大学英语选修课系列教材

陈仲利　总主编

Brief Introduction to America and Britain

张　琳◎主编

当代英美社会文化新编

科学出版社
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“大学英语选修课系列教材”编委会

总 序

教育部颁布的《大学英语课程教学要求》对我国大学生英语的听、说、读、写、译等能力均提出了三个层次的要求，并在全国兴起了实用性大学英语教学改革与实践的浪潮。为进一步完善大学英语教学改革的成果，努力提高学生的英语实用能力，南开大学、天津大学、北京化工大学、北京航空航天大学、北京科技大学、北京邮电大学、对外经济贸易大学、广东工业大学、哈尔滨商业大学等国内重点高校的英语教师通力合作，编写了“大学英语选修课系列教材”。本套教材包括《高级英语口语教程》、《科技英语阅读教程》、《高级英语阅读教程》、《实用翻译技能集成》、《英美报刊深度阅读》、《高级英语写作教程》、《实用商务英语综合教程》、《英语视听说教程》和《当代英美社会文化新编》等九本教材。本系列教材应用了最新的英语教学理念，吸收了最新的英语教学成果，符合我国大学英语教学改革的最新要求，并体现了四、六级考试改革后的新精神，所有编写内容均为各参编院校多年使用过的优秀素材，具有良好的教学效果和广泛的使用基础。

“大学英语选修课系列教材”主要特点如下：

1．选材广泛，内容丰富。本系列教材所选材料均来自国内外原版报纸、杂志、教材、论著、会议论文、实用文件和一些权威网站，语言真实准确、地道优美；内容涉及视听说、口语、阅读、翻译、写作、文化、商务和科技英语等多个领域，适合不同专业学生对英语学习的需求。本系列教材选材注重原汁原味，力图使学生在浩瀚的知识海洋中多方汲取营养，以满足实用性英语教学的需求。如《高级英语阅读教程》的文章大多是近年来有关社会热点问题，并且大都是学生所关心和感兴趣的新闻报道，趣味性、实效性较强；另外，文章内容涉及生活的方方面面，集知识性、科普性、娱乐性于一体，有利于培养学生的学习兴趣。

2．注重语言综合技能的训练，实用性较强。通过精心选编的课文和悉心设计的多种实践和交际活动，从多渠道、多层面、多角度向学生输入大量有效语言信息，吸引学生参加多种多样、生动活泼的语言实践和交际活动，进行大量的“交互式”的语言输入（input）和输出（output）。如《英语视听说教程》、《高级英语口语教程》强调各种微技能的培养和训练，结合具体生活环境和主题，突出听说实践能力的培养；《实用翻译技能集成》围绕实例，阐明方法和技巧，强调翻译实践，培养动手能力。每一章围绕各种翻译技巧，梳理分析，深入浅出，将翻译理论技能和实践训练有机地结合起来。

3．编写严谨，精细实用。本系列教材均按照由浅入深、循序渐进的原则系统而连贯

地编写完成。《实用商务英语综合教程》、《科技英语阅读教程》各自在内容上互相渗透，融会贯通，有机地成为一体。同时，每册又各具特色，风格迥异。

4．知识全面，题型多样。为适应改革后的四、六级考试新模式，《高级英语写作教程》一方面向学生们介绍了各类议论、说明、记叙文体；另一方面，又详细阐明了各类应用文体，从而有效地提高了学生的英语写作实践能力。另外，《高级英语阅读教程》中增加了选词填空题、快速阅读、补全句子、简答等新题型。

5．本系列教材在传播语言知识的同时，更注重英美语言文化知识的学习。《英美报刊深度阅读》和《当代英美社会文化新编》系统介绍了英美报刊文学的特点和社会文化概况，使学生更加深入地了解英美社会面貌，激发英语学习兴趣，并大幅度提高自身的跨文化交际能力。

