

ENGLISH WRITING FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

(教师用书)

研究生 英语写作

赵 珏 H.M. Taylor R.A. Ashmore

English Writing for Graduate Students
(Teacher's Book)

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(教师用书)

赵 琰

Harvey M. Taylor 编著

Robert R. Ashmore

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赵 珽 等编著

责任编辑:汪晓丹

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Finally, we express our thanks to the 1986 and 1988 entering doctoral candidates of Peking University, who studied this book in earlier versions and whose responses helped us make these materials more appropriate to their and others' needs.

The editors
Beijing, 1989

English Writing For Graduate Students

Teacher's Book

This book is to be used with *English Writing for Graduate Students* as an aid for those teaching the textbook. It can also serve as a source of information for self-study learners. However, it should not be made available to anyone studying the textbook as part of a regular class.

It is essential that the teacher using this textbook clearly understand the language education philosophy underlying these materials. This philosophy is explained in the comments which introduce the creative writing section of both the textbook and this *Teacher's Book*.

The editors have attempted to include more information than will be needed to explain and illustrate the various writing components covered in the textbook. The teacher should feel free to pick and choose what is most useful for the particular students being taught. However, the general sequencing of the different units should be followed, since some of the later ones build on concepts and information taught in the earlier ones.

We solicit feedback about these teaching materials from those of you who will be using them in the months and years ahead. Thank you.

The editors
Beijing, 1989

Introduction

English Writing for Graduate Students is designed especially for non-English major doctoral candidates. Often such students have learned English grammar rules and have a large vocabulary in their area of specialization, yet they lack confidence in their ability to write acceptable English. This book is the result of our attempting to meet the needs of such students at Peking University from 1985 to 1989.

The book is composed of two parts: (1) Applied English Writing and (2) Scientific English Writing. The first part includes everyday writing tasks, such as writing notes, announcements, invitations and their replies, letters — both personal and business ones, and resumes. Each of these tasks involves the basic skills necessary for all good writing — skills of organization, of expression, and of clear communication.

The second part includes information and practice involving the particular types of thought development which are important for scientific writing — definition, comparison, cause and effect, and description. Practice is given in writing essays, summaries, and abstracts. Paragraph construction and outlining — two specific writing skills basic to all writing — and making notes from lectures are also included.

This book leads learners through various types of writing using a communicative approach, in which they write while actively thinking. Each type of writing is explained and then followed by creative writing tasks.

One danger in unstructured communicative writing activities — often called “free writing” — is that the writers will think in their native language(s) and then write a translation of those thoughts. The result is usually not English, and therefore such “free writing” does not form a

basic part of this textbook.

Diary writing, of course, is one kind of “free writing,” and as a result it carries the danger of being just literal translations from Chinese. However, diary writing has the overriding advantage of being one type of extensive writing which is within the ability of any English learner and which requires original thinking — true creative writing. For these reasons it is encouraged as an ongoing writing activity throughout the teaching of this course.

We wish the greatest success in learning to write academic English to those who use this book.

Zhao Lian, Professor
English Department
Peking University

Harvey M. Taylor, Ph. D. , Linguistics (Hawaii)
Professor of English
Graduate School
Peking University

Robert R. Ashmore, B. A. , English (Harvard)
Instructor of English
Graduate School
Peking University

NOTES TO THE TEACHER

Suggestions for using this *Teacher's Book*

1. Under no circumstances should this book be made available to any student. The temptation will be too great for students to find answers before they have thought about the problem sufficiently by themselves.

2. True writing involves communicating original ideas from the writer's mind to that of the reader. Therefore these materials attempt to require the student to create something from his/her own mind. That means that in many cases there will be a variety of correct answers to the writing exercises — each student should **create** an answer, not just copy something nor just manipulate grammar or sentence patterns. The teacher should expect a variety of answers from the students — and be unhappy if it appears that students have collaborated in writing their answers.

3. The answers given here are in most cases only examples of possible answers. They should not be considered to be the only “correct” answers, nor even the “best” answers. This should be explained clearly to the students.

4. The editors realize that it is difficult for non-native speakers to teach writing in a second language. Although it may be possible for such teachers to **produce** correct compositions in the second language, it is especially difficult for them to know whether certain expressions written by others are in fact acceptably written. Because of this limitation, the editors feel that teachers who use this textbook should **not** emphasize the grammatical correctness of their students' writing, but rather the students should be encouraged to express their own ideas as clearly as possible.

