

English Composition

In

Logic & Rhetoric

英语写作：逻辑与修辞

Book I Fundamental Writing

写作基础

刘琦 编著

张文鹏 审阅



电子科技大学出版社

活性写作研究

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内 容 提 要

人之为文,性灵所钟。性灵所在,构思与表达尔。此理中外皆然,是以逻辑与修辞统领全书。此外,本书应用跨学科成果研究英文写作,面向广大希望提高英语写作水平的读者。上册《写作基础》侧重逻辑训练。内容包括说明文的13种类型,就如何表达准确,提出了三级词汇概念;短文介绍了起承转合方法。下册《意象和描写》是意象研究专著,以美学理论、文艺心理学、修辞、文学批评和心理学性格理论为指导,从明喻、暗喻、象征、拟色、拟声、拟形、人物刻画诸方面考证意象,侧重修辞训练,尤其是名词、动词、形容词的选择与使用,对于表达生动准确是行之有效的训练。逻辑和修辞是英语写作基本功,无论文、理科学生都可因此获益。

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Preface

The book series is designed primarily for use in a composition course for English majors. However, the topic coverage is relatively comprehensive, so the book can be easily adapted by non-English majors as a guide to campus writing.

The series is an attempt for me to be engaged in an interdisciplinary research on aesthetic theory, rhetoric, literature criticism and trait theories in psychology. The philosophy that guided such a research is my conviction that it would help students gain an insight into things on a broad background so as to trigger off original ideas of their own. Each chapter is closely knitted with three parts: the text, samples for dynamic imitating, and specially designed exercises. Book I discusses the fundamental elements that shape sentences, paragraphs and short essays, with emphasis on logical development in meaning and in structure. Book II is set in the frame of description, with great concern on image building in such aspects as simile and metaphor, symbol, colour scheme, sound effect, shape scheme, and characterization. This training in rhetoric would sharpen students' thoughts and enrich their expression of ideas. The reader should be flexible with the sequence of chapters. S/he may start from any place that her/his interest or need will anchor, for the book also serves as a word builder and a reader for pleasure.

My aspiration to write such a book called for an immediate effort that was added to my working schedule in the fall of 1996 and soon became my routine and hobby. Book II was completed in a chilly morning in late 1999; Book I was finished in the early month of 2001. There will be another two books to complete the series. Perhaps I bit off more than I could chew. However, the die is cast. Any comment on the book is heartily welcome. After writing down the above words, I raised my eye and stared at the window-pane; in the twilight outside I saw Don Quixote on his gaunt horse departing for a new adventure.

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Liu Qi
2002.3

Contents

Book One: Fundamental Writing

Chapter 1 Orientation: English Writing	1		
I . Audience	3		
II . Topic Idea	4		
III . Organization	5		
IV . Expression	6		
Chapter 2 Sentence Skills	8		
I . Sentence Elements	8		
II . Basic Sentence Patterns	11		
Exercises	12		
Chapter 3 Shaping Sentences	18		
I . Shaping Sentences by Combining or Separating	18		
A. Testing logical relationship	19		
B. Choosing proper connectives	20		
II . Shaping by Subordinating	21		
A. Deciding the controlling idea	21		
B. Deciding the placing of clause	22		
C. Warning against faulty subordination	23		
III . Shaping by Coordinating	24		
A. Common patterns of coordination	24		
B. Special patterns of coordination	25		
IV . Shaping by Parallelism	31		
A. Form of parallelism	32		
B. Feature of Parallelism	33		
C. Methods of building parallelism	35		
D. Faulty parallelism	36		
V . Shaping by Ellipsis	38		
Exercises	39		
Chapter 4 Punctuating Sentences	46		
I . Period Fault and Fragments	46		
A. Fragments: ineffective and effective	46		
		B. Period fault	48
		II . Comma Splices and Run-on Sentences	49
		A. Run-on sentence	49
		B. Comma splices	50
		C. Removing run-on effect	51
		D. Correcting fused sentences	52
		III . Basic Rules for Punctuation	52
		Exercises	54
		Chapter 5 Revising Sentences	58
		I . Revising for Clarity	58
		A. Sentence logic	59
		B. Subject-verb concord	61
		C. Agreement of pronouns & antecedents	64
		D. Other grammatical points	65
		II . Revising for Emphasis	68
		A. Repetition of key words	68
		B. Active voice	69
		C. Shift of word order	69
		III . Revising for Economy	70
		IV . Revising for Variety	71
		A. Sentence length & structure	71
		B. Sentence Opening	72
		Exercises	72
		Chapter 6 Building Paragraph	76
		I . Unity and Controlling Idea	76
		A. From subject to topic idea	77
		B. Topic sentence	79
		C. Related sentences	87
		D. Outline for unity	89
		Exercises with Unity	94
		II . Completeness and Developing Methods	99
		A. Developing by description	99

