English
— The Back of Your Hand

英语——从基础到写作

刘新慧　[加]Glenn Arnold　卢雨菁◎著

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Good writing balances ideas and facts, and it also balances abstract and concrete diction. If the writing is too abstract, with too few concrete facts and details, it will be unconvincing and tiresome. If the writing is too concrete, devoid of ideas and emotions, it can seem pointless and dry.

—Alfred Rosa and Paul Eschholz
Models for Writers: Short Essays for Composition

Preface

I have been teaching English since 1987 and witnessed the joy and frustration English learners have on the tough journey of learning English, the most widely dispersed and taught language in the world.

Language itself is changing; new terms are coined and old expressions fade or revive due to discoveries, inventions, personal preferences or integration of different cultures, which is the situation faced by all linguistic workers as well as ordinary people. To admit it or not, English has become the predominate language in a globalized world. Lack of it means loss of opportunities, and nobody is ashamed of talking about the importance of English, regardless of ethnic identity, because this language can lead you to the stage of the world. If you want to be an internationally recognized scholar, you have to publish in the highly recognized English journals; if a government hopes to strengthen its international status, it should know well all the policies conducted by those powerful western countries and establish relationships with them. Even in the entertainment world, to be able to sing or communicate in English has been a symbol of "fan'r"—the person who leads the style. No doubt, English is important.

It was in 2002 at McMaster University that I, for the first time, realized how poorly my generation of English teachers had been educated in the field of English and in return how insufficiently we had been teaching English in an age of reform and internationalization. It was a shame whenever I thought "if I could not speak English properly in the western world, how could I expect my students to fluently and accurately talk about their academic achievement in front of a western audience?" I did see the anxiety suffered by Chinese scholars in the English speaking countries. A lady at McMaster University once told me, "My boss has been very satisfied with my research and arranged for me many lectures and conference presentations; I can do well in the description part of my presentation; but when the question-and-answer session begins, I become dumb and stupid. How I wish my English could have been better."

Starting in 2003, it took me six years in total to first finish my M.Ed./M.Phil. degree studies at the University of Cambridge and then Ph.D. degree studies at the University of Alberta. Now I realize that there is not a so-called "best" way to teach a language, though

there are ways to help students better understand a language and the rules to piece together all its elements, so that the students can integrate what they have learned and make the best use out of what they have possessed.

English, the Back of Your Hand sets out to describe the language facts which define or distinguish this language from other languages. It also includes the culture of English writing and research documentation. The inspiration for the writing of this book comes from a market survey. Although there are books on English academic writing in the Chinese market, most of the books only focus on paragraph development or the introduction of those four types of discourses. Few have taken academic writing as a comprehensive system which puts every tissue of this language on demand: from punctuation marks which have been compared to "road signs placed along the highway of human communication" (Iyer 1988) to the composition of a research paper which asks for skills from research question designs via literature review, research method design, data collection and analysis to the composition of the whole process. *English, the Back of Your Hand* not only works on those building blocks such as parts of speech, grammar, punctuation marks, sentence patterns, and connective skills, but also focuses on the process of how to write a unified, coherent, accurate and persuasive piece of writing. It integrates the study of basic grammatical rules, concepts of writing blocks, and skills of the writing process with extensive practice in sentence structures and argument development; it provides details and insights into the whole process of knowledge construction in English academic writing.

Glenn Arnold has been teaching Academic Writing, Creative Writing, and Accounting at both The Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and Athabasca University. He received his Master of Fine Arts in Writing from Vermont College of Fine Arts, a very distinguished university in literature and fine arts in the United States, and has been a highly credited Chartered Accountant in Canada since 1991. Yujing Lu is a professor in the School of Foreign Languages, Lanzhou University. She has been engaged in the teaching, testing, training, and research of ESL for over 20 years, well-established and experienced. With their participation, proofreading, and supervision, I hope this book will prove a help to Chinese students who want to improve their English ability.

