

# Enhancing Logical Ability in College English Writing for Effectively Narrating Chinese Stories

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## ABSTRACT

In the complex and ever-changing international situation, to create a favorable international environment for the development, China needs to step out into the world, and effectively narrate its stories so that the world can understand its spirit and culture. However, to enable English-speaking countries to truly understand the Chinese nation's aspirations for peace and common development, it is necessary to narrate Chinese stories in a manner that aligns with Western thought patterns. Nevertheless, the current state of English writing among university students is not optimistic. Students exhibit chaotic logical thinking in English writing, with errors in the main framework of sentences, paragraphs lacking prominent themes and clear hierarchy, and an unreasonable organizational structure of the text. To address these issues, this study explores pathways to enhance the logical abilities in college English writing, aiming to assist students in improving their thinking skills in English writing. The ultimate goal is to cultivate a core group of individuals capable of effectively narrating Chinese stories and spreading China's voice for the nation.

**Keywords:** Logical ability, College English writing, Chinese stories.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

*The Report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China* pointed out the need to “accelerate the construction of China's narrative system, effectively tell China's stories, disseminate China's voice, and present a credible, lovable, and respectable image of China.” Effectively telling China's stories is an important way for the world to understand China, which contributes to creating a favorable external development environment for the country. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized, “The key to friendly relations between nations lies in the closeness of their people, and the closeness begins with the youth.” Every young person, especially university students, should shoulder the historical mission, serving as the main force in disseminating China's voice. However, currently, university students have great difficulty in effectively telling China's stories. When they tell China's stories in English, there always appears problems like low quality, insufficient content, and chaotic logic, resulting in unsatisfactory storytelling effects. This has significantly diminished the country's soft power in external communication.

The underlying reasons are closely related to various issues commonly encountered by university students in English writing. These issues have significantly constrained their ability to effectively tell China's stories in English. Among them, the most prominent is the lack of logical awareness and insufficient ability in English writing. Due to the differences in the ways of thinking between the East and the West, many students often suffer from interference from the logic of their mother tongue while writing. This usually makes them fail to express their ideas from the perspective of international readers, let alone accurately convey the deep connotations of Chinese culture in a cross-cultural context. Therefore, this paper is dedicated to exploring ways to enhance students' logical ability in college English writing. The improvement of college students' logical ability can be done through innovations in the contents and methods of the teaching of English writing. By doing that, the research strives to cultivate high-quality main forces capable of effectively telling China's stories for the country. The improvement of writing logic will enable students not only to “speak out” but also to “speak clearly”. Thereby they can carry the

responsibility to tell China's stories to the world. It is also hoped that this research can provide some insights into the field of college English writing.

## **2. CURRENT RESEARCH STATUS AT HOME AND ABROAD**

Given the significant importance of writing, scholars both domestic and overseas have conducted extensive research on enhancing English writing proficiency. Research efforts vary in focus across regions. Foreign scholars tend to emphasize the integration of theory with practice, with many attempting to combine English writing instruction with research in fields such as English linguistics, psychology, education, and applied linguistics, in order to explore the inherent laws of improving English writing skills. Domestic scholars, on the other hand, have focused more on how to enhance students' writing abilities through improved English writing teaching techniques. In recent years, innovations in writing teaching methods have emerged in abundance, yielding significant achievements, such as the process approach and genre-based teaching method.

Undeniably, numerous research outcomes have emerged in this field. However, upon in-depth analysis, it is not difficult to discover that many issues still urgently need to be addressed. For instance, although domestic studies have varying degrees of focus on the role of multicultural education in writing instruction, aiming to enhance students' ability to effectively communicate in a multicultural environment, the so-called "point-to-point" teaching methods are still predominantly employed in instruction. The focus of teaching content lies in solving problems related to a specific word, sentence, or genre. Although to a certain extent, this indeed can help improve students' writing skills, it fails to address the issue fundamentally. Therefore, research on college English writing requires a perspective more comprehensive and systematic. The practice to only focus on improving students' some specific skill is neither effective nor advisable. The training of students' logical ability in English writing should be attached greater importance.

Based on the above mentioned, this thesis explores the problems that college students face in English writing and analyzes the root causes. Based on that, attempts are made to find solutions by sorting out the differences in writing logic between the East and the West and innovating the teaching contents and methods of college English writing.

Through this research, the thesis hopes to provide reference for the teaching of college English writing and contribute to cultivating the main force capable of effectively narrating Chinese stories.

## **3. LOGIC IN COLLEGE ENGLISH WRITING**

### ***3.1 Fundamental Elements of the Writing Logic***

To have a clear logic in English writing, writers are supposed to take fundamental elements such as a well-defined theme, a lucid exposition and a reasonable structure in consideration. These elements are interrelated and complementary, together forming an English essay which is logically rigorous.

