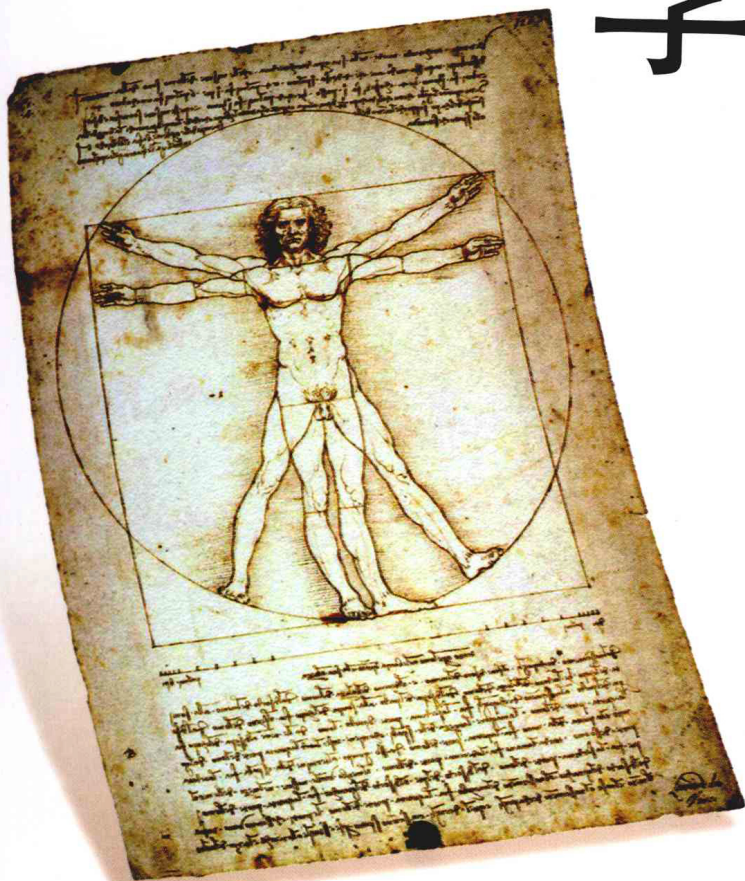


探索人类文明 学英语

Paul O'Hagan 编著

罗慕谦 译



含
MP3
光盘



华东理工大学出版社
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单元内容

- 沟通的桥梁：语言
- 能量的源头：火
- 知识的传承：文字
- 轮子：现代汽车的起源
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- 规范与限制：宗教、道德与法律
- 哲学：思考的学问
- 民主与人权：政治与社会的演化

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From Text to Talk
Ancient Inventions



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Paul O'Hagan 编著 罗慕谦 译

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Introduction

Introduction : Inventions that have shaped our lives

Today we live in a fairly comfortable world. If we live in the developed countries, our lives are in general, much better materially than those of people who lived before us. Even in many of the developing countries, although life is a struggle, it is much better than it would be.

There are many inventions that have caused this. But when we think of the things that have improved our lives, we tend to think of more recent inventions.

This book aims to give you an idea of how ancient inventions have affected our lives in good ways. Sometimes we forget how clever ancient people were. I want to show how the intelligence, perseverance and in some cases, courage of the ancient peoples have given us great benefits.

Some of the inventions are solid things such as the wheel and tools. However, there are more abstract ones such as language and philosophy which are also very important.

An invention can be a development and does not need to be made out of solid material. Indeed, it could be argued that the abstract inventions have been even more important in the long run. This is because ideas lead to changes in the world, many of which change our lives.

In this book I have interspersed the conversation with the text to allow a better idea of how it comes from the text.

塑造我们生活的发明

作者 序

今天我们生活在一个相当舒适的世界里。如果我们是生活在发达国家,那我们在物质生活方面,大致上都比以前的人更好。而在许多发展中国家,生活即使艰苦,还是比过去好多了。

许许多多的发明,造成了这样的结果。但是当我们讲到有哪些发明改善了人类的生活时,多半会想到比较近代的发明。

本书的目的是让你看到古代的发明对我们的生活产生了哪些正面的影响。有时候我们会忘了古人有多聪明。我想让读者了解,古人的智慧、毅力和在某些情况下表现出来的勇气,为我们带来了多大的福利。

其中有些发明是实物,例如轮子和各种工具。但此外也有抽象的发明,比如语言和哲学,这些对我们来说也非常重要。

发明也可以是一种发展上的进步,不一定非得是实物。我们甚至可以说,以长远来看,抽象的发明更为重要,因为思想观念会推动改变,而这些改变中有许多就会改变我们的生活。

在本书里,我把对话和文章穿插在一起,使对话跟文章的关联更明确。

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Unit 1

Language

语言

Passage 1

MP3 1

As with many of the inventions from ancient times, where language came from is a mystery. It was probably an accidental invention which gradually developed from a few simple sounds. However, just like art, music and other abstract inventions which probably came about by accident, we do not know how it was created.