B. Developing by narration	100	Exercises with Economy and Diction	146
C. Developing by examples	100		
D. Developing by classification	101	Chapter 7 Short Essay	153
E. Developing by comparison & contrast	102	I . The Title	153
F. Developing by process	103	A. Composition of title	154
G. Developing by cause & effect	105	B. Capitalization of title	157
H. Development by definition	106	II . The Thesis Statement	157
Exercises with Completeness	107	A. Two steps in writing a thesis statement	158
III . Coherence and Sequence	107	B. Presenting the thesis statement	160
A. Transitional devices	108	III . The Body of Essay and The Brainstorm	162
B. Sequence development	113	IV . Introductory Paragraph	162
Exercises with Coherence	121	A. Opening strategies	163
IV . Economy and Diction	123	B. Beginnings to avoid	173
A. Eliminating Wordiness	124	V . Concluding Paragraph	175
B. Packing more meaning into fewer words	126	A. Ending strategies	175
C. Writing precisely	126	B. Endings to avoid	182
D. Euphemism, slang and idiom	138	Answers to Exercises	183
E. Figurative language	141	Reference	193

Chapter 1 Orientation: English Writing

About noontime a host of round, lofty clouds appears, aureately gray, rimmed with soft whiteness. Like islands scattered over a river in infinite flood that runs around them in deeply transparent channels, they hardly budge; farther on, toward the sky's rim, they move near to one another, they huddle; there is no longer any blue to be seen between them, but they themselves are of the same azure as the sky; all of them are shot through and through with light and warmth.

Turgenev, Bezhin Meadow

Good writing never happens as a lucky incident. It is the successful culmination of efforts in many aspects, including shrewd observation, intelligent reading, a habit of jotting down a sudden sparkle of inspiration, plus a conscious effort in studying rhetoric — not the flowery style that suggests a pompous, showy, and meaningless manner, but the mechanics that focus on gathering, organizing, and presenting ideas, facts, feelings, or impressions so as to achieve a desired effect in writing. This book is written under such guide-lines and the author intends to provide the readers with proper training in the rhetorical perspective.

In the tradition of classical rhetoric, three levels of style distinguish themselves as the plain style, the middle style, and the dignified style, though there are actually more styles than those three. Yet the three distinctions suggested by Cicero and Quintilian — both men are great Roman rhetoricians — have influenced the study of language for many centuries and are still viable in today's language teaching. The classical distinctions in style are based on metaphor or figurative language. According to Cicero^①, the plain style is “*to the point explaining every thing and making every point clear rather than impressive, using a refined, concise style stripped of ornament*”. The dignified style, in Cicero's words, “*showed splendid power of thought and majesty of diction ...*” The middle style is “*akin to both, excelling neither ...*” Quintilian gave a similar definition to the distinctions when he described the plain style as one that focused on presenting facts, while the middle style has “*more frequent recourse to metaphor and will make a more attractive use of figures.*” The grand or dignified style, he continued, is “*more powerful*”; its flow is “*like to some great torrent that rolls down rocks and 'disdains a bridge' and carves out its own banks for itself.*” Cicero's ideal orator “*would be the one who could master all three styles, one able to fit the style to the occasion, purpose, and audience, one able to vary style within a speech as the subject required*”. As students in composition class, we are likely to benefit from Cicero's advice as well. Our

① Quotations of Cicero and Quintilian come from James E Robinson, *The Scope of Rhetoric*, 169 – 171, 1970

purpose in studying rhetoric is to practice those principles in writing. When we present an idea, the style should be clear, unpretentious, and economical; but that should not mean that expression of ideas must always be simple and straightforward. Either the style or the diction must fit the occasion. In the following occasion, the plain style cannot explore the ideas conveyed in the figurative language.

