

高等学校英语专业系列教材
Textbook Series for Tertiary English Majors



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A Survey of Major English-Speaking Countries

主要英语国家概况

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重庆大学出版社

内容简介

《主要英语国家概况》为《求知高等学校英语专业系列教材》之一。本书以英美两国的历史、文化为主,并简单介绍加拿大、澳大利亚和新西兰的历史及现状。全书共 31 章,每章开头列出了关键词,提纲挈领,章节末设有思考题,让学生在练习中进一步掌握全书脉络,温故而知新。每章最后还安排有补充阅读材料,并提供了进一步检索资料的网址,以培养学生的自学能力,同时激发学生深入学习的兴趣。本书的独到之处在于,采用了最新资讯编写,层次分明,详略得当,重点突出,并附有相关图片,让学生更好地理解各国的文化渊源和发展现状。

本书既可供英语专业学生使用,又可作为英语中高级读物,供具有一定基础的英语自学者和英语爱好者使用。

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前摇言

语言是文化的载体。对于语言学习者来说,了解所学语言使用国的历史、政治、文化和经济是十分重要的。本人讲授概况课多年,深感需要一部内容丰富资料详实的教材,所以编著本书。本书以英美两国的历史文化为主,并简单介绍加拿大、澳大利亚和新西兰的历史及现状。要了解一个国家的现状,必须了解其过去,所以本书不但介绍各国的现状,也比较详细地介绍了英美的历史及发展。本书的各部分均采用了最新资料,本书所用图片大都出自 Microsoft 的 Encarta Reference Library 2002, 我们对此表示感谢。

本书共有 31 章,每一章开头列出关键词,后面附有思考题供学生复习。各章后还附有补充阅读材料,并提供进一步检索资料的网址,以培养学生的自学能力。本书设计为一学年使用的教材。第一学期介绍英国和加拿大,第二学期介绍美国、澳大利亚和新西兰。每学期留出两周时间进行讨论和复习。教师可以根据自己的学时安排随意组合。

本书编写分工如下:云南大学外语学院英语系张文力教授参加编写了第1~6章、第14章、第28章和第30章;杨素珍副教授参加编写了第16~21章,并制作了全书索引;本人编写了其余章节并对全书进行统稿。

因时间仓促,经验有限,本书中错误之处在所难免,欢迎读者、专家、同行指正。

周宝娣

2004 年 6 月 30 日

总 序

进入 21 世纪,我国高等教育呈现快速扩展的趋势。为适应社会、经济的快速发展,人才的培养问题已经比我国任何一个历史时期都显得更为重要。当今,人才的能力和素质的衡量越来越多地采用国际标准,人才的外语水平自然地也越来越受到培养单位和用人单位的重视,由此引发了对大学外语教学模式、教材和检测机制的新一轮讨论,掀起了新一轮的大学英语教学改革。作为外语师资队伍和外语专业人才培养的高等学校英语专业,相比之下,在教学改革思路、新教材开发和新教学模式探讨等诸方面均显得滞后。尽管高等学校外语专业教学指导委员会英语组针对当前高校发展的新形式和外语专业人才培养的新规格、新模式和新要求,修订出了新的《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》,并结合 21 世纪外语人才培养和需求的新形势,制定了由教育部高等教育司转发的《关于外语专业面向 21 世纪本科教育改革的若干意见》,就英语专业的建设提出了指导性的意见,但在实际工作中这两个文件的精神尚未落实。

为此,重庆大学出版社和外语教学界的专家们就国内高等学校英语专业建设所面临的新形势作了专题讨论。专家们认为,把“大纲”的设计和“若干意见”的思想和理念变为现实的一个最直接的体现方式,就是编写一套全新理念的英语专业系列教材。随着我国教育体制的改革,特别是基础教育课程标准的实施,适合高等学校英语专业教学需要的教材也应作相应的调整,以应对中小学英语教学改革的新要求。高等学校学生入学时英语水平的逐年提高和就业市场对外语人才需求呈多元化趋势的实际,对高等学校英语专业的人才培养、教学模式、课程设置、教材建设等方面也提出了严峻挑战,应对这些挑战,同样可以通过一套新的教材体系来实现。

迄今为止,国内尚无一套完整的、系统的英语专业系列教材。目前已有的教材出自不同的出版社,编写的思路和体例不尽相同。现有的教材因出版时间较早,内容、知识结构、教学方法和手段已经不能适应新的发展要求。传统的教材设计多数基于学科的内在逻辑和系统性,较少考虑学习者的全面发展和社会对人才需求的多元化。