Did its development continue purely¹ by accident? Did a person or a group of people, once they discovered how useful it was, deliberately² make up words in order to say what they wanted to say?

Conversation 1

MP3 2

P: Professor (Prof.)

P: [*In a seminar*³] Today we are going to discuss language and how it began. We do not know how it was created. Was it purely by accident just like art, music and other abstract inventions? Did a group of people deliberately make up words to say what they wanted to say? Any ideas anyone?

Word Bank

1. **purely** ['pjʊəli] **ad.** solely or simply 仅仅;只不过
2. **deliberately** [dɪ'lɪbəreɪtli] **ad.** with intention; in an intentional manner 故意地;蓄意地
3. **seminar** ['seminɑː] **n.** an occasion when a teacher or expert and a group of people meet to study and discuss something
(大学里由教授指导的)研讨会

Passage 2

MP3 3

How much of the original language came about through copying the sound something made, for example, we could imagine some group deciding to call a bee a buzz⁴? Could singing have come first and then language? Is that why some languages are tonal⁵? When did humans develop the vocal⁶ equipment to allow them to speak?

There are far more questions than answers in connection with the subject of language. But it is fascinating to think about it.



Conversation 2

MP3 4

G: George P: Prof. J: Judy

G: Maybe it came about through copying the sound something made?

P: Such as? Give me an example.

G: You could imagine maybe someone calling a bee a “buzz” or a horse a “neigh⁷”. Then maybe some verbs could be created from them.

P: OK, that could explain how it started. But of course, not everything can be named that way. Any other possibilities?

J: Well, maybe they enjoyed singing and then, from the meaningless humming⁸ or whatever, they developed words and gave them meanings.

P: Excellent. In fact I think that is more likely than the first idea.

Word Bank

4. buzz [bʌz] *n.* a continuous low sound 嗡嗡声
5. tonal [ˈtəʊnl] *a.* relating to tone or tonality 音调的
6. vocal [ˈvəʊkl] *a.* of, pertaining to, or uttered with the voice 声音的
7. neigh [neɪ] *n.* a long loud high call that is produced by a horse when

it is excited or frightened 马嘶声

8. **humming** ['hʌmɪŋ] *n.* the act of singing with closed lips 哼唱

Passage 3

MP3 5

It is not certain when language began. Obviously, spoken language could not have started until humans developed voice boxes¹¹ or larynxes¹⁶.

It used to be thought that Neanderthal¹¹ people could not have developed languages because they did not seem to have possessed larynxes. However, evidence has recently been found that shows that their society was more complex than was thought and so they must have had some kind of language, though it may have been simpler than most languages today.

On the other hand, it may have been more complex because ancient languages tend to be more complex than modern ones. This is because as time goes on, people simplify¹² the way they speak as they come into contact with other people.

A simpler language is easier to learn and to understand and so makes communication with foreigners easier.

Conversation 3

MP3 6

P: Prof. G: George J: Judy M: Mike

M: When did language begin, Professor?

P: We are not certain when it began. It used to be thought that Neanderthals did not have larynxes and so could not speak. Why has that idea changed? Anyone?

G: Did they find a Neanderthal with a voice box?

P: They did not. Judy?

J: I think I read somewhere that Neanderthal society was much more complex than previously thought so they must have used language.

P: That's correct. The Neanderthals must have used language in order to organize their society. We don't know if their languages were simpler or more complex than our modern ones, but we know that languages tend to simplify as time passes.

Word Bank

9. **voice box** the larynx 喉头
10. **larynx** ['læriŋks] *n.* a muscular hollow organ between the nose and the lungs which contains the tissue that moves very quickly to create the human voice and many animal sounds 喉头
11. **Neanderthal** [ni'ændətɔ:l] *n.* a type of primitive people who lived in Europe and Asia from about 150,000 to 30,000 years ago 尼安德塔人
12. **simplify** ['simplifai] *v.* to make less complex or complicated 简化; 精简

Passage 4

MP3 7

However, in the beginning language did not help a great deal in communication. There were two reasons for this: firstly Neanderthals moved about in small groups and secondly, it took thousands of years for writing to appear.

It is believed that there were only about 250,000 Neanderthals in the cold Europe of the time. They moved about in family groups of about seven to ten individuals and each group had its own language. The language of each group was totally different to each other group, which means there were thousands of languages.

