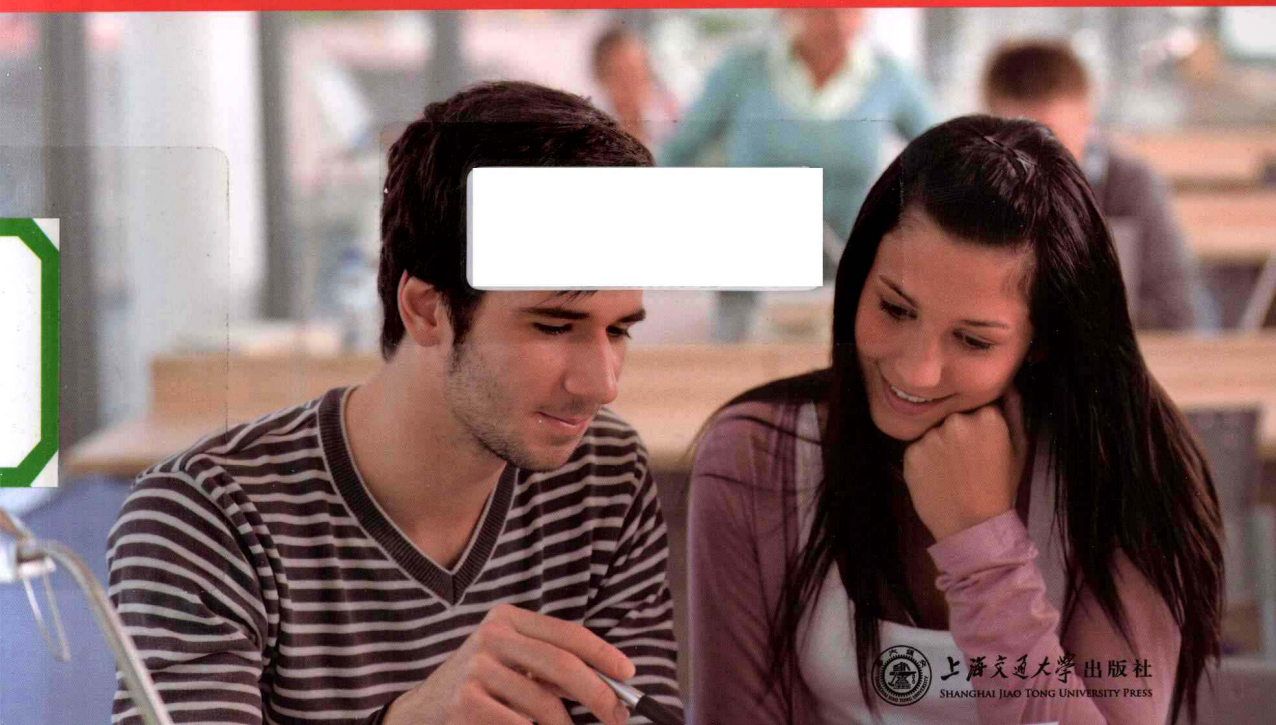刘金明 主编

研究生学术写作实用教程

Academic Writing for Graduate Students:
A Practical Coursebook

上海交通大学出版社
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Academic Writing for Graduate Students: A Practical Coursebook

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内容提要

本书介绍了研究生学术写作的基本结构与具体格式等方面的写作方法。其特点是宏观微观互补、理论应用结合、深入浅出、指导性强。本书全英文编写,主要供外国语言文学研究生使用,也可供其他学科研究生使用。

前　　言

学术写作是外国语言文学研究生的专业基础课,其目的是培养研究生的科学研究与学术写作能力,帮助研究生了解本学科或研究领域的最新成果,使他们学会如何阅读、评判、分析与利用资料,掌握科研论文写作的技巧、方法与规范,有效提高他们的科学研究能力与学术写作水平。

众所周知,当今社会,科学研究需要研究者对学科发展的动态和趋势、研究领域的相关问题与现象有敏锐的眼光,使自己站到学科研究的前沿,这是开展科学研究的重要前提与基础。同时,开展科学研究需要研究者善于学术创新,研究新情况,解决新问题,而能不能及时地发现问题,或者对研究领域的发展作出理性的思考、分析、评价和预测,这需要研究者具有敏锐的眼光和批判性思维能力。因此,学术写作的教学改革要力求教学内容个性化、授课形式多样化、教学手段现代化、学术写作规范国际化,充分体现学术写作的时代性、基础性、指导性与开放性,着力提高外国语言文学研究生的科学研究与学术写作能力。

