

ВВЕДЕНИЕ

Пособие направлено на совершенствование навыков чтения и говорения на продвинутом этапе обучения иноязычной коммуникации. Представленные в нем материалы содержат широкий спектр рассказов¹ англоязычных авторов XX в. Включенные в сборник рассказы разнообразны по стилю и тематике, они принадлежат признанным мастерам художественной прозы и отражают базовые культурные и социальные проблемы своего времени.

Все рассказы предваряются короткой справкой об авторах и сопровождаются серией упражнений, которые могут быть использованы как для работы в аудитории, так и для самостоятельного анализа текстов.

Первая группа заданий к художественным текстам направлена на формирование языковой компетенции студентов. В основу положен принцип обучения языку через контекст. Задания включают упражнения на установление лексической сочетаемости языковых единиц, на выявление тонких семантических отличий в синонимических рядах, на декодирование метафорических значений слов, а также на перефразирование устойчивых, в том числе идиоматических, выражений.

Упражнения подобного рода призваны обогатить словарный запас студентов. Особое внимание уделяется выявлению прагматических характеристик, свойственных как отдельным лексическим единицам, так и более обширным фрагментам текста, на основе определения степени экспрессивности, эмотивности и оценочности анализируемого материала.

Пособие также содержит задания, целью которых является совершенствование морфологических и синтаксических речевых и языковых навыков. В частности, на основе контекста рас-

¹ В каждом рассказе сохранена своя специфическая пунктуация в зависимости от того, английский или американский автор, от времени написания и проч.

сказов отрабатывается употребление абсолютных конструкций, различных форм сослагательного наклонения, неличных форм глагола.

Кроме того, в пособии представлена информация, касающаяся основных аспектов интерпретации текста, таких как авторская позиция, особенности фона произведения, способы создания характера, построения сюжета, тематические характеристики.

При освещении теоретических вопросов использовались работы Ричарда Гилла, Джона Пека, Йанна Миллигана, Дэвида Лоджа и др. Тот или иной аспект рассматривается применительно к конкретному художественному тексту, а заключительным заданием к каждому из рассказов является комплекс вопросов, направленных на его интерпретацию. Предполагается, что в результате поэтапного анализа каждого из компонентов (элементы композиционного построения, характеристика персонажей, проблематика и идейное содержание рассказа и др.) будет отрабатываться алгоритм интерпретации художественного произведения. Задания к заключительному рассказу в пособии включают интегрированный анализ, представленный во всей совокупности рассматриваемых ранее аспектов интерпретации.

Материалы адресованы студентам бакалавриата и специалитета, обучающимся по специальностям «Лингвистика» и «Перевод и переводоведение», с уровнем владения английским языком B2—C1. Они также могут быть использованы всеми, кто изучает английский язык и занимается анализом художественного текста.

Francis King

MAKING IT ALL RIGHT

Francis King, a British novelist, reviewer and drama critic, was born in Switzerland. King spent his early years with his family in India, where his father was a government official. Aged eight, F. King was dispatched to England to a boarding school where he proved academically accomplished and gained classical scholarships to Shrewsbury school and Balliol College, Oxford.

While still an undergraduate at Oxford, he published his first novels. Then King joined the British Council, working in Italy, Greece, Egypt, Finland and Japan, before he devoted himself entirely to writing. For some years he was a drama critic for the Sunday Telegraph and was a fiction reviewer for the Spectator.

His book *The Nick of Time* (2003) reached the Booker long-list, and the most recent was *Cold Snap* (2010). Francis King died in 2011.

‘If you want to see Iris Clark, we ought to call her soon. She’s got herself into the habit of going to bed early.’ As she spoke, Diana Lucas jumped up from the settee and, stooping over, began to edge a six-panel gold screen out from the wall behind it. ‘Oh, this woman! She never puts anything back straight. And the filth behind here. Mary, just look at this filth, just look at it.’ Mary Hirst glanced over her shoulder. ‘Bob, just look.’ Mary’s husband, Bob, clumsy hands clasped between bony knees, continued to stare down at the Chinese silk carpet which, Diana had told them, she had bought off a restaurant in Kobe ‘for a song, an absolute song’. ‘Oh, well, I suppose that I oughtn’t to grumble about her. She’s really rather a dear. And she’s been with me twelve years. Did you realize that, Mary? She’s been with me twelve years. I taught her everything she knows — which isn’t saying much.’