If a person moved (or was taken) from one group into another, they would have to try to learn the language of their new group. So this was not a situation where different groups could communicate easily.



Neanderthal man

Conversation 4

MP3 8

G: George P: Prof. J: Judy M: Mike

G: Did their language help much in communication, Professor?

P: We don't think so because they moved about in small groups, each with

its own separate language.

J: So there might have been thousands of totally different languages?

P: That's right.

M: So if a person married into another group, he or she would have to learn a completely new language.

P: Correct. Furthermore, because no group could communicate with another, there was no use for writing.

G: Therefore, there was no way they could use language to discuss ideas or hear new information. They couldn't develop into countries or create national¹³ cultures.

P: They couldn't even create tribes¹⁴. All they could do was passing information down through the generations.

J: It's not surprising it took hundreds of thousands of years for the first civilizations to appear.

Word Bank

- 13. national** ['næʃənəl] *a.* relating to or affecting a nation, especially a nation as a whole rather than a part of it or section of its territory 民族的
- 14. tribe** [traɪb] *n.* a group of people, often of related families, who live together, sharing the same language, culture and history, especially those who do not live in towns or cities 部落

Passage 5

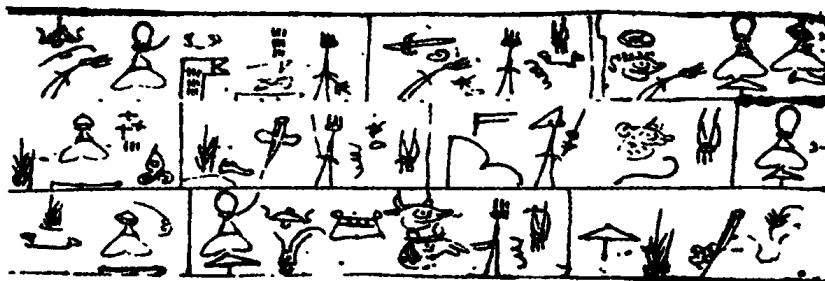
MP3 9

Of course as we shall see in unit 3, writing was very helpful to the development of a sophisticated society. Without a common language or writing system, it was impossible to communicate information and develop further.

As the centuries passed and family groups became clans¹⁵ which gathered into tribes and tribes transformed themselves into states, the number of languages became fewer. Life became more complex and the languages that survived had to develop ways of communicating more complicated ideas.

So while many languages simplified their grammar, there was

probably a big increase¹⁶ in their vocabulary. For example, simple tribes did not need to worry about taxation¹⁷. However, as states grew, taxation systems developed and new words had to be made for new concepts such as accounts¹⁸, debts, treasury¹⁹, etc.



pictographic writing

Conversation 5

MP3 10

P: Prof. M: Mike G: George

P: Yes, to develop civilization you need, at least a large number of people speaking the same language.

M: But if you want to build an empire, you need writing.

P: I think that's correct. To communicate over large distances, you need to write letters to your commanders²⁰. It is not a good idea to rely on a messenger's²¹ memory.

G: I suppose when you develop a big civilization, you have to make new words for new ideas.

P: Taxation, for example. Simple tribes do not need to worry about taxing people. However, a big state has to get money from somewhere and then you need new words for accounts, debts, etc.

Word Bank

15. **clan** [klæn] *n.* a group of families, especially in Scotland, who originate from the same family and have the same name 宗族
16. **increase** [ˈɪnkriːs] *n.* growth or augmentation in numbers, size, strength, quality, etc. 增加
17. **taxation** [tækˈseɪʃən] *n.* the system whereby taxes are levied on some types of income, earnings, or purchases 课税; 征税

18. **account** [ə'kaʊnt] *n.* an arrangement with a bank to keep your money there and to allow you to take it out when you need to (银行) 账目
19. **treasury** ['treʒəri] *n.* the funds or revenues of a government, organization, or corporation, or the place in which they are deposited and disbursed 国库
20. **commander** [kə'mændə] *n.* an officer who is in charge of a military operation 指挥官
21. **messenger** ['mesɪndʒə] *n.* somebody who carries messages between people 使者; 送信人

Passage 6

MP3 11

In addition to this, some languages became important while others had little prestige²². The former would become the official languages of states while the latter had no status and were often associated with poor, uneducated and powerless people. So we can see there is a certain connection with the success of a language, its social status and its political power.

Conversation 6

MP3 12

M: Mike P: Prof.

- M: Of course that has other implications²³. If you have more than one large state then you have political conflicts.
- P: Which of course, lead to wars. And in wars, there are winners and losers.