基于上述思考与认识,并根据湖南省研究生精品课程建设项目(KC2007B025)的需要,我们编写了这本《研究生学术写作实用教程》。

本书分为六个单元。第一单元主要介绍学术写作的本质、批评性阅读的方法以及学术写作中必须考虑的"受众、目的、结构、文体、语言、表达"等重要因素;第二单元主要介绍研究论文选题与开题或研究报告撰写的技巧与策略;第三单元主要介绍文献综述的类型与特征以及文献综述的写作技巧;第四单元主要介绍质化研究和量化研究等研究方法以及如何进行质化与量化研究;第五单元主要介绍避免剽窃抄袭的策略以及研究论文的夹注与参考文献开列的 MLA 格式与规范;第六单元主要介绍外国语言文学研究生学位论文的基本结构与具体格式,致谢、摘要、

引言、结论等部分的写作方法与写作技巧,以及修改与编加论文初稿的基本方法。

本书的特点是宏观与微观互补,理论与应用结合,深入浅出,指导性强。全书用英文编写,主要供外国语言文学研究生使用,也可供其他学科研究生使用。

本书由湖南科技大学外国语学院刘金明教授主编,参加编写的还有湖南科技大学外国语学院曾艳钰教授、张瑞鸿教授、唐忠顺副教授、曾小鹏老师,浙江外国语学院英语语言文化学院杨晓军教授,杭州师范大学外国语学院李桔元教授、李鸿雁副教授。

限于学识,书中谬误在所难免,我们恳切希望读者在使用过程中提出宝贵意见,以便今后修订时加以改进,使之日臻完善。

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编　者

2012 年 9 月 10 日

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Unit 1

Considerations in Academic Writing

1.1 Overview of Academic Writing

This coursebook is designed to help you, graduate students of Foreign Languages and Literatures as well as of other disciplines, with your academic writing. It helps you learn to write a research paper, that is, a paper that:

- ➤ develops a purposeful position about a topic;
- ➤ uses, not simply displays or assembles, outside sources;
- ➤ helps you work through the research process.

At graduate level, you will be expected to ask *What about? How?* and *Why?* questions at the forefront of your field of learning. You can expect to be stimulated, challenged and sometimes unsettled, as you venture into new territory, experience new ways of thinking, and try out new ways of doing research. The main purpose of doing research is not to summarize the work of others but to assimilate and to build on it and to arrive at your own understanding of the subject. The research paper should be more than a thesis with supporting sub-sections; it should set out to critique the work in the field in the light of the new study as well as persuade the audience to your view on the strength of evidence and argument. Academic success means representing yourself in a way valued by your discipline, adopting the values, beliefs and identities which academic discourses embody.

It is common knowledge that the research paper is generally based on primary research, secondary research or a combination of the two. Primary research is

the study of a subject through firsthand investigation, such as analyzing a literary or historical text, conducting a survey or an interview, or carrying out a laboratory experiment. It is usually subdivided into *qualitative studies*, *survey studies*, and *statistical studies*. Surveys include both questionnaires and interviews, and statistical studies have *quasi-experimental studies* and *experimental studies*. Secondary research is the examination of studies that other researchers have made of a subject. It consists of summarizing previous studies, reviewing the literature in a given area, and synthesizing the research undertaken by others. Both library research and literature review belong to secondary research, which, in most cases, is a necessary prerequisite to the primary research because it provides necessary and important background information for your study.

So, as a guide for the preparation of research papers, this coursebook introduces you to skills of critical literature reading and the basic strategies of constructing a research paper. It provides guidance in research design, helping you in preparing a plan or proposal for a scholarly journal article, thesis, or dissertation. The process of writing a research paper is covered step by step, including the crucial aspects of finding a question to answer, using the print and computerized resources of the library, evaluating source materials, formulating the working thesis, note-taking procedures, quoting, writing and revising a rough draft, and using the MLA style of documentation.