‘Oh, I think that she’s a lovely cook,’ Mary said. She enunciated her words slowly and carefully with a trace of an Australian accent.

‘On a good day,’ Diana conceded. ‘Now what about that call to Iris?’

‘Well, I don’t know, dear.’ Mary looked at her watch and then looked at Bob. ‘It’s getting late. It’s such a long drive back to Kyoto and Bob has to be on duty at the hospital at nine o’clock.’

‘She’d appreciate a visit from you, I know. Even if we looked in just for ten minutes. They were always so inseparable; other people never really counted for them. And now that she’s on her own, well, the poor thing seems so utterly *lost*.’ Again Diana fidgeted with the screen. ‘It’s a beauty, isn’t it? The gold alone is worth a fortune.’

‘Isn’t that the one you picked up with me at that little junkshop behind Kyoto station?’ Mary queried.

‘Yes, of course, so I did! I’d quite forgotten. Yes, that’s right.’ But Diana did not care to be reminded. ‘Of course it was in a ghastly condition then. Remember? But I saw at once that it had its possibilities. I had it remounted. Touched up by a little man whom I’ve found, a real artist. The gold restored — that cost me a pretty penny, I can tell you. Yes, I’m pleased with the result... Now, Mary, let’s put through that call. You’ll be doing her such a good turn.’

Mary, who hardly knew Iris Clark, was less sure of this. But the news of the car accident in which Frank Clark had been killed and Iris herself gravely injured had appalled her when she had read of it in the newspaper and ever since she had hoped for some opportunity to be of comfort or assistance. ‘Would we really be welcome — at this hour, I mean?’

‘Quarter-to-ten,’ said Diana with a brisk look at the platinum-and-diamond watch on her wrist. ‘She doesn’t go to bed all *that* early. Come.’ She held out a hand to Mary and yanked her, with surprising ease considering the disparity in their size, out of the sofa and on to her feet. ‘You’d better speak to her. It’ll make it nicer, coming from you.’

‘Me, dear?’

‘I’m always running over to see her. Almost daily. And now that it seems likely that I shall be taking over the house —’

‘Taking over the house?’ Mary stared at her in amazement.

‘Sh! It’s meant to be a secret. Don’t tell a soul. Isn’t it wonderful news?’

‘But I — I thought that the *bank* rented it.’

‘Yes, but Iris hated the thought of its falling into the hands of Frank’s successor. A bachelor. After all they put into it, it would have been such a shame — one of the show-places of the district. So she’s *arranged* — with a little scheming — for me to have it. Isn’t it marvellous news? I can’t wait to get out of this beastly western house. My things are going to look ten times better when they’re on show in their proper setting.’

‘But — how did she fix it?’ Mary asked, as Diana continued to impel her inexorably towards the telephone.

‘Quite simple. The company asked if the landlord would be willing to renew the lease — it ends this month by a lucky chance — and she said that she would ask him. Then she told them that he was awfully sorry but he wanted the house back as he had promised it to someone else. That was me, of course.’ Mary was still looking at her openmouthed with a mixture of shock and admiration. ‘Now, come, dear. I’ll dial the number and then you can speak to her.’

‘But I hardly know —’

‘Come!’

Mary submitted to Diana as people of far stronger wills found themselves submitting. ‘Are you sure that we won’t be disturbing you?’ she asked, and Iris’s far-away, plaintive voice answered her: ‘No, no, I have nothing to do but to — to sit here. So please come. Do you think you can find the way?’

‘Oh, yes. Diana Lucas will be with us.’

‘Diana! How lovely!’

‘Tell her I’ll bring the screen — I’ll bring her screen over. Tell her it’s gorgeous,’ Diana hissed.

Mary did as she was bid.