6．本系列教材综合了国内外同类教材的优点，兼顾了不同层次学生的需求，既体现了教育部有关大学英语教学改革的新精神，又满足了实用性英语教学的客观需要。同时，这些编者都是富有教学经验的一线教师，本系列教材是他们多年教学成果的结晶。

7．本系列教材适用范围广泛。不仅是大学本科生高级英语选修教材，亦可作为广大同学备考英语六级和报考研究生的参考用书，同时，也是英语专业学生或广大英语爱好者提高英语水平的良师益友。

总主编　陈仲利

2009年2月

前　言

为了适应教育部颁布的《大学英语课程教学要求》，哈尔滨商业大学的英语教师通力合作，编写了“大学英语选修课系列教材”之一《当代英美社会文化新编》。

本书以文化线索为纲，所选资料均出自近一两年英美两国的主流报刊杂志，例如*New York Times*、*Time*、*Newsweek*等，可帮助读者获得英美两国在社会与文化等方面的最新信息和知识，也可作为跨文化研究的辅助材料。

全书分Part One和Part Two两大部分，共8个单元。Part One着重介绍美国社会和文化，Part Two着重介绍英国社会和文化。本书精选了35篇不同类型和题材的阅读材料，对英美两国的风土人情、教育、文化价值观及科学技术发展等方面做了介绍。每个单元涉及不同话题，均有概括性综述及4~5篇与该话题相关的文章。每篇文章后附有相关的背景知识介绍及生词表，便于读者阅读；课后练习除阅读理解题之外，还设计了词语解释和佳句翻译练习，目的是让读者熟悉地道的英文表达，进而提高自身的英语水平。本书的独特之处在于，没有拘泥于传统教科书式地对英美文化进行介绍，而是采用最新的语言资料，以通俗易懂的方式进行阐述，从全新的视角向读者展示当代英美两国的社会文化及人们的生活状况。与同类书相比，本书更注重感性认识和理性思考。

社会语言学家认为语言是文化的载体，文化又是语言的土壤。尽管世界正趋于一体化，但我们仍无法解决不同地域之间的文化差异和由此产生的各种分歧。人们只有通过语言了解各民族的文化价值观，才能实现彼此之间的有效沟通和谅解。本书作者正是站在跨文化交际的角度，精选了英美文化的热点话题，使读者开卷后能够思考语言背后所蕴涵的文化价值观，从中了解民族隔阂的根源，有的放矢地指导读者的实际工作，有一定的现实指导意义。

本书可供高等院校通过大学英语四级、六级考试的学生及英语自学者阅读训练使用，还可供广大英美文化爱好者、出国人员及英语教师参考使用，亦可作为大学英语选修课教材。有一定的实用价值。

由于时间仓促、水平有限，本书难免有错误和不足之处，希望广大读者不吝赐教。

编　者

2009年7月

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Part One

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Unit One

American Landscape
美国风光

Introduction

The United States of America is situated in the central part of North America. It is the fourth largest country in size in the world. The country is bounded by Canada on the North and by Mexico on the south with the Atlantic Ocean on the east and Pacific Ocean on the west. So people always use "from east to west" or "Atlantic to Pacific" to refer the immense size of the country. There are four time zones in the whole country. If you got in a car in New York and drove to Los Angles, it would take you four or five days. It takes two full days to drive from New York to Florida. Therefore it would be difficult to describe the great diversity in a single generalization.

The United States of America is composed of fifty states and a federal district, the District of Columbia. Only Alaska and Hawaii are outside of the contiguous 48 states. The 50 states may be divided into eight regions.

1. The New England Regions

The New England region includes the following eastern states: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

New England is perhaps the smallest in region but it played an extreme important role in the nation's history, especially in the Independent War and the building of the nation. Because the limited soil in this mountainous area, New Englanders work in the following industry such as shipbuilding, fishing, and trade. New Englanders gained a reputation for hard work, self-reliance and ingenuity. Education is another strongest legacy. Its cluster of top-ranking universities and colleges—including Harvard, Yale, Brown, Dartmouth, Wellesley, Smith—is unequaled by any other region. Boston is the cultural center of the region.

