

# 英语论说文写作手册

yingyu lunshuowen xiezuo shouce



张良青 • 编著



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## 前 言

本书讨论的是英语论说文的写作。论说文是针对某一个主题表达主张、说明事理、阐发见解的文章。它涉及的主题可大可小,从宇宙天地、社会人生,到一事一物、一言一行,都可论可说。就这个意义而言,散文、杂文、时评、演讲,甚至一些学术性的文章,都属于论说文的行列。这一类的文章虽然在语体和风格等方面会有一些的差别,其写作目的却是基本相同的:都是为了说服读者或者在读者中产生一定的影响,比如引导读者认识某种现实,激发读者思考某个问题,号召读者做出某项努力,等等。

论说文的核心是论证,这是它和记叙文等文体不同的地方。论证是一个修辞问题,如何论证关涉读者对文章的认可和接受程度。修辞这门学问起源于公元4世纪的古希腊。公元4世纪是希腊散文和修辞学的黄金时代,出现了许多著名的演说家和修辞学家,其中最具代表性的是亚里士多德。他的《修辞学》(*Rhetoric*)是欧洲文艺理论史上第一部系统的修辞学理论著作,主要用来探索演说的论证方法与创作原则。当时的智者派在雅典传授诉讼术,教人们如何靠混淆黑白、颠倒是非来取胜,将修辞发展成了一种诈术。智者派因此被称为“诡辩者”,他们认为修辞术就是不择一切手段说服的技巧。亚里士多德针对智者派的做法给修辞术下了一个新的定义,即一种能在任何一个问题上找出可能的说服方式的功能。亚里士多德的说服方式,指的是在尊重事实与真理的基础上言之成理、合乎逻辑的论证方式。《修辞学》第三卷讨论了演说的形式——风格与安排,这是亚里士多德的修辞学理论中最有价值的部分之一。亚里士多德认为,一个演说者不仅应该知道讲些什么,还应该知道如何去讲。他指出,散文应该风格朴素,明白清晰,但同时又要善用隐喻,产生使人惊奇的效果。他强调各种手法的使用都要合乎时宜,分寸得当,自然生动而不矫揉造作;演讲和散文不应模仿诗的格律,但应该有自己的节奏,这种节奏不应太过正式,也不能流于随意;散文应多采用紧凑严密的“环



形句”，而不是拖沓松弛的“串联句”；等等。这一卷在书中并不占重要位置，但是对后世的修辞学和散文风格有很大的影响。

从亚里士多德的美学原则来看，修辞就是一种选择。《辞海》对修辞的定义是：修辞是依据题旨情境，运用各种语言材料、各种表现手法，恰当地表现写说者所要表达的情意内容的言语活动。美国语言学家帕特里克·哈特韦尔(Patrick Hartwell)认为：“修辞是在某种语境下出于某种目的所做的选择。”(Rhetoric is choice in a context for a purpose.)我国著名语言学家吕叔湘先生也说过：“修辞学，照我的看法，应该是‘在各种可供选择的语言手段之间——各个(多少是同义的)词语之间，各种句式之间，各种篇章结构之间，各种风格(或叫做“文体”、“语体”)之间——进行选择，选择那最适合需要的，用以达到当前的特定的目的’。”所以说，修辞活动是一个系统的思维过程，体现在论说文写作的各个层面，从遣词造句到组段谋篇，从推理论证到情感诉诸，从逻辑脉络到语言风格，等等。

修辞既涉及内容，又关乎形式。形式与内容是相辅相成的，同样的内容用不同的方式表达会产生不同的效果，合宜的形式可以更好地传达内容。同时，形式若离开了内容，便不过是空洞的外壳。一篇好的文章一定是语言流畅，文法讲究，内容翔实生动而又不乏新意，有读者意识又态度鲜明的。在日常的教学中，笔者发现，大学生在英语论说文写作中存在的问题主要有以下几点(囿于篇幅关系，本书重点讨论了前面四个问题，并对第七个问题稍做提及)。