‘Oh, I am excited!’ Iris exclaimed.

‘Bob, give me a hand with this screen,’ Diana said, advancing on the six-panel gold screen as soon as the telephone call had ended. ‘Let’s take your car, shall we? Then I needn’t get mine out of the garage. Bob, dear!.. Now be *very* careful, won’t you, sweetie? That’s right.’ Between them they began to fold up the screen.

‘Has — has Iris Clark —?’ Mary began to ask.

‘Yes, she begged me to let her have it. It breaks my heart, I’ve really grown so fond of it. But that’s the hell of this business... Ah, well, I suppose that I’ll find another.’ Diana’s own house was the show-room for the Chinese and Japanese antiques which she sold chiefly to rich American tourists, ignorant of the prices prevalent in the stores of Kobe and Kyoto from which Diana usually bought them. ‘I let her have it for a quite unrealistic price, but she’d set her heart on it and in the circumstances...’

‘You’re a sentimentalist,’ said Bob. ‘Bless your heart’. He meant the blessing, though he did not really consider her a sentimentalist. He had always admired Diana for her elegance, her sophistication and her business flair; all qualities in which Mary, bless her heart too, was conspicuously lacking.

‘Well, kids, let’s go!’ Diana lifted one end of the screen, Bob the other. ‘Yes, I sure am sorry to see that blank wall,’ Diana said in a poor imitation of an American accent, gazing at it. ‘You’ll have to help me to find something really nice to put in its place, Mary. Mary has a wonderful eye, did you know that, Bob? She ought to go into business with me.’

‘I’d love to,’ Mary said, obviously pleased. ‘If only I didn’t have *him* to look after.’

‘Oh, leave him!’ Diana exclaimed. ‘He’d manage on his own. Wouldn’t you, Bob?’

For some reason Bob began to flush as he stopped to ease the screen through the narrow doorway.

Iris Clark was seated, not at the desk which stood in the glassed-in porch running the whole length of the vast, Japanese-style room,

but at a small, gate-legged table which to Mary seemed perfectly ordinary but which Diana always eyed greedily, knowing it to be Sheraton. She was a tall, bony woman, whom grief and the months she had spent in hospital had made even bonier. Light freckles dotted the pallor of her cheekbones, her forehead and her arms. When she drew back her lips in a smile, she revealed both large irregular teeth and the gums above them. Her hand made a brief icy contact with Mary's and then with Bob's, but on Diana she bestowed a kiss and convulsive hug.

'What have you been doing? What's all this?' Diana indicated the table.

'Invitations. For my farewell party.' She turned to Bob and Mary. 'I hope that you can come.'

'I've spoken to those two waiters and they've agreed to help,' Diana said before either of them could answer. She was examining a scroll-painting hanging in the alcove.

'Wonderful. You *are* good, Diana.'

'Sweetie, I don't *honestly* like this very much.'

'Oh, don't you? No, I wasn't sure about it. Frank — 'her voice trembled momentarily — 'bought it off Cecil Courtney.'

'Well, that explains of course why nothing about it seems quite right.' Cecil Courtney was a rival dealer. Diana walked over and, putting her hand on Iris's shoulder, inspected her carefully. 'You know, you look so much better. Oh, much better. Doesn't she, Mary?'

Mary, who had not seen Iris since her accident, was in no position to judge; but she nodded her head emphatically.

'And that coat and skirt is *very* elegant. I sent Iris to Madam Keiko. Don't you like Iris's coat and skirt?.. Now, Iris, you sit down and I'll see about the drinks. No, sit down, dear. You're looking much stronger and much better, but you've still got to take it easy. Sit down, there's a good girl.'

Iris did as she was told.

'I've just let Mary and Bob into our secret — Mary is one of my oldest friends, even if we do see so little of each other now that

she and Bob have taken themselves off to Kyoto. She's as thrilled as I am. As she rightly said, my things are going to look ten times nicer in this setting than in that poky western-style house.' She seemed to have forgotten that it was in fact she herself who had said this.

