

吴进业 李文芝 编著

# 英语文章 写作学

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IN THE THEORY  
AND SANDS  
OF ENGLISH  
COMPOSITION

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**英语文章写作学**

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## 内 容 提 要

《英语文章写作学》是专门研究英语文章写作理论、技巧、文体、风格及修辞手段的一本专著。它是研究生、继续教育生和大学本科英语专业高年级学生的教材用书,也是专门研究英语文章作者的必备参考书。

本书共分十章 约二十五万字,全英写成。它依次讲解了英语文章的谋篇形式与技巧;支配英语文章写作的诸因素及其相互间的关系;英语文章的成分和要素;英语文章的语言艺术及修辞手段;写英语文章应遵循的基本准则;英语文章的文体类型及其写作技巧;英语文章的语言、逻辑与思维的关系和如何撰写英语毕业论文等。

本书已经两位美国专家审阅并博得高度赞扬。

## Introduction

The Chinese students, from the first years of life, learn their mother tongue in the most favourable language situation. They hear it spoken and learn to speak it from morning till night and, what is more important, hear it always spoken in the genuine form, with the right pronunciation and intonation, with the correct application of words and sentence constructions. They learn their native language under all possible circumstances, always accompanied by the right gestures and facial expressions coming from their parents, brothers and sisters, nurses, and playmates, so that they are not conscious of any barrier of language. They can completely assimilate all the words and expressions which come to them in a fresh, ever-bubbling spring. All these favourable conditions are enough for the Chinese students to form the ingrained habits of speaking and writing the genuine Chinese language; much less they are particularly trained by their professional Chinese teachers at primary school, middle school, and college. There, they are purposefully taught how to speak and write the standard native language. During the long period of training, they have learned how to use right words, make effective sentences, link the sentences into good paragraphs and connect the paragraphs into a perfect Chinese paper. Once they form a habit, it comes natural to them.

What about their English, then? They begin to learn English at middle school, when they have almost come to adulthood. It is much harder for grown-ups to learn a new language than for children, let alone the adults who have got a complete mastery of their mother tongue. Chinese and English are two different languages in pronunciation, word spelling, and sentence structure. The Chinese students have grown used to hearing and producing a set of Chinese sounds, using Chinese words, constructing Chinese sentence patterns, and writing Chinese papers. When they are faced with the need of hearing and producing a set of English sounds, applying English words, making English sentences, and writing English essays, their ingrained habits of Chinese will get in their way. And the situation in which they learn English differs greatly from that in which they learn Chinese. In learning English the Chinese students have no such private teachers as parents, brothers and sisters, nurses, and playmates they have in learning their mother tongue. They only have each week a limited number of hours in English lessons. These are the disadvantages the Chinese students have in learning English.

It is more difficult for the Chinese students to learn to write English than to learn to speak it, but it is not impossible for them to learn writing it well. If only they are skilled at using their advantages in Chinese to overcome their disadvantages in English, they will surely be able to learn it well. A piece of English writing, like a piece of Chinese writing, includes both content and form. Differently, a Chinese paper is written in accordance with the habits of Chinese diction, the rules of Chinese grammar, and the principles of Chinese rhetoric, whereas an English essay is written

in accordance with the habits of English diction, the canons of English grammar, and the establishments of English rhetoric. Once the Chinese students have a good command of these skills of the English language, they will be able to write good English essays.

The book in your hand is designed to serve the senior-class students at university and the postgraduates, whose second language is English, and also to serve the graduates in English who need to make a further study of the language.

This book consists of two parts: Part One concerns the basic theories and skills of English composition; Part Two is about the types of composition. The first Part contains five chapters. Chapter One, *Artifices of Organizing an English Composition*, illustrates the three stages and six steps of finishing an English paper. Analogously it provides us with the key to a door and gives us the instructions of how to use the key when we come into the room. Unlocking the door we are faced with the contents of Chapter Two, *Relationships Between the Key Factors Dominating English Composition*, which explains how to handle the five relationships in the course of writing if we wish to write effectively. Now it is time for us to calm ourselves a little bit. We shall sit down at our desks and make a careful study of the third chapter, *Indispensable Elements of English Composition*. Most of the good English papers are composed of five elements. This chapter teaches us how to write well those elements that are necessary to the paper. Chapter Four discusses *Verbal Art of English Composition* which flavours the writing with good diction and figurative language, so as to make perfection in it still more perfect. The fifth chapter refers

to the *Fundamental Principles of English Composition*, which aims at letting us know some important rules of writing standardized English articles.

