

A New Course of 新编大学英语阅读教程 四级 English Reading for College Learners

主编 欧阳俊林

4

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College Learners 4

新编大学英语阅读教程 四级

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编写说明

随着大学英语教学和考试系统的改革,大学英语的教与学对目的语的输入提出了更高的要求,体现了素质教育的基本导向。作为一门以扩大知识面和增强语言应用能力为目的的大学英语阅读课,迫切需要一套与之相适应的教材。《新编大学英语阅读教程》就是要体现这样的导向,满足这样的需求。

《新编大学英语阅读教程》广泛收集了现代英语,特别是近十年来英美社会的多式样语言文本。话题覆盖了当今政治、经济、文化、科技、教育、心理、人文、社会等诸多方面,帮助读者了解当今国际各领域的发展动态和问题,并从接触真实语料入手,学习和掌握语言形式、功能和用法,加深语言理解,从而全面提高学生英语语言的阅读水平,增强学生参加新体制下的大学英语四、六级考试的应试能力。

《新编大学英语阅读教程》一共四册,与目前大学英语教学的课程设置平行,每学期一册,循序渐进,由浅入深。通过课堂教学和学生课外阅读,逐步培养学生良好的语言思维和语言学习习惯,以达到最佳的教与学效果。

本书也可以作为英语专业泛读课程的选用教材。

参加本书编写的人员有:宋志俊、郭燕萍、江柳英、江永霞、李永莲、林绪芹、倪响、盛绘。本册主审:宋志俊、盛绘、陆玲妹。

限于水平和时间,疏漏难免,恭请广大读者和学界同仁批评指正。

编者于

2005年8月

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Unit 1 Education

Passage 1 How Colleges Are Failing Our Students

1 The banner that hung across the stage read simply: “Thank You, Alan Brinkley! We’ll Miss You.” As the young professor ended his last lecture, more than 500 students who filled the seats and aisles of Harvard’s Sanders Theater rose in a standing ovation. By all accounts, Brinkley was one of Harvard’s most gifted teachers. At 37, he taught the largest course in Harvard’s History Department and had won an American Book Award for his study of the Depression era. He further stood out from many of his Harvard colleagues because of his open-door policy and willingness to meet with students one-on-one, even though by some estimates, he taught one-third of all Harvard undergraduates in his various classes.

2 “Professor Brinkley was the first teacher who took an interest in me as a person,” one student said afterward. “He advised me when I was choosing a concentration, helped me with my term paper for his class....” One of his colleagues, Professor David H. Donald, himself a leading authority on 18th-century American history, called Brinkley “a splendid young scholar and a superb teacher.”

3 In 1985, Harvard denied Alan Brinkley tenure and effectively fired him. A slim majority of the tenured faculty members in the History Department (13 of 23) had voted to recommend tenure, but the favorable recommendation was overturned by the dean of Arts and Sciences. Brinkley’s case dramatically highlighted the fate of professors who emphasize teaching. It was particularly notable because of the contrast between Brinkley and his colleagues at the nation’s most prestige-encrusted university. Harvard’s history professors were notorious for the frequency of their absences from campus and the rarity with which many of them entered a classroom.

Who’s Looking Out for the Students?

4 But even if Alan Brinkley were the exception because of his teaching ability, the way his case was handled was hardly exceptional. Shortly before Brinkley’s dismissal, another popular professor, Bradford A. Lee, an expert in modern history and, like Brinkley, a winner of the teaching prize, had also been dismissed. With Brinkley’s departure, three of the last four recipients of Harvard’s teaching award had been denied tenure.

5 Harvard is not the only school where the teaching award is a jinx. At Stanford, Yale and other schools, the pattern is the same and it goes beyond denying tenure: "There is little direction, little contact with professors, and so few courses offered each year," the Harvard student guide says.

6 This is not much of an exaggeration. The course catalog denotes courses that are not being offered that year by putting them in brackets. So many Harvard history courses were bracketed one year that students printed up T-shirts reading simply: [History]. One recent year, almost all of the professors of American history were gone at the same time, gutting the curriculum and leaving under-graduates interested in American history at America's leading university to fend for themselves. "No one is looking out for the students," complained one major.

7 The academic culture is not merely indifferent to teaching; it is actively hostile to it. In the modern large university, no act of good teaching goes unpunished.

8 Many academics try to justify themselves by blaming their students who are, they insist, often poorly prepared and uninterested in the subject matter. University professors are often loud in their criticism of the public elementary and secondary schools. Frequently they attempt to shift the debate on the failures of higher education to the failures at the lower levels.