Mary looked about her: the room, for a Japanese house, was vast, the ceiling far higher than customary, the various woods of the floor beams, the transoms and the tokonoma all, even to her inexperienced eye, of a costly variety. 'Yes, it's a gorgeous home,' she said, thinking of their own cosy but creaking and fragile wooden box, possible for entertaining only if they removed the sliding screens and threw all three downstairs rooms into one. 'You'll have difficulty in heating it, Diana, won't you?'

Diana leaned forward, as sleek, polished and finely wrought as the birds which had been carved, perched among irises, in the transom above her. 'Well, that all depends on Iris,' she said in a soft, winning voice.

Iris glanced at her momentarily, glanced away and then glanced back, to hold her bright, appealing gaze, as she said in a voice pitched so low that Bob, who was growing deaf, could not hear her: 'It's Mrs. Macready. I *did* promise her the space-heater, oh, long, long ago.'

'But she can order one from the States. She won't even have to pay any duty.'

'Oh, yes, she will. They don't have any diplomatic privileges.'

'Anyway he's making so much money out of selling scrap-iron that he can afford to pay duty. Whereas I...' She put one small hand over Iris's large one. 'Please, Iris dear. You don't want me to shiver all winter, do you?'

'Well, of course not.' Iris said with a laugh as brief as a hiccough.

'Then that's fixed.' And presumably it was, since Iris merely stared down at her wedding-ring. 'Now you must tell me what I can do to help with the party.'

‘Well, first —’ Iris got up and went over to the gate-legged table — ‘do have a look at this list. I hope that I’ve remembered everyone that I ought to remember.’

Diana took the list and examined it, drawing on the long ivory cigarette-holder into which she had just eased a Turkish cigarette. ‘Him,’ she grunted. ‘Him.’ She looked up, frowning. ‘Do you really want the Da Silvas?’

‘Oh, yes. I must. I must have them. He was one of Frank’s golfing friends, you know.’

‘And that dreary Gulliver couple?’

She continued to go through the list until, suddenly, she put it down on her knees and said: ‘Oh, Iris dear, I meant to ask you — would you mind if I started to bring over some of my things next Saturday? Sakurai has promised to let me have one of his company trucks. We could use the side entrance,’ she went on hurriedly, ‘and stack the things in the two rooms which you never use — you know, the ones facing north. Would you mind, dear? Please be quite frank.’

To this Iris also agreed; as to the suggestion which followed, that — ‘for a little present, of course’ — her driver should help with the loading and unloading of Diana’s possessions. ‘Oh, Iris, you really are an angel! You do spoil me so. Doesn’t she, Mary? Aren’t I lucky to have such a friend?’

Mary gave a taut smile and, hands crossed over the slight protuberance of her stomach, looked around her. She was not a jealous woman and it was not precisely jealousy that she felt, but rather a sense of exclusion. Diana, after all, was *her* friend; had been her friend ever since they had first met at the Kobe Women’s Club in the early days of the occupation. Besides, she now wanted to talk to Iris Clark herself in order to pour out over her all the sympathy which her warm, generous character secreted in such abundance. The other two women continued to discuss the party, Diana’s move, the gas and electricity bills, the rates, a carpet which Diana wished to buy and a fur-coat she wished to sell; and there sat Mary and Bob, ignored and excluded except when Diana would turn to one or the other to ask for their confirmation or support — ‘I am right, aren’t I,

Bob dear?’ ‘You do agree, don’t you, Mary?’ ‘Have you ever heard anything like it, Bob?’

Suddenly Diana jumped up: ‘You’ve not yet looked at the screen. Do get your boy to bring it in. It’s in the boot of the car. Bob, angel, do give me the key.’ She took the bunch of keys and held them out to Iris. ‘Here.’

‘Oh, I *am* longing to see it,’ Iris said when she had sent the boy off to fetch the screen. ‘You’ve seen it, haven’t you?’ It was the first time she had addressed Mary since the invitation to the party.

‘Yes,’ Mary said. ‘It’s a beauty.’

