

English Writing Techniques

英语写作方法论

商艳芝 袁彩虹 编著

河南人民出版社

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前 言

英语写作对大多数中国学生来说都非易事,学生表现出来的畏惧写作,在写作中错误百出、困难重重是英语教师常常面对的现实问题。作者从事英语写作教学将近十年,确实体会到教授这门课程的艰辛,也深感自身责任的重大,因为学生写作能力的提高总是那么缓慢而不露痕迹。因此,如何才能使学生喜欢写作,把写作变成一种学习习惯,并在潜移默化中轻轻松松提高写作能力,是本书作者一直以来孜孜探求的问题。

在亲身经历的写作教学中,作者一直尝试着从传统的写作模式中走出来,采取让学习者易懂乐学的方式,使他们在润物细无声中快速提高写作能力。这需要投入大量的时间和精力去查阅资料、熟悉写作案例、研究写作方法、把握写作要领,并在教学中尝试使用。还要不辞辛苦地把经过实践检验的教学成果和心得逐一记录,不断积累,使之系统化,最后编辑成书。因此,本书从酝酿到成稿经过了三四年的教学实践积累,其中涉及的英语段落写作、篇章写作、文体对比、写作过程分析、作文评价标准介绍、应用文写作、摘要写作等都是大学生必须掌握的写作内容,对学生参加各级各类英语考试及求职应聘有很好的参考价值。

在段落和篇章写作部分,很多写作著作或教材是按照由词到句到段落再到布局谋篇自下而上的顺序进行内容编排,这种编排虽然能提供系统的理论知识,但内容繁杂,学时要求较多。又因为词汇和句法属于语法现象,对于有了一定语言和语法知识积累的学习者而言,从语言表达入手开始写作训练,缺乏真实的写作交际环境,无法进行语言的自然输出,因此,会觉得枯燥乏味,学习兴趣不高,学习效果事倍功半。本书从段落写作开始,逐步进入到各种文体文章的写作,语言运用技巧贯穿其中。这样,学习者就可以

在具有交际意义的篇章层面的学习过程中,养成篇章写作思维能力,巩固语言知识,掌握语言表达技巧,提高写作水平。另外,英语写作过程与步骤分析可使学习者认识到英语写作的循环往复过程,掌握写前构思、写作、写后修改的方法和技巧。作文评价的标准和原则提供了评价、修改作文的方法指导,学习者对照评改标准就可以对自己或他人的作文进行评价和修改。英语摘要写作能够使学习者学会概括文章主要内容,提高信息捕捉能力、要点组织和表情达意能力,培养笔记能力和作文能力。应用文写作部分主要是便条写作和书信写作,其中提供的大量实例可帮助学习者掌握英文便条和书信的格式、语言和写作规范。

本书包含有大量实用性的写作案例,这些优秀的写作范文都是与我们的现实生活、社会热点问题、时事及特定文化现象等密切相关的写作内容,涉及的多是学习者感兴趣的话题。针对这些话题的写作案例解析揭示了写作的过程和方法,使学习者清楚英语写作的真谛,即写作是一个用语言表达思想的创造性思维过程,语言是写作的基础,而思想和内容的创造性展现才是写作的最终目的。因此,本书在编写中一直贯穿的一个理念就是,用创造性的思维方法和写作案例培养学习者的创造性思维。对写作方法的阐述避免涉及过多理论的长篇大论,而是通俗易懂、深入浅出的分析和概括;对写作案例的点评也是简明扼要。写作案例的筛选是一个耗时费力的过程,很多时候,选择一个恰当、合适的案例要翻阅数十本参考资料。实在找不到合适的,作者要亲自动笔修改或编写参考案例。经作者修改或重新编写的案例,还要在教学实践中进行检验,并根据学生的理解和接受情况不断修改和完善。

