

ICB Serial Textbooks :
International Education Programmes

Academic Writing in English

■ Edited by Fanxi Meng

China Agricultural University Press

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

英语论文写作/孟繁锡主编. —北京:中国农业大学出版社,2009.5
ISBN 978-7-81117-639-1

I. 英… II. 孟… III. 英语-论文-写作-高等学校-教材 IV. H315

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2009)第 011116 号

书 名 Academic Writing in English

作 者 Edited by Fanxi Meng

策划编辑 童 云

责任编辑 李丽君

封面设计 郑 川

责任校对 王晓凤 陈 莹

出版发行 中国农业大学出版社

社 址 北京市海淀区圆明园西路 2 号

邮政编码 100193

电 话 发行部 010-62731190,2620

读者服务部 010-62732336

编辑部 010-62732617,2618

出 版 部 010-62733440

网 址 <http://www.cau.edu.cn/caup>

e-mail cbsszs @ cau.edu.cn

经 销 新华书店

印 刷 北京时代华都印刷有限公司

版 次 2009 年 5 月第 1 版 2009 年 5 月第 1 次印刷

规 格 787×1 092 16 开本 11.5 印张 160 千字

印 数 1~1 500

定 价 22.00 元

图书如有质量问题本社发行部负责调换

Editorial Committee

Director: Fanxi Meng

Members: Qunying Jiao

Tingxi Ma

Tingwu Xu

Weizhe Feng

Editing Board

Editor: Fanxi Meng

Deputy Editor: Tingwu Xu

Weizhe Feng

Jacob Kaltenbach

Preface

This textbook is specially prepared for programs, which are English based teaching. The textbook is a result of collaboration of international faculty of International College at Beijing(ICB),China Agricultural University. As a pioneer and leading international education institution in China, our programs have successfully graduated more than 2 000 undergraduates. The ICB students are cultivated in modern subject knowledge, international vision, and capability of creativity.

As a key intellectual skill, academic writing is important for all students in higher education. Academic writing addresses a topic based article to anyone who is seeking factually-based, objectively-presented information on this particular topic. Academic writing is a process. It starts from analyzing and understanding the topic. It then goes on to doing the literature review and research. The next stage is planning and writing various drafts. In the final stage, it is followed by proof-reading and editing. All this should lead to a well presented final text in a specific format.

Hope this textbook will be beneficial for all students and readers who want to improve their academic writing.

Prof. Fanxi Meng

Introduction

As you prepare to write long term papers, research papers, and dissertations-possibly as part of a course of study abroad in an English-speaking country-you may feel afraid, daunted, confused or disoriented. These feelings are natural, and they are shared by many of your native-speaker counterparts. Writing does not need to be intimidating. One goal of this textbook is to demystify the process of research writing. Your instructor's advice and assistance should also help. Over the coming weeks and months you have an opportunity to deepen your skills of research, critical thinking, planning, outlining, note taking, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading. We hope you will also learn to use your curiosity and natural interests to guide your writing.

In English-speaking universities, the research paper is often taught in distinct course and usually to students in the second semester. Some of you might find the course material at first tedious and uninteresting, but you should remind themselves main purpose. As you continue attending university and enroll in a variety of courses in different fields, your instructors and professors will begin to require lengthy term papers.

Such research papers are designed and presented in a set manner; the mechanics and conventions for writing and presenting a research paper have been well established over the years, and there is a general academic agreement to abide by these rules. It is best is to accept these academic for-

mulations as rapidly as possible, until writing a research paper no longer feels like an arduous chore. Once you know the rules, conventions and methods you may even sense a new opening for creative experimentation and innovation. A research paper is a structured, logical, well-sourced and argued, persuasive investigation, and within these terms many things are possible.

The best first step is to be sure that you have a genuine interest in your chosen topic. Your readers will only be persuaded if they sense your intense interest and focus, even passion. You can also seek to maximize your enjoyment of the research process. As you accumulate information about your subject and gradually increase your knowledge, you may develop a parallel interest in the writing process itself. Take full advantage of this. Keep a dictionary and thesaurus handy; these will help you enhance your vocabulary quickly and efficiently, as new words emerge from and reinforce your subject.

At the close of each lesson, you will be invited to reflect on your learning and writing process in the form of a journal entry. Your instructor will decide if these journals should be shared or remain private. Your journal provides a chance to be introspective and to think about your own improvement. It will also form a record of your process. You may find it very rewarding to look back at previous entries, to see how your skills have improved or to remind yourself of small realizations and interesting ideas you encounter along the road to your research paper. Each lesson will provide a suggested journal topic. You can use this as a starting point but feel free to go beyond this topic. Your journal is a chance to write what you like.