Students may use expressions which are new or strange to the teacher, who will be accustomed to using other words to express that idea. The teacher may be tempted to say that all such unfamiliar items are errors, when, perhaps, some of them would be acceptable to a na-

tive speaker. Therefore, the editors suggest that when the teacher discovers such unfamiliar usages, he or she should tell the students that these might possibly be correct, but that there are some other expressions which the teacher is certain can be safely used in that context to express the same idea.

5. Many exercises have been given here — probably more than can be used in a normal one-year writing program. The teacher should select for in-class and homework writing just enough exercises for the students to demonstrate that they have learned how to write the different styles of writing introduced here. To insist that students do every exercise in the book will probably make the course unnecessarily boring for the students.

6. This book has been organized so that creative, communicative writing tasks can be assigned right from the beginning. The first style of writing to be taught is that of short, informal notes, followed by brief announcements to be posted for public reading. Then come styles which require longer sentences and eventually paragraphs.

The purpose of this sequencing is to start the students writing short, practical, communicative compositions, and then gradually to increase the length of their writing tasks. The teacher should emphasize that these short styles of writing are just as truly “writing” as are the longer essays which come later. In fact, the skills required to write a clear and correct short note are also required for writing a long letter, and the organization skills necessary to write a good letter are also needed to write an academic article or thesis. Creative writing is thus here taught as a series of real-life communicative writing activities.

7. Extensive writing is provided for in the Diary Assignment section. The individual teacher may wish to modify this assignment to fit the local situation. However, in order for this to be truly **extensive** writing, the emphasis must be on communication of ideas and not upon grammatical correctness. Either no correction of the diary entries by the teacher

should be attempted, or else such correction should be delayed for at least 2 months. Since there is no experimental proof that the teachers' correction of students' writing improves their writing, even this is not recommended. In fact, only student self-correction seems to result in improved student grammatical and stylistic accuracy. If anything, errors could just be underlined for student self-correction and rewriting (but only after 2-3 months of diary writing).

8. "English writing" can mean different things to different people. For example, at its simplest, it may mean nothing more than "handwriting" — practicing the formation of the letters of the English alphabet, something you may want to review to improve your own handwriting style.

9. For language learners, however, various techniques have been developed for "teaching writing." They may be called "patterned writing" or "manipulative writing" or "controlled writing" or "imitative writing." In patterned writing, the learner may actually only be showing a knowledge of certain details of English grammar, as when rewriting sentences by using a different tense or different pronouns. Manipulative writing may go beyond the sentence level and make similar changes throughout an entire paragraph. However, in neither case is the writer supplying any ideas to the exercise; instead, these are basically just written grammar drills (which, of course, can be valuable for teaching and testing grammar).

10. In controlled writing, the learner is told what to write, but usually after being given certain phrases which are to be put together according to an example. This may be done at the sentence level or in sentence-combining exercises at the paragraph level. In either case, however, the emphasis in this kind of writing is on following the pattern of the example. Therefore the writer demonstrates only his/her ability to join ideas together in a mechanical way, without supplying either those ideas or their organization. Imitative writing may be slightly less controlled

in that the writer is asked to supply some of the necessary information and to write about it while following the organization of a selection given as an example. In this situation the writer does supply some ideas, but without demonstrating any ability to put them together acceptably.

11. These and many other writing techniques can serve the useful purpose of drawing a learner's attention to the grammar and mechanics of getting ideas on paper, but they do not in themselves produce "writing" in its basic, communicative sense. Only communicative writing is true writing, since the primary purpose of writing is to send one person's thoughts to another person in written form. In every language and culture, this is the normal use of writing. Unfortunately, in the language classroom "writing" often becomes an end in itself — producing something on paper which conforms to a pattern or example, rather than presenting one's own ideas for others to understand.

12. Writing which requires the author to select from his/her own thoughts those ideas which are to be communicated and then to express them in written form is often called "creative writing." The writer is responsible for the origin of the ideas, for their organization, and for the way they are presented to the reader. Until a student has learned to write at this level, he/she has not yet "written" anything — nor has the "writing teacher" truly taught "writing."

