

英语写作入门

舒 力 李德儒 编著



上海交通大学出版社

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内 容 提 要

本书提供英语写作章法方面的一般常识和基本要点。它针对中国学生在英语写作中易犯的错误,分别从组词成句、组句成段和组段成章等方面进行系统的阐述,并结合范文研究段落、短文的特点和构成,以及如何按规定主题进行英语写作训练等。书末附有英语大写规则及标点符号用法等。

本书可作为高等院校公共外语课的教学用书,也可供英语自学者参考。

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前 言

语言技能分听、说、读、写四个方面。英语写作是学英语的人都应该掌握的一种技能。一个大学生无论在校期间，还是在以后的实际工作中，经常会遇到用书面英语进行交际的机会。从写一封便函到草拟一份合同，从发表一篇论文到出版一部著作，英语写作技能应用的范围很广，场合很多。为此，经国家教委批准的“大学英语教学大纲”对学生的英语写作能力作了明确的规定：学生学完基础英语后“能运用学到的词汇、语法结构和功能意念，按规定的题目和提示，在半小时内写出100个词左右的短文，基本上能表达思想，无重大语法错误。”

如何达到“大纲”对写作能力的要求呢？我们首先简略地分析一下英语写作的过程。英语写作和本族语写作一样，由确定主题，选择材料，安排结构，语言表达四个紧密相关的环节构成。主题和材料属于内容，结构是对内容的组织。这三个环节处理得如何，主要取决于作者的知识、经验和逻辑思维能力。思想贫乏，材料残缺，逻辑混乱，不仅写不好英语文章，本族语写作也无从谈起。一个大学生写100个词左右的短文，不至于在这三个环节上遇到多大困难。尽管学生在英语作文时的具体心理活动我们还说不很清楚，但可以肯定，他们是在用汉语思维，然后把思维结果用英语转述出来。问题的关键就在于两种语言在学生头脑中的转化过程。因而，英语写作教学应着重提高英语表达能力，而不是或主要不是解决立意、构思、谋篇问题。

目前，在国内的图书市场上可以散见一些有关英语写作的教材和专著，其中多数论著都是从章法学、文体学、修辞学的角度谈英语写作。例如各种文体的特点和写法，如何发挥文章的主题，安排结构，选词炼句，避免俚语俗词等等。此类课题是写作概论探讨的对象。这种高级英语写作教程甚至适合操英语的学生学习英语写作，理论性较强，专门术语繁多。还有的著述酷似语法、句型手册。当然，写作需要语法知识，然而语法是一个庞杂的体系，这个体系中的每一单项对写作并不具有同等的价值。语法练习作得好的学生，文章可能写得很糟。

从最近几届新生的入学测试以及八七、八八两年的全国四级统考作文情况看,似乎可以得出这样的结论:学生经过两年的大学基础英语学习,语言知识增加了很多,读、听的水平有明显提高,但写作技能进步不大,笔头能活用的词不多,造句的能力较差,拼写错误比比皆是。据统计,全国四级统考作文部分的及格率只占10%多一点,远远达不到“大纲”的要求。

大家议论纷纷,也采取了一些教学措施,企图改变这种状况。笔者认为要提高基础英语写作水平,必须强化三个方面的训练:

一、多读、熟读范文。通过大量阅读积累语言知识。大脑中储存的语言材料越多,可供提取运用的余地越大。此外还要熟读若干篇范文,最好能背诵。走马观花式的“过一遍”,脑子里是留不下多少东西的。

二、勤写多练。语言知识丰富了,不一定能写出好文章,还有一个知识向技能转化的过程。转化的条件就是经常动笔。从组词成句练起直到组段成篇。只要持之以恒,词语会越来越多地涌入笔端。

书写也是写作的组成部分。写得多了,拼写错误就逐渐减少了。传统的练习形式如句子翻译、抄课文给学生提供了动笔的机会,不应完全被排除出英语课堂。

三、了解英语写作章法方面的一般常识和基本要求。结合范文研究段落的特点、短文的构成,或者通过写摘要的方式体会范文的结构,模仿人家的笔法。

“英语写作入门”这本书正是基于上述浅见草就的。这是一本下里巴人式的通俗读物。如果读者有耐心从头到尾把它读完,并能从中得到一点收益,或者这本书能引起外语界同行们的议论、批评、指正,笔者的目的也就达到了。

编者

1989.10 于济南

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第一章 组词成句

一篇文章由一群语义相关的句子组成。语言表达思想,传递信息是通过一句一句话说实现的。句子是言语交际活动的最小单位。因而,写出用词贴切、文理通顺的句子是写好一篇文章的起码要求。

造句牵涉到用词和组句两个方面。用词指的是为了表达某种意念,把所需要的词从大脑的词汇存储库中选择出来;组句是指按语法规则和语义联系,把选出来的词组合成句子这一语言单位。每个英语写作者都必须把组词成句作为训练写作基本功的起点。