自 2001 年开始,在重庆大学出版社的大力支持下,我们成立了由华中、华南、西南和西北地区的知名专家、学者和教学一线教师组成的《求知高等学校英语专业系列教材》编写组,确定了系列教材编写的指导思想和总体目标,即以《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》为依据,将社会的需求与培养外语人才的全面发展紧密结合,注重英语作为一个专业的学科系统性和科学性,注重英语教学和习得的方法与规律,突出特色和系列教材的内在逻辑关系,反映当前教学改革的新理念并具有前瞻性。锤炼精品,建立与英语专业课程配套的新教材体系,推动英语专业的教学改革,培养高素质人才和创新人才。



系列教材力求在以下方面有所突破和创新：

第一,教材的整体性。系列教材在课程类型上分为专业技能必修课程、专业知识必修课程、专业技能选修课程、专业知识选修课程和相关专业知识课程等多个板块。在考虑每一种教材针对相应课程的特性和特色的同时,又考虑到系列教材间相互的支撑性。

第二,学生基本技能和实际应用能力的培养。在课程的设计上充分考虑英语作为一个专业来培养学生的基础和基本技能,也充分考虑到英语专业学生应该具备的专业语言、文学和文化素养。同时,教材的设计兼顾到社会需求中对英语专业学生所强调的实际应用能力的培养,除考虑课程和英语专业的培养目的,课程或课程体系应该呈现的学科基本知识和规范外,充分考虑到教材另一方面的功用,即学生通过教材接触真实的语言环境,了解社会,了解文化背景,丰富学生的实践经验。在教材编写中突出强调“enable”,让学习者在实践中学习语言、文学、文化和其他相关知识,更多地强调学习的过程,强调学生的参与,以此提高学生的实际应用技能。

第三,学生的全面发展。对高等学校英语专业学生而言,英语不仅是一门工具,更重要的是一个培养学生人文素质和跨文化意识的学科专业。系列教材强调合作性学习、探索性学习,培养学生的自主学习性,加强学习策略的指导。通过基础阶段课程的学习,使学生在语言知识、语言技能、文化意识、情感态度和学习策略等方面得到整体发展。在高级阶段则更多地注重学生的人文精神、专业理论素养、中外文学及文化修养的培养。

第四,教材的开放性。一套好的教材不应该对课堂教学、老师的施教和学生的学习拓展有所制约,应给使用教材的教师和学生留有一定的空间,要让学生感到外语学习是一件愉快的事,通过学习让人思考,给人以自信,引导人走向成功。系列教材的总体设计既考虑严密的学科系统性,也考虑独具特色的开放性。不同地区、不同类型的学校,可以根据自己的生源和培养目标灵活地取舍、选用、组合教材,尤其是结合国内高等学校中正在探讨的学分制,给教与学一个多维度的课程体系。

我们希望通过这套系列教材,来推动高等学校英语专业教学改革,探讨新的教学理念、模式,为英语专业人才的培养探索新的路子,为英语专业的学生拓展求知的空间。

《求知高等学校英语专业系列教材》编委会

20004 年 8 月



The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland





C CHAPTER 1

Land and People

the Union Jack, the British Isles, Great Britain, dependent territory, Highlands, Lowlands, North Atlantic Drift, Mayday, natural resources, Anglo-Saxons, Old English, Middle English, Received Standard English

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, commonly known as the United Kingdom, Great Britain, or Britain, is an island country that lies northwest of the European Continent across the English Channel. Its national capital is London, a city on the River Thames. Its national flag is called the Union Jack, so called because Great Britain is historically a “union of nations”. The national flag combines the flags of three of the four parts that form the union : the red cross represents England; the white saltire stands for Northern Scotland, and the red saltire stands for Northern Ireland. “God Save the Queen” is the national anthem of Great Britain.

1

Topography

The United Kingdom, with a total territory of 244, 110 square kilometers, is made up of many islands of the British Isles off the Northwest coast of Europe. The two main islands of the British Isles are Great Britain and Ireland. Great Britain, with a total area of about 223, 000 square kilometers, makes up more than 90 percent of the country’s territory. That’s why the United Kingdom is also known as Great Britain. The island of Ireland is divided into two parts : the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The Republic of Ireland is an independent country, while Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom.

According to archeologists, Great Britain was originally part of the



European continent about 9, 000 years ago. At that time, the English Channel did not exist and the River Rhine in France was connected to the River Thames by its branch. Later, Great Britain was washed off by sea water and became an Island.



River Thames

Great Britain is geographically and historically divided into three parts : England in the south with an area of about 130,000 square kilometers; Scotland to the north of England, and Wales to the west of England. England is the most populous and the wealthiest part of the country, so people sometimes refer to the whole country as England, a name which people in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland do not like very much.

