



# 英美社会与文化教程

*Anglo-American Society and Culture*

褚颖主编



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英语社会文化

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## 前言

英语社会文化

英语社会文化

了解英语国家的社会与文化,是英语专业学生的必修课,也是一切英语爱好者绕不开的重要学习环节。本教程通过介绍英语国家概况,旨在帮助学习者掌握以英国、美国为主的基本社会文化。本书适用于各类本科或大专院校英语专业一、二年级学生,以及具有同等英语水平的自学者。

本书在课文的编写及练习的设计上作了一些尝试。第一,按主题编排章节,先解析基本概念,后介绍英美两国具体情况。主要英语国家之间关系密切,其他各国都曾是英国的殖民地,相似点颇多。掌握了基本概念,详细学习了曾经的宗主国英国和当下的超级强国美国之后,学生很容易按需自学加拿大、澳大利亚、新西兰、爱尔兰的相关内容。在有限的课时里,按新思路编写的教材,有利于高效清晰地完成教学任务。第二,授之以“鱼”的同时也授之以“渔”。文化包罗万象、生生不息,文化教学绝不可能面面俱到、一劳永逸。帮助学生学会自己观察、了解和研究文化现象,比灌输知识点更有意义。各章节末均附一个自主学习技巧,介绍探索未知的最基本方法。第三,按学生的实际需求编写生词表和练习题。本课程生词量巨大,其中相当部分基本不会出现在日常英语交际中,学生只需书面辨识即可,故生词表不配音标。对有文化内涵的词条,注释均比较详尽。同时,对文化知识的掌握应由粗及细,不可只见树木不见森林。所以,配套练习均为主观题型的问答题,类似于提纲,供学生预习和复习时使用。练习不附答案,认真学习之后,所有习题在课文中都能找到相应的答案。

本书课文均选编自英语国家原文资料,语言地道,内容新颖,在以往的教学中学生所喜闻乐见。全书包括风土人情、历史、政治、经济、宗教、教育和福利七个章节,均为社会与文化概况的重中之重。为了避免和其他课程重复,忍痛割舍了一些传统概况教材中常见的主题,如报刊选读课中会谈及的媒体,本书政治体制一章中已经谈及的司法,以及可以穿插在其他基础技能课程中的家庭、工作和节庆。



本书主编褚颖根据自己数年教授主要英语国家概况课程和英美文化类选修课的经验,负责了大部分章节的编写工作。副主编申琳以她的专业知识完成了最让人头痛的内容——英美福利和英国经济,也即第七章全部内容以及第四章英国部分的内容。

感谢好友林玫,从最初构想,到中途选材,再到编辑出版,是她一路鼓励、参谋。Last but not least,没有华东政法大学外语学院原院长王嘉禔和院长余素青的鼎力支持,本书难以出版,深躬长揖!

褚 颖

2013年10月20日

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## Chapter 1

# Land and People

### The English-speaking World

#### Part 1 The United Kingdom Profile

- I. Britain or the U. K. : What's in a Name?
- II. Keywords of the Land
- III. London
- IV. Who Are the British?

#### Part 2 From Atlantic to Pacific—An Outline of American Geography

- I. Megalopolis
- II. The Bypassed East
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- IV. The Southern Coastlands
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- VIII. The Great Plains
- IX. The Empty Interior
- X. California
- XI. The Southwest Border Area
- XII. The Pacific Northwest and Alaska
- XIII. Hawaii

#### Words and Expressions

#### Questions

#### Tip: Maps Teach



## The English-speaking World

English has for a century and a half been called a world language. It is recognized as an official language in countries where about 1.5 billion people live. About 300 million to 400 million people speak it as their mother tongue. Perhaps it is time to ask: why did English become so powerful?

The rise of English has been closely linked to the imperial history of the English-speaking peoples. By 1900, the British Empire covered a large part of the globe and some form of English was spoken in all these areas.

Britain had first gone to India to trade in goods like fine cotton, but soon got involved in Indian politics and administration. Though resented, competence in English was necessary for Indians who wished to advance within the British-run system. Even long after its independence in 1947, English is still an essential official language used across the country.

The British also took over large part of Africa. The military officers, traders, farmers, missionaries, doctors and school teachers spread English through the African population. The triangle of trade explains why English is spoken in West Indies.

Australia and New Zealand were mainly settled by people from the British Isles. Some went voluntarily, others as convicts. English became the language of that vast area and the original languages dwindled away. After Britain seized Canada from France in the 18th century, English gradually replaced French in most part of this country.

In the 20th century, British role in spreading the English language has been taken over by the United States. American industry, commerce, and films have all combined to make people think that English is the real thing.

**Countries and areas with English as the First Language for most people:**

Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Canada, Gibraltar, Grenada, Guyana, Irish Republic, Jamaica, Namibia, New Zealand, Philippines, South Africa, USA, U. K. , Zambia, Zimbabwe, etc.

**Countries and areas with English as the Second Language for most people:**

Liberia, Kenya, Malaysia, Uganda, Tanzania, Hong Kong, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Grenada, etc.

