

高等学校教材

(英语专业用)

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# 交际英语教程

核心课程 (四)

下册

# CECL

COMMUNICATIVE ENGLISH

FOR CHINESE LEARNERS

CORE COURSE 4

(UNITS 6—10)

上海外语教育出版社

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**CECL**

**Communicative English For Chinese Learners**

CORE COURSE IV

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广州外国语学院 李筱菊 主编

上海外语教育出版社

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## UNIT 6: SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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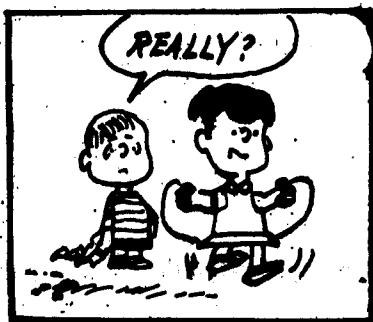
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## UNIT 6

### SOCIAL PROBLEMS

#### I POPULATION

##### 1 Comic strip — warm-up





\* From Schulz, Charles M., *This is your life, Charlie Brown*!, 1970

## 2 The great population debate

### 2.1 What Malthus says

#### 1. Warm-up

You must have heard about Malthus. Who was he? What does he say about population? In pairs or small groups, try to explain as far as you can to each other what Malthus says about population. See whether in your group you can arrive at a statement of Malthus's theory that everybody agrees on.

#### 2. Reading

Read the first paragraph (Don't read further yet!) of the extract from a book given on page 309. See whether your statement of Malthus's theory has been right. In your small group try to improve on your original statement.

#### 3. Language work

What is the English for the following terms?

人口学

人口学家

几何级数

算术级数

按几何级数递增

按算术级数递增

### 2.2 What the Neo-Malthusians and the Anti-Malthusians say

#### 1. Reading

Malthus put forth his theory almost 200 years ago. What has happened to the world population and what new arguments have emerged since his time?

In fact ever since Malthus's time demographers and economists all over the world have been

**Work in pairs. Student A finds out and notes down what the Neo-Malthusians say by reading paragraphs 2 and 3 of the extract. Student B finds out and notes down what the Anti-Malthusians say by reading paragraphs 4 and 5 of the extract.**

A tells B what the Neo-Malthusians arguments are. B tells A what the Anti-Malthusians' arguments are.

.....

Was Malthus right? This question has become a matter of heated debate among demographers. Some, whom we shall call the "Neo-Malthusians," insist that Malthus was correct. We are still in the initial stages of the process Malthus identified, they say, and today's situation is at least as grim, if not grimmer, than Malthus ever imagined. Indeed, the world's population has shot out of control and is following an alarming *exponential growth curve*. This means that as growth doubles during approximately equal intervals of time, it suddenly accelerates.



**FIGURE 13-1** The world's population is following an exponential growth curve. (Modified from Phylis Tilson Piotrow, *World Population Crisis: The United States' Response*, New York: Praeger, 1973, p. 4; originally from the U. S. Department of State.)

Today, of course, we are not even close to the miracle that would lead to adults replacing only themselves. Rather, the momentum of population increase continues to threaten the earth's limited resources. These vast numbers of new arrivals also increase pressure for harmful pollution and other forms of environmental destruction, matters we shall discuss in the following chapter. Another compelling reason for immediately curtailing population growth is that it poses a threat to world peace. When the governments of the developing nations find themselves unable to feed their people, hunger will be matched by civil strife (Mumford 1981). Governments will topple, and the precarious balance of international power will be upset.

The Anti-Malthusians, of course, draw entirely different conclusions about the world's growing population (Bauer 1981). They say that in the long run, more people means a higher standard of living (Simon 1977; 1982). Their reasons? First, a growing population means that more geniuses will come into the world. They will make vital contributions to the welfare of all. Among the evidence that more is good when it comes to population, Simon notes (1981b), is that, comparing countries with the same level of income, those with more people have more scientists and a larger output of scientific knowledge. Second, larger populations create larger markets. This promotes bigger, more efficient manufacturing plants. This, in turn, lowers the manufacturing cost per unit, making more goods available more cheaply. Third, a larger population makes profitable many social investments that would otherwise be unprofitable, especially railroads, highways, irrigation systems, and ports. Together, these factors spur productivity and increase a country's capacity to deliver that productivity to its people.

The Anti-Malthusians also point out that in spite of the tremendous increase in the world's population, its per capita food production has increased, as we saw in Figure 13—3. We should not lose sight of this significant fact, for it means that world food production has actually outpaced the increase in population (Schultz 1981). If the population increase is dramatic, this food increase is more dramatic still. Moreover, this increase in per capita food occurred while the "breadbasket of the world" decreased its farm acreage.

### 3. Language work

- 1) What is the English for the following term ?

### 指数增长曲线

In pairs, make sure you understand what it means. Which line in the graph illustrates this concept? What is the characteristic of this line?

- 2) What do the names and dates in parentheses in the text refer to ?

