

徐晓晴 周常明 主编

# 大学英语泛读

第 3 册

◆ 苏州大学出版社



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# 前 言

《大学英语教学大纲》(修订本)指出:“阅读是掌握语言知识,打好语言基础,获取信息的重要渠道。阅读能力是大部分大学生今后工作所需的重要技能。”在我国已经加入世界贸易组织的今天,全面提高大学生的英语应用能力,特别是阅读能力,已成为大学英语教学的重点。我院的大学英语教师长期以来一直孜孜追求,在努力教学的同时,投入了大量时间和精力,多方收集和精心选编了许多适合当代大学生阅读的文章,以满足大学英语教学的需求。

经过长期酝酿和精心的准备,并在我院外语系领导的大力支持和与苏州大学出版社联手合作下,《大学英语泛读》第1-4册终于与广大教师和学生见面了。我们精选了许多当代大学生普遍感兴趣而且难易适中的文章。还由教学经验丰富的大学英语教学骨干负责撰写了相关的配套练习,以供学生读后检测之用,并附有部分答案,以供读者参考。

本教程所含文章大多选自国内外最新出版的书刊和杂志。教程分四册,每册一学期,可供大学英语教学四学期使用。为便于学生阅读,我们对文章中部分语言点作了注释。

我们相信我们所做的各项工作将有助于学生提高自己的阅读能力。对相关部门和个人对我们出版、发行和使用该教程提供的许多便利和支持,我们表示由衷的感谢,并希望在使用过程中提出宝贵意见,以便在再版时修正。

编 者  
2002年9月

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## Reading Passage One

“Automation” has been and still is, a greatly misused word, but its proper meaning, and therefore its implications, is gradually becoming better understood. Perhaps I could attempt an explanation, if not definition, by saying that it is a concept through which a machine-system is caused to operate with maximum efficiency by means of adequate measurement, observation, and control of its behavior. It involves a detailed and continuous knowledge of the function of the system, so that the best corrective actions can be applied immediately once they become necessary. Automation in this true sense is brought to full fruition only through a thorough exploitation of its three major elements: communication, computation, and control—the three “Cs”. I believe there is a great need to make sure that some, at any rate, of the implications to our society of the three “Cs” in combination are recognized and understood.

It might help, to begin with, to consider one of the industries in which automation has already begun to establish itself—steel-making. Those who have seen a steel plant will know something of the variety of processes, from the blast furnace onwards, which are inter-linked before the final rod or sheet emerges ready on its way to an engineering shop or a motorcar factory. In order to make each of the departments in the plant fully efficient, you can control it by means of a computer, fed with all the information required to operate it. In the case of the blast furnace, the computer would need to be supplied with information about the raw material which goes into the furnace, the temperatures at which the furnace works, and the best way of dealing with the various ingredients.

The operation of this part of the plant is a complex and highly skilled operation, requiring a great deal of knowledge, a great deal of integration of information and rapid decision-making, to make sure the furnace operates efficiently in relation to the next stage in the process. A computer can digest all this, make a very large number of intermediate decisions, and present the management staff immediately and continuously with all the information to enable them to take the final decisions that are necessary in order to operate

the plant at maximum efficiency. The information and the decisions arising from it would be processed, and then move on to the next stage, where again the specific circumstances of the operation would be digested, the best final decisions suggested, and the information processed and passed forward once more. At the same time, while the information moves from one part of the manufacturing unit to the next and is fully integrated into each new operation, the result of each change is fed back to the beginning, and further adjustments are constantly made, so that the process throughout the whole plant operates efficiently. All the time, information, and the actions taken by the computer as a result, are also fed upwards to what we might call general manager computers, or perhaps I ought to say, in order to prevent misunderstanding, computers to assist the general managers, to help them to decide what variations, if any, in routine or organization would be involved in order to operate the various departments in a more efficient manner, in line with general managerial policy.

Provided with this kind of assistance, the managers are free to concentrate on making policy decisions and on changing the decision of the computer if they feel the operation does not really make the best sense. Without automation, the manager is compelled to spend his time making a series of decisions on the basis of very limited information and a great deal of experience. The computer-aided manager is in a completely different position. Before he gets it, and even before he needs it, the information is processed, all action which can be decided by the machine already taken, giving him the essential facts in a clear-cut form, so that he may sometimes be faced with one, two, or more basic choices. He is aware of the consequences of his choices in advance, because the computer allows him to test them. Before he makes his final decision, he is very likely to ask the computer a question: "If I decide to do this instead of that, what will the consequence be?" And he may then find, from the answer the computer gives him, that he has to refer the problem to his superior for a decision of a final nature. One welcome result would be that committee meetings and conferences could be made much briefer and much more business-like and in many instances abolished altogether.

