



What studying in English actually means...

Academic English: A foreign language for everyone

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Welcome

**How many of you
are UG?**



**How many of you
are PG?**

**How many of you have been previously educated in the UK
or through the medium of English?**



What concerns, if any, do you have about studying through the medium of English at Cambridge?

FIRST
THINGS
FIRST

It's important to know that...



Academic
Language...

'...is no-one's
mother tongue'

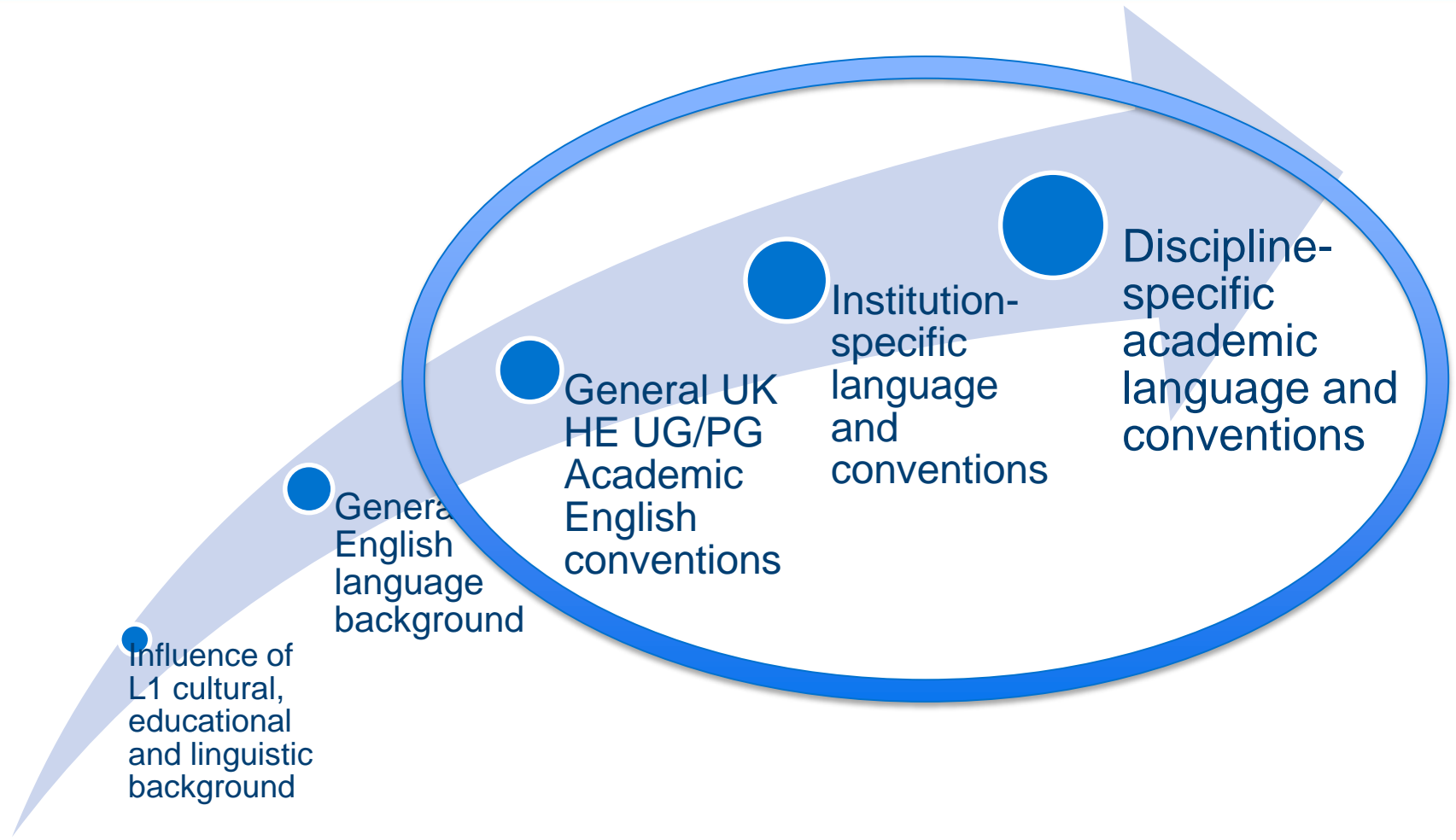
Academic (writing) skills are not innate ...

They need to be **actively** learned, practised and **continually** trained and honed ...

– even for native speakers.



All language is *contextual*

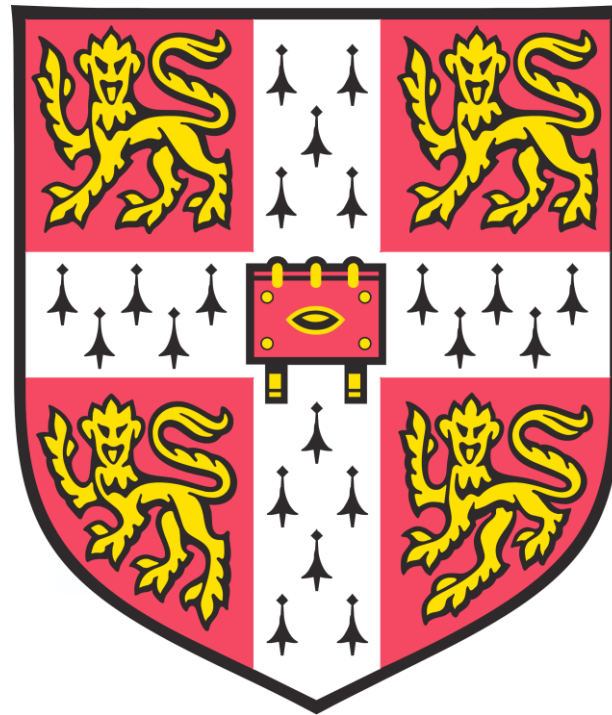


What we are going to look at:

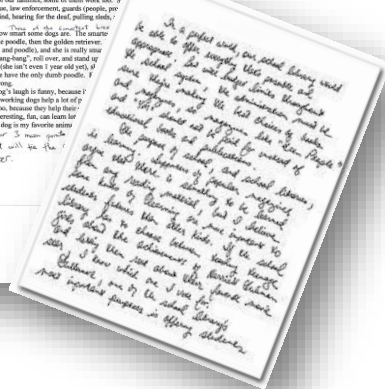
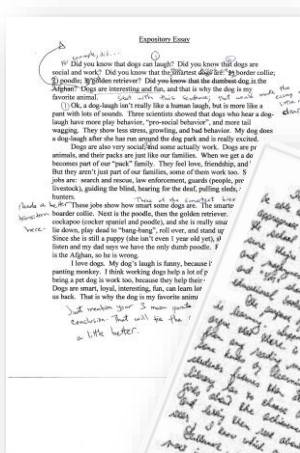
The way we teach, the assessment methods we use, the emphasis on independent and self-directed learning may be very different to what you are used to.