9 But when the Holmes Group issued its report on the reform of teacher education in 1986, it reversed field on the professors. Part of the reason for the widespread ineptness of America's schoolteachers, the Holmes Group concluded, lies in the universities themselves. "They strive to hire highly qualified academic specialists, who know their subjects well and do distinguished research," the Holmes Group said. "But few of these specialists know how to teach well, and many seem not to care. The undergraduate education that intending teachers — and everyone else — receives is full of the same bad teaching that litters American high schools."

How Tenure Really Works

10 At the heart of the system are the academic departments and their power over the system of tenure. The process by which a young professor wins tenure — in effect, a lifetime job at a university — is widely misunderstood outside the academy itself. Although university administrators often have the final say, the tenure system is controlled by the professors themselves. Because a professor once granted tenure is virtually immovable for life and ties up a spot in the department's budget for decades, the decision to grant tenure is the most important made in academia.

11 Almost every school claims that tenure candidates' teaching abilities are weighed along with their published scholarship. The evidence to the contrary, however, is overwhelming. "Chancellors and vice chancellors say teaching is important," one professor at the University of Illinois says, "but no one believes it." Only a tiny percentage of schools ever send faculty observers into a junior professor's classroom to evaluate his teaching.

12 The treatment of teachers indicates academia's indifference to teaching, but it only hints at how deeply the contempt for it is ingrained within the academic culture.

Attitudes towards Teaching

13 The message is a common one in the university. Discussing one of his professors in American Culture, a University of Michigan senior says: "He didn't even want to deal with students, it seemed like. He would just give a lecture and say, 'No, just deal with my TA.' He didn't want to deal with us when we weren't in class."

14 My own experience may serve to underscore his point. Several years ago, I sat in on a meeting of the chairs of the various departments of sociology at the annual convention of the American Sociology Association. Much of the meeting was spent discussing the various lures the chairmen used to attract top students for their graduate schools, including packaging grants with what they called "honorific distinctions" and even giving academic stars "signing bonuses" to get them to attend their schools. "The graduate applicants expect this, and you better give it to them," one chair warned. The discussion of grants and perks and honorific distinctions had gone on for the better part of an hour before Eric Wagner spoke up.

15 Wagner, the chairman of Ohio University's Sociology Department, had a simpler recommendation. His department had sent students to some of the top graduate schools, but they had come away unimpressed and in some cases disgusted by what they found. The professors in the elite departments, he said, "are so busy with their own research they don't have time to spend with our students." He told the group that students he sent to Stanford were so upset by the arrogance and apparent indifference of the professors there that "they wouldn't touch your fellowships."

16 His advice was simple: "Just pay attention to them," he pleaded, "That may be more important than just throwing money at them." The department chairs listened politely and went on to another subject.

Trivialization of the Curriculum

17 The university curriculum is another example of the academic culture's attitude

toward teaching. "In an environment that is serious about the quality of teaching," the Association of American Colleges said in its 1985 report, *Integrity in the College Curriculum*, "the grand design of the curriculum will receive the attention it deserves." But the actual environment of the university is anything but serious about the quality of teaching. And its attention to the design of the curriculum is reflected in the intellectual confusion, nonexistent standards, junk courses, so-called "guts," and blow-offs that are (or should be) the shame of American education.

18 But the curriculum is not completely without its rationale. Indeed, it bears the unmistakable mark of the professorial touch. As absurd as it is, the curriculum keeps the universities well-stocked and the students reasonably pacified, while demanding as little as possible from either students or professors. No other explanation can account for the melange of incoherence that confronts students at the modern university.

19 Auburn University offered a course in "Recreation Interpretive Services," which was described as "principles and techniques used to communicate natural, historical, and cultural features of outdoor recreation to park visitors." The school also listed in-depth courses in "Principles of Recreation," "Park and Recreation Maintenance," and "Recreation Leadership." At Kent State, students have been offered a smorgasbord of intellectual offerings, including "Campus Leadership," a course that covers "the role of the camper and counselor," and "Records Management," in which students "set up, explain, and maintain alphabetic, geographic, numerical, and subject filing systems." For the scholarly inclined, there is "Socio-Psychological Aspects of Clothing"; for the less rigorous minded, "Basic Roller Skating," and for the adventurous, "Dance Roller Skating."

20 At the University of Illinois, students have been able to work toward their B. A. by taking "Pocket Billiards."

21 Students at the University of Michigan who have taken "Sports Marketing and Management" have been given exams with such questions as: "Athletic administrators should be primarily concerned with two (2) groups: Name them." (Answer: players and coaches.) "True or false: At the Michigan Stadium a spectator can be readmitted to the game if he has a hand stamp visible." (Answer: False.)

22 And for students fortunate enough to gain admission to "Music Video 454," the only textbook was the Rolling Stone Book of Rock Video, and one class project was a field trip to Hollywood where the students acted as extras in rock videos-for credit. On

slower days, they analyzed videotapes of Weird Al Yankovic singing "Dare to Be Stupid."

