

新世纪商务英语专业本科系列教材（第二版） / 总主编 王立非

全国高等学校商务英语专业教学协作组重点推荐教材

商务英语 论文写作

THESIS WRITING FOR BUSINESS ENGLISH STUDENTS

主编 沙立 丁言仁



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THESIS WRITING
FOR BUSINESS ENGLISH STUDENTS

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总序

进入“十三五”，我国高等英语教育迎来改革创新和特色发展的关键期，商务英语专业也随之从规模发展进入内涵发展和质量提升的新常态。全国已有251所高校开办了商务英语本科专业，有近500所高校开设了商务英语方向或课程。2016年，教育部制订了《高等学校商务英语专业本科教学质量国家标准》（以下简称《国家标准》），对商务英语人才的培养提出了明确要求，以满足对外开放的国家战略需求。

为了认真贯彻落实《国家标准》，全国高等学校商务英语专业教学协作组与上海外语教育出版社密切合作，对入选“十二五”普通高等教育本科国家级规划教材的“新世纪商务英语专业本科系列教材”进行全面修订。修订后的“新世纪商务英语专业本科系列教材（第二版）”体系更加完整，涵盖英语知识与技能和商务知识与技能两个模块，很好地体现出《国家标准》对商务英语专业学生知识和能力的要求。

本系列教材中，英语知识与技能模块包含《商务英语综合教程》、《商务英语听说教程》、《商务英语阅读教程》、《商务英语写作教程》、《商务英语论文写作》、《商务英语口译教程》、《商务英汉翻译教程》、《国际贸易实务与操作》等。

商务知识与技能模块包含《国际商业伦理》、《国际商务合同》、《国际经济学》、《国际知识产权》、《国际营销》、《国际支付》、《国际贸易单证》等简明教程。

本系列教材具有以下四个特色：

第一，完全对接《国家标准》规定的培养目标和课程体系，突出打牢英语基本功，拓宽国际视野、提升人文素养，培养商务意识和素养，提高商务英语技能、商务实践能力、跨文化交流能力、思辨与创新能力。

第二，编写理念先进，选材新颖，充满时代感；坚持语言、文化、商务三者有机结合，充分体现国际化、人文性、复合型、应用性的特点和全人教育的理念。

第三，体系完整，覆盖商务英语专业核心课程，英语知识与技能教材突出听、说、读、写、译、跨文化交际等技能训练导向；商务知识与技能教材理论体系完整，知识讲解简明扼要，语言原汁原味，配套练习实用性和可操作性强，注重中外真实案例分析，培养思辨和创新能力。

第四，课堂任务设计多样化和立体化特色鲜明，突出网络多媒体技术的应用，提供丰富的视频材料和教学资源，加大了语言学习的趣味性和输入的有效性。

本系列教材为全国高等学校商务英语专业教学协作组重点推荐教材,由国内商务英语教学专家编写,可供一、二年级商务英语专业本科生、英语专业商贸方向学生、财经类院校本科生以及各类经管专业本科生使用,同时也可作为大学英语ESP课程以及各类企业培训和社会商务英语爱好者的学习参考书。本套教材的修订得到上海外语教育出版社领导和编辑的大力支持,在此表示衷心感谢!



全国高等学校商务英语专业教学协作组组长
对外经济贸易大学教授、博士生导师

前言

进入21世纪的第二个10年,中国已经成为世界第二大经济体,在全球经济的发展和繁荣中发挥着举足轻重的作用。随着“一带一路”战略的推出,大批中国企业将跨出国门,开拓海外市场,这对于商务英语人才的培养提出了更高的要求。他们不仅仅要有传统意义上的良好的英语交流技能和跨文化沟通技巧,还需要精通某个方面的商务知识,具有很强的学习新知识的能力,能独立或协同开展市场调研,能用英语撰写研究报告、商务计划书、营销方案等职场文件。对于商务英语专业的学生而言,这些能力的培养和训练主要是通过开展商务题材的项目研究、撰写研究/毕业论文来完成的。

然而,目前受学科划分的限制,相关教材出版和针对性课程开设不足。对于大多数商务英语专业/方向的毕业生而言,在如何开展商务调研、用英语撰写符合学术规范的毕业论文方面尚且缺乏系统性的知识输入和训练。

