



INVESTICE DO ROZVOJE VZDĚLÁVÁNÍ

**ACADEMIC WRITING COURSE SPRING 2013**

**SESSION 3**

(selected activities)

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In collaboration with  
*University Language Centre*

- 1. GUEST SPEAKER LECTURE – CREATIVE WRITING AND SOME OF ITS STRATEGIES IN ACADEMIC WRITING BY Mgr. Pavla Kopečná, PhD**
- 2. LANGUAGE PRACTICE (take-home task): WRITING ENQUIRY EMAIL, WRITING SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION**

## KEY TO EXERCISES SESSION 2 (answers marked yellow)

### 3. Complete the following tables.

formal	informal
appear	seem
ascend	climb
assist/aid	help
cease	stop
commence	begin
consume	use
decrease	shorten/reduce
demonstrate	show
depart	go
desire	want

formal	informal
enquire	ask
finish	end
inform	tell
obtain	get
preserve	keep
reject	say no
release	free
repair	mend
require	need
reside	live

formal	informal
comprehension	understanding
deficiency	lack
opportunity	chance
perspiration	sweat
residence	house
vision	sight
amiable	friendly
complete	whole
energetic	lively
fortunate	lucky

formal	informal
immature	childish
incorrect	wrong
inferior	worse
inexpensive	cheap
indistinct	dim
insane	mad/crazy
relaxed	laid back
responsible	in charge
sufficient	enough
vacant	empty

### 4.

Use more formal alternatives to the words in bold. Make any necessary grammatical changes.

- The book is **mainly** concerned with the problem of policing the internet.
- Almost** every school in the county had reported problems with the new system.
- The work of the Institute is not **only** devoted to cancer research.
- Basically**, we believe we have demonstrated a significant link between the two events.
- We **tried** to find a new way of understanding the data.
- The study is a **really good** example of the way sociologists collect their data.
- The reaction is **typical** of the way large corporations keep control of their markets.
- There's no way** London can be compared to Sydney as a place to live and work.

1. primarily, principally, essentially, predominantly

2. virtually, practically, essentially

3. solely, exclusively, entirely, totally

4. in sum/to sum up/in summary, essentially, fundamentally

5. attempted, strived for, strived to do

6. prime, chief, primary, principal, fundamental

7. characteristic, representative

8. In no way/respect can London be...

**5. In the following examples, the same message is expressed in six different styles, from an extremely formal written style, to the very informal spoken one. Match the sentences with the adequate styles.**

- a) Jargon, very formal.
- b) Written, formal, clear.
- c) Written style for the general public (scripted radio or TV news style).
- d) Formal spoken style (seminar, talk).
- e) Informal spoken style (discussion).
- f) Very informal spoken style (chat).

I. As the value of Sterling increased compared to other currencies, the government was forced to take tax measures to head off a rapid increase in consumer spending spurred on by cheaper imports. **(written style for the general public discourse, scripted radio or TV news style)**

II. And you see, Sterling got more and more valuable, so as a result, the government had to go round putting up taxes, you see, to stop everyone going out and splashing out, spending all their money on cheap imports. **(relaxed, simplified chat, very informal spoken style – the addition of repetition and fillers)**

III. Consequent to the appreciation in the exchange value of Sterling against other currencies, necessary fiscal measures were introduced by the government in order to reduce the likelihood of an import-led consumer spending surge. **(jargon, very formal, this is the style of language used in official reports, technical studies; it is exclusively a style of written English, full of verbal nouns, technical words and passives)**

IV. As Sterling went up in value, the government had to put up taxes to stop consumers splashing out on too many cheap imports. **(relaxed, informal spoken style: discussion, there is plenty of prepositional verbs, all actions are expressed through verbs, not verbal nouns)**

V. As Sterling's international value went up, the government had to take tax measures to head off a consumer spending boom spurred on by cheaper imports. **(formal, spoken style – radio, seminar, talk)**

VI. After the international value of Sterling rose, the government was obliged to take fiscal measures to reduce the likelihood of a surge in consumer spending led by cheaper imports. **(written, formal, clear English, as found in the press or in documents aimed at ordinary educated readers)**

(Adapted from: <http://website.lineone.net/~eshp/styles.htm>)

6.

