



《大学英语选修课系列教材》  
COLLEGE ENGLISH ELECTIVE COURSE SERIES

语言文化类

总主编 石 坚  
副总主编 敖 凡 邹晓玲

# Observing Chinese and American Cultures

## 中美文化面面观

主 编 任 勤  
廖雷朝



重庆大学出版社

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主要内容

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## 内 容 提 要

本教材以中西文化对比研究为主导思想,通过十五个包含抽象及具象文化话题的章节,对中美文化之异同进行观察、思索和讨论,旨在拓展使用者英语交流中语言内涵的广度和深度。本教材从内容编排,练习设计方面秉承任务型教学法教材的编写理念,强调以学习者为中心,重视可操作性、时代性、趣味性和实用性。

本教材可供高等院校非英语专业学生提高阶段使用,也可以用于英语专业一、二年级口语课或各培训部门,涉外部门相关人员的口语培训。

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主 编 任 勤 廖雷朝

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社址:重庆市沙坪坝正街174号重庆大学(A区)内

邮编:400030

电话:(023) 65102378 65105781

传真:(023) 65103686 65105565

网址:<http://www.cqup.com.cn>

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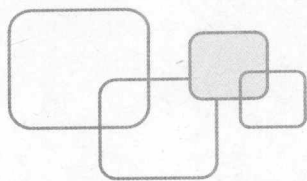
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ELECTIVE COURSE SERIES**



## COLLEGE ENGLISH ELECTIVE COURSE SERIES

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## 总 序

我国的大学英语教学起步于20世纪80年代,经过20多年的发展,大学英语在教学水平、课程设置、教学方法、教学环境、师资队伍等各个方面都有了长足的进步和发展。但随着我国加入WTO和国民经济的快速发展,大学英语教学暴露出与时代要求不相称的一面。为适应现代社会对人才培养的实际需求,推动和指导大学英语教学改革,教育部于2003年颁布了《大学英语课程教学要求(试行)》(以下简称《要求》),并于2007年结合对人才能力培养的新要求再次做了修订和调整,作为全国各高校组织非英语专业本科生英语教学的主要依据。

《要求》将大学阶段的英语教学分为一般要求、较高要求和更高要求三个层次,强调要贯彻分类指导、因材施教的原则,使英语教学朝着个性化的方向发展,要“将综合英语类、语言技能类、语言应用类、语言文化类和专业英语类等必修课程和选修课程有机结合,形成一个完整的大学英语课程体系,以确保不同层次的学生在英语应用能力方面得到充分的训练和提高”。这样,大力发展大学英语选修课就成了大学英语教学改革的重要课题。

大学英语选修课的开设不仅是《大学英语课程教学要求(试行)》精神的体现,也是《教育部财政部关于实施高等学校本科教学质量与教学改革工程的意见》(以下简称《意见》)的内在要求,《意见》将“学生的实践能力和创新精神显著增强”作为教学改革的重要目标之一,而大学英语教学要在这方面有所作为的话,必须注重培养学生的跨文化交际能力、文化素养和在全球化、信息化的背景下获取知识的能力,这显然是传统的大学英语教学和课程设置所不能胜任的。

近年来,全国许多高校纷纷进行了开设大学英语选修课的尝试,并取得了可喜的成绩。但是由于指导思想不明晰、教师知识结构单一和配套改革滞后等原因,在大学英语选修课的开设中出现了“因人设庙”,开课随意性强,开课种类单一,各门课程难易不均,课程测试不规范,学生对各门课程的兴趣差异过大等问题。大学英语选修课的开设迫切需要某种程度的规范与引导,需要更为科学地设置选修课程,确实达到《要求》和《意见》中提出的目标。

针对以上问题,我们认为,一套由成熟理念指引的、体系科学的、建立在选修课开设的成功实践基础之上的系列教材能够起到这种规范和引导作用。因此,重庆大学出版社组织来自全国各地的、在选修课开设方面走在前列的高校的专家和教师,



在多次交流与反复论证的基础上,组织编写了这套“大学英语选修课系列教材”。该套教材具有以下明显的特点:

第一,教材体系科学、系统。系列教材以《大学英语课程教学要求(试行)》为指导,覆盖语言技能类、语言应用类、语言文化类和专业英语类等四个板块,既注重语言基础知识的积累,也充分考虑对学生文化素质的培养,确保不同层次的学生在英语应用能力方面得到充分的训练和提高。

第二,坚持“实用、够用”的原则。在体例安排和内容选择上严格按照选修课的课时要求和学生水平的实际需要,力求精练,避免长篇累牍,在语言难度上体现了与英语专业同类教材的差别。