A well-defined theme is essential for a good English article. Every English article, regardless of its genre, necessitates a distinct and consistent theme that permeates throughout. The theme serves as the soul of an article, because of which each word, sentence and paragraph is tightly integrated. There is no doubt that a well-defined theme can guarantee the article a logical coherence. And therefore, readers will find it easy to follow the author's idea.

A lucid exposition is another crucial manifestation of logical coherence in college English writing. By lucid exposition, it is meant that the writer should articulate his ideas in a well-structured and coherent way. With a lucid exposition, writers are able to show the readers an exclusive clue by presenting a very clear topic sentence and its supporting details. Hence, the logic relations among sentences with a paragraph are clearly displayed to readers, which effectively improve the readability and persuasiveness and make the reading much easier and more enjoyable.

A reasonable structure is one another important guarantee for the logical coherence of college English writing. To write a good English essay, writers are supposed to have the ability to arrange a reasonable structure based on the needs of the article's type and theme. There are various types of structures for writers to show their writing logic, such as causal structure, comparative structure, total score structure, and the forth. The structure is a way to organize writers' idea and its supporting details. A reasonable structure requires writers to have an overall perspective to ensure the rigorous layout of the essay. Through delicate transitions

and connections, a close logical connection is formed between the various parts.

While writing, it is better for writers to constantly focus on the elements above. Through continual practice and reflection, they are bound to enhance their logical abilities so as to produce more outstanding English compositions.

### ***3.2 The Important Role of Logical Ability in Telling Chinese Stories***

The importance of students' logical ability in English writing is self-evident. An article lacking in logic, even if it possesses flowery language, may become a disorderly accumulation of details, leaving readers unable to grasp the key points and confused. However, due to differences in culture and values, there are significant disparities in writing logic between China and the West. These differences can lead to inadequate expression in English writing by Chinese college students, and worse, may cause misunderstandings between different cultures, resulting in serious consequences. Influenced by traditional Chinese culture, many students are accustomed to adopting a spiral thinking approach. They are used to laying the groundwork firstly, presenting arguments around the theme, and finally presenting their own viewpoints. This way of thinking can easily lead to the central idea being placed at the end in English writing, which does not conform to the writing norms of English argumentative essays. Therefore, when writing English articles, learners should avoid the interference of the logic of their native language and ensure that the article's logic conforms to the thinking mode of international readers. By doing that it can help international readers understand the ins and outs of the events being told, break down cultural exchange barriers caused by differences of thinking ways, and let the world understand China better. And this is precisely the key to telling the Chinese story well. Therefore, improving students' logical ability in writing is of great significance for cultivating the main force of telling Chinese stories well.

It is believed that an essay that conforms to English thinking logic can greatly reduce reading barriers for international readers and enhance their reading experience. Following it, readers may better understand the writer's viewpoint, which cannot only greatly trigger their thinking, but also let them resonate with the writer's emotions, and ultimately identify with the writer's viewpoint. If writers can use a structured writing framework that

aligns with western logic to carry Chinese culture, there will be many benefits. Generally speaking, it can enhance the infectiousness of written expression and more accurately and vividly express the essence of Chinese culture, which can help international readers better understand and accept what writers relate. By doing that, Chinese stories may be more easily go into readers' heart in international communication, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of dissemination. On the contrary, if the logic of the article does not conform to readers' thinking way, readers may completely feel confused and lost while reading. They may even develop a sense of frustration, and finally give up reading. What's worse, this may lead them to misunderstand Chinese culture, resulting in adverse consequences.

### ***3.3 Analysis of Students' Logical Ability in College English Writing***

#### ***3.3.1 The Lack of Logical Awareness and Ability***

In the process of writing, the issue of lacking logical awareness and ability is particularly pronounced. Upon investigation, it is evident that the East and the West have totally different ways of thinking. Without training, it is difficult for students to get rid of the interference from thinking way of their native language during the creative process. Furthermore, the teaching of college English writing lacks effective training and enhancement in students' awareness and ability. The primary manifestations of that are as follows:

Firstly, there is usually a lack of a clear theme in college students' English writing. Specifically, this is manifested in students' failure to establish a well-defined theme in their writing. It will make them fail to express their idea clearly, and hence cause readers to feel confused and unable to understand their true intentions.

Secondly, the structure of the text is chaotic. Students usually focus too much on their language expression when writing and neglect the overall structure of the essay, which make them unable to reasonably layout the essay according to what the theme needs. This will lead to a lack of logical coherence, even logical discontinuity and contradiction. One of the prominent issues is the awkward and unnatural transitions between paragraphs. Students are more likely to overlook the intrinsic connections between paragraphs when writing, resulting in the fragmented and statements.