But her life was as cold as an attic facing the north, and boredom, like a silent spider, was weaving its web in the shadows, in every corner of her heart.

Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*

Meanwhile, in the depths of her soul, she was waiting for something to happen. Like a sailor in distress, she kept scanning the solitude of her life with anxious eyes, straining to sight some far-off white sail in the mists of the horizon. She did not know how it would come to her, what wind would bring it to her, to what shores it would carry her, whether it would be a launch or a towering three-decker, laden with sorrow or filled to the gunwales with bliss.

Flaubert

Perhaps the style printed here is what we crave for in our writing, not as ornament, but as the weapon to sharpen the thoughts and to explore the meaning deep under the surface.

Styles are closely related to the writing types.

Traditionally, English writing is classified as description(描写), narration(叙述), exposition(说明), and persuasion(论说), based on the writing purposes as exhibited below.

Description — to show how sb/sth looks;

Narration — to report what has happened;

Exposition — to explain why and how sth is done;

Persuasion — to convince by arguing for/against sth.

Each writing type is distinguished from others not only by a different writing purpose but also by the particular requirements for diction — choice and use of words — and for the correspondingly suitable methods of developing ideas. For example, **description** is often organized in a sequence of space from left to right, top to bottom, closeness to distance, center to periphery, or the other way round. The material can be arranged from the general to the particular or from the particular to the general as seen in the combination of a bird's eye-view and a pedestrian's view. The beginning quotation is an example of dignified style. By using a concrete diction, the writer gives a vivid word picture to the clouds in shape, colour and motion, so as to build an image, in that case, an overwhelming impression of the host of clouds.

Narration usually develops in a time order by telling a story from the first to the last event, or an accident in a series of flashbacks. **Persuasion** is sometimes called **argumentation & persuasion**, which suggests the two basic means to the persuasive end — resort to logical reasoning and to emotion. In terms of logical reasoning, both **exposition** and **persuasion** depend on a logical sequence, but they vary significantly in goals and forms of development since the former is to inform and the latter is to convince.

As a rule, exposition makes a point through examples, classification, comparison/contrast, process, causal analysis, and definition; while persuasion has to reason about arguments processing in statements of facts, judgments, and generalizations. Those are the basic differences in developing each type of writing — mainly essays. No doubt, there is certain degree of overlap within each type, such as descriptive narration, or narrative description, or narration in exposition; even though, each type characterizes a main development and organization.

Then come the considerations for expression — what language is appropriate to a particular development? How to present materials or contents most effectively? How many details are proper for a given subject matter? Are there any special requirements of vocabulary for the content? These considerations involve three things; sentence skills, paragraph development, and diction. Here it is necessary to say a few words about diction, that involves choice and use of words in a particular language situation for a special purpose and with a special audience in consideration. For example, if a writer intends to convey a message through word pictures, he would choose words that appeal to a sensory experience, so as to build images in the mind's eye — a word picture that can be seen, heard, smelt, touched, or tasted in the imagination. But a persuasive writer in argumentation may choose emotional words as well as words of generalization to make a point, or adopt a humorous attitude to win the approval of or even sympathy from the audience. It is important to decide a writing purpose before starting to write so as to avoid a messy content, or a hasty switch later.

People vary in the writing habit: some cannot write until they figure out the content, while others have to write in order to find ideas. The best way is, of course, to adopt the methods you feel most comfortable with. Yet no matter how you behave in writing, you have to understand these factors that will shape your writing.

- Audience — how to interest them;
- Topic idea — how to gather information;
- Organization — how to arrange the content;
- Expression — how to convey the desired message precisely.

Your understanding of those entries may greatly improve the quality of your writing.

I . Audience

An audience is a group of people whom you write for. In a composition class, the audience is, out of question, your instructor, and sometimes your classmates. But there are hypothetical audiences for you to consider. Who are they? What are their interests, tastes, and prejudice? How much they know about your topic? Are they experts or outsiders? Then you have to decide what diction — personal, free-and-easy, formal, technical, straightforward, or the mixture of any mentioned and unmentioned — is more appropriate and acceptable for the occasion. In brief, you have to analyse and measure the audience, make adjustment in form, style, and diction, so as to attract and hold their interest and attention.