2. The Middle Atlantic Regions

The region commonly includes New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, and usually

includes Delaware, Maryland, and Washington D. C.

The Middle Atlantic region attracted a large scale of population than New England. The original English settlements notably provided refuge to religious minorities. New York and Pennsylvania these large states became centers of heavy industry. Principal cities are New York City, Philadelphia and Baltimore. One-third of all products made in amerce are from these cities. Philadelphia was home to the Continental Congress and the birthplace of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the U. S. Constitution in 1787.

If New England provided the brains and dollars for 19th-century American expansion, the Middle Atlantic States provided the muscle.

3. Southern Regions

This region refers to the tobacco and cotton states Virginia, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina.

The region owns unique cultural and historic heritage, including early European colonial settlements, the prominent leaders of the American Revolution, and four of America's first five presidents were Virginians etc. The southern states depend on the plantation which hiring slaves for growing cotton while the northern states need large sum of free labor to develop their manufacture. To northerners it was immoral; to southerners it was integral to their way of life. The acute conflicts of the interest lead the Civil War. In 1860, 11 southern states left the Union intending to form a separate nation, the Confederate States of America. The result of the war is the defeat of the southern states and the economically backward last until after World War II. Nowadays, the Southern states have achieved the new industrial development and high-rise buildings crowd the skylines of such cities as Atlanta and Little Rock.

4. Great Lake Regions

This region is made up Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The section is one of the richest parts of the whole nation. The Great Lakes States are sometimes referred to as the Third Coast apart from the "East Coast" and the "West Coast". All the five Great Lakes except Ontario lie wholly or partly within the region. It became especially popular in the general Great Lakes region during the 1960s when major coastal lake cities and college campuses throughout the area became hotbeds for extreme political and social movements.

5. Midwestern Regions

This term is confusing because in fact it describes the north-central states of the United States of America. The seven states, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota are traditionally composing this region.

This vast and cultivable land earned the name of "breadbasket of the nation" for the abundant output of cereal crops. The endless space is good for the use of mechanization on a large scale. Due to this region occupies so huge land that many people living there incline to hold the isolationism. But the new developments of road transport have changed all this. Also the Midwest gave birth to one of America's two major political parties, the Republican Party.

6. Southwestern Regions

This region mainly consists of Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and Oklahoma. This region is warmer than the northern states and drier than the eastern states. Its population is less dense than neighboring areas and with significant Spanish American, Mexican American, and American Indian populations, it is also more ethnically varied than neighboring areas of the Southwest once belonged to Spain or Mexico but ownership was ceded to the United States after the Mexican-American War of 1846–1848. Arizona is known as the "Grand Canyon State", as the Colorado River cut through rock to form it. New Mexico has around as many cows as it has people. In fact, the first atomic bomb was exploded in the desert here. To the east of New Mexico is a state with a tradition of thinking big: Texas. It has more land than any other state except Alaska and leading the oil-production in the whole country.

7. The Mountain Regions

The word "Mountain" refers to the Rocky Mountains. This area consists of following states: Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming.

Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming are considered the standards of the Mountain state region for the great deserts and plateau which cannot be planted. Some of these areas have had ups and downs in the past but since the late 1960s, the Mountain States have changed a lot for being the nation's most politically Republican geographical entity.

8. Pacific Regions

This region contains the following five coastlines states: Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington. The coastal area has various natural advantages which can make it develop rapidly than the other states. Washington is home to the biggest maker of computer programs, Microsoft. Seattle is the largest city in Washington. The discovery of gold helped California join the United States in 1850. California had well-established industry and a large population. The second largest city in the nation, Los Angeles is best known as the home of the Hollywood film industry. The "Silicon Valley" area near San Jose also makes California become the most populous of all the states.

Passage One

A Science Lover's Kind of Town—Boston

科技爱好者之城——波士顿

When you run an ice-cream parlor down the street from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, you expect your customers to chat about stem cell research or trade theories about neutrinos between licks of burnt caramel. But Gus Rancatore, whose Toscanini's shop in Cambridge, Mass., is renowned as much for its deep-thinking clientele as for its sundaes, discovered long ago that catering to the technology-minded crowd could have unforeseen advantages.

One day, two M.I.T. students who were "working in superconductors," Mr. Rancatore said, took a good look at his ice cream machine, visible through his shop window, and were "distressed by the poor engineering." So they took it back to their lab and transformed its inefficient gear-drive mechanism into a lean, mean, belt-driven machine. That was 23 years ago. "We still use the machine," Mr. Rancatore said. "Another generation of M.I.T. engineers just tuned it up this summer."

In metropolitan Boston, including Cambridge, home of Harvard and M.I.T., and the technology corridor out on Route 128, the story is amusing, but not particularly surprising. At least since the early 1700s, when its cutting-edge physicians first offered smallpox inoculations, Boston has been a leader in sciences both theoretical and applied. Today, it's still a town for science lovers, and the mood can be either serious or playful. If you're the kind of person whose idea of fun is probing the structure of DNA or designing a faster toy bobsled, Boston is an inspiring place to spend a few days.

An essential stop on the science circuit is the M.I.T. Museum, on Massachusetts Avenue a block or so from M.I.T.'s nuclear reactor. Recently expanded to 15,000 square feet of floor space (a 5,000-square-foot addition opened just over a year ago), the museum features invitingly devised rotating exhibits on new M.I.T. research, as well as permanent exhibits.

One day last month, some visitors examined prototype parts for stackable urban cars, which looked more like shopping carts than vehicles, while others walked slowly backward at the "Eight Einsteins" exhibit. As they moved, "hybrid illusions" of faces of Einstein morphed into Freud, Madonna and John Lennon before their eyes. Created by Aude Oliva, a cognitive science professor, and her colleagues, the images are helping researchers learn more about visual

cognition and how the brain functions.

Hanging from the ceiling in one corner were M.I.T.-designed submersible vehicles—made to move on their own in deep-ocean areas too dangerous for divers—including Jason Junior, the one that snooped around the wreck of the Titanic. Upstairs, permanent exhibits demonstrated the institute's more established work in robotics, voice recognition and DNA research. Prof. Harold Edgerton's groundbreaking photography is on display there; you'll probably recognize his famous bullet-through-the-apple shot.

Fiddle with the "Remarkable Double Piddler Hydraulic Happening Machine," which uses a strobe light to deconstruct a water stream into individual droplets. Or examine the displays chronicling M.I.T.'s work on radar in World War II and navigational systems for the Apollo space missions. There's also a video of the annual mechanical engineering class's robot competition.

The museum also owns hundreds of 3-D holograms, the largest and most extensive collection in the world, said Seth Riskin, curator of a new juried exhibit called "Luminous Windows: Holograms for the 21st Century" (running Dec. 5 through March). The show will feature six large-scale holograms from international artists, some as tall as five feet, to be displayed in the museum's ground-floor windows and facing outward, visible to nighttime passersby. Two dozen smaller holograms—from a portrait of Keith Haring to images of brains and a coal molecule—are part of the permanent exhibit.

While the M.I.T. Museum's character is tranquil and contemplative, the justly renowned Boston Museum of Science can seem like pandemonium, especially on weekends. There are literally hundreds of interactive and informational displays and kiosks on dozens of topics: optics, reproduction, computers, live butterflies, remote sensing and much more. A rare Triceratops skeleton recently became the latest permanent exhibit. The exhibits are arranged helter-skelter in three confusing wings over three levels. Plunge right in anyway—this stop, too, is obligatory—but focus and pace yourself.