‘It’s so sweet of Diana to let me have it. It’ll be a wonderful reminder of Japan when I am in my poky little Chelsea flat. I never thought that I should possess a Kano Tanyu screen, never, never.’

‘Kano Tanyu?’ Mary was genuinely amazed.

Diana said hurriedly: ‘Well, that’s only my guess. It’s not signed. If it were, of course the price would be quite astronomical and I’d be selling it to a museum and living happily ever afterwards on the proceeds. But I have a feeling — a hunch...’ She laughed, as though at herself. ‘One can’t explain these feelings, can one? But it’s the same feeling that I had about that Kemair head — remember, Mary? And then Professor Hunter came along and lo and behold my hunch had been right!’

Iris’s driver came in, lugging the screen which was almost twice as tall as himself. ‘Oh, do be careful!’ Diana cried in Japanese. ‘There!’ She and the boy began to open it between them, revealing bamboos on a gold background, among which whiskered tigers, benevolent and plump as cats, stalked each other or crouched at rest. The four foreigners and the Japanese boy all gazed at it in silence.

‘It’s certainly awfully like those Kano Tanyufusuma in Nijo Castle — or is it in Chion-in?’ Mary said. Diana gave her a sharp look.

‘You’ve got a mint of gold there.’ Bob pointed his pipe at the screen.

‘Real gold,’ said Diana. ‘Gold leaf. The Technique is interesting. Do you know about this? They have these gold squares, each

square about...' She spoke quickly and efficiently, like an instructor explaining a machine. 'Fascinating, isn't it?' she concluded. This was how she invariably won over the more sceptical of her customers.

'It's breathtaking,' Iris said; and she seemed literally to have had her breath taken away. She gulped for air: 'Oh, breathtaking,' she said. 'Darling, how can you *bear* to part with it?'

'Yes, it is a wrench. I really am in love with it. But in this case — well, I want you to have it. Very much.'

Iris went up to the screen and then suddenly, going down on her knees, scrutinised it from there.

'Yes, that's the right angle!' Bob exclaimed. 'We westerners tend to examine Japanese objects from the wrong — standing or from a chair, instead of from the floor.' It was something which he had subconsciously remembered from one of Diana's sales-talks on another occasion.

'I love it,' Iris said. 'Oh, I do love it.'

Soon Iris and Diana went off together to decide which of two dresses Iris should wear at her farewell party.

'I can't think why she was so insistent that we should call,' Mary pouted. 'Iris has taken no notice of us ever since we got here.'

'She and Diana have a lot to arrange together,' Bob replied.

'Diana has a lot to arrange! She just wanted an excuse to come over here, if you ask me — to settle everything to her own satisfaction. That screen!'

'It's a beauty, isn't it?'

'Kano Tanyu! I was with her when she bought it. Three thousand yen, it cost her — less than ten dollars. Of course she must have spent a bit on having it restored. Oh, she's a clever business woman is our Diana.' Usually easy-going and kindly, Mary was now venomous.

'...Then if you want it,' Diana was saying as they returned, 'you *must* let me know soon. That American dealer is mad about it and he wants a decision before he goes back to Tokyo. You know, if you like, we could do an exchange. The bowl for the space-heater, how about that?' She had come back into the room her arm linked

in Iris's. 'Iris adores that Ming bowl of mine — you know the one, Mary. It's flawless, quite flawless, and historically quite interesting because it's one of the few examples...' As she went on talking she crossed over to the sofa, picked up her bag and slipped into it a piece of paper which Mary's alert eye saw to be a cheque.

'Well, sweetie, you must get the rest which the doctor said that you needed and we must be on our way. Mustn't we, Mary? Bob?' Her two heavily-built friends struggled to their feet, Mary pulling down her girdle and Bob hitching up his trousers. 'Lovely to have seen you, Iris dear. Now if there's *anything* that you need — any help at all —' When they were in the car, Diana suddenly said to Bob, who had already started the engine: 'Oh, I've forgotten, I ought to have asked Iris about her cook. I want to take her on. I must make sure that it's all right. Could you — *would* you — wait just a moment for me?' She jumped out of the car before either of them had answered and ran wobbling up the drive on her high stiletto heels.

