

● 大学英语拓展课程系列

拓展课程

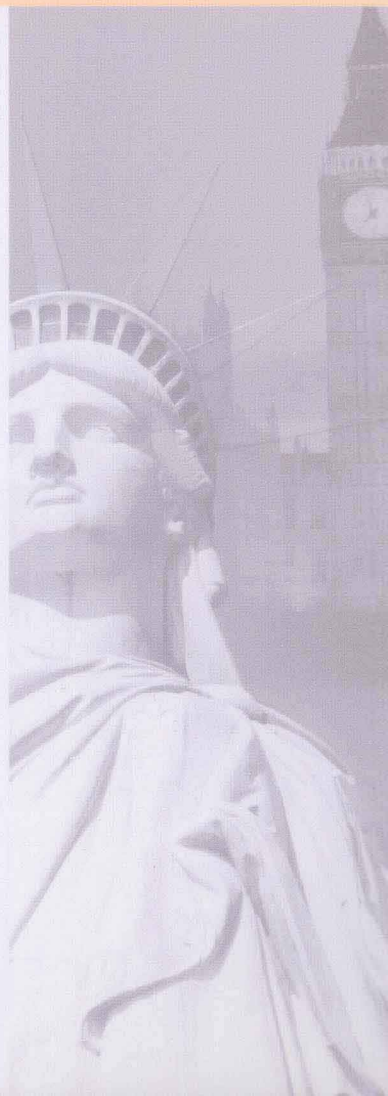


A Course of the Fundamentals of British and American Culture

英美文化基础教程

王恩铭 主编

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**A Course of the Fundamentals of
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英美文化基础教程

出版说明

教育部最新颁布的《大学英语课程教学要求》将大学英语的教学目标确定为“培养学生的英语综合应用能力,特别是听说能力,使他们在今后学习、工作和社会交往中能用英语有效地进行交际,同时增强其自主学习能力,提高综合文化素养,以适应我国社会发展和国际交流的需要”,并提出:“将综合英语类、语言技能类、语言应用类、语言文化类和专业英语类等必修课程和选修课程有机结合,确保不同层次的学生在英语应用能力方面得到充分的训练和提高。”《大学英语课程教学要求》明确要求大学英语教学中开设选修课,以满足大学生的实际需求。

依据《大学英语课程教学要求》,上海外语教育出版社邀请国内外英语教学专家开发编写了选修教材,通过教材的出版引领、促进了大学英语选修课程设置的发展,丰富了我国大学英语教学。这些教材品种丰富,涵盖面广,包括以下多个系列:大学英语应用提高阶段专业英语系列教材、大学英语综合应用能力选修课系列教材、职场英语选修教程系列、大学目标英语、牛津专业英语基础丛书等。这些年来,全国数百所高校使用了这些教材,部分老师对教材的内容和编写形式提出了宝贵的建议,为我们进一步完善教材提供了实践依据。

虽然很多高校多年来一直尝试开设选修课,专家学者也进行了理论研究,但目前此类课程在大学英语教学中所占比重并不大,仍处于探索阶段。多数教学专家对大学英语选修课程的具体教学目标和教学内容范围未形成统一认识,教育主管部门亦未出台具体的选修课教学要求。为了进一步推动大学英语选修课教学的发展,外教社在多年选修课教材使用情况调研的基础上,结合专家学者的最新研究成果和建议,充分考虑我国目前的大学英语教学现状、师资条件、实际需求等因素,重新策划编写了“大学英语拓展课程系列”,该系列教材包括EAP、ESP和EOP三个子系列。

- EAP (English for Academic Purposes)

学术英语类,侧重高级水平英语听、说、读、写、译等技能的培养,为大学生出国留学、攻读研究生、进行科研等学术活动打下更扎实的英语基础。此类课程包括:演讲听说、跨文化交际、文学赏析、学术英语写作等。适合需要继续在学术上深造的大学生使用。

- ESP (English for Specific Purposes)

专业英语类,侧重提升专业英语能力,在培养学生听、说、读、写、译等基本语言技能的基础上,教授与该专业相关的英语词汇和表达,并尽可能传授专业知识,以使大学生轻松通过英语媒介获取本专业知识和信息。此类课程适合相关专业学生学习,针对性强。

- EOP (English for Occupational Purposes)

职场英语类,侧重提升职场英语能力,为大学生将来在英语环境中工作打下扎实的职场交际基本功。此类课程多数适合所有大学生使用,有部分教程与专业结合,适合相应专业学生使用。

