

高校英语选修课系列教材



书面英语

(影印版)

高级写作实践

ADVANCED WRITTEN ENGLISH

Robin Macpherson

著



清华大学出版社

<http://www.tup.com.cn>

书面英语

(影印版)

高级写作实践

ADVANCED WRITTEN ENGLISH

Robin Macpherson

著



清华大学出版社

<http://www.tup.com.cn>

EISBN 83-01-13575-1

Advanced Written English

Robin Macpherson

Copyright © by Robin Macpherson 2001

Published by Arrangement with Polish Scientific Publishers PWN

All Rights Reserved.

北京市版权局著作权合同登记号：图字：01-2002-5968

图书在版编目（CIP）数据

书面英语高级写作实践=Advanced Written English / (英) 麦克弗森著. —影印本.

—北京：清华大学出版社，2002

高校英语选修课系列教材

ISBN 7-302-06191-2

I. 书… II. 麦… III. 英语—写作—高等学校—教材 IV. H315

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2002) 第 107110 号

出版者：清华大学出版社（北京清华大学学研大厦，邮编 100084）

<http://www.tup.com.cn>

责任编辑：周维焜

封面设计：常雪影

印刷者：清华大学印刷厂

发行者：新华书店总店北京发行所

开本：850×1168 1/32 印张：6.5

版次：2003 年 1 月第 1 版 2003 年 1 月第 1 次印刷

书号：ISBN 7-302-06191-2/H·444

印数：0001~5000

定价：14.00 元

ADVANCED
WRITTEN
ENGLISH



Table of Contents

Preface	8
Glossary of Concepts	9
Vocabulary	19
Lexical Choice Involving Parts of Speech	19
Nominalisations	19
Adverbs vs. Verbs	22
Proper Adjectives	24
Adjectives vs. Prepositional Modifiers	25
Frequent Problems with Specific Lexical Items	27
<i>Belong</i>	27
<i>Get</i>	28
<i>Emerge, Happen, Occur, Prove, Turn Out</i>	30
<i>Namely</i> and Related Expressions	32
<i>Easy, Difficult, Possible, Impossible</i>	34
<i>Value</i>	36
<i>Citizen</i>	37
Selected Structural Peculiarities	39
Appositions I	39
Appositions II: Appositions vs. Prepositional Structures	43
<i>Because</i> in Negative Sentences	47
<i>Being</i> and <i>Having</i>	50
<i>Be</i> + <i>to</i> -infinitive	54
Comment Clauses with <i>As</i>	55
Complements and the Verb <i>To Be</i>	57
Constructions with <i>As</i> and <i>Than</i>	61

Gerunds	64
<i>Most</i>	66
<i>Of: Many of..., Most of..., Some of... etc.</i>	67
Problems with Negative Sentences	69
Relative Clauses and the Comma	73
<i>There</i>	77
<i>What, Which etc.</i>	83
Stylistic Devices	89
Cleft Sentences with the Pronoun <i>It</i>	89
Emphatic Word Order: 'Fronting'	92
I: <i>Hardly, Only, Rarely, Scarcely</i> etc.	92
II: With <i>As</i> and <i>Though</i>	95
Relative Clauses in Apposition	98
Clarity and Syntax	103
Abrupt Sentence Endings	103
Coordination	106
I: Unjustified Change of Subject	106
II: Concord and Gender Bias	108
III: Absence of Parallel Structure	112
IV: Unjustified Change of Person	117
V: 'Dangling Participles'	118
Splices	119
Unclear Antecedents I	121
Unclear Antecedents II – The Pronoun <i>It</i>	123
Un-English Syntax	126
I: Verb and Object	126
II: Main and Subordinate Clauses	127
III: Composite Attributive Expressions	129
IV: Parallel Expressions	132
V: Active vs. Passive	134
Rhetorical Enhancers: Conjunctions and Discourse Markers	136
Concession and Contrast	136
Similarity and Contrast	141
<i>Therefore</i> and Related Expressions	145
" <i>In My Opinion...</i> "	148

Articles: A Few Tips	152
Punctuation	161
(The Comma – <i>see</i> Relative Clauses and the Comma	73)
The Colon	161
The Dash	165
Inverted Commas	168
The Semicolon	172
Key to the Exercises	177
Index	203

Preface

The past decade has witnessed an unprecedented increase in the level of English among non-native speakers. Having mastered the language to a degree which allows for essentially unimpaired communication in both speech and writing, more and more learners are aiming to achieve a native-like competence. It is precisely these learners whose written English, advanced as it is, may still be marred by syntactical patterns that do not violate the grammatical rules in any obvious way and yet are alien to English idiom.

