



英语国际人 知性英语·自信表达

英语畅谈 中国文化 50主题

附赠MP3录音光盘

50 Topics On Chinese Culture

内知国情，外知世界
融语言技巧与谈话情趣于一体
再现原生态的口语交流情景

李霞 著 董玉国 译



外文出版社
FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS

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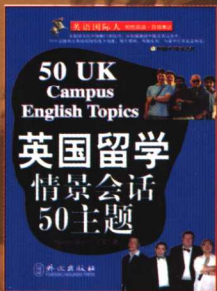
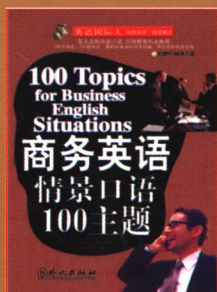
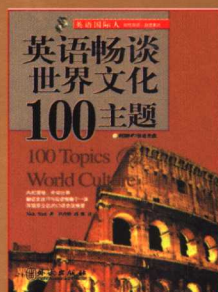
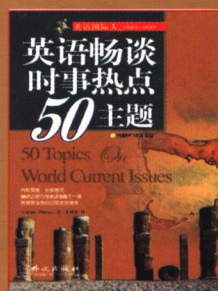
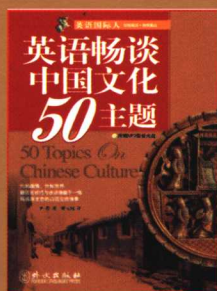


董玉国

1982年大学英语专业毕业后留校任教；1984年留学加拿大，主修美国和加拿大文学，获硕士学位；回国后在《北京周报》英文版从事记者编辑工作8年；此后进入外企，先后在几家国际公关公司和《财富》500强企业从事公共关系工作。



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前 言

.....

不少英语学习者在对外交往中有一个共同的困惑：涉及到较深层次的话题时，言词便捉襟见肘。为什么？答案很简单：不熟悉文化交往中特定的表达方式。这本书试图帮助你突破语言障碍，学会用得体的英语介绍中国国情、表达独立的观点。

文化是相互沟通的最佳介质

在美国大学校园国际学生组织举办的聚会上，常常有这样一个节目：“打破坚冰”，学生们就各自国家的文化展开交谈。在类似的国际交流场合中，个人所代表的民族文化是最显著的身份标识。用流利的英文谈论一些中国文化中有意思的话题，是一名中国人展示个性魅力的最佳选择。

外国人关心的中国文化话题

本书的主题涉及中国传统文化，以及当下中国的社会现象，题材多来自近年英美媒体对中国的报道。从这个途径选取谈资，既是为了让读者了解外国人对中国文化的兴趣点，也是为了帮助读者关注现实问题，学会用英文去思考、表达你对世界的认识。

多元的视角和包容的心态

每一种文化都有其存在的理由和价值，无所谓优劣和高下。对于自己和别人的文化都需要有多元的视角、包容的心态和幽默感。因此，本书在介绍中国文化时，不以老大自居，而是从跨文化的角度，客观地评价中西文化的异同。

简洁有效的语言

本书的英文表达秉承简洁、平和、有效的原则，让谈话者看上去有修养、不做作。达到这个目的，得益于本书的翻译者董玉国先生。他深厚的英文功底以及对中西文化的透彻了解，使得本书的英文表达得体且不失格调。

感谢外文出版社的蔡箐女士，她的工作使想法成为现实；感谢本书的语言教练帕特森先生，他的校订使本书增色不少；感谢《今日中国》杂志的霍建瀛先生，他以深厚的传统化学养给予了本书极大的帮助；还要感谢我的儿子董晓夏，他所贡献的新奇而有价值的观点，使本书内容更开放、更时尚。

