

# 实用英语写作

李维屏 杨理达 编著

W R I T I N G

华东化工学院出版社

**A Practical Course Of  
English Composition**

**实 用 英 语 写 作**

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## 内 容 简 介

本书系统而详尽地介绍了英语写作的措词、造句、构段和谋篇的基本技巧,英语的基本型文体以及许多常用的修辞方式,由浅入深,通俗易懂,注重实用。同时,对于英语写作中常见的语病也作了透辟的分析。为了满足申请出国人员的需要,本书对英语书信,特别是申请信和推荐信,作了详细的介绍,并附有许多实例,以供参考。书中还收集了多篇当今美国著名散文家的上乘之作,并配有译文与思考题。此外,本书还编排了一套内容丰富,饶有趣味的写作习题,置于各章之后,供读者习作练笔,所有练习均附有参考答案。本书对高校学生(包括研究生),大、中学校英语教师,申请出国人员, TOEFL 考生以及具有一定英语水平的读者都能有所裨益,是一本理想的英语写作指导教程。

责任编辑 张其晖

## 实 用 英 语 写 作 Shiyong Yingyu Xiezuò

华东化工学院出版社出版

(上海市梅陇路130号)

新华书店上海发行所发行

上海崇江外文印刷厂排版

上海市群众印刷厂印刷

开本 850×1168 1/32 印张 7.75 字数 208 千字

1989 年 10 月第 1 版 1989 年 10 月第 1 次印刷

印数 1-25000 册

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ISBN 7-5623-0079-0/H·7 定价 3.05 元

## 前 言

随着我国对外交往的不断发展,人们使用英语书面语言对外交流的机会日趋频繁。近年来,申请出国留学和工作的人员日益增多,国内外各种英语考试诸如 TOEFL、EPT 等方兴未艾,有加无已。因此,需要了解和掌握英语写作知识的呼声越来越高。为了满足这一客观实际的需要,我们编写了这本实用英语写作书。本书的宗旨是从英语修辞的实用角度向读者介绍其书面语体运用的普遍原则和写作技巧。

本书着重介绍了英语写作中的措词、造句、构段和谋篇的基本技巧以及某些常用的修辞方式,由浅入深、通俗易懂、注重实用。同时,还专门分析了英语写作中常见的语病,帮助读者提高鉴别能力,便于在写作时引以为戒。此外,为了满足申请出国留学人员的需要,我们对英语书信,尤其是申请信和推荐信,作了较为详细的介绍,并附有许多实例,以供参考。此外,我们还选编了八篇范文以帮助读者提高阅读欣赏能力和写作水平。每篇选文后附有译文和思考题,作为对理解原文和练习写作的提示。为了帮助读者尽快提高写作水平、正确运用修辞方式,我们还编排了一套内容丰富、饶有趣味的写作练习,置于各章后面,供读者习作。所有练习答案均附于书后。

修辞是一门艺术,也是一种写作技巧。在语言的发展过程中,英语国家的人民和作家在实践中锤炼出了生动的词语和有极强表现力的修辞方式。巧妙地运用这些词语和修辞方式,可以增添语言的渲染力,增强文章的艺术魅力。为了使读者比较全面地了解英语的基本修辞方式,尽快地提高写作水平,本书侧重介绍写作的基本技巧,力图成为一本有助于广大读者学习和练习写作的指导教程。笔者希望本书对高校学生(包括研究生),大、中学校英语教师,申请出国留学人员, TOEFL、EPT 考生,科技工作者以及具有一定英语水平的读者都能有所裨益。

前进业余进修学院院长蔡光天先生对本书的编写和出版给予热情的支持,并为本书挥笔题词予以勉励。承蒙蔡先生的厚爱,本书已有幸列为“前进丛书”。在此,我们表示衷心的感谢。

上海外国语学院侯维瑞教授,澳大利亚悉尼大学英语系Margaret Harris教授, Mabel Lee 博士, Katherine Runcie 博士和 Judith Barbour 博士对笔者曾给予热情的帮助和鼓励,谨在此一并致谢。