第三,注重知识与技能相结合,语言与文化相结合。在深入浅出地讲授知识的同时,结合课程内容尽可能多地为学生提供说与写的练习,在雕琢学生语言的同时,尽可能培养学生的跨文化交际能力和批判性思维能力。

第四,强调学生综合能力的培养:考虑到学生在选修课阶段可能不再修综合英语类的课程,各教材在主要训练与课程相关能力的基础上,适当补充了其他能力的训练内容。

第五,吸纳并总结近年来相关高校选修课开设的经验和成果。该套教材的参编者来自全国多所高校,多数教材是由开设该门课程最成功的、最受学生欢迎的学校和教师撰写,教材既吸纳了相关讲义的优点,又根据专家意见,按照学科要求和普遍情况进行了改编,在保证教材科学性的前提下,最大程度地体现了大学英语学生的选修取向。

选修课的开设是大学英语教学改革的重要发展方向,但是在改革中诞生的事物也必然不断地在改革中被重新定义,因此我们这套大学英语选修课教材的体系也将是动态的和开放的,不断会有新的教材被纳入,以反映大学英语教学改革在这方面最新的成功尝试。相信随着教学改革不断走向深入,我们的教材体系也将日臻完善。

总主编

2008年1月

## 前言

教育部高教司 2007 年 9 月最新颁布的《大学英语课程教学要求》明确指出大学英语的教学目标是:“培养学生综合英语应用能力,特别是听说能力,使他们在今后工作和社会交往中能用英语有效地进行口头和书面的信息交流,同时增强其自主学习能力、提高综合文化素养,以适应我国经济发展和国际交流的需要”。《大学英语课程教学要求》还指出:“大学阶段的英语教学要求分为三个层次,即一般要求、较高要求和更高要求。大学英语应用提高阶段课程的教学作为完成基础英语课后的提高课程,担负有高层次英语交际能力和应用能力的培养;提高学生的英语文化素养和文学鉴赏能力;为后续的专业英语学习或专业课提供扎实的语言基础”。

大学英语的学生来自不同专业,有各自的专业背景和学习需求,因此,提高阶段选修课的开设应充分考虑学生的学习心理,并能运用他们在基础教学阶段已经获得的知识,有效调动学生的学习兴趣和积极性,从语言的交际功能和实用性出发,通过听说读写各个渠道演练学过的知识点,积极补充缺乏的文化背景知识,真正让学生实现知识的“内化”和“外化”。

本教材的编写针对大学英语口语提高阶段的特点,注重在提高学生的口语表达能力过程中引导学生整合已掌握的知识点,并拓展和深化学生的文化背景知识。本教材有两大特色:一是注重中西方文化的对比,充分考虑到中国英语学习者自身的实际能力和需求,注意调动他们的学习兴趣,发挥他们自主学习的欲求和能力。此外,因为口语话题涉及的内容往往是最实用,最具常识性的东西,口语课型与文化背景知识的结合能进一步提高学生的文化素养和用英语进行交际的能力。

本书共有十六个单元,每个单元又分为八个部分,注重文化背景知识和具体文化话题相结合。

### 第一部分:

导入:引语及本章讨论的重要问题。

### 第二部分:

热身:学生创建自己的词库,对已掌握的词汇进行分类整合并补充新词汇。

### 第三部分:

头脑风暴:拓展学生思维,组织学生完成采访或讨论等具体任务。



第四部分:

背景知识:中美相关文化背景的概述,旨在介绍最重要、最相关的文化背景常识。

第五部分:

补充阅读:中美相关文化话题的文章,旨在通过一些具有具象特征的文化话题引发学生更深入的思考和讨论。

第六部分:

课堂展示:学生围绕本章主题积极思索并作简短演讲,将语言“输入”转化为“输出”。

第七部分:

拓展训练:习语解读,情景对话和辩论,旨在进一步提高学生的口头表达能力。

第八部分:

自学提示:推荐与本单元文化主题相关的书目和电影电视,方便学生利用各种课外资源进行自主学习。

本教材的背景知识部分为编者在博采众长的基础上缩略总结编制而成,文字简练易懂,充分考虑到实用性和学生的接受能力。补充阅读部分则选用中美两国书刊和媒体上影响广泛,接受度高的相关文化话题,以激发学生的学习兴趣 and 参与热情。另外,本书设计了不同层次,难易适中的练习,充分体现了新课标中提倡的任务型教学模式的理念。