除了重新修订已出版的教材外,我们还通过邀请更多海内外英语教学专家参与编写、和国外出版社合作出版等方式,扩大本系列教材的选题规模,以满足各专业大学生的学习需求。本系列教材具有时代感强、实用性强、课堂可操作性强等特点,相信会给我国大学英语教学带来新风向。

Preface

Living in a “global village”, virtually every individual in modern society, young college students in particular, is expected, if not required, to be able to speak one or two foreign languages. Beyond that, globalization also demands that one should be able to communicate interculturally with people from outside his/her country, making understanding or appreciation of any culture or cultures increasingly important, indeed necessary, for any “global villager” to play a significant role in the world. In response to this changed and changing world, Chinese colleges and universities have recently made efforts to shift the focus in English language teaching from language-based skill training to a more culture-oriented approach, in the hope that college students will be not only proficient in English language, but also competent in intercultural communication.

In keeping with this shift of focus, we initiated our project in June 2012 and completed it in March 2013. The purpose of this project is twofold. One is to provide in this textbook readable, fluent and, hopefully, idiomatic English on the one hand, and to inform the users of this textbook of the fundamentals of British and American culture on the other hand. As indicated in the title of this textbook, it is intended to describe, discuss and occasionally analyze the basic fabrics of British and American political, social and cultural life, all defined in a broad sense. To this end, we took cautious measures in conceptualizing and designing the format and content of this textbook and, through judicious consultation and thought-through discussion, eventually came up with what is now presented to the users of it.

In executing the plan thus conceived, we adopted a multi-dimensional approach, giving priority to the social and cultural aspects of these two most important English-speaking countries, while at the same time paying due attention to other aspects of British and American life. Altogether, the textbook is composed of 16 chapters, 8 about Britain and 8 the United States. For each chapter, a uniform organizational structure is followed, which includes 10 items such as *Guided Reading, Learning Objectives, Project, New Words and Expressions, Text, Notes and Explanations, General Questions, Essay Questions, Quiz, and Reference Answers.*

They are structured in such a way to make it user-friendly, for teachers and students alike.

Like many other similar survey textbooks on Britain and America, this one also covers some of the basic topics about these two countries like geography, demography, politics and economy. However, our similarity may just end here, for a significant portion of our textbook is devoted to the discussion of such topics as religion, values, ethnic groups, and political principles. It is our belief that all of this offers us a key to the understanding of either Britain or the United States, for they are the ones that undergird the political, economic and social structure upon which these two countries are built.

To fulfill this “mission”, we followed the time-honored principle of “division of labor”, breaking our joint undertaking into two parts, with Wu Min, Chen Huilin, and Zhang Xinbin taking care of the British part, and Wang Enming and Wang Zhuo responsible for the American part. As a team, we have been working on many projects, bound together by our common commitment to the study of British and American culture as well as our friendship and collegueship. Needless to say, this is not going to be our last concerted effort, for we know full well that, as students of British and American culture, we still have tons of work to do in both teaching and research.

After all, as “global villagers”, we all need to be able to communicate and understand people of different cultures, all of which begins with language skills and cultural awareness, plus intercultural competence. With this in mind, we would like to invite the users of this textbook to join us in this endeavor to make our world a harmonious “global village”.

Any comment or criticism about the textbook in any form will be greatly appreciated.

Wang Enming
American Studies Center
College of English Literature and Language
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“大学英语拓展课程系列” 精选

EAP 学术英语类

演讲听说	大学英语演讲基础教程
	全新大学英语视听说教程（上、下）
读 写	大学英语人文素质阅读教程
	英语段落写作
文学文化	二十世纪美国小说赏析
	跨文化交际技巧
	中国文化英语阅读教程
	英美文化基础教程

ESP 专业英语类

商务经贸	流畅商务英语听说教程-决战危机
	流畅商务英语听说教程-破解迷局
	流畅商务英语听说教程-成功运营
	跨文化商务沟通案例教程
	国际经贸组织
	金融英语综合阅读
	牛津商务英语图示教程
	经济学专业英语基础
	经贸英语趣闻阅读
农 科	农科英语趣闻阅读
医 学	医学英语教程-社会医学
	新世纪医学英语教程-生物医学
	新世纪中医英语教程（上、下）
	医学英语趣闻阅读
文 科	新世纪文科英语教程（1、2）
理 工	新世纪理工英语（共9种）
美 术	美术英语教程（上、下）
其 他	牛津专业英语基础丛书（共8种）

EOP 职场英语类

成功职场英语
成功商务职场英语
理工职场英语
人文职场英语

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The United Kingdom





Chapter 1

The Country

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the geographical and physical features of the United Kingdom.
2. Know the characteristics of the climate and weather of the country.
3. Have an idea of what the four components of the UK are.