本书的大部分内容在作者教授的英语专业本科生的写作课堂教学中应用过,也在作者开设的公共选修课上尝试过,效果很好,深受学生的欢迎。作者相信,学习者顺着这本书一路走来,会发现他们不再厌烦或恐惧写作,不再把写作看作一种苦差,而是英语学习的一种途径和方式而乐此不疲。本书内容广泛,讲解深入浅出,案例通俗易懂,语言简明扼要,便于自学,可作为课外阅读书目,也可作为大学英语各级各类考试以及考研的指导用书,对期待短期内快速提高写作能力的学习者会有很大的帮助。

商艳芝 袁彩虹

2013年5月于洛阳师范学院

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第一章 英语段落的认识

1. 英语段落的结构特点：直线性

英语思维是直线型的(linear),英语段落大多呈线性发展。典型的英语段落是以表达中心思想的句子,即主题句(topic sentence)开头,然后对主题进行阐述和发展。段落的每一个句子既是它前面的句子在语义上的继续,又是对主题句的进一步发展。段落结构模式主要有以下几种:

1.1 并列型

并列型指段落内的各句子平等并列,互不相属,组合起来共同说明主题。除主题句(有的还有总结句)外,其他句子相互位置的改变并不影响整个段落的意义(如下图)。



这种段落结构模式一般用于举例、分类或列举原因。

【例 1】

The Amazon River is the mightiest river in the world. In width, it is the first, with one-fifth of all the fresh water on earth moving through its mouth. In length, it is second only to the Nile, and if stretched across the United States, it would reach from New York to Los Angeles. And in area, it covers the largest of any river.

【例2】

Different types of students have different ways of spending their spare time. Some active students, especially boys, prefer to play ball games and do other physical exercises. Some inactive students prefer to stay in the classroom writing letters, reading popular novels or magazines, or listening to popular music. Some hardworking students make use of their spare time to consult reference books or to go over their lessons. Some romantic students like to go to the countryside to enjoy the natural scenery and fresh air. For students whose families are poor, they like to do certain part-time jobs to support themselves. In a word, whatever they choose to do, they can make their spare time colorful and enjoyable. (《新编英语写作教程》, p6, 陈立平)

【例3】

There are three reasons why John is not going to university. In the first place, his family is quite poor and, since he has four younger brothers and sisters still at school, he feels that he should help his family financially as soon as possible. Secondly, if he went to the university, his mother would be left alone to look after the young children. Finally, he has been offered a good job with excellent chances of promotion. Consequently, although he wants to go to university very much, John is going to take the job instead.

1.2 顺序型

顺序型指段落内的各个句子是按事情发展的先后顺序排列,即主题句→支撑句1→支撑句2→支撑句3→支撑句4→支撑句5,段落的每一个支撑句都是它前面的句子在语义上的继续,他们组合起来共同说明主题句或对主题句进行发展。

【例4】

I had a terrible morning today. I slept so late that I did not have time to eat my breakfast. On my way to my political science class, I fell over a stone and tore my raincoat. In the middle of a class, I discovered I had left my physics homework in my locker(抽屉). At the end of the class, the professor would not let me go for lunch on time, because I had not turned in my homework, and he

wanted to talk over this problem with me.

【例5】

To apply to a graduate school needs three steps to go. First, obtain a list of schools with your major. Then, carefully select an academic orientation from many which suits your interest and ambition. Having decided on your specific field, the third step is to enter your name for the examination in the local testing service and fill in the application form. After that, you are wanted to pay fees and to offer your school report card. Next, you will wait for a permission card...

【例6】

As the day of the exam approaches, there are several things you can do to make life easier. Firstly, you should make sure that you get regular exercise, that way you won't feel tired at night and you won't stay awake worrying. Just before the exam, it helps to write short notes of the most important study points on pieces of paper and look at them just before you go to bed. On the day of the exam, instead of doing any studying, eat a proper breakfast and take some emergency snacks with you, wear comfortable clothes and take your favorite pen and pencil with you.

1.3 层递型

层递型即按语意的轻重和认识的深浅由轻到重、由浅入深地排列句子,即主题句←支撑句1←支撑句2←支撑句3←支撑句4←支撑句5,段落的每一个句子都是对它前面句子的进一步详细说明,是说理分析文章的典型结构模式。

【例7】

The sea is very big in the world. When you look at the map of the world you will find that there is more water than land on the earth. The sea covers three quarters of the world.