At the end of the book from which this extract is taken there is a bibliography. Given below are the relevant references from the bibliography.

- a. Match the writers in the bibliography with the references made to them in the text.
- b. For what saying or view is each writer referred to in the text? Note down under each writer in the bibliography what the saying or view is.
- c. Mark the name of each writer to show which side of the debate he is on. (AM for Anti-Malthusians and NM for Neo-Malthusians.)

— . — . — . — . — . — . — . — . —

**Bibliography:**

- (1) Bauer, Peter T. *Equality, The Third World and Economic Delusion*.  
Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts. 1981.

Note:

- (2) Mumford, Steven. *Population Growth and Global Security*.  
The Humanist, No 41. January 1981. pp 6—25.

Note:

- (3) Schultz, Theodore W. *Investing in People — The Economics of Population Quality*.  
University of California Press, Berkeley. 1981.

Note:

- (4) Simon, Julian L. — *The Economics of Population Growth*.  
Princeton University Press, New Jersey. 1977.

Note:

— *The Ultimate Resource*.  
Princeton University Press, New Jersey. 1981

Note:

— . — . — . — . — . — . — . — . —

**4. Preparing for debate**

Which side of the debate are you on? Choose one argument belonging to the opposite side and think how you would refute it. Note your counter-argument down.

**5. Debate**

Have a show of hands to see how many students in your class are on each side.

If there are students on both sides, hold a debate.



and technological development.

Second, when it comes to the creation of markets, a large population does provide the potential for a large market. But what actually creates the market is the number of purchasers. A population with very low purchasing power, no matter how large it is, will be less likely to create a flourishing market than a smaller population with high purchasing power. It is said that an average consumer in the U.S. buys and consumes as much as fifty average consumers in China. Therefore it can be said that although the Chinese population is four times as large as the American population, the Chinese market is only one twelfth the size of the American market. Here again, it is the disposable income of the population rather than its mere size that really counts.

Third, it is claimed that a larger population makes many social investments profitable. However, for any investment to be profitable, the profits must come from the users or consumers. A large public that would like to travel by air will not in itself make the airlines profitable or even feasible, unless that public can afford to pay the air fares. So we come back to the standard of living of the population once again. The reason why obviously desirable social investments fail to be carried out in some countries is very often not that these countries lack the necessary population, but that they lack the necessary economic and technological strength to set up and maintain such projects.

A larger population does create larger demands on a nation's production, and in this sense helps to 'spur on' the nation to try to produce more. But, on the other hand, it is common knowledge that an excessively large workforce often does not increase productivity but rather leads to unemployment. Too many hands on a job tend not to improve but rather to reduce efficiency. Surplus manpower is too often a justification for putting off the introduction of new machinery and technology, and thus productivity is held back rather than increased.

Fourth, the last half century having been a period of gigantic scientific breakthroughs for mankind, it may not be difficult to prove that world food production during that period has outpaced the increase in population (Schultz 1981), but it cannot be proved that it will continue to do so indefinitely in the future. Given the earth's limited land resources and mankind's unlimited potential for reproduction, it is only a question of how long it will take for the rate of world population growth to outstrip the rate of increase in food production, if, indeed, it has not already done so.

In conclusion, the Anti-Malthusians when talking about population tend to make the mistake of considering only quantity while ignoring quality. They also tend to forget that what the world has to deal with now, is not merely a large population (which, it may be argued, is not a problem and is even desirable in some cases), but a population that is *too* large, or rapidly becoming too large. This is a reality to which the Anti-Malthusians seem to be blind, and which is starkly presented as follows by a United Nations report made in 1958:

'With the present rate of increase, it can be calculated that in 600 years the number of human beings on Earth will be such that there will be only one square metre for each to live on. It goes without saying that this can never take place, something will happen to prevent it.'

**A.S. Parks**, who quotes the above in an article in *The New Scientist*, goes on to say:

'The human race will have to decide whether that "something" is to be pleasant or unpleasant.'

To which we will add:

'And it had better decide now, before it becomes too late.'

— . — . — . — . — . — . — . — . —

## 2. Taking notes

Fill in the table below. Note down on the left-hand side the different points made by the Anti-Malthusians, then on the right-hand side opposite each point the counter-argument given in the 'refutation'. Make a brief but clear statement of each point and each counter-point.

## 3. Language work

Read the 'refutation' once again. Underline all the expressions or sentence patterns that you think would be useful for you if at some future time you want to refute your opponent's arguments in any debate.

The Anti-Malthusians' arguments	Refutation of the Anti-Malthusians' arguments
Major argument:	Major counter-argument:
Reasons:	Counter-reasons:
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
Total effect of the 3 factors above:	Total effect of the 3 factors above:
4.	4.
	Concluding counter-argument:
	1.
	2.

### **3 Problems of population (1): China**

#### **3.1 Prediction**

You are about to read an article entitled *How the pressure of population hits Chinese life*.

1. Discuss with your partner whether you think the article is about the causes

OR

the consequences of a large population.

