



高等学校英语专业系列教材



英语论文 写作入门教程

主 编 高恩光 戴建东

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英语论文写作入门教程

Research Paper Writing
—An Elementary Coursebook

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· 北京 ·

内 容 简 介

本教程是一本英语论文写作的入门教科书,共10个单元,内容包括对论文的界定、选题方法、研究过程,书目卡 and 文摘卡的制作、列提纲的方法、论文的组织、文摘资料与行文的融合、论文中语法与文体的要求、初稿的写作与论文的修改、文前文后部分的处理与安排等。正文后附有10篇论文样本,再加上第9单元中的1篇,共11个样本。全书10个单元内容的讲解都紧密结合了这11个样本。因此,本教程最大的特点是用论文样本说话,手把手、一步一步教给学生查资料、做研究、写论文的方法,把写作理论与写作实践高度统一起来。

本教程适合高校英语专业和其他专业毕业论文写作教学使用,兼顾文、理、工科各类专业的学生。

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前言

《英语论文写作入门教程》是针对不知道什么是论文，没有写过任何论文的本科大学生和其他学习者编写的。其最大特点是用论文样本说话，手把手、一步一步地教给学生查资料、做研究、写论文的方法，把写作理论与写作实践高度统一起来。本书兼顾文、理、工科各类高校的学生，让他们把学到的英语知识运用到本专业的论文设计、写作中去，为未来搞好科研工作，参加国际学术交流会议，在国际学术刊物发表文章，在国际学术出版社出版论著奠定良好的基础。

本书尤其适合高校英语专业和其他专业毕业论文写作教学。它既体现了高等学校英语专业高年级教学大纲所要求的内容，又体现了国内外流行的科研论文写作规范（特别是 MLA 和 APA 的格式与规范）和修辞要求，并结合论文样本条分缕析地一一进行分析讲解。因此，本书的设计具有创新理念，可操作性强，有利于课堂教学与自学。

本书共分 10 个单元，内容包括对论文的界定、选题方法、研究过程、书目卡和文摘卡的制作、列提纲的方法、论文的组织、文摘资料与行文的融合、论文中语法与文体的要求、初稿的写作与论文的修改、文前文后部分的处理与安排等。正文后附有 10 篇论文样本，加上第 9 单元中的 1 篇，共 11 个样本。全书 10 个单元内容的讲解都紧密结合了这 11 个样本。需要说明的是，样本不是范本，有的甚至不符合论文规范，有的还有语法及文体错误，这些问题是有意留下供学生做练习和改错用的。

我们建议，该课程的教学可安排在大学本科最后一年的第一学期，每周安排两课时，用 10 周的时间授课。这样，就可以给学生留下充足的时间酝酿选题，查找资料，为论文的写作做好充分准备。

本书为中国学位与研究生教育学会“十五”研究课题“研究生英语读写课程教学的改革与研究”成果（课题编号：06CB105），由高恩光、戴建东主编，胡明珠和任彤参加编写。其中，戴建东编写了第 1、2 单元和部分样本的整理修改工作；任彤编写了第 3、4 单元；胡明珠编写了 5、6、7、8 单元；高恩光编写了第 9、10 单元和部分样本的整理修改工作。最后由高恩光对全书进行了统稿和编排。

在本书的编写过程中，得到了太原理工大学博士生导师谢克明及陈泽华、谢刚、阎高

伟、刘全周等老师的大力支持，并提供了论文样本；得到了太原师范学院计算机系主任刘耀军的帮助，并提供了论文样本；得到了太原旅游职业学院教师李谨的帮助，并提供了论文样本；还得到了我们的学生刘子芳、张敏、刘翠萍、贾璞、白瑞丽、李俊莲、马文婷的帮助，并提供了论文样本，我们在此深表感谢。另外，在有些单元的作业（task）中采用了 Reginal L. Smalley 和 Mary K. Ruetten 编写的 *Refining Composition Skills — Rhetoric and Grammar for ESL Students* 中的片断文章，但为了有利于学生做作业，书中没有标明，特此说明。

由于编著者水平有限，加之时间仓促，书中的遗漏和不妥之处在所难免，敬请广大读者批评指正。

编 者

2008 年 1 月于太原

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Appendix A Sample Papers

Appendix B A Sample of Prospectus

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Unit 1

Understanding the Research Paper



Points to Learn in This Unit

In this unit you will learn some general points of a research paper. In particular you will know the answers to these five questions:

1. What is a research paper?
2. What things does a graduation paper consist of?
3. How many kinds of research paper do we have?
4. What processes do you go through in writing a research paper?
5. Why do you write a research paper?