Each word in the box can be used in two ways, one an everyday way, the other a typically academic way. Complete each pair of sentences using the same word for both sentences and making any necessary grammatical changes.

generate turn solid confirm identify underline character pose nature focus

- 1 A She loves to ..... for photographs in front of her fabulous house.  
B The events ..... a threat to stability in the region.
- 2 A It was difficult to ..... the camera on the flower as it was so small.  
B We should ..... our attention on the most important issues.
- 3 A I called the airline and ..... my reservation.  
B The data ..... my hypothesis that animal-lovers enjoy better health.
- 4 A The power plant ..... electricity for the whole region.  
B This issue always ..... a great deal of debate among academics.
- 5 A The murderer was ..... from fingerprints discovered at the scene.  
B In this theory of history, progress is closely ..... with technology.
- 6 A She became interested in ..... conservation.  
B The first lecture in the series was on the ..... of human communication.
- 7 A Jim's a very interesting ..... . I hope you meet him.  
B The book attempts to explain the fundamental ..... of social life.
- 8 A I saw her ..... to her husband and whisper something in his ear.  
B Let us now ..... to the subject of town planning.
- 9 A He always ..... every new word when he's reading.  
B The study ..... the fact that very little research exists.
- 10 A The liquid became ..... as the temperature was lowered.  
B The study lacks ..... evidence and therefore its conclusions are doubtful.

1. pose, 2. focus, 3. confirmed, 4. generates, 5. identified, 6. nature, 7. character, 8. turn, 9. underlines, 10. solid

**7. Here is a paragraph that should be written in a more academic tone. Read it through and underline the parts that need to be rewritten and suggest possible improvements.**

Given the general knowledge of the health risks of smoking, it's no wonder that heaps of smokers have tried at some time in their lives to quit. However, in most cases, their attempts are unsuccessful. People begin smoking, often when they're adolescents, for lots of reasons, including the example of parents and pressure from peers. If others in one's group of friends are starting to smoke, it can be hard to resist going along with the crowd. Once people start smoking, they're likely to get hooked. The addiction to smoking is partly physiological; smokers become used to the effects of nicotine and experience painful withdrawal symptoms when they give it up. In addition, people become psychologically dependent on smoking as a way of reducing anxiety and coping with particular situations.

**8. Identify the informal expressions in the following sentences. Rewrite the following sentences, replacing the informal expressions with a more formal equivalent.**

1. With women especially, there is **a lot** of social pressure to conform to a certain physical shape. (**a great deal**)
2. Significantly, even at this late date, Lautrec was considered **a bit** conservative by his peers. (**somewhat**)
3. It focused on a subject that **a lot** of the bourgeois and upper-class exhibition-going public regarded as anti-social and anti-establishment. (**much**)
4. Later Florey **got together** with Paul Fildes in an experimental study of the use of curare to relieve the intractable muscular spasms which occur in fully developed infection with tetanus or lockjaw. (**collaborated**)
5. When a patient is admitted to a psychiatric inpatient unit, the clinical team should avoid the temptation to **start** specific treatments immediately. (**commence**)
6. Therefore after six months the dieter is behaving according to all twenty-six goals and she has achieved a **big** reduction in sugar intake. (**considerable**)
7. Modern houses have so many labour-saving **things** that it is difficult for the person at home to have adequate exercise by doing chores, cooking, and looking after a family. (**devices**)
8. Simply making the effort to reclaim this wasted **stuff** for fertilizer would have a positive effect on greenhouse releases. (**material**)
9. It is difficult to imagine exactly what is meant by saying that such a classification is natural as any collection of **things** could be classified in this way. (**objects**)
10. Unfortunately, since there are so many possible explanations, the correct one is most difficult to **find out**. (**ascertain**)
11. These exercises can easily be incorporated into an exercise routine, with each exercise **done again** a number of times. (**repeated**)
12. Fleming **did well** in isolating a streptococcus from the cerebrospinal fluid of the patient. (**succeeded**)
13. Effective vaccines prevent such hazards, but only if a social organisation **makes sure** that all potential mothers are vaccinated in good time. (**ensures**)

**Session 2 task – academic email exchange – completed:**

*1. Example of academic email exchange between a PhD candidate searching for a placement with a university of his/her choice and a faculty staff at the questioned university.*

Dear Professor Collins,

Excuse me for approaching you and asking you for your help in the following **matter**: I am **currently** a PhD. candidate at Masaryk University, School of Humanities, Department of English and American Studies. I work **as** a tutor of English for Specific Purposes at the Language Center, Brno, Czech Republic. I **intend** to apply for a Fulbright Scholarship, which would enable me to work on my dissertation at an American university. The award of the scholarship, **however**, is subject to a preliminary consent of an establishment that would be willing to **admit** me. And this is where my request comes in. Is there any chance **of** being offered a **fellowship** at the Gervitz Graduate School of Education? I would be enormously grateful if you could **consider** me as a candidate for **visiting** research student under your **supervision**. The fellowship (up to 10 months) would be covered by the scholarship in question. The **deadline** is unfortunately December 1, 2007 for the academic year beginning in the fall 2008 - I would need a written confirmation from an American scholar that they would be **willing** to supervise me.

