

ENGLISH RHETORIC & ESSAY WRITING

英语修辞与论文写作

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

英语修辞与论文写作/李炳林著. —贵阳:贵州人民出版社, 2000. 6

ISBN 7-221-05167-4

I. 英... II. 李... III. ①英语-修辞②英语-写作
IV. H315

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2000)第 32750 号

英语修辞与论文写作

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贵州人民出版社出版发行

(贵阳市中华北路 289 号)

850×1168 毫米 32 开本 14 印张 400 千字

2000 年 6 月第 1 版 2000 年 6 月第 1 次印刷

贵州新华激光照排印刷厂印刷

印数 1—1000 册

ISBN7-221-05167-4/H·45 定价:23.00 元

序 言

迪克·科博利斯

从传统上来讲，新西兰的大学和英国的大学一样，没有把英语写作列入英语系的课程设置中。直到大约十年前，人们才认为，不仅所有的大学生都能写作而且他们并不需要掌握大学大多数写作课程所必须的特殊风格。

这两种看法在二十世纪 80 年代末受到了质疑。二十世纪 80 年代末，大学的招生人数大增，各种各样的写作标准也随之显现出来。这时，新西兰大多数的大学意识到应该采取措施来适应学生的写作要求，但都各行其事：有的开设补习课；有的开设写作学分课。可是，英语系却没有开设这些课程，因为它们当时还沉溺于对英国文学的兴趣之中。

梅西大学的英语系则不然。我们决定将写作教学置于该系办学的中心位置，其理论基础是：写作是使每一个人，包括优秀的作家在内，都能把文章写得更好的学科。英语及媒体研究学院（原英语系）目前成功地开设了四门写作课（其中有两门通过电子邮件信箱开设），并开有辅助课程：英语口语理论与实践。这些课程都受到了学生的普遍欢迎。我们还准备开设有关“交际”方面的更多的课程。

由于我校在写作领域内的科研任务繁忙，我们因此有理由经常邀请国外专家来访问。1998—1999 年度，我们十分荣幸地、愉快地邀请到贵州大学的访问教授李炳林来我院访问。他对我院所开设的课程给予了密切的关注，并提出了许多建设性的意见，特别是关于怎样教母语为非英语的学生学习写作方面的意见。访问的同时，他一直在撰写他的专著。

我并非写作专家，对他的书作不了具体的评论，但他在不到一年的时间内用英语撰写了一本系统的修辞与论文写作方面的教科书，其修辞实例引用范围之广：包括美国、英国、新西兰和中国，这些都使我叹服。我相信该书将是修辞学研究方面的一个非常有益的补充。我了解到，他准备用汉语写另一本与英语修辞相关的书。这两本书将会给想掌握书面英语的学生奠定一个坚实的基础。

我谨代表梅西大学的同事以及与炳林有过愉快交往的其他人，祝愿他与他的著作有一个成功的未来。

梅西大学人文社会科学学院英语及传媒研究院

迪克·科博利斯（教授、院长）

一九九九年五月

Aristotle says, "Rhetoric is the counterpart of dialect." And now we all realize that a world without rhetoric would be a world without logic, laws, culture tradition, and better interpersonal relations.

亚里士多德说：“修辞学与辩证法是相对应的。”我们现在意识到，一个没有修辞学的世界将是一个没有逻辑、没有法律、没有文化传统，没有更好的人际关系的世界。

——李炳林

The author of this work has spent quite a lot of time and energy writing the book to the best of his ability, searching and researching, organizing all the data he has on hand in the way that will make it easier for any knowledgeable readers to get into wonders of English rhetorical modes.

This book is respectfully dedicated to Professor Dick Corballis, Head of School of English and Media Studies at Massey University, whose image of me is that of a man hunched over the keyboard of a computer and going to him with questions on rhetoric and writing.

Acknowledgements

I have been thinking about writing this book, in one way or another, for some years, and my special debt is to my former students, without whom the book would not have been necessary.

Any course book is a collaborative effort. There are those who supported the idea of writing the book, those who helped in the preparation of the book, those who provided favourable conditions, and those who critically read the manuscript. During the course of researching and writing this book, I have sounded out my ideas and plans on Professor Richard Corballis, Professor Baokun Li, Ms Alison Hoffmann (Victoria University) and Mr Grant Harris (writing consultant at Massey University). Their support has been invaluable.