1.2 The Nature of Writing

Historically speaking, writing is a rather recent invention. Unlike spoken language, written language has a documented history of little more than 6,000 years. And while it is generally accepted by linguists that certain aspects of spoken language may be *biologically* determined, the same cannot be said of writing. Writing abilities are not naturally acquired; they must be *culturally* (rather than biologically) transmitted in every generation, whether in schools or in other assisting environments.

According to William Grabe and Robert B. Kaplan, writing is a technology, a set of skills which must be practiced and learned through experience. The skills

required do not come naturally, but rather are gained through conscious effort and much practice. That is, writing—particularly the more complex composing skill valued in the academy—involves training, instruction, practice, experience, and purpose. It is not a natural ability that automatically accompanies maturation.

1.3   The Nature of Academic Writing

Writing in general is classified into four categories according to its purpose. The categories are:

> ➤ Narration—telling a story; relating events in time-ordered sequence and revealing their significance.

> ➤ Description—deals with perceptions and is concerned with arranging what we see into meaningful patterns and conveying it in words.

> ➤ Exposition—is to explain in logical progression, how things work or why things happen. It is organized around cause and effect, true or false and other dichotomies.

> ➤ Persuasion—seeks to change the way people think on the basis of argument, that is, reasoning supported by evidence.

It is likely that researchers will use all these rhetorical modes in one paper. The essential element of academic or research writing is that it has an argumentative purpose that runs through the entire text, and is supported by narrative, descriptive or expository passages.

The nature of academic or research writing is to convince readers through reasoning supported by evidence, of the researcher's view. Research texts are characterized by an argumentative purpose. The argumentative purpose is inherent in the research question/statement/thesis/hypothesis or objectives. The skill in academic writing is the capacity to progressively build argument by means of expository paragraphs, to a persuasive conclusion, accounting for alternative explanations in the process.

1.4 The Rationale of Academic Writing

A research paper is a form of written communication. We academic writers, regardless of backgrounds, are engaged with thinking about our readers' likely expectations and reactions, with deciding on what to say—and what not to say—about our data, and with organizing our texts in ways that meet logical conventions and yet create a space for ourselves. In this sense, academic writing is rhetorical.

More than 2,000 years ago, Aristotle defined rhetoric as "the faculty of observing in any case the available means of persuasion". The five stages of composition in classical rhetoric theory are still powerful and regarded as the guiding principle for speech as well as writing. The five stages of composition include invention (*inventio*), arrangement (*dispositio*), style (*elocutio*), memory (*memoria*), and delivery (*pronuntiatio*).

➢ *Inventio* is the Latin term for "invention" or "discovery". It is concerned with a system or method for finding arguments.

➢ *Dispositio* is the Latin term for "disposition", "arrangement", "organization". It is the division of rhetoric concerned with the effective and orderly arrangement of the parts of a written or spoken discourse.

➢ *Elocutio* is the third part of rhetoric. For the classical rhetorician, *elocutio* means "style".

➢ *Memoria* is the fourth part. It is concerned with memorizing speeches.

➢ *Pronuntiatio* is the fifth division, that is, delivery. The final stage in the composing and delivering of a speech is the orator's use of voice (*pronuntiatio*) and gesture (*actio*).

A rhetorical view of academic writing is that writing is a persuasive process. The writer is bent on influencing his audience in one way or another. For this purpose, the writer brings into collective play *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*—three rhetorical appeals suggested by ancient and modern rhetoricians. The rhetorical triangle of writing communication is as follows (Fig. 1.1):
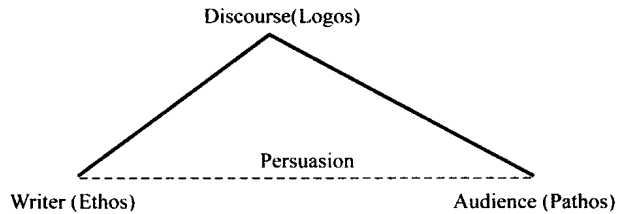
Fig. 1.1　Rhetorical triangle of writing communication

According to Aristotle, the discourse must not only convince through the argument, it must create a trustworthy image of the speaker. The ethical appeal (*ethos*) is exerted when the writer's discourse gives the audience an impression that the writer is man of sound sense, which shows that he has an adequate grasp of the subject being talked about, and that he knows and observes the principles of valid reasoning, and has sound judgment. The emotional appeal (*pathos*) is exerted when the writer's discourse arouses an emotion in the audience. To arouse an emotion, the writer must contemplate the object that stirs the emotion. The logical appeal (*logos*) is exerted when the writer's discourse is rational and logical.