**Countries and areas with English as the Foreign Language for most people:**

Argentina, Belgium, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ethiopia, Honduras, Lebanon, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, etc.

## Part 1 The United Kingdom Profile

Britain is one of the most influential countries in the world history. Out of that small cluster of islands off the northwest coast of the European continent came three movements that quite literally changed the world: the industrial revolution, the parliamentary system of government, and the English language. It is no exaggeration to say that everyone in the world has been affected, directly or indirectly, by the impact of these contributions to global development.

### *I. Britain or the U. K. : What's in a Name?*

The visitors may wonder about the different names used to describe the country referred to as Britain, Great Britain, the United Kingdom, the U. K. , the British Isles and England ( the latter still being used by much of the rest of the world, including the United States).

The problem partially stems from the fact that this country is actually four countries in one: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Each one has its own identity, its own flag, its own history and culture, its own national sport team, and, in the case of Scotland, its own separate legal and educational system.

Correctly speaking, the British Isles and Great Britain are also geographical names. The British Isles is a group of islands situated off the continent of Europe. They are made up of two large islands and hundreds of small ones. Great Britain is the larger of these two islands, together with all the offshore islands, including the Isle of Wight, the Isles of Scilly, the Hebrides, Orkneys, and Shetlands. The United Kingdom comprises Great Britain and Northern Ireland. So the official name for this country is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. But it is too much of a mouthful to say such a long name for a country, so people just say Britain, the United Kingdom or simply U. K.

The Republic of Ireland, or Eire in short, is another country on the British Isles. It takes up the remaining part of Ireland—the southern part of Ireland. It has been an independent republic since 1949 and its capital is Dublin.

The complications do not end there. The Isle of Man in the Irish Sea, and the Channel Islands, in the English Channel are largely self-governing, and are known as Crown Dependencies. The British government is responsible for their foreign and defense policies. Their inhabitants speak English, and their ways of life are almost indistinguishable from those of people on the mainland. But these islands are not part of the United Kingdom.

**Map 1: the United Kingdom**



**Capital:** London

**Other Capital Cities:**

Edinburgh, Cardiff, Belfast

**Other Main Cities:**

Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool in England; Glasgow and Aberdeen in Scotland;

Swansea, Wrexham, and Newport in Wales;

Londonderry in Northern Ireland.

## II. Keywords of the Land

a) It is small. With an area of about 243,000 km<sup>2</sup>, Britain is just under 1000 kilometers from the south coast to the extreme north of Scotland and just under 500 kilometers across at the widest point. It is only half as large as Sichuan Province in size, or as large as Jiangsu and Zhejiang Provinces. Britain is notable for its varied landscapes. Physically, Britain can be broadly divided into highland and lowland areas. Britain has, for centuries, been tilting with the north-west slowly rising and the south-east slowly sinking. That is why Britain is geographically divided into two parts: the highland zone and the lowland zone.

b) Its dimensions are moderate in almost every way. It has no great mountain chains. Its highest mountain (Ben Nevis in Scotland) is less than one sixth the height of Mt. Everest. It has no great rivers or estuaries. Its longest river (the Severn in England) is barely one-twentieth the length of the Nile. It has no great lakes. Its largest lake (Lough Neagh in Northern Ireland) could fit into Lake Superior more than 215 times. It has no great variety of animal life and vegetation. Few animal or plant species here are unique to the British Isles.

c) Its climate is notorious, to residents and visitors alike. It is often thought of as cool, wet, cloudy and windswept. Climatologists describe it as "moderate", a polite term for the often cool wet summer and the mild snowless winters. The most telling influence is the surrounding seas, which act as a temperature buffer. January temperature is generally between 3—5°C and July temperature is between 11—26°C. So the British often do not know how to respond to extreme weather. Rainfall is usually well distributed throughout the year, and tends to be soft and steady rather than sharp and heavy, with few major storms. That is why Britain is always covered with lush greenery.

d) It is a crowded country, like most of its European neighbors. Perhaps the first thing that new visitors notice is its compactness: houses are mainly small, people live in close proximity to one other, and the landscape everywhere bears the imprint



of human activity. In mid-2003, the population of U. K. was estimated to be about 59.6 million, which was roughly the same as France, but living on a land area half the size of France. The Population density runs at nearly 250 people per square kilometer, although there is considerable regional variations. The most densely populated parts are in and around London, the outskirts of Birmingham and Coventry in the Midlands, a crescent in the old industrial areas from Liverpool to Manchester and Sheffield, and small clusters around Newcastle, Glasgow, Cardiff and Belfast. The most sparsely populated regions are southwest and northwest England, Wales, and most of Scotland.

### Population and Area, June 2003, U. K.

	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	United Kingdom
Population (thousands)	49,856	2,938	5,057	1,703	59,554
Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	130,281	20,732	77,925	13,576	242,514
Population Density (people per km <sup>2</sup> )	383	142	65	125	246

Source: Office for National Statistics; National Assembly for Wales; General Register Office for Scotland; Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

### III. London

Not all capital cities play a major role in national affairs like London, because power is often shared among multiple major urban areas. Washington, D. C. is the capital city of the United States, but its national significance is dwarfed by New York financially and Boston educationally.