I must acknowledge a deep indebtedness to my supervisor and friend, Professor Richard Corballis, Head of the School of English and Media Studies at Massey University. Indeed, few authors have been lucky enough to receive the kind of criticism he gave to the manuscript of this book. Evidence of his good sense and critical acumen is to be found on nearly every page that remains. In addition, my writing the book of English *Rhetoric and Essay Writing* has benefited from thought-provoking discussions with Professor Richard Corballis.

The writing of the book has been carried out during my visit to the School of English and Media Studies at Massey University, New Zealand. I am grateful to the staff of the school office, most notably Julie McKenzie and Kathryn Sutherland (part timer), for exhibiting grace, patience, and ingenuity in printing the manuscript. I also thank the Massey library for providing me with the facilities and sources that I needed for my research and writing. I own my indebtedness to those authors whose works I have quoted, but some of whose publishing information I failed to record.

My indebtedness is also to Professor Li Baokun in BUAA, China, who strongly encouraged writing the book and spent time reading the draft critically and made valuable comments from an angle of a Chinese

professor. To this book, he wrote an objective Chinese preface, for which I feel appreciated.

I should give my thanks to China Scholarship Council for providing we with a scholarship to do my research in New Zealand for a year. Without the scholarship, I might not have been able to produce this book in such a short time.

Finally, I am deeply indebted to my family for providing supportive ambiance and for shouldering all family responsibilities so that I could have more time and energy to write the book. I dedicate the book, with thanks, to them, especially to my wife, who also emailed me some material needed for some chapters of the book while I was well on my way of writing the book.

Preface by Professor Dick Corballis

In New Zealand—as in the United Kingdom—courses in writing have not traditionally formed part of the curriculum offered in university English departments. Until about ten years ago it was assumed not only that all students could write but also that they needed no help to master the rather specialised style required in most university disciplines.

Those assumptions began to be questioned in the late 1980s, when the numbers of students attending university increased significantly, and a wide variation in writing standards became apparent. At this point most New Zealand universities realised that something had to be done, but they set about solving the problem in very different ways. Some set up remedial classes; others introduced writing courses for academic credit. But these initiatives often took place outside English departments, which generally stuck to their traditional interest in English literature.

At Massey University, however, the Department of English decided to make the teaching of writing an important part of its core business, on the basis that writing is something that everybody—even the best writers—can learn to do better. The School of English and Media Studies (as we are now called) currently offers four successful and popular courses in writing (of which two are offered to distance students by email), and these are supplemented by a course in the theory and practice of speaking. More such ‘communication’ courses are planned.

With so much of our research tied up in the area of writing, it is logical that we should seek to bring in overseas experts as often as possible, and it has been pleasure and a privilege to host Visiting Professor Binglin Li from Guizhou University during 1998–9. He has taken a close interest in our courses, and has made many constructive comments, especially with respect to the teaching of writing to students from non-English-speaking backgrounds. At the same time he has been working on this book of his own.

While I myself do not have the expertise to judge his work definitively, I am impressed by the dedication which has enabled him to pro-

duce a thorough and systematic textbook in English on rhetoric and essay writing in less than a year, and by the range of examples (from American, British, New Zealand and Chinese sources.) I imagine that it will prove a very useful addition to the range of texts available on that subject, and I know that he intends to follow it with a related book in Chinese. The two books together should form a very effective platform for students wishing to master written English.

On behalf of my colleagues here at Massey University, who have all enjoyed their interaction with Binglin, I wish him and his books a very successful future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DC' followed by a stylized flourish.

(Professor) Dick Corballis
Head of School
May, 1999

序 言

用英语写作,难。在读听说写四种能力中,读和听属于接受性能力(receptive skills),而说和写属于产出性能力(productive skills),即表达能力。后者要求对语言的主动和熟练的掌握。特别是写,又多用于正式场合,有特定的文体等方面的要求。要写出一篇像样的文章,至少需要三方面的知识和能力。一是要知道“写什么”,即有思想、有内容、有话可说;二是要了解“怎样写”,即根据不同的目的、对象、要求,用不同的方式写,写出的东西要符合英语规范及英语国家的文化规范;三是要能够“用英语写”,即掌握必要的英语词汇、语法等表达手段。要做到这三点,不是容易的事。有人学习英语多年,可以读各种材料,可以听一点东西,可以说几句口语,但一下笔,写出的东西不成样子,可见英语写作之难。

教英语写作,也难。英语写作的能力归根结底不是靠一门课教出来的,而是靠学生长期的语言积累形成的。一个文化知识面窄,英语基础差的学生希望通过一门写作课就把英语写作能力大幅度地提高上去,是不现实的想法。但这并不是说,写作课完全无用。精心设计和教法得当的写作课对提高学生的写作能力仍可大有裨益。关键在于要有一个好的教师和一本好的教材。