Now coming out of the room and keeping in mind what we have learned in the first five chapters, we are ready to start Part Two, *Types of English Composition*, which will be discussed in the next four chapters. Chapter Six, which deals with *Mechanics of Descriptive Writing*, informs us of how to make a clear picture or deep impression of a person, place, or object in words. The Seventh chapter, *Technique of Narrative Composition*, makes us clear about how to tell interesting stories, record events, or report incidents or news. Chapter Eight, *Kinds and Skills of Exposition* lets us know how to inform the readers of something or explain something to the readers. Chapter Nine, which skillfully treats *the Relationships Among Language, Logic, and Thinking in Argumentative Writing*, tells us how to convince the readers of the soundness of an opinion and move them into action. The last chapter, *Craft of Writing English Research Papers*, refers to the seven-step method of preparing a research paper.

We hope this book will provide a good basis for second-language classes on composition for the seniors on the college level and the postgraduates. It would also be the good material for the graduates in English who will use it in their continued efforts to improve their written English.

Here we are greatly indebted to all the books we have referred to in writing this one. But due to our limited knowledge, not a few deficiencies may still exist in the text. Any criticism or suggestion of the improvement of our material will always be ap-



preciated by the authors.

We acknowledge gratefully the help and support rendered by Henan College of Education and give many thanks to our American friends, Mr. and Mrs. Swathwood, for their valuable suggestion and careful revision of our draft.

# Contents

## PART ONE Basic Theories and Skills of English Composition

<b>Chapter One</b>	<b>Artifices of Organizing an English Composition</b>	
	.....	(2)
<b>Section I</b>	<b>Prewriting</b>	(4)
	A. Selecting and Limiting a Subject	(4)
	B. Finding Ideas	(7)
	C. Organizing Ideas	(9)
<b>Section II</b>	<b>Writing</b>	(10)
	A. Writing an Introduction	(11)
	B. Writing the Body	(13)
	1. Transitional Expressions	(14)
	2. Pronoun Reference	(15)
	3. Repetitive Expressions	(16)
	C. Writing the Transitional Paragraph	(16)
	D. Writing a Conclusion	(17)
<b>Section III</b>	<b>Rewriting</b>	(18)
<b>Chapter Two</b>	<b>Relationships Between Key Factors Dominating English Composition</b>	(20)
<b>Section I</b>	<b>Relationship Between Writer and Subject</b>	(20)

Section II	Relationship Between Writer and Readers ...	(21)
Section III	Relationship Between Purpose and Writing ...	(24)
Section IV	Relationship Between Writer and Writing ...	(25)
Section V	Relationship Between Content and Form.....	(28)
<b>Chapter Three</b>	<b>Indispensable Elements of English Composition</b>	
	.....	(33)
Section I	Thesis.....	(33)
Section II	Unity .....	(38)
Section III	Coherence .....	(40)
	A. Organization .....	(41)
	B. Transitions .....	(43)
Section IV	Paragraphs .....	(45)
	A. Types of Paragraphs .....	(45)
	1. Independent Paragraph.....	(45)
	2. Special Paragraph.....	(46)
	3. Amplifying Paragraph .....	(52)
	B. Paragraph Technique .....	(55)
	1. Working out a Specific Topic Sentence .....	(55)
	2. Maintaining Unity in a Body Paragraph .....	(64)
	3. Keeping Coherence of a Body Paragraph .....	(66)
	4. Developing a Body Paragraph Adequately .....	(83)
Section V	Effective Sentences .....	(92)
	A. Essential Characteristics of Effective Sentences	
	.....	(93)
	1. Sentence Completeness .....	(93)
	2. Sentence Conciseness .....	(99)
	3. Sentence Clearness.....	(103)
	4. Sentence Unity .....	(110)

	5. Sentence Coherence .....	(117)
	6. Sentence Emphasis .....	(130)
	7. Sentence Euphony .....	(144)
B.	Sentence Variety .....	(148)
	1. Avoiding Monotonous Sentences .....	(149)
	2. Appropriately Using Various Sentences .....	(155)
<b>Chapter Four</b>	<b>Verbal Art of English Composition .....</b>	<b>(167)</b>
<b>Section I</b>	<b>Effective Diction .....</b>	<b>(167)</b>
A.	Accurate Diction .....	(169)
	1. Denotation and Connotation of Words .....	(170)
	2. Abstract and Concrete Diction .....	(178)
	3. General and Specific Diction .....	(182)
B.	Appropriate Diction .....	(185)
	1. Formal and Informal Diction .....	(189)
	2. Colloquialisms .....	(191)
	3. Slang .....	(193)
	4. Jargon .....	(195)
C.	Diction to Be Avoided .....	(197)
	1. Clichés .....	(197)
	2. Localisms .....	(199)
	3. Vulgarisms .....	(201)
<b>Section II</b>	<b>Figurative Language .....</b>	<b>(202)</b>
A.	Simile .....	(206)
B.	Metaphor .....	(208)
C.	Analogy .....	(211)
D.	Personification .....	(214)
E.	Metonymy .....	(219)
F.	Synecdoche .....	(224)

