

ANALYSIS OF MISTAKES IN STUDENTS' LETTERS

学生英文信错误分析

上海译文出版社

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前 言

本书共收集了二十五封信，分为二十五课。这些信都是用英语写的，内容涉及工作、学习、生活、娱乐等各个方面。

每课包括情景、原信、改错、改正后的信，附有汉语译文。

属于语法、用词、句子结构、词序等方面的错误，均予以改正。另外有些地方，虽然不是错误，但表达方法欠妥或不合英语习惯，也作了纠正。

本书适用于高中学生、高等院校一二年级学生、中学教师及自学英语的同志。

欢迎读者提出改进意见。

作 者

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1. SITUATION

A university student from Shanghai spends her summer holidays in Qingdao. There she meets an old professor with whom she strikes up an acquaintance. On her return home, she writes him about her studies.

2. ORIGINAL LETTER

August 22, 1981

Dear Professor,

I'm writing to you¹ from Shanghai. After visiting three cities, I've arrived² in Shanghai. I had a very good time during the summer holidays. I've seen³ a lot of beautiful scenery. But the most important thing that happened to me⁴ on the holidays⁵ was meeting many famous professors. Especially, I had the honour to meet you⁶. I know you are a veteran professor⁷. So now I want to tell you something about my study⁸ in the past year, and hope⁹ you to correct my way of studying¹⁰.

I like reading very much. I always read¹¹ simplified English books¹² in my spare time. I've read "Jane Eyre", "Oliver Twist", "David Copperfield" and other books by Dickens¹³. Although I've read these books, I don't think I've made a rapid progress¹⁴. Maybe I read them too fast.¹⁵ Usually I read a book within a day¹⁶. I really

don't know how to read books extensively¹⁷. Should I write something after I go through with the book¹⁸? Please give me your advise¹⁹. Would you please recommend me²⁰ some books²¹ which are very important and necessary for me to read²²?

I still quite remember²³ you gave me a test²⁴ at dinner time that day in Qingdao. I don't think I passed. Because²⁵ I didn't pay enough attention to my spoken English before. That's the reason why I speak English so unfluently²⁶ and make mistakes as soon as I open my mouth. Your test made me know²⁷ how poor my spoken English was²⁸. From now on I must speak English as much as possible. I want to try my best to speak English fluently²⁹, correctly and with ease³⁰ in a short time. When I meet you next time, you'll be surprised to see I've made a good progress. Do you believe me?³¹

I have lots of things to tell you, but I know you are very busy, so will say good-bye for now.

Best wishes.

Your student

Liu Ya-qing

My family address³² is on the envelope.

My father asked³³ to be remembered to you.

<情景>

一位上海的大学生在青岛度暑假时结识了一位老教授。回上海之后，她写信告诉老教授她的学习情况。

〈原 信〉

敬爱的教授：

我正从上海给您写这封信。游览了三个城市之后，我回到上海。暑假过得很愉快。观赏了许多优美景色。但更重要的是我遇到了很多知名教授，特别是荣幸地见到您。我知道您是位富有经验的老教授，所以想向您汇报一下过去一年的学习情况，并希望您能帮助我改进学习方法。

我酷爱读书。课余时间都用在阅读简易英语读物上。我已看完《简·爱》、《奥列佛·特维斯特》、《大卫·科波菲尔》以及其他一些狄更斯的著作。读完这些书，我仍觉进步不快。也许我读得太快？我大都是一天看一本。我真不知道怎样搞泛读才好。看完书后，是否该写点读后感？请指教。再者您能给我推荐一些重要著作和必读作品吗？

我仍然清楚地记着，在青岛，那天吃晚饭时，您考了我一下。那次测试，我觉得自己不能算及格。因为我以前不重视英语口语，所以说得很不流利，一开口就出错。您的测验使我意识到我的口语太差。从今以后，我要尽可能多说英语，尽最大努力在短时间内把英语讲得流利、正确。下次再见到您时，您会吃惊地发现我取得了巨大的进步。您相信我吗？

我有很多事要告诉您。可我知道您很忙，只好就此止笔。

此致

敬礼!

您的学生

刘亚庆

一九八一年八月二十二日

我家地址在信封上。

父亲嘱笔向您问好。

3. CORRECTIONS

1. When "write" means to produce and send a letter to someone the preposition "to" is often omitted.
2. The use of the verb "arrived" instead of "returned" might be interpreted as indicating that Shanghai was the fourth city visited by the author of the letter.
3. It would be better to use the simple past here, as reference in this sentence is made to the summer holidays.
4. "happen to someone" more often implies something unpleasant or unfortunate. It would be preferable to use the preposition "with" in this context.
5. We usually say "during the holidays" or "in the holidays", rather than "on the holidays".
6. This sentence sounds awkward. "especially" is as a rule used to modify verbs, adjectives or other adverbs: *The criticism is especially deserved in this case/ I don't especially like coffee.* It would be better to reconstruct this sentence, for example: *I was especially honoured to meet you.*
7. "veteran" is more often used when referring to a person who has had long experience in some form of activity, especially in wars or military service: a

- veteran officer/ a veteran of the two World Wars.
8. The plural number would be better here, because the author is obviously referring here to different subjects.
 9. Please pay attention to the use of the verb "hope". This verb may have the infinitive as its object: I hope *to visit* Beijing next month, or the simple future in the subordinate clause when the subjects of the main clause and the subordinate clause are not one and the same person: We hope he *will come* to see us tomorrow.
 10. It might be better to say "methods of study".
 11. "Always" sounds too categorical: there are surely times when the author of the letter does other things? "often" would probably be nearer to the truth.
 12. It is usual to call these books "simplified readers".
 13. This may be understood as implying that the three books mentioned are all by Dickens, including "Jane Eyre" the author of which actually is Charlotte Bronte.
 14. The noun "progress" is as a rule used without an indefinite article.
 15. The author here expresses an uncertainty, a doubt. It would be better to use the question mark.
 16. When emphasizing the quantity "one", this word is preferable to the article "a".
 17. The author here apparently refers to a university subject known commonly as "extensive reading". It might be better to say: I don't know how to do my extensive reading.

18. The indefinite article, meaning "any", would be preferable here.
19. A common spelling mistake. The same mistake often occurs in: practice (n.) — practise (v.), device (n.) — devise (v.) and other similar words.
20. "recommend" something / someone *to* someone: Can you recommend a good dictionary *to me*?
21. The word "book" occurs in this paragraph no less than seven times. It would be advisable to use some synonyms here to avoid redundancy: stories, novels, works, etc.
22. An awkward sentence. It would be better to say: ... which *it would be important and necessary for me to* read.
23. The adverb "quite" (= completely, perfectly) is seldom used with verbs. It might be preferable to use "clearly" here in its place.
24. Does the author of the letter mean here that she still remembers the test itself or the fact that she was given a test? Probably the former. If so, it would be better to say: ... remember the test you gave me...
25. Clauses of reason or cause with "because" as a rule follow the main clause: We helped him because he needed it/ I can't come because I'll be busy tomorrow.
26. An awkward word. It would be preferable to use a positive adverb here (freely, smoothly), negating the verb "speak": That's why I *don't* speak English so freely (smoothly).
27. "to know" means "to be *already* possessed of facts". When it is necessary to indicate that one did not

know something previously, but has the knowledge now, it is better to use the words: realize, learn, etc.

28. Was before, but is not now? It would be better to use the present tense here.

29. The author of the letter undoubtedly means that she wants to try her best *to learn* to speak English fluently.

30. "with ease" has the same meaning as "fluently", and is therefore redundant here.

31. It is not clear what the author of the letter wants the addressee to believe: that he will be surprised, or that she will have made good progress by the time she meets him next time.

32. The place where one lives is called "*home address*".

33. The present tense (asks) or the present perfect (has asked) would be preferable here.

〈改 错〉

1. 如果 "write" 表达 "给某人写信" 这一意思时, 介词 "to" 经常省略。

2. 这里应该用 "returned", 而不用 "arrived"。用 "arrived" 会使人误解为上海是写信人游览的第四个城市。

3. 因为这句话中的事发生在暑假之中, 所以这里最好用一般过去时。

4. "happen to someone" 常常指不愉快或不幸的事。根据上下文, 这里最好用介词 "with"。

5. 我们一般说 "*during the holidays*" 或 "*in the holidays*", 而不说 "*on the holidays*"。

6. 句子不顺。 "especially" 一般用来修饰动词、形容词或其他

副词。如: The criticism is especially deserved in this case.
I don't especially like coffee.

这个句子最好能重新安排一下。可以说: I was especially honoured to meet you.

7. “veteran” 常用来指长期从事某一活动而富有经验的人, 特别是在战争和军事活动方面。如, a veteran officer, a veteran of the two World Wars.
8. 这里最好用复数。很明显写信人这里是指各种不同的科目。
9. 注意动词 “hope” 的用法。“hope” 可有不定式作宾语。如 I hope to visit Beijing next month. 也可有宾语从句, 从句中的主语和主句主语可以不是同一人或物。从句中用一般将来时。如 We hope he will come to see us tomorrow.
10. 最好说: “methods of study”
11. “always” 听起来太绝对。写信者肯定要用些时间干其他事情。“often” 更合乎实际。
12. 这类书籍一般称为 “easy readers” (简易读物)。
13. 这句话容易让人误解为这三本书(包括《简·爱》)都是狄更斯的作品, 而《简·爱》的作者是夏洛蒂·勃朗特。
14. 名词 “progress” 前一般不加不定冠词。
15. 写信者在这里表达的是一种猜测、怀疑, 所以用问号更合适。
16. 强调数量时, 用 “one” 比用 “a” 好。
17. 很明显, 写信者在这里指的是大学里的 “泛读” 课。最好说: I don't know how to do my extensive reading.
18. 这里是泛指, 用不定冠词好。
19. 常见拼写错误。这种错误常出在 practice (n.)——practise (v.) device (n.)——devise (v.) 这类词上。
20. “recommend” something / someone / to someone. 如: Can you recommend a good dictionary to me?
21. “book” 一词在本段中出现过七次之多。为避免重复, 此处换用其他一些同义词为好, 如: stories, novels, works, etc.
22. 拙句。最好说: ... which it would be important and necessary for

me to read.

23. 副词 “quite” (= completely, perfectly) 很少和动词连用。这里最好用 clearly 代替。
24. 写信者想说她仍然记得那次测验，还是记得她被测验这件事？很可能是前者。如果是这样，则最好说：... remember the test you gave me...
25. 以 “because” 引起的原因状语从句，常常在主句之后。如：We helped him because he needed it. I can't come because I'll be busy tomorrow.
26. 该词不妥。这里最好用肯定的副词 (freely, smoothly等)，否定该动词 “speak”：That's why I don't speak English so freely (smoothly).
27. “know” 意为 “已经知道”。当需要表达 “以前不知道，而现在才知道” 这一意思时，最好用：realize, learn 等。
28. 过去差，现在就不差了吗？这里最好用一般现在时。
29. 毫无疑问，写信人的意思是，She wants to try her best to learn to speak English fluently.
30. “with ease” 和 “fluently” 意义相同，在这里多余。
31. 写信者要让收信者相信什么？不清楚。是相信收信者自己会大吃一惊？还是相信写信者在下次会面时会取得巨大进步？
32. 家庭地址在英语中称为 “home address”
33. 这里最好用一般现在时或现在完成时。

2

1. SITUATION

During a business visit to Beijing Jin suffered a heart attack and had to stay in hospital for several weeks. When he felt better, he helped some of the doctors and nurses in the ward with their English studies. One of the nurses now writes to inquire after Jin's health and to tell him about her studies.

2. ORIGINAL LETTER

December 18, 1981

Dear Teacher Jin¹,

Please forgive me. I haven't written letters to you² since you left Beijing³. I'm afraid I haven't made any progress in my English studies. Although I make the best use of my time, I always feel that the result⁴ is unsatisfied⁵. Probably I have no good methods of learning.

I often remember⁶ the days that you lived⁷ in the hospital⁸. I hope your health is getting better and better. You must pay attention to your health⁹ and rest more. The stronger¹⁰ your health is, the more you can contribute¹¹. Am I right?

Christmas is coming soon. I don't know if you celebrate it. I think that to you Christmas is more interested¹² than the Spring Festival.

The climate¹³ in Beijing is very cold now. The te-

temperature is below zero. It is windy and dusty. I think that the climate in Jinan is warmer than in Beijing and has less wind and dust¹⁴.

I hope that you will come to Beijing again and I can get your help continuously¹⁵.

As you know, that¹⁶ my English level is very poor¹⁷, so if there are mistakes in this letter, please correct it¹⁸.

Best regards.

Your faithful student¹⁹,
Li Hou-Ming²⁰

〈情景〉

在京出差期间，金教授患心脏病，住院几周。病情好转后，他在病房帮助大夫和护士学英语。后来一位护士写信询问金教授的健康状况并谈及自己的学习。

〈原信〉

敬爱的金老师：

从您离京之后，我一直没给您去信，请原谅。我觉得自己在英语学习方面毫无进步。尽管我充分利用了时间，但总觉得结果不理想，也许是学习方法不对。

我常常回想起您住院的日子。希望您身体越来越好。您要注意身体，多多休息。您越健康，所做的贡献就越大。我说得对吗？

圣诞节快到了，不知您是否庆祝圣诞节，但我想对