第一，用词不够地道。习惯用一些抽象宽泛的词语，不能准确地表达内容；对常用词语的意义和搭配把握不够准确，用词缺乏丰富性和灵活度。

第二，缺乏句型意识。不同的句式在特定的语境中起着不同的作用，要增强表达的效果和力度，应该学会欣赏各种句型的妙用，并加以模仿运用。

第三，对语篇的整体性把握不够。一篇文章应该是一个有机整体，从句子之间的起承转合，到段落之间的自然过渡，再到整个篇章的谋划布局，都应保持恰当的衔接和连贯。

第四，论证能力有待提高。论证是论说文的灵魂，如何适当选择和组织材料支撑自己的论点，并使用恰当的论证策略，以理服人，以情动人，是一门重要的功课。

第五，文化背景知识欠缺。写作作为一种比较高级的语言使用方式，其本质是一种交流活动。而交际涉及的不仅仅是语言，还有语言背后的文化和思维方式。在交际语境下的二语写作，要求我们既要熟悉西方的文化语境和



语言规则,又要了解我们本族文化的实质和内涵。唯有如此,才能传递出动人的声音。

第六,母语的制约。因为汉语与英语属于两种不同的语系,我们大多数人又没有机会体验浸润式的纯英语环境,所以在学习英语的过程中难免会受到母语的困扰。受母语制约集中表现出来的特点就是语言不地道。

第七,话题意识不强。当今世界如一个不停旋转的万花筒,科技的发展和进步让人们的生活变得更加丰富多彩,也增添了很多前人不曾经历的烦恼。我们既要阅读经典,又要关注时事;后者让我们了解当今的世界,而前者让我们与伟大的思想对话,并带着批判性的眼光来解读当今的各种现象。

第八,缺乏写作欲望。英语写作在大学课程体系里的地位比较低,在很多学生心目中只是各种级别考试的一个必考项目。在平日写作课上或课下的练习里,总是匆匆写完应付了事,很少会认真细读自己的文章,反复进行润色修改。平时用汉语写作都不常有,用英语就更是犯难了。缺乏写作表达的欲望也许是我们英语写作水平不高的一个最重要的原因了。笔者认为,写作在全球互动日益加速的跨文化交际背景下,其作用只会更加突显,而不是减弱。关心社会问题,做积极参与全球对话的世界公民,发出自己本民族的声音,是大学生必须具备的素养之一。这需要我们努力提高自己的写作水平。

作为二语学习者,要想在写作方面有所长进,必须首先意识到在写作中存在的诸多问题。其次应该养成英文阅读的习惯,在精读中揣摩语言,在泛读中吸取思想。因为写作不是无源之水,闭门造车是写不出好东西的,要在阅读、欣赏、总结和模仿的基础上进行创造。广泛阅读的人写作时用词更准确,语言更流畅,对主题具备更深的认识。通过阅读,我们可以借鉴别人如何选择词汇,铺陈句子,展开论证,等等。当然,写作是个人思想内容和语言风格的表露,自然应该是体现个性的,不然千篇一律,千人一面,难免俗套乏味,让人印象模糊。

本书旨在为论说文写作的学习和教学提供一种思路和借鉴。在本书的编写过程中,笔者参考了国内外众多书籍、文章及网络资料,在此谨向这些资源的提供者表示诚挚的谢意。同时还要感谢笔者的学生们,与他们之间的交流为本书提供了写作思路。由于编者水平有限,不妥之处还请同行专家和广大读者不吝赐教,以便今后进一步改进和完善。

张良青

2019年6月



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## 第一章



# 准确选词

马克·吐温曾说过,近乎正确的字眼与正确的字眼之间的差别,就好像萤火虫和闪电的差别(The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter—'tis the difference between the lightning-bug and the lightning)。英国讽刺大师乔纳森·斯威夫特也有类似的观点,他认为好的写作风格就是在适当的地方用适当的词(proper words in proper places make the true definition of a style)。中国诗文也讲究炼字。《文心雕龙·炼字》云:“富于千篇,贫于一字。”唐朝卢延让《苦吟》诗云:“吟安一个字,捻断数茎须。”可见寻找一个妥帖的字词是何其重要又艰难的事情。因此,对我们来说,最重要的事不是绞尽脑汁寻找生僻的大词,而是学会使用恰当的词。在选择词语的时候有几个基本的原则:一是多用具体的词;二是充分考虑语境;三是注意词的感情色彩,并注意辨别一些容易混淆的词。另外,在学习一个词的时候,应当注意它的立体性和多面性,熟悉该词在不同语境中的各种常用搭配,通过整体的语块来认识、记忆和使用它。

