

高等学校“十三五”规划教材

新媒体时代 英语文化教程

(大学英语文化背景知识拓展)

主 编 陈争峰
副主编 杨延红 聂琳 郑沛
John Robertson(美国) 刘楠

English Cultural Course
in the New Media Era
(The Expansion of College English
Cultural Background)



Culture Diversity



西安电子科技大学出版社
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贵州师范学院内部使用

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内 容 简 介

本书的编写宗旨是让学生在丰富的文化背景中学习英语知识和技能,提高应用英语的能力。全书由12个单元构成,每个单元都附有原汁原味的外籍教师的微课视频,每个单元围绕英语文化背景知识主题展开。Unit 1 介绍英语的全球化;Unit 2 讲述黑色星期五和奇怪的西方节日;Unit 3 讲述耶稣神话故事和龙的轶事;Unit 4 讲述美国文化的象征;Unit 5 讲述西方飞盘和奇特的体育故事;Unit 6 阐述在欧洲旅游的文化知识;Unit 7 讲述伦敦塔和哥特式建筑;Unit 8 讲述披头士乐队文化、爵士乐以及阿黛尔的成功故事;Unit 9 讲述莎士比亚、狄更斯以及海明威的背景知识;Unit 10 讲述英国和美国的饮食以及食物风味知识;Unit 11 讲述英国人喜欢喝茶和英式下午茶的背景知识;Unit 12 讲述西方的教育背景知识以及中西方教育的差异。

本书可作为大学生四六级考试、考研以及雅思和托福应试的好帮手,也可作为高等院校大学生的选修课教材。

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前 言

依据教育部颁布的“教学大纲”的要求，基于多年来在大学英语教学方面的探索及对大学英语四六级考试、研究生入学英语考试、雅思以及托福考试等实际需求的了解，尤其是针对大学生英语文化背景知识匮乏和英语篇章理解能力差的现状，编者结合 2018 年的《中国英语能力等级量表》编写了本书。当前教育国际化和越来越多大学生出国留学的常态化，要求非英语专业的本科生，尤其是理工科专业的学生，不但要学好英语，还要深入了解西方文化背景知识，而且要提高阅读及获取英语信息的能力。

本书采用真实地道的西方文化背景材料，从不同方面向中国学生展示英语国家的生活、风俗习惯、社会问题与文化现象，让学生加深了解英语国家文化背景知识，从而拓宽大学生的国际文化视野。全书共 12 个单元，每个单元都附有外籍教师录制的微课视频，每个单元均围绕大学英语文化背景知识主题展开，并附有对异国文化的欣赏和篇章理解、口语讨论和辩论。

本书借助新媒体手段，由美国外教 John Robertson 录制与大学英语教学单元主题相关的微课，拓展并讲述大学英语文化背景知识，形成了与所用教材文化主题相一致的教学体系，目的是使学生更全面地了解英语国家的文化背景和人文历史知识，增加大学生学习英语的兴趣，提高学生的英语语言理解能力和运用能力。

编者希望通过本书，能够进一步增进学生对西方国家文化背景知识的了解，开拓学生的国际文化视野，从而更好地学习英语。

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本书所引用的材料多数已注明出处或列在参考文献中，没有注明出处的是由于辗转引用而未能查出原作者，编者在此一并对文献著者表示衷心的感谢！

由于编者水平有限，书中难免出现疏漏和不足之处，恳请广大读者批评指正，力争再版时更正。

编者

2019年4月

于西安电子科技大学外国语学院

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Unit 1 Global Language and Culture

1. Cultural Background

1.1 Pre-watching Activities



微课 1.1

1.2 Pre-review Questions

- (1) Some languages are increasing in use, while others are declining. Do you think this is a positive or negative development?
- (2) What do you think of English language in the globalized world?
- (3) English is widely used in the world. What is your understanding “English mania”?
- (4) What is the cultural diversity?
- (5) How do you understand the flexibility of language?
- (6) When going to a new country, how do you enjoy the exotic culture and language? What is your advice?



微课 1.2

2. The Text

Questions:

- (1) What do the Swiss people amaze you?
- (2) How do people in Switzerland maintain the harmonious and peaceful co-existence between its difference races?

Multi-lingualism in Switzerland

Though small in size, Switzerland has four official languages. These languages are spoken by four different European ethnic groups in separate areas in the country. The distribution of the different languages in 1990 was: German 65%, French 18%, Italian 10%, Romansh 1% and others 6%.

The four main ethnic groups live in 25 cantons, all of which enjoy a high degree of autonomy, especially in the areas of language and cultural policies. Thus, the teaching of language is not uniform throughout the country, there are variations among the different cantons.