Word Bank

22. **prestige** [pre'sti:ʒ] *n.* respect and admiration given to someone or something, usually because of a reputation for high quality, success or social influence 名望; 声望
23. **implication** [ɪmplɪ'keɪʃən] *n.* something that is implied or involved as a natural consequence of something else 含意; 暗示

Passage 1

MP3 13

This has other effects on languages. We can see this in the case of English itself.

If you look at a text of English before 1066, you see a very different language to Modern English²⁴. In fact, it is a very different language called Anglo-Saxon (or Old English²⁵).



to helg: þær eam ælfrinc b: 77 gýpne þær: 77 elahano manna
mroheom. Ac þa fe kyng: 77 yllclm 77 ge alhæde: þa bea we ac 77 p
pýde: 77 lano pýde: 77 lano call. 77 an cimbæce: 77 bryge: 77 pophæc
77 pýpýde on þa 77 healf: 77 hi calle þa. coon þa kyng 77 ge on
hano: 77 pæf ælfrinc b: 77 mophæc: 77 coyl: 77 calle þa fe mroheom
pæron: 77 buan he 77 pæc: 77 an 77 77 calle þa fe mrohm æt fleom
mrohm: 77 he 77 alhæc æt alæde: 77 fe kyng nam he 77 pæf
77 pæf na: 77 manega: 77 pæcæc: 77 þa mæn calle he æt: 77 pýde of
heom 77 he 77 pæc: 77 ælfrinc b: 77 he 77 pæc: 77 æt abban dæne: 77 he 77 pæc
77 pæc: 77 pæc: M L X X I I I
he 77 pýlclm kyng læde æt pæf pæc: 77 lano pýde: 77 coyl
lano: 77 þa lano on þa fe healf: 77 mro pæc: 77 ymb læg: 77 þa 77 pæc
Anglo-Saxon

modern English, however, the grammar was quite different. As well using words from other languages for example, they would put words together. They would also change the endings of words to change the meaning of the sentence.

Then when the French invaded England, the language was completely

changed. As well as many new words coming into English from French, the grammar was also greatly changed (as mentioned above, it became simpler).

However, for about 300 years, French had a much higher social status than English. So French affected English much more than English affected French. In fact some historians argue that if the Kings of England had not started to break away from France and promote²⁶ English, the English language would have died out²⁷ completely.

Conversation 7

MP3 14

J: Judy P: Prof. M: Mike

J: I heard something about that. It was to do with English.

P: Good, young lady. Tell us more.

J: When the French invaded England in 1066, their language became dominant²⁸ there.

P: That is true. But it didn't last, did it?

J: English rose again in the next 400 years. However, it was completely changed. Now, because of the British Empire and the US, it is probably going to become the main international language.

P: Very probably. What effect do you think that will have?

M: In the same way that French almost destroyed it, English will probably help to destroy many weaker languages and cultures.

Word Bank

24. **Modern English** the English language from about 1500, when it began to develop a more standardized form compared with the dialects of Middle English 现代英语; 近代英语
25. **Old English** the earliest form of the English language, used up to about AD 1150 古英语
26. **promote** [prə'məʊt] *v.* to encourage the popularity, sale, development or existence of something 发扬; 促进
27. **die out** to cease to exist; become extinct 逐渐消失; 灭绝
28. **dominant** ['dɒmɪnənt] *a.* more important, strong or noticeable than anything else of the same type 占优势的; 支配的

Practice Look at the answer and try to formulate the question

A1 Language was probably an accidental invention.

⇒ Q What was probably an accidental invention?

.....

A2 It used to be thought that Neanderthal people could not have developed languages because they did not seem to have possessed larynxes.

⇒ **Q** *Why did it use to be thought that Neanderthal people could not have developed languages?*

.....

A3 Neanderthal language may have been more complex because ancient languages tend to be more complex than modern ones.

⇒ **Q** *For what reason may Neanderthal language have been more complex?*

.....

A4 As time goes on, people simplify the way they speak as they come into contact with other people.

⇒ **Q** *Why do people simplify the way they speak as time goes on?*

.....

A5 There are far more questions than answers as regards language.

⇒ **Q** *How many more questions than answers are there as regards language?*

.....

Quiz I Give the question from the answer

1. It is a mystery.
2. Neanderthals moved about in small groups.
3. It took thousands of years for writing to appear.
4. Each group had its own language.
5. There were thousands of languages.
6. If a person moved (or was taken) from one group into another, they would have to try to learn the language of their new group.
7. Because family groups became clans which gathered into tribes and tribes transformed themselves into states.
8. Because some languages became important while others had little prestige.