

Cross-Cultural Awareness

跨文化意识

英语教程

张 蓓 郑文园 编著
[美] Elizabeth Gibson 审定



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内 容 简 介

我国加入 WTO 后,中国经济逐渐融入世界经济。在日益频繁的国际交往中,各个领域的跨文化交际已成为人才、经贸、文化交流的基础。对跨文化交际人才的需求也随之急剧增长。因此,大力培养有知识经济的眼光和远见、有国际水平的沟通和活动能力的人才,已成为当前外语教学迫在眉睫的重要任务。

本书是以文化学和跨文化交际学理论为基础,系统、完整、客观地论述了中美文化差异的一本英文版高校选修课教材。该书注重选材和编排体例上的时代性、挑战性和实用性。它强调在文化理解的基础上,亲身体验跨文化的矛盾与冲突,特别是围绕当代社会焦点问题的个案分析,为读者营造了一个进行批判性思维、增强跨文化意识的论坛。

本书为高校学生提供了一本全新的、实用的跨文化交际教材,也是为对跨文化交际感兴趣的中外人士提供了一本颇有价值的参考读物。

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前 言

随着我国深化改革和对外开放的日益扩大,中国人参与跨文化交际的机会越来越多,面临跨文化冲突的挑战也越来越多。如果我们只强调外国语的语言学习与研究,不结合其社会历史文化的分析研究;只学习外国文化书面的百科知识,不亲身投身于跨文化交际实践,体验跨文化交融与冲突,便不能真正提高对跨文化差异性的辨别能力,因而不能培养出名副其实的跨文化交际人才。

本书的编写目的是展示中美文化异同,剖析深层文化积淀,促进跨文化交际。对于对中美文化有兴趣的英语学习者来说,系统地、完整地、足量地了解两国社会文化,熟练地掌握文化差异,逐步提高跨文化认知能力,是用英语顺利地进行跨文化交际的基本保证。本书正是为了满足广大英语爱好者的这一需求而编写的。

本书的选题范围是选择英语国家的主流文化,特别是美国文化中的主流文化。在专题取舍上,我们尽量避免面面俱到地评述美国文化的所有方面,而是挑选关系到跨文化交际顺利进行的一些重要方面作为我们选材范畴。例如:价值观念、生活方式、家庭伦理和婚姻习俗、宗教信仰、种族观念等。我们努力真实地描绘出丰富多彩、千姿百态的现实生活中的种种文化行为。本书内容贴近现代生活,融知识性、趣味性、系统性、思辨性为一体。

本书将对跨文化交际学的教学和教材建设作出贡献。与国内已经出版的同类教科书相比,从研究视角上,编写体例上,以及主题挖掘的深度上,都力求有所突破、有所创新。本书以通俗易懂的英文编写,选材一律从近年最新发表的原始资料中筛选,适应在各种社会生活领域中从事跨文化交际的人们的需要。

本书从选题、收集资料、编辑,到修改、校正、试用历时四年。在艰苦的编撰过程中,我们得到了诸多人士的支持、鼓励和帮助。在此书问世之际,谨表达我们衷心的感谢。

首先我们非常感谢美国专家 Gibson 女士对本书富有建设性的、细致入微的审阅、修正。她将自己几十年来,在许多国家从事教学和社会活动的丰富经验,融入本书的审稿之中,提出了许多宝贵意见和建议。特别令人感动的是,她亲自动笔改写了一些课文。我们还要感谢汕头大学外语系主任李贵苍教授和庄和诚教授给予我们的热情支持和宝贵建议。感谢黎智坚同学以其娴熟的电脑技术,在搜集资料和校对定稿方面给予的帮助。感谢汕头大学外语系 2002 级全体学生在使用本教材的过程中,提供的翔实的反馈意见。最后,我们也要感谢我们的先生吴欣勉和尤足茂,他们在各个方面给予我们极大的鼓励、支持和帮助。

如果没有各方面的鼓励、支持和帮助,本书不可能如此顺利地完成。我们在此一并致谢。由于我们的经验和水平有限,错漏之处在所难免,欢迎读者批评指正。谢谢!

张 蓓 郑文园

2003 年 5 月于汕头桑浦山下

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Chapter 1

Values

Unit 1

Friendship

Author's note : The concept of friendship differs in different cultures. American friendship tends to be activity-centered, quickly-developed and changeable. Most Americans expect friends to be independent rather than dependent and solve their own problems. To the contrary, Chinese friendship may evolve in more expectations and obligations. There are few limits on what you can ask help for or expect of a friend. Therefore, knowing what to expect of 'friends' from another culture can make cross-cultural communication easier.

Focus :

- ◆ Self-actualization & reliance
- ◆ Impersonal behavior & compartmentalized behavior
- ◆ Casual acquaintances & close intimate friendships
- ◆ Friendship obligations & limits
- ◆ Dependent & independent friendships
- ◆ Direct & indirect advice to friends
- ◆ Politeness with friends
- ◆ Benefits of cross-cultural contacts & friendship
- ◆ Friendliness & friendship

Text A

The American Way: Friendship

In general, Americans learn to view the world from their own

point of view, that of the individual self. A main aspect of American culture shared by most Americans is the concept of friendship. Given the American values of self-reliance and self-actualization, we can realize why Americans tend to avoid personal commitments that might bring obligations. They simply do not like to get involved. If an American smiles at you, that smile may not mean what a smile means in your country. It may mean no more than an acknowledgement of your presence.

Another example of friendly, but impersonal, behavior may occur in work relationships with Americans. During working hours, he may be joking and talking with you and making you feel included. Then, as soon as working hours are over, their behavior seems to change. They act as if they hardly know you any more and don't even include you in any of their personal activities. Many of us from foreign countries have “*comprehensive*” or “*whole*” friendships that include all aspects of our lives. Americans usually do not. American friendships tend to be *compartmentalized*; certain friendships revolve around work or school activities while others revolve around church or club activities. Some even revolve around the family. Friendships that are centered around the office often do not *spill out into* recreational or even school activities.

comprehensive: So large in scope or content as to include much. 广泛的, 在范围和内容上包含广泛的

compartmentalize

[kəm,part'mentəlaɪz]: To separate into distinct parts, categories, or compartments. 划分, 区分, 分成不同的部分、类别或间隔

spill out into: 变成

Steve and Yaser first met in their chemistry class at an American university. Yaser was an international student from American universi-

ty. Yaser was an international student from Jordan. He was excited to get to know an American. He wanted to learn more about American culture. Yaser hoped that he and Steve would become good friends.

At first, Steve seemed very friendly. He always greeted Yaser warmly before class. Sometimes he offered to study with Yaser. He even invited Yaser to eat lunch with him. But after the semester was over, Steve seemed more distant. The two former classmates didn't see each other very much at school. One day Yaser decided to call Steve. Steve didn't seem very interested in talking to him. Yaser was very hurt by Steve's change of attitude. "Steve said we were friends," Yaser complained. "And I thought friends were friends forever."

Yaser is a little confused. He is an outsider to American culture. He doesn't understand the way Americans view friendship. Americans use the word "friend" in a very general way. They may call both *casual acquaintances* and close companions "friends". Americans have school friends, work friends, sports friends and neighborhood friends. These friendships are based on common interests. When the shared activity ends, the friendships may fade. Now Steve and Yaser are no longer classmates. Their "friendship" has changed.

casual acquaintances: 点头之交

In some cultures friendship means a strong life-long *bond* between two people. In these cultures friendships develop slowly, since they are built to last. American society is one of rapid change. Studies show that one out of five American families moves every year. American friendships develop quickly, and they may change just as quickly.

bond: (n.) 关系

People from the United States may at first seem friendly. Americans often chat easily with strangers. They exchange information about

their families and work. They may smile warmly and say “Have a nice day” or “See you later.” Schoolmates may say, “Let’s get together sometime.” But American friendliness is not always an offer of true friendship.

After an experience like Yaser’s, outsiders may consider Americans to be *fickle*. Learning how Americans view friendship can help non-Americans avoid misunderstandings. It can also help them make friends the American way.

fickle[ˈfɪkl]: (adj.) 轻浮的, 易变的, 反复无常的

Here are a few tips on making friends with Americans:

1. Visit places Americans enjoy: parties, churches, Western restaurants, parks, and sports clubs.

2. Be willing to take the first step. Don’t wait for them to approach you. Americans in China may not know if you speak English. They may be embarrassed if they can’t speak your language.

3. Use small talk to open the conversation. Ask them where they’re from, why they came to China, etc. Remember; be careful to avoid personal questions about age, salary, marital status and appearance.

4. Show an interest in their culture, their country or their job. (Americans like to talk about themselves!)

5. Invite them to join you for dinner or just for coffee or tea. Try to set a specific time. Americans sometimes make general invitations like “Let’s get together sometime.” Often this is just a way to be friendly. It is not always a real invitation.

6. Don’t expect too much at first. Maybe they’re just being

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friendly. But maybe they do want to be your good friends. It will take time to tell.

People like Yaser shouldn't give up trying to make American friends. Americans do value strong life-long friendships, even with non-Americans. When making friends, it helps to have a good dose of cultural understanding.

Group Discussion and Presentation

Topic : *Friendliness and friendship in U. S. A.*

Text B

Friendship in Different Cultures

In writing assignments in English classes my students frequently raise the topic of friendship. Reading what they write, I start to understand Chinese friendship obligations. For instance, once a student wrote that she understood that her friend wanted to go shopping, she kept silent, put her work aside and went shopping with her friend. Sometimes when they write about middle school friends and describe the closeness they feel as if they are together. Sometimes they write with great sadness when they feel they are no longer close to each other. All this is different from what many American young people would say about friendship.

In the United States you can certainly ask a friend to do something with you, but you would not expect a friend to recognize and respond to your wishes without stating them. Nor would you expect a friend to drop everything to respond to a non-urgent need such as go-

ing shopping. In fact an American friend would feel that they had imposed too much if the friend gave up a real need to study to go shopping. There are limits to what you can expect from a friend. In the U. S. you can feel free to ask your friend for help, but you recognize that the friend may say no, if they give you a reason. In China there are few limits on what you can ask or expect of a friend. You can feel free to tell your friend what he or she can or should do to help you or please you.

Chinese expect friendships to be more lasting

Another difference is that my Chinese students seem to expect their friendships to stay the same over a lifetime. To them a true friendship is a relationship that endures through various changes in the lives of the friends. In the United States a person is likely to change even "best friends" several times over the years. Even this relationship in which people feel close emotionally and tell each other their secrets and personal problems may not survive life changes such as move to another city, graduate from a university, experience a significant change in economic circumstances, or marry. I think the reason is that friendship, like so many other relationships in the United States, including marriage, depends on frequent interaction with the other person. If the people involved do not see each other and interact regularly, the relationship is likely to wither and die.

In the West people often have many friends at one time, but the friendships are usually tied to specific circumstances or activities. When a person changes circumstances and activities, he or she changes friends. A person may have work friends, leisure activity friends and neighborhood friends. Also two people who are friends usually

have similar financial circumstances. This is because friendships in the West are based on equality. Friends should exchange similar activities and give similar things to one another. If one can afford to treat the other to a meal at an expensive restaurant and the other does not have enough money to do the same; it will cause a problem in the relationship.

Americans expect friends to be independent

As with so many other things in the West, people prefer to be independent rather than dependent, so they do not feel comfortable in a relationship in which one person is giving more and the other person is dependent on what is being given. For Westerners friendship is mostly a matter of providing emotional support and spending time together. Chinese friends give each other more concrete(具体的) help and assistance than Western friends do. For example, a Chinese friend will use personal connections to help a friend get something hard to obtain such as a job, an appointment with a good doctor, an easier path through an official procedure or an introduction to another person who might also be able to give concrete help. Chinese friends give each other money and might help each other out financially over a long period of time. This is rarely part of Western friendships, because it creates dependence of one person on the other, and it goes against the principles of equality and individual initiative.

American friends like Chinese friends give each other emotional support in times of trouble, but they do it differently. A Westerner will respond to a friend's trouble by asking, "What do you want to do?" The idea is to help the friend think out the problem and discover the solution he or she really prefers and then to support that solution.

A Chinese friend is more likely to give specific advice to a friend. For instance, if in a friendship between two Chinese women, one woman is arguing with her husband, the friend might advise and she says so directly. An American friend in a similar situation may want her friend to choose wise actions too, but she will be very cautious about giving direct advice. Instead she may raise questions to encourage her friend to consider carefully what may happen if she does one thing instead of another.

Group Discussion and Presentation

Topic: Expectations in friendship from the Chinese and American perspectives.

Reading 1

Benefits of Cross-Cultural Contact

One of the necessary ingredients (因素) for a true friendship consist of shared experiences, values, and interests. Across cultures, shared daily experience may not exist, but through initial superficial relationships people can discover whether they have shared values and interests. Even if a relationship “does not go anywhere,” the cross-cultural contact can still be beneficial to both parties and can help break down isolation and stereotypes (陈腔滥调). The most obvious benefit to the language learner is the opportunity for language practice. In addition, the more experience people have in initiating and responding to relationships, whether transient (短暂的) or permanent, superficial or deep, the more clues they will have to understanding the other culture.

Without the experience of encountering people in several types of relationships, it is difficult to learn to become comfortable in the second culture. There is no doubt that engaging in personal relationships across cultures requires more time and effort, and can be more tiring than doing so with people from one's own culture.

Questions

1. Have you ever initiated a cross-cultural contact? If so, explain it.
2. Do you think cross-cultural contact could be beneficial to you in understanding cross-cultural friendship? Why?
3. Do you have any experience in keeping a cross-cultural relationship over time? Give examples.

Reading 2

Mobility and Friendship

Americans are geographically mobile, which requires them to develop friendships easily and quickly. Approximately one out of every five American families moves every year. People relocate because they change jobs, attend distant colleges, get married, have children, or simply want a change in their lives. As a consequence, people sometimes form and end friendships quickly. Students who attend two or three universities during their undergraduate and graduate years may change their "circle of friends" several times. Likewise, people who change their jobs, while keeping one or two friends from the original place of employment, may also change their circle of friends.

Relationships based on a common activity may fade or end when the activity ends. Mothers may meet while dropping their children off