

 同济大学研究生教材

学术英语口语教程

Speaking English in Academic Contexts

张兢田 郭强 编著
John M. Swales 审阅

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内 容 提 要

《学术英语口语教程》旨在提高学生在学术背景下的交际能力。全书共分8个单元,内容围绕学习期间经常遇到的学术情形从易到难地展开,以如何适应崭新的学术生涯为出发点,涵盖如何参与讨论与演讲、与队友沟通、与教授面谈,直至如何准备相应的实习、答辩与面试。所有涉及内容均配有相应的句型及练习,内容简洁、实用,适合广大在校研究生、高年级本科生和即将进行交换学习和海外留学的人员使用。

本书供高校各类研究生和高年级本科生作教材,也可供各种高级培训班及出国人员使用。

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Introduction to the Textbook

English speaking in academic contexts is becoming increasingly important in China with the popularity of the term EAP(English for Academic Purposes). Students are provided with more opportunities to attend English classes taught by English native professors, to involve themselves in group activities or collaborative work with counterparts from the west, to participate in international conferences and to work for foreign capital enterprises after their graduation. However, academic speaking in English is still a problem for most of Chinese scholars. Although academic speaking courses are set up for international students at most of universities in English speaking countries, speaking training class in China still focuses on traditional topics in daily life. The authors of the book believe even though there are many textbooks aiming at improving students' spoken English, speaking in academic context belongs to a different genre from daily conversation. If Chinese students could receive the training of this kind in time, their future language difficulties will be greatly lowered.

The goal of the textbook is to help students acquire basic communicative skills and improve their confidence in academic contexts, which can directly impact their future both in academic and nonacademic career.

This textbook arranges the contents in students' academic development order from Unit 1 to Unit 8. Unit 1 focuses on getting to know each other when students come to their new campus for postgraduate study. Unit 2 tells students how to adapt the new environment and Unit 3 deals with students' roles in and out of class. Unit 4 centers on two important academic activities in class: presentation and group discussion. Unit 5 emphasizes how students can better benefit from the office hours and appointments they have with their professors. Unit 6 delves into how students can make greatest possible progress in practicum. Unit 7 is designed to help students discover the secret of dissertation defense and final unit aims at students' first step out of their "ivory tower"—admission interviews.

The central feature of the textbook is the emphasis on TASKS students could involve themselves, because we believe learning by doing is a more natural way for language learners. Therefore, task-based speaking activities are arranged in each unit



accompanied by academic development process in postgraduate life.

Another feature is that both the passage and the task are designed as closely as possible to authentic life in academic contexts. We wish that the users of the textbook can not only improve their spoken English, but also deepen their understanding of academic life after they learn the textbook.

A third feature of the textbook is its conciseness. Every section or task is used to help students open their mouths to practice their speaking. Therefore, we try to condense the input content and help students realize what they need to grasp in the shortest possible length.

Though this textbook is mainly designed for multidisciplinary postgraduates, it will also be helpful to those upper level undergraduates as well as the researchers who have graduated from schools but still need to improve their spoken English in academic contexts.

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Jingtian Zhang

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Unit 1 Getting to Know Each Other

Highlights

Introducing each other
Greeting people
Ice-breaking conversation
First impression

Sentence patterns: getting to know each other

Language focus: narration



The process of coming to know each other is often difficult and challenging, particularly if you are not an extroverted or sociable person. Knowing each other means more than merely acquiring each other's information-names, backgrounds or hobbies. To maximize learning, you need to dig deeper below this superficial acquaintance. In this unit, you are going to learn how you can break the ice to begin communicating with others.

Introducing each other

There might be occasions where you will have to introduce yourself. For example, if you are meeting a new schoolmate or a professor, you might start by saying "Hello! I am ...". When you are introduced to someone and the person making the introduction doesn't include your name, it's likely that he or she forgets it or doesn't know how to make a proper introduction, and at this time you need to introduce yourself with your first or full name. This will prove that you are paying attention and realize your name was omitted. Even after you have been introduced earlier to someone, do not assume that your name would be clearly remembered and reintroducing yourself may be necessary.

