



SERIE
Archipelago

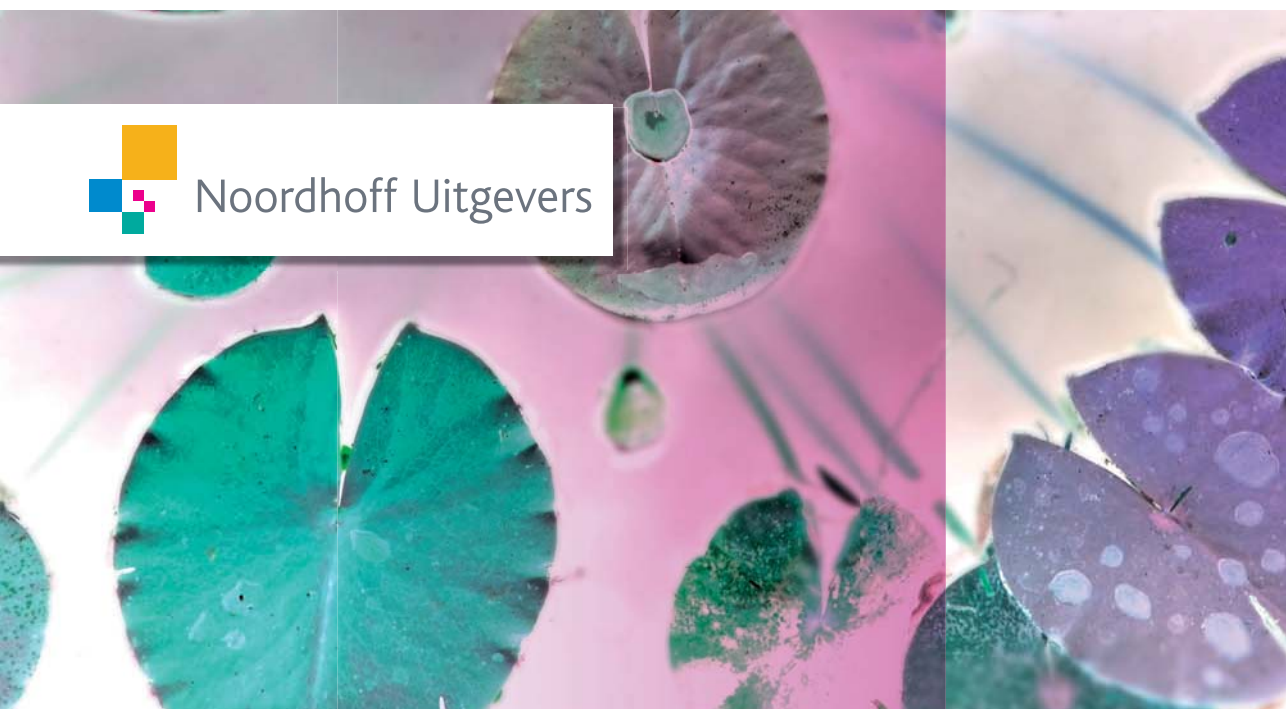
Reading & writing

Maarten Schrevel

Second Edition



Noordhoff Uitgevers



Reading & Writing

Archipelago

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Maarten Schrevel

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About the author

Maarten Schrevel studied English Language and Literature at Groningen University, graduating in 1982. After a couple of years of teaching at several secondary schools in the north and the south of the country, he has worked for the Hogeschool Zuyd in Heerlen since 1984. He has gradually moved from full-time teaching to part-time teaching and part-time project leading tasks, a combination of tasks he enjoys a lot.

He was co-author and editor of *HighTech English*, published in 1994 at Wolters-Noordhoff.

In the *Archipelago*-series he has also written *Meetings*, and he is again the editor of the complete series.

Maarten lives in Maastricht, and is married, with two children.

Preface

The *Archipelago* series of English textbooks is in the first place intended for students studying business skills in Dutch universities of applied sciences. The skills taught, however, are skills students of other types of higher education should also be competent in. After graduation, all these students will find jobs in companies, businesses and institutions. Wherever they go, they will have to be skilled in writing letters, reports and e-mail messages and they will have to be able to participate in meetings, deliver presentations and communicate effectively. Very many of these graduates will find that English is the medium of communication.

