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21世纪英语专业系列教材

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Contrastive Analysis and English Writing

英汉对比与 英语写作



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Contrastive Analysis and English Writing

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《21 世纪英语专业系列教材》
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前言

写作是英语专业学生必须具备的五项基本技能之一，由于它与听、说、读、译相比更能体现语言学习者对综合能力的应用，因此写作教学往往是英语专业本科教学的重中之重。尽管国内市面上关于英语写作的教材层出不穷，但中国学生的英语写作仍普遍存在一些问题，突出表现在受母语负迁移影响而导致的语法错误、语用错误以及篇章结构安排上的错误：写作理论知识与写作实践能力脱节的问题，作文结构程式化、千篇一律，内容刻板老套的问题，等等。基于对上述问题的反思，我们特别针对中国的英语专业学生，编写了这本《英汉对比与英语写作》。

作为北京市 2009 年精品教材立项项目，本教材旨在倡导一套更符合我国国情的英语写作教材编写理念，争取从根本上提高中国学生的英语写作能力。具体而言，本教材在各章节内容的构思和编写方面主要突出以下特色：

1. 通过英汉对比，重点关注汉语言、汉文化、汉思维在学生写作过程中的正负迁移表现，并以此为依据进行每一章节的重、难点设置，增强中国学生对自身写作中出现的错误原因的深刻理解，从而增强英语写作的感性与理性认识，提高写作实践能力。

2. 在注重知识点讲授的同时，加大例文评析的力度。一方面，通过对范文的赏析及详细分析让学生切实体会抽象知识点在具体写作中的实际体现；另一方面，通过对学生习作进行分层面、分要点的详细错误分析及改正，让其真正认识到自身写作存在的问题及改进方向。

3. 在段落发展、篇章组织等方面不再给出任何固定格式或参照模板，鼓励学生对所讲述的写作知识点进行融合、灵活、创新的应用，避免机械性模仿，培养其自身的写作风格。

本教材共分为四大部分、十五章。第一部分共三章，集中讨论中国学生在英语行文过程中突出存在的语言问题，包括选词、造句及标点符号使用等内容；第二部分也由三章组成，主要对英语篇章的局部构造进行阐述，并分析中国学生在英语环境下使用段落中心句、不同的段落发展方式以及段内衔接连贯方面存在的问题；第三部分由五章构成，上升到文章总体谋篇布局的层面，分别讲述了英语文章主题句、开头、结尾、篇章发展以及篇内衔接连贯这五大问题，并通过习作讲评重点分析了中国学生在这些方面易犯的错误；最后一部分共有四章，上升到文体层面，分别对英语记叙文、描写文、说明文以及议论文的写作特点进行了探讨，并通过范文赏析与习作点评，对比总结了中西方在这些文体应用方面上的异同，此外，这一部分的设计既关注了不同文体的风格特征，同时也是对前三部分内容的综合性应用。

本教材行文语言为英语，在举例说明英汉差异时部分用到汉语例证，适合英语专业二、三年级本科生及其他英语写作爱好者阅读。

本教材在编写过程中得到了英国专家 Margaret Fawcett 女士的热心帮助，并由加拿大专家 Robin Dahling 先生对全文进行了认真的审读，提出了许多宝贵的修改意见，并确保

了对习作进行错误分析的准确性以及习作修改的地道性。在此特别向二位外籍专家致谢。

本教材的总体框架是由主编和副主编共同设计的，大家分工合作，共同负责稿子的最后审定，最终由主编总其大成。本教材第一、二章由淡晓红编写，第三、六、十一章由王志欣编写，第四、七、十章由周荣娟编写，第五章由张怡编写，第八、九章由李方慧编写，第十二至十五章由杨子编写。

