

恩波 21 世纪考试辅导丛书

大学英语 四、六级考试

DAXUE
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200PIAN

根据教育部最新
《大学英语教学
大纲》(修订本)
编写

阅读精粹 200 篇

全国百所
名牌大学
推荐辅导用书

'99 新版

2000

王典民/编著 恩波/审订

国家行政学院出版社

大学英语四、六级考试 阅读精粹 200 篇

王典民 编著
恩 波 审订

国家行政学院出版社

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

大学英语四、六级考试阅读精粹 200 篇/王典民主编. - 北京: 国家行政学院出版社, 1999. 9

ISBN 7-80140-080-1

I. 大… II. 王… III. 英语 - 阅读教学 - 高等学校 - 水平考试 - 学习参考资料 IV. H31

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (1999) 第 43233 号

大学英语四、六级考试阅读精粹 200 篇

王典民 编著

*

国家行政学院出版社出版发行

北京市海淀区厂洼街 11 号

邮政编码: 100089

发行部电话: 68929037 68929098

新华书店经销

北京朝阳印刷厂印刷

*

850×1168 1/32 开本 11.5 印张 320 千字

1999 年 9 月第 1 版 1999 年 9 月第 1 次印刷

印数: 1-5000 册

ISBN 7-80140-080-1 定价: 12.80 元

前 言

随着各种英语考试阅读题数量的增加和难度的增大,越来越多的学生迫切感到有必要迅速提高英语阅读能力。可是,怎样才能快捷有效地提高阅读水平和应试能力呢?学生表现出茫然和困惑。困惑的主要原因在于许多英语学习者在认识上存在误区,他们将阅读训练简单地理解为词汇加语法,认为只要掌握这两者,也就相应地解决了阅读问题。由于这一片面认识,不少学生将英语阅读训练等同于词汇和语法的学习,而没能真正体味其中的奥妙和乐趣。

本书的主旨在于向读者详细介绍和讲解英语阅读的方法与技巧,通过大量的练习使读者真正掌握这些方法、熟练运用这些技巧;本书还透彻地阐释了各类阅读理解问题的实质,使读者通过学习本书能轻松自信地面对各种英语考试。

与其它类似书籍相比,本书有三大特点:

其一:针对性强。作者根据多年教学实践,针对学生在英语阅读上存在的实际问题,将阅读分为阅读方法和解题技巧两个方面来阐释。在阅读方法上,着重培养读者正确运用浏览(skimming)、查找(scanning)、预测(prediction)、研读(critical reading)和宏观把握文章内容结构的能力。在解题技巧上,根据问题类型分中心思想、具体内容、结论和判断、推论、语调等几个方面分别加以详细说明,使读者在深刻理解的基础上,切实地提高阅读水平和应试能力。

其二:注重实效。不少学生反映,一般的阅读材料在讲解上述方法与技巧时往往内容空泛,浅尝辄止,并且缺少相应练习,学生并没有从中真正获益。本书在讲解每一方法和技巧时,始终以学生能有实际收获为目的,举例剖析,详尽透彻,易学易用。本书还配有专题练习,以供学生实际训练,达到学以致用目的。

其三:循序渐进。这包含两层意思:一是阅读方法与解题技能方

面的内容安排合理,由低向高,由浅入深,便于学生逐步学习提高;二是所选取文章也遵循由易到难,逐级上升的原则,对学生逐步提高英语阅读水平十分有利。在专题讲解与练习之后,是综合阅读练习,所选用的文章题材广泛,内容丰富,而且多为当代英语,文字新颖。相信读者在提高英语阅读能力的同时,也能体会到最新英语语言之妙。