13. Based upon these assumptions, the following materials have been compiled to lead the English language learner into "creative writing" as quickly as possible. Shorter and simpler writing tasks are given first, with more complicated tasks following.

14. Neither the learner nor the teacher should assume that "writing" involves only paragraphs. There are rules and conventions to be followed in all good writing, whether it be when writing shorter informal notes, public announcements, official notices, invitations and their replies, or longer forms such as letters, resumes, summaries, abstracts, and aca-

demic papers. These rules and conventions are explained and demonstrated in the following sections of this book, but it is up to the learner to do the writing, to **“learn by doing.”**

15. Good writing **cannot** be taught or learned by explaining, studying, or memorizing “rules of writing.” Good writing comes **only** by writing, revising, and rewriting — followed by more writing, revising, and rewriting, and then more of the same.

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Unit 2 Notes and Announcements

Part One: Writing Notes (short, informal messages)

I Questions

1. Notes (1) and (2) are less formal than Notes (3) and (4) in these ways:

Addressee's name has no title (Sue, Mom vs. Prof. Jones, Prof. Norton)

Incomplete sentences vs. complete ones

Writer uses only given name vs. full name

2. Relationships between each of the people

Example 1. Two (probably young) women who know each other well enough to use given names and for Anne to omit the reason why she can't come.

Example 2. Son writing to his mother.

Example 3. Graduate student and his professor (seminars are only for grad students' and discussing papers with a professor is a normal grad student activity). They have a friendly relationship, since John doesn't give an explanation for his absence (he knows the professor will trust him to have a good reason to miss the seminar), and he uses informal language ("I'll," omitted subject in second clause).

Example 4. Probably an undergraduate student (a class, not a seminar; a homework assignment; and a test, not a less-frequently scheduled exam) writing to a teacher who does not know him very well (gives a detailed reason for being gone, uses no contractions in complete sentences with polite wording ("if it is possible, I would like"). Since this is a foreign student, more politeness and formality may be expected than from an American student.

3. Problem Note 1. No time given for when the call came. No name of the caller. No telephone number to call.

Suggested correction:

(probably better if written on the inside;) Dad

Mr. Brown called at 7:30 a. m. He wants you to call him back at 667-2324.

Bill

Problem Note 2. The address is like a letter, not a note. No date nor time are given. The inside salutation is for a letter, not for a note. Too much apologizing for troubling Prof. Johnson; sounds too humble to be sincere. Wang gives no idea of what he wants to talk about. He doesn't suggest a time to meet nor say how they are to decide on when to meet. The thanks for kind teaching is not part of the purpose of the note, and the rest of that paragraph sounds too insincere. "Goodbye" is not normal for closing something which has been written. No indication of which "Wang" wrote this note.

Suggested correction:

(written on the outside of the note;) Prof. James Johnson

Sept. 26th

Dear Prof. Johnson,

I would like to talk with you about my grades. I will phone you later today for an appointment.

Thank you.

Wang Wei (in your Bio-Chemistry class)

Problem Note 3. No time or date are given. This note is about something very personal and should not be left open on the desk. It would be better to explain what happened in person, rather than to write it, since it could be misunderstood.

Suggested Correction :

(written on the outside of the note :) George

3:15 p. m. , Wednesday. Your girlfriend came to see you, but I didn't know where you were. I need to talk to you about what happened.

Li

III Exercises

1. Writing notes

(1)

Joseph

9:15. Prof. Zhang called and wants to see you tomorrow at 3.

Li

(2)

Dear Mr. Brown,

I was absent from class last week because I had to attend a meeting of all the researchers in my laboratory. I will ask a friend to explain what happened in class. If I have any questions, I will talk to you.

Thank you.

Li Zhang

(3)

Mr. Smith,
Here is the book I borrowed last week. I enjoyed it very much. Thank you.

Li Zhang

(4)

Xiao Cheng
Remember the English Corner this Sunday. I'll wait for you in my room unless you tell me otherwise.

Li

(5)

Mary
Thank you very much for copying the tape for me. I'll listen to it a lot.

Li

2. How well you know each person

- (1) Joseph has been my roommate for 4 months, and we know each other very well.
- (2) Mr. Brown has been teaching my class for 3 weeks, and I do not know him very well yet.
- (3) Mr. Smith is older than I am, but I know him well enough to visit