For most of the *Archipelago* books, second editions have now been developed. Each of the new books comes with its own website, containing additional material. Those that have not yet been updated will continue to be available until second editions have been produced. The series consists of the following titles:

- *Grammar*, second edition, by Marianne van Vlierden
- *Correspondence*, second edition, by Tobi Ringeling
- *Reports*, by Corné Stuij
- *Presentations*, second edition, by Arnoud Thüss
- *Dialogues*, second edition, by Peter Frambach
- *Reading & Writing*, second edition, by Maarten Schrevel
- *Meetings*, also by Maarten Schrevel.

All the books in the series adopt a similar approach. Each chapter of each book starts with a case study. This case study may demonstrate a certain practice or provide examples of a particular phenomenon. Occasionally it may be a cartoon intended to make the reader think about the topic of the chapter. The rest of the chapter explains the theory, provides examples and gives assignments. All the chapters offer an extensive list of vocabulary and expressions relating to the particular skill taught. Each communication skill is thus approached from various angles. Once students have completed a book, they should be highly competent in that particular skill.

The *Archipelago* series can be used in various educational settings. In the traditional classroom situation, they can be used as standard textbooks. In project work and problem-based learning, groups of students can work with the books and learn all the necessary skills together, supported by their lecturers. In situations where students have to study independently and without the help of lecturers, they will find that the series is suitable for their needs as well. The clear English and numerous assignments (with suggested answers provided on the websites) make the series suitable for any student who is working on his own.

The websites contain a wealth of material. Not only will users find suggested answers to the assignments there, they will also find more assignments, also with suggested answers. All the vocabulary listed in the books also appears on the websites, together with Dutch translations. Depending on the particular communication skill, the websites may contain additional material as well. For example, on the websites dealing with oral skills, there are modules on pronunciation, contracted forms, weak forms and graded speech.

The masculine form of the third person singular is used everywhere in the series, but this should always be read as including the feminine form.

The authors of the *Archipelago* series would like to thank a number of people for their support, co-operation and help.

First, as one of the authors, I would like to thank all the other authors of the *Archipelago* series: we have worked together as a team and in the friendly and co-operative spirit necessary for such an undertaking. Although each book is attributed to a single author, some of the other team members also contributed to them. For example, Tobi Ringeling provided a module on contracted forms, weak forms and graded speech for *Presentations*, *Dialogues* and *Meetings*, and Arnoud Thüss provided the pronunciation module for these three books. Arnoud Thüss wrote the "Searching on the Internet" course for *Presentations*, *Reports* and *Reading & Writing*. Peter Frambach kindly allowed his extensive business vocabulary lists to appear elsewhere, too. Tobi's, Arnoud's and Peter's help is much appreciated, for it has certainly contributed to making the *Archipelago* series more complete and unified. I myself contributed the module on communication theory. Thanks are also due to Arnoud's colleague Wander Lowie for his valuable comments on the drafts of the pronunciation course.

We would also like to give our heart-felt thanks to our partners and families for their constant support.

Finally, many thanks to all the *Archipelago* users who have sent us their remarks in recent years. Their comments have undoubtedly helped to make the second editions even better than the first. We warmly invite all users of the books to send any further comments to us so that we can continue to improve the series.

July 2009
Maarten Schrevel
Author

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How to work with this book

This book in the *Archipelago* series deals with two skills all students at business schools in universities of applied sciences need to be proficient in: reading and writing. While you may claim that you can already read well enough, you may not be reading efficiently enough. The first part of this book aims at teaching you to become an efficient reader, and begins with a short chapter on communication as a system. The second part of the book deals with how to write better English (few students would claim to being good writers of English) and write more effectively.

There are two kinds of readers: those who are learning to read, and those who are reading to learn. This book is intended for readers belonging to the second category. Being able to read English texts well is vital for students at universities of applied sciences because English is *the* language of business textbooks, periodicals and articles. Since many lecturers use textbooks written by British or American writers, you will need to understand them as well as native speakers do.