读者应如何使用本书才能获得最佳效果?首先,在学习过程中要培养好的阅读习惯,即不仅用眼,更要用脑去阅读,真正做到积极主动地阅读。用头脑去分析、整理所读到的内容,这既是有效阅读的根本所在,又是阅读的最高境界。因此,希望读者能从一开始就养成全新的阅读习惯,正确运用阅读方法与技巧,从而从根本上提高阅读能力。其次,对于书中大量的练习材料,希望读者能够多次复习,而不是仅读一次,核对答案而已。这是因为,阅读能力的训练与提高需要反复体会与练习,特别是在已经熟悉篇章内容情况下的阅读更有助于阅读方法的掌握与技巧的提高;而具备了好的方法和技巧反过来又能更快更好地进行阅读,所以,读者要反复温习,力争做到熟中生巧。

总之,如果读者能够认真地按上述要求去做,做到主动阅读和反复温习,就一定能够显著地提高阅读水平和答题水平,充满信心地面对任何英语阅读试卷。

本书除作为大学英语四、六级考试用书,也适用于研究生入学考试、托福、GRE 等各类英语考试。

如有疏漏之处,还望读者不吝赐教。

编者
1999年8月

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第一章 阅读必备——掌握篇章结构

“知己知彼，百战不殆”。在英语阅读过程中要做到心中有数，就必须了解一段文章的层次结构，判断内容上的主次关系，这样才能在阅读时恰当地运用阅读技巧，提高速度。就段落中句子的作用而言，一段好文章通常包含以下几种句子：

1. 主题引入句(topic introducers)

这类句子位于段首，短则一句，长可几句。顾名思义，这些句子的作用是提出本段的主题，有时也包含中心思想。读者在阅读了此类句子后，应明白本段写作的内容，或进一步得知作者的写作目的。

2. 主题展开句(topic developers)

这类句子往往占据段落大量篇幅，内容丰富详实，具体明了。其目的在于提供各种形式的论述说明，以论证支持作者的观点即中心思想。对于这部分的阅读可适当加快速度而不必过分在意琐碎细节，把握住作者引用了哪些论据和细节，以及采取何种方法论述即可。

3. 结束句(terminator)

文章的结尾一般有两种形式：一是总结性结尾，即对全篇中心思想进行概括表达；二是结论性结尾，即将中心思想的观点运用到实际当中去解决问题。结束句也是经常得出中心思想的地方。

4. 转折句(topic modulator)

有时作者会从不同角度，不同方面去阐述其观点，一段文章也就可能有几层含义，或相互并列，或递进，或转折。转折性句子通常包含 not only...but also, actually, in fact, yet, however, but 等等词组。转折句明确地告诉我们本段的含义不只一个，只有将各个含义综合起来才能得到中心思想。

上述段落结构知识对阅读有很强的指导作用，只有熟练掌握并运用这一知识，才能做到用头脑去积极主动地阅读。请看以下实例：

例 1.1

The ability to write well organised, concise paragraph is essential to a student's success in almost all university courses. In preparing scientific reports of laboratory experiments, a student must present his findings in logical order and clear language in order to receive a favorable evaluation of his work. To write successful answers to essay questions on history or anthropology examinations, a student must arrange the relevant facts and opinions according to some accepted pattern of paragraph structure. And certainly when a student writes a book report for English, or a critique for political studies, or a term paper for sociology, style and organisation are often as important as content. Clearly, skill in writing is crucial to successful achievement in most university subjects.

本段第一句即为主题引入句,同时表达了中心思想:好的写作能力是大学生学习成功的关键。为了说明这一观点,作者分别从写实验报告,考试中书面回答问题以及写读书报告等具体几方面论述了写作能力的重要性。最后又回到第一句话的内容,重述本段中心思想。

