

A CONCISE PRACTICAL
ENGLISH GRAMMAR

《简明实用英语语法》

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前 言

本书是为师专英语专业的学生编写的,同时也适合于广播电视大学和英语水平相近的自学者及中小学英语教师。

在编写过程中,我们力求做到简明实用。书中的讲解使用简明平易的英语,注重其实用性和容易混淆的语法现象之鉴别,以及在语言运用中须注意的问题。而并非探讨语法的流派或拘泥于固定的归类和定义。

编者多年来使用本书作为师专英语专业“实用语法”课的教材。从内容和容量上,本书都符合《高等师范英语教育专业英语教学大纲》的规定。

由于编者水平所限,书中错误、缺点在所难免,恳切希望批评指正。

编著者

2003 年 5 月 27 日

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PART ONE
MORPHOLOGY

Chapter One Nouns

I. Kinds of nouns

1. Common nouns. Such as *desk, chair, student, teacher, etc.*
2. Proper nouns. Such as *China, Asia, Mr. Green, etc.*
3. Abstract nouns. Such as *information, love, hatred, etc.*
4. Material nouns. Such as *water, steel, air, etc.*

II. Number of nouns

Some nouns can be counted and so they are called countable nouns while others can't be counted and so they are called uncountable nouns. For countable nouns, there are two forms. One is called singular form, the other is plural form. The plural form is made from the singular. There are two ways to do this.

I) Regular form

1. In general, the plural form of a noun is made by adding "s" to the singular.
e.g. desk—desks, chair—chairs, student—students.
2. For the nouns ending in "ss, sh, ch, x", their plural forms are made by adding "es".
e.g. class—classes, bench—benches, dish—dishes, box—boxes.
3. For the nouns ending in "o", their plural forms are made by adding "es".
e.g. potato—potatoes, tomato—tomatoes.
But for words of foreign origin their plural should be made by adding "s".
e.g. radio—radios, photo—photos.
4. For the nouns ending in "y" following a consonant letter, their

plural forms are made by dropping “y” and then adding “ies”.

e.g. lorry—lorries, candy—candies.

But for nouns ending in “y” following a vowel letter, “s” should be directly added to the end.

e.g. day—days, boy—boys.

5. For nouns ending in “f” or “fe”, their plural forms are made by changing “f” into “v” and then adding “es”.

e.g. life—lives, wolf—wolves.

But for words of foreign origin, “s” should be directly added to the end.

e.g. roof—roofs, surf—surfs.

6. For the letters, numbers and nouns used only as symbols their plural are formed by adding an apostrophe “s” (’s).

e.g. There are two “s’s” in this word.

He always has many “and’s” in his speech.

In the 1990’s, his business was very successful.

7. For compound nouns, generally we only change their chief nouns into plural.

e.g. father-in-law—fathers-in-law, girl-student—girl-students.

But: 1) Man teacher—men teachers, woman doctor—women doctors.

2) For some other nouns, their modifiers are only in plural.

e.g. sportsman—sportsmen, salesgirl—salesgirls.

3) If there isn’t a chief noun, “s” should be added to the end.

e.g. go-between—go-betweens, grown-up—grown-ups.

II) Irregular forms

1. By changing vowel letters.

e.g. man—men, goose—geese, foot—feet.

2. By changing both vowels and consonants.

e.g. mouse—mice, louse—lice.

3. By adding other letters (en, ren),
e.g. ox—oxen, child—children.
4. By shortening endings into “a”.
e.g. bacterium—bacteria, datum—data, phenomenon—phenomena.
5. By keeping the original form.
e.g. sheep, deer, fish.

III) Correct judgement of the numbers of n.

In practical usage, we can't judge the number of a noun only by whether there is an “s” or not at the end. There are many exceptions:

1. Some nouns ending in “s” are used as singulars.
e.g. news, physics, politics, billiards, measles, plastics, the United Nations, the United States.
2. Some nouns ending in “s” are used both as singular and as plural.
e.g. crossroads, works (factory), means, headquarters.
3. Most of the collective nouns such as *family*, *team*, *government*, *committee*, *club*, *class*, *school*, etc. can be used as a plural when it denotes the members in it.
e.g. My family are all workers.
The team go all out to win the match.
But, it can also be used as a singular when it is regarded as an impersonal unit.
e.g. My family is a happy one.
Our team is the best one in this city.

Notes: When there is “a(n), each, every, this, that” before them, they can only be regarded as a singular.

e.g. There is a big family in the building.

This team doesn't win very often.

Still, some collective nouns can only be used as plural, such

as *people*, *cattle*, *police*.

III. Cases of nouns

According to the different function of nouns, we use different forms of them. The subject and object of a noun are in the same form called common case. While the attribute of a noun is in possessive case. Here we are to discuss this case.

