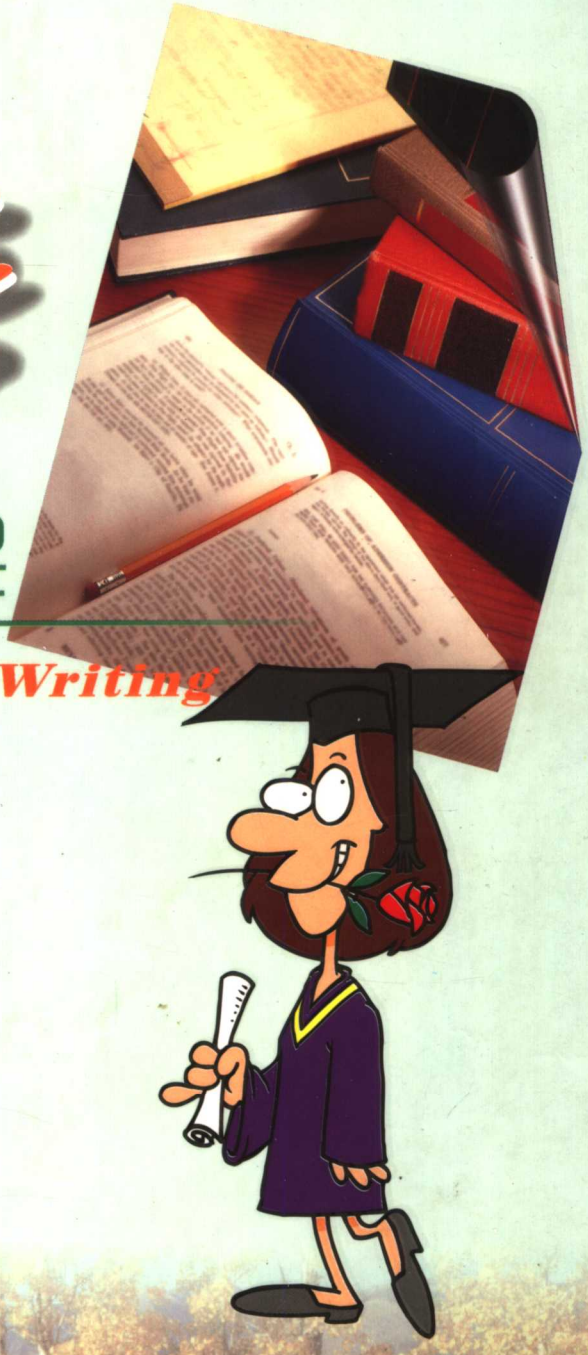
谷青松 编著

# 英语写作教程

## Courses in English Writing



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# 前　言

在当今信息时代，英语写作的交际功能显得越来越重要。同时，在各类英语考试中，写作部分越来越受到重视。编者在多年教学和培训的基础上，结合近年国内外有关英语写作的研究成果，详细介绍了与英语写作有关的语法规则、英语写作的特点和方法、几种常用应用文的写法以及四种重要的考试作文形式，旨在让读者从全面了解英语写作本身入手，通过实践和模仿，达到提高英语写作能力的目的。

本书主要内容：

1. 通过语法规则来理解英语写作。本章以近年国内外权威英语语法著作为基础，结合自己对英语中修饰成分的专门研究，详细介绍了与英语写作有关的语法规则，让读者了解什么是正确的句子。同时，为了让读者写出精彩的句子，本章最后部分提供了许多有效并且易懂的方法和实例。

2. 怎样写英语作文。本章从段落到篇章详细介绍了英语写作的特点和方法，并且介绍了英语写作的四种主要类型，以便读者对考试作文的理解。

3. 了解一些英语应用文。本章详细介绍了摘要、论文、书信等几种常用的应用文，旨在提高读者英语写作的实用能力。

4. 练习几种考试作文的写法。本章以考前培训为目的，从评分方法和试题特点等方面详细介绍了大学英语考试作文、研究生入学考试作文、雅思作文和托福作文。

本书主要特点：

1. 适用广泛。本书主要对象为高校学生、研究生报考者、雅思和托福应试者。同时，由于本书全部用英语撰写，而且配有练习和答案，不但可以用作大学非英语专业高年级学生以及英语专业学生的写作课教材，而且可以成为大学英语教师和其他英语写作爱好者的一本很实用的参考书。