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Xinhui Liu on behalf of the Committee
July 12, 2012

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前　言

我从1987年开始执教,目睹了英语学习者在这条荆棘路上的艰辛与坎坷。

认知领域的扩展和各民族间交流机会的增多都会导致语言的增减与变化,这使原本复杂的语言构造变得更难以掌控。不管承认与否,英语已经成为全球化市场的主要语言。国家与个人都在强调自己的身份,而第一步则是要被认可。因此,政治上强大的标志便是能坐下来和西方领导人谈话;学术上有水准才能在全球认可的英语期刊上发表文章;娱乐界成功的"范儿"都能用英语在国际艺术节上飙技。

2002年我前往加拿大麦克玛斯特大学(McMaster University)做访学。深感自己英语的匮乏,文化撞击所带来的震痛自不必说。痛定思痛:如果来自中国的英语老师都会有如此大的语言压力,我们教出来的学生又会怎样?我在当地中国学者的脸上看到了焦虑。一位叫静秋的生物学学者告诉我:"老板对我的研究和试验都很肯定,给我安排讲座。我陈述部分做得还可以,但一到提问环节,我或者听不太明白老外的提问,或者回答得磕磕巴巴,我很难过。我多么希望自己的英语能再好一些。"

访学结束后,我去了英国剑桥大学(University of Cambridge)攻读"跨文化第二语言教育"的教育学哲学硕士学位。原因很简单,我想搞明白如何学好、教好一门外语;接着我又获得了加拿大阿尔伯达大学(University of Alberta)的博士学位。现在如果有人问我教英语的最好方法是什么,我只能说任何回答都有不全面的成分。英语是一个互动过程,其全部意义在于交流并在交流中得到修改、更正和完善。在一个没有自然语言环境的情况下教英语,英语老师能做到的就是把这门语言的知识体系有效、系统地讲解给学生,设法让学生最大量地置身于地道的语言环境里,对学生遇到的问题及时反馈,使学生在感性的基础上做到知性与融会贯通,从而最大可能地有效输出已经掌握的语言能力,做到会用英语思考、辨读和表达自己。

本书重点是教英语写作。与写作相关的技能和语言点在这本书里都得到了精确而全面的介绍:语法,修辞,标点,实用性写作,学术性写作,论文的选题、研究方法、数据收集与分析、成文,常见错误与修正等。这本书是在做过市场调查后用一年的时间写成的。虽然国内市场不乏英语写作的书,但大多不系统。有些只讲四种文体或很公式化地介绍学术写作;有些只把学术写作当成阶段性的技能对待,缺乏一

个知识体系。一个普遍的问题就是选材随意、没有出处、缺乏实用性。这本书里融入了编写者执教英语多年的经验和教授英语写作的感悟；在介绍每种技能和知识点的同时力争做到精准和重点突出；在选用语言素材时也是精挑细选、注重语言的质量、时代感和实用性。本书是在参阅了大量国内外相关书籍、咨询了大量专家和学生的基础上写成的。

Glenn Arnold 毕业于加拿大阿尔伯达大学商学院，1991年获国际注册会计师称号，参加过许多大型项目；他也曾就读美国佛蒙特艺术学院(Vermont College of Fine Arts)，获得写作专业的硕士学位，在加拿大阿尔伯达北方工业大学(The Northern Alberta Institute of Technology)和阿萨巴斯卡大学(Athabasca University)教授英语写作和会计学。他为本书提供了大量素材并承担了部分编写以及校读工作。卢雨菁在兰州大学外国语学院长期从事大学英语的教学、评估、培训和研究工作，为本书的成书提供了很多参考和宝贵意见。

由于种种局限，本书不足之处在所难免，望广大读者和专家多多包涵、批评指正，使我们不断进步！

刘新慧(代表编委)
2012年7月29日

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CHAPTER 1

SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES

S yntax is basically "the set of rules needed to construct valid expressions or sentences in a language" (*McGraw - Hill Dictionary of Scientific & Technical Terms*. 6th ed. 2003). This chapter does not have intention to discuss the research conducted on syntactic structures, which dates back to *Noam Chomsky's Syntactic Structures* (1957), and has been constantly expanded beyond the scope of linguistics. Instead, this chapter will essentially work on the grammatical rules underlying the construction and interpretation of sentences.

CLAUSE

According to *Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary*, a clause is a group of words containing at least a subject and a predicate verb to usually form one part of a compound or complex sentence.

