

Reading Between the Lines

读透英美报刊

王丽娜 许卉艳 主编



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前言

随着我国与世界各国的交往日益频繁,英文报刊作为媒介手段和信息转换工具,越来越凸显其重要性,越来越被社会各界所重视。阅读英文报刊也是一种乐趣,从英文报刊中不但可以了解海外的许多时事,亦可获得丰富而广泛的知识,从政治、经济、军事、外交到科技、文化、教育、体育、娱乐无所不包。而且报刊上的文章文体迥异,在报刊阅读的过程中通过接触各种文体,各种风格不同的文章,不但可以提高英语的实际阅读能力,增强语感,增进英语学习兴趣,也有助于提高各种文体的英语写作能力。但很多学了几年英语的人却感到很难读懂英文报纸或期刊。其主要原因在于缺乏有关英文报刊的基本知识,比如报刊英语的结构特征和语言特点、修辞与逻辑等等。如果了解了报刊英语的基本特点,略加以这方面的阅读练习,就可以收到事半功倍的效果。我们从几个方面简介一下报刊英语的特点:

一、报刊英语的结构特征:

报刊英语的文章不同于一些其他的常见媒体,有其自身的特点。一般来讲,从结构上可以把一篇报导或文章分成三个部分:标题(Head),引言(Lead),主体(Body)。而且这种格式相对固定,标题用来概括说明全文,引言用来引导文章自然流畅,主体就是整个文章的内容。

二、标题:

标题是文章内容的浓缩和概括,读报纸时,要先浏览标题,以决定读什么或先读什么。特别是英文报纸版面多,栏目多,内容庞杂,从何读起,标题可以起到“向导”作用。

1. 英文报刊标题主要有四大功能:概要文章内容;激发读者兴趣;显示新闻轻重;活泼美化版面。

2. 常见标题形式有单行式和双行式,如:本书中 For a Healthier Globe 为单行式,亦可称为直述式,这种标题直接告诉读者故事、事态的主题,是英文报纸中最常见的最容易理解的标题形式。双行式分两个层次,一主一副相互补充和配合,起到概要故事内容,准确反映文章基调,引起注意,激发兴趣的功能。例如:As Noise Rises, So Do the Dangers
The constant clatter in hospitals stresses both patients and staff.

3. 英文报刊标题的语言有其自身的风格,其主要特点是:用词简洁,语法独特,修辞丰富,标点巧用。

在英文报刊文章标题部分,常用一些修辞手段,如:比喻:To Sharpen the Brain First Hone the Body 和 Class (room) Warriors; 押韵:Wheels and Deals in Silicon Valley 和 Tech Ties That Bind。

英文报刊常用的标点符号有逗号、分号、问号、引号和冒号。用逗号可以替代连接词“and”;问号常常用来引起读者的兴趣,如:Ink and Paper or Is and Os?

4. 文章标题部分几乎都用现在时态,如:Why the Have-it-all Woman Has Decided She Doesn't Want It All。

5. 文章标题部分通常省略某些词,尤其是冠词和动词 to be,如:Lost in the Wave 和 Not the Queen's English。

三、掌握技巧、克服生词障碍

英文报刊文章包含的词汇量大,涉及面广,政治、经济、军事、文化、体育等无所不包。因此,要读懂报刊原文,除了了解有关背景知识、中外文化差异,掌握一定的语言知识外,很大程度上有赖于对词汇的领会了。我们阅读报刊文章时,既无时间逐个单词去查字典,在很多情况下也无此必要,读读停停会影响对文章内容的整体理解,而且会失去阅读兴趣。我们读报刊的主要目的是获取信息,应抓要点、明大意。报刊上的文章有其自身的特点,如果对此有所了解并掌握阅读技巧,就能收到事半功倍的效果。

1. 利用构词法猜测词义

英文报刊文章所涉及的词汇浩如烟海,但构成这些单词的词缀和词根是有限的,读者应充分利用自己所掌握的前缀、后缀和词根知识推断词的意义。例如:

