

商务英语 阅读辅导用书

Reference Book for
Business English Reading

王 艳 主编



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新世界商务英语系列教材

New World Business English

商务英语阅读 辅导用书

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本套教材面向三个层次：研究生、本科和高职高专。研究生层次的商务英语适用于全国各高等院校商务英语方向以及财经类专业的硕士研究生。整体思路贯彻《研究生英语教学大纲》和《考试大纲》，适应全国研究生英语教学发展的新要求。本套全国高等院校研究生商务英语系列教材由阅读教程、翻译教程、写作教程、听说教程以及配套多媒体课件组成。

本科层次的商务英语教材适用于全国各高等院校英语专业的商务英语方向和国际贸易、国际经济、国际工商管理等商科专业的学生。

高职高专层次的商务英语教材按照教学模式设置，包括语言技能教材和商务谈判、国际贸易实务、外贸英文制单、商务礼仪等商务知识核心教材。

针对本科层次商务英语教学模式和课程设置，商务英语方面的教材涵盖下述三大模块：语言技能、混合模块（语言技能 + 专业知识）、商务专业知识：

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编撰者们不仅具有丰富的语言教学经验，而且具备商务活动的实践经验，或者曾任驻外商务公职，或者获得工商管理、经济学等商科专业的硕士、博士学位。他们集教学经验和专业背景于一身，这是本套商务英语系列教材编撰质量的有力保证。

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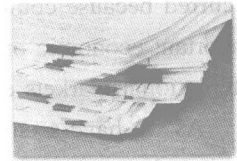
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Chapter 1

Government and Trade

Background Introduction



In the post World War II era the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, or GATT, was an agreement that prompted regular negotiations among a growing body of members to reduce tariffs (import taxes) on imported goods on a reciprocal basis. During each of these regular negotiations, (eight of these rounds were completed between 1948 and 1994), countries promised to reduce their tariffs on imports in exchange for concessions, or tariffs reductions, by other GATT members. When the most recent completed round was finished in 1994, the member countries succeeded in extending the agreement to include liberalization promises in a much larger sphere of influence. Now countries would not only lower tariffs on goods trade, but would begin to liberalize agriculture and services market. They would eliminate the many quota systems — like the multi-fiber agreement in clothing — that had sprouted up in previous decades. And they would agree to adhere to certain minimum standards to protect intellectual property rights such as patents, trademarks and copyrights. The WTO was created to manage this system of new agreements, to provide a forum for regular discussion of trade matters and to implement a well-defined process for settling trade disputes that might arise among countries.

As of 2006, 149 countries were members of the WTO “Trade Liberalization Club” and many more countries were still negotiating for entry. As the club grows to include more members, and if the latest round of trade liberalization discussion called the Doha Round concludes with an agreement, the world market will become increasingly open to trade and investment. [Note: The Doha round of discussions began in 2001 and remained uncompleted as of 2006.]

Another international push for trade liberalization has come in the form of regional free trade agreements. Over 200 regional trade agreements around the world have been notified, or announced, to the WTO. Many countries have negotiated these with neighboring countries or major trading partners, to promote even faster trade liberalization. In part these have arisen because of the slow, plodding pace of liberalization under the GATT/WTO. In part it has occurred because countries have wished to promote interdependence and connectedness with important economic or strategic trade partners. In any case, the phenomenon serves to open international markets even further than achieved in the WTO.

As we have seen, there are many good arguments for allowing free trade among states. Trade helps economies grow and helps produce the most efficient production of goods and services across the globe. One might think that governments would want to encourage this efficiency and would agree to let trade occur unregulated. In practice, however, governments often try to manipulate trade in a wide variety of ways. They do this to achieve a wide array of economic, political, and diplomatic objectives. Government regulation of trade and other efforts over the past five decades to minimize that regulation have had a significant impact on global trade flows, economic growth, and prosperity. For this reason, it is useful to learn about the main ways in which governments have intended to regulate trade and, more recently, to deregulate it. Governments have traditionally tried to manage trade flows in two basic ways: by restricting imports and encouraging exports.

Import Restrictions

Restrictions on imports generally take two forms: tariffs and quantitative restrictions.

Tariffs are taxes that are imposed upon imported goods upon their entry into a country. Tariffs, or import taxes, are usually calculated as a percentage of the value of a given imported product. If the United States imposes a 10 percent tariff on imports of Danish ham, for example, then a merchant bringing a \$100 shipment of Danish ham into the United States would be required to pay 10 percent of \$100, or \$10, to the U. S. government.