本教材共四人参编,其中任勤编纂三章(五、六、十五);廖雷朝编纂五章(七至十一),吴蓓编纂五章(一至三、十三、十四),佟晓牧编纂两章(四、十二)。

本教材可供高等院校非英语专业学生提高阶段使用,也可以用于英语专业一、二年级口语课或各培训部门,涉外部门相关人员的口语培训。

编者

2010年6月

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# Unit 1

## Raising Cultural Awareness

### Stage One Introduction

#### I. Quotations

1. That American culture arises from the interplay of two great sets of forces—the Old World and the New. The Old World projected into the New a rich, complex, and contradictory set of habits, forces, practices, values, and presuppositions; and the New World accepted, modified, or rejected these or fused them with inventions of its own.

—Howard Mumford Jones, *Harvard Professor and US writer*

2. Culture hides much more than it reveals, and strangely enough what it hides, it hides more effectively from its own participants. Years of study have convinced me that the real job is not to understand foreign culture but to understand our own.

—Edward T. Hall, *American anthropologist and cross-cultural researcher*

3. In small societies children learn by imitating their parents, relatives and neighbors. In our huge society we use our mass entertainments to instruct our children on how they should express their emotions and what values they should have.

—Margaret Mead, *American cultural anthropologist*

## II. Key Points to Consider

1. What is meant by the term “culture”?
2. What cultural symbols can you think of in both Chinese and American cultures?  
What do you know about them?
3. What are the characteristics of culture?

## Stage Two Warming up

### Word Bank—Build Your Vocabulary

Work with your group members and come up with as many words or phrases about culture as possible.

art	The Spring Festival	tea culture
religion	Christmas	coffee culture

## Stage Three Brainstorm and Interview

### Task 1: Brainstorm

Brainstorm and contribute your ideas to the topic; *symbols associated with American/Chinese culture.*

*Task 2: Doing a survey*

Interview at least 3 students in your class about the following cultural behaviors, then give a report on the topic: *What we do and what we don't do in Chinese culture.*

1. One can smoke around other people in public places if he/she wants to.
2. It is OK to ask people, young or old, male or female, how old they are.
3. People always arrive on time when they are invited to a party.
4. It is OK for one to blow his/her nose in public.
5. It is OK for one to chew gum while talking to others.
6. It is OK to call someone who is older by his/her first name.
7. One should always bargain before buying anything.
8. It is OK for people to ask how much money their friends and acquaintances make.
9. When friends and families have dinner out together, it is OK for one to pay his/her own share of the check only.
10. It is OK for people to drop by a friend's house without calling first.
11. People often hug and kiss friends on the cheeks when they meet.
12. Teenagers are permitted to go out on dates by their parents.
13. It is common for young people to live with their parents after they get married.
14. It is OK for college students to ask their parents for pocket money.
15. One can always talk and laugh loudly with friends while dining in a restaurant.

*Task 3: Topics you might choose for your presentation or further thinking*

1. Do you think that children in Chinese culture and American culture are more alike than adults in these two cultures? Please defend your answer.
2. Do you agree to Edward T. Hall's opinion that culture "hides more effectively from its own participants"? Why or why not?
3. What aspects of American culture do you know the best?
4. What aspects of Chinese culture have contributed greatly to making you who you are?
5. Can panda be considered as a symbol of Chinese culture? Why or why not? Please



defend your idea with the quoted definitions of culture given in this unit.

6. What aspects of American culture are the most difficult for you to understand?
7. What aspects of Chinese culture, in your opinion, are the most difficult for an American to understand?
8. Why is the knowledge of American culture a valuable component of English-learning?

## Stage Four Background Information

### Section A:

### What is Culture (I) and Some Information

#### About American Culture

#### What is culture (I)?

1. Culture is hard to define mostly because this concept is large and inclusive. It involves almost everything we need to know in a society.
2. Many anthropologists and behavioral scientists in the world have tried to define culture. Hundreds of definitions have been given to culture and they have been formulated from different perspectives.
3. According to Edward B. Tyler (1871), the pioneer English anthropologist, culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." This is the first time the term was used in this way.
4. To the Dutch researcher Geert Hofstede, "Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one category of people from another."
5. Damen claims that culture is "the learned and shared human patterns or models for living; day-to-day living patterns. These patterns and models pervade all aspects of human social interaction. Culture is mankind's primary adaptive mechanism."