本教材的编写旨在改革当前商务英语论文写作课的教学理念和教学形式,提供一套跨商务研究、商务英语和论文写作三门课的教材,一方面有助于在课堂教学中融入更多商务元素和研究实践,围绕研究项目,培养学生发现问题、研究问题和解决问题的能力,真正实现培养“商务+英语”的复合型人才的目标;另一方面,本教材可以惠及商科专业的本科生,给他们提供一套国际通行的、规范的商务研究报告和英语论文写作的教材,提高他们英语写作的能力。

一、编写指导思想

本教材从《高等学校商务英语专业本科教学质量国家标准》出发,把基于实证研究的毕业论文(设计)作为培养学生创新意识和实践能力的重要环节,紧密围绕完成论文的各个环节开展教学指导,引导学生自选课题、检索和阅读文献、设计研究方法、开展实证研究、进行数据分析,直至完成论文写作。

教材在内容选择和教学任务设计上,遵循项目教学法(The Project Approach)的几条重要原则,即:

1. 学校和社会是一个整体,而不是相互割裂的两个世界,学习的目标是让学生更加积极主动地了解社会,积累知识、能力和经验,与时俱进。
2. 学习是个学生主动构建知识的过程,只有当他们积极参与其中并且有明确的目标时才会达到最佳的学习效果。
3. 教和学是互动的过程,教师的任务是通过系统的指导、针对性的训练来引导和促进学生的学习。而学生的任务是积极投入到课内和课外的学习活动中,通过观察、实践、阅读、研究、思考来构建个性化的知识体系,成为某一个课题方面的“专家”。

4. 每个学生的兴趣、能力、资源、目标是不同的,学生间讨论和合作可以促进新思想和新方法的产生,有利于培养创造力和解决问题的能力。

二、教材的内容

教材的章节编排与学生实际开展商务研究和论文写作的顺序相一致,便于课堂教学的开展和教学效果的检测。本教材分为三大部分,分别为:

第一部分:第1—3单元,发掘研究思路(Generating Your Research Idea)。其目的是为开展研究做前期准备。主要内容包括:商务研究的基本概念、过程、研究课题的选择、文献查找、开题报告的撰写、研究方法选择和研究过程的设计。

第二部分:第4—7单元,开展研究实践(Conducting Your Research)。其目的是指导学生开展实证研究,收集研究数据。主要内容包括抽样设计、问卷设计、问卷调查、深度访谈和专题小组(focus group)。在研究方法的选择上,我们重点讨论了上述对于本科生而言切实可行、操作性强的方法,而对于需要消耗大量时间或资源的方法只做简单介绍。

第三部分:第8—10单元,撰写研究论文(Writing Your Thesis)。其目的是指导学生按照学术论文的规范进行论文写作。由于这方面的教材较多,我们把重点放在开题报告写作、文献综述写作、数据分析和结果展示等难点上,而对于很多教材中都提到的语言特点、常用句型、格式规范等则相对简化。

附录一:依据国际上通行的商务论文引证规范,本教材重点介绍了哈佛格式(Harvard Style)。考虑到这部分内容对课堂教学而言比较繁琐枯燥,在章节中,我们只做提纲挈领的介绍,达到“授人以渔”的目的。我们对学生写作中较为常见的引文来源情况进行分类,以附录的形式展示如何做参考文献的著录,并配有实例,方便学生在写作过程中随时参考套用。

附录二:为了让学生对商务题材的研究论文有个完整的认识,本教材附录二提供了一篇完整的毕业论文供参考。这篇论文并非完美,但它从一定程度上反映了本科生通过实证研究商务课题可以达到的水准。该论文获得了“江苏省普通高等学校本专科2012年优秀毕业设计(论文)”三等奖。该论文的作者是南京大学金陵学院2012届毕业生郑轶南,在此一并表示感谢。

三、教材的使用方法

1. 教学对象

由于本教材的跨学科特性和全英语撰写的方式,其预期的使用学校和范围将包括:

- ◆ 开设商务英语专业/方向的普通高等院校,作为学科核心课程“论文写作”的教材;
- ◆ 开设双语教学的重点院校,作为学科核心课程“商务研究方法”的教材;

- ◆ 开设传统英语专业的普通高等院校,作为选修课的教材;
- ◆ 开设经济管理类专业的普通高等院校,作为学科核心课程“商务研究方法”的教材。

2. 课时安排

由于教材内容的编排顺序力求和学生实际开展研究与撰写论文的进度同步,教师可以根据各自学校的教学计划灵活选择在第六或第七学期开课。各章节所用课时数也建议教师依据本校毕业论文/设计的时间表进行,确保学生边学习知识边开展研究,一步一步引导他们完成研究和论文写作。

