



大学生公共基础课创新型精品教材

新素养 大学英语

主 编 邓安安

综合教程

AN INTEGRATED COURSE

(第一册)



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新素养大学英语综合教程（第一册）

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Unit 1

Language



Part I Warm-Up



1 Quotations Related to the Topic

语言是人类交流思想的工具、传承文明的载体、增进理解的桥梁。中文承载着中华民族数千年的文明智慧，是中国贡献给世界的重要公共文化产品，支持服务国际社会开展好中文教育是中国作为母语国的责任。……国际中文教育广受欢迎，彰显了开放包容的魅力，展现了互学互鉴的价值，体现着合作共赢的精神，凝结着中外人士共同的心血。

——来自习近平向 2024 世界中文大会致贺信

Language is a tool for human beings to exchange thoughts, a carrier for inheriting civilization, and a bridge for enhancing understanding. The Chinese language, which encapsulates the millennia-old wisdom of the Chinese civilization, is an important public cultural product that China has contributed to the world. China's responsibility as the native-language country is to support and facilitate the international community in conducting Chinese language education... International Chinese education is widely popular, demonstrating the charm of openness and inclusiveness, showcasing the value of mutual learning and appreciation, embodying the spirit of win-win cooperation, and crystallizing the shared efforts of people from China and abroad. (From President Xi Jinping's Congratulatory Letter to the 2024 World Chinese Language Conference)

2 Watch and Learn



ShaoLan Hsueh is convinced that Chinese is a lot easier than most people think and her goal is to get beginners a basic knowledge of 1,000 or so characters quickly. She's shooting for something in between and hoping the "network effect" will guide students from there. In a video demonstration, ShaoLan demonstrates how easily rudimentary sentences can come together using the tiles as building blocks. Her approach, referred to as "Chineasy", emphasizes the pluses of the language for an outsider: there is no grammar, no tense, no "he or she" gender and no hard-and-fast ordering of words in a sentence.



Part II In-Depth Reading

Read the passage, and complete the tasks that follow.

Text A



Putonghua and Chinese Dialects

By Emily Wang

- 1 China is a great country with the world's largest population. It is also a country with multiple **ethnic groups**. The language **landscape** in China is quite **complex**. The **majority** of the population belongs to the Han ethnic group, which makes up a significant **portion** of the Chinese population, 91.11%. The languages spoken by the Han people differ from those spoken by the other 55 minority groups.

ethnic groups 民族群体

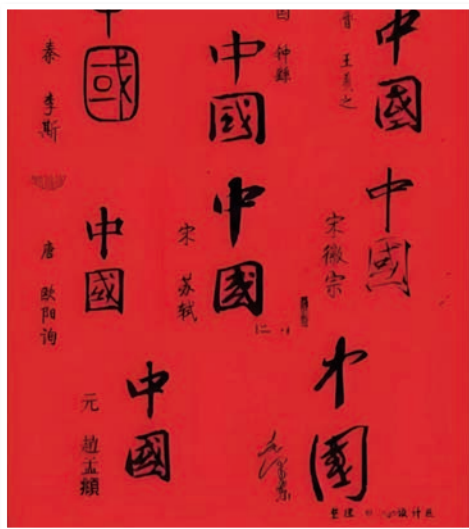
landscape *n.* 景观, 情形

complex *adj.* 复杂的

majority *n.* 大多数

portion *n.* 部分

2 In fact, there are approximately 80 dialects in China, each with its own **unique** characteristics. Some famous ones include Cantonese, Hokkien (闽南话), Hakka (客家话), Sichuan **dialect**, Shanghai dialect, and East-Northern dialect.



These dialects can be quite different. That is why there is the saying “老乡见老乡，两眼泪汪汪”，which means “When **fellow** villagers meet fellow villagers, tears fill their eyes.”