In my PhD **dissertation**, I am trying to analyze the structure and language of written medical case reports as a style belonging to the genre of research articles. The text analysis of such reports involves a corpus-based research, **undertaken** primarily from the stylistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic viewpoints. The corpus, which I **am** currently developing, will be approached both from the synchronic and diachronic **angles**. In the **former**, my focus will be on characterization of the genre as it is currently produced by the discourse community of medical professionals. In the **latter**, an emphasis will be placed on the comparison of differences between medical case reports written 1900 - 1906 and those produced nowadays. In the dissertation I will **draw** on developments of both the Slavonic (especially the Prague School - Mathesius, Vachek, Firbas, Danes; among others Tarnyikova, Bakhtin) and Anglo-American (Crystal, Davy, Leech, Fowler, Halliday, Hasan, Swales, Hoey, Bazerman) traditions in the study of language.

Please find **attached** my Curriculum Vitae. If you **require** any additional **materials**, I will be happy to supply them.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

John Smith

personal page of the student: <http://www.john-smith.muni.cz>

Attachment: curriculum vitae

## **2. A sample email answer to the PhD candidate:**

Dear Mr. Smith,

I would be happy to work with you and we would be able to arrange a visiting scholar status for you which will provide you with library space. We will also try to locate desk space for you in a shared office. we will not be able to provide any financial support, but with a Fulbright you should not need that. You do understand that Santa Barbara rents can be high.

I have worked with a number of Fulbright scholars, and currently am working with one from China. I have always found it a rewarding experience.

If you have read my work you are aware my approach is quite distinct from that of the other scholars you cite, focusing more on the social, historical, and activity contexts within genres are used and recognized, with form being a rhetorical response to the situation. So an historical comparison would have both a textual component but also a socio-historical-institutional one, to consider the contexts within which the linguistic forms are deployed.

Is this email sufficient indication of my willingness to work with you or do you need another kind of document? I will be travelling and on holidays for the next two weeks, so I probably cannot do much more than this until near the end of the month.

Yours,  
John Collins

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**3. HOMEWORK: Based on the assignment below**

- **(1) either a formal letter to apply for the scholarship below**

**Studentship Funded Opportunity**  
**School of Geographical & Earth Sciences, University of Glasgow**

The School of Geographical and Earth Sciences at the University of Glasgow, announces 2 fully-funded PhD studentships to commence in September 2013. The funding will cover fees for a 'Home' (UK) or EU-based candidate (£4,500 per annum) and a stipend to cover living expenses equivalent to the current Research Council recommended rate (£13,590 per annum). The funding have been made available through the *Urban Studies* Foundation.

This studentship will be held in the School of Geographical & Earth Sciences, and the successful student will automatically be a member of the Human Geography Research Group (HGRG). Applicants can consult the HGRG web-pages for information on staff research interests [<http://www.ges.gla.ac.uk:443/research/groups/humangeography>].

The expectation is that the student would commence their studies in **September 2013**.

Send your enquiries and letters to Dr John Browne, Reader in Geography, School of Geographical & Earth Sciences, University of Glasgow, Glasgow G12 8QQ,  
(or contact: [john.browne@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:john.browne@glasgow.ac.uk) tel: 0141-330-5171) by **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2013**.

We would aim to make a decision and inform the successful applicant by the end of **July, 2013**, at the latest.

- ***or (2) en email as the first contact to the university to ask whether you would be a suitable candidate for them (see the email activity as done for homework )***

***As for the structure of a formal letter of enquiry you may follow a fairly set order of information established in the English language written communication:***

- salutation
- state your reasons for applying for the scholarship; give information on yourself and your academic research and pedagogical achievements
- describe your current dissertation project and research background
- describe your future goals
- say how you will contribute with your research to the host institution
- say how you will use the achievements after you have returned to your home institution
- use a suitable ending where you state your reference/references, contact details and enclose attachments