II . Topic Idea

The topic idea is the core of writing. Its content, development, and expression lay a foundation for the body of writing and directly affect the success or failure of a paper. An effective topic idea usually bears two features: it is manageable, and it is individual.

First, it must be a familiar one, so you have something to say about the subject. Even if it looks strange at the first glance, it is still manageable as long as you can obtain information of subject matter from library, internet, and other sources. In addition, considering the length and the time requirements for a classroom paper, the topic must be a simple one, that deals with only one point or aspect of the subject matter under discussion. Only a simple topic allows discussion to go under the surface. In other words, you must know about your topic from your own experience, or at least know how to collect data around the topic and to process information for the particular use. Therefore, an effective and manageable topic must be a familiar and simple one.

Second, a good topic idea should be individual, not merely repeating a popular theory. Since writing is a sort of interpersonal communication, how can a participant in conversation function like a parrot? Definitely he should voice his own opinion if he is sincere in that communication. In that sense, being individual is being original. He may need imitation from a master or predecessors, but that imitation should be able to trigger off a mental sparkle of his own idea. Then imitation is no longer an inferior practice. But we should not confuse the effective imitation with plagiarism, that is stealing or pirating other people's ideas or works as one's own. The topic idea that is individual often bears a personality, even if it deals with a similar topic to people in general, its interpretation is still personal; and this personality provides a chance to write with freshness.

Often, a classroom paper is assigned with a given subject; but that subject only suggests a general direction for you to go. You might have no idea how far the distance is, or where is the exact spot you should arrive. A hasty start often results in repenting at leisure. To avoid such a blunder in writing, you have to narrow the scope down to a topic that includes the main points for discussion and choose a particular angle to view the problem. Supposing a given subject is about the travel, you have to decide which aspect or point is most comfortable for you to discuss. You have to make sure that the topic can interest you first. Then you can stick to the topic literally, by illustrating your ideas about travelling abroad, by comparing and contrasting the advantages and disadvantages of travelling by car, by emphasizing the importance of punctuality, right company, financial support, etc.. You can give the topic a metaphorical or even poetic treatment, for the word travel can also be interpreted as a mental progress, a process in one's life, and so on. If the student has never been to any place other than his birth place, still can he draw information from the reading material, pictures, photos, and movies. He may become a man who travels the world in search of what he wants and returns home to find it.

An effective way to eject ideas at the speed of a storm is called **brainstorming** that is recommended

by many writers. You just take out a blank sheet of paper and jot down all the associated words or phrases that strike you. You have to keep writing for several minutes without a break. Then by examining the intrinsic connection of ideas, you group them and cross off the wild guess. The task left is comparatively easier for you to organize them in a suitable sequence and pattern for development. The following list shows how the brainstorming about wu shu looks like.

Wu Shu(武术)

Martial art; popularity; health-promoting; curative effects; boxing; swordplay; wielding the spear, cudgel, and other weapons; Jin Yong (金庸); Shao Lin Temple; military training; systematic movements; fighting with bare hands; warriors; attack and defence; Wu qin xi (五禽戏) devised by Hua Tuo — imitating the movements of tiger, deer, bear, ape, and bird; Sword Dance by Madame Gong Sun; schools of wu shu; broadsword exercises; raising one's palms overhead; wrestling; moving like a flying cloud and a flowing stream; posing like a white crane spreading its wings; posing as a golden cockeral standing on one leg; promoting physical fitness; coordinating the body and the mind; therapy for sickness; combat between two competitors; using a wide variety of complex skills to approach the opponent; Chinese Xiangpu sumo, with nothing but a piece of cloth to cover up the private parts, branching out from wrestling and weightlifting; the sword dance flourished in the Tang Dynasty; life-size terracotta figures unearthed at mausoleum of the first Qin emperor; obesity; Li Xiao Long ...

(With some reference from Sports & Games in Ancient China)

You can decide your focus by crossing off irrelevant phrases, and you will find you have got something that resembles a rough outline.

Health-promoting, curative effects, promote physical fitness, coordinate the body and the mind, therapy for sickness, wu qin xi devised by Hua-Tuo, systematic movement.

