

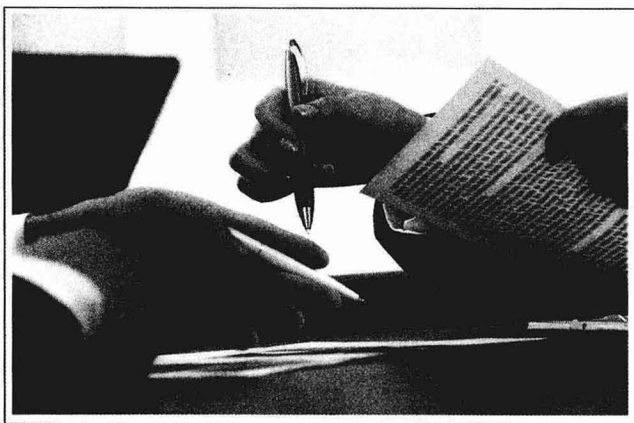
# College English Writing and Communication

A Student  
Handbook

李贵苍 总主编

## 大学英语写作 与交流教程 学生手册

上海译文出版社



College English  
Writing and  
Communication  
A Student  
Handbook

大学英语写作  
与交流教程  
学生手册

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李贵苍 黄小苹 主 编

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# 前 言

外语能力大致分为两类：输入性能力和输出性能力。前者涵盖外语学习过程中体现出来的各种学习外语的能力，如记忆单词、阅读文本、练习听力等，而后者主要体现为外显的和使用外语的能力，如口语和书面语表达的能力。如果说，提高输入性能力的目的是彰显输出性能力，那么，外语学习的目标就是尽量使这两类能力达到高度统一，而最能体现这种统一的就是外语的写作能力。

英语写作不仅是大学生提高英语综合应用能力的必由之路，也是学生拓展有效交流能力的利器。然而，对于多数学生而言，英语写作费时费力，事倍功半，从未领略过自我表达和相互交流的酣畅。对于不少大学英语老师而言，教写作遂沦为替学生的语言学习查漏补缺的苦旅，肩上挂着的是学生的语言错误，眼前挡着的是学生对写作的倦怠和抵触，身后拖着的是缺乏成就感的烦恼，自我表达和相互交流的写作教学本位始终在迷茫和困惑中漂浮。

造成以上困境的根源何在？我们认为主要的原因有五：一、缺乏为学生有效写作交流服务的语言能力支持平台。大学英语综合教程提倡语言知识和技能的综合性应用，但并未明确、有序地把语言知识和技能与有效交流之间的关系呈现出来，词、句、段、篇的语言学习与交流的有效性学习未能有机结合。二、商业化教辅所传播的“高分词句”和“一个月突破”等疯狂神话催生了不少学生的急功近利心态。教师的查漏补缺让他们看到的是自己补之不及的缺陷，失却的是继续努力的勇气和对教师有效教学的信心。三、以交流促运用，以运用促习得的语言教学观有待树立和强化。很多师生往往认为探求写作交流效果是语言运用高级阶段的任务，而语言运用是语言知识积累高级阶段的任务。然而，“写长法”等国内写作教学改革告诉我们，语言知识积累、语言知识运用和写作交流效果探究完全可以培育为一个双向良性循环的过程，教师的写作教学可以跳出无尽纠错的泥潭。四、写作评价机制缺乏评判学生思维和交流能力的指标体系。在大规模的测试中，客观公正优先，因而写作评价的信度重于其评价的效度。诸如学生思维和交流等能力因其

主观性强、征像不一而无法在写作评价机制中占据应有的权重,导致写作教学的重心滑向语言基础的查漏补缺。五、“以学生为主体”的教学理念虽然已经得到提倡和推行,但在其贯彻和实施过程尚存误区或偏差。激发学生表达自我、与社会沟通的交流愿望只是课堂教学展示的时髦装饰物,远远回归不到写作教学的本位。

如何解决以上的困境?编写组的教师们结合现代写作教学理念和自身的教学智慧,以交流与写作互相促进为宗旨,分《大学英语写作与交流教程:学生手册》和《大学英语写作与交流教程:学生实践》两册,从以下几个方面进行了语言能力和思维能力和交流能力共进的探索:

