

新东方学校实用英语丛书

妙手著文章

漂亮英语句子的写作技巧

STYLISH WRITING



谷约 著

世界知识出版社

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CHAPTER 1

Stylish English is ...

Concise

简洁即是美

好的写作,首先而且至关重要的一点就是简洁。繁冗的写作堆砌了许多无用的词藻,反而减弱表述的清晰度。当然,也不能仅仅因为简短就认为短句一定优于长句。只要一个单词确实能起到一定的作用,它就应该留在句中。一般来说,只有在进行强调或修饰、美化句子时,才能使用重复的单词、语音和短语。修改文章,就是要删繁就简。比较下面这对句子,注意体会二者的差别及效果。

(1) **Dr. Sun Yat-sen went to Japan *by means of* a big boat.**

(2) **Dr. Sun Yat-sen went to Japan *by* boat.**

斜体字部分较为啰嗦,“by boat”即是“by means of a boat”。

请看下列例句

Wordy: It *makes me feel painful* to think that she has to work 12 hours a day and seven days a week.

Better: It pains me to think that she has to work 12 hours a day

and seven days a week.

Wordy: *It will be* our aim to ensure proper health care for *each and every one* of the Chinese people.

Better: Our aim is to ensure proper health care for *all* Chinese.

Wordy: This book will help you master the *basic elements* of good writing.

Better: This book will help you master the *basics* of good writing.

Wordy: The search of the forest *that they conducted was entirely complete*.

Better: The search of the forest was complete.

或 They conducted a complete search of the forest.

Wordy: He has no sense of principles, *whether he is in public or in private*.

Better: He has no principles, public or private.

第二个句子合乎汉语表达习惯,即他们对森林进行了彻底的搜查。

Wordy: *Whenever anyone telephoned her to ask her for help with their homework* she always obliged right away.

Better: She immediately obliged anyone who telephoned for help with homework.

Wordy: *In a cautious manner* the car went around the corner.

Better: The car *negotiated* the corner.

Wordy: If the government agency finds that an individual has received a payment to which the individual was not entitled, whether or not the payment was due to the individual's fault or misrepresentation, the individual shall be liable to repay to the government the total sum of the payment to which the individual was not entitled.

Better: If the government agency finds that you received a payment that you weren't entitled to, you must pay the entire sum back.

Wordy: Another important aspect is good health. It is one of our great blessings. It may be achieved through proper diet and exercise. Rest is also desirable.

Better: The great blessing of good health may be achieved through proper diet, exercise, and rest.

词语简化的一些技巧

◇ 策略之一:用介词短语替代从句。

例 **Wordy:** *While they were playing tennis*, she started an argument that lasted all morning.

Better: *During tennis* she started an argument that lasted all morning.

Wordy: *When you come to the second traffic light*, turn right.

Better: *At the second traffic light* turn left.

◇ 策略之二:删掉诸如“who is”、“that is”之类的关系代词,变

从句为短语。

例 Wordy: The novel, *which is written in three parts*, told a story *that* took place in the Middle Ages.

Better: The three-part novel told a story set in the Middle Ages.

注:将句中的“three parts”(名词)改用形容词“three-part”来表达,你可省却四个不必要的单词“which is written in”。像“that”这样的关系代词也常被省掉。(参见第十章)

◇ 策略之三:剔除你不需要的单词。

“Two joint parthers will present their views over a long-distance telephone call.”

写完这样的句子后,你自己再读一遍,挑出单词“joint”和“telephone”,注意删去不必要的词。

◇ 策略之四:表达否定意义时,尽量避免使用否定词。英语中有很多不用“no’s”或“not’s”也能表达否定含义的词汇,你尽可以采取更为委婉的表达方式。

例 Thus *college students who do not have sufficient financial backing*. 也就是 college students who “*lacks sufficient financial backing*”,如果你不想用太多的否定词,可以尽量避免。

赘句范例及改进建议

Wordy (赘语)

as a usual rule

at that point in time

at this point in time

Improved (修改后的替换词)

as a rule

then

now

at your earliest convenience	now, soon
concerning the matter of	about
due to the fact that	because
for the reason that	because
has proved itself to be	has proved, is
in connection with	with
in order to	to
in relation to	with
in the event that	if
modern factories of today	modern factories
next steps to take	next steps
puzzling in nature	puzzling
regardless of the fact	although
the reason why is that	because
total effect of all this	total effect
with reference to	about

简洁明快又有说服力的措辞手法范例

That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.