限于作者水平，书中难免存在纰漏和欠妥之处，恳请各位教师、专家批评指正。

何伟、杨子、淡晓红

2010年9月28日

Contents

Part I Language Expression

Unit 1 Words and Collocations / 1

Words / 1

English Conventions / 1

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 18

Student Writing Analysis / 28

Collocations / 29

English Conventions / 29

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 30

Student Writing Analysis / 31

Assignments / 32

Unit 2 Sentences / 33

Sentence Structure / 33

English Conventions / 33

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 36

Student Writing Analysis / 42

Sentence Unity / 43

English Conventions / 43

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 44

Student Writing Analysis / 45

Sentence Coherence / 46

English Conventions / 46

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 51

Student Writing Analysis / 54

Assignments / 55

Unit 3 Punctuations / 56

Commas / 56

English Conventions / 57

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 59

Student Writing Analysis / 61

Colons / 61

English Conventions / 62

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 62

Student Writing Analysis / 63

Semicolons / 64

English Conventions / 64

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 64

Student Writing Analysis / 65

Dashes / 66

English Conventions / 66

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 67

Student Writing Analysis / 67

Assignments / 68

Part II Local Organization

Unit 4 Topic Sentence / 70

English Conventions / 70

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 73

Student Writing Analysis / 75

Assignments / 78

Unit 5 Supporting Details / 80

Narration / 81

English Conventions / 81

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 83

Student Writing Analysis / 84

Description / 85

English Conventions / 85

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 88

Student Writing Analysis / 89

Assignments / 90

Comparison and Contrast / 90

English Conventions / 90

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 93

Student Writing Analysis / 94

Assignments / 95

Classification / 96

English Conventions / 96

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 97

Student Writing Analysis / 98

Assignments / 99

Cause and Effect / 99

English Conventions / 99

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 101

Student Writing Analysis / 102

Assignments / 103

Illustration / 103

English Conventions / 103

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 104

Student Writing Analysis / 106

Assignments / 106

Process Analysis / 106

English Conventions / 106

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 107

Student Writing Analysis / 108

Assignments / 109

Unit 6 Unity and Coherence at Paragraph Level / 110

Unity / 110

English Conventions / 110

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 111

Student Writing Analysis / 113

Words / 114

English Conventions / 114

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 120

Student Writing Analysis / 123

Assignments / 125

Part III Overall Organization

Unit 7 Thesis Statement / 127

English Conventions / 127

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 132

Student Writing Analysis / 135

Assignments / 137

Unit 8 ' Beginning of an Essay / 138

English Conventions / 138

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 141

Student Writing Analysis / 144

Assignments / 147

Unit 9 Ending of an Essay / 148

English Conventions / 148

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 150

Student Writing Analysis / 154

Assignments / 156

Unit 10 Essay Development / 157

English Conventions / 157

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 163

Student Writing Analysis / 165

Unit 11 Unity and Coherence at the Textual Level / 167

English-Conventions / 167

Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 172

Student Writing Analysis / 175

Assignments / 178

**Part IV Appreciation and Analysis:
Approaching Essay Writing as a Whole**

Unit 12 Narration / 180

- English Conventions / 180
- Professional Writing Appreciation / 184
- Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 189
- Student Writing Analysis / 191
- Writing Assignment / 195

Unit 13 Description / 196

- English Conventions / 196
- Professional Writing Appreciation / 199
- Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 203
- Student Writing Analysis / 204
- Writing Assignment / 210

Unit 14 Exposition / 211

- English Conventions / 211
- Professional Writing Appreciation / 213
- Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 219
- Student Writing Analysis / 220
- Writing Assignment / 225

Unit 15 Argumentation / 226

- English Conventions / 226
- Professional Writing Appreciation / 227
- Contrast with Chinese and Negative Transfer / 234
- Student Writing Analysis / 234
- Writing Assignment / 241

References / 242

Key to Assignments / 243

Part I Language Expression

Language is very important in any culture as it enables people to communicate with each other. But different languages have different features. In order to communicate effectively in a foreign language, we need to have knowledge and understanding of its features as they determine methods of expression in that language.

Unit 1 Words and Collocations

Words and collocations are the most basic unit for any writing. Due to the fact that great differences in lexical features and idiomatic expressions exist between Chinese and English, few equivalents can be established. Consequently, a large number of mistakes in writing are associated with the usage of words and collocations, making it important for us to compare and contrast the similarities and differences of these aspects within these two languages. This unit will highlight the differences to help students guard against the negative transfer their mother tongue imposes on them.

Words

No matter how well a student learns grammar, no matter how successful they master the sounds of a second language, without words to express a wide range of meanings, they cannot successfully communicate in that language in any meaningful way. Rudyard Kipling, a British author, characterized words as “the most powerful drug used by mankind.” A student learning to write in English usually finds it hard to express the many ideas filling their mind. To give these ideas proper expression, they must gain an understanding of the English words. Only when they have done this, will they be able to learn how to use words correctly, effectively, and imaginatively.