The situation is very different in Britain, where London plays a dominant role in almost every aspect of British life; so much so that Britain is not only dominated by England, but in many respects is also dominated by London. More than one-third of the British population lives in and around London. As well as being the seat of national government, it is also the national hub in many aspects.

It is the home of all the major national newspapers, radio and TV stations. It is the

home of the Bank of England, the London Stock Exchange, and most of the major banks and financial corporations. The rail and motorway systems center on London, which is also home to Britain's two major airports, Heathrow and Gatwick. London has world-class theatre, opera, ballet, symphony orchestras. The national football stadium was for many years at Wembley in north London, and the capital is also home to Wimbledon for tennis, Twickenham for rugby, and Lord's and the Oval for cricket.

Inner London, including the shopping districts of the West End and the financial district of the City of London, is the wealthiest region in the European Union. Unfortunately, Inner London is also one of the most expensive places to live in the world, topping comparative tables for the cost of renting and buying property, for eating out at restaurants, and for going out to the theatre or the cinema.

The East End is the area closest to the original Port of London, known for its high immigrant population, as well as for being one of the poorest areas in London. The surrounding area saw much of London's early industrial development and now has



From upper left: City of London, Tower Bridge and London Eye, Palace of Westminster



London can be defined in many different ways for different purpose.

Its ancient core, the City of London, largely retains its square-mile mediaeval(中世纪的) boundaries. Greater London(大伦敦) has been divided into 32 London boroughs(伦敦自治市) in addition to the City of London since 1965. The innermost 12 boroughs are collectively called Inner London.

been developed into the Olympic Park for the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics.

#### **IV. Who Are the British?**

Despite the existence of a “United” Kingdom, regionalism is a factor in national politics, because the people who make up the Kingdom have separate—although overlapping—histories and cultures. A number of changes since WWII have further challenged the concept of “nationalism”. For one thing, the British Empire and the British monarchy, which used to bring the four peoples together, have lost much of their magic. For another, the effects of European integration have muddled the British distinctiveness, and the arrival of new immigrants has brought a new social diversity.

##### **1. The Scots**

The Scots, particularly the Highlanders from the mountainous north, try to maintain their separate identity. Like the Welsh, they object to being called “English”. Their earliest ancestors were the Picts and the Celts, and the Gaelic language, still spoken in remote parts, comes from the ancient language of the Celtic tribes.

The Scottish Highlander considers himself the “true” Scot and he wears his national dress, the kilt, with pride. Kilts, pleated skirts made of material with a squared, colored design called a tartan, probably derive from the costume of the Roman conquerors. Each Scottish clan (a Gaelic word for “tribe” or “family”) has its own tartan with specific colors and design and only members of that clan are entitled to wear it.

The Highlanders are a proud, independent and hardy people who mainly live by farming sheep in the mountain areas; others, on the coasts and islands, are fishermen. But most Scots are Lowlanders, concentrated in the densely populated towns and cities of southern Scotland. These urban areas are heavily industrialized.

The Scots have a reputation for being inventive, hardworking, serious-minded and cautious with money. In the past, they were pioneer settlers and empire builders in places like America, Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand. They have

also provided the British Army with some of its most famous soldiers. Over the centuries, enemy troops have often terrified at the sight and sound of Highlanders in kilts marching into battle, accompanied by the blood-curdling music of the bagpipes. Some even nicknamed the Scottish soldiers “devil in skirts” and “ladies from hell”. Since the 1960s there has been considerable Scottish nationalist agitation call for a separate parliament so the Scots could have a greater say in their own affairs. But the results of a referendum in 1979 showed less than 40 percent in favor so no further action was taken.

Apart from their very distinctive national dress the Scots can be recognized by their particular style of speech and accent. Also, their vocabulary contains many words and expressions, often of ancient origin, which are unique to Scotland. Remember that they like to be called “Scots” or “Scottish” and not “Scotch”. Scotch refers to the most famous of Scottish exports, whisky: the word is derived from the Gaelic and means “water of life”. The history and atmosphere of Scotland as well as the character of its people have been expertly portrayed by such famous Scottish writers as Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott and Robert Louis Stevenson.

## 2. The Welsh

Wales is a land of chapels, valleys, hill farming, and vast empty mountainous spaces. In Welsh, it is known as *Cymru*, which roughly translates as “the country of friends”.

The Welsh have been united with England since the 1535 Act of Union, but they are still very conscious of their separate Celtic heritage. Welsh is spoken as the first language in the rural north and west parts by some 20 percent of the population. Apart from this, there is a growing passion to speak the Welsh language. Visitors to Wales will quickly become aware that they are in a “foreign” country: the Welsh language is spoken widely—although is not so evident in metropolitan Cardiff—and appears on all road signs, public notices and official buildings together with English. It is unique in Britain.

A referendum was held in Wales in 1997, as part of the Labour government’s policy of devolution, to decide whether Wales should have a token independent Assembly