

中级英语 作文技法 要点

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*Focus on
Skills in
Composition in
Intermediate
English*



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第一部分 中级英语写作基础知识

第一章 概 述

学习英语的目的是为了利用英语这一语言工具,去实现交流目的和完成交流任务。因此,除了要学会口语交际和阅读文章外,还应学会用英语写文章。英语考试中通常有对考生作文能力的测试,这就要求我们对英语作文考试的常见类型、写作要求、写作技巧予以重视。

综合英语作文在考试中的重要性,以及英语考试大纲对考生的要求,大致可知:

(1)考试写作共一题,时间 30 分钟,要求考生写出 100 至 120 个词之间的短文。试卷上可能给出题目,或规定情景,或要求看图作文,或给出段落首句要求续写,或给出关键词要求写出短文。要求能够抓住题意,正确表达思想,文理通顺,意义连贯,没有重大语法错误。写作的内容包括日常生活和一般常识。

(2)短文写作部分的目的是测试学生运用英语进行书面表达思想的初步能力。从大纲要求我们可以看出,大学英语考试的作文内容多是社会、文化或日常生活的一般常识,涉及的知识面不是很广,专业性也不是太强,如此出题的目的,也是为了让考生能写出大体相似的文章,以便统一标准,利于评分。

针对以上的要求,我们应该明白在英语作文上应该注意的环节和如何有效地利用 30 分钟来完成一篇优秀的英语作文。我们用英语写作文,实际上是利用英语发表作者对某个问题的意见,或提出自己的主张,或者是记叙和描写人物、事物、生活画面以表明自己歌颂

或批判的态度。这说明用英语写作,首先要善于从题材(即写作材料)中提炼出主题,并根据主题需要选择和组织材料。当然,文章的体裁也决定着材料的取舍。为了更好地掌握考试的方法,我们不妨共同探讨一下针对中级英语对各种文体的要求,如何提高自己的写作水平。

对于如何写出符合要求的作文这一问题,我们认为切合主题、连贯通顺、语法正确这三点是写好英语作文的关键。

一、切题

不管是用汉语还是用英语写作,切题是衡量文章质量的主要标准。而英语作文对切题有着特殊的要求。一般来说,英语作文的一个重要特点就是每段文章必须有一个主题句(topic sentence),它的位置通常在一个段落的开始,该段落的其他句子都必须围绕这个主题句展开,辅助说明该主题句;段落的末尾通常还有终结句(paragraph terminator),对全段进行总结概括。

例文 (1)The sentence in most well written paragraphs may be analysed into four general functions. (2)First, there are paragraph introducers, which are sentences that establish the topic focus of the paragraph as a whole. (3)Second, there are paragraph developers, which present examples or details of various kinds that support the ideas set forth by the paragraph introducers. (4)Third, there are view point or context modulators, which are sentences that provide a smooth transition between different sets of ideas. (5)Fourth, there are paragraph terminators, which logically conclude the ideas discussed in the paragraph in a psychologically satisfying manner. (6)Not all pieces of writing will conform to this analysis; however, most successful paragraphs usually contain some of these four sentence types.

解析 这篇文章共有六句,第一句是主题句,提出段落中的句子有四种功能。第二句至第五句围绕主题句的内容展开,分别解释句子的这四种功能,最后一句是终结句,对各辅助句的内容进行总结,

并且照应了主题句提出的关于句子有四种功能的论点。这样,整个段落就构成了一个有机的整体。

有些同学在写作时没有注意到这一特点,他们不去围绕主题句扩展段落,相反却写了一些与主题句毫无关系的句子。例如:有一个在主题句 One morning I get up very early, and everything around was quiet. 开始的段落中,很多学生不懂得要围绕 early 和 quiet 两个词去扩展段落,却随心所欲,信口开河,如:因为起得早就想去公园散步,或者早晨锻炼有很多好处,等等。还有作文只重复主题句的内容,文章显得啰嗦、单调、条理不清。由于这些内容和主题句风马牛不相及,因而失分较多。

二、连贯

一篇好的英语作文除了要求切题外,还要求语义连贯、结构严谨、层次分明。各种水平考试的作文都要求学生准确地表达语句之间的联系,例如在前面的那篇范文中,作者就用了 first, second, third, finally 等词来表达各个句子之间的并列关系。这一点在汉语中就没有那么严格。如汉语中我们可以说:“昨天下雨了,我没有来。”读者一眼就能联想到两个分句之间的因果关系。但是用英语表达这个思想,一定要强调两者之间的因果关系,应该说成:

Because it was raining yesterday, I failed to come.

