



商务英语专业系列教程

◎主 编 / 冯 莉

The Writing of Business 商务英语写作



 吉林出版集团有限责任公司 外语教育出版社
Foreign Language Education Books, Jilin Publishing Group



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前 言

课程教学目标

《商务英语写作》(又称《商务英语书面沟通》)是国际商务、国际贸易、国际金融、国际营销、专门用途英语、商务英语等专业的一门语言技能课程。《商务英语写作》作为商务英语技能培养的一项重要课程,其教学目标是使学生在商务环境中能够用英语有效地进行商务书面沟通,完成各种商务交际活动,达到商务交际目的。

教材设计理念

现代社会生活领域的话语实践呈现“体裁化”趋势,尤其是在学术和职业领域中,体裁运用成为职业人士的生存方式。体裁既是职业沟通行为的类型,也是职业沟通的过程和产品。体裁能力已成为商业人士生存能力的核心部分。本教材旨在培养学习者对商务体裁的理解、生成和运用的能力。

商务写作教学源自国际商务活动对商务沟通能力的需要,必须以真实商务沟通中的语篇写作任务为课程内容设计基础,并且要采用最能够有效指导商务沟通任务完成的教学理念。教材设计理念应当从语言学、传播学、语言教学与教育学等多学科研究视角展开。

从语篇研究视角来看,商务语篇不但是商务沟通的产品,更是体现商务活动开展的符号性过程。商务写作研究不能只注重话语产品本身的静态研究,更应注重语篇在商务沟通过程中的动态生成,因此写作教学要注重文本理解与生成过程,而非文本形式研究。此外,在过去几年中,随着科技的进步,商人们大量使用手机、传真、语音邮件和网络,商务沟通的传统实践方式发生了革命性的变化,新的话语实

践要求商务写作的教学内容与教材设计跟上时代发展的需要。本教材反映了现代商务写作的趋势：1.商务语篇与商务实践的互动；2.高科技驱动下的商务语篇策略；3.商务语篇与跨文化交际互动；4.服务于商务目的的商务语篇策略。

从教育学角度来看，建构主义教学理论适合于商务写作的课程教学设计。该理论的出发点是，知识技能是由学习者自己构建的，语言的教与学应该强调在教育环境下人的全面发展，强调教师、学习者和任务之间相互影响的动态性质。任务成了教师与学习者之间的接合部位。此外，学习发生的环境对学习过程起着重要作用。根据这个理论，教学的主要目标是引发学生主动探索知识和信息。为此，教师首先应具有创新意识和创新能力，充分发挥个性和创造性。教师需要具备现代教学理念与现代知识，并自觉将这些知识转换成为教学能力。

教学策略建议

教师要运用创新意识设计适合学生的真实的商务英语写作任务，在输入一定的语言知识和商务知识之外，注重以意义为中心的活动。让学生在教与学的过程中通过各种现实的商务工作，学会运用语言处理日常商务的方法，最终培养和提高学生的语言能力、交际能力和工作能力。教师要从单纯的讲授或讲解知识变为与学生一起应用知识做事，执行任务，开展活动。这种转变要求教师具有引导学生使用商务英语开展商务活动的 ability。

教师首先要将商务写作视作一种任务性行动过程，带领学生进行目的分析、读者分析、内容分析、体裁形式分析和语言策略分析，使学生在分析体裁与生成体裁过程中主动建构任务的意义，并深入体裁作为社会行动过程的意义。其次，教师应设计基于写作的综合性任务，将听、说、读、译融入写作任务过程中。第三，商务英语写作课堂的教学要重视创造商务语境真实性，不能成为单一的枯燥理论讲座，所以在写作教学过程当中，课堂形式非常重要。应努力尝试突破常规的课堂教学，

使用多媒体手段,运用生动、活泼的小组活动形式,将商务英语写作的内容与形式、写作与其他技能的训练有条理地联系起来,最大限度地让学生体验真实的商务实践过程。

教材使用建议

商务写作教学应当具有三个特点:1.真实语料(authentic material);2.以目的为导向(propose-related orientation);3.自我学习为中心(self-direction)。教师一方面可以准备充足的资料,一方面应当调动学生利用各种资源收集有关信息和资料。建议教师充分利用现实生活中国内外公开的商务英语语料为课程教学与研究服务,包括真实的产品广告、招聘广告、公司网站宣传资料、产品宣传资料、公司新闻、商业新闻等,或利用实习机会收集公司内部文本。让学生参与真实语料的收集过程本身就是学习的过程,分析的过程,同时能够培养学生的研究能力,激发学生的积极性。