- ① recognize the challenges that studying in English will pose;
- ② understand the approach and conventions of academic English, which may vary quite considerably from those of your first language; and
- ③ Identify the learning strategies that you can employ in order to meet these challenges and fulfill your academic potential.

Three Types of Shock



So – what will be expected of you?



NAME	DATE
John Doe (Dr. Gregg N. Yard)	2/2/2002

The Preparation of Aspirin

The purpose of this experiment is to synthesize aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) from salicylic acid and acetic anhydride.

OC(=O)c1ccccc1 + CC(=O)OC(=O)C $\xrightarrow{\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4}$ CC(=O)OC(=O)c1ccccc1 + CC(=O)O

salicylic acid 2.0 g 0.014 mole acetic anhydride 5.0 g 0.024 mole acetylsalicylic acid acetic acid

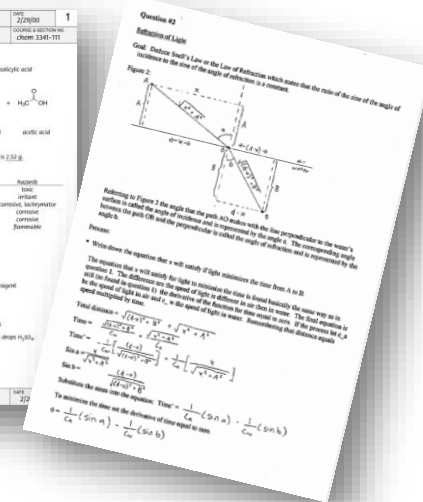
The limiting reagent is salicylic acid. The theoretical yield of acetylsalicylic acid is 2.32 g.

Physical Data*	emp.	lit.	density	refractive index	boiling
salicylic acid	158	152.0	—	at 20°C, n _D 1.562	156
acetyl salicylic acid	180	175.5	—	at 20°C, n _D 1.516	176
acetic anhydride	102	—	1.08	—	139
acetic acid	60	—	1.049	—	118
salicylic acid	98	—	1.44	—	195
ethyl acetate	88	—	0.90	—	77

*Data from CRC, 9th ed.

Calculations:
2 g salicylic acid (1 mmol) is 0.014 moles
5 g acetic anhydride (1.8 g/mol) is 0.011 moles
5.4 g (1 mmol) is 0.011 moles
Thus salicylic acid is present in the lesser molar amount and is the limiting reagent
Therefore the theoretical yield of acetylsalicylic acid is 0.014 moles, or
0.014 moles (162 g/mol) = 2.32 g

Procedure:
From: Experiments for Organic Chemistry, Chem 314L, Spring 2000, pp. 20-25
1) Weigh salicylic acid and acetic anhydride in a 125 mL Erlenmeyer flask, add 5 drops H₂SO₄.
2) Heat on steam bath for 10 min, then cool.
3) Add 50 mL water and cool on ice.
4) Collect product by vacuum filtration.
5) Air dry the crude product crystals and determine its molar yield.
6) Recrystallize in the few short steps on the next page.



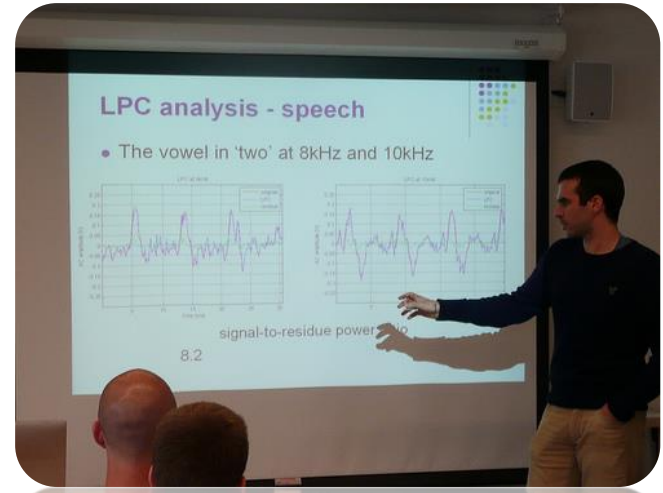
Weekly supervision essays

Lab Reports

Thesis



Weekly supervisions



Presentations

These are the two main ways you will be assessed...



But of course there will also be lots of these...



And not forgetting....



Emphasis on independence and self-centred study...



... where *Critical Thinking* is key





**WHO WHAT
WHERE
WHY WHEN
& HOW**

Bloom's Taxonomy

create

Produce new or original work

Design, assemble, construct, conjecture, develop, formulate, author, investigate

evaluate

Justify a stand or decision

appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, critique, weigh

analyze

Draw connections among ideas

differentiate, organize, relate, compare, contrast, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test

apply

Use information in new situations

execute, implement, solve, use, demonstrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch

understand

Explain ideas or concepts

classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate

remember

Recall facts and basic concepts

define, duplicate, list, memorize, repeat, state



Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching

**And, of course,
everything's in ...**

construct
bridges, roads, etc.
English adj 1 of the
language Δ n 2 the
Britain, Ireland,
the US, Canada
tries Δ pl

In terms of English language proficiency...



...you have all already met or exceeded the University's **minimum** English language requirements.

A silhouette of a person performing a high jump over a bar against a sunset sky. The person is in mid-air, with their body arched over the bar. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and casting long shadows. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds. The high jump bar is supported by two vertical posts. The overall scene is dramatic and evokes a sense of achievement and challenge.

ONLY THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENT

It's not simply a case of ...

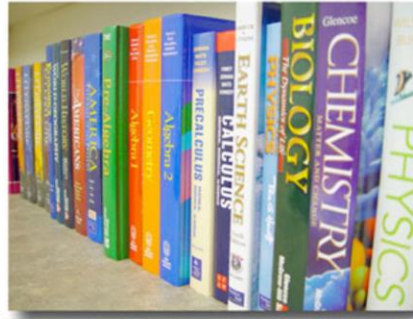
English
Language



Subject
Knowledge



ACADEMIC
SUCCESS



In linguistic terms...

**Mechanical
Manipulation**



**Extent of
communication
competence**

It's *studying in English* – which is more like this:





Academic English

But what is 'academic English'?



Well...

- Developing an argument
- Linking theory and evidence
- Drawing a conclusion
- Analysis
- Being critical
- Developing a central idea
- Processing information
- Incorporating facts
- Using correct terminology
- Using of evidence to support an argument
- Using primary texts
- Using quotations
- Acknowledging work previously done in field
- Presenting in a logical order
- Using analytical interpretation
- ***And so much more ...***

So, it's not just about
the language...



There are no grammatical patterns or **lexical** items in *academic English* that do not appear in *general English*.

KEY WORD: **ACADEMIC**



Academic English...

...is the type of English that the **Korean** researcher uses to communicate their ideas to the **Brazilian** researcher at a conference in **Moscow**.