使主句连贯的方法常见的有两种:一种是用连接词来表示启示接转(link words),如: first, second, as a result, for this purpose, but, furthermore, at last, then yet, finally, consequently, moreover, for example, also, likewise, another, next, in addition, on the contrary, once, other, in this case, in summary, such, otherwise, on the other hand, this, in closing, in conclusion, now, therefore 等等。

另一种方法是用替代、比较等修饰手段来照应句子的关系。例如:

1. Firms praise the good qualities of their articles through advertising.
They do so in order to outsell other firms.

2. Most large cities have markets for vegetables and fruits. Markets of this kind enable the buyer to see and choose the goods he wants. The markets are this a necessary convenience.

3. He comes every week.

—— I never knew he came so often.

—— He used to come even more often.

在这三个例子中 they, this, he, the, so, more 等词起着连句成篇的作用。如果没有这些表示照应关系的词, 句子之间就显得不连贯。

例文 (1) Far more striking than any changes in the kinds of work done by women in the U.S.A. labor force is the shift of wives and mothers from household activities to the world of paid employment. (2) Emphasis on the new work of women, however, should not be allowed to obscure another important fact. (3) Today, as always, most of the time and effort of American wives is devoted to their responsibilities within the home and the family circle. (4) This is true even of those who are in the labor force. (5) Since 1980 the demands of paid work have become much higher. (6) The normal work week has decreased from sixty to forty hours; paid holidays and vacations have become universal; and most of the hard physical labor that work once required has been eliminated. (7) Because of these developments, many women can work outside the home and still have time and energy left for home and family. (8) Moreover, most working mothers do not assume the burdens of a full schedule of paid work. (9) Among employed mothers of preschool children, four out of five worked only part times or less than half the year in 1965. (10) Among those whose children were in school, three out of five followed the same certain work schedule. (11) And even among working wives who had no children at home, only a little more than half were year-round, full-time members of the labor force.

解析 在这一段中,第一句指出目前美国劳动力中发生了一个显著的变化,即妇女从事的工作正在由家务劳动转向社会劳动,第二句却又说这种变化并不能掩盖另一个重要的现象,两者之间的转折关系通过连词 *however* 表现出来。第三句中的 *today* 照应前面两句的现在时态,并引导出主题句,即:美国妇女和以前一样,她们大部分时间都在从事家务劳动。第四句中的 *this* 指的是第三句的那种现象。接下来作者解释了产生这种现象的原因。*since 1980* 这个词组和前面的 *today* 呼应。第七句中的 *these* 指第六句提到的缩短工作时间,普遍执行公共假日休息和取消繁重体力劳动等原因。正是由于这些因素的存在,美国妇女才可能一边工作一边料理家务。第八句的 *Moreover* 导出另一个原因:大部分参加工作的妇女不从事全日制工作。最后三句分别说明身边子女还未上学和正在上学的妇女以及还没有孩子的妇女参加工作的情况,三句话通过三个 *among* 一气呵成。

可是,很多同学不会运用连贯技巧,他们作文段落松散零落,杂乱无章。

例文 ① *One morning I got up very early, and everything around was very quiet. The sky was clear and the air was fresh the sun didn't rise yet. I did morning exercise. I ran along the street to the park to read English. I thought the park was a good place for study. There must be few people in it in the very early morning.*

② *Women are playing an increasingly important part in society today. Today, many women have a work. They worked as well as men, playing an important part in the factories. There are many women in government also. They lead other people, control, and make out plans. There are many women scientists. They invent new things to improve our lives.*

解析 这两个例文中句子的语法基本正确,但句子与句子之间缺少联系,整个段落显得很松散。以第一段为例:太阳还未升起和天空晴朗之间存在着转折关系,因此两句话之间应该加入连词 *but*;后

做早操与先去公园这两处动作之间应有先后关系,而句子重点应当是去公园,因此,可以用主从复合句来表达;另外,去公园和考虑到公园人不多,有利于读英语,是一个因果关系,可以用分词短语来表达。现将这两段文字修改如下,请比较表达效果。

1. One morning I got up early, and everything was very quiet. The sun hasn't risen yet, but the sky was clear and fresh. After I did morning exercises, I ran along the street to the park thinking that there must be few people in it and that it must be a good place to read aloud.