1.5　Approaches to Reading Critically

In academic writing, you have to do a lot of reading. A great deal of that reading serves the purpose of acquiring knowledge and understanding of a range of new topics and issues. However, you will be expected to go beyond this type of reading and to become critical; that is, you need to read critically. Reading critically is based on critical thinking. The concept of critical thinking reflects an idea derived from roots in ancient Greek.

Etymologically, the word *critical* derives from two Greek roots: *kriticos* (meaning "*discerning judgment*") and *kriterion* (meaning "*standards*"). The word implies the development of "discerning judgment based on standards. " In *Webster's New World Dictionary*, the entry for *critical* reads: "characterized by critical analysis and judgment" and is followed by "Critical, in its strict sense, implies an attempt at objective judgment so as to determine both merits and faults. " Considering these definitions together, as Richard Paul and Linda Elder

put it, critical thinking may be appropriately defined as "thinking explicitly aimed at well-founded judgment, utilizing appropriate evaluative standards in an attempt to determine the true worth, merit, or value of something. " Critical thinking, then, has three dimensions: an analytic, an evaluative, and a creative component. As critical thinkers, we analyze thinking in order to evaluate it. We evaluate it in order to improve it.

Anne Murphy holds that reading critically essentially means being able to make judgments about the material you are reading and to defend the judgments you make. During your study you will be expected to think about written material in a number of ways, including the following:

● **Written material as information**

It is a good idea to question any writer's claim that the material is value-free or objective. No statement can be regarded as free from values, sub-text or selected agenda. The very choice of language itself is a judgment on the part of the writer.

● **Written material as proposition or argument**

A writer may state the underpinning argument, or may not state it: just imply it. In any case you, as the reader, should be alert to noticing how claims are being made and supported.

● **Written material as discourse**

The selection of a writing style and specific terminology may indicate a system-as-discourse at work. For example, a feminist may detect a predominance of a male-oriented worldview or a male-oriented value-system in the choice of language and tone in a document. In such cases, it may be useful to ask yourself, as the reader:

a. Who has written this piece?

b. For whom?

c. What worldview is being presented?

d. Could it have been written in a different way to reflect a different discourse?

All in all, when you are reading relevant background literature for your study you need to ask yourself the following questions. In this way your critical awareness will be sharpened and your critical thinking will also be developed in the reading.

> ➤ What are the research questions (i. e. general questions and specific questions)?
> ➤ Are the research questions clearly stated?
> ➤ Why should this study be carried out (justifications for the need for the study)?
> ➤ How was the study carried out (Describe the research design.)?
> ➤ Is the research design appropriate for the research questions?
> ➤ What are the research findings?
> ➤ Was the author consistent in the way they analyzed their results?
> ➤ Is there any strength or problem in this study (indicating weaknesses or even flaws in its research design and writing)?

1. 6　Important Characteristics of Academic Writing

According to Swales and Feak(1994), academic writing is a product of many considerations: audience, purpose, organization, style, flow, and presentation (Fig. 1. 2).
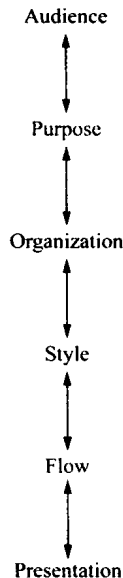
Audience

↑
↓

Purpose

↑
↓

Organization

↑
↓

Style

↑
↓

Flow

↑
↓

Presentation

Fig. 1. 2　Considerations in academic writing

1.6.1 Audience

Perelman in his book *The Realm of Rhetoric* distinguishes among three audiences: those the speaker expressly addresses; the speaker himself, "reflecting privately about how to respond to a delicate situation"; and the "universal audience", which consists of all of humanity or "at least all those who are competent and reasonable". Before you write, you need to spend time pondering over your audience, getting to know the types of possible audience and identifying your specific audience.

For most graduate students, the audience will be an instructor, supervisor, or editor of academic journals who is presumably quite knowledgeable about the assigned writing topic. To be successful in your writing task, you need to have an understanding of your audience's expectations and prior knowledge, because these will affect the content of your writing.