English Conventions

English is frequently presented as an inflectional language, a language in which grammatical function of clause elements is primarily derived from inflections of words rather than from word order and preposition. English has S-V concord, case, voice, morphological changes (gender, number, case, tense, voice, mood, degree of comparison, person, and part of speech) in lexicon and frequent use of connective words, formal subject and formal object as well. These features are the basis of English language.

Countable /Uncountable nouns

In English, there is a division between countable and uncountable nouns. A noun is countable if it can be regarded as one of several separate units, for example, *book*, *egg*, or *horse*. As the name suggests, countable nouns can actually be counted. A noun is uncountable if it cannot be thought of as one of several separate units, but only as a single idea or substance, for example, *butter*, *music*, or *advice*. These nouns cannot be counted. The following, adapted from the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, are some important grammatical differences in the usage of countable and

uncountable nouns.

• **Basic usage of countable and uncountable nouns**

① A countable noun can be used in the singular or in the plural, for example *book/books*, *egg/eggs*, *horse/horses*, *ticket/tickets*, *university/universities*. Don't try to use uncountable nouns in the plural. Don't say *butters*, *musics*, *advices*, *informations*, *furnitures*. It is a common mistake to use an uncountable noun in the plural.

Correct: You should listen to his advice.

Incorrect: You should listen to his advices.

② A countable noun can be used with *a* or *an*; for example *a book*, *an egg*, *a horse*, *a ticket*, *a university*. Don't use *a* or *an* with uncountable nouns. Don't say *a butter*, *a music*, *an advice*, *an information*, *a furniture*. It is a common mistake to use *a* or *an* with an uncountable noun.

Correct: I like listening to music.

Correct: I like listening to *the* music.

Incorrect: I like listening to *a* music.

③ An uncountable noun can be used with quantity words such as *some* and *any*: *some butter*, *any music*. If these quantity words are used with countable nouns, the nouns must be put into the plural, and we should say *some tickets*, *any eggs*.

Correct: She bought some books.

Incorrect: She bought some book.

④ The quantity expressions *much*, *how much*, or *a little* must be used with uncountable nouns. With countable nouns, we have to use *many*, *how many*, or *a few*.

Uncountable

I don't have much money.

How much time do you have?

There is little hope left.

Countable

He doesn't have many friends.

How many records do you have?

There are a few rooms available.

⑤ An uncountable noun can be used on its own without such words as *the*, *some*, or *any*.

She doesn't eat meat.

If you need advice, don't be afraid to ask.

A countable noun cannot be used in the singular in this way—only in the plural.

Correct: I like reading books.

Incorrect: I like reading book.

⑥ Some nouns can be used in either a countable or an uncountable way, depending on their meaning. The following pairs of sentences show how the meaning can change: in each case, there is a countable noun in the first sentence and an uncountable noun in the second.

Countable: Would you like a cake? (One of several cakes which someone can take to eat)

Uncountable: Do you like chocolate cake? (A type of food)

Countable: The lambs were born early this year. (The animals)

Uncountable: There are several ways of cooking lamb. (A type of meat)

⑦ Proper names, names of particular people, places, times, occasions, events, and so on, are usually used in the singular, but they can be used in the plural only if

they can be thought of in a countable way. This is especially common with proper nouns expressing time.

On Tuesdays I go swimming.
Are the Robinsons coming to the party?

⑧ Most abstract nouns, such as *love*, *anger*, *knowledge*, *intelligence*, or *freedom*, are always uncountable. But some abstract nouns can also be used in a countable way.

Uncountable

They did it with difficulty.
Her voice sounded full of doubt.

Countable

They have had a lot of difficulties.
I have my doubts about whether he's the right person for the job.

• **Nouns which are only singular**

Several nouns are used only in the singular. There are three main types:

① Most uncountable nouns, such as *music* and *advice*, are only singular.

Music is an art form whose medium is sound.
Unsolicited advice is not welcome.

② A group of nouns are used in the singular, even though they end in *-s*. These include the names of certain subjects, diseases, and games, such as *physics*, *linguistics*, *mumps*, *measles*, *billiards*, *etc.* A common mistake is to think of these as plural, and use them with a plural verb or form a singular noun from them.

Correct: Billiards is a game.

Incorrect: Billiards are a game.

Correct: Poor Mike has got the measles.

Incorrect: Poor Mike has got the measle.

• **Nouns which are only plural**

Several nouns are used only in the plural. There are three main types:

① A few nouns are related to things consisting of two joined parts. They include *jeans*, *binoculars*, *trousers*, *pliers*, *scissors*, *etc.* To talk about these in the singular, we use a pair of.