由于我们水平有限,书中肯定存在不少缺点和疏漏之处,恳请读者不吝指正。

李维屏 杨理达

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政克寫作頌

先生

先生

# 目 录

第一章 措词.....	1
1.1 正确 1.2 简洁 1.3 明晰	
第二章 造句.....	12
2.1 句子的结构与组合 2.2 句子的统一与连贯 2.3 造句的技巧	
第三章 段落的结构与类型.....	26
3.1 主题句 3.2 统一与连贯 3.3 段落的类型	
第四章 写作的基本方式.....	48
4.1 开头与结尾 4.2 衔接与转折 4.3 描写文 4.4 记叙文	
4.5 说明文 4.6 议论文	
第五章 写作中常见的错误.....	92
5.1 累赘 5.2 句型单调 5.3 词语位置摆得不当 5.4 表达迂回曲折	
5.5 垂悬片语	
第六章 几种常用的修辞方式 .....	104
6.1 谚语 6.2 比喻 6.3 反复 6.4 对偶与排比 6.5 渐进 6.6 拟人	
第七章 英语书信 .....	120
7.1 书信的格式 7.2 信的开头与结尾 7.3 申请信 7.4 推荐信	
第八章 标点符号 .....	141
8.1 用在句尾的标点符号 8.2 逗号与分号 8.3 其他标点符号	
第九章 阅读与写作范文 .....	152
9.1 BRADLEY 9.2 ON BEING A JOURNALIST	
9.3 TIME IS FOR SAVORING 9.4 THE COMPANY	
MAN 9.5 GIANTS 9.6 CARNAL INDIFFERENCE	
9.7 A LOST PASSION 9.8 TO ERR IS HUMAN	
附录一 英语作文修改符号 .....	201
附录二 英语写作常用词语 .....	203
附录三 练习答案 .....	212

# 第一章 措 词

写作主要是为了表达思想,但要把思想表达清楚,就必须认真选择词汇。写作就是一个先积词成句,再积句成段,最后,积段成章的过程。文章写得怎样与用词有关。因此,写好文章的第一步,是学会措词。写作最讲究措词,倘若措词不当,便会使句子生硬、意思牵强,有时会闹笑话,甚至还会引起读者的误解。所以,写作时我们应搜索枯肠,寻找最恰当的词来表达自己的思想,要真正做到 **proper words in proper places**, 决不安于“大致可以”,更不能草率从事。要谈写作,应先从词汇谈起,因为习作谋篇的成功与否同我们的措词能力和用词水平休戚相关。选词、措词一般要遵循正确、简洁及明晰三条原则。

## 1.1 正 确

用词的第一条原则是正确。英语中有许多同义词和近义词,但每个词都有其确切的含义和使用范围。尽管有些词在某些情况下可以互相替换,但它们的词义决非完全相同。我们要力求选择最正确的词汇。比如,英语中表示“大”的形容词很多,其中 **big, large, great, huge** 运用十分广泛。但这些词都有其确切的含义和特定的使用范围。如要表示“那个孩子长得很大”,就说 **That boy is very big**, 否则,就是用词不当。又如,要表示某人有些不愉快,就要用 **displeased**, 如果他有些生气,就要用 **angry**; 假如他大发雷霆,就要用 **furious**。所以,同类词也有程度上的区别。同样,下面两句都不合习惯:

People construct homes.

Families make houses.



第一句中 construct 意为“建造”，一般用于建造大型建筑物，如桥梁、水库等。而 home 则表示“家”、“家庭”。因此说“建造家庭”，就是用词不当。第二句中 make houses 也属搭配不当。英语习惯上讲 build houses, make homes. 正确的说法应是：

People build houses; families make homes.

