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THE WRITING SEGMENT OF AN INTENSIVE PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

The ultimate goal of a writing program for academically oriented ESL students is to teach the written form of English required for success in United States colleges and universities. Foreign students must learn the same skills required of native speakers, such as the writing of reports, research papers, and essay exams. Indeed, many students with a solid background in English and high English proficiency (TOEFL¹ 500 or more) on campuses where there is no intensive English program learn these skills in freshman composition classes along with native English speakers. Students who know little or no English when they arrive, however, have special needs which are met by special programming. In intensive English programs, students study English for a minimum of 20 hours per week, with each class day divided among the language skill areas, typically listening and speaking, reading, writing, structure and possibly language laboratory.² Depending on entering proficiency and learning speed a student may require three months to a year of English study before he is ready to begin academic work.

Our program is divided into three distinct levels to accommodate the entering English proficiencies of our students. Level One students are virtually monolingual in their native language (TOEFL range 200-375) although they may have studied a year or two of English in their home countries. Level Two students (TOEFL 375-425) are at the intermediate

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1. The Test of English as a Foreign Language is available from the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey.

2. From Guidelines on Intensive English Programs, established by the Consortium of Intensive English Programs, a sub-group of the Association of Teachers of English as a Second Language (ATESL) Section of the National Association of Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA).

level, and Level Three students (TOEFL 425-500) are advanced and should be prepared to do academic work upon successful completion of the level. At each level there is one hour per day devoted to learning writing skills.

The students' overall program of classes per week at each level is as follows:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Pronunciation and Speaking Skills	4	4	2
Oral Grammar	4	4	2
Reading & Vocabulary	4	4	4
Writing	4	4	4
Language Lab	4	4	4

Each class has a maximum of 15 students. Entering students are placed by means of a standardized proficiency test, biographical information regarding previous study of English and, in borderline cases, an oral interview and a writing sample. There are students from many language backgrounds in each class, although Arabic, Spanish, Persian Farsi, Japanese, Korean, and Taiwanese are the most common.

Students progress through the levels on the basis of achievement. If they do the work at Level One with passing success, they may proceed to Level Two. On occasion a student will work tremendously hard and make such astounding progress that he will skip from Level One to Level Three.

As a rule the students are placed in a single level for a given fifteen-week term. Sometimes a student with greatly differing abilities will be assigned to classes at two levels. For example, Arabic-speaking students are often much better in oral skills than in reading and writing. Such students might take Level One reading and writing classes and Level Two oral skills classes.

RATIONALES³

Our approach to teaching writing depends on certain basic beliefs about language and language learning.

3. Elaboration and justification can be found in Paulston and Bruder, 1976, Chapter 6.

1. Written language for rhetorical purposes is different from spoken language and must be learned as a separate skill.
2. Rhetorical organization varies from language to language and is best taught from a contrastive rhetoric standpoint.
3. The role of writing in the language learning process changes as students gain in proficiency. At beginning levels, writing serves as a reinforcement of the oral grammar patterns being learned. It provides a visual mode to complement the aural one, a fact which accommodates various learning styles. At more advanced levels, writing becomes an end in itself.
4. People learn to write by writing and by receiving corrections on what they have written.
5. People need both controlled and free composition from the beginning level, although controlled composition is phased out as the students' writing skill increases.
6. Due to varied language backgrounds of the students and the variation in learning pace, certain aspects of learning to write are highly conducive to individualization.

LEVEL ONE

Goals. Writing at the beginning level serves in large part to reinforce the oral grammar patterns through a different modality. As the student proficiency increases, more attention is devoted to writing as a separate skill.

The students at this stage concentrate on correctness of form at the sentence level, the mechanics of punctuation, filling out forms, elementary organizational strategies, and, if they are not familiar with the Roman alphabet, handwriting skills. They also engage in free writing practice.

Procedures. The major emphasis at this level is on teaching the fundamental principles of English sentence formation. Unlike native speakers of English who come to the writing class with long experience in the language, the foreign student must learn word order patterns for affirmative, negative and interrogative sentences, rules of subject-verb agreement, the forms of regular and irregular verbs, and the meanings expressed by the various verb tenses. We need to teach pronouns and

rules of pronominal reference, and the form, meaning, and word order for adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases.

