

韩 洁 编写

中级美国英语读物系列

与美国面对面交流

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A m e r i c a n
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上海交通大学出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

与美国面对面交流/韩洁编写. —上海:上海交通大学出版社, 1999. 6

(中级美国英语读物系列)

ISBN 7-313-02215-8

I. 与… II. 韩… III. 美国-概况-英语-语言读物 IV. H319.4

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(1999)第 17999 号

与美国面对面交流

韩洁 编写

上海交通大学出版社出版发行

上海市番禺路 877 号 邮政编码 200030

电话 64281208 传真 64683798

全国新华书店经销

立信会计常熟市印刷联营厂·印刷

开本: 850×1168(mm)1/32 印张: 7.5 字数: 17.5 千字

1999 年 6 月第 1 版 1999 年 6 月第 1 次印刷

ISBN 7-313-02215-8/H·428

定价: 10.50 元

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前 言

当代应用语言学理论认为外语学习进入中级水平阶段时(如大学英语四级),学习者应加强阅读练习;此刻他的主要目标不是外语本身,如语法规则、单词学习等,而是以外语为桥梁,吸取知识及其他信息。这样,外语就在阅读过程中“润物细无声”地滋润着学习者,其结果自然是提高了英语能力。

这一认识已被许多外语教师和广大学生的实践所证明。笔者在几十年教学生涯中所见许多优秀学生无不遵循这一规律,这就是专家们所谓的“习得”(acquisition)。此方法虽与片面追求应试效果的方法背道而驰,但结果往往是学生在考试中不仅有上佳表现,而且以后还会有进一步提高的后劲。这些都是应试教育望尘莫及的。

用“习得英语”提高英语素质,首先要有适当的读物,能引起阅读兴趣。笔者认为英语读物是否适当,除了文字难度以外,必须考虑读物的题材,看它是否适合广大读者的需要。

笔者从1998年美国报刊杂志中精选出一些题材有趣且可读性强的文章,如美国当代社会的文化观念、人际关系、处世态度、经济变革以及科技动态等,汇编成《中级美国英语读物系列》,希望读者在趣味盎然的阅读中潜移默化地吸取知识并提高英语水平。

书中凡超过大学英语四级的词汇均加以注释,并为每篇文章设计了多项选择型阅读理解题(Multiple Choice Questions),供读者在自测中深入思考,加深理解。对于较难的句子或段落,提供了参考译文(Fragment of Translation for Reference)。另外,所有问题均附有答案(The Answer Key)。

编者

1999年4月

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1 The 'Myths of Living Together before Marriage

By *Marilyn Gardner*

1 In the movie "You've Got Mail," a ²thirtyish character named Joe Fox describes a thoroughly modern domestic scene. "My father is getting married again," he says. "For five years he's been living with a woman named Gillian." They have a young son.

2 When ³the senior Fox tells a colleague about his forthcoming wedding, he explains, "Matt is four years old. It would be nice for him to know his parents are married."

3 Young Matt has plenty of company these days. As of 1997, slightly more than 4 million couples were living together, and a growing number of them are raising children, according to ⁴the US Census Bureau.

4 "You've Got Mail," in fact, perfectly illustrates the broad acceptance of ⁵cohabitation. Both main characters—Joe Fox, played by Tom Hanks, and Kathleen Kelly, played by Meg Ryan—live with a partner. Not a wedding ring in sight.

5 Yet such ⁶blithe arrangements hardly guarantee ⁷marital success. A study released today at Rutgers University in ⁸New Jersey finds that living together, rather than strengthening an eventual marriage, actually increases the risk of divorce by 46 percent. It also increases women's risk of domestic violence and children's chances of physical or ⁹sexual abuse.

6 The report, "Should We Live Together? What Young Couples

Need to Know About Cohabitation Before Marriage,” offers the first¹⁰ in-depth look at such living arrangements. Authors Barbara Dafoe Whitehead and David Popenoe reviewed nearly 50 cohabiting studies spanning more than a decade.

7 “When¹¹ blushing brides walk down the¹² aisle in the 1990s, more than half have already lived together with a boyfriend,” they write. In addition, the longer an unmarried couple lives together, the less likely they are to tie the knot. People who cohabit, the study finds, “are more oriented to their own autonomy” and less likely to be committed to a relationship.

8 To a generation¹³ disillusioned by their parents’ divorces and¹⁴ wary of marriage for themselves, living together appears to offer a positive alternative. Like test-driving a car before buying, they want to test-drive a relationship, checking out¹⁵ compatibility before signing on the¹⁶ dotted line.

9 Yet such practices can be particularly hard on women, who face the risk of¹⁷ pregnancy. ¹⁸“Liberation” can impose new forms of bondage.