前缀	意思	例词
ambi-	both	ambiguous, ambivalent
be-	to make, cause to be	bewilder, belittle
de-	away, from, negative	decompose, decanter
extra-	outside, outward	extracurricular, extrasolar
fore-	before, far(away)	foretell, foreword
hyper-	above, beyond	hypersensitive, hypersonic
mis-	wrong, unfavorable	misuse, misfortune
pseudo-	false	pseudonym
out-	beyond, further	outnumber, outrun
mal-	bad, evil	malnutrition, maltreat

词根	意思	例词
-anim-	mind, life, alive	animation, inanimate
-bene-	good, well	benefit, benevolent
-cred(o)-	to believe	credible, discredit
-flu(o)-	to flow	fluid, flush
-fus-	to pour, melt	fuse, fusion
-miser-	wretched	misery, miserable
-nov-	new	novelty, innovation
-sim-	similar, copy	similarity
-voc-, -vok-	voice, cry	vocal, provoke

后缀	意思	例词
-able, -ible	able to be	eatable, reducible
-age	amount of	mileage, tonnage
-ate	to act as, cause to become	fascinate, liberate
-cracy	rule by, rule of	democracy, bureaucracy
-fy	cause to become	purify, unify
-ia	disease, state, quality	hysteria, militia
-ship	state, quality, rank	friendship, relationship
-ster	a person of a certain type	songster, roadster
-wise	in the manner of	clockwise, likewise
-y	state, quality, act	jealousy, smoky

尽管这些词缀和词根看起来孤零零,枯燥难记,但我们可以用所熟悉的单词反向来记。如果真正掌握了这些词缀和词根,我们的词汇量将成倍扩大,阅读时会更加得心应手。

2. 从上下文找线索

报刊文章往往会出现新的词语或比较专业的术语,这时文章的作者会考虑到广大的普通读者并不都是专业人员而为我们提供这样或那样的线索,如利用标点符号引出定义或释义,举例说明,使用同义词或反义词等。通过这些线索,一个敏锐的读者能迅速猜出生词的大意。

1) 标点符号线索

逗号、冒号、破折号、括号等可以为我们提供猜测词的大意和了解句子各部分之间关系的线索。注意利用这些标点符号线索,能够使我们进行高效率的阅读。

逗号——列举并列成分,或对前面的词和内容进行解释;

冒号——对前面的词或内容进行补充和解释;

破折号——对前部分予以补充、说明;

括号——为前面出现的词或词组做注解。

例如:

(1) ...the general secretary of **Amicus**, the manufacturing, technical and skilled persons' union, ...

分析:很明显,逗号后面的部分是对 Amicus 的注释,即“生产、技术和熟练工人的协会”。

(2) The singer's performance was not very good; the notes he sang were often the wrong **pitch**: sometimes they were too low and sometimes too high.

分析:pitch 后面的冒号提示我们,后面的内容是对该词的补充和解释,音符有时高有时低,由此可推出 pitch 在这里的意思是“音调”、“音高”。

(3) “I kind of did it **shotgun**—different campuses, different places, all across the country,” said Mr. Martin, who said he hoped to become a wildlife veterinarian. (选自本书第 25 篇 “In New Twist on College Search, a First Choice, and 20 Backups”)

分析:破折号后面的是对 shotgun 给予了提示和说明,“漫无目标地”。

(4) A satellite is a machine which orbits the earth to **relay** (that is, send) communication signals over long distances.

分析:显而易见,括号内的词 send 是对 relay 一词的注释,即“传递”、“传播”。

2) 举例线索

举例的目的是对重要的观点予以支持和论证,或对难懂的概念和术语进行解释和说明。举例往往会使观点和概念更加清楚、明了、易懂。有时被举例说明的词亦会为后面的例子起到提示作用。表示举例的信号词有:for example, for instance, such as, as, like, a case in point, take sth. for example, for one, for another 等。例如:

Both Gateses read scientific books and travel extensively in developing countries. They share a sense of urgency. “We're not doing enough in developing countries to distribute the therapies and practices we know are effective in fighting diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV,” the couple told U.S. News. (选自本书第 2 篇 For a Healthier Globe)