现在关于英语写作的教材已出了不少。遗憾的是多数质量不高,其中不少是为了应付各种考试而编写的。有的教材甚至只教所谓的应试技巧,而置实际的英语写作能力于不顾,这从长远角度来看是弊大于利的。

李炳林同志拟出版 *English Rhetoric and Essay Writing* (《英语修辞与论文写作》),我对该书给以高度评价。我认为这是一本认真

的、严谨的、质量上乘的写作教材。

我初识炳林同志是在 1997 年。那年他参加了在北京和杭州召开的一个关于外语教学的国际研讨会。我是那个研讨会的中方主席。他在会上发表的论文就是关于英语写作教学的。那篇论文给我留下了较好的印象。会后,炳林把他在贵州大学多年任教所编写和使用的写作课讲义给我一阅。那本讲义就是现在这本书的原型。因此,可以说这本书是从教学实际中来,是教学实践经验的总结,是有教学实用基础的。

1998 年炳林赴新西兰梅西大学(Massey University)访问研修。他在梅西的一年里,将其主要的精力用于这本书的撰写。他研究了国外的写作教学理论,收集了大量的材料,修改、补充、丰富了这本书的内容。并使这本书在新西兰正式出版。据我所知,国内学者在国外出版英语写作教材为数不多。炳林在新西兰的导师, Professor Richard Corballis, 与我有过通信联系。他肯为这本书作序并给予肯定评价,足见他对这本书的重视。

我在上面提到,英语写作包括了三方面的知识和能力。关于“写什么”和“怎样写”,本书作者有所提及,但这两个问题不是英语写作课能够解决的。本书将重点放在第二个问题,即“怎样写”上。英语 rhetoric 一词,常译为“修辞学”,在汉语中这个术语有特指的含义。而英语的 rhetoric 意为“the art or study of using language effectively and persuasively”,用在写作上指的就是我们说的“怎样写”。本书作者从写作的过程入手,探讨了写作的目的和本质,然后以主要的篇幅详细说明了一篇文章的基本要素的写作方法:怎样写段落、怎样写提纲、怎样写摘要、怎样写总结,一篇文章如何开头、如何展开、如何结尾等等。本书的核心部分是通过介绍各种写作手法(rhetorical modes,如例示、定义、分类、分析、比较与对照、类比、因果、归纳、演绎)教给学生实际的写作技巧。掌握这些技巧有助于真正解决“怎样写”的问题。

以上这些内容在别的写作书中也都可以看到,但我比较欣赏

这本书的原因之一是,它不是干巴巴地讲一些人所共知的理论,而是通过大量的、精选的、地道的材料说明如何把一篇文章写好。这些材料本身就是好文章,读来津津有味,可以令人把玩,赏析,学习。作者在每章篇首引用的名家语录,更起画龙点睛作用,也显示出本书较高的品位。

English Rhetoric and Essay Writing 将在国内出版。我相信,通过更多的教师和学生使用,进一步的修改、补充、完善,这本书有可能在提高学生的英语写作水平方面发挥更大的作用。

李宝琨

李宝琨

2000年5月于北京

Introduction

Rhetoric concerning the teaching of writing varies from country to country. I wrote this book while visiting Massey University in New Zealand, where the teaching of writing generally is not subordinated to the greater value of writing, but required in every course, whether it is a humanities course, an economics course, a computer course, or any other courses. In fact, every course is a writing course in the university. Teachers will require reports from students in various courses. For example, in a business course the required report may be a market investigation, or market activities. In a natural science course the required report might be a description of a procedure. The required report in a social science course may deal with some library research. An English course may require an essay or review on a book or a play. As students advance in the university, the research tasks they undertake become increasingly difficult and complex, and any report they write will reflect that increasing difficulty and complexity. In this university, any student who wants to do well in a course and every student who wishes to go on to graduate school has to be able to write sensible research papers.

In universities in China, however, the ability to write well in English is often required of students of the English major, though non-English majors may also be required to write English. In either case, the ability to write well will definitely help students in their future. There is not a field in the world today that does not demand the ability to gather information, develop ideas, organize them and write them down. Most often all this is done in English. In workplaces, be they academic, business, or government offices, staff frequently meet situations which require of them the ability to write in English. Texts written in these specific pragmatic-working communities make institutional collaboration possible. Without the ability to write in English the collaboration would not be possible and communication and relationships would be broken. Therefore, it would be reasonable to say that writing is social action, and writing in English is international social action.