The focus is obviously based on the function of wu shu. Making a few minor adjustments to the order, you have a brief outline:

Three advantages of practising wu shu

1. a historical perspective
health-promoting & curative effects
the well-known physician Hua-Tuo and wu qin xi
2. three advantages of practicing wu shu
promote physical fitness
coordinate the body and the mind
effective therapy for some sorts of sickness

Following the steps, you can try other topics such as Beauty Exhibited in Wu Shu.

III . Organization

Organization of English writing calls for a dual task — developing pattern and sequence. The former

shows a basic concern about the various methods of developing ideas and the latter involves structures of the writing.

Patterns vary according to the nature of writing type. For expository writing, the commonest methods it applies include definition, cause & effect, comparison & contrast, process, and classification; special patterns are question-answer, problem-solution, proof and disproof, example, arrangement in time and place, and plot. Some of those patterns can also be applied to other types of writing.

Sequence is the order by which the contents are arranged. Types of sequence include chronological or spatial order, logical order (which covers a great variety of organizational patterns), climactic order, and so on. A paper may use only one method or several methods in combination. It is the content and writing purpose that choose the methods of development. Full discussion of organization is given in Chapter 6 Paragraph Building.

IV . Expression

A piece of thoughtful writing must observe three generally recognized principles: unity, completeness, and coherence. Those three principles should be embodied not only in organizing the ideas but in choosing and using a proper diction as well. In other words, the vocabulary must tone in naturally with the whole plan of writing. Furthermore, it should be able to convey an atmosphere or the general mood of the paper that may sound happy, bitter, sentimental, flippant, polite, extravagant, sweet, vigorous, etc. and to suggest the writer's attitudes labelled as neutral, positive, or negative towards the topic under discussion. Most words acquire connotations as well as denotations; both refer to the way in which a word is used. The figurative language — metaphor, simile, personification, analogy, irony, and other figures — is based on the connotations of words. An effective diction is natural, economical, and precise. Of three levels of diction, the general English is preferable to the formal and informal English. Even in the general English, different writing purposes call for a particular diction suitable for the particular occasion.

Compare the following two examples, paying special attention to the diction and see how the words are suited to the occasion.

Charles did not wake them when he entered. This was the last time he had come to bid her farewell.

The aromatic herbs were still smoking, and at the window the swirling, bluish vapor mingled with the mist that was drifting in. There were a few stars in the sky, and the night was mild.

Wax was dripping from the candles onto the bedsheets in large tears. Charles stared at the flames, tiring his eyes in their bright yellow glow.

Shimmering reflections played over the surface of Emma's satin gown, white as moonlight. She was invisible beneath it, and it seemed to him that she was spreading out beyond herself, merging into the things around her, into the silence, the night, the passing wind, the moist odors rising from the ground.

Then suddenly he saw her in the garden at Tostes, sitting on the bench beside the thorn hedge; or in

the streets of Rouen, in the doorway of their house, in the farmyard at Les Bertaux ... He again heard the laughter of the light-hearted young men dancing beneath the apple trees; the bedroom was filled with the fragrance of her hair, and her dress had been the same dress she was wearing now!

For a long time he was lost in memories of his past happiness, of her poses, her gestures, the sound of her voice. One surge of despair followed another, endlessly, like the waves of an incoming tide.

Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*

My involvement with the martial arts began the day I spread my arms out from my sides (unconsciously asking, I suppose, to be crucified) to stop a thief from leaving my office. Grabbing my left wrist, he flipped me as easily as he would a pancake. Later, grimly contemplating the black and blue marks which ran across the right side of my body, I was forced to realize not only how vulnerable I was but how naive as well.

Like most women, I had little knowledge of how to defend myself ... of course, the martial arts are not a panacea. Learning any martial art is a painstaking process, which is why you must have a competent instructor who will let you go at your own pace. One woman in my first jujitsu class broke her collarbone because she tried a forward roll she did not feel ready for, but had been urged to do by her instructor. That was a painful, bitter lesson: learn to trust your own instincts. A good instructor will teach you to tap or slap your thigh, your partner, or the mat, as a signal to your partner that she or he is hurting you.

While a broken collarbone is the exception rather than the rule, you can expect to be occasionally black and blue, to suffer minor sprains, pulled muscles. And, as with any new subject, you may at first feel apprehensive and awkward. However, as you acquire competence, you will probably feel exhilaration at overcoming your fears of pain and violence. You will begin to become aware of the potential power of your body. Yes, you will become stronger.

