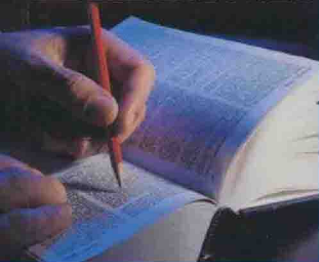


□ 黄 任 编著

21 世纪英语学习丛书



英语修辞学概论

(修订本)

English Rhetoric :
An Introduction (2nd Edition)

 上海外语教育出版社
外教社 SHANGHAI FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION PRESS
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初版 前言

1998年5月上海外国语大学汇编了《上海市高等教育自学考试英语专业简章、大纲》(暂用本),其中“英语修辞学”被列为选修课程之一,选用的参考教材有两本:一是我用中文写的《英语修辞与写作》(*English Rhetoric and Writing*)(上海外语教育出版社,1996年),二是这本用英语写的《英语修辞学概论》(*English Rhetoric: An Introduction*)。这两本书可以说是姊妹篇,虽侧重点有所不同,但都是在我为英语专业本科学生开“英语修辞学”课和编写教材的基础上完成的。内容安排上既勾画体系,又突出重点,结合实际需要列出若干专题,分题讲解,文字力求简明通畅,说理尽量深入浅出,并附练习及参考答案,以巩固和加强对专题内容的掌握,因此既可作英语专业本科学生使用的教材,也适合于广大英语修辞学爱好者自学之用。

这本教材分为3个单元。第1单元(I—V)对英语修辞学的研究对象、内容和方法加以扼要介绍,包括写作内容的必要成分、修辞艺术的3要素和修辞活动的3层次。这3个层次概括了从词语选用、句式变化直到组段谋篇的修辞活动全过程。第2单元(VI—XIII)把英语修辞活动中的一些重点问题列出来分别进行讨论,例如“指示意义(Denotation)与隐含意义(Connotation)”,“概括(Generalization)与详述(Specification)”等,共7个专题,每个专题包含两个侧面,它们之间有区别,又有联系,正确把握这些相互关系,对学习和使用修辞至关重要。这个单元是本书的重点和主要内容所在。第3单元(XIV—XVI)属于附录,供读者参考。

英语修辞学是一门古老的学科,具有长期的优秀传统,但同时它又是一门现实的学科,与我们的日常生活关系十分密切。例如我们经常所说的“五讲四美”中的“语言美”就同修辞学有关。又如《科技英语学习》1997年第6期在报道首届全国高校英语辩论赛消息时发表了两位优胜者的体会文章,分别题为“逻辑即力量”和“燃起感情的火炬”,这是应用传统修辞艺术的成功实例,因为“逻辑”和“情感”正是传统修辞艺术3要素中的两个要

素。当前我国的英语修辞研究主要在下述3个方面展开:一是继续对传统修辞学和现代修辞学进行研究,继承和发扬英语修辞学的优良传统,同时吸收现代修辞学的新观念、新语料和新方法,改进和提高我们的研究和教学;二是把英语修辞同汉语修辞加以对比研究,既推动中外文化交流,又利用汉语优势促进英语修辞研究;三是把英语修辞学同其他学科联系起来,如心理学与修辞学、语用学与修辞学、交际策略与修辞学等,从而引出种种跨学科的新课题和新成果。

黄任
1996年

Editor's Note to the 2nd Edition

Ever since its publication in August 1999, the present book has been reprinted each year, bringing me encouragement and, at the same time, uneasiness. I have to follow the late Dr. Nida's advice to make content changes as well as updating several linguistic points. Adding useful information from the most recent books and suggestions sent to me by the late Dr. Eve Malo, Dr. Carol Prorok and Dr. Neil Cosgrove are significant improvements. Moreover, I have to revise the book according to suggestions and criticisms from my students, colleagues and other readers, in addition to my own studies and considerations.