Students progress toward mastery of these basic principles of sentence formation through focusing in each lesson on a particular teaching point, a form or pattern. Among those specifically included in the curriculum are the simple present and simple past tenses; the present and past continuous tenses; the modal verbs; the subject, object, and reflexive pronouns, and expressions of quantity; the definite and indefinite articles; and adjectives and adverbs. A typical lesson consists of the presentation and explanation of the teaching point followed by the students' working individually on written exercises focusing on the pattern under consideration. The explanation is always a brief presentation of the rules for formation and use of the structure along with appropriate examples. However, the nature of the related written exercises changes as the academic term progresses.

At the beginning of the semester students write out the responses to the grammar drills from their oral grammar text, Bruder's *MMC: Developing Communicative Competence in English as a Second Language*, a sentence level activity which largely involves making specified structural changes in model sentences, such as transforming a statement into a question. We find that this type of exercise reinforces understanding of the patterns learned in the grammar class and helps students to gain control of the most basic structures without having to be concerned with the additional problem of formulating and organizing their ideas in the new language.

Depending on individual rates of progress, but generally about six weeks into the course, students stop working on drill exercises and begin working on sentence formation within the paragraph. For this phase of the course we use controlled composition exercises. Paulston (1972) and Paulston and Bruder (1976) have enumerated in some detail the benefits of controlled composition. In summary, its use allows for the systematic grading and sequencing of teaching points and provides for the student to focus on one pattern at a time, maximizing his opportunity to write correct paragraphs and thereby increase motivation. Controlled composition exercises lend themselves well to an individualized format, and, furthermore, they are easily corrected.

There are many types of controlled composition exercises (see Paulston and Bruder, 1976), but most consist of a written model which is to be rewritten by converting or manipulating particular structures in some specific way, such as transforming a paragraph written in the

simple present tense to the simple past. The degree of control is determined by the model and the type of language manipulation required. Ideally, the student should proceed from controlled exercises to semi-controlled writing in which a model provides the content for a composition but in which there is little structural control. The final step is free writing, in which the student uses the patterns of the teaching point in a free composition of his own creation.

For this aspect of our Level One course we use Baskoff's *American English Guided Composition* which, while it does not embody all the principles of controlled composition, does allow for guided writing focused on specific well sequenced teaching points. Students read a model paragraph containing examples of the pattern under consideration, study the appropriate grammar rules, do sentence level exercises requiring application of the rules, and finally write a paragraph based on and similar to the model but drawing on their own experience for the content. In a lesson on frequency adverbs, for example, the students read a model paragraph entitled "A Typical Day in My Life," which demonstrates the use of the adverbs. They then proceed to do sentence level exercises involving the adverbs, and the final step is writing a composition like the model, in which the student describes a typical day in his life using the teaching point pattern.

While it is felt that controlled composition is the most effective means of achieving mastery of the basic sentence level patterns, the students do need frequent opportunities to write free compositions, and they do so once a week in our Level One curriculum. However, the teachers suggest topics which are within the range of the students' expressive ability in English. One technique we have found to be effective here is to find an interesting picture to have the students describe, since description tends to elicit the patterns the students have mastered.

Effective correction is crucial for learning the writing skill and correction techniques are essentially the same for controlled and free compositions. Using a set list of correction symbols, teachers indicate student errors focusing on the teaching point and previously learned patterns. Careless errors or errors on past learning points are merely underlined and the student is required to identify the mistakes. It is sometimes difficult to convince teachers not to correct everything, but we feel to do so would overwhelm the student; it is more efficient to concentrate on teaching point problems. Students must correct their mistakes, and in cases of extreme difficulty, rewrite papers before they get full credit for the assignment. It is the teacher's responsibility to work

on problem areas with individual students during the class hours.

Compositions are also corrected for punctuation points covered in the language lab where the students use Jaramillo's *Conventions in the Mechanics of Writing: A Language Laboratory Manual for Foreign Students*. Following along in their books, students hear rules given on tape; they are then required to punctuate sentences in the manual correctly by applying the appropriate rules. The writing teachers keep informed about what lessons have been covered and provide additional explanation in class where necessary. At Level One the punctuation teaching points covered include capitalization and use of the period, comma, apostrophe, and quotation marks.

Our students who come from language backgrounds such as Arabic or Farsi which use a writing system other than the Roman alphabet require explicit, systematic instruction in handwriting. They are shown how to use Bright and Piggott's *Handwriting - A Workbook* and are given assignments according to their needs. These students cannot be expected to learn the writing system by mere exposure to it; they must know what features distinguish one letter from another, capital letters from small letters, handwriting from typing. We have found use of a workbook in which students can practice copying letters and letter combinations an efficient way of helping them to write legibly in English.