3 How do people communicate with one another? That’s where the official language comes into play: Standard Chinese, also known as Putonghua. You might often hear it referred to as Mandarin or simply Chinese. This standardized language allows people from different regions to communicate and understand each other.

4 The **pronunciation** of Putonghua is based on the Beijing dialect, its vocabulary on the northern Mandarin, and its grammar is based on modern written vernacular Chinese. It serves as the standard form of spoken and written Chinese across the country.

5 **Unifying** the language is not an easy thing. It takes quite an effort to **promote** Putonghua. In 1955, the Chinese government officially **defined** Putonghua as the national standard language. This **marked** the beginning of efforts to promote a unified language across the country, aimed at reducing communication **barriers** among various dialects. The *Chinese Pinyin Scheme* was passed in 1958, laying the **groundwork** for the systematic promotion of Putonghua in education and public life. In 1998, the first National Putonghua Week was **confirmed**. Two years later, the *Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Standard Spoken and Written Chinese Language* was **promulgated**, officially establishing Putonghua (Standard Mandarin) as the national standard language in China.

unique *adj.* 独特的

dialect *n.* 方言

fellow *n.* 同事；同辈

pronunciation *n.* 发音

unify *v.* 统一

promote *v.* 促进

define *v.* 定义

mark *v.* 标志

barrier *n.* 障碍

groundwork *n.* 基础工作

confirm *v.* 确认

promulgate *v.* 颁布

- 6 Putonghua, or Mandarin Chinese, is not only spoken in Chinese mainland but also **serves** as the official language in regions such as Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, and Singapore. Additionally, Mandarin Chinese is spoken in various countries and regions across East and Southeast Asia, including Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Burma, Thailand, and more.
- 7 It's important to **note** that Mandarin Chinese goes by different names in different areas. In Chinese mainland, it is referred to as Putonghua, in Taiwan, it is known as Guoyu (国语), and in other East and Southeast Asian regions, it is called Huayu (华语). But are they all the same?
- 8 **Initially**, they were based on the standardized pronunciation established in *The Dictionary of Standard Mandarin Chinese*. However, they have **evolved** separately since 1949, **incorporating** local languages, **primarily** seen in vocabulary differences. For example, the word for "taxi" in Putonghua is "出租车" (chūzūchē), while it is "计程车" (jìchéngchē) in Taiwan's Guoyu and "德士" (deshì) in Singapore's Huayu.
- 9 Another significant difference lies in Chinese characters. **Simplified** Chinese characters were introduced in Chinese mainland in 1955, but other countries like Singapore **adopted** them much later. Taiwan, on the other hand, still **predominantly** uses traditional characters.
- 10 However, with China's opening up, the **gaps** between Putonghua and other **varieties** of Mandarin Chinese have been narrowing, especially since the 1990s, as other regions have been incorporating more elements from Putonghua.
- 11 So, if you are learning Chinese, Putonghua is **undoubtedly** the top choice to **master** this widely spoken and influential language.

serve v. 服务; 充当

note v. 注意

initially adv. 最初

evolve v. 演变

incorporate v. 纳入

primarily adv. 主要地

simplified adj. 简化的

adopt v. 采用

predominantly adv. 主要地

gap n. 差距

variety n. 多样性

undoubtedly adv. 无疑地

master v. 掌握

Understanding the Text

Task 1 Answer the following questions for better understanding of the text.

- 1 What is the significance of China having the world's largest population?

- 2 Which ethnic group makes up the majority of China's population, and what percentage do they represent?

- 3 How many dialects are estimated to be spoken in China, and can you name a few examples?

- 4 What does the saying “老乡见老乡，两眼泪汪汪” imply about the relationships between people from different regions?

- 5 What is the official language of China, and what are its other commonly used names?

- 6 What are the main influences on the pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar of Putonghua?

- 7 What efforts did the Chinese government undertake in 1955 regarding the promotion of Putonghua?

- 8 In which regions outside of mainland China is Mandarin Chinese recognized as the official language?