由此可见，有些词意义虽然很相近，但使用的范围不尽相同，如不了解词的搭配和使用方法，便会出错。请再看以下各例：

1. Carelessness is the reason for his failure.

句中 reason 意为“原因”、“理由”，强调在逻辑推理上引出结论的原因，而不是指导致某种结果的原因。本句应改为：

Carelessness is the cause of his failure.

2. The boy is higher than his sister by a head.

句中 high 表示“高”是同类形容词中最通用的，但 high 不能用来描写人的身高，表示人的身高应该用 tall. 所以，本句应改为：

The boy is taller than his sister by a head.

3. His voice shook with excitement.

句中 shook 意为“震动”、“摇动”，通常表示物体短促而迅速的震动。如果表示某人的话声因激动而震颤，则应用 tremble, 故句子应改为：

His voice trembled with excitement.

*meaning* 4. The arrest was made without any signal of opposition on the part of the murderer.

句中 signal 意为“信号”、“暗号”，并不表示某种“迹象”，所以句子应改为：

The arrest was made without any sign of opposition on the part of the murderer.

5. The retired professor takes healthy exercise every morning.

句中 healthy 意为“健康的”，一般指人的身体状况。如要表示“有益健康的”，应该用 healthful. 所以本句应改为：

The retired professor takes healthful exercise every morning.

由此可见,英语的每一个词都有自己的使用范围和搭配方式。许多词往往不止一个意义,而相同的意义往往又可用不同的词来表示。我们只有通过大量的阅读,不断地丰富自己的词汇,逐步学会辨词的方法,才能将词汇极其自然地应用于文章,使其恰到好处。

## 1.2 简 洁

除了用词正确之外,写作还应力求措词简洁。写文章应本着“节约用词”的原则,避免冗赘的词句,删掉一切多余的文字。换言之,要用最少的语言将自己的思想表达清楚。文章不但要思想性强,观点明确,而且还要语言朴实简练,没有冗词赘句。只要不影响或改变句子的意思,用词要尽量简洁。比如, to increase speed 不如 to accelerate 简洁。同样, to predict 要比 to foretell the future 更加明快。英语中有句谚语: Brevity is the soul of wit, 意为“言以简洁为贵”。要做到用词简洁并非容易,这不但需要我们有丰富的词汇,而且还要求我们精心提炼自己的语言,对每词每句都要仔细琢磨,认真推敲。请看以下各例:

1. She is attractive in appearance, but she is rather a foolish person. (12 个词)

前半句中 attractive 意为“迷人的”,“有吸引力的”,因而无须再用 in appearance。后半句中主语和谓语均可省略, person 也纯属多余。本句可改为:

She is attractive, but rather foolish. (6 个词)

2. The auther was not altogether beloved by every inhabitant of the village. (12 个词)

本句的意思是“这位作家并非受到村里每个居民的热爱”,但句子不够简洁,而且有些迂回。此句不妨改用主动语态,直言表达更为恰当:

Some villagers disliked the author. (5 个词)

3. People who always look on the bright side are usually better companions than those who take a gloomy view of life. (21 个词)

本句的主语实指“乐观主义者”，共用了八个词，而实际上只需一个词即可。后半句的主语也犯了同样的毛病。此句可改为：

Optimists are usually better companions than pessimists. (7 个词)

4. After he had lost his pen in the classroom, he looked for it carefully, but he could not find it. (20 个词)

本句共分三个层次，丢笔、找笔以及结果如何。但句子十分累赘，而且语言过于平淡，一般只适用于口语。在笔语中，可以把几个层次有机地结合起来，使句子的结构更加严谨。例如：

A careful search for his lost pen in the classroom proved unsuccessful. (12 个词)

5. Doctors of medicine are of the same opinion that excessive consumption of food will cause the deterioration of man's physical constitution. (21 个词)

此句学究气十足，用词过于浮华，未免有些矫揉造作。Doctors of medicine 纯属累赘，of the same opinion 可改为 agree，excessive consumption of food 也可改为 overeating，而 physical constitution 实指 health。所以此句可改为：