### 一、多用具体的词

词语,尤其是用来表达行为的动词,可以分为笼统型(general)和具体型(specific)两大类。我们在使用词语的时候,应当遵循越具体越好的原则,这样可以让我们的表达更加准确生动,也更简洁。举个例子,我们都知道“走”这个动作在英文中用“walk”来表达。但是,walk是一个很笼统的动词,人们在日常生活中会表现出各种各样的走法,如 stride, stroll, strut, swagger, edge, limp, shuffle, totter, trudge, paddle, waddle, wade, tiptoe, creep等。再如 laugh这个动词,也对应着一系列不同的“笑”法,如 giggle, cackle, chuckle, grin, beam, snigger, snicker, smirk, titter, simper, chortle, guffaw, cachinnate等。而





say 也对应着众多不同的“说”法,如 cry, claim, exclaim, protest, murmur, mutter, grumble, grunt, whisper, curse, blurt out, yell, snap 等。若在写作中全部使用笼统型动词,不仅会使描述单调乏味,还会词不达意。为此,我们应当在阅读中多积累能够精确表达行为的具体词汇,并注意它们之间的用法差别。我们通过以下几组例句比较一下使用两种类型的动词产生的不同效果。

Ⓐ And Henry—wifeless, childless, jobless—never had to **deal** with such details as variable-rate mortgages.

Ⓑ And Henry—wifeless, childless, jobless—never had to **tussle** with such details as variable-rate mortgages.

—*The Art of Living Simply*, Richard Wolkomir

tussle 的原意是“扭打”或“抢夺”,其比喻意义是“全力应对”或“竭力解决”(try hard to solve a difficult problem or issue),跟 deal with 相比,更加突出了过程的艰难。

Ⓐ A car stopped outside a post office, and a man about my age **got out** and **went inside**.

Ⓑ A car stopped outside a post office, and a man about my age **popped out** and **dashed inside**.

—*Out of Step*, Bill Bryson

pop out 和 dash inside 相比较 get out 和 go inside 而言,不仅能够表明人物的动作,而且胜在能形象地说明人物当时的动作是急匆匆的:从车里“跳出来”,“直奔”邮局而去。

Ⓐ I made my way through the food line and **walked** to a table, where I **sat down** in relief.

Ⓑ I made my way through the food line and **tiptoed** to a table, where I **collapsed** in relief.

—*Fresh Start*, Evelyn Herald

tiptoe 的意思是 to walk very quietly without putting your heels on the floor, collapse 表示 to sit down suddenly in a relaxed way,形象地表明了“我”在小心翼翼之后突然放松下来的心情。



Ⓐ I **opened** my anthology of American literature, and **wrote** the date at the top of a crisp ruled page.

Ⓑ I **cracked** my anthology of American literature, and **scribbled** the date at the top of a crisp ruled page.

—*Fresh Start*, Evelyn Herald

crack 是个拟声词,意思是: If something cracks, or if you crack it, it makes a sharp sound like the sound of a piece of wood breaking. crack the book 不仅表示打开书的动作,而且生动地表明因为是新书,所以打开的时候发出了清脆的声响。scribble 表示快速地、潦草地写 (to write something quickly and carelessly, especially because you do not have much time), 很符合我们在上课开始时在笔记本上匆匆写下日期时的情形。

Ⓐ But although the books were old, for me they seemed alive, and for a long time I **read** them, one by one, pretending that I was the heroine and my love would soon come to rescue me.

Ⓑ But although the books were old, for me they seemed alive, and for a long time I **devoured** them, one by one, pretending that I was the heroine and my love would soon come to rescue me.

—*A Love Affair with Books*, Bernadete Piassa

devour 原本表示狼吞虎咽地吃东西 (eat something hungrily and in large quantities), 和 book 一词搭配时表示津津有味、如饥似渴地阅读 (to read with great interest and enthusiasm), 非常形象生动地表达了作者对阅读的热爱。

Ⓐ At the time, it seemed ridiculous and exasperating, but afterward I realized that I was possibly the only person ever to have entertained the notion of **crossing** that intersection on foot.

Ⓑ At the time, it seemed ridiculous and exasperating, but afterward I realized that I was possibly the only person ever to have entertained the notion of **negotiating** that intersection on foot.