In this sense, *English Rhetoric and Essay Writing*, is a preparation

to producing an outline and then to the finished copy that evolves. Writing becomes the tool that they use throughout the process; but they have to be sure that they are using the information that they have found, rather than being used by it. Chapter 2 discusses the writing of outline, one of the most effective approaches to the study of rhetorical methods. It is a valuable, basic step toward producing a coherent composition. It makes students identify their purpose in writing and arrange their information discovered in their brainstorming in a logical way that will most forcefully express their ideas. Chapter 3 deals with writing summaries, which will definitely help students to organize their paragraphs and essays, especially memos, reports and book reviews. Chapter 4 discusses paragraph organization, arranged after the writing process and writing outline, as an initial step to help students to organize each idea derived from their brainstorming and outline into an essay in miniature, which is a paragraph. Through learning to write a well-proportioned and unified paragraph, they will know how to develop the unit of thought stated in the topic sentence.

Part two consists of three chapters about the introduction, middle and conclusion of an essay. Chapters 5 and 6 discuss ways to write an effective introductory paragraph for an essay and a sound conclusion. Chapter 7 generally treats two different ways to organize a body paragraph for an essay: *structural* (presenting information according to a certain order of organization, e. g. chronological order, spatial order, etc.) and *rhetorical* (developing the paragraph through some persuasive means, e. g. analogy, induction, etc.).

Part three consists of nine chapters (Chapters 8 to 16). As the core of the book, this part provides detailed treatment of rhetorical modes, one per chapter, and considers how we can move from exemplification to discursive arguments. Herein I concern myself with such matters as substance, rhetoric and organization of longer essays. My discussions and illustrations attempt to make clear that we all can make rhetorical decisions in our communication through classification, comparison, contrast, analogy, analysis, etc.

Part four is made up of Chapter 17, Writing Memos and Chapter 18, Writing Reports. Chapter 17 discusses audience and functions of memos — to inform, persuade, or inquire, and the different kinds of memos — informative, persuasive and inquiry. Detailed discussion on organizing different memos is provided. In Chapter 18 audiences and

Rhetoric is not a narrow discipline, confined only to literature and linguistics. It is a subject relevant also to social sciences and natural sciences: logic, psychology, sociology, history, etc., as shown in the book by the range of quotations and sources. The explanation of rhetorical principles, backed up by these wide-ranging quotations and samples, makes the book an interdisciplinary approach to composition and communication. The book can make students aware of the interdisciplinary nature of all learning and will aid them in all areas of study.

This book is also so designed that any graduate student who has been assigned an English research paper in any course can pick it up and find step-by-step procedures for generating a research paper. My hope is that students will see *English Rhetoric and Essay Writing* as a process manual that belongs on their desks alongside other reference books. But the general usefulness of this book goes beyond the information and strategies provided about writing and the format and style of organization. My experiences in teaching English essay writing and rhetoric to senior students has taught me that the spirit may be willing but the body can be weak. For some students, the approaches discussed in the book is very different from their normal way of attacking writing problems and, in the flurry of a normally busy and demanding semester, they may fall back into their old habits of writing at random, which is not very good for a senior student. Many of them may need to try the approaches laid out in the book before the advice and strategies fit them comfortably and before they are able to see for themselves how these strategies work to their advantage. If they keep the book on their desks, they will always have available a reminder of steps they can go through to develop their essays.

Concerning teaching writing, every writing teacher holds to some theory of how writing should be taught, theoretically, practically, systematically, or selectively. My feeling is that it should be taught systematically, but the system should make students aware not only of the practical aspects of writing but also of the cultural and rhetorical milieu of the language they are studying. They are taught not only how to express their ideas clearly and convincingly, but also how to generate new ideas, analyse their beliefs and evidence critically, and select among choices intelligently. My experience shows that students will and can produce what is expected of them, and therefore we should demand that they meet the intellectual challenge of realistic writing situations. The book, *English Rhetoric and Essay Writing*, a compilation of ideas from classical rhetoric

and insights from modern rhetoric, with an ultimate goal to give students the confidence and skills to approach any writing task, provides ways of meeting that challenge. It requires students to be aware of rhetorical options and to sharpen their thinking as a means of improving their writing.

Finally, I see my task of writing this book not in terms of setting down authoritative statements about the rules of writing or rhetoric, but of recording and organizing, to the best of my ability, the materials I have on hand. The author of a writing course book is an organizer, not a lawgiver.

May 2000,
in Guizhou University
Guiyang, China