Tariff fees are collected for most governments by what is known as a “customs” agency — in the American case, the **U. S. Customs Service**, a division of the **U. S. Department of the Treasury**. Tariffs restrict or discourage imports by making imported goods relatively more expensive than domestic goods. If a company importing \$100 in Danish hams into the United States must pay a \$10 tariff at the U. S. border, that company will be likely to increase the price of those hams in the United States, to make up for the cost of the tariff. Consumers can be expected to consume fewer Danish hams if they cost more than domestic hams, even if the Danish hams are thought to be superior in quality to the domestic hams. Tariffs vary widely from country to country and from product to product within countries. Most countries impose no tariffs at all on some imports, but most imports are subject to at least minimal tariffs. Most U. S. tariffs are very low — less than 3.5 percent, on average.

Quantitative restrictions seek to limit access to imports by making them scarce, which, according to the laws of supply and demand, makes them more expensive. Most countries in the world apply **quotas** to the import of certain goods and services (although applying tariffs is much more common).

Why would governments want to alter the natural flow of international trade by imposing tariffs and quotas? Governments restrict imports for four basic reasons:

1. For some governments, particularly in the developing world, tariffs provide a significant source of government revenues.
2. Every country in the world, including the United States, maintains high tariffs on at least a handful of products for which domestic producers are thought to be vulnerable to foreign competition. This so-called tariff protection is typically imposed early in an industry's life or at moments of weakness or decline, when the threat from more efficient foreign producers is thought to be particularly severe. Once imposed, tariff protection is very difficult to remove, because the enterprises and workers who benefit from it work very hard to keep it in place.
3. Governments use import restrictions to protect domestic health or safety. A government sometimes bans all imports of a particular good when it has reason to believe it could harm public safety or health. For example, the United States recently prohibited all European imports of livestock to protect U. S. livestock herds from foot and mouth disease, which has afflicted large numbers of animals in Europe.
4. Governments also restrict imports and exports for political reasons. Countries wishing to punish or influence the behavior of another country for human rights violations or for an act

of aggression, for example, will sometimes restrict imports from goods producing in the “misbehaving” country. In times of war, adversaries will often prohibit all imports from each other, a measure known as an **embargo**.

Export Subsidies

Governments also regulate trade by providing various kinds of support for export producers. Export subsidies come in a variety of forms, but they have in common a transfer of government funds to domestic firms, enabling them to offer their products or services to other countries at lower prices. The objective of this support is to enable domestic producers to “win” sales by undercutting the prices charged by producers in foreign countries.

Consequences of Trade Restrictions

A combination of tariffs, quotas, and subsidies can serve vital national economic, and sometimes political objectives, but they can also impose significant costs, some of which are not always immediately apparent. Tariffs or quantitative restrictions protect domestic industries and workers from foreign competition by raising the prices domestic consumers must pay for imported goods. In this respect, some argue that import restrictions should be viewed as a tax on domestic consumers. According to some experts, the costs of protecting the jobs of workers in vulnerable industries, which are ultimately borne by taxpayers or consumers, far exceed the potential cost of retraining and finding new jobs for those workers.

According to the US Institute for International Economics, trade barriers cost American consumers \$80 billion a year, or more than \$1 200 per family, in increased prices for goods such as sugar (and foods made with it) and appliances made from steel. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development estimated that in 2004, American consumers paid \$1.5 billion because of U. S. sugar policies. A similar analysis can be applied to export subsidies. Subsidizing exports can cost governments much more money than would programs designed to shift uncompetitive production into more efficient or internationally competitive sectors.

Another criticism of import restrictions and export subsidies is that they discourage the firms and industries benefiting from such policies from making the changes necessary to challenge foreign competition. Once the protected companies have received government support in the form of import restrictions or export subsidies, they may have less incentive to improve their efficiency and management, eventually even becoming dependent on

government support for their survival.

About Text A

After a decade of rosy rhetoric and steadily improving ties, China-Europe relations entered a more complicated phase. While the relationship between China and Europe has developed remarkably quickly and broadly since 1995, it now seems that the relationship may be passing from the “honeymoon” phase into the “marriage” phase of the relationship. Both parties are beginning to realize the complexities of the relationship, the fact that they do not see many issues identically, that outside factors and actors contribute to shaping the relationship — but that mutual areas of common interest and cooperation remain substantial and dominant.