In addition to Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom has many small islands such as the Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands off the northern coast of Scotland, Hebrides off the western coast of Scotland, Anglesey to the northwest of Wales, and the Isle of Wight in the English Channel.

Great Britain is located between 50° and 60° north latitude and 20° east longitude and 10° west longitude, with the meridian line running through London. Apart from Ireland which borders Northern Ireland, no other country shares border lines with Great Britain. But to the north of the British Isles



there are sea routes leading to Iceland and Norway. Across the North Sea, Britain faces Germany, Denmark, Holland, and Norway. And to the southeast across the English Channel, it faces France, its second closest neighbor after Ireland. To the south and across the Atlantic Ocean and the Bay of Biscay are Spain and Portugal. The United States and Canada are on the west side of the Atlantic Ocean.

The United Kingdom has a long coast line of 12,429 kilometers. In the south, it is separated from continental Europe by the English Channel. The English Channel is only 34 kilometers wide at the Strait of Dover in the east where it meets the North Sea. The North Sea surrounds the United Kingdom in the east. In the west, the country has the Atlantic Ocean and the Irish Sea as its border. The North Channel, which is only about 20 kilometers wide at one point, separates Northern Ireland from Scotland. Great Britain is about 500 kilometers from the east to the west at the widest point, and less than 1,000 kilometers from the north to the south. No place in the United Kingdom is more than 125 kilometers from the sea.

The United Kingdom has many dependent territories such as Gibraltar, the Falkland Islands, the British Virgin Islands, and Bermuda. The dependencies are the remnants of imperial Britain. They are usually small in territory and are scattered all over the world. The dependencies are not technically part of the United Kingdom, but they have maintained a special relationship with the British government. They are largely self-governed, but the British monarch appoints a governor for each territory who is responsible for external policy and internal security. There are



Map of UK



disputes over the sovereignty of some of these territories such as Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands. Gibraltar is at the southern tip of the Iberian Peninsula. It controls the western entrance to the Mediterranean Sea. The Spanish government also claimed sovereignty over the territory. The Falkland Islands lie in the South Atlantic Ocean, east of the Strait of Magellan and northeast of the southern tip of South America. Argentina also claimed the islands. A battle was fought in 1982 over the sovereignty of these islands, ending in the defeat of Argentina. Now, significant petroleum and natural gas reserves are found in the Falkland's territorial waters.

Geographically, Great Britain is divided into two parts: the Highland Zone in the north and the Lowland Zone in the south. The Highland Zone includes the Highlands of Scotland, the Central Lowlands of Scotland, the Southern Uplands, the Pennines, and the Lake District of Cumbria.

The Highlands of Scotland include chains of great mountains in northern Scotland. Many of these mountains are very old, so that they have been weathered down by time to become plateaus. This region contains the country's highest mountain Ben Nevis which is 1,343 meters high. As the land here is too hilly and barren to grow crops, it is mostly used for grazing animals. This region is one of the least populated areas of Great Britain.

The Central Lowlands of Scotland are valley areas that lie to the south of the Highlands. The valley was once lush with swamp forests which later turned into coalfields. This region is the most important part of Scotland, as most of the industrial centers, farmland and three quarters of the population of Scotland are all located here.

The Southern Uplands of Scotland are located right to the south of the Central Lowlands. They are composed of remains of what used to be great mountain ranges that run from the southwest to the northeast of Scotland. This area features expansive moorland and woodland.

The Pennines start on the border of England and Scotland and run about 120 kilometers south to central England. Partly because of their length and partly their elevation, they are often referred to as the "Backbone of England." Like the Southern Uplands, the Pennines are mostly moorland.



The Lake District of Cambria is located on the west side of the Pennines. This region claims the most spectacular view in Great Britain. A group of poets in the 19th century often went there to get inspirations. So people call them the Lake Poets.

The Lowland Zone, in contrast, contains large areas of flat land in the southern and eastern parts of England. Most of the region is less than 250 meters above sea level. It comprises such areas as the Midlands of England, the Plain of Lancastria, and the North Eastern Lowlands.

The Midlands of England surround the southern end of the Pennines on three sides. North Eastern Lowlands is the area on the eastern side of the Pennines. Together with the Plain of Lancastria on the west of the Pennines, it forms a broad Lowland Belt that has the most fertile soil and therefore is the most suitable for agriculture.

Northern Ireland is full of rugged mountain scenery. This region is a lot lower in elevation than the Scottish uplands. The outpouring of basaltic lava in old time has turned the land into a huge plateau. Lake Lough Neagh, with 396 square kilometers, is the largest freshwater lake in the British Isles.