——美国宇航员 *Neil Armstrong*

The only reward of virtue is virtue; the only way to have a friend is be one.

——美国作家 *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

To err is human, to forgive, divine.

——英国诗人 *Alexander Pope*

Animals are such agreeable friends—they ask no questions, they

pass no criticisms.

——英国小说家 *George Eliot*

Great men are but life-sized. Most of them, indeed, are rather short.

——英国批评家 *Mao Beerholm*

Too much rest becomes a pain. ——英国诗人 *Alexander Pope*

Loyalty comes from love of good government, not fear of a bad one.

——美国法官 *Hugo Black*

练习：

1. If you want to change the outline of your story as you go along, that is fine.

2. In the majority of cases, the data provided by direct examination of fresh material under the lens of the microscope are insufficient for the proper bacteria.

3. As an accountant, I do not agree with people using company money that is not pre-authorized. (不用否定词)

4. The use of this method would eliminate our current problem.

5. When kids do not have discipline at their schools, it means they

do not have discipline in the home. (不用否定词 “not”)

6. It must be remembered that we have no power, no influence. We do not have money or authority. All we have is a willingness to persevere and the hope that we shall conquer soon.
-
-

7. Suzhou is where one can find some 2,000 pavilions and towers. (不用 “where”)
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-

8. Mrs. Walker sat by, nodding her head to show her approval.
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9. Ms. Dunn has taught in the classrooms in the corporate world for sixteen years, coaching clients throughout the Fortune 500. (修改句中两个 “in” 引导的介词词组)
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-

10. “The trick will work,” the witch laughed wickedly and with a sharp sound. (使用生动、简洁的词句)
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-

参考答案:

1. If you want to change your story outline as you go along, fine.
2. Often, bacteria cannot be identified under the microscope.

3. As an accountant, I dispute with people using unauthorized money.
4. This method would eliminate our current problem.
5. Absence of discipline in the schools reflects absence of discipline in the home.
6. We have not power, nor influence, nor money, nor authority, but a willingness to persevere and the hope that we shall conquer soon.
7. Suzhou is home to some 2,000 pavilions and towers.
8. Mrs. Walker sat by, nodding approval.
9. Ms. Dunn has taught in the corporate classrooms for sixteen years, coaching clients throughout the Fortune 500.
10. "The trick will work," the witch cackled with glee.

CHAPTER 2

Stylish English has...

Variety Brevity is not always a virtue

变化才是真

简短未必是美德

许多人将简洁与简短混为一谈,其实二者有很大区别。简洁的主旨是用尽量少的词汇讲述整个故事,简短的主旨则是为保持文章篇幅短小,精心撰写或随意删除文中的某些词语或章节。

简洁并不意味着总写短句子。事实上,如果句式缺少变化,文章就会显得支离破碎,缺少联系,让人觉得作者的写作技巧贫乏。句式的变化能令文章协调流畅,会让读者感受到作者对主题把握得游刃有余。虽然短句没什么语法错误,但用得太多会使本应合在一起的意思分离开来。

记住:不要使用一连串短的、支离破碎的句子。要理清自己的思路,尽量使句子长度有所变化。

例 **Before:** *The Art of Strategy* was written by Sun Tzu. It is a fifty-six-hundred-word Chinese classical work. The writer put forth a set of principles in a very tightly compressed manner. They deal with how to defeat oppositions and win battles.

这种表达的问题在于：

(1) 简单的“主语 + 谓语”结构太多；

(2) “written”和“writer”，“The Art of Strategy”和“It”，“set of principles”和“they”为重复用语；

(3) 读起来很单调。

After: In his fifty-six-hundred word classic, *The Art of Strategy*, Sun Tzu put forth a tightly compressed set of principles for achieving triumph over opposition.

介词结构 + 同位语 + 主语 + 谓语的形式比较好，因为将“Sun Tzu”放到了最重要成分——主语的位置，其他成分按逻辑排序居次要地位。整个句子很流畅。

再看下面各例

Choppy: Of course, the weapons at Sun Tzu's time were quite primitive. The armies were very large. They were nearly as large as those in World War Two. The devastation and human sufferings were just as profound as in World War Two.

Better: Compared with World War Two, the weapons at Sun Tzu's time were quite primitive, but the armies were nearly as large and the devastation and human suffering just as profound.

Choppy: Proverbs are short sayings. They are drawn from long experience.