In my opinion, automation does not in the least replace human decisions on important issues. It makes sure that the people who have to make these decisions have adequate pre-digested information to work on. It is not a question of machines replacing men: it is largely a question of extending men's faculties by machines so that in fact they become better, more competent men. If you want to see across the ocean, you must use radar

instead of a telescope. You have to use the most adequate tools for your purpose.

## Words and Expressions

automation 自动化

measurement 测量

fruition 实现;完成

exploitation 利用

blast furnace 高炉,鼓风机

ingredient 配料;成分;要素

integration 结合;综合

digest 整理,把……分类

intermediate 中间的

maximum 最大量

manufacture 制造

aid 帮助

adjustment 调整

consequence 后果

faculty 才能

competent 有能力的

## Notes

1. by means of: 用;依靠
2. It involves a detailed and continuous knowledge of the function of the system, so that the best corrective actions can be applied immediately once they become necessary.  
自动化要求不断详细了解系统运转的信息,以便必要时立即采取最佳校正措施。
3. at any rate: 无论如何
4. ...to help them to decide what variations, if any, in routine or organization would be involved in order to operate the various departments in a more efficient manner, in line with general managerial policy. ……来帮助他们作出决定.在日常工作或组织机构中应该进行可能有的哪些改变,以便使各个部门更有效地运转,并与总的管理方针相一致.  
in line with: 与……一致

## Reading Comprehension

1. According to the author, full realization of automation involves \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. people's understanding of its significance  
B. full use of its three main elements: communication, computation and control  
C. people's understanding of its proper meaning and implication  
D. information-feeding and decision-making
2. In Paragraph 2, Line 2 the word "establish" most probably means \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. set up                      B. prove                      C. make                      D. look up
3. In the steel-making plant the computer is used throughout the whole manufacturing

process \_\_\_\_.

- A. to provide and pass on processed information for the manager
  - B. to control every step of the whole process
  - C. to solve math problems
  - D. to store information concerning production
4. A computer-aided manager \_\_\_\_.
- A. has more free time
  - B. can concentrate on decision-making
  - C. is able to make decisions on a scientific ground
  - D. All of the above.
5. Automation can do the following except \_\_\_\_.
- A. taking the place of human decisions
  - B. making meetings shorter and sometimes even cancelled
  - C. extending man's abilities and making him better and more capable
  - D. making the manager aware of the consequences of his decision in advance

### Translation

1. "Automation" has been, and still is, a greatly misused word, but its proper meaning, and therefore its implications, is gradually becoming better understood.
2. Without automation, the manager is compelled to spend his time making a series of decisions on the basis of very limited information and a great deal of experience.

### Short Answer Questions

1. What do the three "Cs" stand for in the passage?
2. Where can you spot the author's explanation of the word "automation"?

3. How does the author make the reader know what automation is?
4. What is the significance of automation according to the passage?
5. What is the manager's main role when automation is realized?

## Reading Passage Two

In China they're called little Emperors. In Europe they've been blamed for the population decline. And in certain corners of the United States, they're considered tragic—even vaguely unpatriotic.

Only children, and the parents who bring them into the world, have historically been viewed with suspicion. In the past, when a family's survival depended on the number of hands available to plant and harvest food, big families were prized. While that's still the case in certain parts of the globe, technological advances for the most part have eliminated the need for multichild families.

Still, demographers tell us that the majority of Americans, given the choice, would have more than one child. Single-child families have nearly doubled in the United States over the past 15 years. Yet despite this startling increase in only children, the negative stereotype of the spoiled, maladjusted loner continues.

Bill McKibben, environmentalist, and father of a 14-year-old daughter, debunks these prejudices in his new book *Maybe One: A Personal and Environmental Argument for Single-Child Families*. For personal and environmental reasons, McKibben and his wife, writer Sue Halpern, were inclined to have just one child. But like many parents, they worried about the emotional and social repercussion. McKibben did some research to answer his own personal questions and came away assured that single-child families don't harm kids. (Indeed, dozens of studies point to the fact that only kids actually fare better in measures of achievement motivation and social adjustment.)

In addition, McKibben concludes that families stopping at one kid may be the best and only way to counteract a world population explosion that is spiraling out of control. While certain industrialized countries—among them Japan, Spain, and Italy—are seeing negative population growth due to dramatically shrinking family size, McKibben notes that global population continues to boom. More American women, for instance, may be having just one child, but the population base from which these single-child families spring is so

large that at current rates, the number of people in our country alone will double by the year 2050, creating greater pressure on the earth's natural resources.