This rigid connection not only destroys the overall layout of the essay, but also makes it difficult for readers to understand and grasp writers' true intention while reading.

The third issue is the lack of coherence in the discourse within a paragraph. Each sentence within a paragraph has its own function, either serving as the main idea of the paragraph or functioning as supporting sentences. But students who lack writing logic training usually do not understand the interlocking logic between sentences. While writing, what they do is not to reasonably organize information but to focus on how to write enough words to satisfy the requirements of their teachers. This leads to disorderly arrangement, complexity, and unclear organization of content within paragraphs, and weakens the overall persuasiveness of the article.

Fourthly, the grammar structure of sentences is not standardized. Grammatical errors are also an important factor affecting the logic of English writing. There is no question that grammar is the rule of English language, which determines the correct combination of words and the legality of sentence structure. However, some students often ignore grammar rules when writing, which will result in their chaotic sentence structures and frequent grammatical errors. This undoubtedly seriously affects readers' reading experience and even lead them fail to understand writers' intentions.

The logic of college English writing is manifested at multiple levels, including sentences, paragraphs, and entire article. And it is influenced by numerous factors. Only by fully recognizing the deficiencies in students' logical awareness and ability can targeted measures be taken to effectively address them. Thereby a clear, coherent, and organized logical structure can be realized. This ensures that college students are well-equipped to effectively tell Chinese stories.

### *3.3.2 Problems in Logic Teaching*

The current issues in the teaching of writing are quite complex, and primarily revolve around a lack of awareness, the constraints of teaching resources and conditions.

Firstly, most teachers of English writing cannot realize the significance of writing logic, which leads to a one-sided focus on grammar training and vocabulary practice in class.

Additionally, some teachers possess a limited grasp of theoretical knowledge and have an incomplete understanding of the cognitive differences between Chinese and Western ways of thinking, which naturally hinders their ability to comprehensively and systematically assist students in enhancing their writing logic skills. Furthermore, the teaching methods employed in writing classes are monolithic, with an emphasis on morphology and syntax, lacking guidance in logical thinking. This approach often leads to a situation where teachers dominate the classroom, with low student participation, which will usually result in a dull and monotonous class. Consequently, students become apathetic in their thinking and inept in their expression. Under such circumstances, they are unable to truly perceive the artistic allure of writing, making it challenging to enhance their proficiency in writing.

Thirdly, the scarcity of class hours also poses a significant problem. College English writing instruction for non-English majors occupies a relatively small portion of the overall university curriculum. Some institutions do not even offer separate college English writing courses, with writing instruction merely being an add-on to the general college English curriculum. However, in the current situation, the reduction in college English classes, coupled with numerous teaching tasks, leaves little to allocate for logic training. This tight schedule leaves teachers powerless, unable to implement systematic writing instruction, let alone improve writing logic. Even in institutions that offer writing courses, the scheduling is extremely limited, typically consisting of only 16 classes. However, cultivating logical thinking in writing requires long-time guidance and training.

In summary, it is evident that the logical competence in English writing among university students in China is currently severely lacking, rendering them incapable of shouldering the significant responsibility of effectively narrating Chinese stories. There is an urgent need to enhance the logical ability in English writing among university students.

## **4. PATHWAYS TO ENHANCING LOGICAL ABILITY IN COLLEGE ENGLISH WRITING**

To genuinely enhance students' logical thinking abilities, educators must embark from multiple dimensions, devise and implement a series of specific and targeted measures.

#### **4.1 Comparing Chinese and American Literary Works**

Comparing Chinese and American literary works holds significant importance in enhancing students' logical abilities in English writing. Such a comparison enables them to gain a clearer understanding of the cultural backgrounds and cognitive differences between Western and Eastern nations, thereby facilitating better cognition and determination of logic and perspectives in English composition. Different countries possess distinct cultures, which significantly influences people's ways of thinking and linguistic habits. These differences can be intuitively comprehended through a comparison of Chinese and American literary works, which will contribute to improving logic in English writing. For instance, in English-speaking countries, expressing viewpoints often favors brevity and directness. There are strict structural requirements for sentence, paragraph, and article layouts. In contrast, Chinese literature tends to favor a more indirect and subtle way of expressing oneself, with less stringent structural demands, emphasizing the concept of "form scattered yet spirit united". Mastering these cultural commonalities greatly benefits students in grasping the grammar and thinking patterns of English writing.