Overeating, the doctors agree, is harmful to health. (8 个词)

以上各例表明，现代英语写作是以简洁为原则的。简洁，就是言简而意赅，决不罗嗦。文笔简洁、鞭辟入里的作品是广大读者所喜闻乐见的。初学者不要一味追求那些所谓“漂亮”，“华丽”、“典雅”、“深奥”的“大词”，而应力求语言的自然美和朴素美，使自己的文笔朴实明快，简洁有力。

措词除了要正确简洁之外,还要明晰。所谓明晰,就是使意思清楚明白,让读者一目了然。初学者在写作时,应采用明晰平实的语言,扎扎实实,使文章切合思想实际,自然易懂。一般来说,用词不明晰,而使意思含糊不清,主要表现在以下两个方面。第一,句子结构不够严谨,语病四伏,或句子有欠完整,缺少了必不可少的成分。这些都会影响句子的明晰。以下各例均隐约其辞,意思不清,令人费解。例如:

1. He loves the dog better than his brother.

此句意思不明确,既可理解为“他比弟弟更爱狗”,也可理解为“他爱狗胜过爱弟弟”。作者只顾省略,而造成了后半句的谓语残缺。此句可按意思分别改为:

He loves the dog better than his brother does. 或者 He loves the dog better than he loves his brother.

2. Our dog is enjoying the beautiful wealther while it stays.

句中 it stays 意义不明确,既可指“狗留在此地”,也可指“好天气持续下去。”此句应改为:

While the beautiful wealther stays, our dog is enjoying it.

3. In Nostromo Conrad's style is ironic and his setting is highly symbolic, so that it sometimes confuses the reader.

句中 it 所表示的意思不明确,它可指小说 Nostromo,也可指 style, 或者 setting, 从某种程度上讲 it 也指以上所有一切。所以作者应该把意思表达清楚,以免引起读者的误解。此句可改为:

Conrad's ironic style and highly symbolic setting in Nostromo sometimes confuse the reader. 或者, In Nostromo,

Conrad's style is ironic, and his highly symbolic setting sometimes confuses the reader.

用词不明晰的第二种情况是作者一味追求“华丽”的词藻，以“装饰”自己的作品。用这种方法写文章，就必然只求文字上的花俏，而使文章变得空洞无物，华而不实。有些人由于对英语的词汇认识不清，看到一些早已过时的“漂亮”词语，就认为华丽绚烂，硬写进自己的文章。其结果往往使读者不知所云，有时甚至令人啼笑皆非。假如某人见到了一位美国客人，便问他：May I have the honour of knowing whom I am speaking to? 对方听了说不定会大吃一惊，或者暗暗发笑。但如果问：May I know your name? 那就十分自然得体了。所以，文章的语言要力求明晰，朴实。以下各例均有些矫揉造作，令人费解。

1. The causal factors of her poverty becomes obvious when one considers the number of offspring she possesses.

此句有些矫揉造作，表达方式过于迂回。句中 causal factors 十分累赘，而且华而不实。而 offspring 和 possess 均属“大词”。如用明晰平实的语言来表达，句子就会显得自然易懂了。此句可改为：

She is poor because she has too many children.

2. The writer's report enjoyed a not unfavorable reception given by the committee.

此句表达方式太迂回，根据句意此句以直叙为好。句中 not unfavorable 是双重否定，应尽量避免使用。本句可改为：

The committee was in favor of the writer's report.

3. It is the feeling of the president that there are enormous responsibilities which are to be assumed with an office of public trust.

此句的毛病在于缺乏直观性，句子浮华而又空洞无物，违背了明晰的原则。It is the feeling of the president 应改为 The

president feels; enormous 不如 great 朴实, 而 an office of public trust 实指 a government. 所以此句可改为:

The president feels that a government has great responsibilities.