分析:diseases 后面所举的例子可以由读者所熟知的单词“疾病”反向推断出,这些都是令人棘手的疾病名(此时,对文章的理解也就足够了),同时又帮助读者了解 therapies 的意思一定是“疗法”。

3) 同义词或反义词线索

作者为了加强所要表达的意思,用 and 连接两个意思相同或相近的词语,用 or 连接两

个意思相反的词。读者如果了解其中一词的含义,便可推断出另一词的大体含义。例如:

(1) The Friday after Thanksgiving may be the kickoff of the holiday shopping season in malls and stores. (选自本书第 16 篇“The Mall Had Its Day; Now It's the Web's Turn”)

分析:如果 mall 对于读者是生词,那么 store 一词便可提示,此词意思为“商场”、“商业中心”。

(2) It has to do with our suspicion and skepticism of government power being able to take private property. (选自本书第 5 篇“Real Angry over Real Estate”)

分析:同上例,大多数读者都了解的 suspicion 一词可以帮助我们得知 skepticism(英国英语为 scepticism)意思为“怀疑(态度)”。

4) 同位语线索

阅读时,我们常常会发现,在一个不熟悉的词后面紧跟着一个解释性或说明性的词(组)或词群,即同位语。作者通常用同位语来为读者提供一个较生疏单词或专业术语的通俗表达方法,以利于读者的理解。例如:

In the early 1800s, groups of English workers wrecked machines that they felt threatened their jobs. They were called “Luddites” after one of their leaders, a term that now used for anyone who puts up resistance to new technologies.

分析:Luddite 后面的 a term that now used for anyone who puts up resistance to new technologies 是它的同位语,是对该词的解释,即,此术语现用来指任何以行动抵抗新技术的人。此词来源于十九世纪初用捣毁机器等手段反对企业主的自发工人运动的一个领头人的名字——卢德。

5) 其他

除上述所列举线索外,读者还可利用比较与对照线索、因果关系线索及常识线索等。例如:

..., a former prosecutor in the Manhattan district attorney's office and a professor of the Catholic University of America's Law School in Washington. (选自本书第 19 篇“Live Tracking of Mobile Phones Prompts Court Fights on Privacy”)

这段文字中的 attorney(律师)、Law School(法律学校)都可帮助读者推断出 prosecutor 的意思可能是“原告”、“起诉者”或“检察官”。

简言之,如果阅读时能够充分利用各种语言线索,就会较好地把握生词的含义,达到较迅速高效的阅读状态。

王丽娜 许卉艳

2006 年 9 月

目 录

Unit 1 All in the Family	(1)
家庭是关键所在	
Unit 2 For a Healthier Globe	(6)
为了建立一个更健康的世界	
Unit 3 The Public Face	(11)
公众形象	
Unit 4 Auf wiedersehen, Deutsch	(17)
别了,德语	
Unit 5 Real Angry Over Real Estate	(22)
对地产政策的愤怒	
Unit 6 Class(room) Warriors	(27)
课堂上的勇士	
Unit 7 The Final Chapter	(32)
最后的篇章	
Unit 8 The New Rich-Rich Gap	(37)
新型富人之间的差距	
Unit 9 To Sharpen the Brain, First Hone the Body	(43)
锻炼大脑,身体先行	
Unit 10 Wheels and Deals in Silicon Valley	(49)
硅谷的车轮与商业交易	
Unit 11 Working past 60 Is Not Always about the Money	(56)
退休后还工作不都是为了钱	
Unit 12 As Profits Surge, Workers Still Wait	(62)
利润持续上涨,工人继续等待	
Unit 13 Why the Have-it-all Woman Has Decided She Doesn't Want It All	(68)
女性的鱼与熊掌——事业与家庭	
Unit 14 Scientists Find a DNA Change That Accounts for White Skin	(74)
DNA 与肤色	
Unit 15 Tech Ties That Bind	(80)
科技,家庭的新纽带	