例 1.2

Basic methods of preparing food show great similarity throughout the world, but English cooking terms sometimes have special meanings. For example, almost all cultures have devised some means of baking, that is, cooking bread or other food in an oven. Boiling, or cooking food in water or some other liquid, is another universal practice. A related process, stewing, means to boil slowly or gently a mixture usually of meat, vegetables and water. Still another cooking process, roasting, means to cook meat in its own juice over fire or in an oven. While the terms to describe the various cooking methods have a literal meaning in formal English, in informal English they are used to describe human behaviour in a colorful or humorous way. Half-

baked, for instance, may refer to a foolish idea or a stupid person. Boiling or boiling mad means very angry. In a stew means to be worried or to be in a difficult situation; and to stew in one's own juices means to suffer, especially from one's own actions. To roast a person means to criticise or ridicule him without mercy. In other cases, a person, through his excessive relish of life, might get pickled and end up in a jam. This list demonstrates the use of cooking terms as colloquial expressions to picture human conduct more vividly.

不难看出,这篇短文包含了两层内容。文章第一句便开门见山地表达了中心思想。在以下展开论述的语句中,作者分别提到几种普遍的烹饪方法。而由“while”引导的转折句则起到承上启下的作用,其含义也与第一句相同,也可视为表达中心思想的主题句。接着作者针对文章第二层内容——英语烹饪词汇的延伸运用,又列举了一些实例。最后一句为概括性的结束句。

虽然并不是所有段落都一定包括这四类句子,但这几类句子在作用上所反应的结构层次却见于任何文章之中。只有对篇章结构有一定了解,才能较好地运用各种阅读方法与技巧。所以说,洞悉段落篇章结构是进行阅读的必要条件。

本章要点:1. 掌握段落的层次结构——四种类型句子。

2. 熟练辨识阅读文章中的层次结构。

专题练习

Read and reread the following passages to familiarize with the paragraph structure, and try to form the good habit of analyzing paragraph structure while reading.

1) When you practise reading with passages shorter than book length, do not try to take in each word separately, one after the other. It is much more difficult to grasp the broad theme of the passage this way, and you will also get struck on individual words which may not

be absolutely essential to a general understanding of the passage. It is a good idea to skim through the passage very quickly first to get the general idea of each paragraph. Titles, paragraph headings and emphasized words (underlined or in italics) can be a great help in getting this skeleton outline of the passage. It is surprising how many people do not read titles, introductions of paragraph headings. Unless you do, you will not be likely to improve your reading comprehension and speed.

2) Experimental psychologists have put forward two very different accounts of the process of remembering. According to the first, memory consists of a series of snapshots which we view whenever we wish to recall some past experience or item of information. If you ask how memories get laid down, exponents of this theory would say that we behave like the character in Christopher Isherwood's play who said: "I am a camera with a shutter open, quite passive". In essence, the theory describes both the laying-down and the recall of memories as passive and objective processes, and it is the view of memory presumably held by the people responsible for deciding what is admissible as evidence in a court of law, where great importance is attached to the recollection of eyewitnesses at the scene of a crime or an accident.

3) Most paragraphs have a topic sentence which expresses the central idea. The remaining sentences expand or support that idea. It has been estimated that between 60 to 80 percent of all expository paragraphs in English has the topic sentence first. Always pay special attention to the first sentence of a paragraph; it is most likely to give you the main idea.

Sometimes, though, the first sentence in the paragraph does not have the "feel" of a main idea sentence. It does not seem to give us enough new information to justify a paragraph. The next most likely

place to look for the topic sentence is the last sentence of the paragraph.

Remember that the opening and closing paragraphs of a passage or chapter are particularly important. The opening paragraph suggest the general direction and content of the piece, while the closing paragraph often summarizes the very essence of what has been said.

4) During the decades of the 1960's, most of the European colonies of Sub-Saharan Africa achieved independence. In the west, Nest, Nigeria (1960), Sierra Leone (1961), and Gambia (1965) – all former British colonies – joined the family of free and independent nations. In the east, Tanzania (1961), Uganda (1962), Kenya (1963) also became sovereign states free of British rule. As the African empire of Great Britain was being dismantled, France, the other major European colonizer, withdrew from vast areas south of the Sahara. Thirteen former French colonies gained national status in the single year 1960: Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Togo, Dahomey, Nigér, Chad, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Gabon, and Congo. Although a few European colonialists still occupy African territory, the 1960's witnessed the birth of more than twenty free black nations.