10 And then there are the children. In 1997, 36 percent of couples in unmarried households included at least one child under the age of 18. “Fully three-quarters of children born to cohabiting parents will see their parents split up before they reach age 16, whereas only about a third of the children born to married parents face a similar fate,” the report states. Only 44 percent of cohabiting mothers eventually marry the father of their child, down from 57 percent a decade ago.

11 Four-year-old Matt in the movie serves as a prime example. His mommy and daddy never make it to the altar before they separate. So much for commitment.

12 What to do to make marriage more attractive? The Rutgers

researchers recommend intensive education for young people to help them make better decisions about living together. They also want to encourage more ¹⁹egalitarian relationships in marriage.

13 Everyone is aware of the high divorce rate. But as these figures on the failure rate of cohabitation show, the risks of marriage, whatever they may be, could be less than the risks of not being married and living together. A week before ²⁰Valentine's Day, that almost counts as good news.

Notes

- 1 myth—a false belief
- 2 a thirtyish character——一位 30 岁上下的人物
- 3 the senior Fox——姓 Fox 的父亲
- 4 US Census Bureau——美国人口普查局
- 5 cohabit—to live together as lovers when not legally married
- 6 blithe—cheerful; carefree
- 7 ~~blatant~~ marital—of, or relating to, marriage
- 8 New Jersey—state of eastern US
- 9 sexual abuse——性虐待
- 10 in-depth—detailed, thorough / 深入 /
- 11 blush—to become suddenly red in the face from modesty, embarrassment, or shame
- 12 aisle—a passage way between rows of seats, as in a church or auditorium
- 13 disillusion——幻想破灭
- 14 wary—on one's guard; watchful
- 15 compatible—capable of living or performing harmoniously with another
- 16 dotted line——虚线; 指结婚证书上供签名的空格

- 17 pregnancy—怀孕
- 18 liberation—解放
- 19 egalitarianism—a belief in human equality, esp. with respect to social, political, and economic rights and privileges
- 20 Valentine's Day—情人节

Multiple Choice Questions

- 1 It's mistakenly believed that cohabitation _____.
A will strengthen eventual marriages
B may avoid raising children
C leads to higher rate of divorce
D is the trend of the present world
- 2 According to statistics, cohabitation actually _____.
A saves expenses
B strengthens marital status
C chooses to give birth to babies
D increases the risk of divorce
- 3 Cohabitation may provide the man with a chance to _____.
A have an excuse for not going to work
B take care of all domestic chores
C illtreat the woman and children
D bear greater responsibilities
- 4 "To tie the knot" in para. 7 may mean _____.
A to come into steady marriage bond
B to hate each other
C to live in comfort
D to guard against each other
- 5 It seems cohabitation provides more freedom for _____.
A both the cohabiting parents B the man

- 6 According to the report by Whitehead and Popenoe, _____.
A of all the cohabitants only 36% split up
B of all the cohabiting couples, over 1/3 become parents
C all cohabitants know that they will split up sooner or later
D all cohabitants hope for a eventual marriage
- 7 Clearly, the author's attitude toward cohabitation is _____.
A positive
B negative
C supportive
D passive

2 **Sharing a Roof and a Way of Life**

By *Melanie Stetson Freeman*

1 Philip takes out the ¹garbage and delivers the mail. Two of the three women all named Ida go to exercise class together once a week. Red ²hibiscus flowers bloom in the courtyard thanks to Pearl's ³green thumb. Harvey breaks into song, ⁴serenading his housemates whenever he gets the notion.

2 These seniors are part of a successful experiment in ⁵communal living that saves money and ⁶combats loneliness. Eleven single seniors have formed a family that shares expenses, ⁷chores, conversation, dinners, and laughs in the security of a ⁸co-op home here.

3 It's called Rothman House, and it was conceived by Janet Witkin, founder of Alternative Living for the Aging.

4 "They have each other to care about, to share jokes with, to discuss the news of the day," she says. "It's the interaction that keeps them healthy. My philosophy is that people can stay independent as long as possible through interdependence."

5 "What kind of life is it," she continues, "to get up alone, to go out alone, to come home alone, to eat dinner alone, to go to bed without having anyone to say good night to? Is that worth having all your own possessions around you? Or would it be better to downsize a little and share life with others?"

6 Home-sharing programs—in which seniors either join a group home or live with a housemate—are ⁷gaining ground in the United

States. California, along with ¹⁰Oregon, ¹¹Wisconsin, and ¹²Vermont, is leading the way. A 1993 survey by the National Shared Housing Resource Center in ¹³Baltimore found 350 sharedhousing programs in the US.

7 Rothman House, which opened in 1985, consists of 14 private bedrooms and baths laid out in a horseshoe shape, with two kitchens and two living rooms at the end and a courtyard in the center. The site, in the Beverly—Fairfax area of ¹⁴Los Angeles, was chosen to be near services and transportation. One of the purposes of the co-op is to keep seniors involved with their community.