2. Make a list of the main aspects of the problem you think should be mentioned in such an article.

#### **3.2 Reading for specific information**

1. Now read the article and list the ten areas the article mentions, in which problems are caused by population pressure. Check these against your own predictions.
2. For which items on the list are no facts given ?
3. How would you classify the ten items on the list under just four main area headings ? In which order would you put the problems ?

Discuss your answers with your colleagues.

#### **3.3 Reading for organization & language**

Now look at the organization and special language of the article.

1. The second paragraph of the article is not about the problems of population pressure. What is it about ?
2. Why is this information given at the beginning ?  
What is the contrast the writer wants to make ?
3. "GNP" is an abbreviation commonly used in economics.  
Which phrase in paragraph 4 does it stand for ?
4. Which phrase, used in paragraphs 3 and 4, means "each person's average share of the wealth of the country" ?

(This phrase also occurs in the reading in 2.3.)

#### **3.4+ Writing a summary**

Write a brief paragraph to summarise the writer's main point about the population problem in China.

#### **3.5 Research**

Research for updated information about China's GNP, population growth and per capita national income. Compare updated data with those given in the 1983 *China Daily* article.

# How the pressure of population hits Chinese life

Chinese people will not be much better-off by the end of the century unless the population is kept within 1.2 billion.

In 1980, China's gross value of agricultural production was 218.7 billion yuan, and industrial production 497.2 billion yuan, totalling 715.9 billion yuan. According to the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1981-1985), the gross value of industry and agriculture in 1985 will reach 605 billion yuan and 266.8 billion yuan respectively, an average increase of 4 per cent annually. China may surpass Britain and France in gross value of production and become the fifth biggest economic power in the world, next only to the US, Japan, Soviet Union and West Germany. Even now, China's total production in the fields of cotton cloth, grain, machine tools, coal and tungsten ore is among the highest in the world.

But these achievements are not reflected in living standards. With a population of more than one billion to feed, China's per capita national income is still lower than that of at least 100 nations.

The gross national product of China is about the same as that of France which has a population of 59 million, but China's per capita

Special to China Daily  
by Wang Shangquan

national income was much lower.

Lack of cultivated land has become an increasingly serious problem in rural areas where about 800 million people live. These people farm on 1.49 million mu (about 100 million hectares), 5 mu (0.33 hectares) per able-bodied person. One Chinese has an average of only 1.5 mu (0.1 hectares) of cultivated land.

In 1978, one person had only 625 jin (312.5 kilograms) of grain. Although the output of grain has increased, it can barely match population growth. China still has to import a large quantity of grain.

The 200 million people living in urban areas, — 20.6 per cent of the population — are faced with the problem of finding a job. In 1980, registered workers and staff members numbered 104.44 million. Every year, about five million more youths look for jobs.

The fast growing population also causes serious problems in education. Illiterate or semi-illiterate people make up some 20 per cent of the

Chinese population. And every year China has another 20 million babies.

The present universities can hold 1.1 million students, and at most 1.5 million in 1985. By 1985, the number of pupils in elementary schools will have reached 130 million, only a fraction of whom will be enrolled in high schools and universities. This can hardly meet the needs of the development of China's economy.

Education, housing, transportation, medicine and hygiene, culture and entertainment all suffer from the pressures of overpopulation.

Discuss whether the situation has

- a. changed for the better
- b. changed for the worse
- c. remained largely the same

#### 4 Problems of population (2): other countries

##### 4.1 Listening & note-making

You are now going to listen to a short radio report about the population problem in Japan.

1. Discuss with your partner whether you think the problem will be the same there as in China. Is there another aspect of the problem that might be mentioned?
2. Now listen to the report and note down the main point the report makes and *one* statistic that illustrates the point.

Discuss your notes with your partners.

3. Listen to the tape again to check your answers and note down the *two areas* Japan's population problem affects.
4. Now listen a third time and say whether the following statements are true or false according to the report: Discuss your answers. If a statement is false, try to correct it.
  - 1) Birth rates have gone up 50 per cent in Japan since the post-war baby boom. T F
  - 2) By 2020 nearly 25 per cent of the Japanese will be over 65. T F
  - 3) At present one in every seven Japanese is an old-age pensioner. T F
  - 4) Eventually 35 percent of those who work will have to contribute their incomes to pay for social security. T F
5. Now compare the article you have read on China with the report you have heard on Japan. Say which of the following statements summarise the article and which summarise the report.
  - a. the problems related to the age-structure of a population
  - b. the problems of sheer population size
  - c. the consequences of excessive population growth
  - d. the consequences of an aging population

##### 4.2 Population pyramids — information exchange

1. Working in pairs, exchange information about the age-structure of the populations of the countries, so that each of you can complete the blank graph on each work-sheet.

Useful language:

- 1) What percentage of the population is under five years of age?
- 2) One out of every five Mexicans is under ten years old.
- 3) Five percent of the population are men between the ages of 15 and 19.
- 4) Women under 20 make up 28 percent of the population.