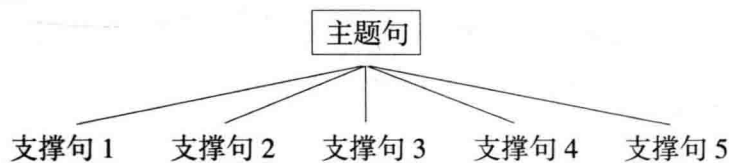
【例8】

I like reading novels because they tell interesting and moving stories. Moreover, some stories are instructive. By describing good and evil people, and the bright side and the dark side of life, such stories help me to distinguish

between right and wrong, and understand people and life. As a result, reading them has perhaps made me wiser.

1.4 渐进型

渐进型即根据事情的重要程度和严重程度,按照从最不重要到最重要或从最不严重到最严重的顺序排列句子,段落中包括主题句在内的所有句子位置不能随意改变,这也是说理分析文章的典型结构模式。



【例9】

Television is harmful for children's healthy development. When children spend too much time watching television, they cannot concentrate on their studies. What is worse, their eyesight becomes poorer and their body unhealthy. And they are often exposed to violence, which are bad for their mental health.

【例10】

It was graduation day at college, and faces beamed with pride. Teachers vigorously shook hands with their students, delighted that so many had successfully completed the program. Even prouder were relatives of the graduates. They had encouraged wives, husbands, sons, and daughters who, tired and discouraged, had threatened to leave college. But the proudest of all were the graduates. Many had returned to school after years in the world of work. They had toiled at the jobs, gone to school at night, and cared for their families—this day made all the sacrifices worthwhile.

1.5 转折型

转折型指段落内句子与句子之间存在着意义的转折。这种结构模式可用于意义的对比和对照。

【例11】

Californians and New Englanders are both Americans. They speak the same language and abide by the same federal laws. But they are very different in their

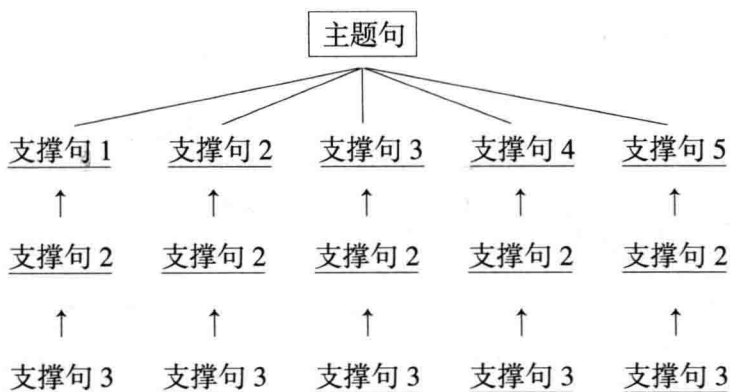
way of life. Mobility, both physical and psychological, has made a great impression on the culture of Californians; lack of mobility is a mark of the customs and morality of New Englanders.

【例 12】

People often confuse crows(乌鸦)and ravens(渡鸦), but the two birds are really not so difficult to distinguish. Both crows and ravens are large, intelligent, mischievous birds whose bodies are covered with glossy(有光泽的) black feathers. However, while crows are about 18 to 20 inches long, with a wingspan(翼展) up to 39 inches. Ravens sometimes exceed 26 inches in length and have a wingspan up to 56 inches. Crows have high, shrill(尖锐刺耳的) voices while ravens' voices are deep, harsh and croak(发出呱呱声的). Crows build their nests in trees. Ravens sometimes nest in trees but more often build their nests on rocky cliffs.

1.6 混合型

英语的很多段落不只有一种结构模式,而是以上两种或几种模式的混合使用。常见的有并列型和层递型(或渐进型)的结合,因此,就形成了段落的几个层次。



【例 13】

Automobile accidents occur for a variety of causes. // First, poor weather conditions are often responsible. When the roads are snowy, icy, or wet, it is more difficult to control a car. / Accidents can also happen when certain parts of

the automobile malfunction. Faulty brakes and defective tires, for example, have been blamed for many mishaps. / But the most common cause of accidents is driver error. A careless, sleepy, or drunk driver is not fully alert and runs a high risk of having an accident.