### 一、语言技能和话题双线编写。

在学生自学为主的《大学英语写作与交流教程:学生手册》中,我们以写作技能为主线,与学生以往的写作学习习惯相衔接,帮助学生对英语写作技能建立起一个全局的理解和把握,同时方便学生就具体技能的不足而查阅教程并进行相应的自主学习。在课堂教学用书中,即《大学英语写作与交流教程:学生实践》中,话题成为编写的明线,与大学英语的主干课程教材,即大学英语综合教程类教材的编写体系相一致,突出教程的交流特色。同时,写作技能成为课堂教学用书编写的暗线,体现教程的交流与写作相互促进的理念。

### 二、写作技能为写作交流效果服务。

尽管《大学英语写作与交流教程:学生手册》按照词、句、段、章等顺序编写写作技能,但写作交流效果意识却贯穿于各个层次的技能讲解。例如,词汇层次的技能讲解突出了各类词汇和构词法可能产生的修辞效果,句法层次的技能讲解突出了英语写作中信息传递的规律及其读者效应等。

### 三、写作评价纳入交流效果的权重。

一般写作教材按照词、句、段、章等顺序对文章或段落范例进行点评,交流效果往往是一笔带过,以交流效果为主进行点评的很少。为了突出交流特色,本教程课堂用书中的学生习作将附有外教撰写的交流效果点评。当然,交流效果与写作语言技能是无法割裂的。学生习作中的语言技能点评由具有多年四、六级大学英语等级考试写作阅卷经验的教师担任。

### 四、练习和任务的设计目的明确。

一般来说,练习或任务活动的指示语只告诉学生做什么,而练习或任务活动的目的或目标往往是尽在不言中。这样的指示语虽然比较简洁明了,但不易起到帮助学生明确练习或活动的意义所在。本教程的指示语对练习和任务活动的目的进行了简单的提示,让学生对所学内容的要点有个概要性的掌握,并在知晓练习或任

务的意义之后进行操练。

### 五、范例讲求时代性与经典性。

本教程的范例选择讲求时代性与经典性原则的兼顾。在设计以激发学生交流愿望为主旨的教学任务中,段落或文章范例选择中的时代性原则优先于经典性原则,在设计欣赏、模仿类任务时,文章范例经典性原则优先于时代性原则。

### 六、语言风格力图简明流畅、亲和互动。

考虑到教程使用对象的语言基础,本教程的语言风格定位为简明亲和,以尽量降低他们阅读该教程时可能产生的焦虑。该特点在各章的导入部分体现得尤为明显。另外,我们还精选了少量的示例图片,帮助学生解读课程讲解。

在编写本教程的过程中,我们感受到了浙江师范大学教务处对重点教材建设与课程教学改革的一贯倡导和支持。感谢该处对这本教程的编写规划提出了建设性的修改意见。感谢浙江省教育厅“2010 年度浙江省高校重点教材建设”立项以及本校的配套资助给参编人员带来的荣誉和鼓励。真诚感谢参编人员任教班级学生对教材的认真试读和反馈。甚至他们的疑惑一直都在鼓舞着参编人员尽己所能地发挥自己的教学智慧。另外,浙江师范大学外籍专家 Grigsby Wotton 博士通读了全稿,提出了宝贵的修改建议。当然,本书的顺利面世也离不开上海译文出版社的大力合作和支持。

尽管本教程的许多单元已经使用过多次,并取得了良好的效果,但由于编写时间仓促,编者的经验和水平有限,教程难免存在着一些有待完善之处,还望使用本教程的师生给我们一一指出,以便我们修订时调整和改进。

《大学英语写作与交流教程:学生手册》的主编和副主编分别为浙江师范大学外语学院黄小苹和张桃副教授。本教程的总主编,浙江师范大学外国语学院院长、博士生导师李贵苍教授最终审定全稿。具体参编人员名单如下(按章节顺序排列):楼育萍,陈小芳,胡萍萍,周心红,聂咏华,冯妙玲,骆巧丽,郑连忠。

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# Chapter 1

## Vocabulary Power Building

### Learning objectives:

This chapter will illustrate

- ◇ how different types of words will empower your writing
- ◇ how different types of words will function in figures of speech
- ◇ how word-building strategies may make your description dramatic

This chapter will also talk about

- ◇ the emotive meaning of words
- ◇ some easily confusable words

### Introductory remarks

Before the essay, before the paragraph, and even before the sentence, comes the word. Individual words are the building blocks of an essay, the genes that generate everything else. Use right words and your writing will blossom. So, what are right words? Right words are the words you can use to express yourself precisely, appropriately, and effectively. In a language with a large vocabulary like English, finding the right words is not an easy job.

