

# **PART 1 Background theory and guidelines**

## **1 Grammar**

### **What is grammar?**

Grammar may be roughly defined as the way a language manipulates and combines words (or bits of words) so as to express certain kinds of meaning, some of which cannot be conveyed adequately by vocabulary alone. These include the way ideas are grouped and related, and the purposes of utterances (statement, question, request, etc.). Grammar may also serve to express time relations, singular/plural distinctions and many other aspects of meaning. There are rules which govern how words have to be manipulated and organized so as to express these meanings: a competent speaker of the language will be able to apply these rules so as to convey his or her chosen meanings effectively and acceptably.

### **The grammar practised in this book**

The grammar on which this book is based is that which is described in most modern grammar books (*see References and further reading*), p. 317 and which is likely to be known and accepted by most readers. As far as possible, I have tried to avoid language features which are specifically associated with one English variety (British, American, Australian, Indian, etc.), but rather use those forms which are likely to be used internationally by both native and non-native speakers.

Nobody (including native speakers) always uses perfectly correct grammar: the teaching aim of this book is, therefore, not to achieve perfection, but to assist learners to master the most important grammatical usages that will enable them to convey meanings effectively and acceptably. From the point of view of sheer length, moreover, it has not been possible to provide a comprehensive coverage of English grammatical structures; the