3. 单元内容的使用

本教材的每个单元由以下几个部分组成:

- ◆ 开篇故事: 从一个学生的视角,描写她在整个毕业论文写作中遇到的困惑和难题,如何通过学习、与导师的交流逐步走出困境,完成研究和写作任务。
- ◆ Introduction: 介绍本单元将涵盖的教学内容,明确学习目标。
- ◆ Body: 这部分是本教材主干部分,对开展商务研究和论文写作所涉及的基本概念、步骤、方法进行详细阐述。这部分内容具有跨学科性和专业性,对于不熟悉商务知识和学术语言的学生而言是巨大的挑战。教师应将这部分作为课堂讲解的重点,通过教材中提供的例子和自己教学实践中积累的例子进行深入浅出的讲解。为了提高课堂教学效果,建议教师让学生做好课前预习,扫除生词障碍,并且鼓励学生在课前通过网络等方式自学课文中提到的陌生概念,例如 methodology、literature review、research proposal、sampling 等,甚至可以借助中文进行理解。
- ◆ In-Class Task(s): 在每项重要内容之后,本教材会针对刚刚讲解过的概念、难点安排1~3个课堂任务,以促进和检验学生对刚刚学习到的知识的理解,并使其进行简单的应用。课堂任务主要以小组讨论和班级讨论的形式展开,其目的是让每个学生参与其中,及时巩固加深对新知识的理解。教师可以根据课时安排、学生的能力和兴趣,每次课上选择使用1~2个课堂任务,每个任务的时间控制在5~10分钟。为了提高课堂活动的效率,建议让学生在课前对任务进行预习,带着问题听课和讨论。
- ◆ Major Tasks: 在结束了每个单元的内容讲解后,本教材为本单元所讲述的重要概念、方法、知识点设计几个大型任务。与 In-Class Tasks 相比, Major Tasks 综合性强、开放性强、实践性强,需要花费的时间也长。因此,教师可以选择自己认为最有意义的任务,让学生在课后完成。Major Tasks 也是以小组讨论的形式展开,以任务驱动。对于 Major Tasks 完成情况的检查可以采取小组活动报告(group report)、个人反思报告(response writing)或小组活动成果汇报(result presentation)等方式。无论是 In-Class Tasks 还是 Major Tasks,一般不采取选择或问答的形式,而是开放性、启发式的任务,需要学生集思广益,创造性地完成。教师在这过程中不是评判者,而是协调者、组织

者、促进者和顾问。

- ◆ **After-Class Tasks:** 在每个单元的最后,本教材设计了课后任务。与之前的两个任务不同,课后任务由个人独立完成,紧密围绕学生自己正在进行的研究和写作任务设计,促使学生将从本单元中获得的知识和技能及时应用到自己的研究中,循序渐进地完成课题研究和论文写作的任务。此外,课后任务还强调与论文指导老师的互动,鼓励学生积极与导师交流,按照计划的时间表完成研究和写作任务。

《商务英语论文写作》是由南京大学金陵学院英语系和大学外语部的教师在多年论文写作教学和商务英语论文指导实践的基础上历时三年撰写而成的。主要的撰写教师具有英语和商务双学科背景,因此能胜任这部跨学科教材的撰写任务。本教材于2014年通过江苏省教育厅的审核,被列入“十二五”江苏省高等学校重点教材立项建设名单(新编教材)。

本教材的第1—6单元由沙立撰写,第7单元由宋钧撰写,第8单元由宋钧和王淑妍合作撰写,第9单元由王劼华撰写,第10单元和附录由王淑妍撰写。此外,为使全书内容编排更加合理,各位作者撰写的内容有所交叉,其中宋钧撰写了第2单元的“Improving Search Skills”部分;王淑妍撰写了第9单元的“*How to Write the Methodology Section*”和“*How to Write the Conclusions Section*”两个部分;王劼华撰写了第3单元的“*Primary vs. Secondary Data*”和“*Choosing the data type: primary or secondary data*”两个部分以及第10单元的“*How to Prepare for the Oral Defense*”部分。丁言仁教授对全书的设计和撰写进行了全程指导。

本教材的编写得到了南京大学金陵学院的大力支持,获得了学院教改项目“商科英语论文写作教材编写和课程建设”课题经费和“南京大学金陵学院精品专业”建设经费的资助。此外,全书由在南京大学金陵学院负责写作教学的美国外教Mr. Joshua Allen Foster 逐词校对,在此表示感谢。由于编者水平有限,本教材难免存在许多不当之处,恳请使用本教材的教师和学生提出宝贵意见。

编者

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Part 1



**Generating Your
Research Idea**

An Introduction to Business Research Projects

Unit 1

Xiao Lin's anxiety grows as the sizzling summer cools down. Next Monday she will be a senior. As a senior she will have to write a graduation thesis, but she has little idea how to do it. All she knows is that it is time-consuming, tiring and challenging. As an English major, she has a concentration in Business English, a new but increasingly popular choice among her classmates.