Thanks must be extended to Shanghai Jue Xian Cultural Exchange Company, Ltd. for its help with typing and proof reading.

I have finally completed the revision that preserves the basic system and content of English rhetoric from the first edition, while making the following improvements:

First of all, the six figures of speech are taken from the figurative use of language in Unit 12 into Unit 15, where over 40 common figures are briefly introduced. These figures can be viewed as the colorful leaves of the rhetorical tree.

Secondly, Unit 13 is added for the three inartistic criteria in English rhetoric, which complements Unit 2 for the three artistic criteria, though they are used at different levels. Another addition is Appendix II: A Table of Rhetorical Terms in English and Chinese. This bilingual table is arranged mainly to help the students reduce difficulties in terminology.

Thirdly, some of the general introductions are enriched, many of the examples are updated, and most of the exercises are rearranged or replaced so as to make them more interesting and more practical for learning.

HUANG Ren
November 28, 2012

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修辞学概论》(English Rhetoric: An Introduction)。这两本书可以供教师做教参, 供学生自修之用, 但都是为我校英语专业本科生使用“英语修辞学”课程编写教材的基础上完成的。内容安排上采用由浅入深、由点到面、由面到点的体系, 又突出重点, 结合实际课程列出若干专题, 分题讲解, 文字力求简明易懂, 道理尽量深入浅出, 并附练习及思考题, 以期能引起读者对英语修辞学课程的兴趣, 因此既可作教师专业本科学生使用的教材, 也适合于广大英语爱好者做修辞学自修之用。

这本书共分为 3 个单元, 第 1 单元(I—V)对英语修辞学的研究历史、内容和方法加以概要介绍, 包括写作内容的必要成分、修辞艺术的主要策略和修辞活动的 3 层次。这 3 个层次概括了从词汇选词、句式变化直到组织篇章的修辞活动全过程。第 2 单元(VI—XIII)把英语修辞活动中的一些重点问题列出来分别进行探讨, 例如“指示意义(Deixis)与暗示意义(Connotation)”, “概括(Generalization)与详述(Specification)”等, 共 7 个专题, 每个专题包含两个侧面, 它们之间有区别, 又有联系, 正确把握这些相互关系, 对学习和使用修辞至关重要。这个单元是本书的重点和主要内容所在。第 3 单元(XIV—XVI)属于附录, 供读者参考。

英语修辞学是一门古老的学科, 具有长期的优秀传统, 但同时它又是一门现实的学科, 与我们的日常生活关系十分密切。例如我们经常所谈的“工讲究美”中的“语言美”就同修辞学有关。又如《科技英语学习》1997 年第 6 期在报道首届全国高校英语理论研讨会时发表了两位优秀作者的体会文章, 分别题为“逻辑理力美”和“情感感情的光艳”, 这是应用传统修辞艺术的成功实例, 因为“逻辑”和“情感”正是传统修辞艺术 3 要素中的两个要

Unit

1

Goals for Studying Rhetoric

1.1 Modern rhetoric and rhetorical system

A) Origin of modern rhetoric

Rhetoric originated in speaking. Aristotle, in the 4th century BC, first defined rhetoric as the art of persuasion by means of arguments. In Athens, the center of western civilization, great orators, by using rhetoric, gained a following and political power. John Locke, an English philosopher of the late 17th century, described Rhetoric as “the science of oratory” or “the art of speaking with propriety, elegance, and force”. All this explains why the word “rhetoric” refers to “speaking” in European languages as Greek, Latin, French, Spanish, Italian, etc.

With the development of the modern printing industry in the 19th century, rhetoric came to be understood as the ability to write or speak well, usually in an ornate, showy manner. Today there are still people who equate rhetoric with the adoption of unusual stylistic devices or the use of special figures of speech in speech or writing.

At present, however, with the quickened tempo of life, the increased stress on efficiency and efficacy, and the ascendancy of the idea that languages are means of communication, more and more people have come to regard rhetoric as the art of effective communication. Furthermore, rhetoric tends to be connected more with writing than with speech, and more with prose writing than with verse.