- 9 How have the names for Mandarin Chinese varied in different regions, and what are some examples?

- 10 What are the differences between simplified and traditional Chinese characters, and which regions use each?
- 11 How have the gaps between Putonghua and other varieties of Mandarin changed since the 1990s?
- 12 Why is Putonghua considered the best choice for learning Chinese?

Task 2 Cloze

(A) understand	(B) communicate	(C) universal	(D) local	(E) next
(F) agreement	(G) embarrassment	(H) greatly	(I) easily	(J) close
(K) striving	(L) happening	(M) protection	(N) lost	(O) divided

China is a very big country with a large population. Each region may have its own 1 language, or a dialect. There are great differences between these dialects. If people in different places use their dialects to talk, they may not be able to understand each other, and this situation may lead to 2 and misunderstanding. Therefore, the Chinese people 3 with each other in a common language, Putonghua, also known as Mandarin in Western countries. Chinese dialects are usually 4 into seven groups: northern dialect, Wu dialect, Hunan dialect, Jiangxi dialect, Hakka dialect, Cantonese dialect and Fujian dialect. Most northern dialects are 5 to Putonghua and easy to understand, while the other dialects are difficult to 6 for a non-native speaker. The dialects in China differ 7. Speaking Putonghua allows the Chinese people to communicate better with each other and promote the development of economy and culture everywhere. Only by learning Putonghua can you communicate with people from all parts of China and even with Chinese-speaking people all over the world. While 8 to promote Putonghua among the people of the whole country, China also pays special attention to the 9 of dialects, which should not be 10 after learning Putonghua.

Further Exploration

Task 3 Vocabulary

- A** These sentences are about the reading. Complete them with the correct form of the words in the box.

landscape	majority	unique	promote	confirm
serve	evolve	incorporate	adopt	master

- 1 In 1998, the first National Putonghua Week was _____ to celebrate the language.
- 2 Each dialect has its own _____ characteristics that make it distinct.
- 3 If you want to communicate effectively in Chinese, it is essential to _____ Putonghua.
- 4 Since 1949, the different varieties of Mandarin have continued to _____ separately.
- 5 The _____ of the population in China belongs to the Han ethnic group.
- 6 Putonghua not only _____ as the official language in mainland China but also in some other regions.
- 7 The language _____ in China is quite complex due to its many dialects.
- 8 The government aims to _____ Putonghua to reduce communication barriers.
- 9 Singapore _____ simplified characters much later than mainland China, while Taiwan continues to use traditional characters.
- 10 Many regions have begun to _____ elements from Putonghua into their local dialects.

- B** Complete the following sentences with the correct form of the words in the box.

landscape	majority	unique	promote	confirm
serve	evolve	incorporate	adopt	master

- 1 Many companies choose to _____ new technologies to improve efficiency and productivity.
- 2 To truly _____ a skill, one must practice consistently and seek feedback.

- 3 The _____ of the students preferred online classes over traditional ones.
- 4 The new marketing campaign aims to _____ local businesses and encourage community support.
- 5 Over the years, technology has continued to _____, changing the way we communicate.
- 6 Each piece of art in the gallery has a _____ style that reflects the artist's personality.
- 7 The breathtaking _____ of the mountains attracted many tourists to the area.
- 8 The restaurant aims to _____ a variety of dishes that cater to different dietary preferences.
- 9 The scientist was able to _____ the results of the experiment through repeated trials.
- 10 It is important to _____ sustainable practices into our daily routines to protect the environment.

