

特别奉献
美国之音

VOA

THE VOICE OF
AMERICA

美语课堂 走进美国

苏玉彬 编著

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VOA美语课堂

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走进
美国

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编者的话

长期以来,美国之音的新闻节目就被广大英语学习者当作学习英语的良好范本,尽管目前市面上的有声学习资料比以前丰富了许多,但美国之音用词浅显,词汇量不大,发音标准,其作为提高听力的工具地位不会因此发生变化。由于互联网的普及,许多英语学习网站都免费提供美国之音新闻节目的在线收听或下载功能,这极大地方便了英语学习者,也向传统的图书出版发出了挑战。因此我们特地邀请了厦门大学几位从事听说教学的教师编写了“美国之音美语课堂”系列丛书。他们有的是教学经验丰富的资深教师,有的是业务突出的后起之秀,他们的共同特点是一丝不苟,精心选材,为每则新闻做了详细的注释,提供了大量的背景知识。更为重要的是,他们遵循英语听力的学习规律,认真地设计了各种练习题。所有这些努力只是为了一个目的:为英语学习者在浩如烟海的学习材料中提供最可靠的指南。

“美国之音美语课堂”系列丛书包括正常语速的《VOA 美语课堂·标准英语》、《VOA 美语课堂·经济报道》以及特别英语的《VOA 美语课堂·新闻》、《VOA 美语课堂·经济报道》、《VOA 美语课堂·走进美国》,它们各具特色,适合不同的读者:

《VOA 美语课堂·标准英语》题材广泛,附中文译文

《VOA 美语课堂·经济报道》练习题题型多样,富于启发性

《VOA 美语课堂·新闻》按主题分类,提高词汇复现率

《VOA 美语课堂·走进美国》内容丰富,是了解美国社会、历史、人文、科技等的一扇窗口

值得一提的是,美国之音是美国政府对外宣传的工具,不可避免地带有其政治色彩。在收听过程中,我们应用自己的观点加以分析和鉴别。



VOA

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Lesson 1 Alaska

Part 1 Exercises and Notes

Vocabulary and Cultural Notes:

1. **administration** (一个总统、内阁等的)任期
2. **treaty** 条约;谈判
3. **deal** 交易;(政治上的)密约;〈口〉买卖
4. **salmon** 鲑鱼;大麻哈鱼
5. **territory** 领土;版图;地域
6. **presence** 存在
7. **statehood** 州的状态或地位

Exercises:

I. Listen to the passage and give brief answers to the following questions:

1. When did the United States buy the land Alaska?
2. How much did the United States pay for the land?
3. Why did many Americans at the time criticize the purchase?
4. When did Alaskans become American citizens?
5. Which two states are the only states that do not share borders with any other states?

II. Listen to the passage and complete the following statements:

1. Americans found work in Alaska's _____
_____.
2. In later years, Alaska's _____
made the area extremely valuable.
3. Today, history experts consider the sale to be _____

- _____.
- American traders and business leaders knew that the area was _____. They said owning Alaska would _____.
 - Political leaders said the purchase would be good for the United States because it would _____.
And they said it would _____.

Part 2 Keys to Exercises

I.

- In 1867.
- About seven million dollars.
- They said seven million dollars was too much to pay for what they thought was a worthless piece of frozen land.
- The date was January 3, 1959.
- Alaska and Hawaii.

II.

- salmon fishing industry and its gold and copper mines
- oil, natural gas, trees, fish and animal skins
- one of the greatest deals any country ever made for territory
- was rich with minerals and animals; improve business in the Pacific coast states
- end all Russia presence in North America; help guarantee friendly relations with Russia

Part 3 Script

Alaska

Host: Our VOA question this week comes from two listeners. Munna

from Bangladesh asks if Alaska is a state of the United States. The short answer to that question is yes. Prinya Plabodiwatt from Thailand asks why the United States bought the territory of Alaska from Russia.

The United States bought that land in 1867, during the administration of President Andrew Johnson. When Russia offered it for sale, Secretary of State William Seward quickly prepared a treaty of purchase.

The United States paid about seven million dollars for the land. It was decided to call the area Alaska, after the Aleut Indian name for part of the area, Alakshak.

Many Americans at the time criticized the purchase. They said seven million dollars was too much to pay for what they thought was a worthless piece of frozen land. They said the deal was foolish. They called it "Seward's Folly".

Those critics were proved wrong. Americans found work in Alaska's salmon fishing industry and its gold and copper mines. In later years, Alaska's oil, natural gas, trees, fish and animal skins made the area extremely valuable. Today, history experts consider the sale to be one of the greatest deals any country ever made for territory.

Why did Secretary Seward buy Alaska? He had wanted to buy the area for a long time. American traders and business leaders knew that the area was rich with minerals and animals. They said owning Alaska would improve business in the Pacific coast states. Political leaders said the purchase would be good for the United States because it would end all Russian presence in North America. And they said it would help guarantee friendly relations with Russia.

The people of Alaska first asked to be part of the United States in 1916. That request was rejected. They asked again in the 1950s. In

1958, Congress approved the Alaskan statehood act. Alaskans became American citizens after they voted to accept the measure. The date was January 3, 1959.

Alaska is the largest of all the states in territory. It is above northwest Canada. Alaska and Hawaii are the only states that do not share borders with any other states.