An additional writing skill which students living in this country need but seldom learn from conventional writing texts is the ability to fill out forms properly. We are currently experimenting with materials designed by Romaine Goetz (1977) to teach students in a systematic way how to correctly provide information on forms such as college applications and immigration documents.

All of the activities just described are implemented within an individualized format to allow each student to advance at an appropriate pace. Slower students have the opportunity to spend extra time on problem areas, and faster students can progress quickly through easier material. At the beginning of each class the teacher hands back corrected work and distributes assignment sheets detailing what each student is to do in class and for homework. The instructor then explains the relevant teaching points, usually with small groups of students who are working on the same teaching point. Most of the teachers' time, however, is spent circulating around the room working with individual students on previous and new assignments, a procedure which maximizes the opportunity for individual attention to particular problems.

For an individualized format such as this to work to the students' benefit, procedures must run smoothly. Teachers need to keep careful records detailing each students' progress, and the daily lesson plan must include what points are to be covered with which students. Depending on the teacher's preference, some classes have individual student folders containing corrected work and the new assignment, which are distributed at the beginning of the class. Other teachers keep track of student progress simply by means of a checklist.

LEVEL TWO

Goals. Most of our students who successfully complete Level One proceed to the Level Two course which also contains individuals entering the program at this level. The goals of this course remain largely the same as at Level One but concentrate on more advanced grammar patterns commensurate with the increased proficiency in English. In addition, the students learn some of the basic organizational and rhetorical devices of English; there is greater emphasis on coherent development and organization of ideas within the paragraph and short composition. We teach the students more advanced punctuation rules and provide an opportunity for those entering at this level to improve their handwriting and learn how to fill out forms.

Procedures. Students at this level understand more English and can benefit from more teacher explanation of grammar patterns and rhetorical devices. The teaching points at this level are more difficult and complex, and therefore it is more efficient for all students to work on the same lesson, receiving rule explanations from the teacher and then applying these rules in class and homework writing assignments. As in Level One, however, most of the class period is spent in writing while the teacher circulates throughout the room answering students' questions and going over problems from previous assignments.

We believe that students at this phase of learning must still progress from greater to lesser control in their writing activity, but we have been unable to find a controlled composition text suitable to our students' needs. Therefore, we have found it necessary to experiment with lessons prepared by Furey (1978) which are inter-sequenced to teach both grammar patterns and rhetorical devices or organizational principles.

The grammar patterns taught at this level include articles, relative clauses, adverbial clauses, the past perfect tense, passives, gerunds, *if*-clauses, and comparatives and superlatives. A typical lesson focuses on a specific pattern contextualized in a model paragraph which the students read before coming to class (See Appendix). After having the students identify examples of the teaching point pattern in the model, the teacher provides a grammar explanation, encouraging the students to analyze the structure and provide generalizations on the pattern's form and function. Following the presentation by the teacher, which generally takes 5 to 10 minutes, the students start their assignments, first working on controlled sentence level exercises which require manipulation of the structure under consideration and then proceeding to a less controlled activity, usually writing a paragraph or two similar to the model in content.

Rhetorical devices and organizational patterns are taught much the same way as the grammar points. In this course, the students learn and practice some of the basic principles of American English rhetoric—the use of topic sentences, supporting ideas, transitional words, and parallelism to achieve clarity and cohesion within the paragraph. They learn to do outlines and to write good introductions and conclusions for short compositions. Each rhetorical teaching point is introduced by a model or example of its use, followed by an explanation to be presented by the teacher. Structured, controlled exercises in the use of the device are followed by a freer writing exercise requiring the student to apply what he has learned in previous explanation and practice.

Free compositions are frequently assigned at this level, sometimes to be completed within the class hour so that students will become used to writing within time limits as they will later have to do in their academic work. The length of the compositions is gradually increased from paragraphs of 100-150 words to three or four paragraph compositions of 120-300 words. The students generally find it helpful to have topics suggested; we try to think of areas that are more thought provoking and sophisticated than those at the first level, such as “The Role of the Father in My Society,” or “Some Solutions to the World Hunger Problem.”