Unit 16 The Mall Had Its Day; Now It's the Web's Turn	(86)
购物中心风光不再,网上购物取而代之	
Unit 17 Weighty Matters	(92)
体重非小事	
Unit 18 Ink and Paper or 1s and 0s?	(97)
选择笔墨还是数字	
Unit 19 Live Tracking of Mobile Phones Prompts Court Fights on Privacy	(103)
法院的争议:手机的实地追踪功能与个人隐私的保护	
Unit 20 As Noise Rises, So Do the Dangers	(111)
噪音越大,危害越大	
Unit 21 Kids Gone Wild	(117)
粗鲁的孩子	
Unit 22 When Teachers Don't Make the Grade	(123)
当老师不合格时家长该如何应对	
Unit 23 Gene Therapy Is Respectable Again	(129)
基因疗法重新受到重视	
Unit 24 You're Not Sick, You're Just in Love	(134)
你并没有生病,你只是恋爱了	
Unit 25 In New Twist on College Search, a First Choice, and 20 Backups	(143)
大学志愿:一个主打,二十个备选	
Unit 26 Heal Thyself	(149)
自我诊疗	
Unit 27 He Drew like an Angel	(155)
他像天使一样画画	
Unit 28 Our Vanishing Savings Rate	(161)
个人储蓄率极度走低	
Unit 29 Boy Brains, Girl Brains	(166)
教学如何充分兼顾男女生智力差别	
Unit 30 Between Panic and Apathy	(171)
如何应对大规模流行病——惊慌还是冷漠	
Unit 31 Lost in the Wave	(177)
海啸中丧生	
Unit 32 Bad News on the Internet	(182)
网上信息值得怀疑	

Unit 33 Too Cruel for School	(187)
校园暴力	
Unit 34 The Deadliest Cancer	(192)
头号癌症杀手	
Unit 35 Which Comes First, Language or Thought	(198)
先有语言还是先有思维	
Unit 36 Beauty Gets a Wake-up Call	(204)
美丽容颜不是睡出来的	
Unit 37 Choice of Food Can Reveal Your Mood	(210)
食物选择与心情流露	
Unit 38 U.S. View of Family “Idealized” but Fails to Translate into Real Life	(216)
美国人心目中的“理想”家庭难以变成现实	
Unit 39 Not the Queen’s English	(221)
不是皇家英语	
Unit 40 A Big, Dirty Growth Engine	(227)
巨大的污染引擎	
Unit 41 Advertising of, by, and for the People	(232)
参与式广告成为时尚	
Unit 42 Double Trouble Speak	(237)
繁琐的语言	
Unit 43 Is Heart Surgery Worth It	(241)
有心脏病就得动手术吗	
Unit 44 The Debate over Doing Good	(246)
企业应该参与社会公益活动吗	
Unit 45 The Overworked, Networked Family	(251)
繁忙、网络、家庭	
Unit 46 What’s Driving the Box Office Batty	(256)
电影票房的困惑	
Unit 47 Where Doesn’t It Hurt	(261)
解读疼痛背后的信息	
参考文献	(266)
Answer Key	(267)

All in the Family 家庭是关键所在

Before You Read

► Preview

2005年9月,袭击美国的卡特里娜飓风造成了惨重的人员伤亡和财产损失,媒体后来注意到大部分受害者是黑人妇女和儿童,这些家庭中没有男人遮风挡雨。在路易斯安那州,70%的非洲裔美国儿童出生在单亲家庭,这一比例在其最大城市新奥尔良据估计高达80%以上。父亲的缺失给孩子的成长带来了许多负面影响。研究表明,家庭结构是对孩子产生影响的¹最大因素;双亲家庭是孩子生活的最佳环境,在这样的家庭成长的孩子会学业良好,避免走上犯罪歧途,在经济上更为成功;单亲家庭,尤其是未婚母亲家庭会带来诸多问题,如高犯罪率等。因此我们目前的问题是倡导传统价值观念,珍视家庭。但遗憾的是,这一点总是被忽视。

► Warm-up Questions

1. What kind of role does family play in people's lives?
2. What is the relationship between family structure and youth crime?
3. What is the parents' responsibility to their children?

