

英语专业写作教程系列

Write to Communicate: Academic Writing

高级英文写作教程：
论文写作

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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,以提高学生的写作能力。全书包括八个单元,分门别类地训练学生掌握学术论文的各种论述方法,训练学生掌握论文写作时应注意的遣词造句、前后呼应、引经据典等方法,并且运用教学法循序渐进地指导学生写作 3000 - 5000 单词的论文。

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》对本科生大三(六级)、大四(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 3,000~5,000 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

本写作教程分为《实用写作》和《论文写作》两个分册,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。教材每单元含四部分,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 1,500~3,000 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。

《论文写作》分册每单元四个部分的内容安排如下。

第一部分(从第一单元到第七单元)介绍一种论述方法。这些论述方法包括:叙述、描述、举例、因果关系、定义、比较对比、分类。每一种论述方法均提供若干不同类型的样文,通过分析它们的框架结构、组织形式和语言特点,再通过实际练习,帮助学生掌握各种论述方法的写作。在讨论这些

论述方法时,编者多次强调,尽管各种论述方法可以自成体系,但在一篇完整的文章,特别是较长的论文中,上述七种论述方法中的若干种会根据论述的需要配合运用,以达到文章的目的。

第二部分(从第一单元到第八单元)分主题讨论了学术论文写作中需要注意的一些关键问题,并提供了足够的例子和练习。这些问题包括:学术论文的基本风格要求、衔接手段、运用学术文献(包括直接引用、解释性说明和概括性说明)以及标注方式、编写参考文献表等。在讨论借用现有学术成果时,特别强调了应避免故意或非故意的抄袭现象,并详细介绍了避免抄袭的各种方法。

第三部分(从第一单元到第七单元)在《实用写作》分册分别讨论写作步骤的基础上,从学术论文的高度谈论不同的步骤,并特别突出了选题、搜集资料、积累资料、撰写主题句、撰写文章开头和结尾,综合运用学术成果等的重要步骤,帮助学生解决学术论文写作中的控制性难题。

第四部分步步深入地引导学生完成长度为 3,000 英文单词的课程学术论文,并结合每个单元的主题,提出具体而详细的指导意见,直到学生顺利地完成课程论文。

本书第八单元的第一、三部分的内容与其他七个单元有所区别。第八单元的第一部分整体介绍了一篇学术论文的构思、准备和写作过程;第三部分提供了三篇由不同类型的作者撰写的学术论文。第一篇是国际关系学院英语系大四学生为该课程撰写的 3,000 词课程论文,第二篇是美国一所大学的学生撰写的调查论文,第三篇是一位英语教学专家发表在学术刊物上的论文。三篇论文提供了不同的语言样本、论述方法和思维结构,是本课程学生很好的学习材料。另外需要说明,由于第八单元不包含需要学生完成的具体任务,所以教师用书部分不包括第八单元的内容。

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任务。学生完成这些任务后,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效果。

鸣 谢

本书最初形成于 1998 年 8 月至 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 月至 2002 年 1 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做出的不懈努力,特别是国内同行近年在写作领域做出的种种贡献。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

2002 年 6 月 于坡上村

Section One

Students Book

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 academic 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 writing 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 course 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 position, 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 mind our purpose, our audience, and the requirement of the appropriate form of language.

Students might say that given that this is a writing course, the teacher will always be the evaluator, grading everything the students write, and that, therefore, the purpose of all writing will have to be for good marks?—An important consideration for future prospects. True as this might be, other possibilities do exist. A teacher plays more roles than that of a marker. A teacher can in fact be a genuinely interested reader, a kind-hearted monitor, and a willing, supportive helper. Even if the teacher does play the role of a marker in the end, the emphasis can be different. Traditionally, the teacher will consider spelling, diction, grammar and content when evaluating a written work. For this course book, although linguistic features are still important, the most important aspect will be the communicative effectiveness of each piece of writing. If the writer fails to use the appropriate form of language to achieve the intended purpose, even if grammar and spelling are flawless, the paper will probably not receive a high mark. Conversely, if the essay is effective in communicating ideas, a few mistakes in grammar or diction will not affect the mark.