As senior college students, so far you have probably written many many compositions both in Chinese and in English since you entered the primary school. But they are all your personal concerns: your experiences, your thoughts, your feelings, your friends, your family members, and your own opinions that do not refer to any other source of information or ideas. Academic subjects, however, usually require you to write articles beyond your personal knowledge and experience. Especially when you are about to graduate from college or university, doing academic writing is your obligatory course. Such a piece of writing is referred to as a research paper.

1.1 Definition of a Research Paper

A *research paper* describes a presentation of our research that may be in a printed, an electronic, or a multimedia format, typically between five and fifteen pages long (3000 – 5000 English words), with most instructors specifying a minimum length.

Various known as the *term paper*, the *library paper*, the *research article*, or the

investigative theme, a research paper is an argumentation in which different parts are logically related and all center around research questions (Punch, 1998), based on research in a library or a laboratory, presenting our views and research findings of careful and thorough investigation or experiment of some chosen or assigned subject. No matter what the paper is called, our task remains the same in essence: to read on a particular topic, to gather information about it, to present the views on it and to report the findings in the paper (Winkler, A. C. & Jo Ray McCuen, 1979).

Throughout the English-speaking world, different countries use different terms to refer to the research paper. "The library paper assigned in undergraduate courses is most often labeled a research paper." (Slade, 1997) It is also a general term for any academic writing. In the United States, the term *thesis* is used to refer to the research paper submitted as part of a master's degree or an undergraduate honors program. In British and Australian education system, it can be used for both master and doctoral written work. The term *dissertation* is used in the U. S. A. as a long doctoral paper. (Devlin, 2003; Wen Qiufang, 2001)

Task 1-1

Look up the terms "thesis" and "dissertation" in an English-English dictionary and find the definitions about the meaning of research paper.

1.2 Components of a Graduation Research Paper

A graduation research paper has three components: the front matter, the paper proper, and the back matter. The front matter is the preliminaries of the paper, i. e. the pages before the body. It includes these elements: the cover, the prospectus, the approval sheet, the title page, the outline page, and the abstract page. The paper proper is the text of the research paper. It consists of several pages and its first page includes the information: the author's name, the instructor's name, the course number, the date, the title, and part of the text. The back matter contains the acknowledgment, the appendix(es), the endnotes, and the bibliography. All the components can be shown as in Fig. 1 - 1.

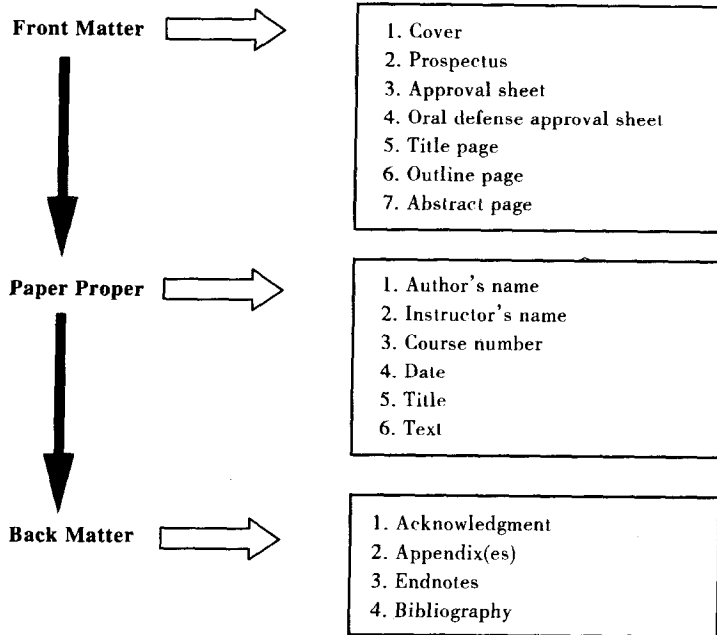


Fig. 1 – 1 The components of a graduation research paper

Task 1–2

1. Look at every part of Sample Paper 1 (on pp. 150 – 159) and examine its elements. Consider how each entry is written.
2. Suppose you are going to write a research paper entitled “The Polite Expressions in the English Language”. Now write the title page and the first page of your paper after Sample Paper 1.