最后，我要特别感谢购买并阅读本书的读者。幸运的是，它值得您的关注。

作者 李霞

学习指南

巧学活用本书能达到以一当十的效果，你至少可以做以下练习：

语音练习：选取你最感兴趣的课文，尽力模仿录音中的语音语调，把自己的朗读录下来和录音比较，找出差距反复模仿，直到乱真。

口语练习：利用书中对话做两人对练，或者和录音对练。就书中的主题换一个论点或谈话思路进行开放式对话创作。

听力练习：利用随书的 MP3 录音做精听和泛听练习。常用的内容精听，即反复听直到听懂每一个字并能流利跟读为止；其他内容泛听，能听懂大意并基本能跟读即可。

听写练习：听写能力表现在做课堂笔记和讲座笔记、会议记录等。利用本书 MP3 可以做听写练习，反复听写直到没有错误为止。

语汇练习：利用书中的词汇表，并摘录课文中精彩实用的句型或用法，建立自己的主题词汇库。

翻译练习：利用书中句型和对话做汉译英或英译汉练习，口译或笔译均可。

你可以根据自己的英语水平、工作需要和学习习惯将各种方法融会贯通，形成最适合自己的学习方法。当然，如果仅限于书本，再多的练习也只是纸上谈兵。如果你有找人开练的强烈愿望并付诸行动，离你的学习目标也就不远了。

Forword

.....

Many students of English are often bothered by more or less the same problem. They find it difficult to express themselves properly when talking about complex topics. The reason is actually very simple. There is a lack of sufficient understanding of the cultural context. This book aims to address this problem. Readers will learn to discuss topics about China in effective English.

Cultural topics as a best vehicle for communications.

There is a popular item called “break the iceberg” on the agenda of campus gatherings at US universities. Students from different countries will break the ice by talking about subjects of their own culture. In such a situation, a person’s cultural background is probably his or her most recognizable identity. Similarly, it will be very desirable for a Chinese student to discuss interesting Chinese cultural topics in fluent English.

Chinese cultural topics most relevant to foreigners.

This book covers a range of topics, from traditional Chinese culture to current social phenomena. Most of these topics have been reported in the Western media over the recent years. Hopefully this will allow the readers not only to understand what are making headlines in the West, it also helps to expose them to these topics, enabling them to think and communicate in everyday English.

A diverse and open state of mind. Every culture has its value.

No culture is superior to the other. It takes a diverse and open mindset, as well as a sense of humor, to look at each of them. Discussions of the Chinese cultural elements in this book are based on a multi-dimensional, rather than self-centered, perspective. Both the Chinese and Western cultures are viewed in their own right.

Simple and practical language.

As much as possible, English expressions in this book tend to be simple, basic and practical to enable the readers to engage in simple and unpretentious conversations. The writer wishes to thank Mr. Dong Yuguo. His English proficiency and his exposure to different cultures have helped achieve this goal.

My special thanks go to Ms. Cai Qing at the Foreign Languages Press. Without her outstanding work, this book would not have become a reality. Mr. Graham Paterson, the language consultant, has made this book more readable as far as language is concerned. I am indebted to Mr. Huo Jianying of the *China Today* magazine. His knowledge of traditional culture has been a valuable source of help. Lastly, my son Dong Xiaoxia has made constructive comments which, in turn, have made the dialogues more relevant.

I also want to thank every reader who buys this book. I hope you will find it worthwhile.

Li Xia

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Culture Conflicts 文化碰撞

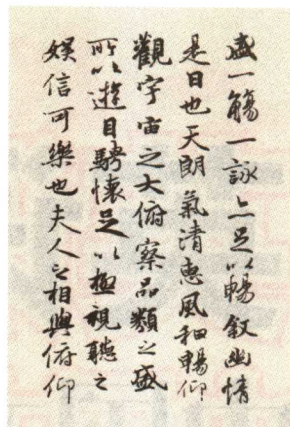
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英语畅谈 中国文化50主题