本教材在商务英语写作的课程设计中,运用项目教学法,将各种写作任务按其在商务活动中的自然规律组合成任务系统,进行学习任务的体系化设计。每种写作任务既可独立成章,又有其语境和相应情景,从而使教学操作灵活。具体来说,教材设计了三大模块,相应形成三大项目。模块之一,即求职过程,包括企业介绍、招聘广告、简历、求职信。其中,企业介绍与招聘广告体现了企业组织的特征和需求,是个人确定求职目标的基础,因而是简历与求职信的撰写和面试准备的前提。模块之二,即市场调研过程,包括问卷、图表制作与分析、报告撰写和口头陈述。问卷作为收集数据的主要调查工具,是报告体裁形成的前提,而数据收集之后需要运用图表进行整理分析。正式的报告一般在正文中内含图表,并后附问卷,形成了内嵌式体裁。口头报告要基于书面报告的形成过程和数据分析结果。模块之三,即

交易谈判过程，包括信函磋商和合同签订。交易信函包括询盘信、报盘信、还盘信和接受信，是商务谈判沟通目的实现过程与行为序列的文本化体现。其他如备忘录和通知之类的体裁则可穿插于三个模块之中。

建议教师运用项目教学法，将任务型教学法、交际教学法、小组合作学习与启发式教学法相结合，融入到体系化的学习任务设计中，调动学生全方位的学习积极性，从而达到商务英语写作教学的综合目标。

感谢黑龙江大学应用外语学院领导和教师对编写本教材的支持。本教材的项目教学法虽然实施三年有余，但编写经验仍显不足。在使用中如发现问题与疏漏，请广大专家与师生批评指正。

编者

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Chapter 1

Principles of Business Writing

In this chapter, you will learn :

- Basics about business communication
- Stages of business written communication
- 11 C principles of business written communication



Overview

What is communication? The process you use to send and interpret messages so that they are understood is called communication. In the business environment, this process is called business communication. Being an effective communicator is critical to you in your personal, academic, and professional lives. Research indicates that adults spend about two-thirds of each day communicating. Managers spend more than 50 percent of their time attending meetings, making telephone calls, writing, and listening. Whether you realize it or not, your success in life is dependent upon your communication skills. We all use communication for five basic purposes: (1) to establish and build goodwill, (2) to persuade, (3) to obtain or share information, (4) to establish personal effectiveness, and (5) to build self-esteem.

Why write? People in organizations put things in writing to make themselves visible, to create a record, to convey complex data, to make things convenient for the reader, to save money, and to convey their own messages more effectively. "If it isn't in writing," says a manager at one company, "it didn't happen." Writing is an essential way to make yourself visible, to let your accomplishments be known. Written memos and reports – business genres – document what was said and done and the reasons for decisions. Carefully written genres enable a company to use its earlier experience without having to reinvent the wheel every time a new set of people tackles a recurring problem. Written documents also allow individuals and companies to protect themselves. If there is no written record, chaos and expensive lawsuits may result. Written channels (including

graphics) are better than oral ones for conveying numbers and complex information. Written channels are less expensive than oral ones for reaching large groups of people or transmitting information over long distances. Writing may also be more convenient for the recipient. When you send a letter or memo, the recipient can read it when it's most convenient. Written documents become even more important in international business. Talking on the phone requires immediate comprehension. Reading a fax or e-mail message is easier for a manager doing business in a language other than his or her native language.

Finally, putting a message in writing makes it easier to present your ideas in the most effective way, even in difficult situations. We've all had the experience of fumbling for words, only to think of the perfect words to make a point after it was all over. Writing, because it can be revised, gives us the second chance we may need to achieve the effect we want.

Basics about Business Communication

Business communication can be classified by direction of communication, which can largely decide degree of formalization in your business writing.

External and internal communication

External communication originates within a company and is sent to receivers outside the company. Communication with clients, customers, sales representatives, governmental agencies, advertising agencies, and transportation agencies outside the company is external. The external communication network links the organization with the outside world of customers, suppliers, competitors, and investors. Internal communication originates and is sent to receivers within a company. For example, a memorandum from a supervisor to an employee is an internal communication.

Internal communication refers to the exchange of information and ideas within an organization. Communication among the members of an organization is essential for effective functioning. As an employee, you are in a position to observe firsthand things that your supervisors and co-workers cannot see: a customer's first reaction to a product display, a supplier's brief hesitation before agreeing to a delivery date, an odd whirring noise in a piece of equipment, or a slow down in the flow of customers. Managers and co-workers need these little gems of information in order to do their jobs. If you don't

pass that information along, nobody will because nobody else knows. Communicating freely helps employees develop a clear sense of the organization's mission and helps managers identify and react quickly to potential problems. To maintain a healthy flow of information within the organization, effective communicators use both formal and informal channels.