It is also possible that you walk into a room with a small group of people you don't know. If this happens, be proactive and introduce yourself to each person in the room. This will make you stand out from the group as someone with confidence. It will also make everyone feel more at ease.

Task 1 nice to meet you

Now introduce yourself to your desk mate with a warm smile, a welcoming comment, direct eye contact, a firm handshake and an introduction that includes your first and last name.

Although campus etiquette is not as complicated as that on social or business occasions, some of the following tips are still useful. Generally speaking, a student is usually introduced to a professor and a boy student is introduced to girl student. For example, "Susan, I'd like you to meet John. He's a very excellent photographer. Didn't you say you wanted to join a photography club?" "John, this is Susan. She is



our singing star. ”

On western campus, students are usually introduced with their first names, and that habit has also influenced Chinese culture too. Chinese students also like to address each other by first names even although it is their first time to meet each other. When one stretches out his or her hand, saying “Hello, I’m ...”, it is regarded friendly for you to do the same thing. You can also give your full name while stressing your first name by saying, “Hello, my name is Tina. Tina Zhang. ” You can repeat the person’s name after that person is introduced to you, for instance, “Nice to meet you, Tina. ”

When you are not introduced to people, you may respond by introducing yourself if the right opportunity presents itself. This seems to make everyone feel more comfortable. For instance, you are with a friend in a cafeteria and a couple of his friends stopped by the table to say hi. He talked to them for a few minutes but never introduced you. The proper etiquette in this circumstance would have been for him to introduce you to his friends. In this case, you can also introduce yourself.

Task 2 shaking hands

- If you are a male and you are meeting a female, you should wait for her to extend her hand first. If she does not initiate a handshake, do not be offended.

- If you are a male and you are meeting another male, you should always extend your hand first. This is a sign of confidence and self-assurance.

- If you are a female and you are meeting a male, you should extend your hand first, for men might be confused about proper behavior. This will put the man at ease and is also a sign of your confidence and friendliness.

- If you are a female and you are meeting another female, handshaking is usually for a formal business setting.

Shake hands with a new classmate



that you don't know and introduce each other by using the recommendations above. How does your partner describe your handshake, firm, aggressive or wimpy? Ask for feedback after your hand shake.

Then, form a group of three. Imagine one is a professor, another is a student, how do you introduce them to know each other?

Task 3 true or false statement about me

Write down your name and three statements on a piece of paper. There should be two true statements and one false statement. Then exchange you statements with your partner. For example, you can write:

Statement 1: I like singing.

Statement 2: I am a morning person.

Statement 3: My room is painted red.

You are to guess which two statements are true and which statement is false. If you get it wrong, you need to ask your partner to explain what the correct one is. It can be a fun way to learn things about each other.

Task 4 Demonstration: tell me about you (assignment to be presented next time)

This is a task that needs your preparation after class. Bring in some things (at least 5 items) to class that have information about you (your ID card, your latest plane or train ticket, a book that you like, pictures of your loved ones, your dress/coat or other personal belongings). Give your fellow students different things of yours and tell them to work together to build an idea of what you are like as a person. Then, you can use the following patterns to exchange your idea:

- You thought I'm ..., but actually I ...
- Well, actually, that is incorrect.
- You're exactly right.



