

高级英语写作概论

An Introduction to Advanced English Writing

关世民◎著



苏州大学出版社



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前 言

写一本在编排体例和内容上都有些新意的《高级英语写作概论》是笔者多年的夙愿。笔者在高校常年教授英语专业本科英语写作课程,从英语基础写作课程到英语高级写作课程,使用的教材版本不下七八种,有国内的版本,也有国外的版本;有关国内外版本的英语写作参考书用了不下几十种。在使用这些教材和参考资料的过程中,人们不难发现有些不尽如人意的問題。一是教材或者专著在编排体例上存在极端现象。要么在编排体例上突出语言知识内容,作者刻意重视英语词汇、句型、语法和篇章的学习研究,使这些教材或者专著具有很强的语法、句法和词法学习及篇章赏析的编排特点;要么以写作机制为重点,突出写作技巧和方法,大多数英语写作教材和专著都属于这种类型,它们重视范文的结构分析、写作方法、表达策略和体裁模仿练习。二是基础写作和高级写作内容混淆,基础写作内容编排从词汇、句子、段落再到篇章,而相当多的高级写作内容编排也是如此!对于这些问题,我曾请教过一些英语教学同行和国内知名语言学学者,他们也认为基础写作和高级写作内容重叠较多。这说明国内英语写作教材和有关论著,从基础写作到高级写作尚没有一个比较清晰的分界,这种状况不利于英语写作教学和研究。

笔者认为有必要划分出基础写作和高级写作的内容、方法、要求和标准。基础英语写作教学目标应该把重点放在词法、句法和语法学习以及良好写作习惯的养成上,要求学生掌握句式的多样性和有效性、段落的衔接与连贯、各种体裁写作特点、语法通顺和句式道地以及常见的写作方法和技巧,着重培养学生的写作基本功。高级写作的学习目标应该指向写作措辞运用、篇章修辞分析、语篇衔接与连贯、写作体裁研

究、学术写作表达方法与高层次的写作技巧研究,要上升到修辞学、语义学、语用学和跨文化的界面来学习写作和实践写作。写作过程中要强调写作逻辑、格调和风格;语篇要力求简洁、明了、清晰和地道;要有读者意识;词汇和句式要有语体风格特点;词汇使用通常都是高级、规范的书面语词汇,根据语义和语用的表达需要,句子结构要凸显强调、多样、灵活特点。所有这些都应该是高级写作的本原要义。

本书共分十章。第一章是简介,概述高级英语写作的国内外研究趋势,综观国内外有关高级英语写作的最新研究成果和发展趋势,让读者对高级英语写作有一个总体的了解。

第二章阐述了用词的修辞策略,本章的创新点是从词汇学、语言学和语用学的视域来分析研究词汇的写作表征,归纳词汇的文体性、语境性使用特点。

第三章从语用的角度,从高级写作的层面论述了句子使用的优化原则,说明了一个观点:在基础写作中,通常被认为是正确、合理的句子在高级写作语境中可能会变得不那么合理了。例如,基础写作对句子的多样化和文体风格就没有高级写作要求严格,在基础写作中,经常使用第一或者第二人称代词作为句子的主语,但是这种表达方式在高级写作中就会被认为是不得体。

第四章阐述了语言修辞格在高级写作过程中的修饰、强调、说明、表意和阐释的不同作用。本书根据修辞格的各种修辞功能和语义、语用属性对常用的修辞格进行了分类。这种分类研究在国内外语修辞界应该说是一种首创,因为到目前为止,还没有哪个学者把众多的外语修辞格进行分类表述。本书把常见的英语修辞格按照有利于教学、有利于学生学习掌握、有利于修辞功能属性归类的原则分成三类:比较修辞类(comparison)、联想修辞类(association)和间接修辞类(indirection)。

第五章阐述了写作衔接机制。国内写作教学界通常把连接衔接、语法衔接和词汇衔接作为三大衔接机制。本书提出了目前国内最新的衔接机制研究设想,突破目前我国写作衔接理论的有关论述和分类方法,把连接衔接概念进行再分类,提出结构外逻辑衔接和结构内句法衔接两个概念。这样就有句子结构外的逻辑衔接和句子结构内的句法衔