◇ Notes

ovation <i>n.</i>	热烈欢迎
encrust <i>vt.</i>	在……上包(或涂)硬的外层
notorious <i>a.</i>	声名狼藉的
recipient <i>n.</i>	接受者
jinx <i>n.</i>	[美口]不祥物;白虎星
gut <i>vt.</i>	去除
fend <i>n.</i>	努力
ineptness <i>n.</i>	不称职
academia <i>n.</i>	学术界
ingrained <i>a.</i>	彻底的,根深蒂固的
underscore <i>vt.</i>	强调
honorific <i>a.</i>	尊敬的,表示敬意的
perk <i>n.</i>	特权,额外收入
trivialization <i>n.</i>	轻视
blow-off <i>n.</i>	吹牛大王
rationale <i>n.</i>	基本原理
melange <i>n.</i>	混合物,大杂烩
smorgasbord <i>n.</i>	瑞典式自助餐
billiards <i>n.</i>	台球,桌球

◇ Exercises

• *Answer the following questions briefly.*

1. Why was Professor Brinkley so remarkable in Harvard University?
2. What were Harvard's history professors notorious for?
3. According to the Holmes group, why were the teachers in universities bad in teaching?
4. Why does the author cite the example of Eric Wagner?
5. What is the actual environment of university curriculum according to this passage?

Passage 2 The Ivory Tower Obscurity Fetish

1 Recent strife on college campuses has been portrayed as “tenured radicals” trying to undermine the oppressive institutions that employ them. But the opposite argument is more convincing: to a startling degree, American professors on the left have come to embrace their professional roles. They encounter the world not as radical subversives but as secure employees of mainstream institutions.

2 Unlike past American intellectuals, who saw the educated, nonacademic public as their main audience, today’s leftist intellectuals feel no need to write for a large public; colleagues, departments, and professional conferences have come to constitute their world. And as their desire to reach a nonprofessional public had atrophied, contempt has arisen in its place. Little in the “culture wars” is more striking than the ease with which these new professors defend professional reputations and language, sophisticated theories, and distinguished friends, and heap scorn on journalists and critics as backward outsiders.

3 Distain for a public prose should stick in the craw of professors on the left. It doesn’t. It goes down smoothly, facilitated by a widely accepted proposition: clear language undermines critical thoughts. Although the position can easily be ridiculed, it rests on some undeniable truths. Language is more than an empty vessel; not every argument can be made accessible to a general audience. Certain insights, information, and subjects require a specialized vocabulary. Humanities professors draw direct parallels between their studies and those in the physical and biological sciences; their research is just as specialized and complex, and needs as much training to grasp. Judith Frank, a feminist professor, complains that a journalist critic “seems to expect the humanities to be utterly transparent to the general population, when the truth is that for those of us who have gone through graduate training, the humanities are a profession, and the people who practice a particular profession are trained in its language.” This might be called pulling rank, showing the unaccredited to the door.

4 Fredric Jameson, one of the deans of Marxist cultural criticism, offers a similar justification: literary and cultural theory is as complex as molecular biology. It is “surprising” how many people take a “belletristic view,” Jameson comments, making “the assumption, which they would never make in the area of nuclear physics, linguistics, symbolic logic, or urbanism, that such cultural problems can

still be laid out with all the leisurely elegance of a coffee-table magazine."

5 In the exact sciences the need for specialized language seems incontestable; papers by bio-mathematicians need to use a vocabulary that limits a general readership. Yet transferring the point to the humanities and social sciences is dicey. Literature, history, and philosophy belong to the common stock of humanity; their importance resides partly in their accessibility to an educated reader. Thoughtful citizens can acquaint themselves with Western philosophy and literature from Plato to William James or from Sophocles to Kafka. The humanities as a whole resist becoming a technical discipline with a technical audience. But many scholars in the field challenge this idea; it suggests to them that their work is inferior to scientific research because it is less complex and more accessible.

6 Academics on the left use another argument to justify their vocabulary. Not only do specialized fields require a specialized idiom but society, especially Anglo-American society, employs simple language in order to resist subversive truths. A "clear" sentence structure represses critical thinking that requires a counter-logic and vocabulary.

7 Again, this belief can be easily ridiculed, but again it rests on some valid ideas from an honorable pedigree. German idealism protested the domination of simple clarity as simpleminded. Hegel ridiculed " $2 \times 2 = 4$ " logic and "healthy common sense." Philosophical truths require surmounting common truisms and familiar categories; they necessitate an uncommon language, or what Hegel once half-apologetically called an "obscure style."