All in the Family

It took the media a while to **acknowledge** that most of Katrina's victims were black. Apparently, it will take longer to mention that most of the victims were women and children. I noticed three **commentators** who brought up the **delicate** subject of the mostly missing males—George Will, Gary Bauer, and Thomas Bray, a **columnist** for the *Detroit News*. Will **noted** that 76 percent of births to Louisiana's African-Americans³ are to unmarried women, and probably more than 80 percent in New Orleans⁴, since that is the usual estimate in other inner cities. Will wrote: "That **translates** into a large and constantly renewed **cohort** of lightly parented **adolescent** males, and that translates into chaos, in neighborhoods and schools, come rain or come shine."⁵

A good deal of hard evidence shows that this is so. Two decades of research produced a **consensus** among social scientists of both left and right that family structure has a serious impact on children, even when controlling for income, race, and other **variables**.⁶ In other words, we are not talking about a problem of race but about a problem of family formation or, rather, the lack of it. The best outcomes for children—whether in

academic performance, avoidance of crime and drugs, or financial and economic success—are almost invariably produced by married biological parents. The worst results are by never-married women.

High crime. In a policy brief **released** last week, the Washington-based Institute for Marriage and Public Policy, looked at 23 recent studies dealing with family structure and youth crime. In 19 of the 20 studies that found family structure to have an effect, children from **nonintact** or single-parent families had a higher rate of crime or **delinquency**. Neighborhoods with lots of out-of-wedlock births had lots of crime. **Ominously**, one study said that the more single-parent families there were in a neighborhood, the more crime there was among two-parent kids living around them. Again, these studies are controlled for race.

Among the other findings:

—Adolescents in single-parent families were almost twice as likely to have pulled a knife or a gun on someone in the past year. This was after controlling for many **demographic** variables, including race, gender, age, household income, and educational level of parents.

—In a large sample of students in 315 classrooms in 11 cities, the “single most important variable” in gang involvement was found to be family structure.⁷ In other words, the greater the number of parents at home, the lower the level of gang involvement. A study of American Indian families found that living in a two-parent family reduced gang involvement by more than 50 percent.

—Another study concluded that out-of-wedlock **childbearing** had a large effect on the rate of arrests for murder, an effect that “seems to have gotten stronger over time.”

—“Adolescents in married, two-biological-parent families generally **fare** better than children in any of the family types examined here,” one study reported. The other family types studied were single mother, **cohabiting** stepfather, and married stepfather families.

—One study, judged most important by the institute, found that divorce rates had no relationship to violent crime rates but that out-of-wedlock births had a strong relationship to youth crime—nearly 90 percent of the increase in violent crime between 1973 and 1995 was accounted for by the rise in out-of-wedlock births.

The **upshot** of these studies is that America is confronted by a form of poverty that money alone can’t cure.⁸ Many of us think social breakdown is a result of racism and poverty. Yes, they are factors, but study after study shows that **alterations** in norms and values are at the heart of economic and behavioral troubles. That’s why so much re-

search boils down to the old rule: If you want to avoid poverty, finish high school, don't have kids in your teens, and get married.

But the conventional wisdom is determined to ignore the evidence. It holds that family **fragmentation**—sorry, diverse family forms—is positive and here to stay. Peggy Drexler, the author of a new book, *Raising Boys Without Men*, says people who promote intact families are playing a “blame game” against single mothers. She thinks eating dinner regularly with your children is more important than the number or gender of adults in the home. And boys, according to Drexler, have an **innate** ability to become men, even without a man in the house. (But if boys can raise themselves, why should any father stick around?) The book carries **blurbs** from various establishment figures. Why not? Her ideas are ordinary ones among our **elites**.