A blue-tinted photograph of water ripples. In the center, a single water droplet is captured mid-splash, creating a small crown-like structure. Concentric ripples emanate from this central point, spreading outwards across the surface of the water. The lighting highlights the texture of the water and the clarity of the droplet.

KEY FEATURE:

CLARITY

The background is a vibrant blue with a complex, swirling, and marbled texture. The colors range from deep, dark blues to lighter, almost white highlights, creating a sense of movement and depth. The overall effect is reminiscent of a close-up of water ripples or a microscopic view of a mineral surface.

**But being clear can
be difficult....**

especially in writing.

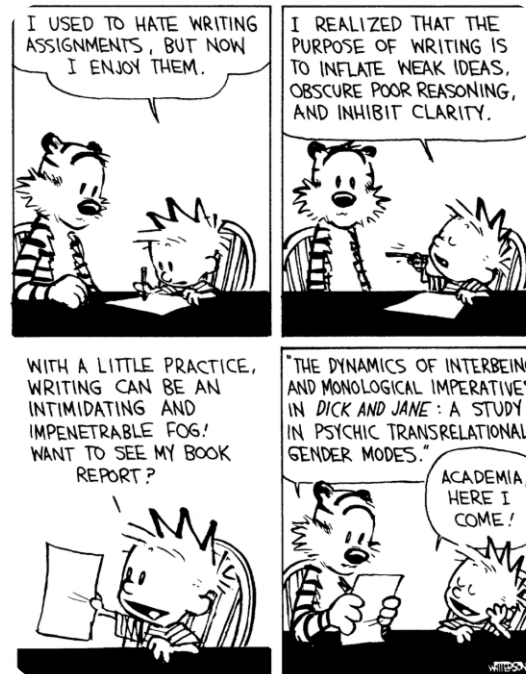


Well, **writing** is not just
about, well, **the writing**..

New Area
=
More Difficult

Complex Writing
=
Deep Thought ?

The Unavoidable
Problem of
Inexperience



But mainly it's because we ...



But
wri
wh
un

Ou
to
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ge

It involves starting,
progressing and,
finishing
**a complicated
and challenging
set of tasks.**





It requires you to activate **lots of different skills**, sometimes at **different stages** and phases in the process, **sometimes all at the same time.**

It's important not to lose sight of the fact that all academic writing starts with **flawed, incomplete, vague hunches, ideas and concepts.**



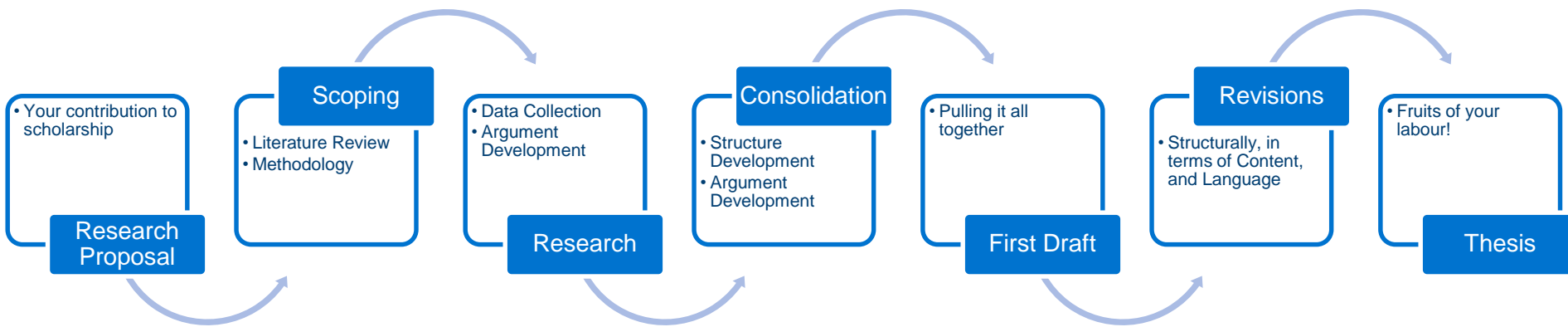
But the key is to exploit its
revisability:

this then allows you to come full
circle, to revisit ideas, to explore
the same things in different ways,
to revise, and to reconceptualise ...



*– all of which are arguably central to the essence of
scholarship itself.*

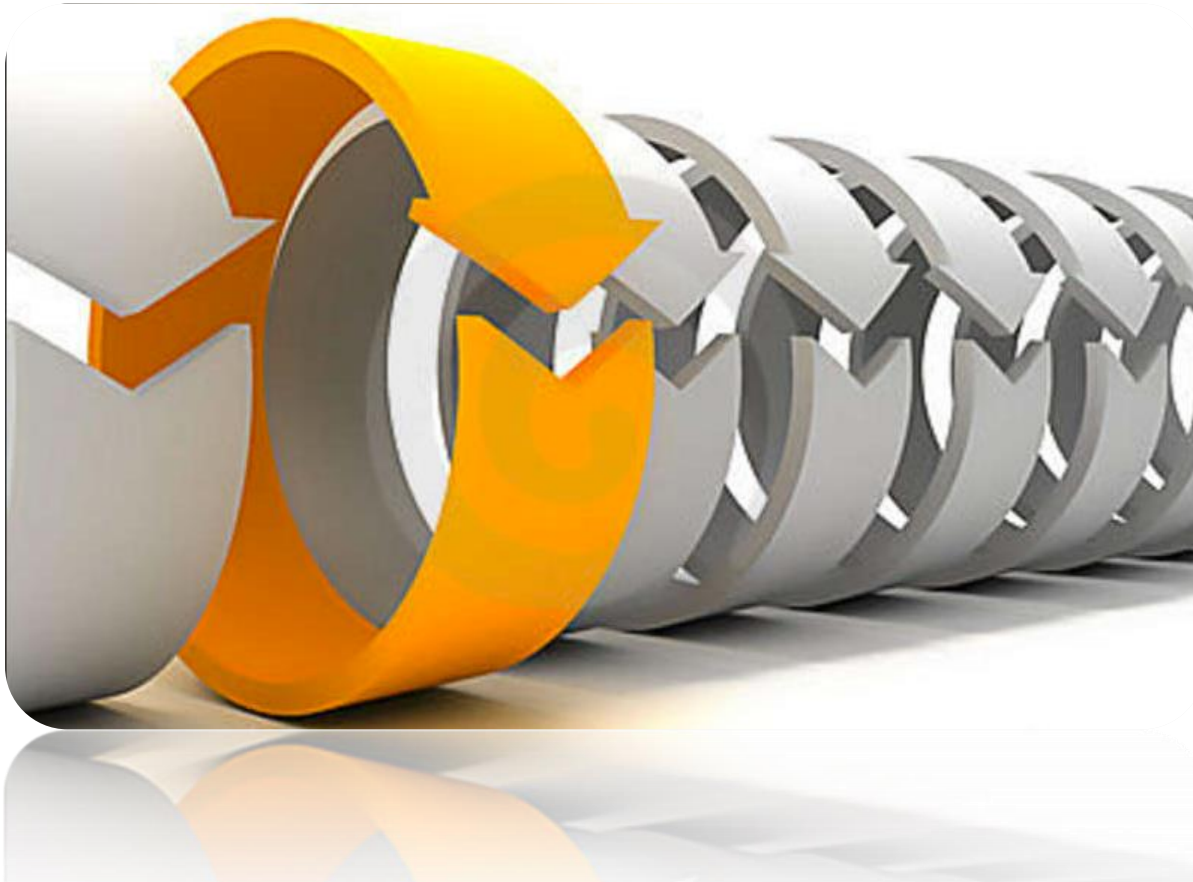
Academic Communication is a *process*



... since the process is more *cyclical*



In fact, each stage could be said to be cyclical itself...