Correct: Your jeans are in the wash.

Incorrect: Your jeans is in the wash.

Correct: I need to buy another pair of jeans.

Incorrect: I need to buy another jeans.

Incorrect: I need to buy another jean.

② A few nouns ending in *-s* are used only in the plural. They include *congratulations*, *outskirts*, *remains*, *stairs*, *thanks*, *etc.*

Correct: The stairs were steep and winding.

Incorrect: The stair was steep and winding.

These are not uncountable nouns, because they are used with *how many*, not *how much*.

Correct: How many stairs are there?

Incorrect: How much stairs are there?

③ A few nouns express the idea of groups of people or animals. They include *people, folk, police, cattle, poultry, livestock*.

Correct: The police are outside.

Incorrect: The police is outside.

Incorrect: The polices are outside.

• Irregular plurals

Usually, a countable noun is changed into its plural form by adding an *-s* or *-es* suffix, but there are also several irregular ways of forming a plural.

① Some nouns are changed into their plural form by changing the vowel.

man—men

foot —feet

mouse—mice

louse—lice

woman—women

goose —geese^①

tooth—teeth

② A few nouns are changed into their plural form by changing the final *-f* to *-v* before adding the *-s* or *-es* ending.

knife—knives

wife—wives

leaf—leaves

half —halves

Some nouns in this group have a regular plural as well: *scarfs* and *scarves*, *hoofs* and *hooves*. Both possibilities are correct.

③ Some nouns are changed into their plural form by adding *-en* or *-ren*.

ox—oxen, child—children, brother—brethren (only in the religious sense)

④ A few nouns which have been borrowed from foreign languages have an irregular plural.

stimulus—stimuli, crisis—crises, criterion—criteria, phenomenon —phenomena

In some cases these nouns may have two plurals; they have developed a regular plural but have also kept their original irregular one. In these cases, the regular form is more informal and popular; the irregular form tends to be used by specialists. However, nouns ending in “s” (stimulus, crisis) do NOT pluralize with the addition of an extra *-s*, *-es*, or *'* ending.

There are no certain formulas for success. (informal)

We have to learn all the relevant chemical formulae. (specialist)

⑤ A few nouns have no plural ending, but we can still use them in a singular or plural way: they include the names of some animals (such as *sheep, deer, cod*), certain nationalities (such as *Japanese, Swiss*), some nouns expressing quantity (such as *ton, pence*), and a few others (such as *aircraft, crossroads, kennels, offspring*).

The sheep was making noise.

The sheep were making noise.

⑥ Compound nouns combine two or more words into a single unit. They are usually made plural by adding *-s* at the end of the word: *can-openers, grown-ups*. But in a few cases, the first part of the compound takes the *-s* ending, especially when the compound contains a preposition.

runner-up — runners-up; passer-by — passers-by

① While goose transforms from singular goose to plural geese, the plural of moose is NOT meese, but mooses.

In some cases for compound nouns, the changing noun is irregular, and must follow the rules for changing irregular nouns.

man-of-war — men-of-war

Sometimes, a regular plural form has developed, which is slowly replacing the irregular one.

mother-in-laws (also mothers-in-law)

Tense

Tense is a grammatical category of the verb or verbal inflections, such as present, past, and future, that expresses the temporal relations between what is reported in a sentence and the time of its utterance. To write proper English, students must have the rudiments of different kinds of tense. A detailed description of each kind of tense is adapted from *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* as follows.

• The present

English has two main ways of talking about present time: the *simple present* and the *present progressive* (also called *present continuous*).

• The simple present time

The simple present is made by using the *verb stem* or *basic verb form*. We add -s or -es to the verb stem in the third person singular.

The simple present is used in the following ways:

① We use the simple present to talk about something which is happening now, and which will continue to happen in the future. We often use the simple present in this meaning to talk about things that are true about our life, such as our residence, our job, or the kinds of things we like.

Martin lives in Canada.

I work in a hospital.

"What kind of books do you read?" "I mostly read science fiction."

② We use the simple present when we talk about something which happens again and again, or when we say that something happens regularly at a particular time. Use words such as *always*, *often*, *sometimes*, *occasionally*, and *never*, or phrases such as *on Tuesdays* or *every day* with the simple present in this meaning.

They often go out to restaurants.

I travel to London twice a month.

He gets up at 6 o'clock.

She goes to church every Sunday.

③ We use the simple present to talk about something which stays the same for ever, such as a scientific fact.

