

上海市高校教育高地建设项目



英语写作教学的原则与策略

肖福寿 著

English Composition Pedagogy:
Principles and Strategies

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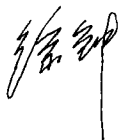
序

肖福寿教授是我敬重的一位学者,他要我为他的专著《英语写作教学的原则与策略》写篇序言,我自当从命。我是从2001年有幸拜读他的南京大学博士论文开始认识他的。文中精辟的学术见解、地道的英语行文给我留下了深刻的印象。时隔数年,又读到他的新著,令我十分钦敬。他的学术成就自然归于个人的不断求索与努力,但与其就读的几所著名大学或许也不无关系。

《英语写作教学的原则与策略》是肖教授的一部巨著、力作,也是他近几年来学术研究的一个阶段性的总结。从写作的本质到ESL写作理论,到英语写作的原则与策略,再到英语写作的教学方法,每章每节无不闪烁着他对研究课题的真知灼见。毋庸置疑,该书是解放以来国内有关英语写作研究的最具权威、最有深度和广度、最具理论性与实践性相结合的一部论著,其出版实在是英语学界可庆可喜之事。

肖教授的学术成就,与其长期耕耘于英语写作的教学与研究密切相关。翻译界曾经有一句话:Those who can, translate; those who can't, teach translation; those who can't teach translation, teach translation theory. 我不知现在是否还有这种情况,也不敢以此类比英语写作教学。但无论怎么说,肖教授的研究集英语写作理论、技巧与实践于一体,他始终扎根于英语写作教学与研究的第一线,是一位深受学生欢迎和爱戴的老师。无怪乎,他所指导的研究生的学位论文无一例外地也都研究英语写作。

我无意将肖教授与其他教授相对照,但我要强调的是,他是一位真正的学者,一位名副其实的英语教授。



2007年6月

Preface

Too few will gainsay the fact that writing is an art and that “he who has an art has everywhere a part,” but too many will acknowledge that the art of writing is beyond their reach and that writing is their Achilles’ heel in their academic or professional career. Is writing really that unattainable and formidable? Things might seem to be going by contraries. With adequate practice plus some knowledge of writing principles and strategies, any novice writer may turn into a sophisticated one.

This book, inspired by my colleagues and students, has grown over many years of teaching English composition in Shanghai University. It aims to unravel the underlying mechanisms of English writing and its teaching by exploring the principles and strategies regarding English writing and the teaching of ESL composition in the context of current theoretical and pedagogical perspectives on English as a second language (ESL) writing and writers. It should appeal to four groups of audience: (1) undergraduate students who feel an urge to improve their English writing; (2) graduate students who are keen on English composition and research and who would like to be teachers of English composition; (3) in-service ESL instructors currently engaged in teaching composition to ESL students, and (4) researchers involved in describing L2 writing and/or investigating ESL composition and its pedagogy.

To address the needs of the target audiences, this book has gone to great lengths to explore: (1) the nature of writing, ESL writing, and composition teaching; (2) the linguistic, rhetorical, and mechanical principles of English writing; (3) the strategies for invention, planning and organizing, drafting, revising, and editing and proofreading in the writing process; (4) the strategies for syllabus design, lesson planning, text selection, task construction, oral and written response to student writing, and writing assessment; (5) overviews of research related to ESL writing;

and (6) numerous opportunities to reflect on and develop the teaching skills needed for effective ESL composition instruction. Questions for Reflection at the beginning of each chapter invite readers to consider their own prior experiences as students and writers and to anticipate the knowledge to be presented in the chapter, whereas Questions for Review at the end of each chapter ask readers to examine and evaluate the theoretical information and practical suggestions provided in the chapter. To help readers gain more new insights into writing, the author has compiled a list of apt quotations about writing in Appendix 1. In Appendix 2, readers will have the opportunity to apply what they have learnt from this book to the analysis of authentic student writing so that theory can be organically integrated with practice. In Appendix 3, you readers will read some words of wisdom which have been crafted out of the author's life experiences. These sentences demonstrate to you how words can be used to work miracles and hopefully your life will change because of them. Therefore, the book is unique in furnishing readers with a synthesis of theory and practice in a way that they can understand and see the relevance of the material to their own situation.