To read efficiently is to acquire an understanding of the concepts presented by the writer. In the chapters dealing with reading, the reader will learn how to use certain strategies to improve his reading. The reading strategies discussed in this book are scanning, skimming, paragraph analysis, fast reading, sentence comprehension, vocabulary recognition and interpreting illustrations.

Writing effectively is a different matter. It is difficult enough in one's mother tongue, let alone in another language. While a good command of grammar is essential if you want to write well, the right approach is equally important. (This book does not deal specifically with grammar, however: the user is referred to the separate *Archipelago* book *Grammar*, in which a large number of grammatical problems in English are discussed clearly and thoroughly.) This book deals with a general approach to tackling writing tasks. The second part begins with the necessary preparations and continues with detailed instructions on how to structure your paragraphs and chapters. The second last chapter deals with sentence construction, writing clearly and illustrations; the information on writing effective email messages and website texts has been extended here.

The website contains keys or suggested answers to all the assignments, lists of useful phrases and translations, an extra list of business terms and translations (courtesy of co-author Peter Frambach), a short course in searching the Internet and a module on word formation.

All sample texts in this book have been replaced; all except one come from the website of the *Financial Times*. They have also been placed on the website.

There are a number of ways you can work with this book. In the first place, it can be used as a textbook in the classroom. It can also be used in project work (students can study the material and tackle the assignments together), or by students working independently. The explanations have been presented in easy-to-understand language, and should not require a teacher to provide any backup. However, since these are areas that many students may find difficult, if you feel you need additional help, you should not hesitate to ask a teacher for it.

This book deals with the two basic skills of reading and writing. Chapters 2 and 3 deal with reading, chapters 4, 5 and 6 with writing. Chapter 7, finally, is a short chapter dealing with cultural differences. While both reading and writing skills can be worked on independently of each other, a full understanding of the relationship between the two will be gained if the book is studied in its entirety.

Chapter 1

Communication in general

1.1 Communication as a System

1.2 The Communication Path

1.2.1 Internal Interference

1.2.2 External Interference

Summary

For all acts of communication it is advantageous to have some idea of what communication entails and how communication works. Therefore this opening chapter teaches you the essentials of the communicative system, the communication path and of the two sorts of interference that may occur, internal and external interference.

You will learn about senders and receivers, about encoding and decoding the message travelling the communication path, and, most importantly, about the three basic aims of communication, the informative, the persuasive and the stimulating aims.

Case study

Higher Education in Holland: good and cheap

Why don't more British students take a leaf out of the Germans' book and hop over the Channel to Maastricht, especially as they will save money thereby? Maastricht would like them because they would improve the international mix. The university charges £ 1,200 to £ 1,500 a year for tuition to students in the European Union who are under the age of 30. That compares with fees of £ 3,200 a year at British universities. Students on Masters programmes who are under 30 pay the same sum for a one-year Masters degree, which again is a lot less than they would pay in the UK. Many of Maastricht's degrees are in English; loans are available from the Dutch government and there are generous grants, too. Moreover, Maastricht is not that far away, reachable via the Eurostar to Brussels plus another one-hour train ride, so you should not feel that you are in a remote spot far from home. For example, it takes less time to travel to Maastricht than it does to get to Edinburgh.

A European studies student Thomas Kramer, 22, a German, believes Brits should consider it and appeals to their pockets. "You can get by on 20 per cent less money here," he says. But there is another important reason for the British to head to Maastricht and that is the teaching style. As a relatively new university, set up 30 years ago to revive the old coal-mining town, Maastricht adopted problem-based learning. This encourages students to learn by posing problems, teaching one another, making presentations, doing research and working in groups. It makes them into extremely poised young men and women who are international in their outlook because they are mixing with other young people from 50 different nationalities.

Employers love them, according to the staff, because they are so self-assured and good at talking. By contrast, many universities in the UK still use the large lecture for teaching, which means that students learn in a relatively passive way and have minimal contact with academics because they are taught by PhD students. As the president of Maastricht, Dr Jo Ritzen says: "Maastricht is a world-class institution. I am confident that UK students will get an even better education here and for less than half the price in the UK. And our Master's programmes are even better value."