Advanced Written English focusses on sophisticated structures characteristic of English at a high idiomatic level, since their complex character and richness of nuance are a source of recurrent problems. Common as they are, these problems are still generally overlooked by grammar books and hence by the learner. It was my aim to draw the reader's attention to these problem areas, which I have presented with detailed, step-by-step explanations, accompanied by exercises and a key.

Like my previous work *English for Writers and Translators*, this publication is addressed to advanced users of English, and the two books are to a large extent complementary in character. However, it must be stressed that my presentation of the issues included in *Advanced Written English* does not in any way presuppose the reader's knowledge of material discussed elsewhere. Nor is the reader required to adhere to the order of presentation as has been offered: the respective sections can be used independently or combined in such a way as to answer individual needs, a feature which makes the book ideal both as a teaching aid and as reference material for self-study. It is particularly recommended to teachers, translators, writers and journalists, as well as students of philology, teacher-training colleges and those preparing for the CAE and Proficiency exams.

Gdańsk, 2001

Glossary of Concepts

In this book a number of terms appear that might be unfamiliar to the reader:

adverbial (*also – expression, – link, sentence –*)

An **adverbial** is a word or phrase which functions as an adverb (e.g. *by contrast, fortunately, in fact, moreover, possibly, quite recently, therefore, undoubtedly*), giving us extra information about an action, happening or state. An **adverbial** may introduce a sentence, but is not to be confused with a **conjunction** (e.g. *although, because, while* etc.).

antecedent

This is the word to which a pronoun (*he, she, it, who, which* etc.) refers, e.g.:

1. The party was a great success – the guests really enjoyed it.
2. Anyone can join our club who is interested in poetry.

In **1** the expression *The party* is the **antecedent** of *it*; in **2** *Anyone* is the **antecedent** of *who*.

apposition

Generally an **apposition** denotes a noun or **noun phrase** placed beside another in order to describe it, while being unconnected to it by any preposition or **conjunction**, e.g.:

1. Joan, my wife's cousin, has just returned from America.
2. Jack is visiting Brighton, his hometown.

In **1** *Joan* is the grammatical subject of the sentence, while the phrase *my wife's cousin* is an **apposition**; the phrase is *in* apposition to *Joan*. In **2** *Brighton* is the object of the verb phrase *is visiting*, while *his hometown* is in apposition to *Brighton*.

attributive

An **attributive** adjective occurs before the noun to which it refers. Compare the following alternatives:

- a. This is a dangerous road.
- b. This road is dangerous.

In **a** *dangerous* is in **attributive** position, while in **b** it is in **predicative** position. Most adjectives can be both **attributive** and **predicative**.

auxiliary verb

An **auxiliary verb** is one like *be*, *do*, *have* or *will* which is used in combination with another verb to make verb phrases, and especially to form tenses, e.g.:

- Do you want another biscuit?
Mary is visiting her friends.
John has gone to London.
Peter will miss the train.

cleft sentence

A **cleft sentence** is when special emphasis is given to one particular part of the sentence by means of *it* or *what*, e.g.:

1. "Who took the money?" "It was Peter that took the money."
2. What you need is a long holiday.

In **1** and **2** special emphasis is given to *Peter* and *a long holiday* respectively.

comment clause

The following sentences contain **comment clauses** (underlined):

1. John was a pilot, so he claims, in the Battle of Britain.
2. She was, as she admits, too lazy to take the job seriously.