What is amazing is that the Swiss people, made up of different linguistic and racial groups, have been able to live in harmony and share a common national identity. This extraordinary achievement has been praised, admired and hailed as a model for racial harmony by many countries, including Singapore. These different races with diverse cultures and histories have been able to live together in a country without any clashes and have, for 700 years since independence, made their country wealthy. What is their secret?

First of all, let us examine how the different races communicate with one another. Unlike in Singapore, where the different races live among one another, the different races in Switzerland live in separate geographical areas. In the German-speaking areas, German is the *lingua franca*. The ordinary people do not speak French but understand it. In the Italian-speaking areas, the street signs are in Italian and the people there speak Italian, but they are also able to understand German or French. Similarly in the French-speaking areas, the people speak and write in French, but they understand German as well.

In a nutshell, the different races can communicate with and understand one another. The main reason for this splendid situation is that their schools, apart from teaching their individual mother tongues, also teach a second or a third language. Although schools in different cantons adopt different educational systems, they have something in common. In all schools, the mother tongue is taught as the first language as well as used as the language of instruction. Students are also taught two other languages. (Romansh is a minority language taught only in Romansh-speaking areas.)

The Swiss are keen to preserve their own mother tongues, hence the schools in the different language areas use their own mother tongues as the language of instruction. Even in the Romansh-speaking areas they treat Romansh as their mother tongue, though the language is only spoken by less than 1% of the total Swiss population.

According to a German-speaking friend, German is taught as a mother tongue in elementary schools in the German-speaking areas and students used to start learning French or Italian only in secondary schools. Now the trend is moving towards picking up a second language in the third or fourth year in elementary schools. Similarly in French- and Italian-speaking areas, the mother tongue is taught first while the second or third language is picked up later on.

While in Switzerland, I found out that the schools in Zurich have begun a new experiment in education this year. From the first year of their elementary school, the students not only learn German, their mother tongue, but English as well. This new experiment is based on the premise that knowing English, an international language, would be an advantage for the people of Zurich, an international city.

This experiment, however, has its fair share of controversy and detractors. A French-speaking friend explained that learning English instead of the other Swiss languages is an impediment to the cultural amalgamation of the German and French-speaking groups in Switzerland. This shows that the Swiss still feel very strongly about preserving their own languages and are concerned about the linguistic links between the different races.

It is not true to say that there has been no friction among the different groups in Switzerland. A 1991 report published by the Swiss government mentioned some problems which existed between the difference groups. These problems are quite complex and it is not easy to achieve harmony between the different groups. For instance, the Romansh people are a small minority who reside in the mountainous areas. Their language is faced with the threat of extinction. It is a problem as to how they can preserve their mother tongue and at the same time, communicate with the others. Another problem is that within the German-speaking areas, the people speak a variety of German dialects called Swiss German, which is different from the Standard German (or High German) taught in schools. This has created some communication problems between German-speaking and non-German-speaking Swiss.

Although Switzerland faces the problems of managing and balancing the different languages, the Swiss can still maintain harmony among the races. This is mainly due to the fact that they do not discriminate against any minority languages, and they have mutual tolerance and respect for one another language and culture. Moreover, they have a strong sense of nationhood which helps them smooth over the minor frictions within the country.

The Swiss people are always proud of being Swiss. Swiss living in any country in the world can retain their Swiss citizenship because Switzerland allows for dual citizenship. A Swiss relative of mine has been living in the Philippines for the past 40 years. This relative has become a Filipino citizen but she still retains her Swiss citizenship. She also retains her pride as a Swiss and her love for the Swiss culture.

A strong sense of nationhood and mutual tolerance and respect between the different races are the reasons why Switzerland has been able to maintain the harmonious and peaceful co-existence between its difference races. Multiracial and multilingual Singapore can certainly learn from this.

★ *New Words*

amalgamation *vt.* 融合, 混合; 合并, 联合

discriminate *vt.* 歧视

harmonious *adj.* 和谐的

retain *vt.* 保持

3. The Appreciation of Exotic Culture

Exotic Island Wedding

As a travel professional considering an exotic island wedding was a logical choice, but having to convince a strong Catholic family was the challenge I faced! I was never a traditionalist in the sense, and I have attended so many conventional weddings with a church ceremony and post-reception in the past, I wanted to do something different and special for the most important day of my life!

Island weddings have been around for quiet some time, but in my opinion, they seemed to be perceived more for renewal of vows and second marriages, however, as our lifestyles change, we separated ourselves from tradition, and an exotic wedding on a spectacular island seemed like a dream in paradise for me.