The book as a whole moves from notions of writing and ESL writing to writing principles and then to strategies of English writing and ESL composition instruction. Chapter 1 begins with a definition of writing, providing readers with a good knowledge of the nature of writing. Chapter 2 highlights the teaching of writing, focusing on the requisite qualities of the writing teacher. Chapter 3 deals with the importance of theory as it shapes pedagogical practices, providing an overview of the history of L1 and L2 composition theory and teaching as well as an in-depth discussion of the issues and variables unique to L2 writers and ESL composition instruction. Chapters 4 through 6 deal with the linguistic, rhetorical, and mechanical principles of English composition. Chapters 7 through 11 deal with the strategies related to the composing process, including invention strategies, planning and organizing strategies, drafting strategies, revising strategies, and editing and proofreading strategies. Chapters 12 through 15 deal with (1) fundamental issues related to approaching any ESL writing class, such as syllabus design, textbook and materials selection; and (2) specific topics pertaining to L2 composition instruction, such as teacher response to student writing, peer response, and models of writing assessment.

Without the assistance of many individuals, the completion of this book would be simply out of the question. First, I would like to express my sincere thanks to my MA students who assisted in the preparation of earlier versions of the text: Hanrong Feng, Hui Li, Jue Liu, Sufang Wu, Weimin Chen, and Yingying Ni.

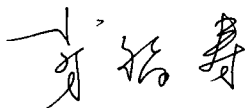
Equally instrumental in the development of this book is my beloved partner Yu Zheng who helped me collect materials for this book and copy-edit it during her companionship with me at the University of Iowa where I was a visiting scholar between 2005 and 2006.

I would also like to acknowledge Shanghai University that provided me with a grant which entitled me to a one-year sabbatical leave at the University of Iowa so that I could concentrate on writing and rewriting various versions of this book. I am equally grateful to the College of Foreign Languages, Shanghai University for funding the publication of this book.

Obviously a book of this kind must have drawn on a multitude of sources. I owe a considerable debt to all the sources mentioned and to my students who enthusiastically took my course and generously offered me their writing samples used throughout the book. While feeling deeply apologetic for being unable to trace and acknowledge the sources of some of the materials used here, I would now like to avail myself of the opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to those authors whose work has benefited me in the writing of this book but whose names remain unknown. To all these folks, I remain truly indebted.

Let it be understood that the field of English composition teems with numerous challenges and rewards. While conveying the author's enthusiasm for this engaging field of intellectual inquiry and professional practice, this book is expected to provide its readers with useful insights and practical ideas.

Albert Shaw, Ph.D.



Professor of English
Shanghai University

Contents

序	i
Preface	iii
List of Figures and Tables	xix

Part One Towards a Better Understanding of Writing

Chapter 1	What Is Writing?	3
1.1	Introduction	3
1.2	Definitions of writing	4
1.3	Writing versus composition	6
1.4	Writing versus speech	9
1.4.1	Linguistic differences	9
1.4.2	Psychological differences	10
1.4.3	Cognitive differences	11
1.5	Towards a working definition of writing	12
1.5.1	Writing is an art	13
1.5.2	Writing is an active process	16
1.5.3	Writing is a creative process	18
1.5.4	Writing is a recursive process	22
1.5.5	Writing is a process of communication	23
1.5.6	Writing involves a conventional graphic system	25
1.5.7	Writing is context-based and usually reader-oriented	26
1.5.8	Writing involves grammar	27
1.5.9	Writing involves rhetoric	28
1.6	Writing in the eyes of professionals	29