Task 4 Sentence Translation

- 1 中国的语言环境非常复杂，除了汉族的语言外，还有55个少数民族的语言，各自具有独特的特点。

- 2 普通话的发音基于北京方言，而其词汇则主要来源于北方的普通话，这使得它成为全国通用的交流工具。

- 3 自1949年以来，普通话和其他方言之间的差异逐渐缩小，尤其是在词汇方面，许多地方开始吸收普通话的元素。

- 4 学习普通话不仅有助于与中国大陆的人们沟通，还能让你更好地理解华人社区在东南亚的文化和习俗。

- 5 在中国，尽管普通话被视为官方语言，但许多地方的方言仍然在日常生活中发挥着重要作用，影响着人们的交流方式。

Task 5 Paragraph Translation

今年在长沙举行了一年一度的外国人汉语演讲比赛，这项比赛证明是促进中国和世界其他地区文化交流的好方法。它为世界各地的年轻人提供了更好地了解中国的机会。来自 87 个国家共计 126 位选手聚集在湖南省省会参加了从 7 月 6 日到 8 月 5 日进行的半决赛和决赛。比赛并不是唯一的活动，选手们还有机会参观中国其他地区的著名景点和历史名胜。



Part Extensive Reading

Read the passage, and complete the tasks that follow.

Text B

The History of the English Language

(A) The history of the English language really started with the arrival of three Germanic tribes who invaded Britain during the 5th century AD. These tribes, the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes, crossed the North Sea from what today is Denmark and northern Germany. At that time the inhabitants of Britain spoke a Celtic language. But most of the Celtic speakers were pushed west and north by the invaders mainly into what is now Wales, Scotland and Ireland. The Angles came from “Englaland” [sic] and their language was called “Englisc” from which the words “England” and “English” are derived.

Language historians generally divide the history of English into three periods: 1. Old English Period, 2. Middle English Period, 3. Modern English Period.

Old English (450—1100 AD)

(B) The invading Germanic tribes spoke similar languages, which in Britain developed into what we now call Old English. Old English did not sound or look like English today. Native English speakers now would have great difficulty understanding Old English. Nevertheless, about half of the most commonly used words in Modern English have Old English roots. The words “be, strong and water”, for example, derive from Old English. Old English was spoken until around 1100.

Middle English (1100—1500)

(C) In 1066 William the Conqueror, the Duke of Normandy (part of modern France), invaded and conquered England. The new conquerors (called the Normans) brought with them a kind of French,

Early Modern English (1500—1800)

English (1500—1800)

End of Middle English, a sudden and distinct change with vowels being pronounced shorter and shorter with many peoples from around the world.

The Renaissance of Classical learning, meant that more. The invention of printing also meant that books became cheaper and more and more people had access to English. Spelling and grammar became fixed. Printing houses were, became the standard. In 1604 the

English (1800—Present)

English (1800—Present)

English (1800–

ference between Early Modern English and Modern English has many more words, arising from the scientific technology created a need for new words to describe parts of the earth's surface, and

ish

d 1600, the English colonization of North America created a new variety of English. Some Englishes are more closely related to British English than others. In some ways, American English is more like British English than it is like the English of the 17th century.

modern British English is. Some expressions that the British call “Americanisms” are in fact original British expressions that were preserved in the colonies while lost for a time in Britain (for example trash for rubbish, loan as a verb instead of lend, and fall for autumn; another example, frame-up, was re-imported into Britain through Hollywood gangster movies). Spanish also had an influence on American English (and subsequently British English), with words like canyon, ranch, stampede and vigilante being examples of Spanish words that entered English through the settlement of the American West. French words (through Louisiana) and West African words (through the slave trade) also influenced American English (and so, to an extent, British English).

(H) With English expanding in all directions, along came a new breed of men called lexicographers who wanted to put an end to the anarchy of word spelling. One of the most important work of this period is the compilation of *Dictionary of the English* by Dr. Johnson, which greatly contributed to the use of standard spelling. In 1857, editing of the Oxford English Dictionary was started. It was not finished until the year 1928 and has continued to be revised ever since.

(I) Today, American English is particularly influential, due to the USA’s dominance of cinema, television, popular music, trade and technology (including the Internet). But there are many other varieties of English around the world, including for example Australian English, New Zealand English, Canadian English, South African English, Indian English and Caribbean English.