Contents

1 Your Goal : The Research Paper	1
What is a Research Paper?	1
Questions for Classroom Discussion	4
Writing Assignment; Setting Out	4
Your Journal	5
2 Knowing Your Audience and Writing Clearly	6
2.1 Register, Formal and Informal Writing	6
2.2 Writing Clearly, Simply and Directly	9
Reading; George Orwell on the English Language	12
Classroom Exercise; Register and Good Writing	13
Writing Assignment; Revising Sentences	15
Your Journal	15
3 Review; Common Errors of Grammar, Usage and Punctuation	16
3.1 The Basics	16
3.2 Remedial Grammar Review	17
3.3 Reviewing Grammar and Usage; Common Questions and Errors	22
3.4 Commonly Confused Words	29
Classroom Exercise; Grammar Review	32
Writing Assignment	32
Your Journal	33

4 Evidence and Logic; Critical Thinking for Writers	34
4.1 Evidence and Analysis	35
4.2 Logical Fallacies to Avoid	41
Questions for Classroom Discussion; Evidence and Analysis	46
Writing Assignment; Logical Fallacies	47
Your Journal	47
 5 Introduction to Research; Online and Library Resources	48
5.1 Internet Research	48
5.2 Research Exercise; Library Research	55
Questions for Classroom Discussion	57
Writing Assignment; Research Exercise	58
Internet Assignment	58
Your Journal	59
 6 What Should You Write About?	60
6.1 Choosing a Topic	60
6.2 Posing a Research Question	61
6.3 Discovering the Thesis	62
Classroom Exercise; Thesis Statements	64
Questions for Classroom Discussion	64
Writing Assignment; Potential Paper Topics	65
Your Journal	65
 7 Using and Acknowledging Sources	67
7.1 Primary Sources	67
7.2 Secondary Sources	68
7.3 Tertiary Sources	68
7.4 Citation	69
7.5 APA Citation Guidelines and Examples	72

Classroom Exercises; Citations	85
Writing Assignment; Reporting Initial Research	85
Your Journal	86
8 Identifying and Avoiding Plagiarism	88
8.1 What is Plagiarism?	88
8.2 Citing to Avoid Plagiarism	90
Quiz	93
Questions for Classroom Discussion	97
Writing Assignment; Why Plagiarize?	97
Your Journal	98
9 Planning Your Research and Preparing Your Manuscript	99
Manuscript Style	99
Questions for Classroom Discussion	100
Writing Assignment; Your Research Plan	101
Your Journal	102
10 Prewriting: Focusing and Expanding Your Topic	103
10.1 Prewriting	103
10.2 Introduction to Peer Review	105
Classroom Exercise; Initial Peer Review	108
Writing Assignment; Prewriting	108
Your Journal	109
11 Writing the First Draft	110
What is a First Draft?	110
Option One; Traditional Essay Format	112
Option Two; Drafting Using an Outline	114
Option Three; Outlines with Deadlines	117

Classroom Discussion; Drafting Method	119
Writing Assignment; The First Draft	119
Your Journal	120
12 Revision and Peer Review, Part I	121
12.1 Revising, Editing and Proofreading	121
12.2 Post-Draft Outlining	123
12.3 Peer Review and Draft Workshops	127
Questions for Classroom Discussion	133
Classroom Exercise; Post-Draft Outlining (The Full-Paper Level) ...	134
Writing Assignment; Post-Draft Outlining (The Paragraph Level) ...	134
Classroom Exercise and Writing Assignment; First-Draft Workshop	134
Your Journal	135
13 Writing the Second Draft	137
13.1 Research and Structure	137
13.2 Writing Introductions	140
13.3 Writing Conclusions	143
Classroom Exercises; Critics and Signposts	146
Writing Assignment A; Introductions	146
Writing Assignment B; The Second Draft	147
Your Journal	148
14 Revision and Peer Review, Part II	149
14.1 Revision; From Second to Final Draft	149
14.2 The Paramedic Method of Revision	152
Classroom Exercise; Applying the Paramedic Method	157
Writing Assignment; Applying the Paramedic Method	158
Classroom Exercise and Writing Assignment; Second-Draft Workshop ...	158
Your Journal	159

15 Proofreading and the Final Draft	160
15.1 Punctuation Review	160
15.2 Proofreading for Style and Grammar	164
Classroom Exercise; Revision Suggestions	167
Classroom Discussion; Reflecting on the Drafting Process	167
Writing Assignment; The Final Draft	167
Your Journal	168

1 Your Goal : The Research Paper

What is a Research Paper?

Your goal in this course is to produce a research paper of at least ten pages on a topic of your own choice, which you will develop through your own research, critical thinking, revision and editing. We won't choose topics until Lesson Six, but you should already be thinking about topics that interest you-perhaps issues related to major subject (field of study), your hobbies or personal interests. You should also be thinking about potential sources: books, articles from academic journals, magazines and newspapers, material from the Internet, audio or visual material or even experts you could interview.

You may be asking, "What is research paper?" And some of you may wonder why you should learn to write one at all.

A research paper is not a compilation of all the material you discover related to your topic. It is not the record of only a single perspective on your topic. It is not a story from your experience (although placed in context, such stories may prove useful as examples in your paper). It is not a collection of material simply edited to back up your ideas.