1.6.1	Writing is largely a matter of how we think and feel	29
1.6.2	Writing as an art can be acquired only by practice	32
1.6.3	Writing is a form of magic	34
1.6.4	Writing requires vocabulary, empathy, and style	35
1.6.5	Good writing comes from much reading	38
1.6.6	Writing is a game of words	38
1.6.7	Writing demands correctness, clarity, and sincerity	39
1.7	Summary	41
	Questions for Review	42
Chapter 2	Can Writing Be Taught?	43
2.1	Introduction	43
2.2	Notions surrounding the teaching of writing	44
2.3	Teacher beliefs about writing	48
2.3.1	Students learn to write only by writing	48
2.3.2	Writing is a process	48
2.3.3	Writing is a tool for thinking	49
2.3.4	Writing has a purpose	50
2.3.5	Conventions of finished texts count	50
2.3.6	Writing and reading are interrelated	51
2.3.7	Writing is closely related with speech	52
2.3.8	Writing involves complicated social relationships	52
2.3.9	Writing assessment involves complex judgments	53
2.4	Requisite knowledge of the writing teacher	53
2.4.1	Second language acquisition	54
2.4.2	Linguistics	57
2.4.3	Rhetoric	61
2.5	Requisite skills for the writing teacher	67
2.5.1	He listens to his students	68
2.5.2	He coaches his students	68
2.5.3	He learns to be a diagnostician	69
2.5.4	He writes with his students	69
2.5.5	He allots appropriate writing assignments	70
2.5.6	He provides immediate feedback	70

2.5.7	He encourages students to think clearly and express precisely	71
2.5.8	He keeps the writing objectives in mind	72
2.5.9	He fosters a positive attitude in students	73
2.5.10	He conducts writing conferences	73
2.5.11	He helps students develop the writer's twenty-one senses	74
2.5.12	He helps students understand the developmental stages of writing	75
2.6	Summary	76
	Questions for Review	77
Chapter 3	ESL Writing and ESL Writers	78
3.1	Introduction	78
3.2	The origins of ESL writing	79
3.3	The emergence of ESL writing as a subdiscipline	81
3.4	The differences between L1 and L2 writers	84
3.4.1	Differences in schemata	84
3.4.2	Differences in rhetorical patterns	86
3.5	Summary	88
	Questions for Review	89

Part Two The Principles of Writing

Chapter 4	Linguistic Principles of Writing	93
4.1	Introduction	93
4.2	Understanding grammatical sentences	94
4.2.1	Understanding the basic grammar of sentences	94
4.2.2	Recognizing the parts of speech	95
4.2.3	Recognizing the parts of a sentence	99
4.2.4	Understanding types of sentences in writing	103
4.3	Principles of maintaining subject-verb agreement	105
4.4	Principles of maintaining pronoun-antecedent agreement	107
4.5	Principles of maintaining clear pronoun reference	109
4.6	Principle of avoiding shifts in writing	110

4.7	Principles of placing modifiers appropriately	112
4.8	Principles of maintaining consistent and complete grammatical structures	114
4.9	Principles of avoiding sentence fragments	116
4.10	Principles of avoiding comma splices and fused sentences	118
4.11	Principles of using correct verb tenses	122
4.12	Principles of using correct articles, determiners, and quantifiers	124
4.13	Summary	126
	Questions for Review	126
Chapter 5	Rhetorical Principles of Writing	127
5.1	Introduction	127
5.2	The rhetorical triangle	128
5.3	The principle of accuracy	130
5.3.1	Using concrete and specific language	130
5.3.2	Using suitable, standard, and idiomatic language	132
5.3.3	Watching for word connotations	132
5.3.4	Quoting and paraphrasing accurately	133
5.4	The principle of audience awareness	133
5.5	The principle of emphasis	134
5.5.1	Using closing and opening positions for emphasis	134
5.5.2	Using climactic order	135
5.5.3	Using strong verbs for emphasis	135
5.5.4	Using voice for emphasis	137
5.6	The principle of variety	137
5.6.1	Variety in sentence length	138
5.6.2	Variety in sentence openings	139
5.6.3	Variety in sentence types	141
5.7	The principle of parallelism	142
5.7.1	Using parallel structures in a series	143
5.7.2	Using parallel structures with pairs	144
5.8	The principle of brevity	152
5.8.1	Eliminating unnecessary determiners and modifiers	153