Vocabulary

tribe *n.* 部落, 族群
invade *v.* 入侵, 侵略
inhabitant *n.* 居民, 栖息者
derive *v.* 源于, 得到
historian *n.* 历史学家
native *adj.* 本土的, 土生土长的
conqueror *n.* 征服者
conquer *v.* 征服, 战胜
ruling *adj.* 统治的, 支配的
class *n.* 阶级, 类别
linguistic *adj.* 语言的, 语言学的
dominant *adj.* 占主导地位的, 主要的

distinct *adj.* 明显的, 独特的
arise *v.* 出现, 发生
principal *adj.* 主要的, 首要的
colonization *n.* 殖民, 殖民化
preserve *v.* 保护, 保存
canyon *n.* 峡谷
ranch *n.* 牧场
stampede *v.* 奔逃, 狂奔
vigilante *n.* 自发的治安维护者
breed *n.* 品种, 繁殖
lexicographer *n.* 词典编纂者
anarchy *n.* 无政府状态, 混乱

Skimming and Scanning

The following are several statements attached to the text we have just read. Each statement contains information given in one of the paragraphs. Identify the paragraph from which the information is derived. You may choose a paragraph more than once.

- () 1 The preservation of certain English expressions in America reflects the linguistic history that diverged from British English over time.
- () 2 The Industrial Revolution and the expansion of the British Empire contributed to the vocabulary growth in Late Modern English, introducing many new terms.
- () 3 The arrival of new words and phrases during the Renaissance was a result of increased global interactions and cultural exchanges.
- () 4 Various forms of English exist worldwide, including those specific to Australia, Canada, India, and the Caribbean, each with unique characteristics.

- () 5 The linguistic divide between the lower and upper classes during the Norman rule resulted in a temporary separation of English and French usage in society.
- () 6 Native speakers today would find Old English challenging to comprehend, despite many modern words having their origins in that period.
- () 7 The introduction of printing in the 16th century led to a more uniform language, making literature more accessible and promoting literacy.
- () 8 Influences from Spanish, French, and West African languages enriched American English, resulting in the incorporation of various foreign words.
- () 9 The influence of American English has grown significantly in contemporary culture, largely due to the United States' prominence in various global industries.
- () 10 The compilation of dictionaries during this period aimed to address the inconsistencies in English spelling and usage that had developed over time.
- () 11 The inhabitants of Britain were largely displaced to the western and northern regions, such as Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, due to the invasions.



Part IV Extracurricular Exercises

Speaking Task

Deliver a 2~3 minute speech on the topic of **Changes in the Way People Communicate with Each Other**.

Useful Expressions

evolution 演变

technology 技术

face-to-face interaction 面对面交流

digital communication 数字沟通

social media 社交媒体

instant messaging 即时通讯

email 电子邮件

video conferencing 视频会议

nonverbal communication 非语言沟通

information overload 信息过载

virtual reality 虚拟现实

artificial intelligence 人工智能

texting 发短信

emoji 表情符号

online communities 在线社区

privacy concerns 隐私问题

Reading in Depth

Passage One

Questions 1 to 5 are based on the following passage.

It's late in the evening: time to close the book and turn off the computer. You're done for the day. What you may not realize, however, is that the learning process actually continues—in your dreams.

It might sound like science fiction, but researchers are increasingly focusing on the relationship between the knowledge and skills our brains absorb during the day and the fragment, often bizarre imaginings they generate at night. Scientists have found that dreaming about a task we've learned is associated with improved performance in that activity (suggesting that there's some truth to the popular notion that we're "getting" a foreign language once we begin dreaming in it). What's more, researchers are coming to recognize that dreaming is an essential part of understanding, organizing and retaining what we learn.