G.	Allusion .....	(227)
H.	Antonomasia .....	(229)
I.	Hyperbole .....	(230)
J.	Understatement .....	(234)
K.	Euphemism .....	(235)
L.	Pun .....	(239)
M.	Syllepsis .....	(241)
N.	Zeugma .....	(243)
O.	Antithesis .....	(245)
P.	Epigram .....	(246)
Q.	Paradox .....	(247)
R.	Oxymoron .....	(249)
S.	Irony .....	(251)
T.	Innuendo .....	(253)
U.	Sarcasm .....	(254)
V.	Climax .....	(255)
W.	Anticlimax .....	(257)
X.	Transferred Epithet .....	(258)
Y.	Apostrophe .....	(259)
Z.	Vision .....	(260)
A <sub>1</sub> .	Alliteration .....	(261)
B <sub>1</sub> .	Onomatopoeia .....	(263)
C <sub>1</sub> .	Pleonasm .....	(264)
D <sub>1</sub> .	Interrogation .....	(265)

### Section III Tone ..... (266)

## Chapter Five Fundamental Principles of English Composition

..... (270)

### Section I Conceiving a Proper Scheme and Sticking to It

	.....	(275)
Section II	Making Paragraphs the Units of a Composition .....	(277)
Section III	Making Assertions in Positive Form .....	(280)
Section IV	Writing in the Active Voice .....	(282)
Section V	Writing in Concrete, Definite and Specific Language .....	(284)
Section VI	Bringing Related Words Together .....	(286)
Section VII	Avoiding a Series of Loose Sentences .....	(290)
Section VIII	Omitting Unnecessary Words .....	(292)
Section IX	Adhering to One Tense in Summaries .....	(295)
Section X	Using Clean English .....	(297)
A.	Cutting the Cackle .....	(298)
B.	Hitting the Nail on the Head .....	(301)

## PART TWO

### Types of English Composition

Chapter Six	Mechanics of Descriptive Writing.....	(308)
Section I	The Selection of Details.....	(310)
A.	Choosing Details to Support a General Statement of an Object .....	(311)
B.	Choosing Details to Show the Characteristics of an Object .....	(311)
C.	Choosing Details to Help Create a Clear Impression of an Object .....	(313)
Section II	The Use of Sensory Details .....	(314)
Section III	The Arrangement of Details .....	(316)

	A. Arranging Details from a Stationary Vantage Point .....	(317)
	B. Arranging Details from a Moving Vantage Point .....	(319)
	C. Arranging Details for Emphasis.....	(320)
Section IV	The Use of Specific Words and Figurative Language .....	(322)
<b>Chapter Seven</b>	<b>Technique of Narrative Composition .....</b>	<b>(325)</b>
Section I	The Organization of a Narrative .....	(326)
Section II	The Selection of Key Events .....	(330)
Section III	The Use of Narrative Details .....	(331)
Section IV	The Choice of an Effective Point of View ...	(333)
Section V	The Application of Requisite Dialogue .....	(337)
Section VI	The Proper Use of Descriptive Elements in Narration .....	(340)
<b>Chapter Eight</b>	<b>Kinds and Skills of Exposition .....</b>	<b>(342)</b>
Section I	The Organization of Exposition .....	(343)
Section II	Exposition of Classification and Analysis ...	(346)
Section III	Exposition of Process .....	(349)
Section IV	Exposition of Comparison and Contrast ...	(352)
Section V	Description and Narration in Exposition ...	(357)
Section VI	Analogy in Exposition .....	(359)
<b>Chapter Nine</b>	<b>Relationships Among Language, Logic, and Thinking in Argumentative Writing .....</b>	<b>(360)</b>
Section I	Proposition .....	(361)
	A. An Arguable Proposition .....	(362)
	B. Precise Expression of a Proposition .....	(364)
	C. Minor Propositions .....	(365)

Section	II	Evidence .....	(366)
	A.	Facts as Evidence .....	(367)
	B.	Theories as Evidence .....	(369)
Section	III	Reasoning .....	(371)
	A.	Deductive Reasoning .....	(371)
	B.	Inductive Reasoning .....	(374)
	C.	Clear Thinking .....	(377)
<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Ten</b>	<b>Craft of Writing English Research Papers ...</b>	<b>(382)</b>
Section	I	Choosing and Limiting a Subject .....	(384)
Section	II	Using the Library and Preparing a Working Bibliography .....	(387)
Section	III	Preparing a Preliminary Outline .....	(390)
Section	IV	Reading and Taking Notes .....	(391)
Section	V	Preparing the Final Outline .....	(394)
Section	VI	Writing the First Draft .....	(395)
Section	VII	Writing the Final Draft .....	(397)



# **PART ONE**

## **BASIC THEORIES AND SKILLS OF ENGLISH COMPOSITION**