50 Topics On
Chinese Culture

1. The Art of Calligraphy

奇妙的书法



Dialogue

- A:** Some critics **suggest** that different genres of Chinese calligraphy have different political implications. Take Wang Xizhi for example. His calligraphy was repudiated as unorthodox during his lifetime but, only a few decades after his death, was established as an orthodox genre.
- B:** That's for sure! Historically, Chinese calligraphy and politics were closely intertwined. Over 2000 years ago, Emperor Qin Shihuang, the first Emperor in Chinese history, established the official Chinese writing characters. The new, simplified characters made writing calligraphy less complicated. It **allowed** people to use characters with more straight strokes, thus making it easier to write with brushes. This created the Li genre. **Over time**, other variations were also developed, which eventually lead to the formation of the five genres in Chinese calligraphy. These were the Zhuan, Li, Kai, Xing and Cao genres.
- A:** I've heard that most emperors were **good at** calligraphy. The Tang Dynasty Emperor Li Shimin was an avid collector of Wang Xizhi's writings.
- B:** That's right. Qing Dynasty Emperor Qian Long **played a key role** in compiling an authoritative collection of calligraphy. **To some extent**, preferences of the Emperors had an influence on the **rise and fall** of certain calligraphy genres.
- A:** Ordinary Chinese people also seemed to like calligraphy a lot.
- B:** Part of the reason was the sponsorship by the Emperors. Another reason was the Imperial Civil Service examinations that started in the 7th century. Those examinations were focused on writing and provided a way for ordinary people to achieve a better life. As a result, calligraphy became widely accepted. Calligraphy also had its practical values because it was a good way to **make friends** and was more presentable as a gift rather than jewelry or money.

- A:** Does calligraphy still have these practical functions now?
- B:** Yes. Many people practice calligraphy as a way to raise their cultural accomplishment. Older people use calligraphic writing as a method to **keep fit**. They believe that when a person concentrates on writing calligraphy, his inner wellbeing is stimulated.
- A:** I had thought computers would lead to the disappearance of Chinese calligraphy. Now I understand that's not likely to happen. How can you give your boss computer-printed calligraphy as a gift?
- B:** You don't, unless you want him to fire you!

- A:** 有评论家认为中国书法的不同流派都有其政治含义。比如王羲之，他的书法曾经被视为对正统文化的攻击而遭诟病，但在他死后几十年，却被朝廷封为书法的正宗。
- B:** 是这样。历史上，中国书法与权力密不可分。两千多年前，中国的第一个皇帝秦始皇统一了中国的文字。新的简化汉字使书写变得简单。人们使用适合毛笔书写的直线笔画写字，由此产生了隶书。随着时间的推移，其他字体也产生了，最后形成中国书法的五种字体：篆、隶、楷、行、草。
- A:** 我听说中国的皇帝大多擅长书法，唐代皇帝李世民就热中于收集王羲之的作品。
- B:** 对。清朝皇帝乾隆还编纂了一套字帖，把他认为正宗的书体收录其中。从某种程度上说，皇帝的好恶决定了不同书法流派的兴衰。
- A:** 普通中国人似乎也热爱书法。
- B:** 这一方面是因为历代皇帝的提倡，另一方面是因为朝廷从7世纪开始实行的科举考试。这种考试借文章选拔人才，成为平民百姓的晋身之阶。书法因此受到重视。此外，书法还有着实际的效用，比如结交朋友。比起珠宝或金钱，送人一幅书法作品就来得高雅、体面。
- A:** 现在书法还有这样的功效吗？
- B:** 还有。很多人研习书法的目的是提升文化素养；老年人学习书法是为了保健强身。人们认为，在凝神定气地思考布局运笔的过程中，体内的气会随之运动，对健康颇有益处。
- A:** 我一直认为电脑的出现会导致中国书法的衰落。现在看来，这不太可能。你怎么能拿着一幅从电脑中打印出来的书法作品送给上司呢？
- B:** 除非你想让他炒掉你。

Background Reading 背景阅读

Brush 毛笔

The brush is the traditional Chinese writing tool. Its tip is made of soft hairs from a sheep, weasel or rabbit. The carefully selected hairs are tied together, trimmed into a tapering shape and fixed onto one end of a bamboo or wooden holder. The hair is both soft and elastic. The outer layers of the brush are shorter, making it easier to absorb ink. The tip end has longer hairs which come to a tiny point, so that both wrinkle dotting and line drawing can be done easily.

