



Logic and Expression Skills in Applied English Writing

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Abstract: Applied English writing is the core module of English teaching in higher vocational colleges, which is directly related to students' workplace communication ability and employment competitiveness. Based on the teaching practice in higher vocational colleges, this paper analyzes the core of logical construction and expression norms of applied English writing. In view of the problems existing in students' writing, such as logical confusion, blunt expression and irregular format, this paper puts forward practical skills from three dimensions: logical framework construction, language expression optimization and scene adaptation training. The research shows that strengthening the logic design of "purpose-oriented", standardizing the expression principle of "conciseness and accuracy" and paying attention to the practical training of "professional scenes" can effectively improve the practical English writing ability of higher vocational students and lay a solid foundation for workplace communication.

Keywords: applied English writing; writing logic; expression skills; higher vocational English; workplace communication

1. Core Connotation and Value of Applied English Writing

Taking "solving practical problems and meeting workplace needs" as the core, applied English writing covers business letters, workplace reports, email communication, notices and announcements, with three characteristics: practicality, standardization and purpose. Different from academic writing, its core value is to achieve efficient communication, requiring clear, concise, logically organized and properly formatted content. Under the employment-oriented concept of higher vocational education, this ability is essential for students engaged in cross-border e-commerce, international trade and other related fields. It directly affects workplace communication efficiency and career development, making it a key and difficult point in higher vocational English teaching.

2. Common Problems in Applied English Writing of Higher Vocational College Students

2.1 Chaotic logical framework and lack of purpose

Some students do not clarify the communication purpose before writing and lack a clear logical thread, resulting in redundant content, unclear hierarchy and unremarkable key points. For example, business emails do not follow the logic of "subject-request-suggested action", and workplace reports lack data support and logical deduction, making it difficult for readers to quickly obtain core information and violating the requirement of efficient communication.

2.2 Stiff language expression and insufficient accuracy

Firstly, influenced by Chinese thinking, literal translation leads to rigid sentence patterns. For instance, the direct translation "please reply as soon as possible" does not conform to the euphemistic expression habits in English workplace. Secondly, improper vocabulary use and frequent grammatical errors, such as confusing similar words like "affect" and "effect" and wrong use of tenses and voices, reduce the accuracy of information transmission.

2.3 Lack of format standards and insufficient adaptability

Applied writing has strict format requirements, but students generally have weak awareness of standardization: business letters omit salutations or signatures, email subjects are unclear, and reports lack necessary modules. Some students ignore scenario adaptation: colloquial expressions are used in formal correspondence, while overly complex sentences appear in daily communication, resulting in inconsistency between style and context.

2.4 Lack of practical content and disconnection from workplace reality

Students' writing mostly relies on textbook templates without considering workplace needs, leading to vague and untargeted content. For example, product promotion emails fail to highlight advantages, and work plans only list theoretical measures, which are hardly applicable to real work scenarios.

3. Logical Construction Skills in Applied English Writing

3.1 Clarify communication objectives and identify core requirements

Before writing, clearly define “why to write”, “to whom” and “what effect to achieve”. For example, a complaint letter should emphasize facts, impacts and demands; an invitation letter should specify key information of the activity. The 5W1H method can be used to sort out core information and ensure writing stays on track.

3.2 Establish a standardized framework and regulate content hierarchy

Build standardized frameworks for different genres: (1) Business email: subject – salutation – opening – main body – closing – signature; (2) Workplace report: title – abstract – introduction – main body – conclusion and suggestions – references; (3) Notice: title – salutation – main body – signature. A standardized framework helps reduce difficulty in writing and ensure clear structure.

3.3 Strengthen logical cohesion and improve coherence

It is essential to use linking words appropriately, including those for cause and effect (therefore, as a result), contrast (however, nevertheless), progression (furthermore, in addition), listing (firstly, secondly), and summary (in conclusion, to sum up). In this way, connections between sentences and paragraphs can be natural, and the logical chain can be made clear and coherent.

4. Expression Optimization Skills in Applied English Writing

4.1 Vocabulary selection: accurate and practical, avoid redundancy

Prioritize high-frequency workplace words and professional terms instead of archaic or redundant expressions, e.g., use “use” instead of “utilize”. Combine industry-specific terms such as L/C (letter of credit) in international trade and “fulfillment” in cross-border e-commerce to enhance professionalism.

4.2 Sentence optimization: concise and varied, avoid stiffness

Use simple and compound sentences as the main structure, with appropriate complex sentences to avoid redundancy. For example, simplify “Because the project was delayed, we need to adjust the schedule” to “The project delay requires schedule adjustment”. Properly use passive voice and idiomatic English to avoid Chinglish.

4.3 Format standards: conform to genre and convention

Key points for attention: (1) Salutation and Signature: For business correspondence, the form “Dear Mr./Ms. + Surname” shall be adopted. A polite closing should be used at the end, and the signature must contain all necessary information. (2) Email Format: The subject line shall be concise, and the main body shall be divided into well-organized paragraphs with clear logic. (3) Report Format: The writing shall include core components; data and graphs shall be clearly labelled, and the format shall be optimized in accordance with relevant industry practices.

5. Practical Paths to Enhance Applied English Writing Ability

5.1 Carry out professional scenario-based training

Practical training tasks shall be designed in combination with professional characteristics: for the International Trade major, simulated foreign trade correspondence shall be conducted; for the Cross-border E-commerce major, product description and customer communication email writing shall be carried out; and for the Tourism Management major, training on writing scenic spot-related documents shall be provided. Furthermore, real enterprise cases shall be introduced to enable students to assume professional roles in completing writing tasks, thereby enhancing the pertinence and practicality of the training.

5.2 Establish a diversified feedback mechanism

Adopt the model of “teacher evaluation + peer assessment + enterprise tutor guidance”: teachers comment on the logical framework and format standards; peers evaluate language expression and content integrity; front-line enterprise staff assess workplace adaptability. Furthermore, an online writing platform is utilized to assist in detecting grammatical errors and improve revision efficiency.

5.3 Cultivate a habit of regular accumulation

Guide students to build a “workplace English material bank”, classify useful expressions, analyze excellent samples,

and follow industry English websites and cases. Continuous daily accumulation improves flexibility and adaptability in writing.

6. Conclusion

Applied English writing ability is an important part of higher vocational students' core workplace competitiveness. Its improvement requires both logical construction and expression optimization, closely combined with professional scenario needs. Targeting students' prominent problems, strategies such as clarifying communication purpose, building standardized frameworks, optimizing language expression and strengthening scenario training can help students master practical writing skills. In the future, higher vocational English teaching should further strengthen workplace orientation, integrate applied writing into training and enterprise practice, continuously improve students' writing ability and workplace adaptability, and support the cultivation of applied English talents.

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