B) Contents of modern rhetoric

1. There are two main rhetorical trends in contemporary western culture:

The first trend refers to “stylistics”, which is associated with the various registers, e.g. scientific and technical writing, business writing and journalism; or the stylistic variants of literary language, including personal style, and styles of different times and schools.

The second trend refers to “rhetoric”, which is chiefly concerned with techniques of how to influence the audience: the functions and effects of different language symbols in communication activities; measures to promote mutual understanding and to affect the emotions of the audience; skills to handle persuasion and arguments as described in the “three artistic criteria” (Unit 2), the “three inartistic criteria” (Unit 13) and the “three levels of rhetorical operations.” (Unit 3 – Unit 5).

2. Specifically speaking, rhetoric consists of two basic aspects:

The first is “communicative rhetoric”, which emphasizes the choice of words and phrases, the selection of sentence patterns, organizing paragraphs and whole pieces of writing in such a way that ideas are expressed most clearly, most accurately and most appropriately so as to achieve the best results in communication.

The second is “aesthetic rhetoric”, which stresses the vividness and gracefulness in expressing one’s ideas by the artistic use of figures of speech so as to increase the power and gracefulness of one’s speech or writing.

C) The rhetorical system of the present book

1. The rhetorical system of the present book can be regarded as an integration of “communicative rhetoric” and “aesthetic rhetoric”. If we compare this system with a tree, the three levels of rhetorical operations are the trunk while the others are branches and leaves, including the artistic and inartistic criteria, meanings of expressions (e.g. aspects of word meanings, denotation and connotation,

generalization and specification, economy and clarity, accuracy and vagueness, unity and coherence, literal and figurative uses, etc.), and figures of speech, etc.

2. As a linguistic discipline, rhetoric may have something here or there that one can find overlapping as in other related branches of learning; however, each discipline has its own features and range of studies, or its own basic system. In this respect, two extremes should be guarded against: one is to extend the range of rhetorical studies, i.e. to place the content of other disciplines into rhetorical studies, and the other is to narrow down the rhetorical system, e.g. to limit the range of rhetorical studies within figures of speech, or even misunderstand rhetoric by describing it as “adornment of the language”.

The practical value of rhetoric lies in helping make one’s speech or writing appropriate and effective so as to achieve the most desirable result in communication.

1.2 The three fundamental elements in writing

- A) According to Dorothy Margaret Guinn and Daniel Marder, co-authors of *Spectrum of Rhetoric*, the three fundamental elements in writing are fact, reason, and feeling. Any piece of written discourse should contain a combination of these elements. A technical report may be dominated by facts, though reason and feeling will also be found; whereas a letter to a close friend may be charged with feeling, but reason and fact will appear as well. Knowing how these elements combine helps writers to shape, elaborate, and refine their own expression so that they will be able to communicate with desirable effects.
- B) In practice, problems may still arise in dealing with these three elements in

an appropriate way. On the one hand, personal viewpoints and experiences may affect the writer's interpretation of the situation and on the other hand, the authorities concerned will always exert their influence on the writers. For example, many people in the west like to talk about their "freedom" in the case of reporting, but in fact there is no complete freedom of speech, otherwise the two American correspondents, Tom Kartin and Denis Marck, would not have been blamed and fired because of their criticism against President Bush for his negligence of duty in the "9·11" terrorist attack.

Nevertheless, many journalists in the west have a strong sense of obligation and they have often managed to tell people a lot about the truth. If you open the April 26, 1999 issue of *Newsweek*, you will find the headline on the front top page: "THE WAR IN KOSOVO: COLLATERAL DAMAGE", and on its first page, what strikes you most is a special report as "top of the week" news accompanied by a large picture entitled "Casualties of war":

Tragically, however, many of the people on the road that day were not military targets. An 80-year-old Albanian refugee, Dibran Asmani, was riding in one of the tractors. "Suddenly there was a big blast, and I started running," he told reporters later. "All I could think was, 'My God, NATO is bombing us.' I ran through the field like a mouse." Two tractors jammed with refugees were blown apart, killing at least 75 people, the Serbs said. It was the second such slaughter, NATO hit a civilian train on April 12 ...