2. Women are playing an increasing important part in society today. Women make up a large portion of the labor force now. They are playing an important role in factories and in government as well. Like men workers, they can also run machines, drive buses, and hold administrative positions. Moreover, there are many women scientists who perform inventions and make discoveries for our society.

下面的短文摘自一名同学的习作。

例文 This device(tape-recorder) is useful in many ways. For example, in an interview, a journalist can use it to replace the taking of short-hand note. Also in learning English, students can use it in practising their listening skills. Moreover, they can record their own voices and listen to them to improve their spoken English. Therefore tape-recorders can be used widely in our work and study.

解析 以上这段文字灵活应用了连词和代词,如: for example, moreover, also, it, they, them, their, therefore 等,语句表达清楚、流畅,是一篇较好的作文。

所以,适当地运用一些连接技巧,可以使文章结构严谨、条理清楚、层次分明,从而能取得较好的成绩。

三、语法

语法正确是英语写作的基本要求。可是很多同学认为自己从中

学就开始学习语法知识,语法概念很清楚,因此,他们在写作时往往不注意语法,写出来的句子错误百出。而且,写作中经常出现的错误又是一些基本的语法概念。

综观同学的作文,写作中常见的错误有以下几类:

1. 主谓语不一致(disagreement between subject and verb)

例文 ① My father, my mother, and my younger sister is sleeping.

但是,很多错误又是由于概念模糊造成的。如:

例文 ② When a man reaches forty years of age, his vigor and creativity are at its peak.

解析 这里的 vigor 和 creativity 指一个人的品质,是一个单数概念,不宜用 are,改用 is。

例文 ③ A box of groceries were left by the door.

解析 这里的主语是 a box 不是 groceries, were 要改用 was。

例文 ④ The captain, along with three crew members, were decorated for bravery.

解析 这里的主语是 the captain,谓语应该用 was。按照英语语法规则,主谓之间插入以“along with”,“together with”,“in addition to”和“as well as”引导的词组不影响谓语形式。

有些名词如 physics, mathematics, politics, athletics, checkers, mechanics, economics 和 acoustics 尽管以“-s”结尾,但它们还是单数。

例文 ⑤ Mathematics are difficult for many students.

解析 这里应该用 is。

另外,data 虽然形式是复数,但它后面的词常用单数。

例:The data has proved helpful in his research.

2. 句子成分残缺(sentence fragment)

英语的句子由主语和谓语构成,凡缺少主语或谓语的句子都称

为句子成分残缺。

例文

①The result being that she lost the election.

②They guided us to the edge of the village.

Leaving us to find our way home alone.

③They planned for a trip to the Great Wall.

A trip to give them many new experiences.

解析 从形式上看,这些句子都是完整的。其实,他们仅仅是一些句子的片断,缺少主语(如第2句),或缺少谓语(如第1句和第3句)。

成分残缺的句子可以通过改变动词形式(第1句)、合并句子(第2句)或增加句子成分(第3句)等方法来纠正。因此,上面三句可以改成:

①The result was that she lost the election.

②They guided us to the edge of the village, leaving us to find our way home alone.

③They planned for a trip to the Great Wall. It would be a trip to give them many new experiences.

3. 代词指代不明

正确使用代词可以使文章意义连贯,语言简洁。但是,使用代词要注意分清代词所替代的名词,否则,就会出现歧义,甚至有时不知所云。

例文 ①Before Ruth gave the dog it dinner, she washed her pet.

解析 作者本来是让 it 代替 dog,但是在这里也可代替 dinner,句意模棱两可。为避免歧义,本句应该改成:

Before Ruth gave the dog its dinner, she washed her pet.

例文 ②Daily practice is necessary in ballet; in fact they are often as

highly trained as athletes.

解析 这里的 they 指的是芭蕾舞演员(ballet performers),但作者没有在前面提到这个词,因此 they 无词可指。本句应改成:

Daily practice is necessary in ballet training; in fact, ballet performers are often as highly trained as athletes.