It's not only the fees that are lower in Holland, living costs are also less expensive – estimated at about £ 500 a month. Rents are lower, as are prices of goods, according to Natasja Reslow, a PhD student who got her first degree from the university of Edinburgh and is now undertaking a doctorate in Maastricht. Students live in houses in town or in villages in Holland or Belgium where rents are lower still. This lack of a campus is what distinguishes Maastricht from many British universities – though the university is building one on the other side of the river Maas, which will have halls of residence and

sports facilities. Faculty buildings are housed in lovely old buildings around town. There is an impressively equipped library and a large and cheap cafeteria but students don't have the wealth of student union and other facilities that you will find in the UK. Moreover, if gritty, urban edge is your scene, Maastricht, the town, has less of it than you would get in a British city. But what it lacks in inner-city edge it makes up for in quality of life and cleanliness. You could fry the proverbial German sausage on the pavements of the town. And around Maastricht is gorgeous countryside of rolling hills and unspoilt villages.

Another big difference for the British is that, like other Continental universities and as a Dutch institution, Maastricht does not select its students, except those at its university colleges. This latter institution within the university is another innovation – and would suit ambitious students from the UK who are keen to follow a broad programme of study and spend a semester abroad. “This is very much an open curriculum, so students choose their courses,” says Professor Louis Boon, the dean of the university college. “We get students who come here and say they are interested in psychology and then take a course in economics and find they prefer that.” The college is not unlike America's Brown University or Sarah Lawrence College, he says.

The teaching at Maastricht is legendary, which is partly why so many Germans flock across the border to get the personal attention and English-language courses that are lacking at home. But a Briton would notice the lack of emphasis on research. “Our reputation is mainly in teaching,” says Boon. “In research we have always been struggling to keep up.” The British students at the university tend to be unusual. For example, Alexandra Chorlton, 19, did the International Baccalaureate at the United World College in Wales, and was actively seeking an international university. Ariane Sketcher, 21, grew up in Germany. “Being here broadens your mind and you get to see something else,” she says.

Frank Rowley, 22, who attended Cherwell College in Oxford for his A-levels, chose Maastricht because it was cheaper and closer to Luxembourg where he lives. An Irish student, Julie Martin, 28, believes that Brits should come because it would open their eyes. “With this kind of learning system, you sit down and discuss things with people from other cultures. That really teaches you about the world.” And Glenn Borrett, who already has a degree from the University of the West of England, and is undertaking a second degree at Maastricht, endorses the importance of acquiring an international outlook. Moreover, he won't be clocking up any debts from his degree in Holland, he says. “I have a job at the university, and so do a lot of students,” he says. “It's easy to live here, the social life is good and so is the sport.”

ScienceGuide
23 June 2009

Assignment 1.1

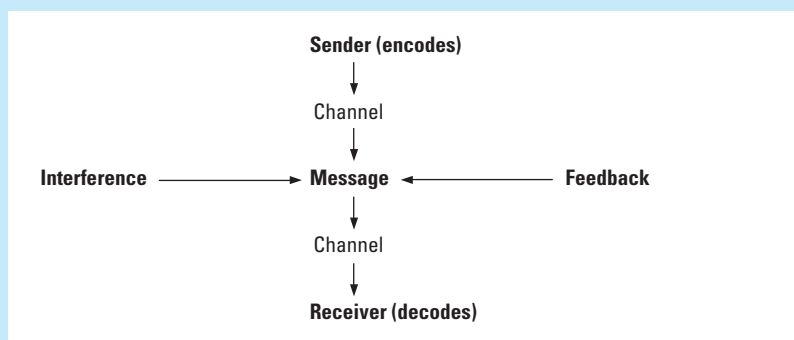
The unknown writer of the case study text tries to persuade potential British students to choose the University of Maastricht for their studies. What words does he use to achieve this?



1.1 Communication as a System

All acts of communication have a number of things in common. There is always a sender, a message and a receiver. The sender encodes a message, the receiver decodes it. The message travels along the channel, where interference may occur.