A successful research paper seeks to persuade us of a position on your topic, but does so through careful synthesis of research, information, diverse ideas, well-documented, credible sources and logical argument. A success-

ful research paper acknowledges opposing positions and still seeks to show us why you believe your thesis to be correct. A successful research paper also informs us on the broad context of the topic and the narrow terms of debate.

Good research paper topics are highly focused. “Modern advertising,” for example, is much too broad a topic. “The advertising market in China” more focused but still too unfocused to produce a successful research paper. “Evidence that the market for television advertising in China will continue to grow” is suitably focused, clear, persuasive and researchable.

Good research paper topics are researchable. Very new subjects—for example, if you were to choose to write about a corporate takeover in the weeks immediately following the transaction—are unlikely to generate much credible research material. You should choose a topic about which others have already written, a topic that is already a matter for public discourse.

Good research topics are persuasive but not overly controversial. You should choose a topic on which various opinions exist, but overly controversial topics may force you to wade through material full of hyperbole, bias and personal attacks. This will prove too difficult in a ten-page paper with a limited timeframe. You should be especially wary of topics on which various “conspiracy theories” exist, as it will be difficult to establish the credibility of many sources.

Possible topics are as varied as the students who will choose them. Be sure to select a topic that interests you, as you will be devoting weeks of your time and need to remain committed. In Lesson Six, we’ll work on honing your topic into a thesis statement.

Your final paper should make clear reference to at-least five sources in the text itself. You should include any sources you consult (even if you do not use them in the text) on your bibliography page. Future lessons will provide more information on this process. Your instructor will also give you specific guidance, but you should be sure to use some “traditional” sources- books and articles- in addition to material accessed via the Internet. For some of you the Internet may provide your only access to English-language materials; if this is the case try to use materials that can also be found elsewhere in print form (articles from periodicals that also appear in print, electronic books and article from online databases). Lesson Five includes tips on looking for credible, useful sources.

It is very important that your research paper is your own original work. It is acceptable (even desirable) to seek the opinions, advice and editing of friends, colleagues and teachers, but you should be the author. You are encouraged (even required) to use material from sources found in the course of your research but all quotations, paraphrases and summaries of such sources should be appropriately marked and cited. Future lessons will help you do this correctly. In some circumstances and some universities, it is acceptable to rewrite and resubmit work from previous classes, but if you do this you must have your instructor’s permission and your revision must be substantive and transformational. Writing a research paper means learning, improving, developing your skill- and that normally requires new original work.

These are the important element of research paper writing: choosing a topic, researching, note taking, critical thinking, outlining and preparation, drafting, revision, redrafting, editing and proofreading. Drafting and redrafting are crucial to this process. Over the following lessons you will become comfortable with the *drafting process* and learn to

help it improve your work. Each subsequent draft should be a transformational advance on the last. Revision between drafts is essential.

Questions for Classroom Discussion

1. How does a research paper differ from a personal story or a compilation of material on a topic?
2. Why is it not a good idea to choose a topic for your research paper that is too controversial?
3. Discuss the importance of “original work”?
4. What are the important elements of writing a research paper? Talk about the different stages involved in its preparation. What do you think is the most difficult stage?
5. What do you think that you might be writing about? Choose a “tentative” topic and discuss its importance to you.

Writing Assignment

Setting Out

Write a brief essay (less than 400 words) reporting on your state of readiness as the term begins. Explain your understanding of the importance of “original work” in a research paper. Make note of any topics you might choose for research paper. Why do you think these may be good topics to write about?

Also write about what you look forward to in the writing process, and any difficulties you think you might confront while writing your paper.

Your Journal

As you begin this class , how do you rate your own writing skills? What makes you a good writer or a poor writer? What do you find frustrating about writing? What brings you pleasure as a writer? Do you already have your own writing process? How do you usually start writing? What do already know about writing , and what do you hope to learn?

2 *Knowing Your Audience and Writing Clearly*

2.1 Register, Formal and Informal Writing

At different times and in different situations you will want to use more, or less, formal English. The degree of formality you choose is called *register*; choosing the appropriate register is not necessarily synonymous with speaking or writing “correctly”. Formal English may be ungrammatical, and informal English perfectly grammatical.

You may speak in a certain manner with your family, in another with your friends, in a third with your colleagues, teachers or supervisors. You will certainly use various different registers when you draft homework assignments, legal documents, job application letters or e-mail messages. Register is not simply a question of the complexity of vocabulary, but also syntax (or sentence structure) and usage.

When you choose a formal register, you are choosing to abide by stricter linguistic conventions. This is not a “more correct” or higher language; it is simply better suited to the task at hand.

For example, in the more formal registers you would normally avoid contractions; so you would write, “Is it not?” On the other hand contractions loosen up the language and bring it closer to its spoken form, and if you expect to read a document aloud in a relatively formal setting, you may choose to use contractions more liberally; and so you would write, “Isn’t