5) Man is called by nature to live in society; for he needs many things which are necessary to his life, and which by himself he cannot procure for himself. Whence it follows that man naturally becomes a part of a group, to procure him the means of living well. He needs this assistance for two reasons. First, in order that he may obtain elementary necessities of life; this he does in the domestic circle of which he is a part. Every man receives from his parents life and nourishment and education; and the reciprocal (相互的) aid of the family members facilitates the mutual provision of the necessities of life. But there is a second reason why the individual is helped by the

group of which he is a part, and in which alone he finds his adequate well-being. And this is that he may not only live, but live the good life – which is enabled by the opportunities of social intercourse. Thus civil society aids the individual in obtaining the material necessities, by uniting in the same city a great number of crafts, which could not be so united in the same family. And civil society also assists him in the moral life.

6) Although there are many types of art, there are some basic principles in art, too. All kinds of art require the same general characteristics. The most important characteristic of art is order. The elements, the separate parts of a work of art must be arranged so that there is a pattern, a design. The form itself is important. A pleasing shape and balance means that a painting or piece of weaving has a continuous pattern, that a ceramic pot is well formed, that the interesting parts of a structure are found on both sides. Harmony and contrast are also essential aspects of art. The parts of the art must fit together; each must have beauty in itself and look attractive with the other parts. In a figure of a person sculpted out of a large piece of stone, for example, the head and body must match; the parts of a sculpture must suit each other. The artists must carve appropriate sizes and forms into the stone. Furthermore, the clothing and the base of the statue must be appropriate so that the whole statue can be appreciated.

7) The painting of Edouard Manet was distinctly different from the art that came before it. Artists in the middle of the 1880's were blending colors and using shadows to get realistic effects. Manet chose to use great flat areas of strong colors. In addition, he almost outlined his subjects in a way that other artists had not done. The other artists were painting about ideas, special subjects, and themes. Manet, on the other hand, painted attractive pictures. He used real person's faces

in situations that made comments about society. He used designs that showed the influence of Japanese art. Even ten years later, when Manet was influenced by impressionist art, he remained concerned with good composition. Art critics of his time said that his art would not live on. Yet today Manet's works are considered great examples of a phase of art.

8) A weasel word is "a word used in order to evade or retreat from a direct or forthright statement or position" (Webster). In other words, if we can't say it, we'll weasel it. And, in fact, a weasel word has become more than just an evasion or retreat. We've trained our weasels. They can do anything. They can make you hear things that aren't being said, accept as truths things that have only been implied, and believe things that have only been suggested. Come to think of it, not only do we have our weasels trained, but they, in turn, have got you trained. When you hear a weasel word, you automatically hear the implication. Not the real meaning, but the meaning it wants you to hear. So if you're ready for a little re-education, let's take a good look under a strong light at the two kinds of weasel words.

9) By about A. D. 500 the Mound Builder culture was declining, perhaps because of attacks from other tribes or perhaps because of severe climatic changes that undermined agriculture. To the west another culture, based on intensive agriculture, was beginning to flourish. Its center was beneath present-day St. Louis, and it radiated out to encompass most of the Mississippi watershed, from Wisconsin to Louisiana and from Oklahoma to Tennessee. Thousands of villages were included in its orbit. By about A. D. 700 this Mississippi culture, as it is known to archaeologists, began to send its influence eastward to transform the life of most of the less technologically advanced woodland tribes. Like the Mound Builders of the Ohio region, these tribes, probably influenced by Meso-American cultures

through trade and warfare, built gigantic mound as burial and ceremonial places. The largest of them, rising from four terraces to a height of one hundred feet, has a rectangular base of nearly fifteen acres, larger than that of the great Pyramid of Egypt. Built between A. D. 900 and 1100, this huge earthwork faces the site of an Indian city, which contained more than one hundred small artificial mounds marking burial sites. Spread among them was a vast settlement containing some 30,000 people by current estimations. The finely crafted ornaments and tools recovered at Cahokia, as this center of Mississippi culture is called, included elaborate ceramics, finely sculpted stonework, carefully embossed and engraved copper and mica sheets, and one funeral blanket fashioned from 12,000 shell beads. They indicate that Cahokia was a true urban center, which clustered housing, markets, and specialists in toolmaking, potting, jewelry-making, weaving and salt-making.