8 “It’s a very sociable atmosphere,” says resident Ida Farver. “It’s less work. I don’t have to bother cleaning or cooking every meal. The main thing is security. You know you’re not alone.”

9 “This is the best compromise between wanting privacy and wanting socialization,” says Gabriel Tiefer, a one—month resident who always seems to have a smile on his face. “It’s a little community. If you fall in with the team, fine. If you’re the disagreeable type, you won’t fit in. People accepted me and it’s working out fine.”

10 The seeds for Janet Witkin’s home-sharing idea were planted when she was in her 20s. She watched her grandfather steadily decline as he moved from an assisted-living home to a ¹⁵convalescent hospital. In 1977, she was taking teenagers to visit elders when she met a man named Abe who reminded Janet of her grandfather. She figured that Abe would do better in co-op housing and in 1978 Alternative Living for the Aging (ALA) was born.

11 Janet’s nonprofit agency offers co-op housing for seniors who don’t want to live alone but who don’t need ¹⁶institutionalization.

12 ALA is ¹⁷adept at determining whether prospective residents will fit in. The agency also has a roommate or housemate matching service

as well as four other co-op facilities in Los Angeles. Two of the co-op buildings were built ¹⁸from scratch; two, including Rothman House, are ¹⁹renovated facilities; the fifth is a historic building. Funding for ALA programs is provided by government grants and loans; private contributions from individuals, corporations, and foundations; and The United Way. ALA staff members have ²⁰counseled more than 14,000 people and matched more than 6,000 in the roommate program since it began.

13 “We look for people who are cooperative and flexible. People who are willing to live with others,” Janet says.

14 With so many seniors living on fixed incomes, the co-op housing alternative is a creative solution to a problem that will only become larger.

15 “As 76 million of us baby boomers move toward our senior years,” Janet says, “we, as a nation, need to think about how we are going to house these 76 million soon-to-be elders.”

16 All Rothman’s residents are low- or moderate-income seniors older than 62, who are able to care for their own basic needs such as cooking, shopping, and laundry. For \$ 485 a month, they get a private room and bath suite, including utilities and secure parking, and five home-cooked dinners a week.

17 “When I got here I didn’t expect to stay but a few months,” says Harvey Goodman, who found himself living alone in a ²¹condo. “But, after I’d been here a couple months I couldn’t leave because they felt like family.”

18 “Can I read to you now, baby doll?” Harvey says as he enters Edith Rappaport’s room to read “Dear Abby.” Edith has been partially blind for the last three years. “We all have strengths and weaknesses, so we help each other out,” Harvey says as he breaks into song.

Notes

- 1 garbage—worthless matter; trash
- 2 hibiscus—木槿属
- 3 green thumb—a specific talent for making plants grow well
- 4 serenade—唱(奏)小夜曲
- 5 commune—a place used for group living
- 6 combat—to fight against
- 7 chore—a daily or routine task
- 8 co-op—cooperative
- 9 gain ground—to make progress
- 10 Oregon—state of the northwest US
- 11 Wisconsin—state of the north-central US
- 12 Vermont—state of the northeast US
- 13 Baltimore—city of Maryland, on the upper Chesapeake Bay
- 14 Los Angeles—洛杉矶
- 15 convalescent hospital—康复医院
- 16 institutionalize—to confine in an institution
- 17 adept—highly skilled, proficient
- 18 from scratch—from the beginning
- 19 renovate—to restore to an earlier condition
- 20 counsel—to urge the adoption of; to recommend
- 21 condo—condominium 公寓楼房 /'kɒndəʊ/

Multiple Choice Questions

- 1 How many names of persons are mentioned in para. 1?
A six B five C four D three
- 2 It seems the best advantage of home-sharing is _____.
A affording much convenience

- B sharing life with others
C an easier way of travelling
D having better services
- 3 Shared housing gets its funds from _____.
A the government B foundations
C individual contributors D all the above
- 4 “The United Way” in para. 12 may be the name of _____.
A a large company B a hospital
C a social organization D a shared housing program
- 5 Living at a shared-home _____.
A is free of charge
B may not be secure
C costs within a senior’s capacity
D requires a certain family support
- 6 “Baby boomers” (para. 15) may refer to _____.
A small babies
B those in the age of giving birth to babies
C those carrying babies with them
D those having to take care of babies
- 7 Living with a roommate _____.
A may not be of one’s own free will
B should first get consent from the senior
C is usually refused by seniors
D requires strict health conditions

Fragments of Translation for Reference

- 1 (para. 5) Is that worth having ...

你守着你所拥有的一切,但就那样,值得吗? 或者换一种活法,即减少一些财富但与他人共享生活,是否更好一些?

2 (para. 11) Janet's nonprofit agency . . .

Janet 的非赢利机构给那些不想独居但又不必交由专门单位照料的老
年人提供合作宅居。

▼