Now consider the following definitions of language. For whom are these written? What are the differences between them?

a. Language is a means of communication.

b. Language is a tool for human communication.

c. Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication.

d. Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which the members of a speech community communicate, interact, and transmit their culture.

1.6.2 Purpose

Audience and purpose are interconnected. Audience sense is a hallmark of effective writers. If the audience knows less than the writer, the writer's purpose is often instructional (as in a textbook). If the audience knows more than the writer, the writer's purpose is usually to display *familiarity*, *expertise*, and *intelligence*. The latter is a common situation for graduate student writers.

So, to be successful, graduate student writers need to consider the actual purpose of their research. The purpose is to display knowledge and understanding of a particular topic, to demonstrate particular skills in convincing the audience, as well as to contribute to knowledge in their area of study.

1.6.3 Organization

Information is presented to readers in a structured format. Even short pieces of writing have regular, predictable patterns of organization. A clear, predictable pattern of organization can be seen in the following letter.

Dear Ms. Wang:

Thank you for your interest in our university. (*Acknowledgement*)

On behalf of the Dean of the Graduate School, I congratulate you on being accepted to the program in Aerospace Engineering to begin study at the master level. This letter is your official authorization to register for Fall 1998. (*Good News*)

As a reflection of the importance the Graduate School places on the ability of its students to communicate effectively, the Graduate School requires all new students whose native language is not English to have their English evaluated. Specific details for this procedure are given in the enclosed information packet. (*Administrative Details*)

We look forward to welcoming you to Midwestern University and wish you success in your academic career. (*Welcoming Close*)

Sincerely,

Generally speaking, academic writing employs a variety of organizational patterns. One very common strategy in academic writing is to organize information in terms of problem-solution. Another is the Create-a-Research-Space model for re-

search paper introductions.

➤ **The Problem-Solution pattern**

The Problem-Solution pattern has four parts：

1）*Description of a situation*
2）*Identification of a problem*
3）*Description of a solution*
4）*Evaluation of the solution*

According to Michael Hoey，the basic Problem-Solution patterns are shown as follows（Fig. 1. 3）：

Situation (optional)

↓

Aspect of Situation Requiring a Response (i.e. Problem)

↓

Response

or ↙ ↓ ↘ or

Positive
Evaluation

Positive
Result

Positive Result/
Evaluation combined
in a single statement

↓

↓

Basis
(optional)
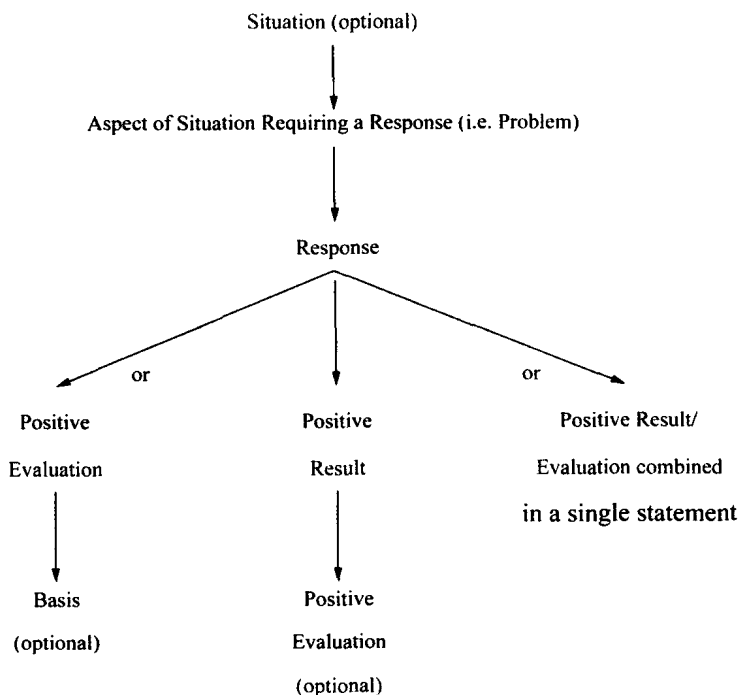
Positive
Evaluation
(optional)

Fig. 1. 3 The Problem-Solution pattern

Read and analyze the organizational pattern of the following text：

International students often study English for many years before going to an English-speaking country to pursue a graduate degree. Their