Mary and Bob sat in silence, the engine still running while Bob banged impatiently with one hand on the steering-wheel. Then, suddenly, Mary, sitting in the back of the car where Bob could not see her, opened Diana's bag and jerked out the cheque. Holding it up to the light which slanted down from the porch at the end of the drive, she made out the words with an amazement so intense that it felt like a sudden burst of rage; yep one hundred and fifty thousand only. One hundred and fifty pounds, *only* one hundred and fifty pounds! For the screen they had bought together in the junk-shop! 'Bob,' she began, but a crunch on the gravel made her slip the cheque back into the bag and click it rapidly shut.

'Dear Iris,' Diana said. 'Don't you think she's sweet?'

'Nice woman,' Bob agreed.

'I'm glad to see her so much better.'

'She relies on you a lot,' Bob said. 'Anyone can see that you have had a lot to do with her recovery.'

'Well, it's nice of you to say that. Yes, I've tried to do the best I can for her. What she needs is jolly along and cheering up.'

‘And that’s your speciality,’ said Bob.

‘You are being nice to me. What do you want from me?’ Diana asked with a delighted laugh.

‘Everything.’

Mary sat next to Diana, tense and silent. ‘Just listen to your husband!’ Diana exclaimed.

Mary was listening; but she still said nothing.

‘Oh, I shall miss my beautiful screen!’ Diana sighed. ‘I let her have it for practically nothing, she’d so set her heart on it. Just enough to cover the cost of restoration. Hammerslay — that American dealer, you know — well, I’m sure that he’d have offered me at least three hundred, four hundred dollars. But I wanted her to have it. I knew what it meant to her.’

‘Very generous of you,’ said Bob. ‘Bless your heart.’

‘Well here’s my humble abode. Thank you very much, sir. Next time you visit me I’ll be in residence in my palace. I can’t wait, I just can’t wait, to settle myself in with all my things around me. ...Good night, Mary dear. Good night, Bob. God Bless. And come and see me soon. *Soon.*’

Diana wondered for a moment, as she turned away from them, why Mary had neither returned her greeting nor taken her hand, instead squinting at her with what was, yes, an almost paranoical intensity. Paranoical, paranoical? She tried out both words as she slipped her key in the lock, smiling to herself. Mary was jealous, poor dear, that was it. As if anyone would want to take dear, dull old Bob away from her! Well, she’d make it all right on the telephone tomorrow. She could always make it all right — anything, with anyone.

ASSIGNMENTS

I. Answer the following questions.

1. What information does the introductory paragraph provide?
2. Where does the action take place?

3. What elements of Japanese life can be deduced?
4. How is Diana characterized?
5. How long had Diana lived in Kobe?
6. What was her occupation?
7. Comment on the way Mary spoke.
8. Why was Mary reluctant to call Iris?
9. What did Bob do for a living?
10. Why did Diana think it was necessary for them to visit Iris?
11. What object did Diana praise?
12. What did Mary think of that screen?
13. What did Diana do to make Mary call Iris?
14. Why didn't Diana make a call herself?
15. Why was Diana determined to take over Iris's house?
16. Why was it meant to be a secret?
17. Why did Mary eventually submit to Diana?
18. What information did Diana prompt Mary to mention in the telephone conversation?
19. Why did Diana need Bob's help?
20. What did Diana say about selling the screen to Iris?
21. What did Bob think of Diana?
22. How different were Diana and Mary?
23. Why did Bob flush?
24. What does the author start his description of Iris and her home with?
25. What did Iris look like?
26. Comment on the way Iris greeted her guests.
27. Comment on the way Diana used Bob and Mary to sell her screen.
28. Why was it important to Diana to move house?
29. How did Diana persuade Iris to sell the heater to her?
30. Why did Iris feel embarrassed?
31. What did Mary feel when Diana called Iris her friend?
32. Describe the way the screen was examined and sold.
33. What did Bob and Mary discuss when left alone in the room?
34. Why did Diana return to Iris's house leaving her bag in the car?

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