An independent clause (or a main clause) is also known as a simple sentence. It contains a subject and a predicate verb, and it makes sense by itself. For example, I am happy.

A dependent clause (or a subordinate clause) is a clause that modifies an independent clause with additional information or serves as a component of it. It cannot stand alone as a sentence. For example, because my parents visit me.

TYPES OF SENTENCES (STRUCTURALLY)
Simple, Compound, Complex, and Compound-Complex

According to their structure, sentences are divided into simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences.

Simple Sentences

A simple sentence is also called an independent clause. It expresses a complete thought. It typically has one subject and one predicate, though sometimes it may have more one noun, pronoun, gerund, or infinitive functioning as a whole subject unit and more than one verb functioning as a predicate unit. While sometimes a simple sentence

consists of only one word, it may also have more than one object, attributive, and adverbial. For example:

Look!

Watch out!

My sister is singing.

They laughed at me.

Mary is the only professional in her family.

【NOTE】

* In some books, a sentence with two or more subjects or predicate verbs in parallel structure and roughly equal in importance is called the simple sentence, while in others it is called the compound sentence. Here in this book, this type of sentence is still taken as the simple sentence, because there is only one linear relationship between the subjective unit and its predicate unit.

* When there are more than one subject, predicate verb, object, attributive, and adverbial in the simple sentence, a comma or a connecting word like "and", "or", "but", "yet" or "nor" will be used to indicate the parallel relationship among them. For example:

Joan, Brenda, or Cindy will serve us.

In the 1930s, visitors and servicemen and many Islanders were enthusiastic to buy the Thousand Mile Shirts.

The Thousand Mile Shirt was a favorite with immigrants, Chinese settlers, and native Hawaiians.

My husband and I have visited Los Angeles, New York city, and San Francisco on our last trip.

That stranger turned around and walked straight towards me.

Bob and his girlfriend rented a car, packed their clothes, and drove to New York.

The missionaries created garment styles for the local women, taught them how to sew, and succeeded in clothing the naked Islanders.

Loose fitting gowns designed to fit the plumpest of women are simple in design, comfortable to wear, and embellished with flowers like orchids and hibiscus.

The old farmhouse stood for years by the fork in the road, down in the valley, beyond the orange grove, at the farthest edge of the family's land, and past the end of the county-maintained road.

Doctor Glenn spoke briefly but melodiously about the importance of flossing after every meal.

* Short simple sentences are usually emphatic. Variety is achieved when they are used

with longer sentences. For example:

> I once asked a very able high school senior, a straight A student in Spanish, whether she ever kept any of her old writings. She looked at me amazed, "For heaven's sake," she said, "what for?"

Compound Sentences

A compound sentence consists of two or more independent clauses (or simple sentences) related to each other in meaning and linked by coordinating conjunctions, such as "and", "but", "or", "yet", "nor", "either... or...", "not only... but also", etc. or by a semicolon without a conjunction. Coordinated ideas should be compatible and roughly equal in importance. For example:

> I want to eat vegetable but he insists on eating meat.
>
> Mary opened the door, and her husband greeted the guests warmly.
>
> You must hurry up or you cannot finish it in time.
>
> Either you come or I go.
>
> Not only do the professors have their own ideas, but the students have theirs too.

Complex Sentences

A complex sentence contains one main clause (or independent clause) and at least one or more subordinate clauses (or dependent clauses), with a conjunction (connective word) denoting the relationship between the two parts. According to its grammatical function, the dependent clause may play the part of a subject, an object, a predicative, an attributive, or an adverbial in the main clause.

As a rule, the major idea is expressed in the main clause and the idea (or ideas) of less importance is in the subordinate clauses.

Complex Sentences—The Nominal Clause

A nominal clause is a subordinate clause that functions as a noun. Normally there are four types of nominal clauses:

The Subject Clause

> That the accused is guilty is a foregone conclusion.
>
> What he said is right.
>
> Whether the president will attend the meeting arouses great attention.
>
> Where he comes from is unknown.

Why so many Chinese pursue power and money deserves research.

Who will take that position has not been publicized.

Whose dictionary will be sold does not bother me at all.

When the meeting will start has not yet been decided.

How the hacker entered the company's Facebook account is a mystery.