Given this emphasis, whenever you write, try to carry on a conversation in your mind between yourself as a writer and yourself as a reader. Never forget the purpose of your writing: ask yourself if the sentences and paragraphs express your ideas clearly and meaningfully; if the words and structures you choose are appropriate for the situation; and if your tone of voice is effective for your intended purpose. Ask yourself what you may not know as a reader, what you would like the writer to explain more carefully, or how. Then do the explanation to the best of your ability. Such an approach will certainly be helpful in the process of this writing course.

The Process of Writing

How do people write? This might seem an innocent question at first sight. You all have experience writing in both Chinese and English and certainly have some idea of how to write. However, we cannot claim that we all know the more effective and efficient processes of writing. Linguists have found, through careful research, that writing is a complex process, and that different writers have different approaches. In spite of the apparent differences, a pattern of the writing process has emerged after careful research into the approaches of many good writers. This may be explained in the following steps.

Stage One: Choosing a Topic

You might find this stage surprising. Aren't we always given a topic? Yes, this may be quite true for students in the traditional classroom, but it is not always true in terms of the needs of the real world. In both life and career, people often encounter occasions that require some kind of writing. For example, almost every literate person writes letters. Although we do not give titles to letters as a rule, they tend to have a central topic. Similarly, when we try to find a job, we need to write letters of

application, which also contains a central purpose: the best presentation of one's experience and potential towards the success of the application. More importantly, however, when we have completed a research project and decide to publish our findings, we need to decide how to compose our ideas for the best possible results. As a matter of fact, whether a piece of writing is good enough to achieve the intended purpose depends heavily on the proper choice of the topic, its general direction, and its organization.

This course book will give you freedom in choosing your own topics. It is hoped that this will not only increase your interest in your writing tasks, but will also aid you in learning the skill of deciding on an appropriate topic in terms of its direction, scope, and size.

Stage Two: Generating Ideas

As soon as we have decided upon a topic and our purpose in writing about it, we should start to generate ideas, a step that helps us to think of as many ideas as possible around the topic. The generation of ideas takes different forms. In some cases, if the writer intends to write a fairly short piece on a topic about which s/he has good knowledge, brainstorming can create ideas. In practice, the writer sets aside a period of time to think of ideas for the writing, jotting them down on paper for further consideration. More frequently, however, a certain amount of research work will be necessary to generate ideas, especially when the writer intends to write extensively on an academic topic. Depending on the size of the task, this step may take anywhere from a few minutes to several months or even longer.

The process of research achieves three purposes. One is to help you to determine what others have already done in the area. The second is to acquire the basic methods of research. The third is to generate ideas. By the end of the research stage, you will have clearer ideas as well as a rough plan for your paper.

Stage Three: Finalising the Topic

According to research results, students usually need to adjust, modify or even change their topics. Based on their research findings, students may attempt to form a tentative thesis statement and see whether the materials will support it. If the material does, the writer moves on to the next stage. If the material does not, the writer has two choices: to dig deeper into research, or to change the thesis statement based on the material available.

Stage Four: Writing an Outline

A clear outline helps to organise the material logically. It should be a framework that lists the ideas in the order in which you will discuss them. Each part should be headed by a short chapter title, which is followed by a topic sentence. This framework will serve as the roadmap for the next stage.

Stage Five: Writing the First Draft

Now comes the time to write a first draft. Writers generally try to follow the outline closely while developing each idea fully. If new ideas appear at this stage, they are jotted down for later

incorporation and development . If there are too many new ideas for the framework to contain, one needs to regress to Stage Four and restart with a fresh outline . This is the stage where a change of mind most often occurs, and therefore an open mind for new ideas is important .