The release in October 2006 of the European Commission’s latest official “Communication” on China, and the accompanying policy paper on EU-China trade and investment, signaled and made explicit many of the concerns about China that had been bubbling beneath the surface in Europe. In the Communication, for the first time in such a policy document, the European Commission made a number of requests of China:

- “open its markets and ensure fair market competition”;
- “reduce and eliminate trade and non-tariff barriers”;
- “level the [commercial] playing field”; “fully implement WTO obligations”;
- “better protect intellectual property rights”;
- “end forced technology transfers”;
- “stop granting prohibited subsidies”;
- “work on clean energy technologies”;
- “be a more active and responsible energy partner”;
- “ensure balance in science and technology cooperation”;
- “[recognize] the international responsibilities commensurate to its economic importance and role as a permanent member of the UN Security Council”;
- “better protect human rights”;
- “[ensure] more accountable government”; be more “results oriented with higher quality exchanges and concrete results” in the human rights dialogue;
- ratify the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- enter into formal dialogue with the EU and “improve transparency” concerning aid policies in Africa; “maintain peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait”;

- improve “transparency on military expenditures and objectives”;
- “comply with all non-proliferation and disarmament treaties”;
- “strengthen export controls of WMD-related materials”.

This laundry list of requests gave the 2006 Communication a harder edge than any of its predecessors, but it also reflected the new sobriety in Europe concerning certain aspects of China's policies and behavior. The European Council ratified the Communication at its meeting on December 11, 2006, and produced its own 23-point list of observations and concerns about the relationship.

These documents took China's government and Europe Watchers by surprise. Both the tone and substance of the documents reflected a departure from the effusive rhetoric and lofty goals set forth in previous Communications, and led some notable Chinese Europe Watchers in Beijing to accuse Brussels of adopting confrontational or “containment” policies similar to what they sometimes perceive from the United States. Privately, Chinese Foreign Ministry officials apparently assured their official European counterparts that they “understood” European concerns and were not overly alarmed by the tone or the substance of the Communication. The Chinese decision to move ahead with negotiations on a new EU-PRC Partnership & Cooperation Agreement, and the warm reception given EU External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner in launching the negotiations in January 2007, are perhaps indicative of the more pragmatic official reaction. Nonetheless, the EU documents do reflect a change in tone, substance, and approach to China from past precedent.

Shaping the Future of Sino-European Relations

Looking to the future, what variables will likely shape EU policy towards China? Six sets of variables can be identified.

The first is the impact of trade on the European economies and workforce. With an EU trade deficit with China in excess of €150 billion in 2006 (total China-EU trade topped €260 billion in 2006), high unemployment rates in several countries (especially France, Germany, and Italy), hollowed-out tertiary industries (particularly in the Mediterranean countries), and relative lack of competitiveness in the “New 12” Central European member states, European economies are increasingly feeling the “China factor.” Thus far, it has not gotten the political traction that it has in the United States, but voices of concern and protectionism can be heard across the continent. European Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson has publicly indicated, on a number of occasions, that these economic concerns

can quickly snowball and possibly have a series of negative consequences-economically and politically.

The second variable is the degree of Chinese responsiveness to the numerous issues of concern noted in the 2006 Communication. These are not demands, but they are more than “markers.” They are serious requests put forward by the European side, in the spirit of partnership, to advance the China-Europe relationship. To be sure, China has its requests too-notably lifting the arms embargo and granting of Market Economy Status-that the EU needs to take seriously and be responsive to.

The third variable concerns relations between the EU member states and the European Commission and Council, and between the European Parliament and the Commission/Council. Prior to the release of the 2006 Communication on China it was apparent that civil society, the China expert community, and NGOs in several member states were unsettled and discontent with the European Commission’s ambitious and optimistic view of China. Many accused the Commission of being naive. The manner in which the EU Commission and Council (mis)handled the arms embargo issue, creating an intra-European and transatlantic policy fiasco, only emboldened the critics of Brussels’ China policy.

It seems that the European Commission seriously reflected on this subterranean discontent between 2004 and 2006, undertook a rethinking of the relationship and a reexamination of Europe’s interests, and incorporated its findings in the new 2006 Communication. This, it would be assumed, will better position the Commission and Council with the member states, but also with voices heard in the European Parliament. As a result, China’s “free ride” in Europe may be over.