4. 词语位置不当

写作时,如果词语位置恰当,语义就清晰易懂,否则,就会引起误解或歧义。

例文 ①A car drove down the street covered with ribbon.

解析 clected 的逻辑主语应该是 a car,而不是 street。本句应改成:

A car covered with ribbons drove down the street.

例文 ②He worked hard in the field, raising crops that would bring in money without complaint.

解析 without complaint 放在句末就可能修饰 money,作定语,或作状语修饰 bring 或 raising,其实,它修饰 work hard 作全句状语。本句应改成:

Without complaint, he worked hard in the fields, raising crops that would bring in money.

5. 串句(run-sentence)

串句指把两个或多个句子用逗号串在一起,当成一个句子使用。

例文 ①The large number of high-school dropouts is indeed a problem that calls for serious study, a practical solution must be found to keep students in school.

②It is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain a good job without a college education, therefore, more and more students are entering the colleges and universities of the United States.

解析 上句用了副词性连词(adverbial conjunction)来连接分句。凡是用副词性连词开始的句子前必须使用分号或逗号,不能用句号。因此,这句应该改成:

It is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain a good job without a college education; therefore, more and more students are entering the colleges and universities of the United States.

常见的副词性连词有:

nevertheless, moreover, finally, suddenly, therefore, consequently, for example, for instance, in addition, as a consequence, for this reason, as a result 等。

这些词都不能从语法上把两个分句连接在一起。使用这些词的标点格式是:

....., consequently,

或者:

.....(;) consequently,

但是,如果副词性连词放在一个完整的句子中间时,它前面就只能用逗号,因为这时它仅仅是加强语气,并没有用来开始一个新句子。这时它的标点格式是:

....., therefore,

例如:

He is, therefore, eager to go with us.

6. 时态混乱

由于汉语中没有时态的概念,中国学生在英语写作时,时态概念比较模糊,常常一会儿用现在时,一会儿又用过去时,使得文章支离破碎,读来费解。

纠正的方法:坚持使用一种时态(一般是现在时或过去时),没有特别的理由不改变时态。

以上列举的仅仅是英语作文中常出现的一些语法错误。除此以外,拼写错误、标点符号以及词语搭配错误也应引起考生的注意。

综合以上三点的分析,我们应该能从总体上把握好如何写一篇英语作文,不至于思路紊乱,抓不住要点。对怎样组织材料、展开段落,有了一个初步的认识,下面我们再就一些英语学习中需要特别注意的问题做一具体分析。

第二章 文章的主题

主题是文章的灵魂,是作者写作意图的突出体现。写文章时,作者总是抱有一个主要目的,对文章所涉及题目有一个基本的看法。这个主要目的和基本看法就是文章的主题。突出主题是写好文章的关键,否则,想到哪里便写到哪里势必使文章结构松散、杂乱无章。因此,在动笔之前,首要要考虑的问题就是如何突出主题。下面的方法将有助于你如何突出主题。

1. 题材取舍要得当;
2. 作者的观点要明确;
3. 一次只集中解决一个问题;
4. 动笔前用一句话阐述一下主题。

题材取舍得当,就是根据主题的需要选择适当的材料,有取舍,有选择,否则文章写出来就会成为一本流水账。为了突出主题,作者还要毫不含糊地说明自己赞成什么、反对什么,观点要鲜明。此外,一篇短文只能解决一个问题,一定要避免面面俱到。例如写一篇题为“The First Day at My University”的短文,如果既写校园的布局,又写文体设施,又写同学之间的关系,还写老师对学生的态度,这么多内容都要表现,结果每个方面只能蜻蜓点水,无法给人留下什么印象。因此,在写作时一定要缩小范围,不要擅自扩大写作涉及面。假如在动笔前写一句话对主题思想加以概括,更有助于作者明确写作意图,做到心中有数。主题思想的概括(thesis statement)可以像路标一样使人不会迷失方向。它不仅可以使各个段落的 topic sentence 应运而生,而且还可以帮助作者把各个段落以主题为线索加以组织和连接。如果把概括好的 thesis statement 放在引言中,文章就容易展开。在下面这篇短文中,作者开门见山,单刀直入,在引言中点出主题,即:斗牛的三大步骤。随后,一段写一个步骤,渐次展开,把斗牛场面描

写得生动而具体。文章的结尾,即第四段的最后一句话,说明斗牛的表演已经完成,斗牛进入尾声,并再次重复文章一开始所表达的主题。

The brave fiesta, also called the most artistic and cruel way of killing an animal, consists of six performances in which six bulls are killed by three bullfighters, one at a time. Each of these individual performances consists of three main parts whose continuity presents one of the most beautiful and bloody spectacles which people pay to watch during the sunny afternoons in Spain and certain countries in Latin America.