So, critical thinking at every stage is vital



And, of course, there's the external constraint of...

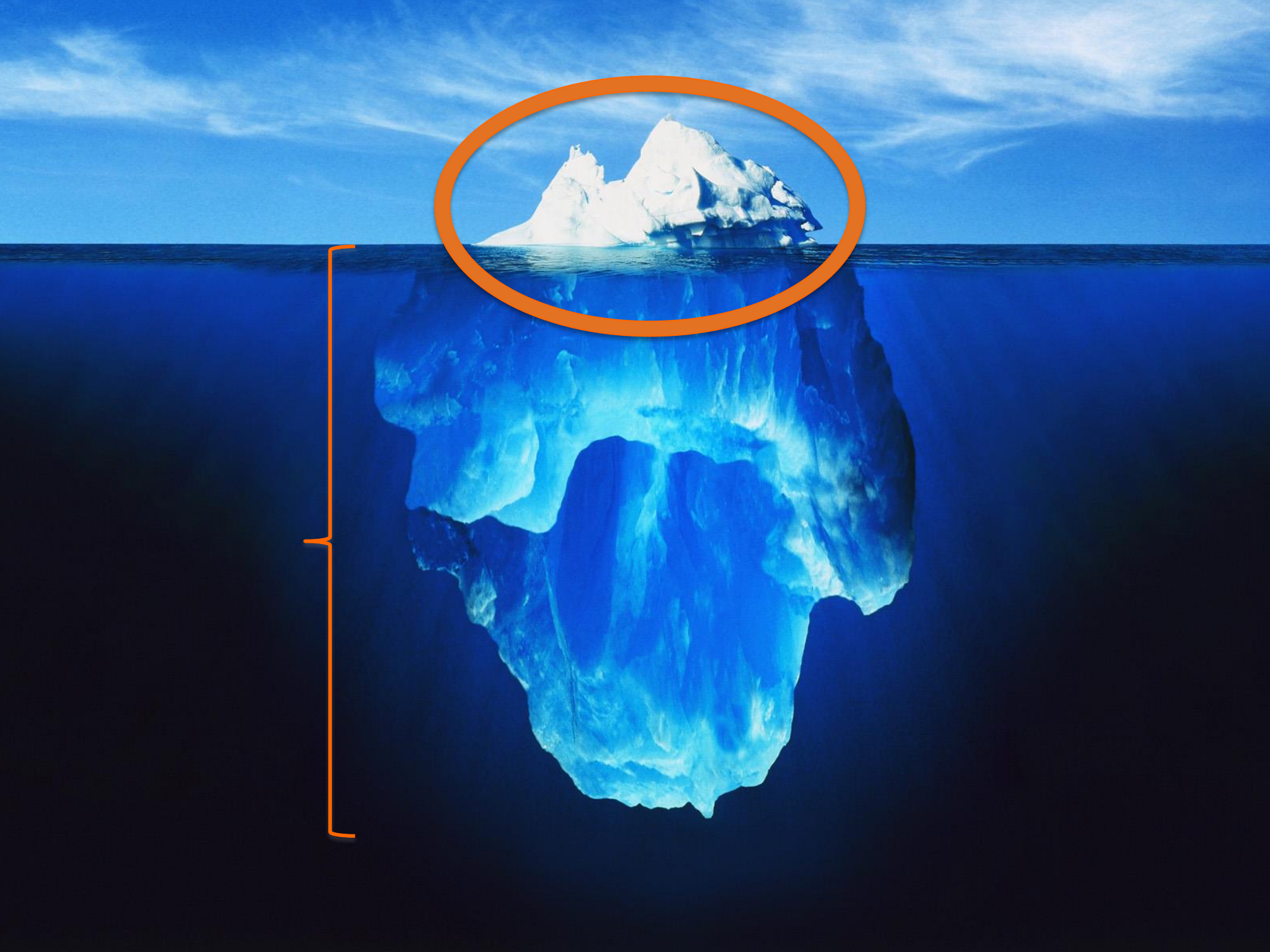


Don't forget
that writing
is a
Process



‘I always try to write on the principle of the iceberg. There is seven-eighths of it under water for every part that shows.’

Ernest Hemingway



**It is important to write at every stage
in the process**



Write to *Remember*
Write to *Understand*
Write to *Gain Perspective*

**Thinking in written form is more useful,
more sustained, more... thoughtful**

In fact, you never stop writing...

- ① To take notes
- ② To draft out ideas
- ③ To consolidate ideas
- ④ To outline sections
- ⑤ To draft drafts
- ⑥ To edit drafts
- ⑦ To continually edit
- ⑧ And on, and on, and on...



When English is not your L1...

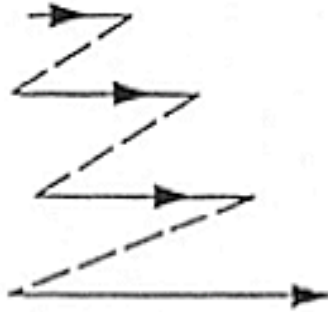
Cultural Influence on Language

Contrastive / Intercultural Rhetoric

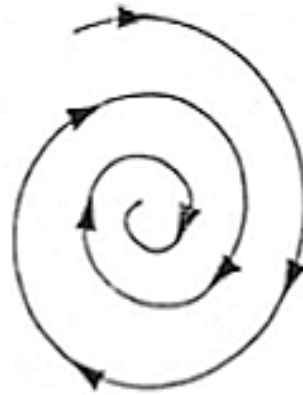
English



Semitic



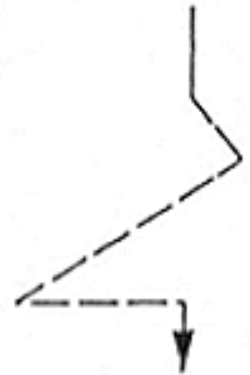
Oriental



Romance



Russian



Kaplan's *doodles*



- But what are these ‘*expectations of the native reader*’ ?
- Where have they come from?
- How can the (L2) student adopt them?

Cultures do not write using the same assumptions, strategies and goals.