第二章 先抱西瓜——抓住中心思想

我们已经知道,一段文章的内容是有主次之分的。有些句子阐述作者的观点和本段的中心思想,而另外的句子则围绕这一中心展开论述。迅速准确地找到中心思想无疑对增加理解和提高阅读速度是至关重要的。

通常,抓住中心思想的关键在于把握文章的主题句(topic sentence)。主题句大致定义为:Topic sentence is a general statement which sums up the main idea of the paragraph whose full meaning and significance are made clear and developed by supporting details. 由此可见,主题句概括总结了作者的中心观点。概括性和一定程度的理论化就是识别主题句的标准。一旦找到主题句,也就抓住了中心思想。而其它的句子内容,不论它们占有多大的篇幅,只要是从具体的方面来论述作者观点,就不会是中心思想,而只能算作辅助内容。

阅读文章首先要明白其主旨,明白中心思想与主题句的关系。阅读时应运用浏览(skimming)方法快速通读文章,迅速找到主题句或概括出全文的中心思想。多数情况下,主题句出现在文章的开始部分,即主题引入句(topic introducers)部分。其次文章结尾处也常常是总结全篇要旨的地方。有时,主题可能会位于文章的中间,特别是当文章中有承上启下作用的转折句时,此句就是主题句。当然,有时文章中没有这样的概括性的句子,这时,读者应从各个具体内容中归纳总结出中心思想。请看下面几例:

例 2.1

In Africa, the fight against starvation in six West African nations is being hampered by the rainy season. Heavy rains are turning the dirt roads into muddy rivers, making it hard for traffic to extend to the remote areas. As a result, relief will have to wait for a dry spell which

seems nowhere in sight. The weather bureau is maintaining silence for fear of causing increased alarm.

显而易见,文章第一句就指出了中心思想,即西非六国与饥饿的斗争受到雨季影响。作者接着从大雨使道路泥泞,交通受到影响,救济不得不中断等具体方面论述雨季是如何影响抗饥饿斗争的。

例 2.2

If the wind becomes gusty after a period of calm, you should seek shelter. The sky needs careful watching, too. Gradual darkening and “boiling” clouds should quicken your pace. Lightning and thunder are common enough storm indicators, but few people realize that the lightning is not nearly as important as the number of lightning flashes. The signs of an oncoming storm are many, and a person's life may depend on his ability to interpret them.

在这段文章中,作者先例举了暴雨来临前的各种征兆,然后在最后一句进行总结:暴风雨到来前的预兆是许多的,人们可以根据对这些迹象的了解而免受暴雨之害。表达中心思想的主题句在结尾处起到画龙点睛的作用。

例 2.3

Despite the fact that cars from Germany and Japan are flooding the American market, Ford, General Motors and Chrysler are hiring more workers than ever before. The flood of cheaper foreign cars has not cost American auto workers their jobs as some experts predicted. Ford operates as far as Asia, and General Motors is considered Australia's biggest employer, yet GM has its huge American work force and hires hundreds of people every day to meet the need of an insatiable society.

本段中的第一句显然是主题引入句,而第二句——外国便宜汽车的大量涌入并没有像有些专家所预料的那样夺走美国汽车工人的饭碗,才是主题句,即中心思想。在接下来的文字中作者就这一观点具体说明,指出福特和通用两家汽车公司均生意兴隆,为中心思想提