接两种衔接方式。结构外逻辑衔接通常指句法结构外的衔接,这种衔接主要由连接性副词承担;结构内的句法衔接指的是句法结构本身内在的衔接,这种衔接主要由并列连词和连接代词、副词承担。这种研究有利于澄清连接衔接存在的一些模糊概念,有利于学习者学习理解。

第六章从语用角度阐述段落的形成原则和语用要求,对开篇段和结尾段从写作技巧方面单列论述。本书对段落形成的语篇关联和交际信息凸显的表征方式做了重点探讨,传统的段落形成研究重点放在段落形成的表现方式上,只解决了学生如何有效组织段落的方法和技巧问题,但是没有解决段落在整个篇章中的相互衔接和照应的问题,更没有解决重点信息凸显和段落之间的语境有效关联问题。本书着力从语用学视域帮助学习者建立段落形成的新理念。

第七章介绍了体裁写作前的准备条件。这一章应该说是本书中内容最丰富的章节,从不同体裁的写作特点介绍、论点形成的过程和原则要求、篇章组织的策略和写作的逻辑思维方式都有比较详细的论述。东西方的写作思维方式研究在本书中是一个亮点,许多同类书没有这部分内容,而我们外语学习者在写作过程中恰恰经常受到汉语思维方式的困扰。本书通过对比方式,简明地介绍了中西方写作思维的不同方式,可以让学习者受益匪浅。

第八章重点介绍四种体裁写作知识。同类专著或者教材只是依次呈现四种体裁的写作特点、方法和范文分析。这种学习方式从认知角度看,过于简单和零散,没有形成联系与对比,不利于学习者学习。本书依据认知建构学习理论,从对比分析方法入手,先分析四种体裁的写作特点和写作要求,让学习者先形成一个完整的体裁学习图式,然后再进入四种体裁学习。本书中的描写文、记叙文、说明文和议论文范文都选自世界经典名篇,可以让在学习不同体裁写作方法的同时,能够欣赏和领略世界经典名篇的魅力。

第九章针对中国学生普遍薄弱的论点提炼问题而单独成章。本书值得关注的一个亮点是引入了论点的形成与提炼,提出论点的确定不是一蹴而就的,而是经过深化主题分析和不断揭示主题的提炼过程。针对说明文和议论文对论点形成的不同要求,本章阐述了论点提炼方

法和原则,对关键词的提炼和选取也有所说明。

第十章专门表述参考文献制作内容,主要有学术界常用的 APA 格式、MLA 格式和 Turabian 格式。文献制作是我国外语学习者的一个难点,许多作者在论文写作和论文发表过程中经常误用或者混用这三种文献制作格式。本章每种格式的介绍说明都附有相应的范例给学习者参考。

本书的编排体例有别于同类书,每个章节分为 Objectives of the Chapter, Diagnosis of the Problematic Writing, Presentation of the Contents 和 Introspection of the Chapter 四个部分。第三部分 Presentation of the Contents 是全章的核心部分,分为若干节来阐述具体内容。

本书的创新之处主要有四方面。一是力求引领读者从语用学的视角看待高级写作,在论述词汇、句子、段落的过程中帮助学习者建立语用意识,从语用学视角审视、学习、理解写作内容和写作要求。二是把写作修辞格按照各自的修辞表征特点做了分类,将写作修辞格归纳整理出三大类:比较类、联想类和间接表述类,这种分类便于学习者学习、理解和运用。三是对语篇衔接机制中的连接机制按照语用和句法原理进行分类,提出句内衔接和句外衔接的新观点。四是书中内容设计在吸收国外先进写作教学研究成果的基础上,针对我国英语写作学习者的薄弱方面,突出语言内容分析、写作知识建构、写作方法指导和写作思维培养的有机结合。