组词成句要求一个英语写作者有多方面的语言知识和综合运用语言的技能。这种知识和技能不是写作课能够独立培养起来的。任何一本写作教程也提供不出解决组词成句问题的“万能药方”。本章仅限于讨论中国学生在基础英语写作的组词成句方面应注意几个要点。

一、简单句和句子片断

就结构而言,英语简单句至少要有主语和谓语两个句子成分。主语是一句话论述的对象;谓语表示主语发出的动作、具有的特征或所处的状态。是否具有一套主谓结构,这是判断你写出来的东西成不成句的一个主要标准。

例如:

①The ocean is eleven kilometers deep in some

places. (有一套主谓结构, 谓语表示主语具有的特征。)

②That ship just arrived from South Africa.(谓语是主语发出的动作)

③These buildings are in a bad state of repair.(谓语表示主语所处的状态。)

简单句也可能有两个或两个以上主语即复合主语, 它们共同支配一个谓语, 这仍然是一套主谓结构。

例如:

①My brother and his girl-friend will go to the United States next year to study computer science.

②The old and the young, the man and the woman, the strong and the weak unite in defending their country.

③Mr Black and his family spent last summer holidays in Singapore.

简单句也可能有两个或两个以上谓语即复合谓语, 它们受同一个主语支配。

例如:

①My sister will go to Japan, live in Tokyo and study medicine in a university.

②The foreign guests arrived at the airport at noon, checked their luggage and boarded the plane.

③The economics of the country was and remains in hopeless trouble.

复合主语和复合谓语可能处于同一个简单句中, 这种现象仍然是一套主谓结构。

①My father and my two uncles went by bike to

the reservoir, fished for five hours and came back home in the dark.

②The tourist and his guide climbed the mountain, stood at the top and viewed the countryside below.

此外,有些谓语动词要求宾语或宾语加补语来补充句子的意义,否则句子的语义是不完整、不清楚的。

①The student always likes to ask questions.

②Several members of the football team have received national awards.

(如果以上两句缺乏宾语 to ask questions 和 national awards, 句子的意义不完整。)

③We should give the classroom a thorough cleaning and a good airing.

④The government granted a loan to the iron and steel plant.

(在这两句中,谓语动词 give 和 cost 要求双宾语,否则句子的意义含混不清。)

⑤The doctor advised the patient to stay in bed for a week.

⑥I guess his age to be twenty-five.

(这两句的谓语动词不仅要求宾语,还要加补语。)

英语祈使句表示命令、请求、劝告等意念。这种句型通常省略主语,由动词开头或在动词前加 please.

(You) Turn left at the corner, sir.

(You) Please try to be on time.

(You) Please pass me that book with a red cover over there.

在这种句型中 You(指读者或听者)是不言而喻的, 为了加强语气也可以出现在句首。英语祈使句广泛用于日常口语中, 实验说明书、维修手册、产品样本、广告等文体中也经常见到这种句型。例如, 下面两段文字描述了两个小实验, 其中祈使句的应用频率就比较高。

例 1:

Heat from the sun can make a piece of paper burn. Put a piece of paper on a concrete sidewalk. Hold a magnifying glass over the paper. Move the magnifying glass up and down slowly. Find the place to hold it so that it makes a bright spot of sunlight on the paper. Hold the magnifying glass steady. Soon the paper will turn brown and start smoking. Then it will burst into flame. Radiation from the sun makes the paper burn.

例 2:

You cannot use a ruler to find the volume of a rock or a ball. But you can see how much water they push out of a full glass. Stand a glass of water in a pan, and fill the glass to the very top. Then put a rock into the glass. The amount of water that spills over into the pan is the same as the volume of the rock. Pour the water from the pan into an empty cubic container. How can you now use a ruler to find out the volume of the water in the container?

然而, 在初学者的英语作文中常常会发现有的句子没有主谓结构, 不是缺主语, 就是少谓语, 甚至两者都没有。这根本不是句子。因为无论从语法上还是从语义上看, 它都是残缺不

全的。还有的“句子”因缺少宾语或补语而令人费解。我们把这种语言现象称之为“句子片断”。

例如:

A car by the side of the road.

A child running into the busy street.

The student can express fluently and exactly.

I've just bought my English teacher.

Lubrication makes the machine.

如果在这些句子片断上添加所缺少的句子成分,它们就成为完整的句子了。

A car was parked by the side of the road.

The policeman stopped a child from running into the busy street.

The student can express himself in French fluently and exactly.

I've just bought my English teacher a Christmas card.

Lubrication makes the machine run smoothly.

在课堂英语写作中出现句子片断一般来说不是由于缺乏必要的语法知识,而是缺少写作训练或马虎粗心造成的。只要常写勤练,仔细认真,就能很快纠正这种语病。

练习1

指出下列各例中哪些是句子片断、哪些是完整的句子,并分析说明:

①How you enlarge your English vocabulary?