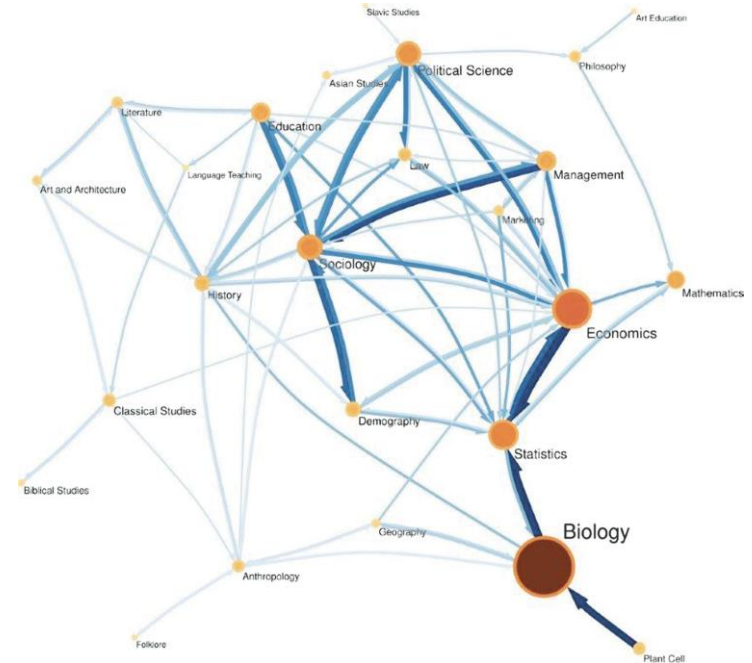


Developing arguments is a culturally embedded topic: different cultures have different ways of approaching the initial formation and development of an argument.

And there are different kinds of *cultures*...



NATIONAL



DISCIPLINARY

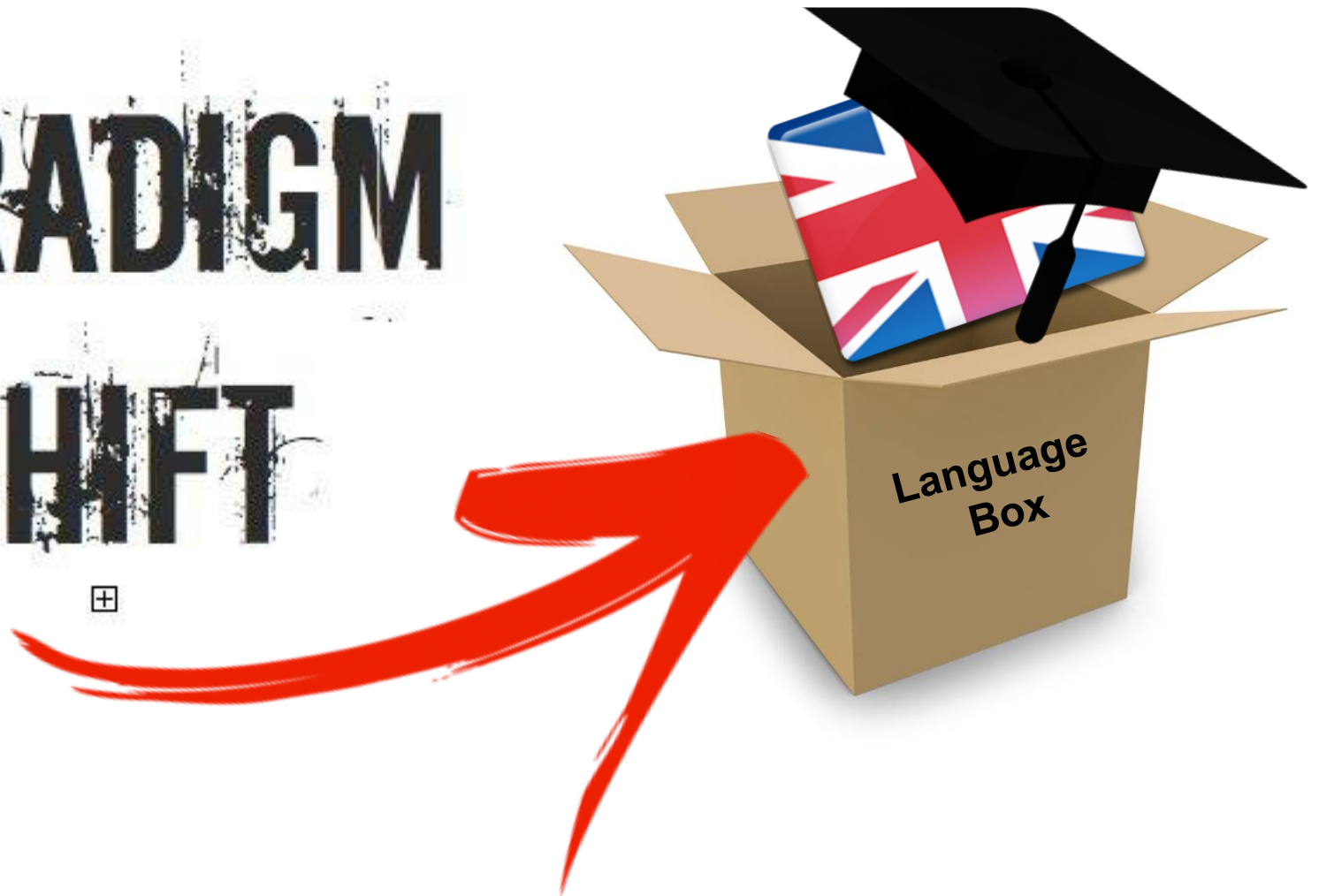
Remember our box?



YOUR SUBJECT

PARADIGM

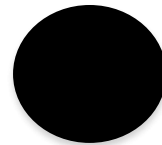
SHIFT



Awareness-raising to address this:

**TO LOOK AT HOW (ACADEMIC)
ENGLISH WORKS**

BLIND SPOT



**AND, MORE
IMPORTANTLY, WHY.**

Conceptual Foundations of English

**Rhetorical
Heritage**

**Writer
Responsible**

**Low
Context**

Linear

Rhetorical Heritage



Logic is not universal –



It is **culturally defined**.

The **language** and
related approach to
expression of...



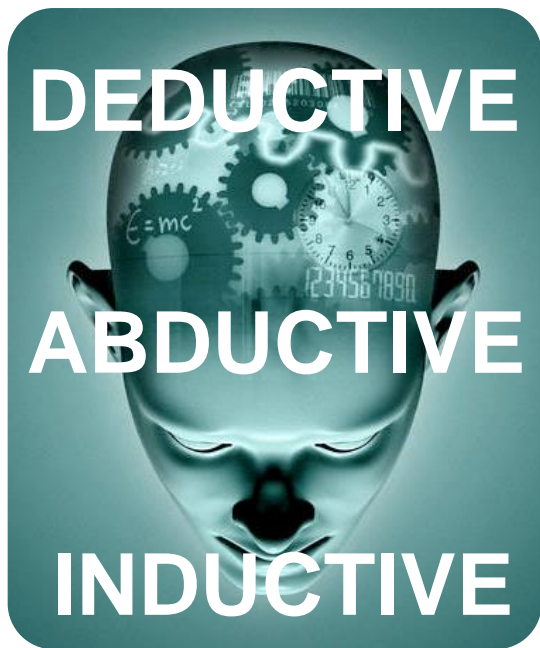
... have evolved out of
the **Anglo-European**
cultural pattern.