当然, 我们并不一概反对藻丽与繁丰的表现风格。在英美文学中常常可以见到华丽的词藻和优雅的文笔。但对我们初学者来说, 应首先学会用朴实、具体、生动和明快的语言来表达思想内容。

综上所述, 措词正确、简洁和明晰对文章起着重要作用。这三条原则相辅相成, 在英语写作中的作用可谓旗鼓相当。初学者应对措词的技巧加以研究, 逐步把握选词、用词的标准。关于措词, 英国 18 世纪著名散文家 William Hazlitt 有过一段精辟而中肯的见解, 这里引述一下, 不无裨益:

It is not to take the first word that offers, but the best word in common use; it is not to throw words together in any combinations we please, but to follow and avail ourselves of the true idiom of the language. To write a genuine familiar or truly English style is to write as any one would speak in common conversation who had a thorough command and choice of words, or who could discourse with ease, force, and perspicuity, setting aside all pedantic and oratorical flourishes.

总之, 措词是一门艺术, 也是一种写作技巧。初学者应不断丰富自己的词汇, 提高语言修养, 逐步掌握分辨词义的能力, 从而能选择最佳词汇来表达思想。只要我们坚持习作练笔, 就能逐步提高措词水平, 写作时就会感到胜任愉快, 得心应手。

## Exercise One

Choose the correct words in the following sentences:

1. Do you (always, often) go to the cinema?
2. Both expressions are right, but the (latter, later) is better than the former.
3. In one single (battle, war), hundreds of enemy were killed and still more were captured.
4. Will you (introduce, recommend) me some good critical books about the author?
5. The teacher (expected, hoped) every student to pass the English exam.
6. When Barbara and Ida visited Shanghai last year, they (lived, stayed) in Peace Hotel.
7. I think we should (bring, carry) the umbrella with us.
8. Columbus (discovered, invented) the New World several hundred years ago.
9. We were looking for the (sight, site) of an ancient camp.
10. The man looked very (healthful, healthy), though much older than before.

## Exercise Two

Rewright the following sentences, using one word to express the underlined words:

1. It was really dangerous for those who were travelling on foot to attempt to cross the road.
2. The two girls cried out at the very same instant of time.
3. Goods going out of the country provide the funds to pay for goods coming into the country.

4. Every time he was taken for a visit, the boy's manner seemed to become worse and worse.
5. The storm did so much damage that it could not be estimated.
6. The traveller entertained his hosts with stories some of which were really more than could be believed.
7. The prisoner did not expect to be brought face to face with his victim in court.
8. When the bus reached the stopping place at the end of the route, it was still almost full.
9. The bees came out of the hive in a stream that showed no sign of ending.
10. The fishing rod is capable of being bent easily without breaking.

### Exercise Three

Rewright the following sentences in clear straight forward English:

1. The level of radiation in the immediate vicinity of the nuclear power plant was evaluated and found to be within acceptable danger parameters.
2. One realizes as one progresses in life that a great many statements of political figures are without substances or credibility.
3. It is the feeling of the committee that the established priorities in management-employee relations are in need of realignment.
4. Because the children and adults differ due to the



- fact that grownups have already been exposed to the world, the children do not know the bitterness.
5. With the rise in the cost of living in order to get a good education it will cost more than it does at present.
  6. A country with 200 million or more mouths to feed and no food to feed them, then people will start to steal, rob, and kill for food to eat.
  7. Not almost all the time when we get out of college we find the job we wish.
  8. Although many people are worried about the war, there are also those who pretend it.
  9. I do not believe that a student should determine whether or not to go to college chiefly on the basis of financial but that of obtaining qualified educational background.
  10. His ability to deal with people around him will be on a better basis.

## Exercise Four

Examine these sentences looking for any of these errors: the verbal noun may need a possessive subject. A modifying verbal may dangle. Verb and verbal tense may be illogical. Correct the sentences only if they need correction.

1. A woman traveling alone is dangerous.
2. Eating lunch on the lawn, the traffic amused the children.
3. Playing some Italian songs, Miss Bingley varied