The sun rises in the east.

Two and two make four.

④ We use the simple present when we are describing what is happening at the exact moment when we are speaking. This meaning of the simple present is used, for example, in sports commentaries.

Shearer gets the ball from Gascoigne. He shoots and scores!

- **The present progressive (or present continuous)**

We make the present progressive (or *present continuous*) by using a form of the verb *be* in the present tense, followed by the main verb with an *-ing* ending, for example *I am waiting*, *she is coming*.

The *present progressive* is used in the following ways:

① We use the present progressive to talk about something which is happening now at the time we are speaking or writing. We often use this meaning with words and phrases that express present time, such as *now*, *at the moment*, and *currently*.

“What is Bob doing?” “He is watching television.”

• It is raining again.

I am looking for my glasses.

② We use the present progressive to say that something is happening now, but will only continue for a limited period of time. Compare these pairs of sentences:

We live in France. (France is our permanent home.)

We are living in France. (We are living there for a limited period of time.)

He cooks his own meals. (He always does it.)

He is cooking his own meals. (He does not usually do it.)

- **The past**

In English, there are also several ways of talking about actions that happened in the past. These include the simple past, the past progressive, the present perfect, and the past perfect.

- **The simple past**

We usually make the simple past by adding *-ed* to the end of the verb, but many common verbs have irregular simple past forms, and so we have to use a special ending, or change the verb in some other way. For example:

I go	→ I went
we buy	→ we bought
they see	→ they saw

The *simple past* is used in the following ways:

① We use the simple past to talk about an action which happened and finished in the past. There is a space between the time when the action happened, and the time when we are speaking or writing about it.

He kicked the ball into the net.

I went home early because I had a headache.

The police found a dead body in the river.

② We often use words or phrases such as *at midnight*, *on Tuesday*, *in 1992*, *yesterday*, and *last year* with the simple past, to draw attention to the time when something happened. For example:

Our visitors arrived yesterday.

Where did you go last week?

The war ended in 1945.

③ If we use words or phrases about time with the simple past, they must have a meaning which shows there has been a space between the time when the action or event happened and the time when we are talking or writing about it. For example:

I saw John yesterday/a week ago/last Tuesday.

• The past progressive

We make the past progressive by using *was* or *were*, followed by the main verb with an *-ing* ending. That is to say, the past present progressive is just like the present progressive in formation, except that the appropriate “to be” form is past tense. For example, *I was looking*, *they were laughing*.

The past progressive is used in the following ways:

❶ We use the past progressive when we want to talk about something that happened in the past, and continued to happen for only a limited period of time.

We were living in France at that time.

I was trying to get the waiter's attention.

The man was looking at me in a very strange way.

❷ We use the past progressive to talk about something which continued to happen for a period of time, during which another thing happened. There are some key words that identify the need to use past progressive, such as “while” or “when”.

I was watching TV when the phone rang.

They met each other while they were staying in London.

• The present perfect

We make the present perfect by using *has* or *have*, followed by the past participle form of the main verb, for example, *I have walked*, *she has gone*, *they have seen*.

The present perfect is used in the following ways:

❶ We use the present perfect to talk about something that happened in the past and is finished, but which still affects the situation now.

Someone has broken the window. (RESULT NOW: it is still broken, and needs to be mended)

The taxi has arrived. (RESULT NOW: someone needs to go and get into the taxi)

Jane has hurt her hand, so she can't write. (RESULT NOW: Jane can't write)

❷ We use the present perfect to say that something started to happen in the past, and has continued to happen up to now. There is a clear difference with the past tense, which you use when the action is finished. Compare these sentences:

present perfect: I have lived in Chicago for many years. (I still live there now.)

simple past: I lived in Chicago for many years. (Now I live somewhere else.)

present perfect: Jim has worked for us since 1992 (He still works for us now.)

simple past: Jim worked for us from 1992 to 1996. (He does not work for us any more.)

❸ We use the present perfect to talk about something that happened at some time in the past before now, but it is not important to say when it happened.

She has had several jobs abroad.

There have been problems with this system in the past.

If we give the date, year, or time when something happened, we must use the simple past, not the present perfect. For example:

Correct: I spoke to him yesterday.

Incorrect: I have spoken to him yesterday.

Correct: They arrived in the US last week.

Incorrect: They have arrived in the US last week.

❹ If we use other words or phrases about time with the present perfect, they must have a meaning which shows that the action has continued up to the present, and may