Lateral and vertical communication

Communication may travel down, across, or up lines of authority in an organization, i.e. vertical communication or lateral communication. Communication that travels down the hierarchy from a superior (supervisor, manager, or executive) to subordinates is *downward communication*. Instructions from a project manager to project team members travel downward. Policies established by the board of directors and company officers are relayed downward to department managers and then to other employees.

Communication among peers - persons of the same status - is *lateral communication* (sometimes call *horizontal communication*). A memorandum from one department head to another is an example of lateral communication. Lateral communication encourages cooperation between departments and divisions of an organization. *Upward communication* refers to communication from subordinates to supervisors.

Distinctions of directions of business communication recognize the different power relationship within and across the hierarchical structures of organizations. This will determine your writing strategies in tone, style and diction choices.

Process of Business Writing

Successful writing on the job is not the products of inspiration, nor is it merely the spoken word converted to print. It is the result of knowing how to structure information in words and in visual design so that the writer achieves an intended purpose. Good writers recognize that writing is a process. Generally, a writing process can be divided into the following five steps.

- Preparation
- Research
- Organization
- Writing the draft

➤ Revision

These five steps are interrelated and overlap at points. For example, your decisions about your reader's needs and your purpose in the first step affect decisions in each of the other steps. Be aware that the time required for each step varies with different writing tasks. For example, when writing a brief informal memo, you might follow the first three steps (preparation, research, and organization) by simply listing the points you want to cover in the order you want to cover them. In other words, you gather and organize information mentally as you consider your purpose in writing the memo. For a formal report, on the other hand, these three steps require well-organized research, careful message, the first four steps merge as you type the information on the screen. In short, the five steps expand, contract, and at times must be reviewed or even repeated to fit the complexity or context of the writing task.

Step 1 Preparation

Adequate preparation is as important as writing the draft, which consists of the following steps:

1. Establishing your purpose;
2. Assessing your reader;
3. Determining your arguments.

1. Establishing your purpose

All business messages have a general purpose: to inform, to persuade, or to collaborate with your audience. To help you define the specific purpose of your message, ask yourself what you hope to accomplish with your message and what your audience should do or think after receiving your message. Basically, you can expect to realize three levels of goals by writing a letter, as illustrated below:

- Text-based goal: to convey information to my reader(s) by text

I want to write a thank-you letter to Mr. Wang, the Director of Career Services for speaking at our meeting in our department.

- Reader-based goal: to expect my reader(s) to learn, to believe, to remember, to feel something

As a result of my thank-you letter, Mr. Wang will remember me so that he can help me with my job research.

- Action-based goal: to expect my reader(s) to do (or not to do) something

Since I have made a good impression on Mr. Wang, he will give me a priority when there is a good job opportunity.

Before proceeding, consider whether your purpose is worth pursuing at this time. Ask yourself these questions:

- Is my purpose realistic? If your purpose involves a radical shift in action or attitude, go slowly. Consider proposing the first step and using your message as the beginning of a learning process.
- Is this the right time? If an organization is undergoing changes of some sort, you may want to defer your message until things stabilize and people can concentrate on your ideas.
- Is the right person delivering this message? Although you may have done all the work, having your boss deliver your message could get better results because of his or her higher status.
- Is my purpose acceptable to the organization? Even though you want to fire off an angry reply to an abusive letter attacking your company, your supervisors might prefer that you regain the customer's goodwill. Your response must reflect the organization's priorities.

Once you are satisfied that you have a legitimate purpose in communicating, take a good look at your intended audience.

2. Assessing your readers

Who are your audience members? What are their attitudes? What do they need to know? And why should they care about your message? The answers to such questions will indicate which material you'll need to cover and how to cover it.

To satisfy your audience's information needs, begin by identifying your primary audience. If you can reach the decision makers or opinion molders in your audience, other audience members will fall into place. Key people are usually the ones with the most organizational clout. However, occasionally a person of relatively low status may have influence in a particular area.

Remember to determine the size of your audience. A report for a large audience requires a more formal style, organization, and format than one directed to three or four people in your department. Also, be sure to respond to the particular concerns of key individuals. The head of marketing would need different facts than the head of production or finance would need.

Try to define your audience's composition. Look for common interests that tie audience members together across differences in culture, education, status, or attitude. Include evidence that touches on everyone's area of interest. To be understood across cultural barriers, consider how audience members think and learn, as well as what style they expect.

