

英语专业写作教程系列

高级英文写作教程： 实用写作

*Write to Communicate:
Practical Writing*

冯幼民 编著

F. A. Kretschmer, Ph.D. 审订



北京大学出版社

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内 容 提 要

本书根据国家英语专业教学大纲要求,依据现代写作理论,系统阐述了英语作文的独特结构与思想表达方式,训练学生使用适当语言撰写各类实用性交际文章,如正式信件、自我介绍、申请书、演说词等等,集中帮助中国学生处理英文写作中的常见问题,并运用教学法循序渐进地指导学生完成 1500—3000 单词的作文。

编者的话

编写宗旨

在我国正式成为世界贸易组织成员、全面准备 2008 年奥运会、日益融入全球化进程的今天,英语书面交际能力在对外交流中占据着越来越重要的地位。这种重要性表现在对书面交际的需求日益增加、对写作能力的要求日益提高两个方面。高层次的书面交流,不仅要求使用语法正确、句子通顺、结构完整的英语表达思想,更重要的是要从中西文化差异、思维方式差异和表达习惯差异的角度出发,学会针对不同对象和目标,运用不同的语言达到交际和沟通的目的。

2000 年 4 月颁布的《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》对本科三年级(六级)、四年级(八级)的英语写作能力提出了明确而量化的要求,还对毕业论文提出了 3000—5000 个英语单词的长度要求。与此同时,近年英语专业八级统测的作文题目越来越向测试学生使用英语表达创造性思维的方向发展。

全球化发展大环境的需求和教学大纲对英语写作提出的新要求,从两个不同侧面为 21 世纪高级英语写作教学指明了方向。我们认为,英语专业高级写作教学的基本任务和目标,应该是帮助学生了解中西方思维、表达方式的差异,学会使用西方人更习惯因而更容易接受的方式表达思想,成功而有创造性地进行书面交流。这套教材,就是在这样的方针指导下编写完成的。

结构和内容

本写作教程系列中的《实用写作》和《论文写作》两个分册里,每册八个单元,分别供英语专业高年级各一个学期(每周二学时)使用,也可供非英语专业的研究生学习使用。书后配有完备的教师手册。

每册书的开篇是写给学生的全方位指导性介绍“To the Students”。它首先对写作概念进行了定义,明确指出写作的主要目的是交流,而不是应试。这是为了在课程的起点就让学生明确课程的总体要求,改变他们在长期应试教育模式下形成的思维定式;并使他们懂得,写作需要根据不同的读者对象、交流目的使用适当层次的语言和适当类型的文种。其次,“To the Students”详细介绍了写作的过程和步骤。为了使文章能够顺利达到交流目的,必须在写作过程的各个步骤上认真仔细,一丝不苟,从而改变学生在应试教育模式下形成的一挥而就,不做深入思考,不做任何修改的陋习。第三,“To the Students”介绍了英语书面表达的两个明显特点:开篇直奔主题、续篇紧扣主题步步展开的特点;使用各类平行结构,特别是“三组平行”结构增强文章力度的特点。这是英语表达与汉语表达重大区别的所在。掌握了这两条规律,有利于学生写出符合英语思维和行文特点的文章。第四,“To the Students”明确了本教材的主要任务:使用正式和准正式文体撰写说明性、论述性文章,阐述思维和研究发现,而不探讨文学创作的方法。同时指出,学生首先需要对自己的写作能力有信心,辅之以不断的训练和练习,才能取得进步。“To the Students”最后介绍了教材的框架结构。

本写作教程里的每个单元由四部分组成,以任务教学法的方式分别训练学生的语言技能、实用交际文种、学术论文写作基本方法等,并紧扣《教学大纲》对六级、八级的写作要求,分不同步骤训练学生撰写各种正式文种和 1500—3000 英语单词的小论文,提高学生使用英语的能力,为写好毕业论文奠定坚实的基础。