While we sleep, research indicates, the brain replays the patterns of activity it experienced during waking hours, allowing us to enter what one psychologist calls a neural (神经的) virtual reality. A vivid example of such replay can be seen in a video researchers made recently about sleep disorders. They taught a series of dance moves to a group of patients with conditions like sleepwalking, in which the sleeper engages in the kind physical movement that does not normally occur during sleep. They then videotaped the subjects as they slept. Lying in bed, eyes closed, one female patient on the tape performs the dance moves she learned earlier.

This shows that while our bodies are at rest, our brains are drawing what's important from the information and events we've recently encountered, then integrating that data into the vast store of what we already know. In a 2010 study, researchers at Harvard Medical School reported that college students who dreamed about a computer maze (迷宫) task they had learned showed a 10-fold improvement in their ability to find their way through the maze compared with participants who did not dream about the task.

Robert Stickgold, one of the Harvard researchers, suggests that studying right before bedtime or taking a nap following a study session in the afternoon might increase the odds of dreaming about the material. Think about that as your head hits the pillow tonight.

() **1. What is scientists' finding about dreaming?**

- A) It involves disconnected, weird images.
- B) It resembles fragments of science fiction.
- C) Dreaming about a learned task betters its performance.
- D) Dreaming about things being learned disturbs one's sleep.

() **2. What happens when one enters a dream state?**

- A) The body continues to act as if the sleeper were awake.
- B) The neural activity of the brain will become intensified.
- C) The brain behaves as if it were playing a virtual reality video game.
- D) The brain once again experiences the learning activities of the day.

() **3. What does the brain do while we are sleeping?**

- A) It systematizes all the data collected during the day.

- B) It substitutes old information with new data.
- C) It processes and absorbs newly acquired data.
- D) It classifies information and places it in different files.

() **4. What does Robert Stickgold suggest about enhancing learning?**

- A) Having a little sleep after studying in the day.
- B) Staying up late before going to bed.
- C) Having a dream about anything.
- D) Thinking about the odds of dreaming about the material.

() **5. What can be inferred about dreaming from the passage?**

- A) We may enhance our learning through dreaming.
- B) Dreaming improves your language ability.
- C) All sleepwalkers perform dance moves when they are sleeping.
- D) Taking a nap after learning can help you find the way through the maze.

Passage Two

Questions 6 to 10 are based on the following passage.

Have you ever wondered how acceptable it is to hug or touch someone? While it may sound safe to avoid all physical contact so as not to offend anyone, the lack of touching might imply cold attitudes or indifference in interpersonal relationships.

So, what should we do? The simple answer is to thoroughly learn unique cultural norms for physical contact. In nonverbal communication terminology (术语), physical contact and the study of touching are generally referred to as haptics. Haptics in communication often suggests the level of intimacy. They are usually classified into two groups: high-contact and low-contact.

Asia and quite surprisingly the United States, Canada and Britain belong to low-contact cultures. People from the rest of the world, such as Latin America, are considered to be in high-contact cultures, where they tend to expect touching in social interactions and feel more comfortable with physical closeness. Despite the classification, there are more complex factors such as relational closeness, gender, age, and context that can affect how someone views physical contact.

One common French custom of greetings is cheek-kissing, but it is mostly restricted to friends, close acquaintances and family members. While cheek-kissing for Latin Americans is also a universal greeting form, it does not require such a high degree of relational closeness. However, gender matters more for them because cheek-kissing often only happens between women or a man and a woman but not two men.

In contrast, in certain Arabian, African, and Asian countries, men can publicly hold hands or show physical affection as signs of brotherhood or friendship while these behaviors may suggest a romantic relationship in other parts of the world. Although men's touching is more normal in these cultures, physical contact between persons of opposite sexes who are not family members is negatively perceived in Arabian countries.

These factors could definitely affect the degree to which someone is comfortable with tactile (触觉的) communication and physical intimacy. Therefore, if you are someone who loves to show physical affection, you should not be afraid to show it or drastically change your behaviors just ask for consent beforehand!