As a learner of English, you may have a lot of problems with words. You may not know many words. You may misuse some confusable words. You may not find the exact words to convey your meaning; or sometimes even if you think you have found the right words, they might give rise to misunderstanding.

To help you build your word power and make better word choice, this

chapter will develop your awareness of the uses of various types of words and their roles in figures of speech, sharpen your sense of the emotive functions of words, and equip you with some word-building strategies so that you can address your points more clearly, and liven up your writing on the whole.

## 1.1 Is there any relation between word types and their expressive advantages?

You may have noticed that there are various types of words in English: formal and informal words, abstract and concrete words, general and specific words, synonyms and antonyms, etc. You may wonder whether different types of words can empower your writing. The answer is “definitely.” Words of different types contribute directly to the appropriateness, clarity, exactness and variety of your writing.

### 1.1.1 Formal words and informal words

In terms of stylistic (文体的) power, English words are generally divided into two types: formal and informal.

**Formal words** Formal words, also called “big words,” are commonly used in official documents and reports, literary works, research papers, and speeches. They are multi-syllable words like *compensate*, *ascend*, and *interrogate*. Such words are seldom used in daily conversation, except for special purposes.

**Informal words** Informal words are those common, ordinary and familiar words used in newspapers, on television, and in most everyday conversations. They are usually short words of one or two syllables. *Get*, *fire*, *ask*, *kid*, *guy*, and *job* are informal words. Many phrasal verbs are also informal. They are more informal than single-word verbs.

#### Examples

Formal	Informal
dismiss	fire
elucidate	explain
depart	leave

identical	same
fatigued	tired
purchase	buy
explode	blow up
establish	set up
submit	hand in
investigate	look into

**Functions** Learning whether a word is formal or informal can enhance your stylistic consciousness and enable you to write appropriately in different situations. Sometimes you may use formal words in writing to make you sound more educated, but it does not necessarily mean that they are the right words. Whether you should use informal or formal words depends on your writing situation (your subject, purpose, and audience). For example, when you greet people, you might say “hello,” “hi,” or even something like “yo.” Your choice of words may depend on whom you are speaking to. It can also depend on when and where you are speaking to them. If you use informal words in a very formal situation, your writing would be inappropriate. It would be as awkward as your wearing a T-shirt to a cocktail party.

**Beware** Formality of words is a matter of degree. One word may be slightly more formal than another.

### 1.1.2 Abstract words and concrete words

**Abstract words** Abstract words denote abstract ideas and concepts and they have no physical referents. Examples of abstract words include *love*, *success*, *freedom*, *good*, *moral*, *democracy*, and any *-ism* (*chauvinism*, *Communism*, *feminism*, *racism*, *sexism*).

**Concrete words** In contrast, concrete words denote concrete concepts and refer to objects or events that you can recognize by the senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. Examples of concrete terms include *spoon*, *table*, *bitter*, *green*, *hot*, *humming*, *walking*.

**Functions** Generally speaking, concrete words are useful in giving details; abstract words are essential in making analysis, classification,

inference, and conclusion. Effective writing makes use of both concrete and abstract words.

Read and compare the following two paragraphs.

- 1) The storm was a thing of beauty. The waves were tall and foaming as they rolled toward the shore. The wind bent the palm trees on the cliffs into graceful curves, and clouds raced across the gray expanse of sky.
- 2) You've given me love like I never had before. You leave chocolate under my pillow, roses on my dashboard, and poetry in my garden. You scrub my bathroom floor, drive my nauseous poodle to the vet, and tell me every day that your life has no meaning without me. You've given me everything — your soft smile, your strong arms, and your ATM PIN number.

Both paragraphs begin with an abstract concept to communicate an overall mood or idea and then give details with concrete words. In the first example, *beauty* is an abstract noun. The writer proceeds to explain how the storm was beautiful by creating a picture of the storm with the concrete nouns like *waves*, *palm trees*, *cliffs*, *clouds*, and *sky*. In the second example, plenty of concrete words such as *chocolate*, *rose*, *scrub*, *drive* are also used to explain the abstract *love*.

### 1.1.3 General words and specific words

**General words** General words name classes or groups of things, such as *buildings*, *weather*, or *birds*, and include all the varieties of the class.