The expected **sequence**
of thought in English



is essentially a **Platonic-**
Aristotelian sequence.

Argumentative structural preference



In terms of argumentation, we therefore tend to prefer a **tight chain of reasoning:**



But not all cultures share this preference...

Writer-Responsibility



CLARITY in



STRUCTURE
ARGUMENTATION
LANGUAGE



Source:

John Hinds, 'Reader versus Writer Responsibility: A New Typology', *Writing Across Languages: Analysis of L2 Text*, eds. U. Connor and R Kaplan (Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1987), pp.141-152

What are the differences?



WRITER



- linear
- **parallel progression**
- accumulative
- tight chain of reasoning
- **LOGOS**
- clear and concise
- 3-part structure
- **Unit of composition: paragraph**

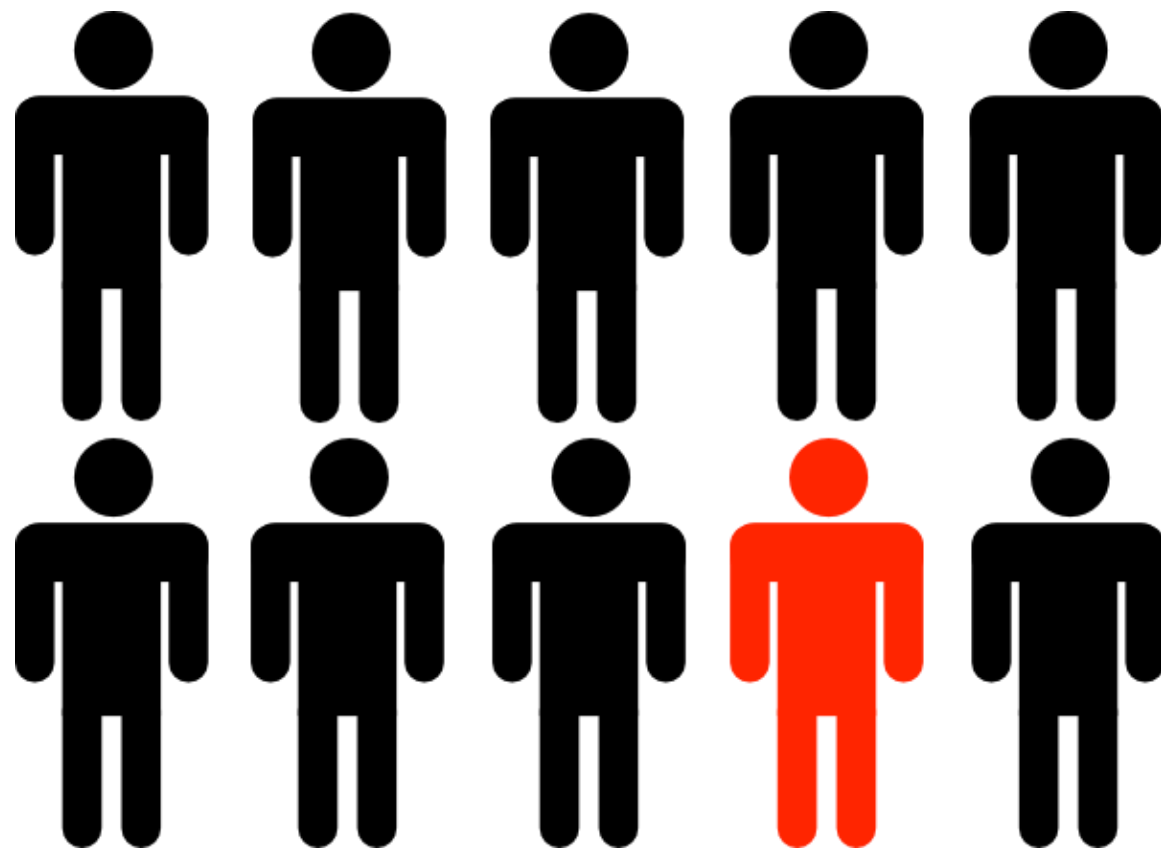
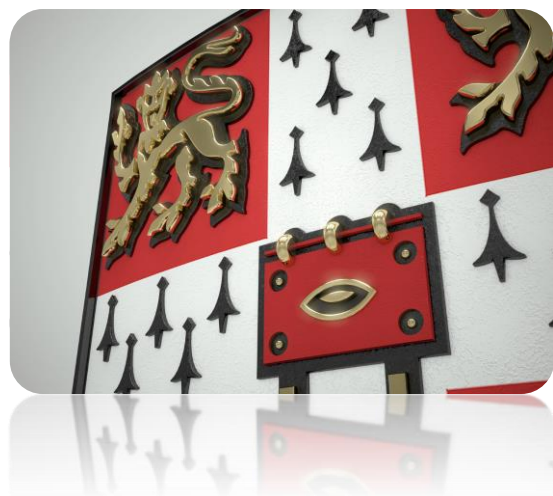
READER



- non-linear or quasi-linear
- **sequential progression**
- tangential
- looser, with richer detail and context
- **ETHOS & PATHOS**
- elaborate and complex
- multi-part structure
- **Unit of composition: larger conceptual blocks**



Why?



Two Examples:

Reader-Responsible Approach



**Fail to prepare
Prepare to fail**

Weight-Time-Importance Allocation



An iceberg floating in the ocean under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The sun is visible at the top center, creating a lens flare effect. The iceberg's tip is above the water, while its much larger, jagged base is submerged. The water is a deep blue, and the sky is a lighter blue with some white clouds.