(*News Week*, April 26, 1999)

The special report was written by several correspondents as a narrative interspersed with comments, in which a reader can find a fine combination of the three elements: The whole piece of reporting demonstrates the stern reality of war which they had witnessed on the battlefield [fact], imbued with sympathy for the suffering local people [feeling], and it is clear that in spite of the NATO officials' deliberate use of the phrase "collateral damage", "NATO couldn't get its own story straight," and "in the end NATO hurt its credibility far more than Milosevic did." [reason]

1.3 Goals for studying rhetoric

A) To be effective in verbal communication is of primary importance. As American linguists Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren write in their book *Modern Rhetoric*: “Rhetoric is the art of using language effectively.” The rhetorical devices for choosing words and phrases, seeking sentence varieties and organizing paragraphs and complete essays are not studied for their own sake but because they contribute to the effective use of language. The basic requirement for being effective is to use fewer words to accomplish one’s communicative purpose. Compare the following two sentences:

1. The sports event began its commencement with the fine performance of 1000 children.
2. The sports event started with the splendid group calisthenics of 1000 children.

As the two sentences refer to the same event, it is obvious that the second sentence is more effective because it is concise and specific: one word (“started”) is used for three (“began its commencement”), and specific reference (“group calisthenics”) for the more abstract reference (“performance”). Besides, the adjective “fine” in the first sentence is not so impressive as “splendid” in the second, which can be demonstrated by the example in *Webster’s Dictionary of Synonyms*: “a fine — yea, even a splendid room, of great height, and carved grandeur”.

B) Rhetoric is closely related to grammar. To be grammatically correct is fundamental to writing, but that is not enough. Basic rhetorical requirements must also be met. Francis Christensen, an American-born French rhetorician, once said:

Grammar maps out the possible; rhetoric narrows the possible down to the desirable and effective.

Now examine the following sentences:

1. The middle-class American growing up in the United States feels

he has a right to have his own room, or at least part of room.

2. The middle-class American growing up in the United States feels he has a right to have his own room, or at least he has a right to have part of a room.
3. The middle-class American growing up in the United States feels it is his right to have his own room, or at least using part of a room.
4. The middle-class American growing up in the United States feels he has a right to have his own room, or at least part of a room.

Sentence (1) is incorrect in grammar, because the word “room” in the sentence is used as a countable noun and it should be preceded by a determiner (as the “a” in the fourth sentence); both (2) and (3) are correct sentences so far as grammar is concerned, but they may not be regarded as good sentences in rhetoric: (2) is wordy and the unnecessary repetition of “he has a right to have” can be deleted, and (3) is not acceptable because it contains a “faulty parallel structure” — the infinitive (to have) and the -ing participle (using) forms are inconsistent. Only the last sentence is comparatively satisfactory in both grammar and rhetoric.

C) China has a long tradition in rhetorical studies, and at present, our rhetorical research is centered mainly in the following three aspects:

One is to go on studying the traditional and modern rhetoric schools and carry forward the fine traditions while assimilating new concepts, new ideas and new methodologies so as to improve the research and teaching of English rhetoric.

Another is to make a comparative study of English rhetoric and Chinese rhetoric, which will not only promote international exchanges but also further our studies of English rhetoric by special attention being paid to our mother tongue.

And the third is to combine the study of English rhetoric with a study of other aspects of English and even other branches of learning. This is a new approach, and it often results in multidisciplinary research topics, e.g. rhetoric in discourse, psycho-rhetoric, rhetorical translation, pragmatic rhetoric, rhetoric in journalism, and rhetoric in public