2. 信息量大。本书提供了丰富的例词、例句和范文，供读者鉴析和模仿。

3. 实践性强。本书理论阐述简明扼要，注重实例分析，强调在理解的基础上通过不断训练达到提高写作表达能力的目的。

在编写过程中，编者参考了有关文献，在此向这些文献的作者表示谢意。同时，由于编者水平有限，书中不当或错误之处在所难免，敬请读者批评指正。

谷青松

2003 年 12 月

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# Chapter 1
# To Understand English Writing through Grammatical Rules

## 1.1 Grammatical Units in English

### 1.1.1 Introduction

An English writing, in my eyes, is virtually a logically-written and well-organized text made up of meaningful and grammatical sentences. An adequate study of the English language can improve the ability to write English correctly and effectively; and written style can be improved through learning about the resources for grammatical structures, word order, and the devices for connecting sentences and paragraphs. (Greenbaum, 1996: 36 – 37) In some sense, grammatical rules seem much more important and necessary in written English than in spoken English. It is, therefore, not difficult to understand that a writer with little knowledge of grammatical rules can hardly write well. This chapter attempts to understand English writing through grammatical rules, or rather grammatical units in the English language.

It is usually assumed that the SENTENCE is the highest-ranking unit of grammar, and hence that the purpose of a grammatical description of English is to define, by means of whatever descriptive apparatus may be necessary (rules, categories, etc.), what counts as a grammatical sentence in English. (Quirk et al., 1985: 47) However, neither SENTENCE nor GRAMMAR can be given a clear-cut definition. To give a realistic presentation of English grammar, we have to accept that grammar is a linguistic CORE, round which other aspects of linguistic organization and usage are integrated, in order to take a broad interpretation of grammar and give a detailed account of other factors; in other words, English grammar should not be restricted to the study on English sentences, but extended to detailed studies on other meaningful units.

In order to state general rules about the construction of sentences, it is constantly necessary to refer to units smaller than the sentence itself: units such as those which are commonly referred to by the terms CLAUSE, PHRASE, WORD, and MORPHEME. (Quirk et al., 1985: 38)

### 1.1.2 Basic-grammatical Units in English

Basically, the units of English grammar can be ordered in terms of rank as: WORD, PHRASE, CLAUSE and SENTENCE. In grammatical terms, while a sentence is the largest unit, a word is the smallest. The grammatical units of the following sentence,

*The weather has been exceptionally hot since we returned from Shanghai last week.*

can be basically interpreted at such levels as:

- at clause level

*The weather has been exceptionally hot since we returned from Shanghai last week.*

- at phrase level

*The weather has been exceptionally hot since we returned from Shanghai last week.*

- at word level

*The weather has been exceptionally hot since we returned from Shanghai last week.*

### 1.1.3 Macro-grammatical Units in English

In English, a word is no more the smallest meaningful element than a sentence is the largest. A word can break into smaller meaningful elements that are called morphemes, which are the minimal meaningful elements from the semantic point of view. Meanwhile, a sentence does not stand alone in English. "It would be an error to believe that outside the sentence there are no restraints, no features that link one sentence to another." (Palmer, 1971: 73) Sentences could come together to form a text so as to convey a complete message. "The essence of grammatical units is that they are meaningful and combine with each other in systematic ways." (Biber et al., 2000: 50) Therefore, from the macro-grammatical point of view, the units of grammar can be extended as: MORPHEME, WORD, PHRASE, CLAUSE, SENTENCE and TEXT. A text consists of one or more sentences; a sentence consists of one or more clauses; a clause consists of one or more phrases; a phrase consists of one or more words; a word consists of one or more morphemes; and a morpheme is actually regarded as the smallest unit of grammar in English, as shown in the following table.

| Macro-grammatical Unit in English | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TEXT** | One or More Meaningful and Grammatical Sentences | | | | | | | | | |
| **SENTENCE** | He | loves | | the | girl | because | she | is | very | pretty |
| **CLAUSE** | He | loves | | the | girl | because | she | is | very | pretty |
| **PHRASE** | He | loves | | the | girl | because | she | is | very | pretty |
| **WORD** | He | loves | | the | girl | because | she | is | very | pretty |
| **MORPHEME** | He | love | s | the | girl | because | she | is | very | pretty |

### 1.1.4 The Nature of Grammatical Units

"Speech is a continuous stream of sound without a clear division into units, but it can be analyzed into meaningful elements which recur and combine according to rules. In writing, such an analysis is expressed through the division into words and sentences." (Biber et al., 2000: 50) Be it small or large, a grammatical unit should be both meaningful and systematic. In English writing, the writer must make sure what he writes is meaningful and what he writes is organized in systematic ways and accords with certain grammatical rules. So, a most likely approach to writing

well may be studying carefully the units of grammar from the lowest to the highest.

