

# 英语段落写作法



## 大学英语

## 初级写作教程

COLLEGE ENGLISH WRITING

蔡基刚 黄莺 编著

# 大学英语初级写作教程

## 英语段落写作法

蔡基刚 黄莺 编著

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## 内 容 提 要

本书为大学英语写作教程系列书之一。已经出版的《英语五段作文法》(高级)和《英语十句作文法》(中级)深受广大读者特别是大学生的青睐。为此作者又策划编写了本书(初级),真心希望它有助于具有相当英语水平的这部分读者。

全书共由七大章内容组成:(一)段落组成;(二)段落连贯;(三)段落功能;(四)段落类型;(五)段落写作;(六)段落句子;(七)段落修改。每章都有实例、分析、讲评、修正、范文及练习等具体内容。

本书最大的特点是针对第二语言学习者在英语写作中常见的错误和问题来阐述段落写作的技巧与方法,相信这对初学英语写作者定有不同凡响的参考价值。

## 前 言

20 多年前,美国有一本当时很畅销的、专为将英语作为第二语言的学习者所写的写作教程,书名为《从句子到段落》(Robert G. Bander)。很多大学的教师把它用作教材,说明在句子、段落、文章这三个层次上,前两者的地位非常重要。没有句子和段落的基础,文章是立不牢的。

我们受上述畅销书的启发,写就了本书。原来想起名《从段落到文章》,但考虑编者曾经编写过《英语十句作文法》和《英语五段作文法》,因而把它归入了这个系列,起用了现在这个书名。

为什么会选择段落这个切入点?主要有以下两个方面的原因:第一,英语典型的段落好比一篇微型的文章,开头有表示中心思想的主题句,中间有阐述中心思想的支持句,最后有归纳总结的结尾句。写好段落就不难写好文章。第二,中国学生的段落写作技巧普遍较差,不知道英语段落有那么多“规矩”,随心所欲,要么没有段落,一篇文章就是一个段落,要么段落不成段落,缺少最基本的成分如主题句等等。

本书最大的特点是针对中国学生英语写作中的错误和问题来介绍段落写作的技巧。全书以段落为中心,下扩到句子和词语,上延到文章布局。每介绍一种技巧,即配备练习以助读者巩固相关章节的内容,因此对初学英语写作者具有特别的参考价值。

本书由蔡基刚负责策划和统稿,并编写第一、三、四、五和第六章,由蔡基刚和黄莺合编第二、七章。

书中存有不足,敬请专家和读者指正。

编者

2005 年 1 月于复旦大学

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# 第一章 段落组成

## 1.1 基本成分

写文章首先要学会段落写作。从篇章角度来讲,段落是文章的基本单位。一篇文章根据其长短,可以由几个到十几个段落组成。因此段落写作成功与否直接关系到整篇文章的好坏。

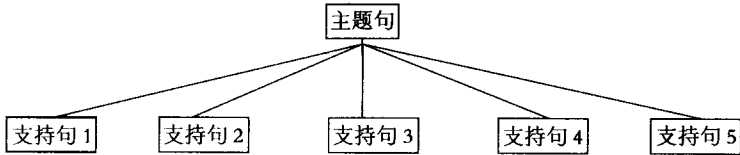
段落一般由若干句子组成,但从功能来说,尤其是说明文、论述文的文章,段落基本成分就是主题句和支持句。

英语段落和汉语段落有所不同,它既是说明全文的一个组成部分,但又自成一体,有自己相对独立的主题思想。为了保证这个主题思想得以充分阐述和发展,英语段落往往用一个句子来概括这个主题,并置于段落中的显著位置如段首或段尾,这个句子称之为主题句(topic sentence)。这就确保了段落内的其他句子都围绕它展开,对它进行叙述、说明或论证,内容上和它无关的句子不得进入这个段落,因此这些句子被称之为支持句(supporting sentences)。根据统计,在英语的说明文、议论文这类体裁中,主题句+支持句的英语段落可以占到整个英语段落的60%—70%以上。(曾利沙1994:20)

英语写作专家 Brooks (1979:218) 是这样论述英语段落的:  
“A well-conceived and well-constructed paragraph is a unit, and often this unity is indicated by a key sentence—what is called the topic sentence. The topic sentence states the central thought, which the rest of the paragraph develops. We can think of the topic sentences as a kind of backbone, a spine, which supports the body of the paragraph and

around which the rest of the structure is formed.”