—John Leo, *U.S. News & World Report*, Oct. 3rd, 2005

New Words and Expressions

acknowledge *vt.* 承认

commentator *n.* 评论员

delicate *a.* 微妙的, 棘手的

columnist *n.* 专栏作家

note *vt.* 注意, 细心地发现

translate *vi.* 转化, 变化

cohort *n.* 一群, 一代

adolescent *n.* 青少年

consensus *n.* 一致同意, 多数人的意见, 舆论

variable *n.* 变量

release *vt.* 发表; 出版

nonintact *a.* 不完整的

delinquency *n.* 犯罪

wedlock *n.* 已婚状态; 婚姻

ominously *ad.* 不祥地, 不吉利地

demographic *a.* 人口统计学的

childbearing *n.* 分娩, 生小孩

fare *vi.* 过活, 生活

cohabit *vi.* 同居

upshot *n.* 结果; 结局

alteration *n.* 更改, 改变

norm *n.* 准则; 行为标准

fragmentation *n.* 分裂, 破碎

innate *a.* 先天的, 天生的

blurb *n.* 新书推荐广告或短评

elite *n.* 精英, 中坚分子

Notes

1. Katrina: 卡特里娜飓风, 2005年9月袭击美国密西西比河地区, 淹没了美国路易斯安那州最大城市新奥尔良, 造成重大人员伤亡和财产损失。
2. Louisiana: 路易斯安那州, 美国南部墨西哥湾的一个州, 1812年被承认为美国第18个州。
3. African-Americans: 非洲裔美国人。
4. New Orleans: 新奥尔良, 美国路易斯安那州东南部城市, 位于密西西比河和庞恰特雷恩湖之间。新奥尔良是路易斯安那州最大的城市。
5. “That translates into a large and constantly renewed cohort of lightly parented adolescent males, and that translates into chaos, in neighborhoods and schools, come rain or come

shine.” 那样就形成了一个广大而不断在更新的由于父母的轻率而出生的青少年群体,无论情况如何,这些孩子总是使周围地区和学校出现混乱局面。

6. A good deal of hard evidence shows that this is so. Two decades of research produced a consensus among social scientists of both left and right that family structure has a serious impact on children, even when controlling for income, race, and other variables. 大量铁的事实表明情况确实如此。20年的研究使左翼和右翼的社会科学家一致认为:家庭结构对孩子有重要影响,即使在控制了诸如收入、种族和其他变量后,结果也是如此。
7. In a large sample of students in 315 classrooms in 11 cities, the “single most important variable” in gang involvement was found to be family structure. 对11个城市的315个班级的大量取样调查表明,导致青少年参与犯罪活动的“唯一最重要的变量”是家庭结构。
8. The upshot of these studies is that America is confronted by a form of poverty that money alone can't cure. 这些研究的结果表明美国正面临着一种金钱本身无法解决的贫困。

After You Read

► Comprehension Exercise

Answer the questions by choosing [A], [B], [C] or [D].

1. Most African-American children in Louisiana _____.
 [A] were born to unmarried mothers [B] live only with divorced mothers
 [C] live in married stepmother families [D] are deserted by their parents
2. Which family structure is the best for children according to the studies mentioned in the passage?
 [A] The single mother family. [B] The two-biological-parent family.
 [C] The cohabiting stepfather family. [D] The married stepfather family.
3. Social breakdown is caused by _____.
 [A] racism [B] alterations in norms and values
 [C] poverty [D] All of the above.
4. One study, judged most important by the Washington-based Institute for Marriage and Public Policy, shows that youth crime is strongly related to _____.
 [A] birth rates [B] divorce rates
 [C] out-of-wedlock births [D] race
5. We can infer from the last paragraph that _____.
 [A] Peggy Drexler is an unmarried mother
 [B] Peggy Drexler's opinion is shared by many Americans
 [C] the book *Raising Boys Without Men* supports the studies mentioned in this passage
 [D] Peggy Drexler's ideas are criticized by many American elites

► Word Study

Complete each sentence with a word or phrase given below (in its appropriate form if necessary):

translate	innate	delicate	release	acknowledge
consensus	note	account for	norm	upshot

1. The voters' _____ was that the measure should be adopted.
2. Correct ideas are not _____ in the mind, but come from social practice.
3. He _____ having stolen the car.
4. I admired your _____ handling of the situation.
5. The latest developments have just been _____ to the media.
6. We wonder how your religious belief would _____ into political action.
7. _____ how I do it, and then copy me.
8. His illness _____ his absence.
9. The _____ of it was that he resigned.
10. You must adapt to the _____ of society you live in.