**Specific words** Specific words limit a general class by naming a variety.

These two groups of words form a relationship of meaning inclusion.

#### Examples

General	Specific
<b>animal</b>	tiger, horse, fox, cat, mouse, bird, butterfly, insect
<b>laugh</b>	chuckle, guffaw, giggle, roar, smile, grin, beam
<b>big</b>	huge, great, large, vast, immense, enormous, tremendous
<b>scientist</b>	physicist, chemist, biologist, astronomer, geologist, mathematician

**General and specific words are relative** The same word may be both

general and specific. *Flower* is a general word compared with *rose*, *tulip*, etc., but if compared with *plant*, it is specific.

**Functions** General words are often used to summarize the main idea or to offer a conclusion; therefore they often appear in a thesis statement and topic sentences.

In contrast, specific words are often used to provide details to make your writing clear and interesting; hence they often appear in the development.

### For example

- 1) He has a two-storeyed house with four bedrooms, two living-rooms, a dining-room and a kitchen. It is really a big house for one family.
- 2) Yesterday morning it took me a very long time to get to my office because I had got into several traffic jams. Then I waited for half an hour without doing anything for the manager to begin a meeting. In the afternoon I had to go to a public lecture. The speaker talked for two hours but I couldn't make out what his main points were. In short, I wasted a lot of time yesterday.

In the above two examples, specific words are used to give details, and after giving the details, the writer summarizes his idea with the general words.

In writing, you may also vary between general words and specific words to achieve variety and coherence, e. g.

- 1) Higher water levels in the lake area may also damage *bamboo* groves. Consequently, the giant pandas, which feed on these *plants*, will suffer, too.
- 2) *Pneumonia* has arrived with the cold and wet conditions. The *disease* is striking everyone from infants to the elderly.

### 1.1.4 Synonyms and antonyms

**Synonyms** Synonyms refer to words with the same or nearly the same meanings in a language. For example, *hope*, *expectation* and *anticipation* are synonyms because they all mean "have something in mind which is likely to happen." Likewise, to *die* and to *pass away*, to

*begin* and to *commence* are synonymous.

**Antonyms** Antonyms refer to words with opposite meanings, e. g. *beautiful-ugly*, *love-hatred*, *up-down*, to *appear-to disappear*.

**Functions** In writing, you may deliberately employ synonyms and antonyms for the sake of variety, emphasis, and contrast, e. g.

- 1) The horse *leaped* into the air and *jumped* over the barrier. (variety)
- 2) There were still some differences on the *question* of human rights, but there was broad agreement on all other *issues*. (variety)
- 3) *More* haste, *less* speed. (contrast)
- 4) *United* we stand, *divided* we fall. (contrast)
- 5) We will never *surrender*. We will never *give in*. (emphasis)
- 6) How do *A students* do it? Brains *aren't the only answer*. The most *gifted students* do not necessarily perform best in exams. Knowing how to make the most of one's abilities counts for much more. Hard work *isn't the whole story* either. Some of these ***high-achieving*** students actually put in few hours than their ***lower-scoring*** classmates. The *students at the top of the class* get there by mastering a few basic techniques that others can easily learn. Here, according to education experts and students themselves, are the secrets of *A students*. (variety and contrast)

**Beware** In English pure synonyms are rare. Most of the so-called synonyms may actually differ from each other in the shade of meaning (意义的细微差别), in emotional color, in formality or in collocation.

## Exercises

1. **Directions:** To differentiate formal and informal words is very important, for their presence or absence has much to do with style. Various occasions calls for a variety of word choices. In an email to your friends, you may use informal words, while in a business letter you'd better use more formal words. In order to write appropriately for specific purposes and audience, you need to know both formal and informal words so that you can use them in different contexts. Now replace the underlined formal words in each sentence with informal ones.

- 1) It is really a very arduous task for a student to write a good English composition in half an hour.
- 2) They failed to realize that much of their time is consumed in enjoying films, clothes, computer games, and traveling.
- 3) A fine use of words does not necessarily mean the employment of big words.
- 4) This seems to be a(n) valid solution to the problem.
- 5) The artist seldom goes to other places. He dwells in the small town during most of the year.
- 6) The workers all endeavor to finish the job by next Tuesday.
- 7) He was so absorbed in his work that he was oblivious of what was happening around him.
- 8) Computers are widely utilized in the fields of business, industry and transportation.
- 9) We were unable to find his residence because of the poor weather.
- 10) The teacher has informed us that the new term commences on September 1<sup>st</sup>, and terminates on January 15<sup>th</sup>.