I met the love of my life a few years ago in travel school, and as our love for each other became apparent my only thought was, what if she doesn't want to have an island wedding? Knowing that her family is Catholic, and tradition is very important to them, I thought to myself, was my ambition of having a romantic wedding on an island not going to be a reality?

Even though I expected the worst-case scenario, the family was very understanding and accepted both our wishes with open arms, so the rest was history! The planning for our special event had begun, and with some consideration we both agreed on having our anticipated wedding on the exotic destination island of Cuba. We had the privilege of visiting this beautiful tropical island prior to our wedding, and we both fell in love with the extremely friendly culture, beautiful beach, and the spectacular exotic resort called Beaches, which is located on a peninsula in a small vacation town called Varadero, this is where we planned on having our special ceremony.

The Beaches All Inclusive Resort was not our original choice, and in the beginning of our research and planning, we decided on the Sandals Montego Bay Resort, which is a fantastic Ultra-all Inclusive Resort located on the fabulous Caribbean island of Jamaica! Not only were they including everything in their package, but they also offered a free wedding as long as we stayed at the resort for 5 nights or longer. Unfortunately, the decision came down to a single guests issue, and because a few of our close family and friends did not have a significant other, that particular resort would not have worked out for us.

I realized that certain events in life happen for a reason, and once we found out that the Beaches Resort in Varadero, Cuba also offered free weddings on the property, and accepted singles, couples, and families as well, we knew our decision was the correct one! If anyone ever tells you the wedding application process is difficult, get a second opinion! We went online and

printed the resorts application form, faxed it off and in a matter of weeks we received a confirmation of the selected date and time of the wedding ceremony without any problems.

When we arrived in Cuba, the island location was exactly what we remembered, and the clear turquoise beach rising and falling onto the soft golden sand brought back some wonderful memories of our past visit! We checked into our very spacious suite, and for the first couple of days took part in the resorts endless variety of buffet and A la Carte dining, amazing entertainment, and non-stop flow of mojitos and margaritas!

Our special day could not have come any sooner, and we were amazed with the ceremony location on the property! The garden wedding gazebo was romantically trimmed with aromatic exotic flowers, and bordered with swaying palm trees. As the wedding ceremony commenced, I soon realized that two dreams were fulfilled that day. I not only married my soul mate, but we performed an exotic island wedding, and became one in island paradise!

4. Oral Practice—Debate

Work in groups, try to find the convincing evidence to support the topic.

- (1) Globalization is beneficial or bad to the language development?
- (2) Internet language enriches or impacts traditional language?

5. Supplementary Reading

Unique Problems

China entry the WTO and will hold the Olympic Games in 2008, the relationship between China and Western in politics, economy, culture will become closer and closer. It is undoubted that the etiquette will play an important role in this process. To the definition of etiquette, China and Western have a different understanding. As Chinese think that the etiquette is the common behavior standards that all the members must obey, and its purpose is to keep the normal living order of the society. In ancient China, a famous philosopher thinks that etiquette is a principal to deal with the relationship between man and supernatural beings, man and ghosts, man and man. There are also many words about etiquette in English. For example, courtesy which means courteous behavior, good manners; protocol which means system of rules governing formal occasion, e. g, meetings, between governments, diplomats, etc. And these words are all from the same French word etiquette. Of course, more spread and more profound cultural comment of the western etiquette is from the Classical Period, i.e., old Athens and Roma culture. Today, etiquette becomes the reflection and manifestation of one country's politics, economy, culture in people's social contact. And it includes the principal and moral that people should obey in daily life.

Etiquette formed in the process of the deposition of culture and social contact. So every nation has their own etiquette standard which created with the spirit of their nation, because this formed the cultural difference between different nations. As languages is the carrier of the human culture, this difference must reflect in the language of different nations. Here is the case of problems made by the different cultures.

When companies do business overseas, they come in contact with people from different cultures. These individuals often speak a different language and have their own particular custom and manners. These differences can create problems. For example, in France, business meetings begin promptly at the designated time and everyone is expected to be there. Foreign business people who are tardy are often left outside to cool their heels as a means of letting them know the importance of promptness. Unless one is aware of such expected behaviors he may end up insulting the people with whom he hopes to establish trade relations.

A second traditional problem is that of monetary conversions. For example, if a transaction is conducted with Russia, payment may be made in rubles. Of course, this currency is of little value to the American firm. It is, therefore, necessary to convert the foreign currency to American dollars. How much are these Russian rubles worth in terms of dollars? This conversion rate is determined by every market, where the currencies of countries are bought and sold. Thus there is an established rate, although it will often fluctuate from day to day. For example, the ruble may be worth 0.75 on Monday and 0.72 on Tuesday because of an announced wheat shortage in Russia. In addition, there is the dilemma associated with converting at 0.72. Some financial institutions may be unwilling to pay this price, feeling that the ruble will sink much lower over the next week. As a result, conversion may finally come at 0.69. These “losses” must be accepted by the company as one of the costs of doing business overseas.