—*Out of Step*, Bill Bryson

negotiate 表示 to successfully get over or past a difficult part on a path or route, 在此句中表示穿过马路的过程很艰难, 充满危险。



Ⓐ Every night in my private room, as soon as I knew I wouldn't be interrupted or discovered, I would **move** myself from the bed to the floor, holding onto the bed rail for dear life, and slowly putting my weight on my feet.

Ⓑ Every night in my private room, as soon as I knew I wouldn't be interrupted or discovered, I would **maneuver** myself from the bed to the floor, holding onto the bed rail for dear life, and slowly putting my weight on my feet.

—*The Power of Belief*, Anonymous

maneuver 在句中的意思是“灵巧地移动”(to move skillfully),更能表达人物利用床栏控制自己的身体来竭力达到目标的过程。

Ⓐ On another occasion, when Henry asked what makes a person a “junior” or a “II” or a “III,” Louise helped me answer by bringing up kings like Louis Quatorze and Quinze and Seize; Henry **answered** with Henry VIII.

Ⓑ On another occasion, when Henry asked what makes a person a “junior” or a “II” or a “III,” Louise helped me answer by bringing up kings like Louis Quatorze and Quinze and Seize; Henry **riposted** with Henry VIII.

—*A French Fourth*, Charles Trueheart

riposte 的意思是“机敏地反驳”(to make a quick and clever remark, often made in answer to a criticism),非常符合上下文的语境。因为在 Louise 举的例子中,国王的名字叫 Louis,跟自己的名字非常相近,于是 Henry 就举了和自己名字相同的国王作为回敬。相比 answer 等词,riposte 更为贴切,生动地表现了孩子机灵的特点。

不难看出,以上例子中,B 句因为使用了具体型动词,对动作的表达更为准确,也更生动形象,从而给人的印象也更深刻;而 A 句的动词太过笼统模糊,使得句子缺少灵气。

我们再来通过几段论说文中出现的叙述体会一下具体型动词的魅力。

At my bank the other day, I was standing in a line **snaking** around some tired velvet ropes when a man in a sweat-suit **started inching toward** me in



his eagerness to deposit his Social Security check. As he did so, I **minutely advanced toward** the woman reading *The Wall Street Journal* in front of me, who, in mild annoyance, began to **sidle up to** the man scribbling a check in front of her, who absent-mindedly **shuffled toward** the white-haired lady ahead of him, until we were all hugger-mugger against each other, the original lazy line having **collapsed** in on itself like a Slinky.

...

Lately, I've found that my personal space is being invaded more than ever before. In elevators, people **are wedging** themselves **in** just before the doors close; on the street, pedestrians **are zigzagging through** the human traffic, **jostling** others, refusing to give way; on the subway, riders are no longer taking pains to carve out little zones of space between themselves and fellow-passengers; in lines at airports, people **are pressing forward** like fidgety taxis at red lights.

—*Space Invaders*, Richard Stengel

第一段使用了许多具体动词描述了人们排队时的情形:snake 作动词表示 go in a particular direction with a lot of bends,指队伍蜿蜒曲折,松松垮垮;start inching toward,minutely advance toward,sidle up to,shuffle toward 等词组细致形象地描述了人们漫不经心又小心翼翼地向前挪动的动作,直到原来松散的队伍溃不成形(collapse in on itself)。第二段用 wedge oneself in,zigzag through,jostle,press forward 等词语描述了日常生活中个人空间经常遭受侵犯的种种情形。这两段叙述通过大量的具体动词营造出强烈的画面感,让读者深切地感受私人空间是多么地容易遭受侵犯,从而为接下来的论述做好了铺垫,有助于增强文章论述的力量。

我们再来看一个例子。

We **paddled** down Maine's Saco River that September afternoon, five couples in canoes, **basking** in the summer's last golden sunlight. **Grazing** deer, **fluttering** their white tails, watched our flotilla pass. That evening we **pitched** tents, **broiled** steaks and **sprawled** around the campfire, **staring** sleepily at the stars. One man, **strumming** his guitar, sang an old Shaker Song: "'Tis the gift to be simple. 'Tis the gift to be free."