The Business English curriculum incorporates both English language modules and business subjects. Students are thus required to write a graduation thesis on a business issue in English. The thought of writing a 4,000-word research paper on an unfamiliar topic terrifies Xiao Lin and her friends. None of them have ever written anything more than 2,000 words in English on anything. What will the research topic be? What does RESEARCH involve? Is it just "Googling" or "Baiduing" information? Delivering questionnaires and reporting the results? Xiao Lin has learnt from previous senior students that she will be assigned a thesis adviser to help her with her project. This seems a source of comfort, but who will be her adviser? What kind of support can she expect from him or her? Perplexed by so much uncertainty, she cannot wait for the school year to begin because she has signed up for a Thesis Writing Course. She can only keep her fingers crossed that all her problems will be solved during that course.

Introduction

Perhaps many of you are like Xiao Lin. Your anxiety is natural.

According to the curriculum, thesis writing is an indispensable part of higher education. It provides you an opportunity to integrate your knowledge and skills to make an in-depth inquiry into a topic of both practical and academic significance. At the same time, it is also an important learning process. The skills developed in writing a graduation thesis will also be of great importance for your future career and education.

A graduation thesis should be based on "research," perhaps still a mysterious-sounding term for you now. To ease your natural fear, this unit introduces the basic concepts and procedures of a thesis research project. It covers the following topics:

- Elements of graduation thesis research
- Purposes of business research
- Types of research students usually choose
- The process of thesis research
- Schedule for the Thesis Research and Writing Project
- Roles of thesis advisers

Elements of Graduation Thesis Research

The word “research” can sound mysterious, even scary, to many of us. Our image of research is scientists in white lab coats doing experiments with sophisticated instruments in sterile labs. This image, to say the least, is incomplete.

In its simplest sense, research is actually part of our everyday life. The word “research” literally means “re-search,” “to search again.” We usually search for information before making a decision. For instance, before you decided which university you wanted to apply for, you and your parents searched again and again by visiting university websites, consulting your teachers, talking to your friends, and, most of all, comparing advantages and disadvantages of different choices. You searched and re-searched until you reached a final decision.

In your university years, you must have been given many tasks and projects requiring that you “re-search” in order to achieve a better understanding of a text, a phenomenon or a theory. You have researched — we no longer need the hyphen — for background information of an author, social context of an event, historical development of a company, real-life case of a theory, and many others. Not only have you done research, but you have also made an oral or written report after such activities. “Research” is actually not foreign to us, nor should it be frightening to us.

Having said that, when it comes to research for a graduation thesis, we should note that it is a process that is more systematic and methodological and lasts for a longer period of time than the kind of research we have done in the past. To put it simply, the thesis research needs to have the following four elements:

- a clearly stated research question
- a systematic review of relevant literature
- a systematic method of data collection
- new contributions to knowledge and/or practices

Now we will briefly delve into each element.

1. A clearly stated research question

A research study is aimed at answering a particular question (or set of questions). This question specifies the objectives of the study and therefore sits at the center of the research; all other procedures and activities revolve around it. That is to say, the nature of your research question determines the subsequent steps of your research, including what literature you read, what data you collect, what methods you adopt to collect data, and what tools you use to analyze the data. Research questions need to be specific, clear and researchable. Here are some

examples of quality research questions Business English majors have chosen for their graduation theses:

- What business opportunities exist for wearable digital devices like a smartwatch?
- How do college students respond to taobao.com's "Double 11"¹ promotion and does the "Single Festival Gala" event increase their purchasing desire?
- Why are/aren't electronic stores a good way to sell books to university students?
- How does the hunger marketing strategy² contribute to Xiaomi's (小米公司的) brand awareness?
- Is the large turnover of employees in company X a result of its merger with company Y?
- How successful are the measures KFC has taken to localize their business to suit China's market?

It is worth noting that although a research question is at the center of a research, it is not the starting point. Research often starts from a general topic and you have to go through some preliminary research before you can refine a general topic into a clearly defined research question.