The types of **comment clause** discussed in this book are virtual parentheses – in the above examples the commas could almost be replaced with brackets:

- 1a. John was a pilot (so he claims) in the Battle of Britain.
- 2a. She was (as she admits) too lazy to take the job seriously.

complement

Complement in the broad sense means something that is necessary to complete a grammatical construction. Here, however, it is used in a restricted meaning to denote a noun or **noun phrase** that completes a **predicate** containing the verb *to be*:

1. Margaret is a librarian.
2. Peter was such a kindly man.

In **1** and **2** *a librarian* and *such a kindly man* are **complements** of *Margaret* and *Peter* respectively.

concord

Concord is the way a verb form changes according to whether the subject is singular or plural (“concord of number”), or first, second or third person (“concord of person”). Thus we say *the boy* is (singular) but *the boys* are (plural); we say *I* am (first person) but *he* is (third person) etc.

conjunction

A **conjunction** is a word like *and*, *but*, *although*, *because*, *if*, *whereas* etc. It can be used to link clauses together:

- a. I arrived early, *but* John appeared much later.
- b. I arrived early *whereas* John appeared much later.

(Cf. also **adverbial** and **coordinate clause**.)

coordinate clause

Compare the following sentences:

- a. I arrived at the party early, but John appeared much later.
- b. I arrived at the party early, whereas John appeared much later.

In **a** the two clauses are grammatically equal (i.e. **coordinate**). In **b**, however, the second clause is **subordinate** to the first: the second clause (*whereas John appeared much later*) cannot function as a grammatically self-contained sentence, while the first clause (*I arrived at the party early*) can.

coordination

Unlike **coordinate clause**, the term **coordination** in this book does not have any specialised grammatical significance. The sections which are listed un-

der the heading **coordination** bring together problems involving formal consistency and logicity in the construction of a given sentence.

‘dangling participle’

A **‘dangling participle’** is a participle that, when referred to its grammatical subject, gives nonsense, e.g.:

*Not knowing the British mentality, many things might seem rather strange at first.

Here the participle *not knowing* has the grammatical subject *many things*, which makes the sentence nonsensical.

defining relative clause (also: restrictive relative clause)

This is a relative clause which defines or identifies the noun it refers to, e.g.:

Here’s the lady who owns that black terrier.

(Not every lady owns a black terrier. Contrast **non-defining relative clause**.)

discourse marker

A **discourse marker** denotes a large group of words and phrases which indicate the relationship between what is being said and its context, and which often reveal the speaker’s attitude to what he is saying (e.g. *as a matter of fact, fortunately, frankly, obviously, possibly, on the other hand, strangely enough* etc.).

ellipsis

Ellipsis is the leaving out of words when their meaning can be understood from the context. Compare the following alternatives:

- a. On one side the passengers could see the bay, and on the other they could see spectacular hills.
- b. On one side the passengers could see the bay, and on the other spectacular hills.

In **b** it is not necessary to insert the words *they could see* in the second part of the sentence.

Note:

Throughout the book asterisks (*) have been used to indicate usage which is unacceptable. Extreme examples of incorrectness have been marked with double asterisks (**).

fronting

Fronting is when a part of the clause is brought to the front in order to give it special emphasis, e.g.:

John loves Renaissance music. Baroque he absolutely hates.

gender bias

This expression denotes a tendency in grammar (not only English) to behave as if all human beings were of the male sex. Compare the following alternatives:

- a. All people can become members of our Society who wish to deepen their understanding of Britain's heritage.
- b. Anyone can become a member of our Society who wishes to deepen his understanding of Britain's heritage.

Sentence **b** means essentially the same as **a**, but the subject *Anyone* is singular. The possessive adjective *his* refers to *Anyone*, even though both sexes are clearly intended.

inversion

Inversion is when the verb comes before the subject, e.g.:

She is a smoker, as are most of her friends.
(*instead of: just as most of her friends are.*)

In the underlined words the phrase *most of her friends* is the grammatical subject of the *as*-clause and governs the verb *are*.

main clause

Sentences often consist of a **main clause** and a **subordinate clause**, e.g.:

1. I'll do the job when I get there.
2. Although the driver was drunk, the police let him go.

In **1** the **main clause** is *I'll do the job*, and in **2** it is *the police let him go*; in both **1** and **2** these clauses could form self-contained sentences, being grammatically complete. By contrast the clauses *when I get there* and *Although the driver was drunk* could never on their own form grammatically complete sentences.

modifier

Cf. **postmodifier**

nominal phrase (cf. noun phrase)

nominalisation

Nominalisation means preferring nominal to verbal language in order to convey the message; more simply, it means using a noun to express something which could also be expressed by means of a verb. For example:

- a. Mr Jones is an employee of the Town Council.
- b. Mr Jones is employed by the Town Council.