Figure 1.1 The communicative system



purposes of communication

Communication can serve three purposes. They are the *informative* purpose, the *persuasive* purpose and the *stimulating* purpose. These purposes of communication also apply to written communication. If a writer wants to inform his reader, he will present factual information only. If the writer wants the reader to share his opinion, his purpose becomes persuasive and he will phrase his message differently. If the writer wants the reader to take action, his purpose becomes stimulating. Again, he will use different words and constructions to make his purpose clear.

Whenever he communicates, the sender has one of these purposes (or a combination of them) in mind. The receiver should be able to read the communicative purpose in the message the sender has sent him. This means the writer has to be conscious of his purpose when writing the message. This is the first step in phrasing the message so that the reader reads what the writer wants him to read.

Assignment 1.2

What is the communicative purpose in each of the following statements? Explain your answers.

- 1 In the attached document you will find my project plan.
- 2 The attached document contains the final version of my project plan.
- 3 The student should have what he wants, where he wants it and when he wants it.
- 4 However, the Board of Directors cannot agree with some minor points in the contract.
- 5 We have to make sure the project will be continued.

Assignment 1.3

Write down six statements (different from those in Assignment 1.2) with clear communicative purposes. Two statements should have informative, two persuasive and two stimulating purposes.

sender vs receiver

The sender sends a message to the receiver. It is important for the receiver to understand the sender's message correctly. Therefore the sender has to keep the receiver's position in mind. With writing this means that the writer understands how the reader reads. The sender/writer has to structure his writing so that the reader/receiver easily and quickly understands what the writer is trying to say. In other words, whenever you write, you try to imagine how your reader reads what you have written.

Readers have certain expectations when reading a text. For example, readers expect paragraphs dealing with one subject only, so writers must write paragraphs dealing with one subject only. Readers expect the topic sentence of a paragraph to tell them what the paragraph is about. Therefore writers must write topic sentences that tell the reader what the paragraph is about. (See Chapter 5, section 5.2 for more details on writing paragraphs.) When writers do what readers expect, written communication becomes effective.

1.2 The Communication Path

communication path

The communication path starts with the sender and ends with the receiver. As soon as the message leaves the sender's mind (a process called *encoding*), it travels the channel. The moment it arrives in the receiver's mind (a process called *decoding*), it leaves the channel again. Channels vary considerably. Pen and paper, and postal services are obvious examples. Electronic channels like the internet and email are extremely important these days in written business communication.



Assignment 1.4

List at least five channels for written communication.

In written communication many things can go wrong. The sender may write down things wrongly or may be unclear: this is called *internal interference*. *External interference* is anything from outside that prevents the message (in itself correct) from reaching the receiver correctly.

1.2.1 Internal Interference

*internal
interference*

When the writer puts his message wrongly on the communication path, internal interference occurs. He may, for example, make grammatical or spelling mistakes that cause the receiver to misinterpret the message. He may also construct his sentences in such a way, that they can be interpreted in more than one way. This may result in the receiver reading something different in a message from what the sender intended. This happens, for example, when the sender writes an email too quickly without thinking carefully. As in all kinds of writing, it is also important in email messages to write and spell correctly. Since the writer is the cause of internal interference, he is the only one able to prevent it.

1.2.2 External Interference

*external
interference*

Anything that happens to a written message on its way from sender to receiver may cause external interference. A few examples: a letter may become wet in the rain, so that part of it becomes unreadable. An email server may go down, so that an email simply does not arrive. Usually there is little the sender can do about this. Feedback from the receiver will cause him to quickly send another message.

But the receiver himself may also cause external interference. For example, he finds it impossible to concentrate, or he is bored with the subject of the message.

Assignment 1.5

Mention three situations in which internal interference occurs and three in which external interference occurs. Indicate how you would deal with each occurrence of interference so that the receiver understands the message the way the sender intended.

Summary

In this chapter you have learned something about the basic concepts used in communication theory. Senders send a message to the receiver. Interference may prevent the message from travelling across the channel unobstructed, possibly causing the receiver to decode the message wrongly. The

sender's/writer's aim is always to get his whole message across as accurately as possible. At the same time, it is in the receiver's/reader's interest to decode the full message the way the sender intended it. This interaction between sender and receiver is vital to the (written) communication process.