The answer, he says, is simple: People—and not only white, educated people like himself—must commit to actually reducing the population by voluntarily limiting themselves to one child per family. And everyone must work to turn the negative attitudes about only children on their ear.

Toni Falbo, professor of educational psychology and sociology has studied only children and their families since 1973. What she's found over her years of research is surprisingly unsurprising: "On average, only children are just like everybody else," she says. "They are no more lonely, maladjusted, or selfish. They are no more likely to divorce or have trouble making friends than people raised in larger families. There is no big disadvantage, apparently, to being an only child. Nor are there stunning advantages." Falbo, herself an only child, is uncovering evidence that perceptions are changing. "I think people are beginning to look at this in a different way," she says.

Not soon enough, according to McKibben "We live on a planet where 3 billion people don't have clean water, where species die by the score each day, where kids grow up without fathers, where violence overwhelms us," he writes. "And the energy freed by having smaller families may be some of the energy needed to take on these next challenges, to really take them on to make them central to our lives."

McKibben's message may inspire many to ponder their role in the population explosion, but will he reach the parents whom demographers tell us are most likely to favor larger families—those of Hispanic and Asian descents in the United States, and various minority groups throughout the industrialized world? Issues of race and ethnicity invariably arise in any debate involving population-reduction strategies. In certain industrialized nations, for instance, educated white parents are having fewer children while the population continues to grow at a faster pace among people of color. At the same time, zero populationists and birth-control advocates have often focused their efforts on developing African nations, saying that the key to reducing the world's population is educating poor people about how to limit their fertility.

But the population debate is about the use of natural resources as well as family size. While the citizens of industrialized nations make up only 22 percent of the world's population, we use two-thirds of the world's resources. In other words, a single child born in Europe, Japan, or the United States essentially occupies more space on the earth than an

entire village of African children. The answer, then, may lie not so much in restraining Africa's or South America's or India's seemingly inexhaustible supply of children, but rather in controlling our own insatiable demand for the earth's resources.

### Words and Expressions

demographer 人口学家

startling 惊人的

stereotype 陈规;模式化的思想

debunk 批判,驳斥

repercussion 反响,影响

fare 生活

counteract 阻碍;抵消

maladjusted 不适应环境的

ponder 考虑,思索

ethnicity 种族地位

### Notes

1. have historically been viewed with suspicion: 以历史的眼光看颇感疑惑
2. While that's still the case in certain parts of the globe: 全球的某些地方依然是这种状况
3. that is spiraling out of control: 正不断失去控制地急剧上升
4. on one's ear: 颠倒
5. zero populationist: 提倡人口零增长的人口学家
6. The answer, then, may lie not so much... but...: 那么,答案并不在于……,而在于……

### Reading Comprehension

1. Only children and their parents have historically been viewed with suspicion, because \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. no one was sure whether the only child is a contribution to the world population  
B. in the past, a family's survival depended on the family members' labor  
C. they are afraid that the only children are called Emperors  
D. it is not mentioned in this passage
2. In some parts of the world, parents don't have many children because of \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. lack of food supply                      B. the advanced technology  
C. the pollution                              D. the unnecessary labor
3. What is the ordinary attitude to only children according to this passage?

- A. They are spoiled and maladjusted.
  - B. They are separated from their friends.
  - C. They have trouble making friends.
  - D. All of the above.
4. What is implied in the last paragraph?
- A. Each person in the developed countries occupies more resources than that in Africa.
  - B. The occupation of resources is an essential part of population problem.
  - C. Man should not only control the birth but also control their demand for the earth.
  - D. All of the above.
5. What is the author's attitude in this passage?
- A. Positive.
  - B. Negative.
  - C. Neutral.
  - D. Dilemmatic.

### **Translation**

1. And the energy freed by having smaller families may be some of the energy needed to take on these next challenges, to really take them on to make them central to our lives.
2. The answer, then, may lie not so much in restraining Africa's or South America's or India's seemingly inexhaustible supply of children, but rather in controlling our own insatiable demand for the earth's resources.

### **Short Answer Questions**

1. Who does "they" refer to in the sentence "In Europe they've been blamed for the population decline"?
2. What is McKibben's conclusion of the influence of children?

3. What is McKibben's attitude to the white when he talks about birth control?
4. What are zero populationists and birth-control advocates doing?
5. What do you think of the only children?