毛笔是中国的传统书写工具。笔尖由羊毛、黄鼬毛或兔毛制成。先要精心选择毫毛，将一端修剪成尖的形状，然后将另一端固定在竹子或木制的笔管上。毛笔的毫毛既软又有弹性。笔头外部的毫毛稍短，使它更易吸收墨汁。尖端用较长的毛，以形成笔尖，这样可以轻易地写出点或线的形状。

Chinese Ink 墨

Chinese ink is made by mixing soot from burning tung oil and pine tar with gelatin, Chinese herbs and spices. Ink is produced by grinding the solid ink with water against an inkstone. There is a saying that “(black) ink has five colors,” because Chinese painters use ink meticulously to produce a number of subtle shades.

墨是由桐油燃烧后的煤烟与松木炭加上明胶和一些草药及香料混合而成。墨汁是将坚固的墨块与水一道在砚台上反复研磨而成的。中国有“（黑）墨有五色”之说，因为中国的画家们精心地用墨调和出各种层次的阴影。

Xuan Paper 宣纸

Xuan paper was originally produced in Xuanzhou in Anhui Province in the Tang Dynasty. Xuan paper has a close texture, making it pliable yet tough, and resistant to moth damage. In addition, this kind can be achieved with heavier or lighter strokes, or when the stroke is quickened or slowed down. With so many advantages, Xuan paper largely replaced the silk fabric which had been used for painting before. Silk is not absorbent, but is suitable for meticulous line drawing and applying heavy colors.

宣纸最初是唐代时产自安徽省的宣州。宣纸的质地紧密、具有韧性，可以防虫咬。此外，在这样质地的纸上书写，笔划轻重缓急皆可。由于有这么多的长处，宣纸取代了曾经常用作绘画材料的丝绸。丝绸的吸附力低，但是它更适合于细致的线描和重彩。

suggest 认为
good at 善于
rise and fall 兴衰

allow 可以，允许
play a key role 起关键作用
make friends 交朋友

over time 一段时间之后，斗转星移
to some extent 在某种程度上
keep fit 保持健康



Exercises 练习

Answer these questions.

1. What did Emperor Qing Shihuang do?
2. Why did calligraphy become popular in the past?
3. Why do people like calligraphy now?

Translate these sentences into Chinese.

1. Different genres of Chinese calligraphy have different political implications.
2. Historically, Chinese calligraphy and politics were closely intertwined.
3. The new, simplified characters made writing calligraphy less complicated.
4. Over time, other variations were also developed.
5. Different writing styles were used for different official documents.
6. Most Emperors were good at calligraphy.
7. Emperor Qian Long played a key role in compiling a collection of calligraphy.
8. Examinations provided a way for ordinary people to achieve a better life.
9. Calligraphy was a good way to make friends.
10. Many people practice calligraphy as a way to keep fit.

Complete this paragraph with suitable words.

Historically, Chinese calligraphy, and politics, were 1 intertwined. 2 2000 years ago, Emperor Qin Shihuang, the 3 Emperor in the Chinese history, established the 4 Chinese writing characters. The new 5 characters made writing calligraphy 6 complicated. It 7 people to use characters with more straight strokes, thus making it easier to write 8 brushes. This created the Li genre.



Answers 答案

Translate these sentences into Chinese.

1. 中国书法的不同流派都有其政治含义。
2. 历史上，中国书法与权力密不可分。
3. 新的简化汉字使书写变得简单。
4. 随着时间的推移，其他字体也产生了。
5. 不同的字体用于不同的律令。
6. 中国的皇帝大多擅长书法。
7. 乾隆皇帝在书法集的编纂中起到了关键作用。
8. 考试成为平民百姓的晋身之阶。
9. 书法是结交朋友的一种好方法。
10. 许多人练习书法是为了保健强身。

Complete this paragraph with suitable words.