8 American poststructuralist, post-Marxist, and post-everything thinkers appeal to these ideas in justifying their language. Not only are we highly trained specialists, using a complex prose, they say; we are also dedicated subversives, using an idiom that resists a repressive clarity. Fredric Jameson, defending the German critical Marxists from charges of obscurity, argues that "it can be admitted that that writing does not conform to the canons of clear and fluid journalistic writing taught in schools. But what if those ideas' clarity and simplicity have come to serve a very different ideological purpose?" What if transparency facilitates clichés and avoids "real thought" that requires effort and time? For Jameson the density of T. W. Adorno's writing exemplified a break with repressive clarity. His "bristling mass of abstractions and cross-references is precisely intended to be read in situation, against the cheap facility of what surrounds it, as a warning to the reader of the price he has to pay for genuine thinking."

9 The point is well taken; it is also misleading. The issue is not the difficulty of writing but the fetishizing of difficulty, the belief that fractured English, name dropping, and abstractions guarantee profundity, professionalization, and subversion. With this belief comes the counter-belief; lucidity implies banality, amateurism, capitalism, and conservatism.

10 Everywhere a denunciation of repressive clarity leads to an embrace of obscurity in the name of revolutionary profundity. In a book on post-modern education, two professors condemn clarity and defend complex or "bad" writing. "It seems to us that those who call themselves progressive educators have missed the role that the 'Language of clarity' plays in a dominant culture that cleverly and powerfully uses 'clear' and 'simplistic' language to systematically undermine and prevent complex and critical thinking."

11 Richard Wolff, a Marxist economics professor, offers a more ringing defense of "bad" writing. Poststructuralist and postmodernist writing is "difficult to read" because "major shifts in ways of thinking usually interact complexly with related shifts in ways of speaking and writing. Early in the process, the new ways of writing will often be convoluted and opaque." Not only is opaque language required for complex thinking but a brainwashed American public prizes clarity; as long as the public does not wake up, we post-Marxists will appear to be "bad" writers. What this public rejects as incomprehensible proves its value, believes Professor Wolff. "To uphold radical and Marxist ideas and to develop them in new directions would quite predictably produce writings out of tune with the prevalent presumptions and desires of the postwar public: 'bad' writings in the eyes of many."

12 As with so much radical scholarship, leftists break with the very theories they appeal to. The easy or ostentatious references to seditious thought from Marx to Nietzsche and Freud ignore the fact that these masters often — not always — were wonderful writers, and ruthless critics of pedantry and obscurantism. The original rebels did not obsessively salute their own complexity and scorn journalists and the educated public. If anything, they did the reverse; they scorned the pedants and addressed the public. The new academics invoke their names and ideas and surrender their prose and precision.

13 Mark knew something else forgotten by those who appeal to his writings: it is possible to write in different styles for different audiences. Works like *The Communist Manifesto*, *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, and *The Civil War in France* stand at the

furthest remove from scholasticism. Even Capital is hardly a linguistic Death Valley; it contains many splendid passages. Marx quoted with pride reviews that praised its “clearness” and “unusual liveliness,” and wrote, “In this respect the author in no way resembles the majority of German scholars, who write their books in a language so dry and obscure that the heads of ordinary mortals are cracked by it.”

14 Early in the century William James pondered the role of colleges and the college-educated. Colleges should have something to do with producing better individuals, cultivating a certain tone, and aiding democracy, he said. He feared colleges were failing on these scores, and he wondered if the popular and literary magazines of the day, the so-called ten-cent magazines, were taking up the slack. “It would be a pity,” he wrote in 1908, “if any future historian were to have to write words like these: ‘By the middle of the twentieth century the higher institutions of learning had lost all influence over public opinion in the United States. But the mission of raising the tone of democracy, which they had proved so lamentally unfitted to exert, was assumed with rare enthusiasm — by a new educational power — private literary adventures, commonly designated in the market by the affectionate name ten-cent magazines.’” It would be wrong to dismiss the collective oeuvre of radical professors; through feminist studies, social history, Latin- and African-American departments, and revised canons, it percolates throughout higher education and society. On the other hand, one needs not to be a doomsayer to wonder about the quality of scholarly writing and the dearth of public writing.

◇ Notes

fetish <i>n.</i>	神物崇拜,迷信,盲目崇拜
undermine <i>v.</i>	破坏,削弱
subversive <i>n.</i>	颠覆破坏分子,危险分子
atrophy <i>v.</i>	萎缩,衰退
distain <i>v.</i>	羞辱,玷污,蔑视
stick in the craw of sb.	使某人生气,使某人不高兴
facilitate <i>v.</i>	推动,帮助,促进
belletristic <i>a.</i>	文学研究的,纯文学的
incontestable <i>a.</i>	无可争辩的,无可置疑的,不可否认的
dicey <i>a.</i>	冒险的,投机的;不确定的
surmount <i>v.</i>	战胜,超越
canon <i>n.</i>	标准;原则