Victoria Pellegrino

Strong feelings like grief and despair are often beyond words. To convey such emotions, Flaubert has to resort to the imagery by placing the readers in the identical position of his character's, so they can see, hear, and smell as Charles does. Those experiences enable them to understand the latter's grief subtly. The words Flaubert used in his masterpiece are concrete nouns, informative adjectives, and active or dynamic verbs that are organized to produce images in such details — the dripping wax from the candles, blue smoke and smell of herbs, shimmering reflections, visions of Emma in several places — all those mental pictures suggest Flaubert's deep sympathy towards Charles and the general mood of depression and melancholy in that description. The second paper is an exposition developed by illustration. The words have general looks and the tone is neutral, in which the writer explains by telling straightforwardly, rather than showing, her experience in practicing the martial arts.

Systematic discussions on diction and figurative language concentrate in Chapter 6 of Book One and all the chapters in Book Two.

Chapter 2 Sentence Skills

Even sound seemed to fail in this air, like the air was worn out with carrying sounds so long. A dog's voice carries further than a train, in the darkness anyway. And some people's. Niggers.

Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*

The above quotation is cited to show a simple fact — sentences make sense only in a context. That is not to say that a single sentence is meaningless before it is placed in a language situation. A sentence does have the literal meaning, and more than that, it can state an idea or express a feeling. But the valid explanation of a sentence chiefly depends on the context — on its relationship with the sentences preceding and following it. For that reason, examples for sentence analysis presented in this and latter chapters usually appear as a group rather than a single sentence.

This chapter and the following three chapters will contribute to the basic writing skills in sentence construction: from shaping to punctuating to revising sentence, with focus remaining on the effective expression of ideas.

This book does not intend to explore varied English styles, but in studying the effectiveness of expressions by skillful writers, we have to understand the relationship of a writer's style and his sentences, or his choice and use of words in expressing what he desires to convey — we have to understand these questions:

- What does he write?
- What does he mean?
- How does he write it?

I . Sentence Elements

Sentence elements are fundamental blocks in building sentences. They are listed in the following:

1. **Subject(s)**: functioned by noun, pronoun, phrase, or clause that acts as a noun. A sentence may have a single subject or a compound subject.

German scientists have discovered that birds, such as ducks and geese, will follow the first moving object they see after they are hatched.

If tough love is your thing, you can find a lot to love about the tiger, who charms and bullies his way in the wildness.

Extra-marital affairs and gambling can ruin a person.

2. **Verb (v)**: often taken one of the three forms in a sentence, a. transitive verb (vt); b. intransitive verb (vi); and c. linking verb (link v).

An insane person dropped an item of clothing into the river from a bridge and plunged into the water to retrieve it.

The kitchen smelled so good that he leaned forward, lured by the odor of fried chicken dices.

3. **Object (o)**: functioned by noun, pronoun, phrase, or clause that acts as a noun.

He gnashed his teeth and wore loudly.

Through the windows he could see moving sheet of rain—rain that dribbled down the panes filling his mind with thoughts of the lake creased and chilled by wind. McIlaverty

4. **Complement (c)**: functioned by predictive adjective, noun, pronoun, or to infinitive that ordinarily follows a verb and completes the meaning of the subject or the object.

He was a simple good-natured man, a kind father, and an obedient hen-pecked husband.

In American society, economic rewards, social status, and power have traditionally been greater for the male than for the female role. Light, Jr. et al

To be frank, once in my life, I felt that temptation to yield to someone, or more accurately, that lack of energy in my foot. Quiroga

His only alternative, to escape from the labor of the farm and clamor of his wife, was to take gun in hand and stroll away into the woods. Irving

5. **Modifier (m)**: functioned by an attributive adjective, noun, adverb indicating place or time, phrase, or clause that acts as any of above mentioned. A modifier has two functions: to describe the s, o, c, or another modifier; and to tell when, where, why, how, or under what condition the action of the verb happened. Modifiers are especially useful in the three aspects:

a. to enrich sentences by specific details

The merchant failed and died.

The merchant bankrupted because share prices plunged: unable to endure the fall from affluence to poverty he plunged too from a skyscraper.

For a moment, she was silent; then she fixed her eyes on my own. It seemed as if she were looking at me through those eyes.