《实用写作》分册每单元四部分的内容安排如下。

第一部分介绍一些实用文种。这些文种包括各种正式信件,如询问信、申请信、自我介绍、推荐信、感谢信等。每一文种均提供若干不同类型的样本,通过分析它们的框架结构、表达方式和语言

特点,再通过实际练习,帮助学生掌握写作方法。第二部分针对英语的特点和中国学生写作中的常见错误进行技能训练。主要有词汇的选择、平行结构的运用、主动被动的选择、多种句型的使用等。这部分通过论述和练习,帮助学生掌握英语写作的基础能力,并逐渐掌握地道的英语表达方式,而不是将汉语句子生硬地翻译成英语,达到避免中式英语的目的。第三部分按八个不同步骤讨论写作过程,从选题、寻找资料、确定主题、撰写初稿、反复修改、最后定稿等不同角度,系统地训练学生撰写长作文的能力,并培养学生较好的写作习惯。第四部分则与第三部分紧密配合,引导学生通过不同步骤撰写长度为 1500—3000 英语单词的小论文。

教材的使用

编者希望通过每单元四个部分的相互作用,从一个新的角度和高度训练学生的高级写作能力,并把学生写作的注意力从过级考试转移到实际交流上来。同时,教材总结了传统的“写作成果教学法”的利与弊,借鉴了两种新的写作教学法:“写作过程教学法”和“写作体裁教学法”的长处,根据不同的任务和情况,灵活有机地分别或合成使用三种教学方式指导实际课堂教学。

另外,编者建议,使用本教材应该注意两个重点。一是教材内容本身,特别要注重培养学生掌握符合英语习惯的篇章结构和表达方式;二是对学生作文的课堂讲评。教材中设计了许多有针对性的写作练习。学生完成这些练习后,建议教师从篇章结构、逻辑思维、语言连贯、选词得当等方面进行课堂讲评,让学生了解怎样从宏观和微观两方面体现英语表达的习惯,提高书面交际的能力与水平。

鸣谢

本书最初形成于 1998 年 8 月—1999 年 2 月。当时我在英国萨里大学语言研究中心研修高级英语写作理论与教学实践。中心

主任 Glenn Fulcher 博士、我的导师 Smiljka Gee 女士和中心的高级英语教师 Isobel Rainey 女士等为本书的理论指导、结构安排、内容选择提出了大量宝贵的建议,使编者能够在短短的进修过程中完成初稿,并于 1999 年 9 月在国际关系学院英语系本科三年级投入使用。在此,谨对他们表示衷心的感谢。可以说,没有他们的帮助,就没有这本书。

在 1999 年 9 月到 2001 年 7 月期间,该教材在国际关系学院英语系 1997、1998 两个年级的学生中使用。由于师生双方的共同努力,取得了明显的教学效果,同时也获得了大量的经验教训。所以在此特别感谢这两个年级所有学生的学习热情、钻研精神和坦率批评。他们提出的许多意见与建议已经成为新教材的重要组成部分。他们的优秀习作和典型错误,也大大丰富了本书的内容。

特别要郑重感谢的是本教材主审 Frank A. Kretschmer 博士。他不仅通读了全部书稿,从结构、文字、内容上提出了难以胜数的修改意见,更为教材提供了大量精彩而实用的例子和评论。

最后也要感谢国内外同行前辈在英语写作教学领域作出的不懈努力,特别是国内同行近年在写作领域作出的种种贡献。教材最后列出的书目只是编者使用的参考书的一部分。本书选用了这些参考书中的一些内容,在这里一并表示感谢。