6. Hall, an important researcher into culture (1966) says “culture [is] those deep, common, unstated experiences which members of a given culture share, which they communicate without knowing, and which form the backdrop against which all other events are judged.”
7. In his book *Beyond Culture* which was published in 1977, Hall further claims that “culture is the total accumulation of beliefs, customs, values, behaviors, institutions and communication patterns that are shared, learned and passed down through the generations in an identifiable group of people.”

### About American culture

1. American culture is rich and complex. European cultures, especially British culture, have a great influence on the development of the American culture.
2. As the United States is a nation of immigrants, one of the most important characteristics of its culture is pluralism. Native Americans, the early Spanish settlers, European colonists, black slaves and all the other immigrants from all over the world contribute greatly to the cultural diversity in the United States. As a result, American culture demonstrates great varieties in its values, beliefs and customs, etc.
3. American culture is also rooted deeply in the process of its nation-building. The dominant American culture has grown out of America's earliest history.
4. Some people see America as a “melting pot” and people of various races and ethnic groups are combined into one culture. Others believe America is a “salad bowl” and people from different cultures maintain their own cultural traditions and the diverse American culture comes into being.
5. Religious diversity is an important part of cultural diversity in the United States. Today about 80 percent of Americans are Christians and the other six percent believe in religions such as Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism. There are still ten percent of Americans who claim themselves as non-religious. Of all the religions in America, protestant faith has had the strongest influence on the forming of American culture. Some protestant principles such as hardworking, self-discipline, self-

improvement, material success and humanitarianism are central values in American culture.

- Many children of immigrants grew up bicultural in the history of America. More often than not, these children, after they grew up and became parents, did not pass on their cultures and their children were usually American by culture. Now, however, more and more immigrants try to maintain their own cultural traditions.

### Section B:

## What is Culture ( II ) and Some Information

### About Chinese Culture

#### What is culture ( II )?

- The recent decades have seen the popularity of the word “culture”, which is translated into “文化” in Chinese. We often hear people use words like “茶文化”, “酒文化”, “企业文化”, “饮食文化” and “校园文化”, etc. Many people assume that everyone knows what the word “culture” or “文化” means. But when it comes to the definition of culture, people find that the word can be defined in many different ways.
- People can mean different things when they use the word “culture” (“文化”). In fact, there are hundreds of definitions of culture. Chinese, too, have tried to define the word “文化” at different times in history. It is said the word “文化” appeared in China more than two thousand years ago.
- In *Ben of Zhou Yi* (周易·贲), there are lines which say “观乎天文，以察时变；观乎人文，以化成天下。” This might be the first time the Chinese started to use the word “文化”，but at that time “文” and “化” were not used as one word.
- Liu Xiang (刘向) from Han Dynasty used the word “文化” in his book *Zhi Wu of Shuo Yuan* (说苑·指武). He wrote “凡武之兴，为不服也；文化不改，然后加桎。”
- When explaining the sentence “观乎天文，以察时变；观乎人文，以化成天下。” a quote from *Zhou Yi* (周易), Kong Yingda (孔颖达) from Tang Dynasty claimed

that: “圣人观察人文，则诗书礼乐之谓。”

6. Gu Yanwu (顾炎武) also states in his book *Daily knowledge Records* (日知录) that “自身而至于家国天下，制之为度数，发之为音容，莫非文也。”

### About Chinese culture

1. Chinese culture is one of the most ancient cultures in the world. It is rich, unique and elegant.
2. “Pluralism” is a major characteristic of Chinese culture, which has shown great tolerance to different cultures. It is, in itself, a mixture of many different cultures, including those of ethnic groups and foreign cultures.
3. The following three cultures, the Eastern Yi culture (东夷文化), the Western Xia culture (西夏文化) and the Southern Man culture (南蛮文化), are said to have great influence on forming the ancient Chinese culture.
4. Chinese culture is the only one in the history of the world that has developed continuously for thousands of years. It has gradually evolved into a stable and independent system that is quite different from western cultures.
5. Agriculture plays a very important role in the development of Chinese culture. The Yellow River Valley has been the most important birthplace of the ancient Chinese civilization for a long period of time.
6. The relatively enclosed geographical surroundings and the rich natural resources enabled ancient China to develop its unique culture independently without much influence of foreign ones.
7. Chinese culture is extremely rich in its spiritual and behavioral culture. Besides, there are different styles of regional culture, which greatly enrich Chinese culture. With the development of China, Chinese culture has attracted the attention of many people all over the world.
8. Chinese culture, like all the other ones in the world, is changing. Before the mid-1900's, the traditional Chinese culture was more prominent. But now, a more modern Chinese culture is developing. It is a combination of the traditional and modern elements.