For a moment she was silent, with averted face; then she fixed her eyes gravely on my own. In an instant my mind was dominated by as strange a fancy as ever entered human consciousness. It seemed as if she were looking at me, not with, but through, those eyes — from an immeasurable distance behind them — and that a number of other persons, men, women and children, upon whose faces I caught strangely familiar evanescent expressions, clustered about her, struggling with gentle eagerness to look at me through the same orbs.

Bierce

b. to clarify the meaning by completing the idea or by shifting the sentence from vague and general to specific and detailed

{ *I often endeavored to analyze and define the feeling she inspired me .*
Being of an introspective turn of mind I often endeavored to analyze and define the novel feeling with which she inspired me — a secret , subtle , but powerful attraction which constantly impelled me to seek her ; but the attempt was hopeless .

Bierce

{ *It is a curious phenomenon that two species practice the war — man and ants .*
It is a curious phenomenon of nature that only two species practice the art of war — men and ants , both of which , significantly , maintain complex social organizations .

N. Cousins

c. to reduce roundabout expression by cutting the dependent clause into modifiers

{ *He works in a store in which flowers are sold .*
He works in a flower store .

When a noun modifier comes from the same root as an adjective modifier, it has different meaning from that of an adjective modifier. Compare the following pairs:

a flower shop	a flowery room
a stone bridge	a stony road
a nerve specialist	a nervous student

6. Connective(k): functioned by conjunction and conjunctive adverb.

The two most common types of connective are:

a. coordinating connectives: used to connect two parts with equal importance

Examples include and, or, but, for, nor, either ... or, neither ... nor, both ... and, not only ... but also, etc.

b. subordinating connectives: used to connect two parts with unequal importance

Examples include after, so, as, because, since, when, where, yet, thus, therefore, moreover, however, nevertheless, etc.

In addition, phrases that act as transitions are often considered as connectives. Examples include in fact, for instance, such as, to conclude, on the contrary, etc.

7. Absolute(a): functioned by word or phrase that has no grammatical connection to any other elements in a sentence. An absolute has flexible placing in a sentence, and is separated from other elements by a comma.

As a world-famous screen character Chaplin had , needless to say , been the center of much attention .

BBC Modern English

To be frank, she looks rather stupid in bright purple.

He had, to give him his due, the great courage to charge at enemies in the battlefields.

In addition to the seven elements, two grammatical terms, phrase and clause, also need our attention.

8. **A phrase** consists of two or more related words without a subject and verb. A phrase can be used as adj, adv, noun or verb in one of the following forms:

a. preposition phrase; b. participle phrase; c. infinitive phrase; d. gerund phrase; e. verb phrase.

Through the fence, between the curling flower spaces, I could see them hitting. Faulkner

"Mrs, O'Brian!" he cried suddenly, tears rolling out under his eyelids. He reached out his hand and took her hand fervently, shaking it, wringing it, holding to it. R. Bradbury

Their cannon, mouths turned towards the woods, seem to be lying in wait. Daudet

To err is human.

He was suspected of having embezzled large sums of the company's money.

The man guzzled down all the food in the refrigerator.

9. **A clause** is made up of a group of words with a subject and verb. A single clause is a simple sentence. It may combine another clause by a connective to form a compound sentence or a complex sentence. There are four types of clause: 1. independent clause; 2. noun clause; 3. adjective clause; and 4. adverb clause. Except for the first type, all the other three are dependent or subordinate clauses used as noun, adjective or adverb to modify other elements in a sentence. Sometimes a subordinate clause is reduced to an elliptical clause when both subject and verb are left out. A subordinate clause cannot make a complete sentence.

Men differ from brutes in that they can think and speak.

He was there talking to a nun who was holding the door half open.

He went to the garden and lay where the grass grew thickest.

Although (he was) exhausted after several hour's bumping along the mountain road, he was again talking about returning to the lake area in the near future.

(elliptical clause used as an adverb)

II. Basic Sentence Patterns

Structurally, sentences are classified as simple, compound, complex and compound-complex ones according to the number and nature of clauses (whether a clause is coordinating or subordinating).

1. **A simple sentence** consists of one independent clause, with a subject and a verb.

She could hear her heart beating.

His goal and his achievement remained a great distance in between.