英语主题句和支持句之间的关系如下：



### **Our Changing Lifestyle: Trends and Fads**

**These days lifestyles seem to change very fast.** It is more than just clothing and hairstyles that are in style one year and out of date the next; it's a whole way of living. One year people wear sunglasses on top of their heads and wear jeans and boots; they drink white wine and eat sushi at Japanese restaurants; for exercise they jog several miles a day. However, the next year they notice that everything has changed. Women wear long skirts; people drink expensive water from France and eat pasta at Italian restaurants; everyone seems to be exercising at health clubs.

**In the United States, even people can be “in” or “out”.** Like people in any country, Americans enjoy following the lives of celebrities; movie stars, sports heroes, famous artists, politicians, and the like. But Americans also pay a lot of attention to people who have no special ability and have done nothing very special. In 1981, for example, an unknown elderly woman appeared in a TV commercial in which she looked at a very small hamburger and complained loudly, “Where's the beef?” These three words made her famous. Suddenly she appeared in magazines and newspapers and on TV shows. She was immediately popular. She was “in”. In 1987 an exterminator in Dallas, Texas decided that he would be very happy if

he could find more customers for his small business; he needed more people to pay him to kill the insects and rats in their houses. He put an unusual advertisement in a Dallas newspaper; He offered to pay \$ 1 000 to the person who could find the biggest cockroach. This strange offer made him suddenly famous. However, this kind of fame does not last long. **Such people are famous for a very short time. They are fads.**

What causes such fads to come and go? And why do so many people follow them? Although clothing designers and manufacturers influence fads in fashion because they want to make a profit, this desire for money doesn't explain fads in other areas, such as language. For example, why have teenagers in the past twenty-five years used—at different times—the slang words *groovy*, or *awesome*, in conversation instead of simply saying *wonderful*? According to Jack Santino, an expert in popular culture, people who follow fads are not irrational; they simply want to be part of something new and creative, and they feel good when they are part of an “in-group”. Fads are not unique to the United States. Dr. Santino believes that fads are common in any country that has a strong consumer economy, e. g. , Britain, Japan, and Germany. However, in the United States there is an additional reason for fads: Most Americans seem to feel that something is wrong if there isn't frequent change in their lives.

**An exciting trend began in Europe in the mid-1990s: the cultural borders between countries began to break down.** Travelers from other parts of the world noticed that “Eurokids” from Lisbon to Stockholm, from London to Athens, seemed to be very similar to each other. All followed the same fads in fashion, music and food. These Eurokids had the same lifestyles and values. For example, they

were worried about the environment, concerned more about rain forests than clothes. Some of the Eurokids' fads will certainly disappear and others will come along, but it will be interesting to see if the trend continues and becomes a true part of European culture.

(《21 世纪大学英语(第一册)》)

上面这篇文章的四个段落,其中三个段落都有主题句,且都在段首位置。段落内的其他句子都围绕主题句展开论述。比如第一段:

主题句: These days lifestyles seem to change fast.

支持句 1 It is more than just clothing and hairstyle that are in style one year and out of date the next; it's a whole way of living.

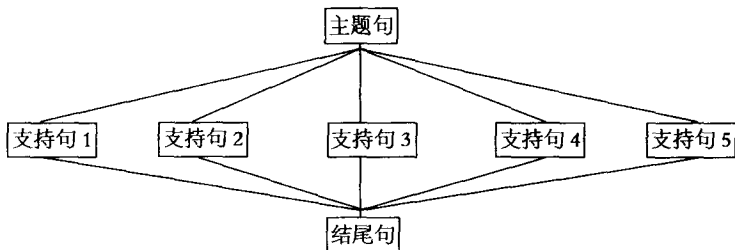
支持句 2 One year people wear sunglasses on top of their heads and wear jeans and boots; they drink white wine and eat sushi at Japanese restaurants; for exercise they jog several miles a day.