Greeting people



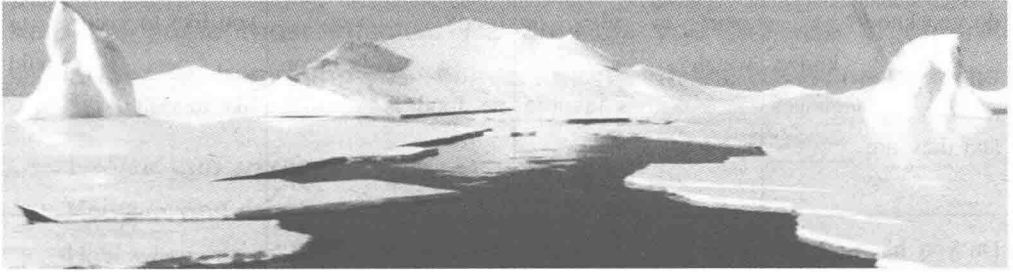
Greeting people is not only a basic aspect of learning a language, but also an important skill in daily communication. Do you know how to greet people? Remember always have a smile, speak clearly and look at the person you are greeting right in the eye. This will make the other person feel you're really paying attention to him or her. If you don't know the person's name, say, "nice to meet you." or "nice to see you."

If the other person greets you first, it is considered polite to answer and ask back. Pay attention to the distance between you. Don't approach someone who does not want to be approached and watch his or her body language towards you. Be aware if the person you are talking to is constantly looking over your shoulder, or checking his watch, it's a pretty good sign that he is not interested in the conversation or he is in a hurry. Gracefully excuse yourself, and say goodbye.

Task 5 group discussion

Discuss with your teammates that in what situations you need to greet a stranger and how. You can think of different occasions that may occur to you, such as elevator, bus stop, classroom, library, cafeteria, outside of a professor's office, and so on. Think of the slight differences you know between western and eastern cultures in greeting.

Ice-breaking conversation



It is normal for most of people to feel a little bit nervous or shy when they approach someone new. There are some statements that focus on starting a conversation, in order to prevent any awkwardness in a social situation, and these can be called ice-breakers. Start a conversation by ice-breakers and listen attentively to the other person's responses.

Here are some examples:

- Is it usually as hot/cold as this here(especially in British English)?
- What do you think of his speech?
- Hi, I'm Tina Zhang from Tongji University.
- It's very noisy here, isn't it?

Asking "*How are you?*" helps break the ice, and it gives them an opportunity to greet you as well. Just remember that invariably, when you ask how they are doing, people will say "*fine*" no matter what's going on in their lives for real. Be prepared to move on to the next topic. Notice something about them, what they're wearing or carrying. To continue the conversation, you can also make small talk about the weather, family, how far you traveled, where a good spot for lunch might be, and other topics of general interest. Don't try to impress. Simply be affable, personable, approachable and keep it simple.

Task 6 greeting grid

Please move around to fill in as many as possible blanks in the grid within 10 minutes. You need to change a partner after you finish one question.



Table 1.1 Ice-breaking Greeting Grid

How many languages do you know? _____ knows _____ languages and they are _____.	What is your favorite sport to play or watch? _____’s favorite sport is _____.	What is your favorite food? _____’s favorite food is _____.	What country would you like to visit? _____ would like to visit _____.
Do you have a part-time job? _____ has/doesn’t have a part-time job.	What famous person would you like to meet? _____ would like to meet _____.	What is an activity you would like to learn? _____ would like to learn _____.	What are you going to do after class today? _____ is going to _____.
Can you play a musical instrument? _____ can play the _____/can’t play a musical instrument.	How long does it take you to get to the cafeteria from your dormitory? It takes _____ (name) _____ minutes to get there.	What do you do very well? _____ (Name) _____ very well.	If you could have one wish come true, what would it be? _____’s wish would be _____.
Where did you go on your last trip? _____ went to _____.	What do you think is your best personality point? _____’s best personality point is _____.	Why did you choose to study in Tongji University? _____ chose to study in Tongji University because _____.	What are your hobbies? _____’s hobbies are _____.
What kind of movies do you like to watch? _____ likes to watch _____ movies.	Who is your favorite singer/movie star? _____’s favorite singer/movie star is _____.	What do you think is the biggest problem in the world? _____ thinks that the biggest problem is _____.	What is your most favorite class? _____’s most favorite class is _____.