The techniques for correction are the same as for Level One; a great deal of emphasis is placed on students' correcting their mistakes and, when necessary, re-doing their papers to be handed in again. A good deal of class time is devoted to working with individuals on particular problem areas. The thrust here is a problem solving one; the teacher goes over a previous assignment having the student identify his errors and correct them.

Punctuation work continues in the language laboratory where students go beyond basic punctuation to consider ellipses, underlining, quotation marks, and hyphens. Students entering at this level who need work on handwriting are assigned exercises from the handwriting workbook.

LEVEL THREE

Goals. It is at this level that the writing skill assumes independence in our writing program. This is the terminal ESL course for most of our students, and it must prepare them to compete with native speakers in writing essays and research papers and in taking notes. They also need to learn to write the grammar patterns required almost exclusively in prose, such as the agentless passive and certain types of clauses, like non-restrictive relative clauses or absolutes. We also introduce the use of a reference grammar (Crowell, 1964), which we hope students will continue to use beyond the English classes.

Procedures. The class time itself is no longer individualized. A great amount of information must be imparted and the most efficient way to do this is to use a lecture-recitation format, reminiscent of a composition class for native speakers of English. The students complete their assignments on an individual basis, however, and each essay or research paper must be acceptable in the writer's academic discipline.

A great deal of time is spent on the writing of the research paper, a skill of great importance in American universities but culturally alien to many of our students. Following Markman and Waddell's *Ten Steps to Writing a Research Paper*, the project is broken down into manageable units beginning with a tour of the library that concentrates on the card catalogues and other reference tools. At each step, the students show the teacher some sign of progress—bibliography cards, a revised thesis, an outline and so forth—to forestall the last-minute dashing off of a paper. About two-thirds of the way through the term, students hand in the rough draft for teacher correction, and the final paper is handed in at the end of the term. The papers are graded on organization and development of ideas; grammar, spelling, and punctuation; footnotes and bibliography; and overall form, including neatness, title page, margins and the like.

The rhetorical devices and development of ideas are presented from Seale's *Writing Efficiently* and go beyond those devices taught in Level Two. For example, students work on developing and supporting

arguments; they write chronological and descriptive paragraphs; they write summaries. The teacher assigns a reading, discusses it in class and then assigns a composition which illustrates the pattern. The compositions are corrected by noting page references to Crowell's *Index to Modern English*. The students then correct their own errors. Practice with advanced grammar patterns such as the past perfect tense, conditional modals, and object complements, come from Frank's *Modern English: Workbook II*.

Another area on which we spend a good bit of time is plagiarism. American scholars regard plagiarism as indication of such moral turpitude that we tend to forget that it is after all a culturally learned concept and totally strange to people who regard the use of others' ideas, acknowledged or not, as the highest form of compliment. In training the students, we first try to explain the notion by examples. We emphasize the need for complete and formally proper acknowledgement. Then we try to explain how plagiarism is regarded in American university circles. Finally, we check carefully any suspect work; proven plagiarized work automatically receives a failing grade.

At all three levels, the work is carefully graded. Grading practices vary according to the major emphasis of the levels, but the students receive a term grade for the writing course which is averaged with grades in the other skill areas to derive one composite grade for each term. The average grade for the Institute classes is "C" which is consistent with general undergraduate grading practices. In addition to the ordinary functions of motivation and feedback, letter grades introduce the system used at most American institutions but not used in the rest of the world. By the time the students enter academic programs, they have some feeling for the difference between "A" quality work and "C" quality work.

We do not wish to imply that students who successfully complete the program are excellent writers of English—that takes years of constant practice and hard work; but they have been provided the tools with which to compete with native speakers if they wish to do so.

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APPENDIX

ELI 3 - WRITING

Present Perfect and Present Perfect Continuous (1)

MODEL PARAGRAPH

Americans *have become* very concerned about the energy crisis in recent years, and many different universities, research institutes, and private companies are now trying to find ways to solve the problem of the fuel shortage. The citizens of Western Pennsylvania *have been* even more aware of the fuel shortage problem since the winter of 1977. Extremely cold weather caused a scarcity of natural gas, and people are afraid that the same thing might happen again in the future. Individuals at the University of Pittsburgh *have been doing* different kinds of research to help solve the energy crisis. For example, petroleum engineers in the School of Engineering *have recently been studying* more efficient ways to getting oil from the ground, and Professor Paul Reznick of the Petroleum Engineering Department *has just received* a grant from Gulf Oil to study the flow of oil and gas in petroleum rocks. Professors in the chemistry department *have also been working* on the energy problem. For example, some faculty members are investigating the use of solar energy. Eventually, energy from the sun will probably meet many of man's needs, but right now this form of energy is useful for only a few purposes. Scientists are looking for more efficient ways to capture the sun's rays and convert their energy into a useable form. The study of nuclear energy is another area of research which *has become* more important in recent years, and there is also a renewed interest in the use of coal as an energy source.¹

Grammar Rules

PRESENT PERFECT

Form $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{has} \\ \text{have} \end{array} \right\} + \text{past participle}$

We have traveled a lot this year.