**CLARITY OF
COMMUNICATION**
in academic English

**CULTURAL INFLUENCES
ON COMMUNICATION &
ARGUMENTATION**

PARADIGM SHIFT





Non-UK

UK

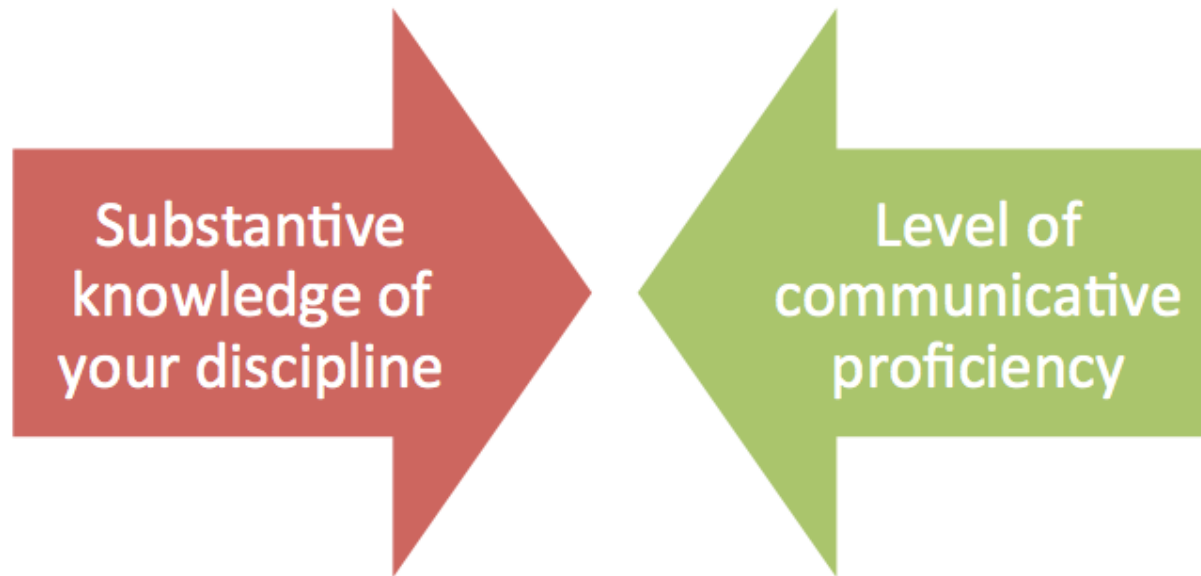


Undergraduate

Postgraduate



But don't forget: It's a Parallel Process...



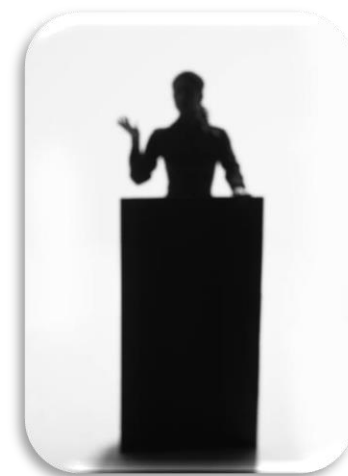
It must not be overlooked, particularly when at university, is that doing good research and becoming an effective communicator, be it in **writing** or **orally**, are not separate processes, but **closely related aspects of intellectual development that need to work in parallel.**

Integrated Approach: Reading to Writing



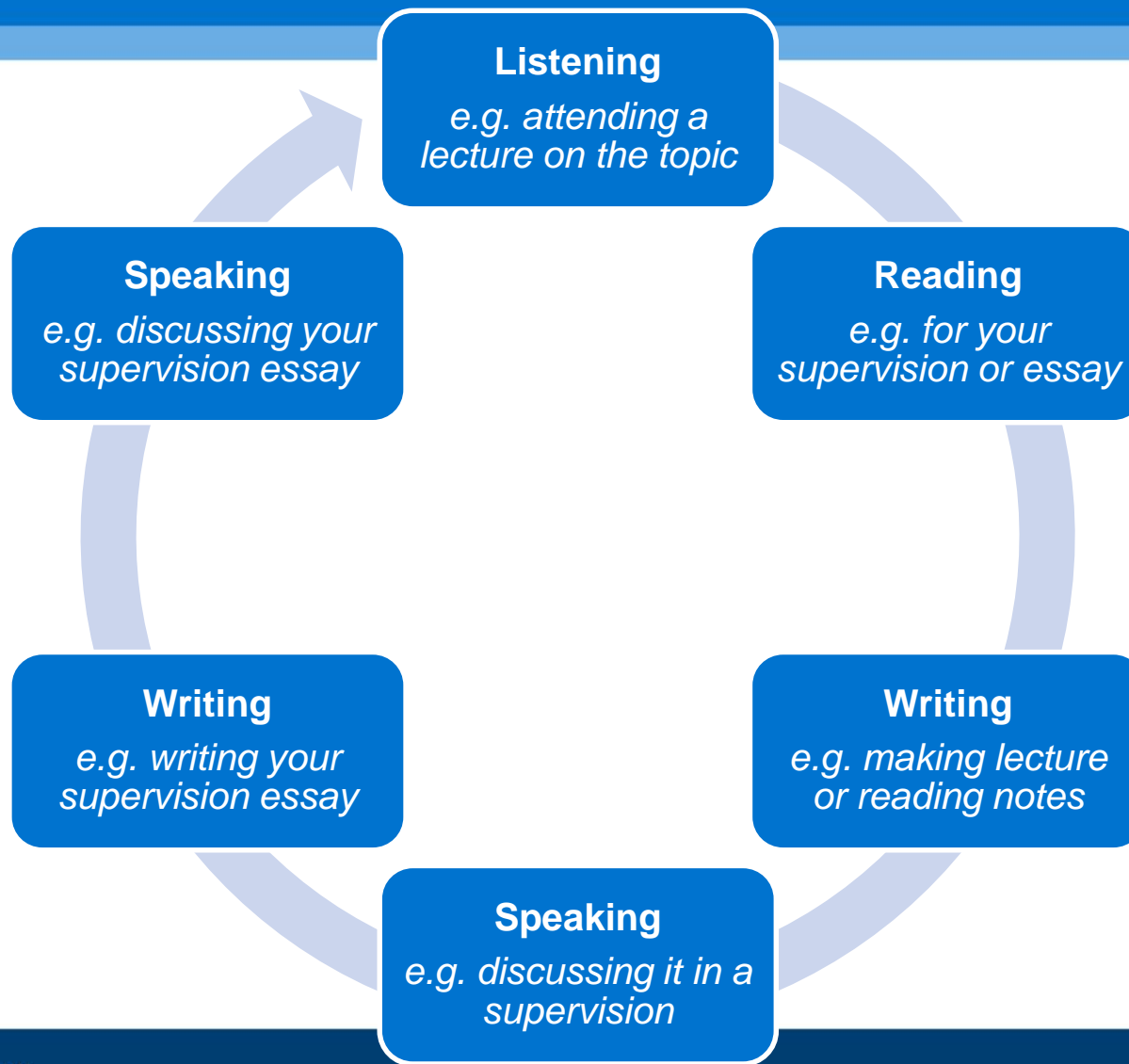
By becoming a **better reader**, you also become a **better writer**.