支持句 3 However, the next year they notice that everything has changed.

支持句 4 Women wear long skirts; people drink expensive water from France and eat pasta at Italian restaurants; everyone seems to be exercising at health clubs.

四个支持句从不同方面来说明和发展主题句,从而构成了一个典型的主题句 + 支持句段落。

有些较长的段落,在结尾还有结尾句(concluding sentence),通过归纳,总结段落的主旨,强调中心思想,和主题句形成首尾呼应,有时还同时起到引出下一个段落的作用。此时它们的关系可以用下图来表示:



又如：Our Changing Lifestyle: Trends and Fads 文章的第二段：  
主题句：In the United States, even people can be “in” or “out”.

结尾句：Such people are famous for a very short time. They are fads.

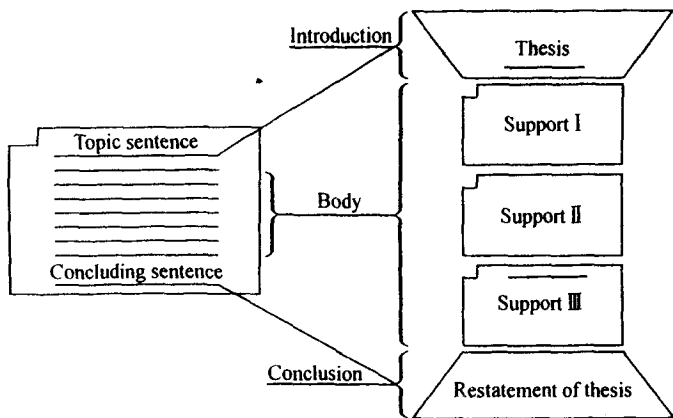
主题句和结尾句说法不同，但表达同一主题，同时引出了下一段落：What causes such fads to come and go? ...

再如：

- (1) **Good manners are important in all countries, but ways of expressing good manners are different from country to country.** Americans eat with knives and forks; Japanese eat with chopsticks. Americans say “Hi” when they meet; Japanese bow. Many American men open doors for women; Japanese men do not. On the surface, it appears that good manners in America are not good manners in Japan, and in a way this is true. But in any country, the only manners that are important are those involving one person’s behavior towards another person. **In all countries it is good manners to behave considerably toward others and bad manners not to. It is only the way of behaving politely that differs from country to country.** (Robert G. Bander; *From Sentence to Paragraph*)

- (2) **Synonyms, words that have the same basic meaning, do not always have the same emotional meaning.** For example, the word “stingy” and “frugal” both mean “careful with money”. However, to call a person stingy is an insult, while the word frugal has a much more positive connotation. Similarly, a person wants to be “slender” but not “skinny”, and “aggressive” but not “pushy”. **Therefore, you should be careful in choosing words because many so-called synonyms are not synonymous at all.**
- (3) Nutritional deficiency is a major problem of elderly Americans. One-half to one-third of health problems of the elderly are believed to be related to nutrition. Assuming financial ability to provide nutritious meals, many elderly have inadequate diets because transportation is unavailable or they are unable to make use of it. They lack food shortage facilities. They have little access to nutritional information or education. They lack motivation or the energy require to prepare meals. Those who need special diets may be unable to afford or to prepare the correct foods. Rising food prices too often erode the ability of those on fixed incomes to maintain even past standards of nutrition and food intake. **The elderly who live alone are less likely to provide hot, nutritious meals for themselves.**

无论从结构还是从内容上来看,这里所列举的两段完全是两篇不分段的微型文章:开始有中心思想句,最后有结尾句,当中有支持句予以说明阐述。这样,一个段落在结构上就等于是一篇缩小了的文章(a well-developed paragraph is “a composition in miniature” or good paragraphs are really good essays writ small)。如下图所示:



**本节提示：**由于汉语段落没有主题句的概念，初学英语的中国学生在段落写作中往往没有写主题句的意识。我们调查了大学英语四级考试的作文，发现凡是得分较低的文章均缺少段落主题句。

## 1.2 主题句

简单地说，主题句就是归纳段落中心思想的一句话。主题句不仅简明扼要地表达了这个段落的主题内容，而且清楚地限定了写作范围。一个好的主题句能使读者较好地理解作者的思路和意图。

### 1.2.1 主题句的位置

英语文章中绝大多数的主题句都出现在段首。这是因为段首的位置比较显著，容易吸引读者，也容易给他们留下深刻印象，有助于迅速掌握段落信息和理解其内容。我们可以看到前文四个段落，几乎都是以主题句开始的。当然，也有主题句出现在段尾或段落当中，甚至不明显表露，但比例比较低。

A. 主题句位于段首

- (4) **Americans make no distinction in greeting friends, acquaintances, elders, or superiors.** When Americans see close friends, casual acquaintances, teachers, or even someone they know only by sight, they are likely to say “Hi” in all cases. This does not mean that they have no more regard for friends than for casual acquaintances. It only means that “Hi” serves as a greeting for both. (Robert G. Bander; *From Sentence to Paragraph*)

将主题句放在段首,开门见山,明确中心,这种段落结构有助于作者确定段落的主线,使段落一层层向前推进,也有助于读者把握中心思想。因此,对于英语学习者而言,采用以主题句开始的段落写作是最常见、最有效的方法,也最容易被掌握。

B. 主题句位于段尾

- (5) School children used to know the story of how Abraham Lincoln walked five miles to return a penny he'd overcharged a customer. It's the kind of story we think of as myth. But in the case of Lincoln, the story is true...unlike the story of George Washington and the cherry tree. Washington's first biographer invented the tale of little George saying to his father, “I cannot tell a lie. I did it with my ax.” **What is important in both stories, however, is that honesty was seen as an important part of the American character.** (Stacia Robbins; *Honesty: Is It Going Out of Style?*)

段尾主题句具有结论作用,是对前面句子的归纳总结。这种段落结构通常能在读者心中制造悬念,吸引读者继续读下去,直至最后一句总结作者主要观点的主题句,因此,段尾的主题句往往能给读者留下深刻的印象。

C. 主题句位于段中



(6) Californians and New Englanders are both American. They speak the same language and abide by the same federal laws. **But they are very different in their ways of life.** Mobility—both physical and psychological—has made a great impression on the culture of Californians; lack of mobility is the mark of the customs and morality of New Englanders. (Robert G. Bander; *From Sentence to Paragraph*)

主题句位于段中通常适用于对两种事物或某种事物的两个方面进行比较 (comparison) 或对比 (contrast)。这种段落通常先提出一个论点并稍加发挥,接着出现主题句,提出不同的或相反的论点,然后展开论证。段中主题句具有承上启下的过渡作用。如本段中,开始指出 Californians 和 New Englanders 的相同之处,然后出现主题句,引出两者的不同之处。使文章的重点落在 Californians 和 New Englanders 的不同之处上。

#### D. 隐含主题句

如 *Our Changing Lifestyle: Trends and Fads* 文章的第三段。也就是说一些段落可以没有明确的主题句,但读者通过阅读整个段落可以很容易体会出或自己概括出来。这类通过读者归纳的主题句称为“隐含主题句”。作为初学者要慎用隐含主题句,最好用其他三种方法在适当的位置写明主题句,尤其提倡段首主题句。

### 1.2.2 主题句的写法

一个好的主题句对于段落写作至关重要。主题句必须观点明确,既要有概括性,又不能过于笼统或无边无际;既要具体明确,又不能过于狭窄。一个好的主题句应当包括以下两个部分:

#### 主题 (topic) + 主题思想 (controlling idea)

主题是向读者表明这个段落讨论什么方面的问题,而主题思想则表明作者对这一方面的看法,即一个等待发展的思想。也就是说,同一主题,由于看法不同,会有不同意思的主题句。例如: