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● 总主编 秦傲松



*Kaleidoscopic  
Life of Modern Times*

生活万花筒

· 高级 ·

冯学芳 主编

· 华中科技大学出版社 ·

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华中科技大学出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

大学英语文库 生活万花筒(高级)/冯学芳 主编  
武汉:华中科技大学出版社, 2002年1月  
ISBN 7-5609-2618-5

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Ⅱ. ①冯… ②樊… ③徐… ④彭…

Ⅲ. 英语-注释读物

Ⅳ. H31

大学英语文库  
生活万花筒(高级)

冯学芳 主编

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责任监印:张正林

出版发行:华中科技大学出版社

武昌喻家山 邮编:430074 电话:(027)87545012

录排:华中科技大学惠友科技文印中心

印刷:华中科技大学印刷厂

开本:350×1168 1/32 印张:6.5

字数:197 000

版次:2002年1月第1版 印次:2002年1月第1次印刷

印数:1—6 000

ISBN 7-5609-2618-5/H·417

定价:9.00元

(本书若有印装质量问题,请向出版社发行部调换)

## 内 容 提 要

本书系大学英语文库系列之一《生活万花筒》(高级),供大学本科高年级学生、研究生和其他具有中高级英语水平的英语爱好者使用。全书共 36 篇文章,均选自国外最新出版的杂志、期刊、互联网或电子出版物,内容涉及现代生活的工作、住房、婚姻、家庭、饮食、人际等方面。对文章中的生词(超过四六级要求的词)在其后加注中文的释义,对文章中的难句以尾注的形式翻译成中文,对文章中出现的习语或其他较难理解的结构以脚注的形式加以解释。本书对于了解现代生活的特点、丰富外国文化知识、提高英语阅读能力有较大的帮助。

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## 前 言

1999年12月颁布的《大学英语教学大纲（修订本）》（以下简称新大纲）指出：“从语言学习的规律来看，英语应用能力的提高是建立在大量的语言输入、尤其是大量的阅读的基础之上的。”新大纲还提出：“大学英语教学还应有助于学生开阔视野，扩大知识面，加深对世界的了解，借鉴和吸收外国文化精华，提高文化素养。”

为了贯彻新大纲的精神，全国高等学校大学外语教学指导委员会英语组于2000年7月在大连召开工作会议，重点讨论了大学英语文库建设。会议确定了大学英语文库的编写原则和编写方案，会议提出，要“加紧大学英语文库建设”。

这套大学英语文库正是在上述思想指导下组织编写的，旨在使学生——读者通过大量阅读，巩固和加深所学语言知识，扩大词汇量，增强英语语感，达到双“提高”的目的，即：既提高英语语言应用能力，又提高文化素养。

这套文库内容十分丰富。从异彩纷呈的现代社会到五光十色的现代生活，从多姿多彩的各国文化到日新月异的科技世界，这套文库都有涵盖。这些内容分属五个系列，它们是：《社会聚焦集》、《文化广角镜》、《名人故事篇》、《科技新视野》和《生活万花筒》。每个系列均按语言难易程度分为初、中、高三个级别。原则上，初级适用于大学非英语专业一年级学生，中级适用于二、三年级学生，高级适用于四年级学生和研究生。

这套文库在选材、译注、体例和编排上均独具特色，不落窠臼。其主要特点有：

1. 各系列各级选文大都摘自国外报刊和互联网，仅个别选文有少量删改。文字规范，语言鲜活，有时代特征，并充分考虑了知识性和趣味性的统一。故这套文库不仅是学习英语、

提高语言应用能力的读物，而且是涉猎世界文化、社会、生活和科技知识的园地。每篇选文长度一般控制在 700—2000 词之内（仅数篇确因内容不忍割舍的短文不足 700 词）。为方便读者做阅读速度的自我检测，文尾标出了该文的词数。

2. 每篇选文后均附有“Sentence Translations for Reference 参考译句”，以帮助读者加深对文中的长难句及全文的理解。这种在文中择句翻译的形式与全国大学英语四、六级考试中的“英译汉”题型是一致的，因此，它还有助于提高读者的英译汉能力，有助于他们备考英译汉测试。

3. 每篇选文以《大学英语教学大纲（修订本）》的词汇表为参照标准，直接在文中注出了超纲生词的词义，并且在不同文章中重复出现的生词重复注出词义。这样有利于读者打乱顺序任选文章阅读，也有利于读者加深对生词的记忆。此外，每篇选文还用脚注的形式针对有关语言难点和人物、典故进行注释，每条注释力求明快清晰、言简意赅。有的词语用了双语注释，目的是为了从各个方面来提高读者的英语应用能力。

4. 每篇选文均编撰了简明扼要的导读。读者在看到中英文对照的标题后，即可结合导读了解文章的主旨，有助于读者从语篇水平上加深对文章的理解；同时，导读还可以激发读者的兴趣，增强阅读的动力。