She *has had* many problems this term.

1. Some of the information for this passage is taken from *University Times*, Vol. 10, #2, September 22, 1977.

For many verbs the past participle form is the same as the simple past tense form. For other verbs, the past participle is *irregular*. Refer to your list of Irregular Simple Past and Past Participle Forms.

NEGATIVE: I *have not* paid my telephone bill yet.
 She *has not* seen her family for one year.

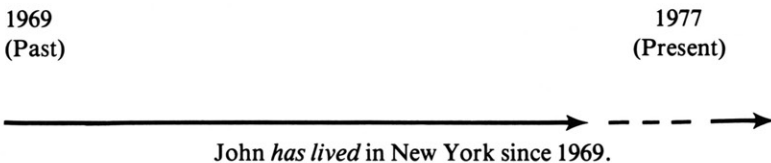
INTERROGATIVE: *Have* you *eaten* at C.J. Barney's this week?
 Has the teacher *made* an appointment with you?

What are the main verbs in the sentences above? the auxiliary verbs?

Use

We use the present perfect tense in English in *three* ways:

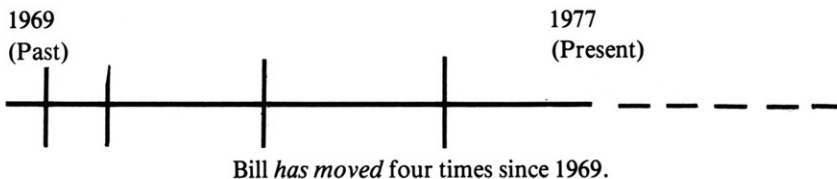
- 1) It indicates an action or state which began in the past and which continues *up to* and *into* the present. The action or state *may* continue into the future.



We often use time expressions with *for* or *since* with this use of the present perfect tense.

- I *have been* a student for three years.
- Joan *has always given* a lot of money to her sister.
- So far, you *haven't failed* any courses.
- I *have not seen* your sister since you introduced me to her.
- There *have been* engineering courses at this university since 1943.

- 2) It indicates an action or state which was *repeated* in the past and which *may be* repeated in the future.



I *have eaten* only once today.

The band *has played* that song twice this evening.

You *have had* a lot of interesting experiences since you arrived in the U.S.

With this type of present perfect we may use *since* and time expressions such as *today, this week, this year*, etc. which indicate that the time is not completed or finished.

I *have seen* him once this week. (This week is not finished; I may see him again before the week is over.)

3) It indicates an action which occurred at an *unspecified* or *indefinite* time in the past.

I *have studied* French, Spanish, and Portuguese.

He *has* already *visited* the Museum of Fine Arts.

They *have* just *received* their grades.

Have you seen your advisor yet?

Compare these sentences with the following *simple past tense* sentences. The time is *definite* or *specified*.

I *studied* French, Spanish, and Portuguese when I was in college.

He *visited* the Museum of Fine Arts last July.

They *received* their grades yesterday.

Did you see your advisor before you registered?

With this type of present perfect we use time expressions such as *already, yet* (with negative and interrogative forms), *just, lately, recently*, etc. (See Lesson 14 of *MMC* for the use of *already* and *yet*). Except for *yet* which usually occurs at the end of the sentence, these time expressions often occur between the auxiliary verb and the main verb. In fact, *just* always occurs in this position.

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

John has been studying chemistry for three years.

{ has } + been + -ing form of verb.
{ have }

We use the present perfect continuous to emphasize the continuity or duration of the action or state. It indicates that an action or state which began in the past is still in progress at the present.

The baby *has been crying* for three hours.

I *have been trying* to find my check book for three days.

What are the negative and interrogative forms of the present perfect continuous?

Exercise #1—In the blank to the right of each verb, write the correct *past participle* form.