The writer would also concentrate more on the development of ideas at this stage than the correctness of grammar, spelling, and other surface features, a task for the editing and proofreading stage . After finishing the first draft, the writer usually sets it aside for a time, a number of hours or days according to time limits . This creates a distance between the writer and the writing so that when the time comes to read the draft, it is done more objectively and cool-headedly .

Stage Six: Revising

Revision is an extremely important step in the process of writing . No writer expects to write clearly and satisfactorily the first time around: good writing is the result of repeated revision . Indeed, it is usually the good writer who finds that many parts of the first draft are unsatisfying . Some of the ideas may not have been adequately developed, while other ideas may have failed to support the thesis . A number of new ideas illustrating the arguments even better may have appeared . In the process of revision, the writer may also return to do more research, thinking, and organising . As a result, by the time the second draft is finished, it is usually quite different in terms of organisation and presentation of ideas . Even the central idea may have been adjusted because of new materials and facts gathered from research . One must be reasonable however: revision is a never-ending process . The time must come when you consider the work to be as good as you can make it .

Stage Seven: Editing, Proofreading and Supplementing

We must also make the distinction between revision, editing and proofreading . When we talk about revision, we are mainly concerned with the overall organisation, the content, and the message of a piece of writing; when we talk about editing, we concentrate on the sentence and paragraph level of the composition, checking the unity, logic and cohesion; when we talk about proofreading, we then mean the more technical aspects: spelling, punctuation and text layout . Each step has its special function . These functions combine to create a complete and well-rounded piece of writing .

At the same time, the peripheral components of a paper, such as a front cover, an abstract, a table of contents, and a bibliography are prepared to pave way for the final product .

Stage Eight: Publishing

When we are finally convinced that the paper is well organised, well presented, and neatly printed, we can now "publish" it, that is, to submit it to the intended reader . When the readers read the paper and react to it, the communication purpose is realised .

Writing, as we see it, is a complex and recursive process . The different stages of researching, planning, drafting, revising, and editing are all important towards the target of a good final product . We are going to encourage this writing process throughout this course book so that you master an effective approach to the writing process .

Two Important Features of English Writing

Every student is probably already aware that English is different from Chinese in many ways . For the purpose of this course book , we will discuss here briefly two important features of English that are different from Chinese . These features are determined by the English thought pattern , which is quite different from the Chinese pattern .

The first feature of English may be described by the word "shape": the argument appears to create a straight line that ends at a particular point before beginning another straight line . Chinese writing on the other hand appears to form a circle: it begins at a certain point with a number of formalities and talks about related ideas before finally mentioning the central point or the main purpose . This may not be true of all cases of English and Chinese writing , but native English users do have the habit of putting the topic sentence or thesis statement at the beginning , followed by a presentation of the ideas contained in it . In a paragraph , the first sentence is generally the topic sentence , and in a formal paper , the first and the second paragraphs will be the introductory paragraphs while the third almost always contains the thesis statement . Students should always keep this in mind and try to start any piece of English writing with the central idea .

The second feature is the preference for Sets of Three in the English thought pattern . English speakers consciously or more likely unconsciously prefers Sets of Three . If we read formal English papers carefully , we can easily discover many instances of Sets of Three . A formal paper has three parts: the introduction , the body , and the conclusion , with the introduction and the conclusion of similar length and the body much bigger . The body may also contain three arguments that support the topic sentence in the introduction . These three arguments may be three paragraphs or chapters that are roughly equal in length . Each argument furthermore will ideally present three examples .

At the sentence level , Sets of Three are common phenomena . Nouns , adjectives or adverbs are often used in groups of three for balance . In parallel structures ?— ?a powerful , expressive , and common structure in English writing ?— ?there are often three parts in the set . We will cite many such instances throughout the course book and students should learn to master this feature to make their writing sound natural in English .