Integrated Approach: Listening to Speaking

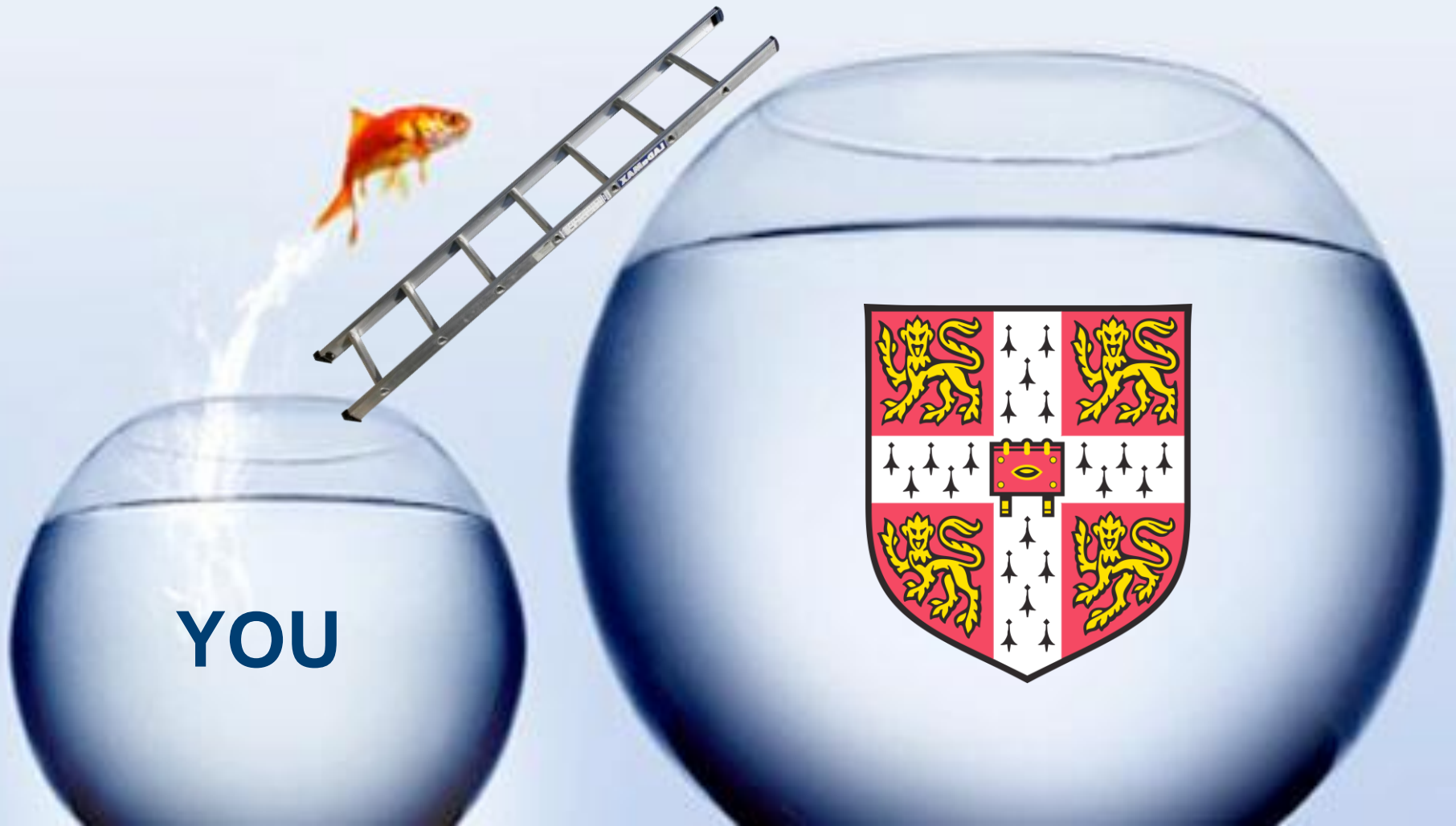


By becoming a **better listener**, you also become a **better speaker**.

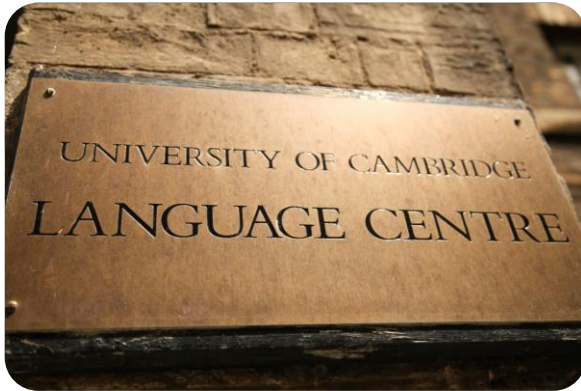
Skills Integration



But help is at hand...



Sources of Support:



Researcher Development Programme

Training and development for Cambridge researchers, including managing research projects and managing your time, as well as opportunities to develop your approaches to communicating, presenting and working effectively in Cambridge's demanding academic cultures. For those who teach, we run short workshops as well as a flexibly structured, accredited 'Teaching Associates Programme'.

accredited 'teaching associates programme';
support for those who teach' we run short workshops as well as a flexibly structured
communication' presenting and working effectively in Cambridge's demanding academic
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Colleges and departments

In-Sessional Support Programme

Academic Development & Training
for International Students
@ The Language Centre

UNDERGRADUATE

POSTGRADUATE

POST-DOC

Workshops – an example:

Reading

Rhetoric

Language of
Argument

Writing

Self-Editing

Writing across
the disciplines

Preparing for
MPhil / PhD
dissertations

Speaking

Pronunciation
& Intonation

Presentation
Skills

Debating

Listening

Note-taking in
Lectures

Listening for
Detail

Skills

Exam
Techniques

Effective
E-mails

Academic
Conventions

Online Courseware

Passport to Study in the UK and at Cambridge

A Preparatory Guide for International Students

What is Academic English?

A Preparatory Guide for International Students



Achieving Clarity in Writing

Home	Academic Writing	Lack of Clarity	EFL	Achieving Clarity	Further Reading
------	------------------	-----------------	-----	-------------------	-----------------

Achieving Approaches to Editing

Achieving clarity in writing is not that is merely the final stage in a starts with the interpretation of t

From a linguistic perspective writ the clarity of the 'end product', p much dependent on the clarity c

So, with that in mind, we need t



General Introduction

We spend a lot of our time writing. When we think we have finished a first draft another process begins. This is the editing process. It begins with **revising and reviewing** the content, organisation and focus and once this is done we move on to **editing and polishing**, to improve the quality of communication and style. Finally, the laborious task of **proof-reading** begins and it may take several attempts before we get it right. Overall, we move from the big picture to the tiny details, from the macro to the micro. In reality these three steps may not occur in a strict sequence but may overlap each other. What we can say for certain is that the final product may look very different from the first draft.

For those of us who plan very well the editing process is correspondingly easier. The kind of questions and principles we apply to the formation of a piece of work, after all, are very similar to those we apply in the revising and reviewing process. Understanding, for example, the audience's expectations, the conventions and criteria we are working with and having good models to learn from all help us in planning and editing our work. An appreciation of cultural differences in academic writing can be important and can affect the relationship we build with a reader.

The aim of this Learning Object is to focus, in a very practical way, on the middle phase of the editing process, that of improving the quality of communication and style.

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Pre-Arr

Welcome to In today's global such as the Uni Your time in the Cambridge's uni what you encour

Introduction

The aims of this Learning Academic English is a vast subje English from the point of view of

The main aim is to invite you to not attempt to cover every last d postgraduate students coming t

The Language Centre



ADTIS Enquiries:
adtis@langcen.cam.ac.uk



ANY
QUESTIONS
?