由于更多地从课堂教学实用性的角度考虑,本书对许多问题只是点到为止,没有深入展开。恳请同行和专家不吝金言,以期本书的进一步完善。

国际关系学院

冯幼民

2001 年 10 月 于坡上村

Contents

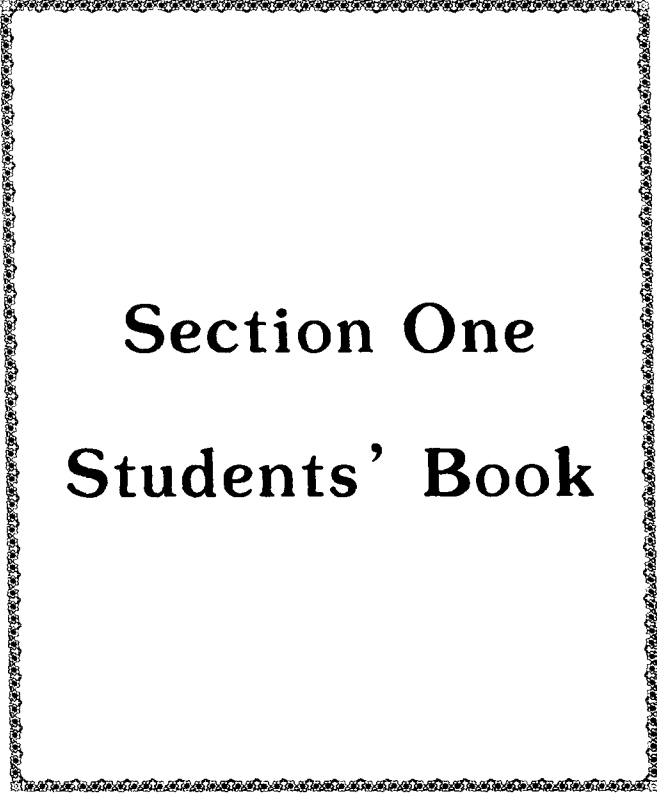
Section One Students' Book

To the Students	3
Unit 1	21
Part 1 Letter Layout	21
Part 2 Choosing the Right Words (1)	29
Part 3 Writing Process 1: Choosing a Topic	36
Part 4 Short Formal Essay: Stage 1	38
Unit 2	39
Part 1 Enquiry	39
Part 2 Choosing the Right Words (2)	44
Part 3 Writing Process 2: Generating Ideas	49
Part 4 Short Formal Essay: Stage 2	50
Unit 3	51
Part 1 Presentation and Speech	51
Part 2 Consistency in Tense, and Person and Number	62
Part 3 Writing Process 3: Planning and Outlining	66
Part 4 Short Formal Essay: Stage 3	72
Unit 4	74
Part 1 Letter of Application	74

Part 2	Parallelism and Sets of Three	83
Part 3	Writing Process 4: Writing a Topic Sentence	92
Part 4	Short Formal Essay: Stage 4	97
Unit 5		98
Part 1	Curriculum Vitae (CV)	98
Part 2	Correcting Run-together Sentences	106
Part 3	Writing Process 5: First Draft— from Paragraph to Essay	111
Part 4	Short Formal Essay: Stage 5	119
Unit 6		120
Part 1	Personal Statement (PS)	120
Part 2	Active or Passive Voice	129
Part 3	Writing Process 6: Revision and Editing	134
Part 4	Short Formal Essay: Stage 6	141
Unit 7		142
Part 1	Recommendation	142
Part 2	Using a Variety of Sentence Types	150
Part 3	Writing Process 7: Proofreading	160
Part 4	Short Formal Essay: Stage 7	163
Unit 8		164
Part 1	Thank-you Letters, Complaints and Apologies	164
Part 2	Consistency in Tone	174
Part 3	Writing Process 8: End-of-Course Review and Evaluation	178
Part 4	Short Formal Essay: Stage 8	180

Section Two Teachers' Book

Unit 1	183
Unit 2	189
Unit 3	194
Unit 4	201
Unit 5	208
Unit 6	219
Unit 7	230
Unit 8	239
Works Cited	246

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Section One
Students' Book

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To the Students

The following pages explain the purpose of this course book in terms of writing, the theory behind it, and the concrete steps you may take to fulfil the goals and targets set for the mastery of a number of advanced writing skills.