1.3 The Importance of Writing a Research Paper

A research paper is the record and summary of the scientific research and an important tool to exchange thoughts and to transmit information between classmates, colleagues, and fellow-workers. Learning to write your graduation research paper is the final examination on your ability to apply all the knowledge you have learned in your four-or-more-year academic studies. It is the preliminary training for your scientific research. It is also an effective channel for the employers to find qualified personnel and for the teachers and school authorities to recommend students to employers.



We do research when we wish to explore an idea, probe an issue, solve a problem, or make an argument that forces us to turn to outside help. Then we would seek out, investigate, and make use of materials beyond our personal resources. The findings and conclusions we inquire in the material would appear in our research papers. During the process we acquire writing skills by means of secondary materials. These skills are not just academic at all. They can be used in your future professional career because many reports, proposals, and documents required in business, government, and other professions rely on secondary research. It is difficult to think of any profession that would not require you to consult sources of information about a specific subject, to combine this information with your ideas and to present your thoughts, findings, and conclusions effectively. (Gibaldi, 1999) Therefore, learning how to write a research paper can help prepare you for assignments in your future work. This is the first reason why we write a research paper.

Secondly, research into something increases your knowledge and understanding of a subject. If your ideas and opinions on the subject are right, doing research will support them and then you will adhere to them. If your views on the subject is wrong, doing research will challenge and change them; then you will give them up or make some corrections to them. Anyway, you will benefit from it in shaping your thinking. When you write a research paper, you do not merely review publications and extract some quotations from them. You should seek for sources that give you new information, that expand and precisely express your ideas, that provide methods or modes of thought you can apply to your research, that supply negative examples for you to argue against, as well as that give a general account of the solutions already arrived at on the subject. In this way, it is helpful for you to write a research paper on the way to your success.

The third reason for you to write a research paper is that writing experience makes you familiar with the conventions of scholarly writing. You will learn the conventions of the footnote, the endnote, the interlinear note, the abbreviation etc.; the bibliography, the format of a research paper; the documentation, the mechanics; the ethics of research; and the rudiments of academic writing.

The fourth reason why you learn to write a research paper is that you will become more familiar with the library resources, the electronic database and the Internet sources through the "learn by doing" method. Even the simplest library or electronic base is an intricate storehouse of information, filled with indexes, encyclopedias, abstracts, and various newspapers, journals, magazines and books. How to discover by searching from the maze of sources a single piece of needed information is indeed a skill that you will learn by undertaking an actual research. It is a very important thing to acquire an ability to make use of a library and the Internet sources in the world today. This is because you will sooner or later need to find out about something. For example, a teacher needs to find out about how to teach his/her students; a lawyer needs to find out about how to successfully argue on an unusual case; a doctor needs to find out about how to

treat a rare illness; an engineer needs to find out about how to design a new and original building or machine. Even a girl student has to know how to stop her child from biting his finger-nails when she becomes a mother. In a word, everyone can develop an ability from knowing how to do research.

Finally, writing a research paper teaches an appreciation for the intricacies and difficulties of research. People tend to complain about something. They might complain about why doctors cannot find a cure for the common cold, why engineers cannot invent an automobile without pollution, why a teacher cannot teach his/her course vividly as an actor performs in a play or movie, or why the innumerable specialists and authorities who affect our lives cannot do one thing or another. If you carry out an actual research into a chosen topic, you will know its difficulties and complications. Then, you will keep silent when you come across someone who cannot do something well as you wish. Thus, you will learn to appreciate the labours of the researchers, the engineers, and the scholars, and to regard the results of their work more kindly.