A fourth factor that will shape Europe’s policy towards, and relations with, China will be the pace and scope of internal reforms in China. The European Union has invested heavily — politically, financially, and rhetorically — in assisting China in a wide range of reforms. This has been the core of the EU’s approach to China and what sets the EU apart from the United States and other nations in its dealings with China. The EU has viewed China primarily through the prism of a developing country and transitional nation — in the midst of multiple reforms aimed at marketizing the economy, globalizing the society, and pluralizing the polity. In these reforms, Europeans believe they have much to share with China — given their own histories as welfare states and, more recently, the transition from socialist systems in Central Europe. This orientation differs markedly from the American approach to the “rise of China” — as Americans tend to be exclusively concerned about the *external* manifestations

of China's rise, while Europeans seem more concerned about its *internal* conditions.

Fifth, Europe now expects more from China in terms of contributing to global governance. This is made clear in the 2006 Communication. The EU welcomes China's recent contributions to UN peacekeeping operations (PKO), to UN reform, to non-proliferation, to resolving the North Korean nuclear crisis, and generally Beijing's new diplomatic activism. But, at the same time, the EU is deeply concerned about China's support for non-democratic states and its "value-free diplomacy" and "no strings attached" aid programs with such states, particularly in Africa and with Myanmar (Burma). Similarly, the EU is closely monitoring Beijing's worldwide quest for energy resources and raw materials. China may not yet be a global power, but it is increasingly a global actor. As such, Europe (and other nations) will be looking to Beijing to help address many of challenges and crises that afflict the international order.

The sixth variable affecting European policies towards China is the American factor and the new role that relations with China play in the transatlantic relationship. One positive side-effect of the arms embargo imbroglio has been that a greater appreciation of China-Europe relations began to take hold in the U. S. government and, concomitantly, a greater sensitivity and appreciation of U. S. -China relations and U. S. security commitments in East Asia developed in Brussels and other European capitals. As such, the "China factor" is now lodged more deeply in transatlantic relations. There now exists considerable consensus and broad agreement now between the U. S. and EU on a range of issues pertaining to China. It is apparent that the commonalities across the Atlantic concerning China far outweigh any differences.

Learning to Live with Complexity

The Sino-European relationship and "strategic partnership" remains an important one in world affairs and is, on the whole, a very positive one. Nonetheless, despite all the positives, it is also evident that the relationship has begun to emerge from its "honeymoon" phase. Thus far, none of these adjustments have been too wrenching, causing more minor tactical adaptations on both sides.

It is also evident that the changed-more sober-climate in relations since late last year comes primarily from the European side. In fact, when one reviews the rapid progress in relations over the 1995 - 2005 decade, it is evident that the EU had been the catalytic force in the relationship and played the role of ardent suitor. Brussels pursued Beijing more than vice

versa. But, similarly, the lust seems to have begun to wear off more quickly on the European side. Going forward, the two sides will need to lower their expectations somewhat; clarify their rosy rhetoric; learn how to live with, narrow, or manage their differences; and develop the mechanisms to build a truly sustainable long-term marriage. Occasional frictions are to be expected, but the strong bonds and mutual interests will drive China and Europe closer and closer together over time.

(David Shambaugh, Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies, MAY 2007)

About Text B

For nearly a decade, U. S. policy toward Latin America has been narrowly focused on a handful of issues, such as China's growing influence in the region and the power of Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez. Latin Americans want economic ties with the United States but feel slighted by Washington and uneasy about the U. S. role in the world. The costs of the estrangement will be high for both sides.

Relations between the United States and Latin America today are at their lowest point since the end of the Cold War. Many observers in the 1980s had hoped that Latin America's turn toward democracy and market economics, coupled with Washington's waning emphasis on security matters, would lead to closer and more cooperative ties. Indeed, for a time, the Americas seemed to be heading in the right direction: between 1989 and 1995, Central America's brutal wars were largely settled; the Brady debt-relief proposal (named for then U. S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady) helped end Latin America's decade-long, debt-induced recession; the United States, Canada, and Mexico signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA); the United States hosted the hemisphere's first summit meeting in more than a generation; and in 1995 a bold Washington-led rescue package helped prevent the collapse of Mexico's economy. But much of this progress has since stalled, with U. S. policy on Latin America drifting without much steam or direction.

After 9. 11, Washington effectively lost interest in Latin America. Since then, the attention the United States has paid to the region has been sporadic and narrowly targeted at particularly troubling or urgent situations. Throughout the region, support for Washington's policies has diminished. Few Latin Americans, in or out of government, consider the United States to be a dependable partner. U. S. -Latin American relations have seriously deteriorated — the result of failures of Washington's leadership, the United States' uncompromising stance on many critical issues, and the unwillingness of the administrations