Better: Proverbs are short sayings drawn from long experience.

Choppy: People change and places change as well. Jennifer felt this

strongly. She had been away for eleven years.

Better: On returning after an eleven-year absence, Jennifer had a strong feeling of how people and places change.

Choppy: Beijing streets are crowded with taxis, company cars and private vehicles owned by the newly affluent. The number has been rising rapidly in the last few years. The latest statistics show there are now 1.2 million vehicles in Beijing alone.

Better: Taxis, company cars and private vehicles owned by the newly affluent have crammed Beijing streets in rising numbers in the last few years-1.2 million vehicles at last count.

Choppy: *Moby Dick* is a book. It is a long book. It is about a whale. A man named Ahab tries to kill it. Herman Melville wrote it.

Better: Herman Melville wrote a long book called *Moby Dick*. It is the story of a struggle of a man against a whale.

Choppy: Thousands of buildings met the same fate. This alone is now being preserved. It marks the center of the nuclear explosion. It is being preserved as a symbol. It symbolizes our wish that there be no more Hiroshimas.

Better: Of the thousands of buildings that met the same fate, this alone, marking the center of the nuclear explosion, is now being preserved to symbolize our wish that there be no more Hiroshimas.

Choppy: I have always had a dream. My dream has been to be a fa-

mous writer. Everyone would read my books. I would become very wealthy.

Better: I have always dreamed of being a wealthy, famous writer, read by everyone.

Choppy: This is a wreck. It was formerly the stately Imperial Garden. It is preserved deliberately as a reminder and symbol.

Better: This wreck, formerly the stately Imperial Garden, is preserved deliberately as a reminder and symbol.

句式变化的一些技巧

英语的一个显著特征是它可以轻易地把简单结构(一个中心意思),转化为复合结构(两个中心意思)和复杂结构(一个中心意思加上一个从属意思),甚至转化为复合—复杂结构(两个或两个以上的意思)。主句,又称独立句,表达可独立成句的思想内容。从句,又称非独立句,表达不能独立成句、需与主句一起构成完整表达的思想内容。

达到句式多变的最佳途径是把关键词或短语换到开头或结尾的位置,从中发现实现你的目的、适合你的品味的最好方法。通过连接短句——省略词,增加词,改变词序,或把不那么重要的思想放到从句中去——你就可以写出更流畅、更精致的句子。

例 Before: Lu Hao graduated last summer. He joined the First Auto Works in Changchun soon after graduation. He received an engineering degree from his college.

采用从句能将这三个简单句以不同方式连接起来。

After: After graduating last summer with an engineering degree, Lu Hao soon joined the First Auto Works in Changchun.

或：介词结构 + 主语 + 谓语

An engineering degree-holder, Lu Hao joined the First Auto Works in Changchun last summer soon after graduation.

或：同位语 + 主语 + 谓语 + 状语

Having graduated with an engineering degree, Lu Hao joined the First Auto Works in Changchun last summer.

状语从句 + 主语 + 谓语

练习：

1. Memory is one of those abilities that we take for granted except when it fails us. So, memory is like digestion in this way. (去掉“so”, 连接两个句子)

2. In 1998, France was the top tourist destination. The country attracted about 70 million visitors. Spain was in second place, with 48 million tourists. This represented a 10% increase for Spain from 1997. (合并这些短的, 有些破碎的句子)

3. *An Ideal Husband* is a film adaptation of Oscar Wilde's play. It tells the story of a popular politician who was involved in a scandal that led to his downfall.

4. She sat obediently. Her fur coat was still wrapped around her against the cold.

-
5. Visits to the state park set a record in 1998. Compared with the year before, it was an increase of 11 percent. (合二为一)
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-
6. It was quite obvious at that time that IQ equals intelligence. Since then, however, many people have seriously criticized the idea. (合二为一)
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7. Snow White did her chores with a smile. Often she would sing while she worked. (合二为一)
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-
8. Sitting in his apartment, drinking a cup of strong tea, Mr. Fax-on reviewed his legal case against his boss. He had been doing this every night for seven nights. (用状语从句连接)
-

参考答案:

1. Like digestion, memory is one of those abilities that we take for granted except when it fails us.
2. In 1998, France was the top tourist destination with about 70 million visitors. Spain was in second place, with 48 million tourists, a 10% increase from 1997.
3. *An Ideal Husband* is a film adaptation of Oscar Wilde's play that tells the story of a popular politician brought down by scandal.