There are other benefits besides what we mentioned above in writing a research paper. With regard to writing techniques, it is a complicated and trying exercise in logic, imagination, rhetoric, as well as common sense. As you chew over the mass of data and information available on the chosen topic, you will learn how to

- think
- arrange ideas
- budget limited time
- conceive of research project
- discriminate useful from worthless opinions
- employ information in a coherent and effective paper

1.4 Kinds of Research Papers

There are two kinds of research papers in our academic studies: the *report paper* and the *thesis paper*. The former can further be divided into two types — the *factual report paper* and the *laboratory report paper*. A factual report paper summaries and reports a writer's findings on a particular subject. The writer neither judges nor evaluates the findings, but merely catalogues them in a sensible sequence. For instance, a paper that lists the opinions of scholars about debate over the Chomsky's transformational-generative Grammar is a factual report paper. Likewise, a paper that chronologically narrates the development of the modern linguistics is also a factual report paper. A laboratory report paper presents the procedures of an experiment or an investigation and reports the results of them. The writer can both give a judgement about the findings in the



experiment or in the investigation and make an evaluation of the results. For example, a paper on a questionnaire investigation into the interest of the middle school students in learning English would be a laboratory report paper. Similarly, a paper that gives an account of an experiment on your teaching approach to spoken English in groups when you do practice teaching in a middle school would be a laboratory report paper, too.

The thesis paper, unlike the report paper, takes a definite stand on an issue. A thesis is a convention or a point of view that a writer or a speaker is willingly to argue against or defend. A paper that argued for or against the Chomsky's transformational-generative grammar would therefore be a thesis paper. So would a paper that attempted to prove that modern linguistics is developed from the ancient philosophy and philology. Here are four more examples as they might conceivably be treated in report papers and thesis papers.

- (1) Sample Paper 1 (thesis paper) on page 150:

The Inevitability of Tess' Tragedy

(by Liu Zifang, a student)

- (2) Sample Paper 2 (thesis paper) on page 160:

Contrast Between Grimm's and Andersen's Fairy Tales

(by Zhang Min, a student)

- (3) Sample Paper 3 (a laboratory report paper) on page 169:

The Design of a Radar Level Gauge with Digital Regulation

(by Yan Guowei, Xie Gang, Liu Quanzhou)

- (4) Sample Paper 4 (factual report paper) on page 174:

An Experiment with Task-Based Approach to English Reading Teaching at High Vocational School

(by Li Jin)

Students are more likely to write a thesis paper than a report paper. This is because students are familiar with the writing skills of an argument essay and they can display their ability to exercise judgement, evaluate evidence, and construct a logical argument on the one hand, on the other hand there are no favourable conditions for them to carry out an experiment. Science students, of course, might prefer writing a report paper.

Task 1-3

After class, first read the four sample papers, then find research papers of each kind either in English or in Chinese from magazines, journals and collections of papers in books. Finally, consider how each paper is organized and documented.



1.5 Steps Involved in Writing a Research Paper

A research paper is generally based on primary research, secondary research, or a combination of the two. Primary research is the study of a subject through first hand observation and investigation, such as analyzing a literary or historical text, a film, or a performance; conducting a survey or an interview; or carrying out a laboratory experiment. Primary sources include statistical data, historical documents, and works of literature or art. Secondary research is the examination of studies that other researchers have made of a subject. Examples of secondary sources are books and articles about political issues, historical events, scientific debates, cultural heritage, linguistic findings, etc. As you use and scrupulously acknowledge sources, however, always remember that the main purpose of doing research is not to summarize the work of others but to assimilate and to build on it and to arrive at your own understanding of the subject.

Writing a research paper, generally, involves seven distinct steps.

Step One: Choosing a Topic

Your instructor may assign a topic or may let you yourself choose what to write about. Even if the topic is assigned, you will probably need to decide which specific idea to explore or which approach to use.

Step Two: Reading Materials

After you have decided on a topic, the next step you will take is to carry out your research. The best way to do research is to collect materials about the chosen topic and get down to exploratory reading of them.

Step Three: Recording Information

While you gather and read materials concerning your topic, you should make notes of information which you probably use in your paper. And the notes must be recorded on cards and assembled into a coherent sequence.

Step Four: Drafting a Thesis Statement

When you read and make notes, you are likely to conceive what you will write about in your mind. Accordingly you should draft your thesis statement for your paper, which sets forth the idea you wish to argue, prove, disprove or support.

Step Five: Drawing up an Outline

According to your thesis statement and what you plan in your mind, you are required to make an outline for your actual writing. The outline must be written in terms of the major points of your paper and in established conventions.

Step Six: Writing the Paper