这套文库是华中科技大学、武汉理工大学和中国地质大学等三校联袂合作的成果。参加编写工作的有三校的老、中、青年英语教师和华中科技大学外国语言学及应用语言学专业部分硕士研究生，共计 30 多人。编写分工如下：华中科技大学负责《社会聚焦集》、《文化广角镜》和《生活万花筒》三个系列；武汉理工大学负责《名人故事篇》系列；中国地质大学负责《科技新视野》系列。

华中科技大学出版社对本文库的编写和出版给予了鼎力支持，投入了很大力量。本文库在编写过程中得到了华中科技大

学外语系、武汉理工大学外语学院和中国地质大学外语系领导的关心、支持以及许多大学生的帮助。我们全体编写人员在此谨表示衷心的感谢。

这套文库大部分选材来源于最新的有关原版书刊和互联网，编委会谨向原作者一并致谢。

由于校际间合作编写这样的大型文库是我们的第一次尝试，经验不足；加上水平有限，时间匆促，疏漏与错误在所难免。敬希各方读者和同行不吝赐教。

大学英语文库编委会

2001年10月



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## 1

## Should the Recommendation System Be Kept?

### 大学保送制该不该保留？



*The recommendation admission system in practice in China has its two sides like a coin. Then should it be kept or cancelled? Let's listen to the voice of the people with different identities.*

The recommendation admission system is a byproduct of the college entrance examination system. Over the past 20 years, the system has benefited a large number of senior middle school graduates who have strong points in certain fields, ensuring them a smooth transition to college without going through the fierce college entrance examination, the so-called "single-log bridge".<sup>[1]</sup> However, some people with *ulterior* (别有用心的) motives have taken advantage of the system. China Youth Daily published a series of reports last August exposing a case in Hunan Province that involved

students seeking recommendation qualifications through fraud and deception. Those reports aroused a strong response from society and led to heated debates over whether the recommendation system should be retained.

This past February, the Ministry of Education stipulated that universities and colleges throughout the country will enroll no more than 5,000 recommended students this year. According to the Ministry, only senior middle school graduates of the present year who reach one of the four set standards can be recommended. The four standards are: 1) provincial-level outstanding students; 2) medallists at national Olympic contests for various courses; 3) outstanding graduates of national experimental science classes; and 4) outstanding graduates of the 13 foreign languages schools throughout the country. In addition, the *Interim* (暂时的) Provisions for Public Security Universities to Enroll Recommended Children of *Martyrs* (烈士) of the Public Security Department<sup>①</sup> will continue to be valid.

**“The recommendation system should not be completely denied.”**

**—Liu Pengzhi, Headmaster of the Middle School Attached to the People's University of China**

The current college entrance examination system certainly has constrained the development of students' potential to a certain extent. In the 21st century, China needs the most advanced professionals in all fields. In the meantime, through teaching we also have learned of the variety of students' potential. If we can intentionally develop students' potential as early as their childhood and give them enough room for self-development, today's children hopefully can become leading experts in their fields in the future. However, the current college entrance examination system tests just a limited range of knowledge and a few abilities. Under the pressure of the college entrance examination, middle school

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① Interim Provisions for Public Security Universities to Enroll Recommended Children of Martyrs of the Public Security Department: 公安大学免试招收公安部门烈士子女的暂行条款

students have to curb (约束) abilities and interests that are not related to the exam, but rather devote themselves to the established study contents.<sup>[2]</sup> This benefits neither the individuals nor the State. For instance, some students have outstanding ability in terms of innovation, computers, organization, lecturing or literary creation, which are beneficial to social progress but cannot be tested under the current college entrance examination system. Though the State has implemented some special policies for students with prominent strong points in arts, sports and science and technology, the related requirements are very strict. I propose further relaxation and more *preferential* (优待的) policies. Otherwise, what our educational system will produce will be just batch after batch of<sup>①</sup> students with uniform thoughts and skills.<sup>[3]</sup>

Attempting to evaluate students through one exam is another disadvantage of the current college entrance examination system. Such appraisal can hardly be accurate, not only because of how a student performs on any given day but also what is tested.

“The recommendation system needs reform.”