1. closely 2. Over 3. first 4. official 5. simplified 6. less 7. allowed 8. with

2. The Significance of Chinese Paintings

中国画的含意



Dialogue

- A:** It's interesting that Chinese paintings can be created on the spot, even though most of them have similar subjects. Peony, plum blossoms, mountains, creeks or cottages are very popular. There are often painters at significant celebratory and commemorative events.
- B:** Their educational function is, in fact, a unique feature of Chinese paintings. Human profiles were used as a method to either glorify heroes or condemn traitors 2000 years ago. Tang Dynasty officials even tried to bring painting into the Confucian ideology. The Court of the Song Dynasty published an official guide to paintings. This raised **criteria** not only for human profiles but also for landscape and object paintings.
- A:** Oh, what was that?
- B:** It **classified** paintings into ten categories covering religious beliefs, Confucianism and state power. This classification gave an official definition of the value and significance of the paintings. The purpose of landscape paintings was to portray the five mountains, while fruit and birds were used to exemplify or eulogize the Gods. In this case, the subjects were used as references to people in order to **deliver** moral messages. For example, peony and peacocks represented wealth and fortune; pine trees, bamboo, plum blossoms and orchids represented elegance and accomplishment; and pine trees and cypresses symbolized loyalty.
- A:** **As far as** I know, painters who did not have to **make a living** by painting used different skills to those specified in the guide, even though they painted the same subjects.
- B:** Artists are usually against pragmatism. They like to give meaning to the subjects they paint. Bamboo symbolizes integrity and simplicity; the orchid symbolizes modesty and misfortune; and pine trees symbolize never giving up. Artists also like landscapes. It

doesn't take a lot of training to paint landscapes. It all **depends on** the painter's personality and ability, as well as his unique touch. Most of today's non-professional painters follow the landscape style. The objective of these painters is purely entertainment and self-satisfaction. The more successful artists have the opportunity to exhibit at public functions. That is probably the climax of their painting careers.

A: What are professional painters doing?

B: Some of them make a great effort to improve their painting skills. They want to develop new and innovative painting methods by borrowing from other genres. Others are busy making money. They have found ways to produce commercially attractive paintings. Some people say they are no longer artists. Instead they have become manufacturers of paintings.

A: 这真有意思：中国画是可以现场表演的。在一些庆典或纪念性的场合，你可以看到画家们挥毫泼墨。画的题材大致相同：牡丹、梅花、山水、林中小屋等。

B: 其实，这是中国画的一个特点：强调绘画的宣传功能。早在两千年前，人物画就被政府机构广泛用作宣传工具，表彰忠臣烈士，批判乱臣贼子。唐代的士大夫们甚至试图把绘画创作纳入儒家的思想体系。到了宋代，政府专门出版了官方画谱，不但对人物画的功能提出要求，对山水画和花鸟画也如此。

A: 都是些什么要求？

B: 这个画谱将绘画分为十类，涵盖宗教思想、儒家理论和政权统治，论述了各类绘画存在的价值与意义。山水画的存在价值是能描绘“五岳”；瓜果、花鸟有敬神的作用。绘画因此起到以物比人的教化作用。比如，牡丹、孔雀表现富贵；松、竹、梅、兰比喻高人雅士；松、柏象征忠贞。

A: 不过，据我所知，古代那些不靠绘画谋生的文人，虽然也画同样的题材，但他们的技法与官方画谱规定的不同。

B: 文人反对实用主义，他们的画有不同的象征意义：竹子代表正直、质朴；兰花代表谦虚和怀才不遇；松树代表自强不息。文人也喜画山水，这不需要进行长期的技巧训练，完全取决于画家的个性和修养，还有独特的笔触。今天，一些非职业画家依然沿袭古代文人的路子，为自娱自乐、修身养性而画。他们当中知名度较高的能参加各种活动，现场作画。这大概是他们艺术价值的最高体现了。

A: 职业画家在干什么？

B: 一些人在苦心研习技巧，试图多方借鉴，开发出不同凡响的画法；另一些人忙于赚钱，他们绘制具有商业价值的作品。有人说他们其实已经不算画家，只是画匠而已。