【例 14】

In English writing, three broad types of error can be distinguished. // The first type of error is the error which leads to a misunderstanding, or even worse, to a breakdown in communication. The student tends to work out a sentence in his own language and then translate it word-by-word into English. This often produces non-English sentence patterns. / The second type of error is that which leads to ungrammatical English, but does not usually interfere with the meaning. The wrong selection of a verb tense often comes into this category. / The third type of error concerns style and usage. When a student writes “The results of the research were terrific”, he is making this type of mistake because native speakers of English never use the word “terrific” in their own academic writing. Each of the three mistakes can damage one’s composition. English learners should always be aware of the three mistakes when they write in English.

【例 15】

With the widespread use of television both in the city and in the countryside, people’s lifestyle is changing greatly. // First, television is changing people’s view of recreation. With at least one television set in each house, most people now will enjoy a film at home rather than going to the cinema because they think it more comfortable and cozy to be at home than in a cinema. // Second, TV changes people’s idea of consumption. Thanks to the purchase programs on TV, people can shop at home without going to the shop that is crowded and far away. Finally, TV changes people’s idea of study. A lot of people, especially the young who have been working for years, can learn from the teaching programs on TV. In short, the effect of TV on people’s life is tremendous.

【例 16】

The main reason for the wide spread for English is its present-day importance as a world language. Besides serving the infinite needs of its native speakers, English is a language in which some of the most important works in science, technology and other fields are being produced, and not always by native speakers. Many companies demand their employees to learn English. // It is a language of wider communication for a number of developing countries, especially former colonies. Many of these countries have multilingual populations and need a language for internal communication in such matters as government, commerce, industry, law and education as well as for international communication and for access to the scientific and technological developments in the west.

2. 英语段落的组织原则

主题的一致性、意义的连贯性和内容的丰富性是英语段落写作时必须遵循的基本原则,也是作文评价的标准。

2.1 主题一致性原则

主题一致性原则指段落内容围绕一个统一的中心思想进行论述,段落内的所有句子都要用来阐述或证明中心思想,与段落内容无关的句子不能出现。换句话说,段落主题的一致性要求一个段落只有一个中心思想,并且段落内的所有句子都要与中心思想密切相关。例如下面一段话:

【例 1】

With the changes in their social role, women's position in the family has been improved as well. Husband and wife are now equal in the family. They cope with problems of daily life together and share the responsibility of doing household chores and taking care of children. But in some families, you can still find wives are being busy with dinners, while husbands are comfortably sitting in armchairs reading newspapers or watching football games on TV.

以上段落的最后一句与段落主题思想“With the changes in their social role, women's position in the family has been improved as well.”是相悖的,不符合段落一致性原则,如果改写一下,则能更好地表达中心思想。

【例1 改进稿】

With the changes in their social role, women's position in the family has been improved as well. Husband and wife are now equal in the family. They cope with problems of daily life together and share the responsibility of doing household chores and taking care of children. Today, you can hardly find wives are being busy with dinners, while husbands are comfortably sitting in armchairs reading newspapers or watching football games on TV.

比较下面两段话,它们是否符合段落一致性的原则?为什么?

【例2】

I want to talk about my father. He is strict with his children, especially with me. He won't let me out of the house unless I've done all my homework. He is a tall and rather skinny man. Some people say he is good-looking. He has a nice streak of grey in his hair. He laughs a lot and enjoys life. My father is interesting.

【例3】

My father's face is rough. His complexion is leathery (似皮革的) and wrinkled. There are large pores in the skin that covers his nose and cheeks. His nose, broken twice in his life, makes him look like a boxer who has lost many fights. His mouth, unless he smiles, looks hard and threatening. His chin is massive (又大又重的) and angular (有角的). Shaved or not, my father's face is rugged.