2. A systematic review of relevant literature

In most cases, other researchers have already "researched" the topic or topics closely related to yours. You should familiarize yourself with this body of literature, the set of published materials related to your topic (e.g., books, journal articles and online materials). This review of the current literature will help you see where you might make a contribution with your study, help you better design your study, and help you avoid "reinventing the wheel."

3. A systematic method of data collection

To find answers to your research question, you need to collect evidence, that is, data. Data can be obtained through field work, such as surveys or interviews, or through secondary sources such as official statistics or other published resources like newspapers, webpages or journal articles. No matter what methods you adopt, the collection should

¹ "Double 11," also known as "Singles' Day," is a large-scale promotional campaign created by China's largest online retailer Alibaba. On this shopping festival, most of the e-shops on taobao.com and tmall.com, both owned by Alibaba, sell goods at heavy discounts.

² hunger marketing strategy (饥饿营销): a promotional strategy which attracts consumers' attention and arouses their purchasing desire by deliberately limiting the supply and creating a sense of shortage so that the producer can charge higher prices than originally advertised

be systematic. This means that you need to consider not only *where*, *when*, *how* and *from whom* to collect the data, but you also need to consider whether the data obtained this way is representative of the situation you are studying, and to what degree conclusions derived from this data applies to the larger situation. For instance, if you find 43 percent of the students in your class are regularly doing weight-loss exercises, this finding not necessarily applies to all students in your college or in your city because maybe most of the students in your class are women while the student population is gender-balanced. In other words, this finding is not generalizable. At most, as you may argue, the finding suggests that many female English majors in China want to lose weight, and even this claim has to be confirmed by further research.

4. New contributions to knowledge and/or practices

The goal of research is to “find things out,” that is, to increase people’s knowledge and understanding of a particular topic so as to improve and direct their practice. Contributions of a study may take different forms. They can be the application of a business theory to a new situation, the discovery of causes and solutions for a managerial problem, the insights obtained from a successful business practice, or the prediction of a market trend. These contributions justify all the time, energy, and resources you devote to the research.



Purposes of Business Research

Research has been widely carried out in the world of business to help business organizations better understand their situations and make better decisions. For business practitioners, research on business-related issues generally serves one of the three purposes: exploratory, descriptive, and causal.

1. Exploratory research

The purpose of exploratory research is to investigate an issue of which little is known. In modern times, new ideas and technology continue to emerge. Business people are eager to explore the potential opportunities or threats these new ideas and technologies may impose on their business so as to take measures to grasp the opportunities or counter the threats. Exploratory research is carried out to help illuminate the situation.

For example, at an IT fair, a CEO of an IT company took an interest in a new technology that can turn blurry pictures into very clear ones, revealing details originally unseen due to the bad condition (e.g., smog, low-light level, etc.) when the pictures were taken. This technology

seemed promising for security surveillance, but before rushing to buy the technology, the CEO has to address many issues. How can the technology be made into salable products? Who will be target customers? Is the demand large enough to make a profit? Are there better or cheaper alternatives that provide the same function? The research undertaken to reveal the potentials of this technology is exploratory.

In business practice, exploratory research is often used to investigate market opportunities, develop new products or identify potential problems of existing markets.

2. Descriptive research

As the name suggests, descriptive research aims at providing a more detailed description of the situation being studied so that decision makers can have a thorough understanding. There are many things business managers want to know in detail, such as the common characteristics of target customers, the consumers' awareness of their brand name as compared with those of their main competitors, or the sales associates' attitudes toward a new incentive policy, and its impact on volume of sales. Precise information on these issues can greatly inform decision-making and help improve business practices.

For example, an online store for women's apparel sent questionnaires to their regular customers to collect demographic data (e.g., gender, age, job, education level), purchasing behavior (e.g., frequency, occasion, average amount of each purchase, types of goods they often buy), preferences (e.g., style, color, promotional methods) and so forth. The results showed that the customers fell into three age groups and those in the same age group had similar purchasing patterns. Based on the findings, the store could design series of products and promotional events catering to each group's preferences. As a result, sales and customer satisfaction improved.

This example shows that for descriptive research to be effective, the researchers must be fully aware of exactly what information they need to gather. This body of knowledge can be obtained by referring to published research results or through exploratory research.

3. Causal research

Causal research tries to find out the cause-and-effect relationship between two factors. It tells whether (and how likely) the occurrence of A can cause B to happen. Causal research is valuable because it enables people to take a good control of the future. For example, if a manager is certain that the implementation of a new incentive policy has caused the sharp decline in sales, he or she can revise the policy or abandon it in