本书适合英语专业高年级学生、研究生和有一定英语语言知识的英语写作爱好者学习使用,也可以作为英语教师教学参考用书。本书用全英文撰写,旨在为读者提供一个地道、真实的学习语境。读者可以在书中感受国内外一些比较权威的写作研究成果论述,也可以看到笔者多年研究英语写作的一些粗浅认识。希望本书能够让读者在学习英语写作过程中有耳目一新的感觉。

本书在写作过程中得到了许多学者、同事以及朋友的指导和帮助。笔者要特别感谢南京大学外国语学院英语系陈新仁教授对本书内容编排所提出的指导性和建设性意见;感谢笔者所在单位杨蕾达院长、颜明南书记、杨学前副院长多年来对笔者在英语写作教学和科研方面的关



心和支持;感谢笔者所在单位方志彪副院长对本书内容所作的修改建议;感谢在我院从事口语教学工作的爱尔兰籍英语教师 Patrick Quinn 对本书部分内容的语言表述所作的修改和润饰;感谢我的同事林云舟副教授对本书写作中的一些语法问题所提出的修改建议。

本书是笔者多年写作教学的感悟和反思集结而成的。由于笔者研究视野和构思设计难免存在某些局限,加之使用英文表述全书内容,肯定会出现各种各样的语言、逻辑和观点等问题。这些问题不论大小,都会给读者带来不便。为此,恳请品鉴本书的国内外读者朋友能够不吝赐教。诚心期待您的批评指正,愿以此与读者朋友们共勉!

关世民

2011 年 10 月 20 日

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Chapter One

Introduction

Advanced English writing, derived from but different to basic writing, specializes in the areas of cohesion, rhetoric and pragmatics which are seldom dealt with in basic writing. Advanced English writing is characterized more by pragmatics and discourse than literacy, and it realizes this through the use of cohesive mechanisms and rhetoric devices along with pragmatic representation. The design of this book differs to some extent from similar books in the field of advanced writing. First of all, advanced English writing, as we have defined it, is connected to the concept of rhetoric, the language used in advanced writing should not be restrained in the literal sense. Secondly, cohesion is an indispensable mechanism in advanced writing, for advanced writing requires much more formal and professional formats, i. e. the linking of sentences and paragraphs not only grammatically but also on a logical level. Thirdly, pragmatics has an important function in advanced writing because when we write, we create a kind of context in which we communicate our ideas to our audience who we should know well, according to Grice's (1975) principle of conversational inference which seeks to explain successful communication in terms of each side's mutual assumption of rationality and cooperation. Building on this work, Sperb and Wilson (1986) argue that readers construct meaning by comparing the information they find in a text with what they already know to establish meanings that are relevant.

This book proposes to establish a framework for investigation needed by students of advanced English writing at university level and for English



major or English postgraduate students and for those who wish to have a good foundation in advanced writing.

This chapter is divided into three parts. In the first part, the main content and highlights will be discussed. In the second part, the current situation with regard to advanced English writing will be generalized in order to inform readers of current thinking and development. Finally in the third part, the characteristics of advanced English writing are illustrated with the purpose of facilitating an understanding of the significance of advanced English writing.

I . Introduction to the Contents of the Book

Writing has always been a central topic in applied linguistics, and it remains an area of lively intellectual research and debate. The complex and multifaceted nature of writing seems constantly to evade adequate description and explanation, and many forms of enquiry have been summoned to help clarify both how writing works and how it should be best taught. One factor is the overarching significance of writing in all our lives, its multiple roles in social, professional and academic contexts and the importance it has in determining our life chances. The various purposes of writing, the increased complexity of its contexts of use and diverse backgrounds and needs of those wishing to learn it, all push the study of writing into a wider framework of analysis and understanding. This book is divided into four parts.

Basic writing is dealt with in Chapters Two and Three, which seek to expound rhetorical diction and sentence optimization, which are chiefly derived from the pragmatic and stylistic views. This section highlights the practicalities of choosing diction and optimizing sentence structures that



affect the quality of advanced writing.