—Deputy Director of the Examination Center of the Ministry of Education

We began to carry out examinations of recommended students' comprehensive abilities on a pilot basis in Shanghai Municipality and Hubei, Hebei, Heilongjiang and Sichuan provinces in 1998. The exam, which was required to be completed in 150 minutes, covered eight of the nine compulsory courses for senior middle school students, except English. Prior to the exam, we determined what would be tested, including basic knowledge and concepts, basic skills, imagination and the awareness of the coordinated development of science and society. Unlike earlier exams, which generally involved only a single course at a time, this exam focused on the penetration, interaction and comprehensive utilization of knowledge of various courses; on the integration of theories and practices; and on the

① batch after batch of: a lot of 一批又一批的

awareness of coordinated development of human beings, nature and society.<sup>(4)</sup> Neither the exam nor the test papers were designed separately for science or arts majors. Also, except for Chinese and mathematics that had special test questions, knowledge of other courses was reflected in comprehensive multiple-choice questions. More than 2,200 students passed the exam in 1998, even though they had no advance direction for preparations. The social response also was encouraging. This year, the exam was expanded to the more than 20,000 recommended students all over the country and also achieved satisfactory results. Although students taking part in the exam accounted for only 0.69 percent of this year's senior middle school graduates, we believe the exam has provided valuable experiences for reference.

**“The suspension of the recommendation system for liberal arts students will be a heavy blow<sup>①</sup> to those who have ambition and talent for literature.”**

— Yang Zhe, a Beijing Middle School Student

I was participating in the Third Bud Cup New Concept Composition Contest<sup>②</sup> in Shanghai when I heard the news that the system was canceled for liberal arts students. I won the top prize at the second contest. My goal in joining the contest was very simple: to be recommended for admission to colleges or universities. I believe all the participants who traveled thousands of miles at their own expense also had this purpose, but now we are told there will be no recommendations for admission this year. Why is the recommendation system canceled for liberal arts students but not for others? Indeed, the recommendation system has its disadvantages. Last year, 17 students were found to have resorted to bribery for their recommendations. The newspaper that ran this story became famous for it. But I wonder whether the result of the report has been considered. Some students cheated to qualify for

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① a heavy blow: 沉重打击

② Third Bud Cup New Concept Composition Contest: 第三届春蕾杯新概念作文竞赛

recommendation, but not all the recommended students did so. Should the recommendation system be reformed to absorb talented students or to prevent some people from doing a stupid thing? It seems the goal is the latter.

The entrance examination for colleges and universities is an *ordeal* (严峻考验). Hard work, instead of talent, is needed to succeed. The examination in some way hurts the creativity that ensures the nation's existence and prosperity. Stereotyped answers don't permit the expression of individual opinions. How could anyone claim this kind of examination promotes quality education? We should have other means of judging talented students. Examinations for specialty students can prove their talents. There are 20,000 students participating in the New Concept Composition Contest. It is a fair competition. If you think the contest is not authoritative enough, you can create an authoritative examination. Actually, students specializing in science can be recommended. Isn't this a case of valuing science above liberal arts? When will society show more consideration for liberal arts students? Most liberal arts students made their choice because of their poor skills in mathematics, while those who have a real interest in art are being elbowed out in various aspects.

I am from Beijing, so it is easy for me to go to university. But students from other places have to fight hard for a place in a key university. I am writing this mostly for their sake. I saw them at the composition contest. They really have talent but they hardly have any opportunity to leave their native counties and provinces for colleges or universities. The decision to halt the recommendation system will bury them in their backward hometowns. A future literary giant among them is now deserted by society. When people say China has only pop literature, they are totally ignorant of those ambitious young people struggling amidst gloomy prospects.<sup>[5]</sup> The 17-year-old Han Han has talent in literature, but cannot get a university education. We are forced to follow suit<sup>①</sup>. When all our

① follow suit: do the same thing that someone else has just done 照样行事



writers lack a university education, our literature will be hopeless.

“Isn't creativity to be recommended?”

—Deng Jiangxiu, a China Youth Daily Reporter

I think what Yang Zhe said only testifies to some high school students' dependence on the recommendation system.

First, we will talk about what real creativity is. In Yang's opinion, several pieces of "new concept composition" and published books can represent creativity. Actually, he doesn't know that real creativity isn't as simple as that. It is a kind of quality and performance, which should be based on a comprehensive and solid understanding of basic knowledge. For senior middle school students, the most important and fundamental task is to master all subjects, lay a good foundation for later university study and be able to solve basic problems with what they have learned.

Apparently, we cannot recommend a certain student for admission to college or university merely for his achievement in some composition or publication. There are lots of children who can write good compositions at three or five and write a book at seven or eight. Perhaps they have no other knowledge or ability except for organizing characters. Should we recommend them for that single skill? Yang Zhe admitted that the reason for participating in the composition contest was to get a recommendation. It is obvious that they regarded the composition as another entrance examination for colleges and universities. But it is clear that this "examination" is neither comprehensive nor scientific.

According to this student, the entrance examination is just a hard struggle that makes no consideration for talent. Middle school students should first be aware that the examination, as China's basic enrollment system for talent, is established and has existed for many years. It must have certain merits. First, the examination comprehensively tests students' understanding of basic knowledge in the middle school phase, and determines whether he or she has the basic ability for university study. Second, China's national conditions put a limit on the number who can enroll. Hence, only a