Goals and Targets

Before we discuss this topic , we will first examine different types of writing for different purposes . In daily life , we encounter at least two different categories of writing: 1) writing for entertainment , (creative writing , such as novels , stories and poems) , and 2) writing for information (formal or expository prose , such as research papers and newspaper reports) . If we consider the social aspects of writing , classification can be made under headings of 1) informal writing , such as private journals , notes to friends , and personal letters , and 2) formal writing , such as letters of application , letters of inquiry , and business communication . If we consider the different natures of writing , we may then find that novels and stories require creative power because the creation of characters , plots ,

and images requires imagination, whereas research papers and business communications require analytical ability because they communicate factual information. Creativeness and analytical ability both have their roles.

However, many students, unaware of different types of writing, tend to think of writing only in the form of novels and poems, and lose confidence at the beginning of an advanced writing course. They fear that they do not have the imaginative power of novelists and poets, that they make too many grammar mistakes, and that they have nothing interesting or profound to say. This negative mindset can be extremely harmful.

To overcome the lack of confidence, we need to look at the concept of writing from a fresh angle. Many students regard writing as something elevated and unattainable, reserved only for the chosen few. They wish to write in English as well as Mark Twain, Ernest Hemingway, or Winston Churchill. They aspire to follow the example of ancient Chinese writers who never rested until they found the most catching turn of phrase. While these are noble aspirations, they may cause one to feel defeated before one has even begun.

What we need is some reflection with a cool head. How many, among the 1.3 billion Chinese people, are famous and successful writers? How many, among some 600 million native English speakers, are successful and famous writers? Very few! We need to draw ourselves back to realistic expectations and foster a realistic view of writing. Before aspiring to achieve fame, we should first of all try to write to communicate." Do not worry if your vocabulary is simple and everyday, your sentences ordinary and commonplace, and your message initially superficial or insignificant. The important thing is to learn to communicate your ideas clearly, logically, and understandably.

Therefore, we need to rein in our ambitions and start from the most essential function of language. In real life, the major role of language is communication rather than entertainment. We have therefore set communication as the target of this course book. We will train the learners how to write clearly, accurately, and logically, with the emphasis on effective presentation of facts and opinions rather than creativeness or imagination. Indeed, the underlying principles are the same with every type of writing. If we master the skills of successful communication, it will not be a big problem if some of us decide to take a few steps further into the realm of creative and imaginative writing.

However, the apparently innocent phrase "successful communication" may carry profound meaning. We already know that language exists in two forms: oral and written. In oral communication, there are many different situations in which different language registers are required. One talks with close friends in one way, with strangers in another; with street vendors in one way, with teachers in yet another. If one confuses these different occasions and uses the wrong form of language, one may fail in the communication. The same is true in written communication. One writes to one's parents in one way, to acquaintances in another; a brief note in one way, and an academic paper in another. If one confuses these different forms, one may be judged as having inadequate education.

As college students, you probably already have a good idea as to what different forms of the Chinese language to use under different circumstances. Yet, you are only at the beginning of learning the proper forms in the English language. The English language has its oral forms and written forms,

its informal, semi-formal, and very formal forms . These forms require different kinds of words, sentence patterns, and essay structures . At the end of this course, we hope that students will have developed an awareness of the need to use informal words for informal occasions such as daily conversation, and formal words for formal occasions such as a term paper for an academic course .

To achieve these goals, training will involve several different aspects:

- 1) Some important forms of written communication that are likely to be useful in different aspects of life and career,
- 2) The important linguistic skills in making a piece of writing clear and readable,
- 3) An awareness of different forms of language,
- 4) The major methods of logical development,
- 5) The different steps of the whole process of writing .

It is hoped that after systematic training in these aspects, you will have mastered the basic skills for advanced English writing .

Achieving the Goals and Targets

To achieve these goals and targets, we need to do the following:

First, we will begin by looking at different types of communicative and academic writing so that we have an idea of what we need to learn to write . It is a belief among many language learners and teachers that language learning is essentially a process of imitating . If we imitate the way an educated native speaker of English speaks and writes, listens and reads, we may regard ourselves as successful language learners . But in order to imitate, we first of all need models . The reading materials and their particular formats in this course book will play this role: they are preceded by guidelines and followed by exercises of different types to stimulate thinking and to train necessary skills .