—*The Art of Living Simply*, Richard Wolkomir



作者用 *paddle, bask, graze, flutter, pitch, broil, sprawl, stare, strum* 等一系列具体动词生动再现了发生在九月某个下午的场景,让发生在过去的那个画面跃然纸上。

与此同时,英语中的词汇是非常丰富的,词汇之间按照不同的关系可以组成不同的语义场。同义语义场中的很多词往往拥有共同的概念意义,虽然在有的语境中可以相互替换,但每个词的意义侧重点和使用方法等不尽相同。我们在写作中也应当从丰富的词汇中尽可能地选择最适当、最贴切的那个词,以便能将意思表达得更加具体、准确、细腻、生动。我们通过以下例句来看几组动词和动词词组,以便观察它们的特殊用法及它们之间的差别,其中有些差别是比较微妙的。

**break, shatter, crack, snap, destroy, damage, smash up, vandalize, sabotage, temper with, ruin, trash, devastate, disintegrate, collapse, fall apart, fall to pieces, burst**

The car windows **broke** into pieces when the two cars crashed into each other.

The blast caused extensive damage, **shattering** the ground-floor windows.

The earthquake **cracked** walls and knocked out electricity and communications.

High winds **snapped** power lines in the city, leaving more than 8,000 people without power.

The cathedral was **destroyed** by the Great Fire of 1136 AD.

These gases would seriously **damage** the patient's respiratory system.

About 400 riots had seized control and **were smashing up** the jail.

All the public telephones in the area **had been vandalized**.

The main pipeline supplying water **was sabotaged** by rebels.

After the accident, police discovered that the car's brakes **had been tempered with**.

Many a famous pop star **has been ruined** by drugs.

People asked why the candidates spent so much time **trashing** each other.



A few days before, a fire **had devastated** large parts of Windsor Castle.  
Society must **disintegrate** once the family dissolves.

When trust is damaged, the community as a whole suffers; and when it is destroyed, societies falter and **collapse**.

Others **fall apart** under pressure, while a few people do well despite the pressure.

The book had been read again and again, until it finally **fell to pieces**.

Thousands of gallons of oil flowed into the river when an oil pipeline **burst**.

**grow, climb, increase, rise, go up, gain, escalate, pick up, widen, be on the increase, expand, build up, multiply, proliferate, snowball, soar, rocket, spiral, maximize**

China's economic output continues to **grow** at a remarkable annual rate.

Demand for goods grew and imports **climbed** steadily.

Gradually the noise and traffic **increased** as they approached the city.

The jobless rate hit 9.3% last month, after **rising** for four months in a row.

The price of petrol **is going up** again, for the third time this year.

A new-born baby will **gain** weight at around one ounce per day.

The number of attacks on foreign aid workers has **escalated** dramatically.

Their shop was losing money, but they carried on in the hope that business would **pick up** soon.

The range of university courses available has **widened** tremendously in recent years.

Juvenile crime **is on the increase** in most parts of that country.

Trade between developing countries and industrialized countries was beginning to **expand**.

The delegations had begun to **build up** some trust in one another.

The problems grew, **multiplied**, and complicated beyond all reason.



Books and articles on the subject **have proliferated** over the last year.  
The number of signers of the petition for a new school **snowballed**.  
Industrial growth has brought power cuts, clogged roads and **soaring** property prices.

Gold prices **rocketed** to their highest since 2013.

Since the project started five years ago, costs have **spiraled**.

The bank's function is to **maximize** profits, and that requires some risk-taking.

**make, have, cause, induce, prompt, motivate, trigger, spark, generate, provoke, evoke, arouse, incite, render, stir up, set off, bring about, give rise to, result in, lead to, lead ... to ..., contribute to, be responsible for, be the cause of**

Gravity is the force that **makes** the planets move around the sun.

The film was so full of suspense that it **had** the audience on the edge of their seats.

Heavy traffic **is causing** long delays on the roads.

Whatever **induced** her to buy such an expensive car?

Japan's recession **has prompted** consumers to cut back on buying cars.

How do you **motivate** people to work hard and efficiently?

The illness **is triggered** by a chemical imbalance in the brain.

A childhood journey **sparked** his lifelong interest in railways.

The case **has generated** enormous publicity in Brazil.

The decision **provoked** outrage from women and human rights groups.

His oratorical efforts **evoked** no response in his audience.

It was a debate which **aroused** fervent ethical arguments.

Four men were arrested for **inciting** the riot.

The bad news **rendered** us all speechless from shock.

The case of Countess Olenska **had stirred up** old settled convictions.

It **set off** a chain reaction in the international money markets.

Compact discs **have brought about** a vast improvement in recorded sound quality.

