

*Essential English and Chinese  
Rhetorical Devices  
with  
Exercises and Answers*

# 英语汉语 修辞格式举要

喻翔生 编

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喻翔生，昆明理工大学外语系教授，1931年10月生于云南省昆明市。1953年毕业于云南大学外语系。1953年至1957年先后在云南人民出版社编辑部编秘组、文艺组，任助理编辑、编辑等职，1957年被错划为“右派”。1978年起在昆明理工大学（原昆明工学院）外语系执教。译著有：《英文常用谚语1000句》《侦破万能头脑》《特洛伊的陷落》《西方名言集锦》《英美文学基础知识1800题》《英语汉语修辞格式举要》。

# 前 言

陈望道《修辞学发凡》中说：“修辞就是调整或适用语辞”。这就是说，修辞就是调整和修饰语词和文词。调整语词和文词就是为了表达特定的思想内容，对词语、句子、段落作恰当的选用、安排。修饰语词和文词指用一定的修辞方式，增加语言的生动性、形象性。我们学习修辞，为的是提高语言、文字表达的水平，使写的文章更准确、更鲜明、更生动、更贴切。

我国是一个历史悠久、有着光辉灿烂文化的文明古国。历代有不少的文学大师极为重视语言表达的艺术。他们精心推敲，遣词造句，写下了无数绝妙好辞，给后人留下精雕细琢的语言瑰宝。唐代诗人贾岛青年时，有一天骑在驴上，口中不停地吟哦：“闲居少邻并，草径入荒园。鸟宿池中树，僧敲月下门。”他反复琢磨，觉得“推”字不确切，想改用“敲”字，于是在驴背上作推门和敲门的手势。他不知不觉间闯进京兆尹韩愈的仪仗队中，被韩愈手下的人押到韩愈面前。贾岛只好告诉他在琢磨诗句的事。韩愈没有责备贾岛，立马沉吟片刻，说道：“作‘敲’字佳矣。”为什么“敲”字比“推”字好呢？因为这首诗题是《题李凝旧居》，月下找人，僧人敲门，响中寓静，敲门才和幽居相应。另一位北宋时的政治家、诗人王安石有一次离开金陵（今南京市）外出，泊船瓜洲时，作了《泊船瓜洲》一首诗：“京口瓜洲一水间，钟山只隔数重山，春风又绿江南岸，明月何时照我还？”诗中的“绿”字展现出千里江岸一片新绿、春意盎然的动人景象，一个“绿”字使全诗别开生面，把春风的作用

活画出来。但是，这个“绿”字迭经筛选，最后才定稿。据南宋人洪迈《容斋续笔》卷八记载：“吴中士人家藏其草。初云‘又到江南岸’。圈去‘到’字，注曰：‘不好’。改为‘过’，复圈去而改为‘入’，旋改为‘满’。凡如是十许字，始定为‘绿’。”这两位诗人刻意炼字，挑选最贴切、最有表现力的文字来表情达意的修辞方法，一丝不苟的认真写作态度，一直传为文坛佳话。

在欧美作家中，特别重视修辞者也不乏其人。法国批判现实主义作家福楼拜（Gustave Flaubert, 1821—1880）曾对另一位法国著名作家莫泊桑（Guy de Maupassant, 1850—1893）说：“我们无论描写什么事物，要说明它，只有一个名词；要赋予它运动，只有一个动词；要区别它的性质，只有一个形容词。我们必须继续不断苦心思索，非发现这个名词、动词与形容词不可。仅仅发现与这些名词、动词或形容词相类似的词语是不行的。不能因为思索困难，用类似的词语敷衍了事。”这就是欧洲文学史上著名的“一字说”的来源。美国现实主义作家杰克·伦敦（Jack London, 1876—1916）出身贫寒，青年时靠艰苦的劳动而独立生活，他立志文学创作，感到自己知识不足，广泛阅读世界文学名著，特别用心学习文字词语，终于具有熟练驾驭语言文字的能力，因而他的作品受到美国读者的欢迎。对这些蜚英腾茂，取得卓越成就的著名作家，我们应当仿效并学习他们炼字选词的严肃、认真的写作态度。

多年以来，编者在大学中从事英语教学，注意到很多在座的青年学子对各个等级的英语考试极为重视。他们为了应试，非常注意对英语的阅读理解、语法及听说的练习和提高。然而，无庸讳言，他们的英语写作能力相对而言是比较差的。即使部分学生掌握了不少英语词汇，比较熟悉英语语法，在写作中能写出字句通顺的英语作文，也往往流于行文平淡，枯燥乏味，缺乏生动形

象的语言和修辞好的文句。主要原因在于他们对英美文学中丰富的修辞格式缺乏了解、或了解不多、或对优美的英美文学名著读得太少。编者有鉴于此，为帮助青年学生丰富英语修辞的素养，深知自己学识浅陋，仍潜心参阅各种英语有关修辞的书刊，广为辑录例句，把英语中常见的修辞方式和能与英语修辞格相对应的汉语修辞格式，特别是文言修辞，编辑成书。在本书中附有为数不少的英语修辞格练习及答案，供读者自修或青年教师作为教学参考。编者希望此书的面世能对读者有所裨益，算是对英语教学尽了一点微薄的力量。