You can learn how radiology, wind turbines and biomethane digesters work. To please "Star Wars" fans, a full-scale model Naboo N-1 Starfighter, from "The Phantom Menace," dangles from the ceiling beside real spaceships from a galaxy not so far, far away.

At Galileo's Drop Stop, test for yourself whether different masses fall at the same rate. An exhibit called Mathematica, created by Charles and Ray Eames, explains concepts like celestial mechanics, probability and the Zeta Function (don't ask) with endearing circa—1961 models and falling plastic balls. Teaching moments are everywhere: the men's rooms have signs explaining how the infrared sink technology works.

For the biggest "wow" factor visit the Theater of Electricity and its Van de Graaff generators and Tesla coils. "We need people who are particularly full of electric charge," joked Diana

DeLuca, a program coordinator who made one volunteer's hair stand on end, much to the delight of the audience. The show got better: a supersize Van de Graaff generator crackled with one million volts and created a shockingly beautiful indoor lightning show.

"A lot of the presenters here have math and engineering degrees," Ms. DeLuca said.

The generators came to the museum from M.I.T., where their inventor, Dr. Robert Van de Graaff, taught physics—one example of the ways the area's dozens of universities and research labs have infused Boston with innovation. Faculty members at Harvard and M.I.T. alone have racked up 49 Nobel Prizes in the sciences. The microwave, the safety razor, the instant camera and the video game were all invented in the Boston area. All around town, there are places to trace some of this legacy.

New Words

parlor	*n.*	reception room in an inn or club where visitors can be received 小店
neutrinos	*n.*	an elementary particle with zero charge and zero mass 微中子
caramel	*n.*	firm chewy candy made from caramelized sugar and butter and milk 焦糖，饴糖
clientele	*n.*	those who use the service of a business shop （商店或生意的）常客
smallpox	*n.*	a highly contagious viral disease characterized by fever and weakness and skin eruption with pustules that form scabs that slough off leaving scars 天花
inoculations	*n.*	taking a vaccine as a precaution against contracting a disease 接种
bobsled	*n.*	long racing sled (for 2 or more people) with a steering mechanism 大雪撬
hybrid	*n.*	a composite of mixed origin 混合物
cognitive	*adj.*	of or being or relating to or involving cognition 认知的，有认识力的
stroboscope	*n.*	scientific instrument that provides a flashing light synchronized with the periodic movement of an object; can make moving object appear stationary 频闪观测仪 （万花筒，转速很高的机器）
fiddle	*v.*	manipulate manually or in one's mind or imagination 用手抚弄
pandemonium	*n.*	a state of extreme confusion and disorder 混战场，喧哗吵闹的地方
methane	*n.*	a colorless gas with no smell that can be turned to give heat 甲烷

Expressions

1. **morphed into**
   the computer makes one image gradually change into a different one　图像渐变
2. **snooped around**
   to find out about someone's private affairs by secretly looking in their house etc.　窥探，打听
3. **strobe light**
   a light which goes on and off very quickly　闪光灯
4. **infuse with**
   to fill something with a particular feeling or quality　注入
5. **racked up**
   to gradually gets points votes etc.　得分，取得胜利

Notes

1. **Boston:** 波士顿，美国最古老的城市和文化中心之一。

   It is the capital city in the US state of Massachusetts. It is a major port and cultural centre, having 30 colleges and universities. Boston was settled in 1630 and played an important part in the American Revolution.

2. **M. I. T.:** 麻省理工学院

   Massachusetts Institute of Technology is a private US university famous for its scientific courses. It was established in 1861 in Boston and moved in 1916 to Cambridge, close to Harvard University.

3. ***The Phantom Menace*:**《魅影危机》，由著名导演乔治·卢卡斯执导的《星球大战》系列影片中的第4部影片，又称《星战前传》。

   Also called *Star Wars Episode I*, it is the fourth film released in 1999 of the *Star Wars* series which is a very successful US science fantasy film directed by George Lucas. But this film ranks the first in the order of internal chronology of *Star War* series.