Simultaneously, teachers can lead students in the reading of English original works. As a language learning resource, English originals serve as a crucial avenue for students to understand the culture, history, and society of English-speaking countries. Through reading English originals, students can be exposed to the most authentic and genuine English. It not only aids students in appreciating the beauty of the language but also effectively guides them in the in-depth study of the cultural values of English-speaking nations, which is beneficial for enhancing the coherence and depth of their narratives in English writing. During the teaching of original readings, students can be organized into groups to discuss and express their understanding of the text's intent and writing logic, and to create mind maps. This allows students to consciously exercise their English writing skills and logical thinking abilities during the activities, assisting them in addressing issues related to a lack of logical awareness and proficiency in English writing.

#### **4.2 Innovating Teaching Content and Methods**

It is proposed that teachers should offer a course on logical training to enhance the proportion of logical instruction. It is necessary for teachers to firstly assist students in understanding the importance of logic in writing by guiding them to comprehend the fundamental elements of writing logic through methods such as analysis, comparison, induction, and deduction. In addition, students should be encouraged to observe the dialectical relationships between words, paragraphs, sections, and the coherence among sentences. That will enable them to grasp the author's writing structure. For instance, paragraph structure training should be one of the key components of logical training in writing. Paragraphs, as the fundamental units constituting an article, play a pivotal role, the organization of which will have a strong impact on the logical coherence of the entire article. Teachers can assist students in understanding the context of paragraphs through typical analyses, such as teaching students how to expand detailed discussions around the topic sentence and how to utilize transitional words and sentences to reflect the logical relationships between paragraphs.

Incorporating writing logic training into writing practice is also an effective approach to enhance students' logical abilities. By designing a variety of writing tasks, teachers can improve and refine their writing logic. This allows students to avoid interference from their native language through explicit cognitive training, thereby comprehensively enhancing their proficiency in English written expression.

Furthermore, teachers should attempt to innovate the evaluation methods for college English writing. When assessing students' English compositions, apart from focusing on the expression of words and sentences, teachers should also pay attention to whether the writing logic is scientific and reasonable, and whether the overall layout aligns with English-style thinking. In addition to teachers' evaluations, peer reviews and mutual assistance among students can also be encouraged, along with regular discussions. This approach not only encourages students to actively think and helps them identify their own blind spots but also fosters a community of mutual teaching and learning. Through mutual exchange and collaborative exploration, students can enhance their awareness of English writing logic and

gradually deepen their understanding and application of the elements of writing logic.

### **4.3 Promoting Extracurricular Activities**

Teachers can collaborate with relevant departments in the school and regularly organize extracurricular activities, by which it can create conditions for enhancing students' logical thinking and promoting learning through competitions. For instance, they can conduct competitions such as narrating Chinese stories in English, English speeches on patriotic themes, and translation contests. By doing that students are encouraged to engage in creative writing that incorporates elements of Chinese history, culture, science and technology, as well as modern and contemporary development.

Additionally, students can be encouraged to organize English corners to tell Chinese stories in English. A sub-topic can be set in each week, such as aerospace technology, and announced in advance through the school's online platform. Students participating in the English corners can write articles ahead of time, narrating the stories of China's aerospace technology development. These activities allow for individual exchanges and can also set up a stage for showcasing, providing students with an opportunity to challenge themselves and step forward. Teachers can take turns serving as mentors for the English corners. At the end of the activities, timely summaries and evaluations of students' performances and logical expression issues can be provided. These extracurricular activities provide students with a practical platform. They not only effectively enhance students' comprehensive English expression abilities, including logical thinking, but also significantly improve their ability to effectively narrate Chinese stories. Compared to traditional classroom teaching, extracurricular activities, with their competitive and interactive nature, create a tense yet lively atmosphere, which can further stimulate students' interest and motivation to actively improve their English writing skills, as well as their reading volume, reading level, and depth of reading of traditional Chinese stories. Encouraging reading, thinking, writing, memorizing, and bold imagination can cultivate students with high English writing abilities, enabling them to spread Chinese stories and culture, thereby better serving the promotion of Chinese culture to the world.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

English writing serves as both a medium for international communication and a window for cultural exchange, presenting an excellent opportunity to showcase China to the world. Telling Chinese stories well is an effective method for disseminating Chinese culture. The integration of the two can further advance the internationalization of Chinese stories, making them more profound and persuasive. By enhancing the logical reasoning skills of college students in English writing, universities can cultivate a core group adept at narrating Chinese stories. This approach aligns with the educational objective of improving students' comprehensive English proficiency and follows historical trends. It responds to the national call, assisting college students in shouldering the historical mission entrusted by the era. Meanwhile it also effectively promotes the mutual reference and integration of Chinese and Western cultures. This study not only provides valuable references for college English writing instruction but also contributes to fostering cultural exchange and understanding. With the widespread application and continuous improvement of these strategies in practice, college students' English writing skills and cross-cultural communication abilities will be significantly enhanced, enabling them to better undertake the historical mission of disseminating Chinese culture and narrating Chinese stories effectively.

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