Definition of Writing

Can you recall the first time you ever held a pen in hand to draw and scribble as a child? Can you recall the first time you were taught to write your own name and Arabic numerals? Can you remember how much effort you had to exert just to hold the pen properly in hand? Most of you would probably say that these events happened when you were around 2 or 3 years of age, well before you started school. Immature as this kind of drawing and scribbling may seem now, however, it was the beginning of the act of writing from which all subsequent writing skills grew.

As soon as you entered primary school, where many exercises and much homework come in a written form, writing became more important. We write in order to remember new characters, to train and exercise handwriting, and to learn grammatical structures. But if we think more carefully, we find that the first few years of writ-

ing experience are confined to the mechanism of writing, more for the purpose of mastering the writing system of the Chinese language than generating meaningful sentences or paragraphs.

We repeat the same process of mechanical writing when we start to learn English, as English has a different writing system. That is why we copied English alphabet letters, words, and sentences when we started to learn English.

However, writing has another and more important aspect. We all know that languages exist for one single reason—communication—which, we believe, should also be the ultimate purpose of all language learning and teaching. We should always keep in mind that all the reading, speaking, listening and writing we do in order to master English has the final purpose of communicating with other English users. As students, you might have found this aspect of language learning remote, because you work to pass one examination after another. But I hope that deep in your heart, you do not lose sight of the ultimate goal: to communicate successfully in English. This is also the reason I have decided to call this text book *Write to Communicate*.

Further examination of the concept of communication tells us that communication exists in two forms: oral and written. The purpose of this course book is to teach you how to communicate more fluently and successfully in the written form. We shall always remember that everything we do in this course will contribute to a proficiency of communication in English on paper.

In the same vein, we know that communication has two directions: give and take. We take in information when we read and listen—passive forms of communication that require the ability to

recognise and understand written and oral messages from different sources. We give out information, on the other hand, when we speak and write—active forms of communication that require the ability to create grammatical, logical, and meaningful sentences or paragraphs so that our audience can understand.

Looking more closely at this active form of communication, we then realize that speaking and writing are different in many ways. When we speak, we usually speak directly to an audience. Whether it is to one person or to a group of persons, whether it is face to face or over the telephone, communication is mostly instantaneous give and take. If for any reason the hearers fail to understand the message, they will interrupt and ask questions. We as speakers then explain and clarify on the spot anything that is unclear. We also in speaking before an audience help the communication with gestures, different tones of voice, and facial expressions, whereas in the case of written communication, all writing is completed before any real communication happens. When communication does take place, we are usually not there to explain or clarify. Compared with a spoken message, a written message has to be clearer, more accurate, and easier to understand.

The audience is another factor that makes writing generally more demanding than speaking. When we speak, we know who the audience is at least in broad terms, and we choose an appropriate form of language to communicate our information accordingly. For example, when we talk to a child, we try to speak slowly, using simple words and sentences; when we talk with our friends, we use an everyday conversational style which is casual and in most cases informal; and when we converse with people more senior in age or po-

sition, we employ a more formal and respectful style of language. On the other hand, when we write, we do not always know even in broad terms who our readers are, when they are going to read our communication and how they may react. Indeed, writing tends to be less difficult when we know the reader personally, the time the reading activity is likely to happen, and how they may react. When we write to our family, for example, we can readily choose the appropriate form of language, in addition to how much explanation or background is needed for them to understand the message. But we as writers do not always have this information. If, for instance, we write an article for a newspaper or journal about our opinion or findings in our research, we usually neither know the readers personally nor the time the reading activity will take place. Usually both the potential readers and the writers have much less shared knowledge with the result that we as writers may have difficulty assuming how much explanation is necessary for the readers. If the readers do not understand, the communication fails: our efforts are wasted.

Therefore, in order to make our written communication a success, we need to think more carefully before as well as during the process of writing. We need to determine first of all the purpose of our written communication. What do we want to communicate? Why are we writing and how? With a clear purpose in mind, we will then try our best to envisage our potential readers. What kind of readers do we expect? What is their age? What is their educational background? How much would they generally know about our chosen topic? We also need to decide what form of language will best serve our purpose with regard to our topic and our readers. We can only be certain of the success of communication if we always keep in