I) The formation of possessive case

1. For a singular or a plural noun ending in "s", its possessive is made by adding an apostrophe (') to the end.
e.g. a girls' class, the boys' hobby.
2. For a singular or plural noun not ending in "s", its possessive is made by an apostrophe "s" ('s).
e.g. Children's Palace, my father's car.
3. For a compound noun, an apostrophe "s" should be added to the end.
e.g. John has taken his *father-in-law's* position in the company.
4. If possessed by two nouns in common, an apostrophe "s" should be added to the second noun.
e.g. John and Mary's parents.
5. The noun group's possessive case can take the "'s" or "' " at the end of the group.
e.g. The woman next door's husband, Henry the Eighth's wife.
6. "'s" can also be used after the short form of large letters.
e.g. the PM's (prime minister's) secretary, the BBC's broadcast.

II) Use of possessive case

Possessive case can be used to express :

1. Of people, country, or animals.
e.g. China's bank, a cow's milk, my father's car.

Notes: Usually the noun after the possessive can be omitted to show a certain place.

e.g. Jack is now at the teacher's (the teacher's office).

Bill went to his uncle's last week (his uncle's home).

2. Of time expressions.

e.g. today's newspaper, last year's examination, a week's visit, three hours' walk or three-hour-walk, a winter's day or a winter day, but we don't say an autumn's day or a spring's day.

3. Of measurement.

e.g. a mile's distance, two ton's weight, 30 dollars' value.

In general, $n. \text{ of } n. = n.'s n.$

e.g. the earth's gravity = the gravity of the earth,

China's bank = bank of China,

the train's arrival = the arrival of the train.

Notes: 1) Compare $n.'s n.$ with $n. \text{ of } n.$

(1) The construction $n. \text{ of } n.$ is chiefly used with the non-living things.

e.g. the roof of the house (not the house's roof), the key of the car (not the car's key).

(2) This construction is also used with the nouns which is followed by a phrase or a clause.

e.g. This is the car of the man from abroad.

The young man stole the money of a lady whose husband is a policeman.

(3) For the name of a person or an animal, we usually use $n.'s n.$ form. Not $n. \text{ of } n.$ construction.

e.g. my father's car (not the car of my father), Tom's book (not the book of Tom).

2) Compare $n.'s n.$ with $n. + n.$

- (1) When we use $n . ' s n .$ the first $n .$ is like the subject while the second $n .$ is like the predicate or object.
 $n . ' s n . = A ' s B = A$ has B or A does sth. to B or A does B .

e.g. my uncle's room = my uncle has a room,
the teacher's report = the teacher made a report.

- (2) When we use $n . + n .$ form(= $A B$), generally B is like the subject but A (usually in singular form) is like an object or the object of a prep.

e.g. a school farm (The farm is in a school),
a book case (The case holds books),
a car driver (The driver drives the car),
our history teacher (The teacher teaches history).

- 3) Compare $n .$ of $n .$ with $n .$ of $n . ' s$.

- (1) $N .$ of $n . ' s$ construction is called double possessive.

In this construction,

a) "*Of*" shows the relation between the part and the whole.

b) The first noun can only be modified by $a (n)$, *what*, *which*, *this*, *that*, or numerals. It can't be modified by "*the*".

c) The second noun must be a person or an animal.

e.g. a friend of my father's (My father has many friends and this is one of them.)
two books of Mary's (Mary has a lot of books, and they are two of them.)

- (2) $N .$ of $n .$ construction is called of-possessive. In this construction, as is mentioned above.

a) "*Of*" shows possession.

b) The first noun is usually modified by "*the*".

c) The second noun is usually a non-living thing.

e.g. the students of our class, (The students belong to our class.)

- (3) For the nouns such as *picture*, *portrait*, *photo*, *statue etc.* both double and of-possessive can be used, but with different meanings.

e.g. a picture of me—the picture taken of me.

a picture of mine—the picture belongs to me.

- (4) For *opinion*, *criticism*, *judgement etc.* both possessives can be used:

Double possessive shows the relation between the subject and the predicate.

e.g. That is just an opinion of my teacher's.

(My teacher gave an opinion.)

Of-possessive shows the relation between the verb and the object.

e.g. That is just an opinion of my teacher.

(Sb. else gave the opinion about my teacher.)

Chapter Two Pronouns

Pronouns refer to things without naming them. They are generally classified as follows:

- I. personal
- II. possessive
- III. demonstrative
- IV. interrogative
- V. reflexive
- VI. reciprocal
- VII. relative
- VIII. indefinite

We are to discuss them one by one.

I. Personal pronouns

Subjective case: *I, you, we, he, she, it, we, you, they.*

Objective case: *me, you, us, him, her, it, us, you, them.*

Notes: 1) The proper order of several personal pron. are usually as follows:

Sing. *You, he and I.*

Pl. *We, you and they.*

2) They are used before a noun to emphasize the noun.

e.g. *We women have won liberation and freedom.*

3) Objective case can sometimes be used as the subject in the following situations:

(1) When it appears in a sentence alone.