() **6. What does the author say in the first paragraph about physical contact?**

- A) Its role in interpersonal relationships is getting increasingly important.
- B) It is becoming more acceptable to many who used to think it offensive.
- C) Its absence might suggest a lack of warmth in interpersonal relationships.
- D) It might prompt different responses from people of different social backgrounds.

() **7. What does physical contact in communication suggest?**

- A) What social class people belong to.
- B) How civilized the communicators are.
- C) What family background people come from.
- D) How close the communicators' relationships are.

() **8. What do we learn about people in high-contact cultures?**

- A) They are sensitive to the way people express their emotions.
- B) They take touching as a cultural norm in social interactions.
- C) They attach great importance to close ties among people.
- D) They tend to be more open in interpersonal relationships.

() **9. What do we learn about social customs in Arabian countries?**

- A) Men can show friendship in public through physical affection.
- B) Non-traditional romantic relationships are simply unacceptable.
- C) Physical contact between unfamiliar people is negatively perceived.
- D) People of different ages and genders show affection in different ways.

() **10. What does the author tell us to do concerning tactile communication?**

- A) Lay emphasis on nonverbal communication.
- B) Learn to use appropriate body language first.
- C) Pay attention to the differences between genders.
- D) Take other people's preference into consideration.

Skimming and Scanning

In this section, you are going to read a passage with ten statements attached to it. Each statement contains information given in one of the paragraphs. Identify the paragraph from which the information is derived. You may choose a paragraph more than once. Each paragraph is marked with a letter.

What Happens When a Language Has No Words for Numbers?

A) Numbers do not exist in all cultures. There are numberless hunter-gatherers in Amazonia, living along branches of the world's largest river tree. Instead of using words for precise quantities, these people rely exclusively on terms similar to "a few" or "some." In contrast, our own lives are governed by numbers. As you read this, you are likely aware of what time it is, how old you are, your checking account balance, your weight and so on. The exact numbers we think of impact everything in our lives.

B) But, in a historical sense, number-conscious people like us are the unusual ones. For the bulk of our species' approximately 200,000-year lifespan, we had no means of precisely representing quantities. What's more, the 7,000 or so languages that exist today vary dramatically in how they utilize numbers.

C) Speakers of anumeric, or numberless, languages offer a window into how the invention of numbers reshaped the human experience. Cultures without numbers, or with only one or two precise numbers, include the Mundurucu and Piraha in Amazonia. Researchers have also studied some adults in Nicaragua who were never taught number words. Without numbers, healthy human adults struggle to precisely distinguish and recall quantities as low as four. In an experiment, a researcher will place nuts into a can one at a time and then remove them one by one. The person watching is asked to signal when all the nuts have been removed. Responses suggest that anumeric people have some trouble keeping track of how many nuts remain in the can, even if there are only four or five in total.

D) This and many other experiments have led to a simple conclusion: When people do not have number words, they struggle to make quantitative distinctions that probably seem natural to someone like you or me. While only a small portion of the world's languages are anumeric or nearly anumeric, they demonstrate that number words are not universal among humans.

E) It is worth stressing that these anumeric people are cognitively (在认知方面) normal, well-adapted to the surroundings they have dominated for centuries. As a child, I spent some time living with anumeric people, the Piraha who live along the banks of the black Maici River. Like other

outsiders, I was continually impressed by their superior understanding of the ecology we shared. Yet numberless people struggle with tasks that require precise discrimination between quantities. Perhaps this should be unsurprising. After all, without counting, how can someone tell whether there are, say, seven or eight coconuts (椰子) in a tree? Such seemingly straightforward distinctions become blurry through numberless eyes.

F) This conclusion is echoed by work with anumeric children in industrialized societies. Prior to being spoon-fed number words, children can only approximately discriminate quantities beyond three. We must be handed the cognitive tools of numbers before we can consistently and easily recognize higher quantities. In fact, acquiring the exact meaning of number words is a painstaking process that takes children years. Initially, kids learn numbers much like they learn letters. They recognize that numbers are organized sequentially, but have little awareness of what each individual number means. With time, they start to understand that a given number represents a quantity greater by one than the number coming before it. This “successor principle” is part of the foundation of our numerical (数字的) cognition, but requires extensive practice to understand.