Do your best to project your audience's expectations and preferences. Will members of your audience expect complete details, or will a summary of the main points suffice? Do they want an e-mail or will they expect a formal memo? Should the message be a short 1- to 2-page memo or a comprehensive 10- to 50-page report?

3. Determining your arguments

After you have clarified your purposes and assessed your readers, you will be starting to develop your scope of coverage and form your arguments. Consider the following questions:

- What key propositions or conclusions do you want your readers to accept?
- What do they need to know and believe in order to be persuaded to take the action you want them to?
- Which arguments will your readers readily accept?
- What kinds of information will they need?

It is necessary to support your arguments with evidence that is explicit, concrete, specific and credible. In order to get sufficient supporting evidence, you need to do research.

Step 2 Research

Before you compose your message, you'll most likely need to gather some information to communicate to your audience. When writing long, formal reports, you'll conduct formal research to locate and analyze all the information relevant to your purpose and your audience. Chapter 6 covers the topic of research by questionnaire. Other kinds of business messages require less formal information gathering. For example, you may simply try to consider others' viewpoints. Put yourself in someone else's position to consider what that person or group might be thinking, feeling, or planning. Or your company's files may be a good source of the information you need for a particular memo or e-mail message. Consider company annual reports, financial statements, news releases, memos, marketing reports, and customer surveys for helpful information.

Chatting with supervisors, colleagues, or customers can help you gather information.

At the least, fellow workers and customers may know what your audience will be interested in. Conducting telephone or personal interviews is a convenient way to gather information. And don't forget to ask your audience for input. If you're unsure of what audience members need from your message, ask them through casual conversation (face-to-face or over the phone), informal surveys, or unofficial interviews.

Step 3 Organization

Without organization, the material gathered during your research would be incomprehensible to your reader. To organize your information effectively, you must determine the best sequence in which your idea should be presented – that is, you must choose a method of development.

The methods of development that are likely to be used by business people are chronological, sequential, spatial, increasing or decreasing order of importance, comparison, division and classification, analysis, general to specific, specific to general, and cause and effect. If you were giving instructions for operating a fax machine, you would naturally present the steps of the process in the order of their occurrence. For this task, the obvious method of development would be sequential. If you were writing about the history of an organization, your account would go from the beginning to the present, using the chronological method of development. If your subject naturally lends itself to a certain method of development, use it – don't attempt to impose another method on it.

Outlining makes larger or complex subjects easier for you to organize by breaking them into manageable parts, and it ensures that your finished writing will move logically from idea to idea without omitting anything important. After your outline is reasonably detailed, you have to consider a design and layout that will help your reader and a format appropriate to your subject and purpose, which may include computer graphics and other illustrations.

Step 4 Writing the Draft

You are prepared to write a rough draft when you have established your purposes, readers' needs, arguments and evidence and when you have done adequate research and outlining. Writing a rough draft is simply transcribing and expanding your notes from your outline into paragraphs, without worrying about grammar, refinements of language or mechanical aspects. Refinement of format and expression will come with the next step revision. The most effective way to start and keep going, however, is to use a good outline

as a springboard and map for your writing. Your outline notes can become the topic sentences for paragraphs in your draft.

The computer is as important a tool for writing as it is for research. The ability to generate documents using word processing software is a necessity for any business person who lives in this IT-age global village. You also need to incorporate computer graphics into your writing. Therefore, learn to use computer software like WORD, EXCEL or others, and even practice typing to increase your speed if you are still a slow hand now.

In business communication, you may come across complicated situations where you find the issue of convention as important as the text itself: format, style and medium. Different genres have different conventional format, style and medium, which give different requirements for organization of the whole text in terms of layout, font, size, handwriting or computer-generating style or even time and place of delivery. For instance, this may be a situation when a handwritten note would be more appropriate. But perhaps a paper document is not the best medium of communication; maybe an e-mail memo would be the most appropriate response.

Step 5 Revision

If you have followed the steps of the writing process to this point, you will have a very rough draft. Revision, the obvious final step, requires a different frame of mind than does writing the draft. Read and evaluate the draft from the reader's point of view. Be eager to find and correct faults, and be honest. Do not try to do all your revising at once. Read your rough draft several times, each time looking for and correcting a different set of problems or errors.

Concentrate on larger issues first; save more specific and mechanical ones until later. Check about your decisions of details of mechanical conventions: grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and word usage, etc. The following principles marked by C will cover all the key points.

Principles of Business Writing

In any English writing, there are rules of making your text cohesive and coherent, which are also the fundamental rules for business writing. Besides, you need the following NINE more C principles: