

# 留美 大学生 英语 作文点评

★编著 蔡基刚



上海交通大学出版社

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## 内 容 提 要

本书旨在对英语写作教学从应试教学到素质教育转变起抛砖引玉的作用。全书收集了在美国留学的世界各国大学生所写的 49 篇英语作文,内容涉及自己的童年,丰富的校园生活,留美的生活和工作,指点江山,评论社会热点问题。文章都写得真挚感人,给人以深刻的印象。

# 前 言

这次出国进修,有机会拜读了美国大学生的作文。我特别留意各国留学生,也即各国到美国大学读书的学生的作文。因为,英语对他们来说,就如同我们中国大学生一样,属于第二语言,都是外国语,因此,可以作些比较。读他们的作文,可以说使我眼界大开,一种清新的气息扑面而来。

并不是说他们的语言功底和写作技巧一定比国内我们大学生高多少。但他们对写作主题的选择,文章的立意,思想的表达方面明显地胜过我们的大学生。很长一段时间来,在我国大学英语写作领域里流行着一种观点:中国人学英语写作,主要是看语言,看作文技巧,内容不是主要的。在这种思想指导下,不仅在考试中,而且在给学生平时的作文练习中,也都是命题作文。词数、题目,甚至文章里写什么(如给内容提纲)都作了很细的规定。这样,就框死了学生,写出来的作文必然是千篇一律,甚至编造情节,说假话,出现了可怕的虚假的倾向。

我们不是不要讲写作技巧,不是不要强调语言的基本功。但是,忽视了内容,忽视了思想,我们的写作技巧就无法很好地发挥,我们的语言就无法很好地提高。道理很简单,词数、体裁、结构,甚至内容都规定死的,我只要背上几句开头、正文、结尾的句型,我只要掌握几个表达法,就可以以不变应万变,就可对付所有这类作文,那还有什么必要去掌握更丰富的语言表达法呢?

这里就牵涉到一个重大问题:我们学习英语写作是为了什么?是为了通过考试(如通过四六级考试、托福考试)?还是为了表达思想,为了交流?显然,我们现在大学英语写作的教和学都已走入了误区。为了应付考试而学习英语写作,其结果必然是空话、套话、假话连篇,必然是无病呻吟,必然是缺乏真情实感。而一旦摆脱了考试的“紧箍咒”,出现在面前的将是广阔灿烂的前景。读读这49篇我们的同龄人,我们同样学习英语的大学生写的作文,不管是写自

己的童年,丰富的校园生活,还是写留美的生活和工作,或指点江山,评论社会热点问题,都写得真挚感人,给人以深刻的印象。在这49篇的作文中,中国留学生写的作文更是光彩夺目。无怪乎当我把这些作文介绍给我的复旦大学学生时,他们都是爱不释手,有的把它们抄录下来,有的不禁动手翻译起来(本书译文就是他们提供的)。这里就产生一个问题,他们在问,我也在想:同样是中国大学生,为什么在国内写出来的作文平淡如水,套话连篇,而一到国外,写出来的作文不仅感情真挚,而且语言也发挥了最佳水平?这难道还不说明问题吗?

我们大学英语正处在一个从应试教学到素质教育的转变时期。本文中收集的作文,从体裁、从内容上来说可能不完全适合四、六级考试中的命题作文,但是这就是作文,这就是原来意义上的作文,这就是我们学习大学英语写作的努力方向。

**蔡基刚**

1998年1月

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## 童 年

每个人都有自己的童年，或幸福美好的，或痛苦悲惨的，都会给自己的一生留下不可磨灭的印象。童年的事中哪一件最值得写？怎样写？下面四篇文章能给我们一些启示。那些文章都是作者截取童年生活中的一个片断，或揭示人生中的一个哲理，或反映了一个重大的社会问题，把自己的童年与整个人生、整个社会联系起来，其立意令人赞叹。



# What Is It Like to Have an Empty Stomach?

*Youssef Rami*

1 Ramadan is the holiest month in the Muslim year. In fact, it's the fourth pillar of Islam. All adult Muslims must fast from dawn to sunset every day of Ramadan. This means abstaining from eating, drinking, smoking, and conjugal relations during the hours of fasting. Travelers, the sick, and pregnant women can defer fasting during Ramadan and make up for it later. Fasting in a hot climate such as Morocco is quite difficult. Nevertheless, those who have to fast have developed a great deal of patience and self-control.

2 Going back to my childhood's best memories, I still recall my first day of fasting when I was only six years old. Of course, I was not supposed to fast since most children usually start fasting at the age of thirteen; however, since I was the only one among all my brothers and sisters who did not have to fast, I was very anxious and curious to experience the feeling of fasting for at least one day, so I decided to fast the following day.

3 "It is a great decision, Son," my father said. I smiled and promised to keep my word. At the same time, I ignored my mother's exhortation that I was too young to fast.

4 It was about 2:30 A. M. when my mother woke me up to eat our last repast, that we could have before the sunrise.

After I washed my hands and face, I sat at the table next to my father with a great feeling, knowing that I was allowed to eat as much as I could without being interrupted by my mother as usual, claiming that I eat too much.

5 After I finished my last meal, my father gave me some good advice. He said, "Kid, I want you to understand something very important." I looked at him and said, "What is it, Dad?" He replied, "Tomorrow is your first day of fasting. If you feel incapable of finishing the day, eat and break your fast and be honest about it, but never cheat because Allah is always watching you." I nodded my head and headed to bed.

6 The next morning, which was my first fasting day, was so terribly hot that I felt thirsty as soon as I got up. Yet I remembered that I could only rinse my mouth without letting a drop of water get into my throat. An hour later I was in school; of course, none of my friends was fasting, and that made it worse. They kept eating all kinds of fruits, candies, and cookies in front of me. At first I didn't care, but later, at lunch time, when everybody was enjoying his meal and I was the only one left with an empty stomach, so many ridiculous ideas came to my mind. Fortunately, I remembered my father's last words, "Allah is watching you." So I found the courage to defeat all crazy and silly ideas.

7 During lunch time, I felt what it was like to have an empty stomach and not be able to eat while food was next to me. I then knew how a poor person would feel if he was hungry and could not afford to feed himself or his family. I said to myself, "Maybe one of the many reasons why people have to fast is to experience what others feel."