Second, writing activities constitute an important component of this course book . Many of us may have found writing to be the source of constant headache in the past . We hope that in this course book, we can make writing at least less painful . We will try to guarantee that everything we write will have a clear communicative purpose . We will also try to ensure that we can always find enough to write about, regardless of the topic . We believe that having a clear purpose, knowing whom the reader will be and what to say will certainly help with writing .

Third, we will endeavour to bring confidence to every one in the class . After learning English for a number of years, every one of you possesses a certain proficiency in English writing . The problem may well be that you have not had a chance to prove it to yourself . This course book will try to provide these chances, first by encouraging free writing, and later by learning to write other types of communicative pieces .

When you do free writing, concentrate on the ideas rather than on grammar, form or spelling . You will soon discover that if you are free of inhibitions, you can all write more than you believe you can . You are also encouraged to keep a journal, writing down ideas and things that are interesting or meaningful during the day . If you can foster this habit of writing, you may find that as time passes, writing comes much more naturally and fluently .

Course Book Organisation

The course book is in two volumes .

Practical Writing, consisting of eight units, focuses on the more basic modes, skills and processes of general English writing . Each unit contains four parts:

Part 1 concentrates on some selected forms of written communication, mainly different types of formal or business communication;

Part 2 concentrates on the basic features of good English writing . Topics like choice of words, consistency in tense, person, and number, and use of parallelism and Sets of Three, etc ., will be discussed, modelled and practised;

Part 3 concentrates on the processes of writing . The different steps of writing for a clear purpose with a specific audience in mind will be discussed and practised .

Part 4 leads the learners step by step through the process of writing a short formal essay of 1, 500 words . This is the most important writing task for *Practical Writing* . Students are required to integrate the appropriate writing skills into this comparatively long piece of writing .

Academic Writing, also has eight units, each consisting of four parts, and focuses on writing an academic paper .

Part 1 (Units 1 - 7) discusses the different modes of supporting the central topic or idea . Narration, description, definition, exemplification, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, and classification will be modelled, discussed, and practised in turn . Although separate parts are devoted to each, it would be helpful to remember that while these modes may stand alone as a complete passage or composition, in a longer piece of writing, different modes will combine to achieve the desired purpose .

Part 2 (Units 1 - 8) deals also with the features of good English writing, but with an emphasis on academic style . Such topics as academic style, coherence, using borrowed information, giving credits, and compiling a bibliography are discussed and practised .

Part 3 (Units 1 - 7) also discusses the processes of writing, with the emphasis on the processes of writing an academic paper . All necessary steps such as preliminary reading, note taking, writing an outline, preparing introductions and conclusions, and incorporating outside resources, etc ., will be discussed and practised .

Part 4 (Units 1 - 8) guides the students through all the necessary steps of writing a 3, 000-word term paper on a topic of some academic value . Having completed a 1, 500-word essay, students are now required to write an even longer paper to practise the necessary skills of selecting a topic, organizing the ideas in good logic, and explaining these ideas with idiomatic, fluent, and standard English .

For **Parts 1** and **3** in Unit 8, four sample academic papers are provided as models . Part 1 analyses the entire process a student writer employs to complete a research paper . Part 3 provides three academic papers from different sources: the first one is a 3, 000-word term paper written by an English major senior at the University of International Relations in Beijing, the second one is a research paper written by a university student in the United States, and the third one is a paper published in a famous

academic journal . It is hoped that these models will inform the students more about the process of writing, the overall organization, and the layout of an academic research paper .

Finally, let us hope that we will all find the course a rewarding experience and the course book a helpful resource .In the duration of this course , any opinions and suggestions will be most welcome and highly valued .It is hoped that close co-operation between users of this course book, be they teachers or learners, will make advanced English writing a successful and meaningful learning experience .