A third unique problem is trade barriers. For one reason or another, all countries impose trade barriers on certain goods crossing their borders. Some trade barriers are directly related to exports. For example, the United States permits strategic military material to be shipped abroad only after government permission has been obtained. Most trade barriers, however, are designed to restrict import. Two of the most common import barriers are quotas and tariffs.

★ Exercises

1. Answer the following questions.

- (1) What are unique problems in the International Trade?
- (2) In France, are tardy business people often left outdoors waiting?
- (3) What is your understanding of the relations between culture and etiquette?

2. Choose the best answer.

- (1) According to the passage, conversion rates_____.
A. are always changing

- B. are determined by financial institutions
 - C. are agreed upon by two trading countries
 - D. vary from day to day
- (2) The intended audience of this passage are_____.
- A. professors of economics
 - B. postgraduate students of international trade
 - C. beginners of business
 - D. business people
- (3) Which of the following is likely to be discussed in the next paragraph?
- A. Export trade barriers.
 - B. Quotas and tariffs.
 - C. Reasons for imposing trading barriers.
 - D. Measures to break down trade barriers.

6. Reading Comprehension of Culture Test

Directions: In this section, after you finish reading the passage, you must choose the best answer from the four choices marked A, B, C and D.

◇ Passage One

Questions (1) to (5) are based on the following passage.

More than 100 years ago, American sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois was concerned that race was being used as a biological explanation for what he understood to be social and cultural differences between different populations of people. He spoke out against the idea of “white” and “black” as distinct groups, claiming that these distinctions ignored the scope of human diversity.

Science would favor Du Bois. Today, the mainstream belief among scientists is that race is a social construct without biological meaning. In an article published in the journal *Science*, four scholars say racial categories need to be phased out. “Essentially, I could not agree more with the authors,” said Svante Pääbo, a biologist and director of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Germany. In one example that demonstrated that genetic differences were not fixed along racial lines, the full genomes (基因组) of James Watson and Craig Venter, two famous American scientists of European ancestry, were compared to that of a Korean scientist, Seong-Jin Kim. It turned out that Watson and Venter shared fewer variations in their genetic sequences than they each shared with Kim.

Michael Yudell, a professor of public health at Drexel University in Philadelphia, said that modern genetics research is operating in a paradox: on the one hand, race is understood to be a useful tool to illuminate human genetic diversity, but on the other hand, race is also understood to

be a poorly defined marker of that diversity.

Assumptions about genetic differences between people of different races could be particularly dangerous in a medical setting. “If you make clinical predictions based on somebody’s race, you’re going to be wrong a good chunk of the time,” Yudell told Live Science. In the paper, he and his colleagues used the example of cystic fibrosis, which is underdiagnosed in people of African ancestry because it is thought of as a “white” disease.

So what other variables could be used if the racial concept is thrown out? Yudell said scientists need to get more specific with their language, perhaps using terms like “ancestry” or “population” that might more precisely reflect the relationship between humans and their genes, on both the individual and population level. The researchers also acknowledged that there are a few areas where race as a construct might still be useful in scientific research: as a political and social, but not biological, variable.

“While we argue phasing out racial terminology (术语) in the biological sciences, we also acknowledge that using race as a political or social category to study racism, although filled with lots of challenges, remains necessary given our need to understand how structural inequities and discrimination produce health disparities (差异) between groups.” Yudell said.

(1) Du Bois was opposed to the use of race as_____.

- A. a basis for explaining human genetic diversity
- B. an aid to understanding different populations
- C. an explanation for social and cultural differences
- D. a term to describe individual human characteristics

(2) The study by Svante Pääbo served as an example to show_____.

- A. modern genetics research is likely to fuel racial conflicts
- B. race is a poorly defined marker of human genetic diversity
- C. race as a biological term can explain human genetic diversity
- D. genetics research should consider social and cultural variables

(3) The example of the disease cystic fibrosis underdiagnosed in people of African ancestry demonstrates that_____.

- A. it is absolutely necessary to put race aside in making diagnosis
- B. it is important to include social variables in genetics research
- C. racial categories for genetic diversity could lead to wrong clinical predictions
- D. discrimination against black people may cause negligence in clinical treatment

(4) What is Yudell’s suggestion to scientists?

- A. They should be more precise with the language they use.
- B. They refrain from using politically sensitive terms.
- C. They throw out irrelevant concepts in their research.
- D. They examine all possible variables in their research.

(5) What can be inferred from Yudell’s remark in the last paragraph?