例2里的段落是初学者喜欢采用的写作方法,在对人物进行介绍时学生常会这样写。然而,这个段落谈到了作者父亲对子女的态度(attitude)、外表(appearance)、性格(character)三个方面,却没有围绕一个统一的中心思想去论述,因此,不符合英语段落一致性的原则。例3中的段落主题思想只有一个:即父亲的脸是粗糙的,所有的支撑内容都是围绕作者父亲的脸是如何粗糙进行选择的。因此,就很好地表达了中心思想。再看下面两段话:

【例4】

Television has much harm. Since the television was invented, it has played an important part in people's life. It has turned the big world to a small one.

People can see the same program at the same time around the world. But, as soon as television comes into common families, it also has much harm, especially for the children. For example, children spend too much time watching television. As a result, they cannot concentrate on their studies. What is worse, their eyesight becomes poorer. And they are often exposed to violence, which is harmful to their mental growth.

【例5】

Quitting smoking was very difficult for me, but I am glad I did. When I was thirteen, my friend Wally and I smoked in front of a mirror. We practiced holding the cigarette in different ways and tried French inhaling (从鼻孔中吸气), letting the smoke roll slowly out of our mouths and drawing it back through our noses. I thought this move, when it did not incite (引起) a bit of coughing, was particularly sexy. At first I smoked only to give myself confidence on dates and at parties. Soon, however, I was smoking all the time.

例4、例5两个段落乍一看上去写得不错,它比较符合中国学生的写作习惯。例4是通过寻找一些反衬的内容去突出主题思想,例5则是想到哪儿写到哪儿,从成功戒烟开始,写到如何养成抽烟的习惯,还写了抽烟的目的。这两种做法都违反了英语段落一致性的原则。例4如果去掉第2句到第5句话,就可以突出“Television has much harm”这一主题思想。而例5若把画线部分去掉,就可以只突出一个中心思想,即“I developed the habit of smoking out of curiosity”。

2.2 连贯性原则

段落连贯性指的是段落内容按照时间、空间、概括到具体、具体到概括等逻辑顺序组织在一起,并通过恰当的衔接手段,使句子与句子之间的过渡自然流畅,段落内容紧凑,逻辑关系清晰,前后互相照应,读起来有行云流水的感觉。也就是说,要实现段落内容的连贯,首先句子的排列要有一定的逻辑顺序(见本章第5部分),其次是句子之间的恰当衔接。衔接主要通过以下衔接手段来实现。

1) 指称

指称指用代词等语法关系表示语义关系。可用来表示指称的代词包括

人称代词(he, they, his, I, you...)、指示代词(this, that, here, there...)和比较代词(than, same, equal, similar, different...)等。例如:

①I like reading novels because they tell interesting and moving stories. (这个句子中的 they 指 novels)

②This is our school library. We often study here in the evening. (这个句子中的 here 指 school library)

③Tom gets ten dollars a week for pocket money. Bob receives a similar amount. (这个句子中的 similar 指 ten dollars)

2) 替代

替代指用替代词等语法关系表示语义关系,如用 one, ones 替代句子中的名词,用 do, does, did 替代句子中的动词,用 so, not 替代从句等。例如:

①I offered him a seat. He said he didn't want one. (这个句子中的 one 替代 a seat)

②Does he like English? Yes, he does. (这个句子中的 does 替代 likes English)

③Do you need a lift? If so, wait for me; if not, I'll see you there. (这个句子中的 so 替代 you need a lift, not 替代 you don't need a lift)

3) 省略

省略指篇章中句子或从句中一些基本结构成分的缺省。省略也被称为零位替代(zero substitution)。例如:

①Would you like to go to the movie? Yes, I'd like to (go to the movie).

②People in my family have different hobbies in their spare time. My father likes watching TV, my mother (likes) listening to music, my elder brother (likes) reading books, and I (like) playing bridge(桥牌).

4) 连接

连接指通过连接词、副词等转折过渡词语来实现句子与句子之间关系的衔接。例如:

I like reading novels because they tell interesting and moving stories. Moreover, some stories are instructive.