2. **Directions:** Both general and specific words are useful in writing. When you summarize or generalize, you may find general or abstract words useful. When you describe or explain things, or when you give details, you should try to use specific or concrete words wherever possible, for they are vivid, exact and interesting. Rewrite the following sentences by using specific or concrete words.

- 1) John is a good man.
- 2) In spring, the weather in Beijing can be bad.
- 3) To keep the horse healthy, one must be careful of its environment.
- 4) Friendliness is a salesman's best asset.
- 5) My father loves me very much.
- 6) The cover of this magazine is very nice.
- 7) He wore unusual clothes.
- 8) The proposal covers all important aspects of the problem.
- 9) Mrs. Hanks attacked her husband with a deadly weapon.
- 10) My relative gave me two gifts.



3. **Directions:** *Synonyms are rich in English. Good writers use synonyms to avoid repeating words, and to add interest and variety to a story. Identify all the synonyms in the following paragraph and learn how they help to achieve variety in writing.*

Addiction to alcohol is one of the primary public-health problems in the United States. It causes more than 19,000 auto fatalities each year; it is responsible for more than a third of deaths from drowning and fire. Drinking is a central factor in divorce. It can trigger child and spouse abuse, suicide, murder, assault, and other crimes. It can damage the liver, the kidneys, the heart, and the central nervous system. The total loss, from increased jail time to workplace injuries and loss of productivity, is impossible to measure, but a conservative estimate is as high as \$ 90 billion per year. As we look for ways to reduce health-care costs, we must recognize that alcoholism is a big contributor to hospital admissions.

## 1.2 How do words play a role in figures of speech?

Figures of speech (修辞) are ways of making your language figurative. When you use words in other than their ordinary or literal senses to lend force to an idea, to heighten effect, or to create suggestive imagery, you are said to be speaking or writing figuratively. For example, when you say that stars “shine brightly in the sky,” you speak literally; while if you say that stars “twinkle like diamonds,” you speak figuratively by using a figure of speech — a simile.

Figures of speech capture meaning more precisely and feelingly, and add vigor and emphasis to your use of the language. Those most commonly used figures of speech include simile, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, personification, and hyperbole. Each figure has its own form and characteristic features, and its own preference for words.

### 1.2.1 Simile

**Definition** Simile (明喻) is a figure of speech involving a comparison between two or more things which are essentially different but have at least one property or characteristic in common. Words like *as*, *as . . . as*, *as if*, *as though*, *(just) as . . . so*, and *like* are commonly used to

make the comparison.

**Words in simile** Since simile compares two things of different classes, often one abstract and the other concrete, words that are concrete and create vivid images are often used to explain abstract, complicated ideas in similes, e. g.

- 1) To get a word out of him was *like pulling teeth*. (to show that it is difficult to get him to talk.)
- 2) He was *like a cock who thought the sun had risen to hear him crow*. (to show that he was very conceited.)
- 3) Beauty is *as summer fruits*, which are easy to corrupt and cannot last. (to show that beauty is short and transient)
- 4) The water of the pool was too dirty, and what was more, the swimmers were *packed like sardines*. (to show how crowded the pool is)

### 1.2.2 Metaphor

**Definition** Metaphor (暗喻) also involves a comparison between two or more unlike things which share at least one property or characteristic, but the comparison is implied rather than stated. That is to say, it has no comparative words such as *like*, *as*, *as if*. For example:

- 1a) Jim was a fox. (metaphor)
- 1b) Jim was as cunning as a fox. (simile)
- 2a) The world is a stage. (metaphor)
- 2b) The world is like a stage. (simile)

**Words in metaphor** Like similes, metaphors also resort to concrete words and expressions to explain abstract, complicated concepts or ideas. But unlike similes which are mainly confined to nouns only, metaphors involve nouns, verbs, adjectives, attributive or adverbial modifiers.

**For example**

- 1) You are *a pain in the neck*. (to show you are very annoying)
- 2) He is *a lion in the battle*. (to show he is very brave)
- 3) The corridor was *flooded* with boys and girls. (to show the crowdedness of the corridor)
- 4) It was *a thorny* problem. (to show the problem is difficult)