Project

What information about the UK can be inferred from its full name? Of the four components of the UK, which one is the largest and the most important one? And why?

Guided Reading

英国, 全称大不列颠及北爱尔兰联合王国(The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), 由英格兰、苏格兰、威尔士和北爱尔兰四个部分构成。由于英格兰在各地区中人口最多, 经济最发达, 又是首都伦敦所在地, 人们常常非正式地以英格兰来代表整个“联合王国”。“英国”这一中文翻译正来源于此。在英文中, 英国常常被简称为The United Kingdom (The UK), Great Britain或者Britain。需要指出的是, Great Britain从严格意义上讲其实是一个地理名词, 指称的是大不列颠岛, 包括英格兰、苏格兰和威尔士三个地区。

英国国土面积24.3万平方公里, 是一个位于欧洲西部的岛国, 由大不列颠岛(包括英格兰、苏格兰、威尔士)、爱尔兰岛东北部和一些小岛组成。隔北海、多佛尔海峡和英吉利海峡, 英国与欧洲大陆相望, 其陆界与爱尔兰共和国接壤。英国南北最长不到1,000公里, 东西最宽不超过500公里。

英国领土的大部分地形崎岖不平, 有很多山地和丘陵。大不列颠岛尽管面积很小, 但是仍然可以根据地形划分为两个区域: 高地区, 即西北的丘陵山区地带; 低地区, 即东南部起伏的平原地带。

英国属海洋性温带阔叶林气候, 终年温和湿润。通常最高气温不超过32°C, 最低气温不低于-10°C。虽然气候温和, 但是英国的天气却总是变化无常, 英国人见面寒暄时也总少不了天气这个话题。

英国的大小河流不计其数, 境内主要河流有塞文河(354公里)和泰晤士河(346公里), 最大的湖泊是位于北爱尔兰的内伊湖, 面积392平方公里。

无论是以地理还是以行政区划分, 英国都可以被分为英格兰、威尔士、苏格兰和北爱尔兰四部分。在四个地区中, 英格兰面积最大, 人口最集中, 经济最发达, 作为全国政治、经济、文化中心的首都伦敦就在英格兰境内。苏格兰位于大不列颠岛北部, 南临英格兰。该地区还包含周围许多小岛, 是英国面积第二大地区。苏格兰境内地形丰富多样, 高山峡谷遍布。首府爱丁堡(Edinburgh)是著名的旅游城市, 以其古老的建筑特色和独特的苏格兰风情吸引着来自世界各地的游客。威尔士与英格兰西南接壤, 面积只有2万多平方公里, 多为山区丘陵地势。首府加的夫(Cardiff)是重要的工业和港口城市。北爱尔兰位于爱尔兰岛的北部, 南与爱尔兰共和国接壤, 东与大不列颠岛隔海相望, 是四个地区中面积最小的。工业区和大城市多集中在沿海地区, 包括首府贝尔法斯特(Belfast)。

New Words and Expressions

Great Britain	大不列颠	Lake District	(英格兰)湖区
Northern Ireland	北爱尔兰	tourist destination	旅游胜地
European Continent	欧洲大陆	latitude	纬度
English Channel	英吉利海峡	determining factor	决定性因素
the Republic of Ireland	爱尔兰共和国	moist	湿润的, 潮湿的
territory	领土, 领地	drift	水流
archipelago	群岛, 列岛	temperate	(气候)温和的
landscape	(陆上)风景, 地貌	maritime	(气候)海洋性的
highland	高地, 高原(地区)	unpredictable	不可预测的
lowland	低地	topography	地形, 地貌, 地势
the Severn	塞文河	offshore	离开海岸的, 近海的
the Thames	泰晤士河	metropolitan	大都会的, 大都市的
drain	排出, (使)流出	coastline	海岸线
Lough Neagh	内伊河		

Text

Physical Features

The official name of the UK is the “United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland”. Great Britain is the island that consists of England, Scotland and Wales, while Northern Ireland is physically separate but is part of the union with Great Britain. However, while the term “United Kingdom” is used on formal occasions such as government conferences and diplomatic dealings, in everyday conversation the term “Britain” is a widely accepted name for the nation. It is, however, noteworthy that it is incorrect to use the term “England” to refer to the whole country, as it might be offensive to people from Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, which are all equally integral parts of the United Kingdom.