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Lesson 2 American and British English

Part 1 Exercises and Notes

Vocabulary and Cultural Notes

1. **expert** 专家
2. **colony** 殖民地
3. **propose** 提议; 建议
4. **reform** 改革
5. **reject** 拒绝
6. **influence** 影响
7. **publish** 出版
8. **establish** 建立
9. **version** (书、乐曲等的) 某种版本或改编本
10. **immigrant** 移民
11. **the Revolutionary War** 美国独立战争(1775—1783)(英属北美 13 个殖民地反抗英国殖民统治、争取民族独立的革命战争。又称北美独立战争或美国革命。)
12. **Noah Webster** 韦伯斯特(1758—1843)(美国辞典编纂者, 课本编作者, 拼写改革倡导者, 政论家和编辑, 被誉为“美国学术和教育之父”。1828 年出版了《美国英语词典》*An American Dictionary of the English Language*, 俗称《韦氏一版》。)
13. **George Bernard Shaw** 乔治·萧伯纳(1856—1950)(英国剧作家, 著有《卖花女》*Pygmalion*, 1964 年改编成歌舞片《窈窕淑女》*My Fair Lady*, 荣获第十一届奥斯卡最佳电影剧本奖。)

Exercises:

I. Listen to the passage and give brief answers to the following questions:

1. Why did Americans begin to change the sound of their speech



after the Revolutionary War?

2. When did Noah Webster publish his first spelling book?
3. When was *The American Dictionary of the English Language* published and what did it establish?
4. Why did Webster begin to establish an American version of the English language?
5. In what way was Webster's rule for saying or pronouncing every part of a word helpful to immigrants?
6. How did immigrants who came to the United States help make American English different from British English?
7. Why did sometimes Americans and British people do not understand each other?

II. Blank-filling:

1. Some American leaders (1) _____ major changes in the language. Benjamin Franklin wanted a new (2) _____ of spelling. His reforms were (3) _____. But his ideas (4) _____ others. One was Noah Webster.

2. For example, a "jumper" in Britain is a (1) _____. In the United States, it is a kind of dress. The British word "brolly" is an (2) "_____" in America. A (3) "_____" in America is a "dustbin" in Britain. French (4) _____ potatoes in the United States are called "chips" in Britain.

3. All these differences led British writer George Bernard Shaw to joke that _____.

Part 2 Keys to Exercises

- I. Listen to the passage and give short answers to the following questions.
1. Because they wanted to separate themselves from the British in

language as they had separated themselves from the British government.

2. In 1783.
3. In 1828.

It established rules for speaking and spelling the words used in American English.

4. Because he believed that British English spelling rules were too complex.
5. The rule made American English easier for immigrants to learn.
6. They brought different languages when they came to the United States, and then many foreign words and expressions became part of English as Americans speak it.
7. Because some words have different word meanings.

II.

1. (1) proposed (2) system (3) rejected (4) influenced
2. (1) sweater (2) umbrella (3) wastebasket (4) fried
3. Britain and America are two countries separated by the same language

Part 3 Script

American and British English

Host: Our VOA listener question this week comes from Iraq. Harbey Muhammad Ali asks about differences between American and British English.

Language experts say that spoken English was almost the same in the American colonies and Britain. Americans began to change the sound of their speech after the Revolutionary War in 1776. They wanted to separate themselves from the British in language as they had separated themselves from the British government.

Some American leaders proposed major changes in the language. Benjamin Franklin wanted a new system of spelling. His reforms were rejected. But his ideas influenced others. One was Noah Webster.

Webster wrote language books for schools. He thought Americans should learn from American books. He published his first spelling book in 1783. Webster published *The American Dictionary of the English Language* in 1828. It established rules for speaking and spelling the words used in American English.

Webster believed that British English spelling rules were too complex. So he worked to establish an American version of the English language. For example, he spelled the word "center" "c-e-n-t-e-r" instead of the British spelling, "c-e-n-t-r-e". He spelled the word "honor" "h-o-n-o-r" instead of "h-o-n-o-u-r" as it is spelled in Britain.

Noah Webster said every part of a word should be spoken. That is why Americans say "sec-re-ta-ry" instead of "sec-re-t'ry" as the British do. Webster's rule for saying every part of a word made American English easier for immigrants to learn. For example, they learned to say "waist-coat" the way it is spelled instead of the British "wes-kit".

The different languages of the immigrants who came to the United States also helped make American English different from British English. Many foreign words and expressions became part of English as Americans speak it.

Sometimes Americans and British people do not understand each other because of different word meanings. For example, a "jumper" in Britain is a sweater. In the United States, it is a kind of dress. The British word "brolly" is an "umbrella" in America. A "wastebasket" in America is a "dustbin" in Britain. French fried potatoes in the United States are called "chips" in Britain.

All these differences led British writer George Bernard Shaw to joke

that Britain and America are two countries separated by the same language.



Lesson 3 American Independence Day

Part 1 Exercises and Notes

Vocabulary and Cultural Notes:

1. **colonist** 殖民地居民; 殖民者
2. **revolt** 反叛; 起义; 造反
3. **troop** 军队; 部队
4. **delegate** 会议代表; 代表团团员
5. **colony** 殖民地
6. **Continental Congress** 大陆会议(美国当时的最高权力协调机构)
7. **Thomas Jefferson** 托马斯·杰弗逊(美国第三任总统、《独立宣言》的主要起草人)
8. **debate** 辩论; 争论
9. **vote** 选举; 投票; 表决
10. **John Adams** 约翰·亚当斯(美国第二任总统)
11. **deny** 否定; 拒绝给予

Exercises:

I. Blank-filling:

In the summer of (1) _____, the American colonists were (2) _____. Almost one in three was (3) _____ to Britain. They could not imagine a war for (4) _____. Yet most were increasingly angry about what they considered (5) _____ by the British government. Britain (6) _____ them without giving them representation. It also (7) _____ any of their laws that it did not like. By June, The colonists were in open (8) _____. Some fighting had already taken place between (9) _____. The idea of