The first part, called tanteo, begins with the sound of the trumpet, which is the signal for the doors to be opened to let the imposing beast in...

Right after the third pair of banderillas, the trumpet sounds again and the second and most important part of the performance begins. This part is called the lidiando el toro...

After the matador has shown all of his art and skill against the bull's attack, the trumpet sounds for the last time, and the third part of the performance begins. This is called the momento del veredicto the moment of truth... This marks the end of the fiesta performance, to be repeated until the sixth bull dies and the fiesta comes to an end.

Matthew Kay, "How to kill a Bull at a Fiesta."

再看这篇关于文化的文章是如何突出“文化无高低贵贱之分”这一主题思想的。

例文 Culture is the sum total of all the traditions, customs, beliefs, and ways of life of a given group of human beings. In this sense, every group has a culture, however savage, undeveloped, or uncivilized it may seem to us.

To the professional anthropologist, there is no intrinsic superiority

of one culture over another, just as to the professional linguist there is no intrinsic hierarchy among languages.

People once thought of the languages of backward groups as savage, undeveloped forms of speech, consisting largely of grunts and groans. While it is possible that language in general began as a series of grunts and groans, it is a fact established by the study of “backward” languages that no spoken tongue answers that description today. Most languages of uncivilized groups are, by our most severe standards, extremely complex, delicate, and ingenious pieces of machinery for the transfer of ideas. They fall behind our Western languages not in their sound patterns or grammatical structures, which usually are fully adequate for all language needs, but only in their vocabularies, which reflect the objects and activities known to their speakers. Even in this department, however, two things are to be noted: 1. All languages seem to possess the machinery for vocabulary expansion, either by putting together words already in existence or by borrowing them from other languages and adapting them to their own system. 2. The objects and activities requiring names and distinctions in “backward” languages, while different from ours, are often surprisingly numerous and complicated. A Western language distinguishes merely between two degrees of remoteness (“this” and “that”); some languages of the American Indians distinguish between what is close to the speaker, or to the person addressed, or removed from both, or out of sight, or in the past, or in the future.

This study of language, in turn, casts a new light upon the claim of the anthropologists that all cultures are to be viewed independently, and without ideas of rank or hierarchy.

解析 文章一开始在引言中便阐述了文化无贵贱高低之分。第二段作为过渡段把引言和正文巧妙地衔接起来,指出文化和语言一

样不分等级。第三段就语言的特点加以展开,纠正了一些西方人对其他民族语言所持的偏见,并列举了大量事实说明有的印地安部族的语言系统比西方语言更完善。最后一段用一个过渡句连接上下文,总结重申主题,指出对语言的研究进一步证明了人类学家的学说,即一切文化都应得到独立而平等的对待,不得厚此薄彼。

当然,并非所有文章的主题都像上文那样开门见山地出现。在何处出现对主题的阐述,要根据文章的具体需要而定,有的出现在结尾,有的则在文章中反复出现,还有的并不直接阐述而是以较为含蓄的方式出现。许多专家认为主题思想的表达离不开文章的内在结构,因此掌握好各类文章的结构显得非常重要。



一、找出下面短文的主题,并用“——”划出 the thesis statement:

Welcome Change

How often have you said, “When my life gets back to normal . . . ,” not realizing that life can never get back to any place or time?

Change is the most changeless thing in the universe. We need to accept all change — welcome or unwelcome — with the understanding that nothing comes to stay, but only to pass. And because two things can never occupy the same space at the same time, one change makes the way for the next, giving us the opportunity to grow.

Linda was devastated when her husband was transferred to a city a thousand miles from her family and friends. Certainly she would be miserable, she resisted bitterly. She secretly wished her husband would go without her.

Then a friend convinced her that although the sun was setting on one life, it would rise on another. So she decided to accept the change as