5.8.2	Changing phrases into single words	153
5.8.3	Changing unnecessary <i>that-</i> , <i>who-</i> , and <i>which-</i> clauses into phrases	154
5.8.4	Avoiding overusing expletives at the beginning of sentences	154
5.8.5	Using active rather than passive verbs	154
5.8.6	Rewording unnecessary infinitive phrases	155
5.8.7	Replacing circumlocutions with direct expressions	155
5.8.8	Omitting words that explain the obvious or provide excessive detail	156
5.8.9	Omitting repetitive wording	156
5.8.10	Watching out for redundant categories	156
5.9	The principle of clarity	157
5.9.1	Going from old to new information	157
5.9.2	Using a graded order of ideas	158
5.9.3	Creating coherence in your paragraphs	158
5.10	The principle of relevancy	161
5.11	The principle of good logic	164
5.12	The principle of simplicity	166
5.13	The principle of thesis awareness	168
5.13.1	Focusing on the paragraph	168
5.13.2	Focusing on the thesis	169
5.13.3	Writing a thesis statement	169
5.14	The principle of thoroughness	171
5.14.1	Using narrative time order	171
5.14.2	Using narrative space order	172
5.14.3	Using cause and effect	173
5.14.4	Using classification	173
5.14.5	Using expository support order (general to specific)	175
5.14.6	Using expository climax order (specific to general)	176
5.14.7	Using definition	176
5.14.8	Using comparison and contrast	177
5.15	Summary	178

Questions for Review	179
Chapter 6 Mechanical Principles of Writing	180
6.1 Introduction	180
6.2 The principle of good punctuation	181
6.2.1 Using the right apostrophe	181
6.2.2 Using the right bracket	182
6.2.3 Using the right colon	183
6.2.4 Using the right comma	184
6.2.5 Using the right dash	188
6.2.6 Using the right ellipsis	189
6.2.7 Using the right exclamation mark	190
6.2.8 Using the right hyphen	190
6.2.9 Using the right italics	192
6.2.10 Using the right parentheses	193
6.2.11 Using the right period	193
6.2.12 Using the right question mark	194
6.2.13 Using the right quotation mark	196
6.2.14 Using the right semicolon	198
6.2.15 Using the right slash	199
6.3 The principle of good capitalization	199
6.3.1 Sentence style capitalization	200
6.3.2 Headline style capitalization	201
6.3.3 Capitalization of nouns	201
6.4 The principle of good paragraphing	204
6.5 The principle of correct abbreviations and nouns	206
6.6 The principle of correct notes and bibliographies	209
6.6.1 Notes and bibliographies for books	209
6.6.2 Notes and bibliographies for dissertations and articles	210
6.6.3 Notes and bibliographies for Internet documents	211
6.7 The principle of correct numbers and dates	211
6.7.1 Guidelines for spelling out numbers	211
6.7.2 Guidelines for spelling out dates	211
6.7.3 Guidelines for indicating inclusive numbers	211
6.8 Summary	211
Questions for Review	211

Part Three Strategies Related to the Writing Process

Chapter 7 Invention Strategies	217
7.1 Introduction	217
7.2 Exploratory & intuitive strategies	219
7.2.1 Brain pattern	219
7.2.2 Brainstorming	220
7.2.3 Branching	221
7.2.4 Free writing	222
7.2.5 Journal keeping	224
7.2.6 Listing	226
7.2.7 Mapping	227
7.2.8 Circle diagramming	227
7.2.9 Looping writing	228
7.2.10 Idea maps	228
7.2.11 Matrices	229
7.2.12 Pyramid pattern	229
7.2.13 Working outlines	230
7.3 Position taking & empirical strategies	231
7.3.1 Debate	231
7.3.2 Dialogue	232
7.3.3 Experiment/Observation	232
7.3.4 Interview	233
7.3.5 Role play	234
7.4 Information gathering, form giving & rational strategies	234
7.4.1 Classical invention	235
7.4.2 Cubing	236
7.4.3 Dramatistic	238
7.4.4 Journalistic	238
7.4.5 Questioning	239
7.5 Summary	240
Questions for Review	241