Discourse mechanisms are discussed in Chapters Four, Five and Six, which concentrate respectively on rhetoric, cohesion and the pragmatic development of paragraphs. The three chapters are developed innovatively in classification and pragmatically in instruction. In Chapter Four, the figures of speech are classified into three types: comparison, association and indirection according to their rhetoric nature and figurative meanings. This classification is used to facilitate the learners' understanding and utilization of the rhetoric devices. Chapter Five deals mainly with cohesion from the aspects of connective cohesion, grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion. It is worth mentioning that in classifying connective cohesion, the innovational work lies in dividing connective cohesion into two types: logical connectors, which are defined as connectors representing the logical sense outside of sentence structures, for they can be used flexibly in any emphatic part of the sentence; and syntactical connectors, which are newly created in this book, indicate the connectors used inside the structures of the coordinate and subordinate sentences. Chapter Six, based on the previous two chapters, seeks to explain the development of paragraphs from a pragmatic standpoint. This chapter includes traditional knowledge of paragraph development and pragmatic views on optimizing the paragraphs with respect to the Cooperative Principle and Relevant Theory.

Chapters Seven and Eight focus on genre dealing with the usual topics of preparation and analysis of genres, i. e. description, narration, exposition and argumentation. In Chapter Seven, the salient topics are the development of thesis statements, features of four different genres and register, variation and thought patterns, which are necessary for learners to achieve authentic and fitting advanced writing. Chapter Eight presents some excerpts from world famous literature, which offers readers not only examples for imitation and study, but also for appreciation.

Chapters Nine and Ten include sections on mechanical devices for



documentation and modification. The contents of this section, while not as important as the previous sections based on academic knowledge, are quite indispensable for advanced writing, as any academic writing either for publishing or for academic conferences must consider documentation format. Chapter Nine introduces functions and types of abstract and relevant techniques to develop appropriate abstracts. Chapter Ten mainly deals with three styles of documentation: APA, LMA and Turabian styles. Examples of each style are provided for students to better understand the three styles of documentation.

II. The Current Situation of Advanced English Writing

Writing has become a core competency of the Internet which is continuously developing and has had such a huge economic impact worldwide. A consensus has been reached both at home and abroad that a student's fluency and writing ability will to some extent decide his or her employment and future career. So research and instruction of writing in a second language has become required core subjects, and research into writing in particular has been actively put into practice. The successes of writing research are many and have influenced writing instruction all over the world.

1. The Current Situation of English Writing Abroad

Western writing theories evolved from “product-oriented” to “process-oriented”, and then from “metacognition” to “social cognition”. Western scholars strove to explore and explain from both the subjective and objective perspectives the complexity of writing. Familiarizing us with the developing trend in writing will assist us in studying writing effectively and meaningfully.



(1) Objective perspective in writing

From the objective perspective, some of the most famous theories in writing, to name just a few, are the Scaffolding Theory, based on “the Zone of Proximal Development” by Vygotsky. It highlights that effective writing instruction can only be realized through assistance from the teachers, textbooks and writing examples, the teacher controls the elements of the task that are beyond the student’s ability and controls the learning stages. In this way, students can gradually learn to write freely without the assistance of scaffolding. Another influential theory is the Linguistic Register Theory in writing, which was developed from Halliday’s Functional Linguistics Theory. Linguistic Register Theory focuses on the three components of field, tenor and mode of discourse, and situational knowledge in writing. The field of register determines that writing relies on a common core vocabulary and core syntactic structures; the tenor of register restrains the use of the writing tone and attitude; the mode of register claims the difference in style from spoken to written.

And it is worth mentioning that the Genre Theory, raised by Vijay K. Bhatia (1993), dominates in writing in the following aspects: ① Genre is a sort of communicating event that can be discernible; ② Genre is a type of discourse with highly-conventionalized and distinct internal structures; ③ When constructing a discourse, it must be restrained within some genre; ④ The writer can convey his or her idea or intention through conventionalized genre. And what is more, other scholars have put forward writing models from the view of social recognition, and confirmed that the activity of writing is specialized as recycling, nonlinear procedures within the dynamics and interactive relationships between the writer, theme and audience.

(2) Subjective perspective in writing

From the subjective perspective, the famous American scholar, J. H. Flavell (1979), established the Metacognition Theory in writing, and