- | | | | | | |
|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|------------|-------|
| 1. be | _____ | 11. hurt | _____ | 21. forget | _____ |
| 2. hope | _____ | 12. leave | _____ | 22. play | _____ |
| 3. see | _____ | 13. make | _____ | 23. tell | _____ |
| 4. have | _____ | 14. put | _____ | 24. wish | _____ |
| 5. buy | _____ | 15. read | _____ | 25. eat | _____ |
| 6. want | _____ | 16. say | _____ | | |
| 7. choose | _____ | 17. speak | _____ | | |
| 8. come | _____ | 18. take | _____ | | |
| 9. drink | _____ | 19. think | _____ | | |
| 10. get | _____ | 20. study | _____ | | |

Exercise #2—Re-write each of the following sentences changing the verb forms to the *present perfect*. Substitute the time expressions at the left for those which are in italics.

this year Ex. We flew from Singapore to Bangkok twice *last year*.

We have flown from Singapore to Bangkok twice this year.

this month 1. John visited Toronto twice *last month*.

since he arrived in the U.S. 2. Ahmed applied to three universities *while he was in the English course*.

since the end of the war 3. Maria lived in South America *before the revolution*.

recently 4. *Yesterday* I went to the dentist because of a severe toothache.

since 1975 5. Several valuable paintings disappeared from the art institute *last year*.

for three years 6. Sandra dated George *during her sophomore year at the university.*

yet 7. Did you take your vitamin pill *at breakfast?*

since the companies improved working conditions 8. There was not a coal miners' strike *last year.*

Several times 9. *Last May* I borrowed money from the bank in order to buy a car.

for a year 10. Roger did not see his family *last year.*

since the beginning of winter 11. *When the weather was bad,* the busses were very crowded.

already 12. I applied for a social security number *last week.*

Exercise #3—Re-write each of the following sentences changing the verb forms to the *present perfect continuous*. Substitute the time expressions at the left for those which are underlined.

for a month Ex. Tim was planning his trip to the Middle East *last term.*

Tim has been planning his trip to the Middle East for a month.

since dinner 1. The couple was arguing *when I left.*

since he left the party 2. Jim was not feeling well *after the party.*

for a couple of hours 3. We were playing cards on the beach *when it started to rain.*

for twenty minutes 4. I was shopping for groceries *when I saw my teacher at the market.*

since the English course started 5. Were you going to the lab *when the elevator broke down?*

Exercise #4—Answer each of the following questions using either the *present perfect* or the *present perfect continuous*.

Ex. How long have you been living here?
I have been living here since 1974.

Ex. How long have you known Maria?
I have known her for two months?

1. What cities have you visited since your arrival in the U.S.?
2. How long have you been studying English?
3. What have you been doing on the week-ends?
4. How often have you been homesick since you came here?
5. How many hours a night have you been spending on your homework?

Exercise #5—Read each of the following sentences carefully. Then rewrite the sentences using either the *simple past* or *present perfect*, whichever is correct.

EXAMPLES

- | | |
|-------|--|
| take | 1. I... <i>took</i> ...two trips to New York last year. |
| take | 2. I... <i>have taken</i> ...two trips to New York this year. |
| study | 1. I.....at Pitt since 1971. |
| come | 2. John.....over to my house last night to watch television. |
| have | 3. Most American universities.....serious financial problems since the 1960's. |
| go | 4. Several of us.....to the Three Rivers Art Festival last week-end. |
| eat | 5. We.....at Ali Baba's twice this month. |
| be | 6. Fifth Avenue in Oakland.....a one-way street for several years. |

- be 7. Last January and February extremely cold months.
- have 8. Since I began to study English, I many problems with the verbs.
- fly 9. We to Philadelphia twice this year.
- cook 10. Since I bought a new cookbook, I many interesting foreign meals.
- buy 11. I a new Toyota last night.
- buy 12. Jim recently a Datsun.
- visit 13. My family Spain during their trip to Europe last summer.
- visit 14. I already Spain several times.

ELI 3 — WRITING

Present Perfect and Present Perfect Continuous (2)

Ask your teacher about any problems you had on your homework exercises. He or she will discuss these problems with the class. Then do exercise #6.

Exercise #6—Write a paragraph like the model which describes a problem of your country or the world and explain some things that people have done to solve this problem. Use some *present perfect* and *Present perfect continuous* forms and underline them. Your paragraph should be at least 125 words.