②Begin the first word of each sentence with a

capital letter.

③The government trying many different approaches to discourage people from smoking.

④A young person needs to learn how to become self-reliant.

⑤A visit to a strange place always with surprise.

⑥The English evening began with a group singing and ended with a disco dance.

⑦Houses built in Beijing every year make beautiful.

⑧Every committee member given a copy of the report.

⑨During the summer earn extra money by repairing electronic devices.

⑩After school, the Arabian post graduate washes dishes in a downtown restaurant.

练习 2

加适当词语把下列句子片断改写成完整的句子:

①comfortably sitting in the armchair and looking at the newspaper's "help wanted" ads.

②likely to replace buses and cars today in the near future.

③where to go for information and how to get it.

④to develop good study habits in college.

⑤necessary to improve your English pronunciation and intonation.

- ⑥arrangement for the interview by telephone call.
⑦result from ignorance of safety regulations.
⑧the spelling errors very noticable in his research paper.
⑨the speech on civil rights deep impression on audience.
⑩since my arrival, visited some famous tourist spots.

二、主语和谓语的一致关系

和汉语不同, 英语谓语动词随着主语的人称和数发生形态变化。这种相应的变化称为主谓一致关系。英语谓语动词的人称和数的变化比较简单。例如, 普通动词一般现在时单数第三人称词尾加s, have 变成 has, be 变成 is, 情态动词不变化等等。英语有不同的时态和语态: be done (一般时被动语态), have been done (完成时被动语态), be doing (进行时主动语态), have done(完成时主动语态)。上述各种时态语态中的助动词 be 和 have 也要和主语保持一致关系。

例如:

- ①London stands on the River Thames.
②Much has to be done to control birth rate.
③They always have the interests of the people at heart.
④Electricity can be very dangerous.
⑤England is separated from France by the Channel.

⑥A delegation headed by the premier is coming here tomorrow.

⑦The laboratory has developed a new process for still further refining aluminium.

英语主谓一致关系虽然比较简单,是最普通的常识,却经常被初学写作者所忽略,破坏主谓一致关系的错误在学生的作文中频频出现。下面这些句子,一个操英语的人听起来会感到刺耳,看上去刺眼。

①This book have already been translated into many languages.

②The earth rotate on its axis.

③All their efforts is of no use.

④There have been a traffic accident over there.

初学写作者违背主谓一致关系还可能有另外一个原因,即搞不清楚主语是单数还是复数。当主语由两个或更多的单数名词组成时,谓语的人称和数怎么确定?The scissors are……和the seissors is …哪个对?对于基础英语写作,要首先注意掌握以下几点:

1)用连接词and连接的两个单数形式的名词作主语时,谓语动词通常用复数形式。

①To fight and to win were their aims.

②The door and the window need painting.

2)由not only....but(also), either....or, neither....nor连接的并列主语,谓语动词的单复数形式依据最接近谓语的主语来确定。

①Not only the switches but also the old wiring has to be changed.

②Either the early news broadcast or the morning papers give the weather forecast.

③Neither the president of the company nor the sales manager is a college graduate.

3)当主语后面跟有 as well as, as much as, rather than, along with, together with 等引导的词组时,其谓语动词的单复数形式按主语而定。

①Li Ming as well as his two sisters is studying in an engineering college.

②John, rather than his roommates, is to blame.

③Correcting the compositions of the students, together with other light jobs, keeps my mother busy until midnight.

④My uncle, along with his family, is going to the seaside this weekend.

4)由“—body”、“—one”和“—thing”构成的不定代词作主语时,谓语用单数形式。

①Everyone has got his ticket.

②There is something wrong with this tape recorder.

③Nobody knows his present address.

5)由“both of”、“few of”和“many of”加名词构成的词组作主语时,谓语用复数形式。由“all of”、“most of”、“none of”和“some of”构成的词组作主语时,谓语的数取决于 of 之后名词的数。

①Few of the students know the answer.

②Almost all of the scientists oppose the use of

nuclear weapons.

③Some of the paper is blank.

6)集合名词society, congress, family, crew, committee, audience, machinery等被看成一个整体时,谓语动词用单数形式。指集合的个体时,谓语动词用复数形式。

①My family has dinner every night at half past six.

②The family leave the house in the morning one by one on the way to their separate jobs and schools.

③The Congress intends to vote on the issue tonight.

④The Congress are divided on this question.

7)某些以s结尾的名词,例如,economics, physics, statistics, politics, news等,形式上象复数,实际上是单数。

①Economics is a basic course for every science student.

②Phonetics deals with the properties of speech sounds.

③Bad news has wings.

8)关系代词(who,that,which)作主语时,谓语的数取决于它们所指代的先行词。

①Air is a mixture which consists of oxygen, nitrogen and other gases.

②As a rule, anyone who provides information that is useful to production will receive a reward.

③Translating machines will enable people who do not share a common language to talk to each other