The Object Clause

Many believe that the accused is guilty.

Nobody can tell what will happen tomorrow.

I wonder whether you are coming.

Who can tell me why the pianist is absent?

The notice will tell you where the meeting is to be held.

My mother wants to know when I can graduate.

Can you predict who will be the next American president?

Did the teacher tell you whose quotation that was?

His article is about how family saga novels can reflect social problems.

The Predicative Clause

What I do care is when and where the meeting will be held.

Lady Gaga eventually becomes what she wanted to be ten years ago.

That is why she failed to pass the exam.

The Appositive Clause

The assumption is that things will improve.

The news that he is going abroad is true.

I have no idea whether he will come.

The doctor's dilemma whether he or she should tell a lie to make the patient happy is frustrating.

【NOTE】

Words that are often followed by a noun clause acting as an appositive are: news, idea, fact, promise, question, doubt, thought, hope, message, suggestion, word, possibility, etc.

Complex Sentences—The Attributive Clause

The attributive clause can mostly be classified into two categories: the restrictive

and the non-restrictive. This classification is mainly based on the closeness and logic—the semantic relationship between the attributive clause and its antecedent.

The Restrictive Attributive Clause

The restrictive attributive clause has restrictive function to the antecedent it modifies. Without this modifier, the intended meaning of the independent clause will be incomplete. Together with the antecedent in the main clause, this restrictive attributive clause is an indispensable part of the sentence it belongs to. For example:

Your wife has got the letter which announces your father's coming.

The person who checked my passport was an Indian who speaks bad English.

This is the room where my daughter was born.

The Non-restrictive Attributive Clause

The non-restrictive attributive clause provides supplementary information about its antecedent or the whole independent sentence but does not limit or restrict the meaning of it. A non-restrictive attributive clause is separated from its antecedent by a comma.

A simple test of whether it is a restrictive or non-restrictive attributive clause is to remove the clause—if the underlying meaning of the sentence changes or becomes incomplete, then it is a restrictive clause; if the clause turns out to have been a supplement to the basic or intended meaning of the independent sentence, then the clause is non-restrictive one. Look at the following examples:

John, who lives next door to me, is a very talented technician.

My house, which I bought last year, has got a lovely garden.

We will put off the outing until next week, when we won't be so busy.

He doesn't seem to have understood what I meant, which greatly upsets me.

Compare the following sentences:

People who worked for him lived in mortal fear of him.

Ocean currents affect the climates of the lands near which they flow.

A ten year old girl killed a snake, which was quite inspiring.

The weather turned out to be very good, which was more than we could have expected.

[NOTE]

* If the antecedent is an indefinite pronoun, such as *all, little, few, much, everything,*

anything, and *nothing*, "that" instead of "which" should be used as the conjunction and it is often omitted. For example:

> That is all that I can say for the time being.
>
> Is there anything that I can do for you?
>
> There is still much that can be done about it.
>
> Have you got everything that you need?

* When the antecedent is modified by *any*, *every*, *only*, *very*, *all*, and *no*, the attributive clause should be introduced by "that". For example:

> These are the very points that interest me.
>
> That is the only watch that I like.
>
> Are there any questions that you want to ask me?

* When the antecedent is modified by ordinal numbers or the superlative adjectives, the attributive clause should be introduced by "that". For example:

> This is the second card that he has played.
>
> He is the most handsome man that I have ever seen.

* If the antecedent is "the way", the restrictive attributive clause is usually introduced by "in which" or "that", which can also be omitted in colloquial expressions. For example:

> The way (in which) you answered the questions was admirable.
>
> The way (in which) he spoke to us was suspicious.
>
> I don't like the way (that) you laugh at her.

* When the antecedents are people as well as things, the attributive clause should be introduced by "that". For example:

> He talked about the men and the books that interested him.
>
> You should forget all the people and things that have destroyed your life.

* If there is a preposition before the conjunction introducing an attributive clause, this conjunction cannot be "that". For example:

> This is the man from whom I learnt the news.
>
> The resort, in which we stayed last summer, was in Alberta.

* The non‑restrictive attributive clause that modifies the whole sentence can only be introduced by "which". Although "who", "whom", "whose", "which", "when" and