The most notable geographical fact about the UK is that it is an island state. Situated north-west of the European Continent between

the Atlantic Ocean and the North Sea, the UK is separated from the northwest coast of France by the English Channel. The only land border connecting the UK to another country is between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. In terms of its territory, the United Kingdom is made up of Great Britain, Northern Ireland, and numerous smaller islands including the Isle of Wight, Anglesey, and the Scilly, Orkney, Shetland, and Hebridean archipelagos.

The United Kingdom is a small nation in physical size. With an area of about 243,000 square kilometers, the UK is about 1,000 kilometers from the south coast to the extreme north and less than 500 kilometers from east to west at the widest point. Due to its small size, no one in the UK actually lives more than 120 kilometers from the sea. And because of the same reason, there is no extreme of distance, size, height, length, or climate in this country. It has no great mountain chains, no great rivers, no large lakes, and no sweeping forests.

At the same time, though, the UK is notable for the variety of its landscapes, from flatlands to hills and mountains. Such variety is the product of a combination of geological and climatic change over time, and of centuries of human activity. In fact, Britain boasts of having one of the richest and most diverse sets of geological features of any country in the world: examples of most of the different types of rock, soils, mineral and land forms found elsewhere in the world can be found somewhere here in the UK.

Topographically, Great Britain can be divided into two major natural regions – a highland zone and a lowland zone. The highland zone is a region of high hills and mountains in the north and west that are frequently broken by valleys and plains, which includes Scotland, Wales and parts of England. The lowland zone, which lies in the south and east of Great Britain and occupies most of England, consists mostly of rolling plains broken up by chains of low hills.

There are many rivers and lakes in Britain. But due to the small size of the country itself, the rivers are never very long, nor are the lakes impressively large. The longest river, the Severn, is

just 354 kilometers in length. However, it is the second largest river that enjoys the greatest significance in Britain – the Thames. It flows through Oxford and London and drains rainfall from large areas of central England along the Trent and Mersey rivers. The largest lake in Britain, Lough Neagh, is found in Northern Ireland, covering an area of 392 square kilometers. But most of the large lakes in the country are located in the deep valleys of the upland areas of Scotland, north England and north Wales. Among them, Lake District, located in northwest England and comprising 15 major beautiful lakes, has become a popular tourist destination in the country, mainly because of its association with the Lake Poets from the 19th century.

Climate

Judging from its geographical location, that is, between latitudes 49°N and 59°N, the foreigners may get the wrong impression that the climate of the UK is featured by extremely cold winter days. However, it is important to know that latitude is not the only determining factor for the climate. Thanks to the fact that the country is actually made up of islands, and the fact that its climate is mainly influenced by the moist and mild westerly wind from the Atlantic Ocean and the warm drift of the Gulf Stream around the land, the UK overall enjoys a temperate maritime climate.

The maritime influence means that the UK climate is mild with temperatures rarely lower than 0°C in winter or higher than 32°C in summer. January temperatures are generally in the range of 3–5°C and July temperatures are in the range of 11–16°C. It also means that there is abundant rainfall, with more than 1,600 mm in the mountainous areas of the north and west but less than 800 mm over central and eastern parts. Rainfall is usually well distributed throughout the year, and tends to be soft and steady rather than sharp and heavy, with few major storms. One of the results is the characteristic lush greenery of the British landscape, which usually

lasts throughout the summer and the winter.

However, it is important to understand that moderate climate does not equal fine weather. As a matter of fact, although Britain enjoys the cool and wet summers and the mild and snowless winters, it is notorious for its changeable and unpredictable weather. Sunshine can turn to rain and back again in a day, and even under an hour in Scotland. Statistically at any time of the year, it might be a 40 percent of sunshine on any day; a 25 percent chance of rain; 10 percent of days will be windy, while the temperature can fall anywhere within a range of 15°C depending on the time of year. And it is not surprising to experience all of the above conditions in one day. Such unpredictability has actually contributed to the distinctive British way of small talk – discussing, or rather, complaining about the weather. As a matter of fact, weather is such a frequent topic of the British daily conversation that the English language learners have to learn at least some expressions related to that topic in order to “survive” in the UK.

Moreover, due to global warming, it is also a fact that Britain has experienced more and more extreme weather in recent years. Take the year 2000 for example, it began with the sunniest winter in England and Wales since 1909, followed by the wettest April since 1766. Parts of Scotland and Northern Ireland then had the driest July since 1929, before October saw rainfall records broken throughout the country. The fall turned out to be the wettest for England and Wales since records began, continuing into the spring of 2001. More than that, in both 2005 and 2006 there were long spells of hot weather with little rain, leaving large parts of Britain dry and parched. And 2006 turned out to have the highest average temperatures since records began in 1914.

Components

The UK is made up of four different regions, both geographically and politically, that are not independent nations.