Sentence a uses the **noun phrase** (or **nominal phrase**) *an employee*, while b uses language which is more verbal.

non-defining relative clause (*also*: non-restrictive relative clause)

This is a relative clause which does *not* define or identify the noun or noun phrase that it refers to (because we already know which person or thing is meant), e.g.:

Here is Pamela Jones, who owns that black terrier.

(Contrast **defining relative clause**.)

non-finite verb

A **non-finite verb** is one that cannot on its own serve as a **predicate** in a sentence, e.g. *smoking, been* etc. The term refers especially to infinitives, participles and gerunds. (A **finite verb** is one that *can* serve as a **predicate** in a sentence, e.g. *smokes, is smoking, is expected, has been* etc.)

noun phrase (*also* nominal phrase)

This is a group of words which together behave as a noun, e.g. *the previous editions, my nephew's wife, the city of Rome* etc.

parallel expression

Parallel expressions are words, phrases and clauses in a parallel relationship to each other, unlinked by any conjunction, but separated by a comma:

*TV influences our feelings, emotions.

*We must face these problems, try to understand them.

part of speech

A **part of speech** is a grammatical category of word, e.g. a verb, noun, adverb, adjective or conjunction.

participial postmodifier

This is when a word or phrase is modified by a participle or participial clause that comes after it, e.g.:

1. **Some of the people** accused were clearly innocent.
2. **Various theories** explaining this phenomenon have been advanced.

In **1** the participle *accused* modifies *Some of the people*. In **2** the participial clause *explaining this phenomenon* modifies *Various theories*. (Cf. also **postmodifier** and **prepositional postmodifier**.)

possessive adjective (also: possessive)

My, your, her, our, their etc. are **possessive adjectives**.

postmodifier

This is a word, phrase or clause that comes after the word or phrase which it modifies, e.g.:

- a. **The house** across the road is said to be haunted.
- b. Last night there was **a nightingale** singing in the garden.
- c. There are **many reasons** why foxhunting should be banned.

In **a** the prepositional phrase *across the road* modifies *The house*; hence it is also called a **prepositional postmodifier**. In **b** the participial phrase *singing in the garden* modifies *a nightingale*; hence it is also called a **participial postmodifier**. In **c** the clause *why foxhunting should be banned* modifies *many reasons*. (Cf. also **participial postmodifier** and **prepositional postmodifier**.)

predicate

The **predicate** is the part of a sentence which tells us about the subject. For example, in the sentence *Marjory has just arrived*, everything except *Marjory* is the **predicate**. (Cf. also **complement**, **non-finite verb**.)

predicative

A **predicative** adjective is one that is placed after the verb *to be*, *to look*, *to seem* etc., as in the following examples:

This road is dangerous.

You look tired.

Cf. **attributive**.

prepositional postmodifier

This is when a word or phrase is modified by a prepositional phrase that comes after it, e.g.:

the man on the moon

the house across the road

Here the prepositional phrases *on the moon* and *across the road* modify *the man* and *the house* respectively. (Cf. also **postmodifier** and **participial postmodifier**.)

proper adjective

European and *American* are examples of **proper adjectives**. A **proper adjective** is formed from a **proper noun** (e.g. *Europe*, *America*).

proper noun

This is a type of noun that designates a particular person, place or thing, e.g. *Charles*, *Europe*, *Buckingham Palace*. Typically it begins with a capital letter. (Cf. **proper adjective**.)

register

Register denotes a variety of language employed in a particular situation. For example, in private a politician or chairman of the board might talk about “tackling” specific problems, but in front of the television cameras he will express the intention of “addressing” those problems. *Addressing* is of a more formal or ‘higher’ **register** than *tackling*.

sentence adverbial (cf. adverbial)