G) None of us, then, is really a “numbers person.” We are not born to handle quantitative distinctions skillfully. In the absence of the cultural traditions that fill our lives with numbers from infancy, we would all struggle with even basic quantitative distinctions. Number words and their written forms transform our quantitative reasoning as they are introduced into our cognitive experience by our parents, peers and school teachers. The process seems so normal that we sometimes think of it as a natural part of growing up, but it is not. Human brains come equipped with certain quantitative instincts that are refined with age, but these instincts are very limited.

H) Compared with other mammals, our numerical instincts are not as remarkable as many assume. We even share some basic instinctual quantitative reasoning with distant non-mammalian relatives like birds. Indeed, work with some other species suggests they too can refine their quantitative thought if they are introduced to the cognitive power tools we call numbers.

I) So, how did we ever invent “unnatural” numbers in the first place? The answer is, literally, at your fingertips. The bulk of the world’s languages use base-10, base-20 or base-5 number systems. That is, these smaller numbers are the basis of larger numbers. English is a base-10 or decimal (十进制的) language, as evidenced by words like 14 (“four”+ “10”) and 31 (“three” x “10”+ “one”). We speak a decimal language because an ancestral tongue, proto-Indo-European, was decimally based. Proto-Indo European was decimally oriented because, as in so many cultures, our ancestors’ hands served as the gateway to the realization that “five fingers on one hand is the same as five fingers on the other.” Such momentary thoughts were represented in words and passed down across generations. This is why the word “five” in many languages is derived from the word for “hand.” Most

number systems, then, are the by-product of two key factors: the human capacity for language and our inclination for focusing on our hands and fingers. This manual fixation—an indirect by-product of walking upright on two legs—has helped yield numbers in most cultures, but not all.

J) Cultures without numbers also offer insight into the cognitive influence of particular numeric traditions. Consider what time it is. Your day is ruled by minutes and seconds, but these concepts are not real in any physical sense and are nonexistent to numberless people. Minutes and seconds are the verbal and written representations of an uncommon base-60 number system used in ancient Mesopotamia. They reside in our minds, numerical artifacts (人工制品) that not all humans inherit conceptually.

K) Research on the language of numbers shows, more and more, that one of our species' key characteristics is tremendous linguistic (语言的) and cognitive diversity. If we are to truly understand how much our cognitive lives differ cross-culturally, we must continually explore the depths of our species' linguistic diversity.

- () 1 It is difficult for anumeric people to keep track of the change in numbers even when the total is very small.
- () 2 Human numerical instincts are not so superior to those of other mammals as is generally believed.
- () 3 The author emphasizes being anumeric does not affect one's cognitive ability.
- () 4 In the long history of mankind, humans who use numbers are a very small minority.
- () 5 An in-depth study of differences between human languages contributes to a true understanding of cognitive differences between cultures.
- () 6 A conclusion has been drawn from many experiments that anumeric people have a hard time distinguishing quantities.
- () 7 Making quantitative distinctions is not an inborn skill.
- () 8 Every aspect of our lives is affected by numbers.
- () 9 Larger numbers are said to be built upon smaller numbers.
- () 10 It takes great efforts for children to grasp the concept of number words.
- () 11 Concepts like minutes and seconds, which rely on numerical systems, are meaningless to anumeric people.

Writing

Summarize Text B with the help of the given words and phrases. You should write at least 120 words but no more than 200 words.

Germanic tribes; Old English; Middle English; Modern English; William the Conqueror; French influence; Great Vowel Shift; renaissance; printing; vocabulary expansion; American English; lexicographers; standardization; varieties of English; influence of technology

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