### 1.1.5 Exercise

Try to analyze grammatical units of the following sentences.

1. *Some students will be working late in their rooms.*
2. *The evenings have turned very cold just recently.*
3. *The hunter in the village has killed a poisonous snake that had bitten quite a few villagers.*
4. *The room has a large window which faces south.*

## 1.2 Morpheme

### 1.2.1 What Is a Morpheme?

The morpheme is the smallest unit required for grammatical and lexical analysis. (Greenbaum, 1996: 470) The word *uncomfortables* can be cut into several segments: *un-comfort-able-s*. Each of these segments has its own form (or set of forms), its own meanings, and its own distribution. *Un-* has a fixed phonological form, a meaning of negation, and recurs in words like *unforgettable*, *unreliable*, *unbelievable*; *comfort* has a fixed phonological form and a fixed meaning, and recurs in word-forms like *comforts*, *comforted*, *comforting*; *-able* sometimes occurs as *ible*, has a fixed meaning, and recurs in words like *comparable*, *advisable*, *inevitable*; *-s* has a range of phonetic forms but a constant meaning of plurality, and recurs in words like *chairs*, *desks*, *beds*. None of these segments can be further divided into smaller segments which function in the same way as they do. They represent "morphemes", the minimal units of grammatical analysis. (Bauer, 1983: 13 – 14)

### 1.2.2 Classification of Morphemes

A morpheme that can occur in isolation is termed a "free morpheme" or "content morpheme", which can be a single word (e. g., *boy*, *girl*, *do*, *go*) or the root of a derivative (e. g., un-*mention*-able-s, im-*polite*, ab-*normal*), carrying the meaning. A morpheme that can only occur in conjunction with at least one other morpheme is termed a "bound morpheme" or "grammatical morpheme", which is an "affix", either an "inflectional affix" (e. g., boy-*s*, work-*ed*, go-*ing*, strong-*er*) or a "derivational affix" (e. g., kind-*ness*, *dis*-close), showing grammatical features.

### 1.2.3 Exercise

Cut the following words into morphemes.

1. *carelessness*

2. *inexperienced*
3. *imperfect*
4. *illogical*
5. *irrational*
6. *deforestation*
7. *transcontinental*
8. *statesmanlike*
9. *impressionism*
10. *aerothermodynamics*

## 1.3 Word and Phrase

### 1.3.1 Word Classes and Word Formation

#### 1.3.1.1 Word Classes

"To the ordinary language user, words are the basic elements of language. They are clearly shown in writing; they are the units which dictionaries are organized around." (Biber et al., 2000: 51) Although it's not an easy thing to give a definite definition of WORD, we know a word consists of one or more morphemes and this helps us to study words by classifying them in various ways.

A word consists of one or more morphemes. A one-morpheme word is called a "simple word" and a word made up of two or more morphemes is called either a "compound word" (a combination of two or more free morphemes) or a "derivative word" (a combination of one root and one or more affixes).

| Word Class | | Example |
|---|---|---|
| Open Class | Noun | student, book |
| | Verb | learn, stimulate |
| | Adjective | beautiful, attractive |
| | Adverb | abnormally, actually |
| Closed Class | Auxiliary | be, have, do, can, will, must, need |
| | Conjunction | and, but, or, because, if, although |
| | Preposition | at, on, according to, as well as |
| | Determiner | the, a(n), your, every |
| | Pronoun | you, your, yourself, one |
| | Numeral | two, first, two-thirds, two thousand |
| | Interjection | wow, ah, ouch, yeah |

There are two major kinds of word classes in the English language: closed classes and open classes. "A closed system contains a limited number of members, and new members cannot easily be added. The principal closed systems in English are the groups of function words, such as auxiliaries, conjunctions, and prepositions. With open classes, membership is indefinite and

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