Great Britain is a country of many rivers and lakes, but none of them are very large. The longest river in the country is River Severn which is 355 kilometers long. Second to it is the 332 kilometer Thames, which is the main river in Southeast England. It has many tributaries, so that the total drainage area of the Thames amounts to nearly 7,000 square kilometers. It is well known to the world because it flows through London before it empties into the North Sea. Other important rivers that drain into the North Sea include the Trent, the Humber, the Tyne and the Tees. In the northwest of England, the Eden and Mersey are important rivers that flow westward into the Atlantic. In addition, there are also a number of rivers that flow into the English Channel, especially rivers from the Northern Ireland. These rivers are generally very short, except the Erne, the Foyle and the Bann.



2

Climate

The United Kingdom is in the northern temperate zone. Although its latitude is as far north as that of Siberia, the United Kingdom enjoys a very mild climate due to the North Atlantic Drift which is a continuation of a warm current that flows from the Straits of Florida in a generally northeastern direction. It flows past Britain and the various rivers carry the warm water inland. This makes the climate warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer than countries at the same latitude.

Generally speaking, it is colder in the north than in the south and the western coast tends to be warmer than the east. The hottest months are from June to August. In these three months the days are very long, with the sun rising at 4 00 a. m. and setting at about 8 00 p.m. Even at about 10 00 p.m. there is still twilight. Summer temperature is usually around 20益, with the highest not exceeding 32益. Autumn, like other regions in the world, is a season of harvest.

The coldest months in the country are from December to February. The average daily low temperature in January is around 0益 and seldom gets below 原0益 even in northern Scotland. There is sometimes snow in England, but not to the amount that it can gather on the ground. In the Highlands of Scotland, snow can be heavy enough for sports lovers to go skiing.

Spring includes March, April and May. The first day of May is a grand festival in England. Also called May Day but having nothing to do with labor, this day sees people going out from their homes to pick Mayflowers for decoration of their homes and enjoy themselves by dancing around May poles in daytime and bonfires at night.

Great Britain has plenty of rainfall because winds blowing off the Atlantic Ocean bring clouds and large amounts of moisture to the British Isles. Britain enjoys an average annual precipitation of more than 1,000mm, which makes the country unusually green. On the whole, the east and south with an annual precipitation of less than 800mm is drier than the north and west which has an



annual rainfall of more than 1,600mm. Generally speaking, the driest time of the year is March to June, but it rains all year round in the west. Great Britain has changeable weather. It is hard to predict the weather even by the most experienced meteorologist. So, weather becomes a frequent topic of discussion among people.

3

Natural Resources

Compared with other European nations, the United Kingdom is the most richly endowed with some major natural resources for industry, especially energy resources such as coal, oil and gas. Rich deposit of oil and gas was found in the North Sea off the eastern coast of Great Britain in 1969. Today, England is the eighth largest producer of crude oil and natural gas liquid in the world. It is a net exporter of oil products. The country is also self-sufficient in non-metallic minerals like sand, gravel, chalk, limestone, salt, slate, and china clay. It also had a small deposit of iron ore in the past which was close to the coal deposit. This factor played a very important role in Britain's Industrial Revolution. However, the iron ore, like other metallic minerals, has almost been exhausted and the country has to import iron and other metallic minerals such as tin and copper today.

Because of the abundance of rainfall and mild climate, Britain has an ideal environment for all kinds of plant to grow and the country is unusually green. The country was once densely covered by trees, but now only about 10% of the land is still covered by trees, the lowest rate of forest coverage among European nations.

4

People

According to 2003 estimate, the United Kingdom has now a population of about 60 million, of whom over 80% live in England, especially around London and the Thames estuary areas. The rest are distributed in Scotland (over 5 million), Wales (around 3 million) and Northern Ireland (close to 1.7 million).



The majority of this population are decedents of the Anglo鄢axons, a term referring to the three groups of Germanic people from Europe who went to England between the 5th and the 7th centuries : the Angles, Saxons, and the Jutes. These people tend to be tall, have blond hair and blue eyes. Their language became the official language of the country. These people settled in England and drove the native Celtic people there to the mountainous areas in Wales and Scotland.

Today, most people in Wales and Scotland are decedents of the Celtic people who were the earliest known inhabitants of Great Britain. The Irish people were also Celtic in origin. In spite of the fact that English is today the official language for the whole country, some of these people still adhere to their old mother tongues that are derived from the Celtic language that was popular throughout Europe in ancient times. Even when they do speak English, they speak it in their own ways, like Irish English, Welsh English or Scottish English.