Chapter 8 Planning and Organizing Strategies	242
8.1 Introduction	242
8.2 Modelling the planning process	243
8.3 Guiding ideas	245
8.4 Outlining	246
8.5 The classical rhetorical arrangement	248
8.6 The commonplaces	249
8.7 The topic proposal	251
8.8 SPACE LAUNCH as a planning strategy	253
8.9 DARE to DEFEND as a planning strategy	255
8.10 Summary	256
Questions for Review	257
 Chapter 9 Drafting Strategies	 258
9.1 Introduction	258
9.2 Strategies for drafting an academic essay	259
9.2.1 Using appropriate titles	262
9.2.2 Using appropriate thesis statements	262
9.2.3 Using eye-catching introductions	264
9.2.4 Developing substantial body paragraphs	265
9.2.5 Drawing logical conclusions	268
9.2.6 Sample essay	268
9.3 Linear composing strategies	270
9.3.1 Deciding on the modes of development	270
9.3.2 Writing from a linear outline	271
9.3.3 Constructing arguments using the Toulmin Model	273
9.4 Non-linear composing strategies	278
9.4.1 Using maps for creative thinking	279
9.4.2 Composing from a map	279
9.4.3 Non-linear composing strategies for research papers	280
9.5 Planning and interactive strategies	285
9.6 Knowledge transforming and knowledge telling strategies	288
9.7 Summary	289
Questions for Review	290

Chapter 10	Revising Strategies	291
10.1	Introduction	291
10.2	Theoretical modeling of revising strategies	293
10.3	Major steps in revision	296
10.4	Strategies for global revision	299
10.5	Strategies for structural revision	303
10.6	Strategies for local revision	307
10.6.1	Revising language	307
10.6.2	Revising the page layout	310
10.7	Checklist-based revising strategies	310
10.7.1	SEARCH as a revising strategy	310
10.7.2	The C-D-O Strategy	312
10.8	Revision-record-based revision strategies	313
10.9	Summary	315
	Questions for Review	316
Chapter 11	Editing and Proofreading Strategies	317
11.1	Introduction	317
11.2	Defining editing	318
11.3	Self-editing strategies	321
11.4	Defining proofreading	325
11.5	The proofreading process	326
11.6	Strategies for successful proofreading	327
11.7	A review of common errors for proofreading	330
11.8	Summary	335
	Questions for Review	336

Part Four Pedagogical Strategies

Chapter 12	Strategies for Syllabus Design and Lesson Planning	339
12.1	Introduction	339
12.2	What is a syllabus?	340
12.2.1	Functions of a syllabus	340
12.2.2	Components of a syllabus	340
12.2.3	Conveying syllabus information to students	346

12.3	Strategies for designing a syllabus	346
12.3.1	Conducting a needs assessment	346
12.3.2	Formulating goals and objectives	350
12.3.3	Laying the groundwork for syllabus development	352
12.4	What is a lesson plan?	353
12.5	Strategies for lesson planning	357
12.6	Summary	366
	Questions for Review	367
Chapter 13	Strategies for Text Selection and Task Construction	368
13.1	Introduction	368
13.2	Strategies for evaluating textbooks	368
13.3	Strategies for supplementing the core textbook	372
13.4	Strategies for task construction	373
13.5	Strategies for sharpening students' drafting skills	381
13.6	Summary	382
	Questions for Review	383
Chapter 14	Strategies for Responding to Student Writing	384
14.1	Introduction	384
14.2	Teacher response in L1 and L2 writing research	385
14.2.1	Teacher feedback in L1 composition	385
14.2.2	Teacher response in L2 composition	386
14.3	Strategies for written response to student writing	388
14.3.1	Developing good habits of responding to student writing	389
14.3.2	Responding to content and organization	391
14.3.3	Responding to grammatical, lexical, and mechanical errors	393
14.3.4	Helping students become independent self-editors	397
14.3.5	Responding to student writing in appropriate forms	399
14.3.6	Tackling problems with teacher response	400
14.4	Strategies for oral response to student writing	401