由于编者水平有限，书中难免有纰缪之处，恳祈外语界专家、同行及读者给予匡正。

编 者

1987 年初稿于昆明

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# **ESSENTIAL ENGLISH RHETORICAL DEVICES**



# **ESSENTIAL ENGLISH RHETORICAL DEVICES**

## **PART ONE**

### **I.0 An Elementry Introduction to the Historical Background of Rhetoric**

What is rhetoric? Rhetoric is the art of presenting facts and ideas in clear, convincing, and attractive language. In other words, rhetoric is the art of expressing modes of thought through the employment of figures of speech, images and other ornaments of style. It is one of the oldest organized subject treated in the world of literature.

It is believed that Corax of Syracuse in the 5th century B. C. stipulated fundamental principles of public argument and laid down five divisions for a speech: Proem, narative, argument, remarks, and peroration or conclusion. Aristotle wrote a rhetoric about 320 B. C. ; Longinus wrote an Art of Rhetoric about A. D. 260. To the ancients the aim of rhetoric was to make oratory effective. In Greece, Rhetoric was considered as one of the few important branches of learning. A knowledge and command of it was regarded as essential. However, the field of rhetoric was then rather limited. In Aristotle's rhetoric, it embraced only the following three subjects capable of systematic treat-

ment, namely:

1. The possible sources of proofs
2. The style
3. The right ordering of the parts of a speech

From the above it can be easily traced how rhetoric was originally applied only to oral expression, constituting mainly what we call today the argumentation.

One rhetoric of the period, slightly later than Aristotle's, from Cicero's day until the 19th century, included the following components: invention, arrangement, style, memory and delivery.

1. Invention was the discovery of the relevant material.
2. Arrangement was the organization of the major parts of discourse (exordium, narration, discussion, peroration).
3. Style was the consideration of the appropriate manner for the matter and the occasion.
4. Delivery elaborated the technique for actually making a speech.

5. Memory: guidance on how to memorize speeches.

The rules for oral and written composition remained so all through the Middle Ages. Even down to about the beginning of the 18th century it was not much changed.

John Locke (1632—1704), a famous English philosopher of the latter part of the 17th century, was quoted to have said that rhetoric was the science of oratory; the art of speaking with propriety, elegance, and force.

The beginning of the 19th century saw the shifting of emphasis from the oral side to the written side in rhetoric. As printing became so general and so convenient that when people worked to communicate

thoughts with others they found it easier to write, so the old rhetorical principles as applied in speech naturally were also adapted to write literature.

## I . 1 What Rhetoric Treats about Today?

Today rhetoric is considered to consist of the combination of two sciences; the science of logic and the science of grammar. Both logic and grammar deal with expression of thought; yet either one of these, when singly applied, may not lead to the desired end. Logic deals with the laws of thinking; the aim is to determine what sequences of thought are sound and self-consistent. The emphasis is on the subject matter alone, from the viewpoint of the writer or author, without any consideration for the reader. This may be good as far as a study goes. But the danger lies in that it may not be practical, for the readers may not be able to follow the writer's train of thought.

In a similar way, grammar deals with the forms, inflections, and choice of words and their relation to each other in phrases, clauses, or sentences. Its aim is to show what is correct according to usage, not caring much whether these customary forms of expression are adapted to the hearers' or readers' capacities. Here what is expressed may be understood, but it may not be understood to the extent the writer desires. In order to adjust this deficiency of both logic and grammar, rhetoric comes in to adapt the oral or written discourse to the hearers or readers and it is therefore also called the art of adaption, which is the science that treats of the modes of expressing thought in such a way that others will not have any difficulty in getting the proper amount of thought intended for communication.



In short, rhetoric has sloughed off its original connection with oratory. No longer may it be defined as “the art which teaches eloquence”. Today rhetoric is generally used to signify “the art of effectively joining words together”, or simply “composition”.

## I . 2 The Importance of Studying Rhetoric

Whether we speak or write, our aim is to have our hearers understand us without much effort. How can this be accomplished without knowing the principles of adaption which rhetoric treats about? So, if we wish to be a good speaker and forceful writer, we must study rhetoric carefully until we know all sides of the subject, and can apply the principles we have thus learned.

It is common knowledge that English and Chinese are from markedly different language families. English belongs to the Indo-European linguistic family; whereas Chinese belongs to the Sino-Tibetan Language family. As the structures of English and Chinese are not the same, the differences between these two languages give rise to the differences in rhetorics. For instance, some figures like allegory, allusion are existing in both English and Chinese, but they are quite different in contents and implications in terms of each nation's history, tradition, culture, belief and customs. Besides, a number of figures such as alliteration, assonance, paraleipsis, apophasis, and polysyndeton are not in existence in Chinese rhetoric. However, in spite of all these points in which English and Chinese rhetorical devices differ, it should be noted that quite a few English figures bear an obvious similarity to their Chinese counterparts. For every English learner, a general knowledge of the rules of grammar, as it were, can hardly