Besides these early groups from Europe, the United Kingdom also has a considerable number of Italians, Greeks, Australians, and New Zealander who have settled in the country as permanent residents.

In addition, Britain also has a considerable number of immigrants from Africa and Asia. Most of them are from former colonies of the British Empire, such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Caribbean Islands, and countries in Africa. These immigrants tend to live in relatively compact communities in big cities of England like London, Manchester, Leicester, West Yorkshire and Birmingham. The Pakistanis, for instance, are mostly found in West Yorkshire and Manchester, while about 80% of the Africans live in the Greater London area. Since the 1970s, Britain has admitted tens of thousands of refugees from African countries like Uganda, Somalia and Southeast Asia countries like Vietnam and Afghanistan. Like everywhere else in the world, there are also Chinese living in Britain. In 1998, their number reached about 170, 000, about one third of them living in London. Most of them are from Hong Kong.

All these immigrants have made the United Kingdom one of the most culturally divers countries in Europe. This is especially true of its urban areas. In London, for instance, it is estimated that about 160 languages and dialects



are spoken, including the languages that are spoken by international students who come to London not as residents but just for academic studies.

Britain's immigration policy has become more flexible in recent years, making it possible for more people from various countries to work and settle in the island. Now, every year, a lot more people than before immigrate to the United Kingdom.



The English Language

The official language of the United Kingdom is English. The word English means the language of the Angles, one of the three groups which went to England between the 5th century and the 7th century. However, today's English is very different from the English of the 7th century. The English language has changed a lot in the 1,300 years after the speakers went to their new home which they named England, meaning the land of the Angles.

The development of the English language can be divided into three periods : Old English, Middle English, and Modern English. Old English refers to the language used in England until the Normans invaded England in 1066. During that period, the English language, as a branch of West Germanic language, was an inflected language. It had strong and weak forms of verbs. Its nouns and adjectives had cases and genders. Word order was not very important in the meaning of the sentences. During this period, a number of Latin words came into the vocabulary as the English people were converted to Christianity. Some Danish words also came into the English vocabulary because of the Danish invasion of England in the 9th century. Great changes took place in the language during the Middle English period from 1066 to the end of the 15th century. In the early part of this period, French replaced English as the official language in England. It was not until the 14th century when English again became the official language of the country because England was in the middle of wars against France and the English king and the nobility lost their land holdings in France and finally regarded England as their home.

Great changes took place during this period as the language was only used



in spoken form by the lower class people. One interesting phenomenon was that the animals began to have different names from their meat because they were tendered by people who spoke English and so kept their English names, while the meat gained French names when it was served to French-speaking masters, such as pork and pig, mutton and sheep, and beef and cattle. In addition, large numbers of French words came into the English vocabulary when the nobility began to speak English, especially words related to government, church, and fashion, etc. The forms of the nouns and adjectives also became simpler. By the end of the period, word order became important in understanding the meaning of a sentence.

The Great Vowel Shift in the 15th and 16th centuries marked the transition of Middle English to Modern English. It changed the pronunciation of 18 to 20 distinctive vowels while spelling remained unchanged. Changes continued during the Modern English period in the process of dropping inflections. But the biggest change was in the vocabulary which became enriched by the Renaissance and Reformation when Greek and Latin words came into the English vocabulary in large numbers. Colonization and new invention also introduced new words into the vocabulary.

The English language has a large number of dialects. But in the 20th century, the educated people began to develop a class dialect known as the Received Standard English based on the language used at Eton, Oxford and Cambridge. This became wide spread because the public media such as the British Broadcasting Corporation adopted it. However, regional dialects still exist today.



QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

1. What is the topography like in Great Britain?
2. Why is the climate in Great Britain so mild?
3. Does England have rich natural resources?
4. Who are the English people?
5. What is English and what changes has it experienced?



SUPPLEMENTARY READING

The following are the words of the British National Anthem. Both the words and the tune are anonymous. The song was first performed in 1745 and became known as the national anthem in the beginning of the 19th century. On official occasions, only the first verse is sung. You can listen to the anthem at the following website : <http://www.shakespeare.org/english/anthem.html>.

God save our gracious Queen,
Long live our noble Queen,
God save the Queen!
Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the Queen!

O Lord God arise,
Scatter our enemies,
And make them fall!
Confound their knavish tricks,
Confuse their politics,
On you our hopes we fix,
God save the Queen!

Not in this land alone,
But be God's mercies known,
From shore to shore!
Lord makes the nations see
That men shall brothers be,
And form one family,
The wide world over
From every latent foe,