

《出国留学后，你不可不知的“Small Talk”文化》

Tara 老师自述：

我记得多年前，初到英国 UCL 上学的时候，学校在开学的第一个月内，组织了很多场新生社交活动。9 月份的每一天，我都在兴奋、紧张与嗨的心情中度过。因为要和很多来自世界各国的新同学寒暄（我们系当时有来自 52 个国家的新生），要适应不同的口音和语言逻辑，很有趣很新鲜同时也很陌生。

基本上，每天下课后我会前往不同的迎新会，然后开始 Blablabla 地和不同人聊天。很快，我就发现了“问题”：**为什么大家聊的内容都这么简单肤浅呢？**

比如你和一群人聊天，开场白永远是：**Hi, how are you? ...What's your name? ...Where do you come from? ...What's your background?...What did you study before?...Such a nice weather today, isn't it?...**

然后聊了没几句，可能会有新的人加入，于是大家又把同样的问题抛给那个新人。在新人回答的同时，有的人可能会说一句 **Excuse me**，然后转到旁边一群人那里，加入谈话，然后，同样的问题，周而复始。。。

这样的所谓的 **small talk**，难道不很 boring 吗？我当时心想。

在国外生活多年后，再回过头来看当时的场景，我的理解已经完全不同。对于西方社交文化已经非常熟悉的我，深知 **small talk** 文化的精髓与意义。今天也来和大家分享一下，希望对于马上和计划出国留学和生活的同学们有所帮助。

首先，**small talk** 其实就是**寒暄**。西方人在初次与人见面，甚至初期的若干次与人见面的时候，都是非常有距离感的，不会一下子和人走得很近。这是一项非

常突出的文化特点，即，**非常客气，同时又很客套**。尤其是面对一张完全陌生的异国面孔，他们更是会很客气，同时很有距离感。



（当年 20 岁，在迎新会上和新同学大力社交的 Tara 老师）

经过当时好几轮的社交活动之后，我慢慢发现了这些小寒暄的好处：帮助你快速认识系里面大部分的同学。我记得当时 10 月份，我和另一个中国同学一起走在教学楼里的时候（她当时就没怎么参加这些社交活动），每走几步就会有人和我打招呼 “Hi,Tara”, “How are you, Tara?”, “You look great today Tara!”.而我身边的同学咋是完全没人理。事后她开玩笑地跟我说，“怎么感觉全世界都认识你一样？”哈哈，我心想，这就是那些小寒暄的功劳啊！

的确，small talk 它很多时候没有太多实质性的内容，也不需要你事无巨细地跟别人汇报自己的生活内容，甚至可能会很傻很尴尬，但是它的作用并不是深度交流，而仅仅是让更多人认识你，知道你的存在，感受到你的质地——这个人是开朗型的还是阴郁型的，大概什么学习背景，文化背景，说话是否有意思等等。Small talk 的存在与进行是西方社交里非常重要的一个部分，它让人们感觉放松，气氛友好，在几次寒暄之后能初步筛选出自己感兴趣的聊天对象，为以后成为真正意义上的朋友奠定基础。

我到现在，都记得当年的自己有多傻多天真。由于对于英国的社交文化不了解，不知道英国人很擅长“假客气”，所以很傻很天真地把英国同学的话太当话。在一次社交场合中，我认识了一个美丽的英国女孩，她在聊天最后跟我道别的时候说：“It was really nice talking to you. We should hang out sometimes, maybe this weekend?” 当时我自然很开心，大方说：“Sure! Just give me a call anytime.” 然后周末我就傻傻地等啊，结果，根本没有电话。

几个月后，我和这个女孩经过慢慢的交往，真的成为了可以在一张床上睡的好姐妹。所以有一次，我有点小撒娇似的申讨她，说刚开始认识的时候她把我可是耍弄了。她听后很是惊讶，说：“Oh no.... honey, I'm so sorry, but, I was just being polite! We all do that, British people! Hahahah! Now we are friends, I will really mean it when I invite you.” 这时，我这才彻底领会西方社交文化的真实节奏！





（到英国一年后的 Tara）

说到这里，我的故事也差不多讲完啦。那么，同学们平时和外国人聊天，除了会说: “Hello! How are you?” 以外，还能多走几步路呢？

有的学生告诉我，经常感觉和歪果仁没的可说。然后转身看见别人谈笑风生的，自己在一旁傻乎乎干看着，感觉很是尴尬，到底该怎么聊天呢？

今天，Tara 老师，来教给你几句点爆社交圈的实用开场白。学起来！用起来！

1. So, what do you do? 你是做什么工作的？

This question is a typical question when making small talk to get to know the other person better. It's asking, "What is your job?" 这样的问题适用于第一次认识和接触某个新认识的朋友。问问别人是做什么的。当然了，如果对方一看就是个学生，那就可以跳过这一问了。可以改问：So, are you a student? What are you studying? Where do you study?....

Example answers: 示范回答

- Right now, I'm a student. I'm in my second year of pharmacy school. How about you? What do you do?

- I work as a tour guide for a local tour company. I've worked there for three years now. How about you?

- That's a good question! I do a little bit of everything: some writing, some photography and some graphic design, too. What do you do?

发现没？为了把话题进行下去，不做“话题终结者”，回答完别人的问题后应该反问一句，“那你是做什么的呢？” To encourage further conversation and be even more polite, you want to ask about them, too. As you can see from the examples above, adding the question “How about you?” or “And what about you?” will give the other person an opportunity to respond. You'll see this on most of the examples that follow.

2. How's (summer) treating you? 最近过得还好吗？

这句话字面意思是，最近夏天（秋天、生活、等等）对你照顾得还好吗？往往是对你的状态有些许了解的朋友会问道这样的问题。This question is asking about a specific part of your life, like your summer, your job or any other major event in your life. It's another way of asking, “How is your summer?” or “How is your new job?”

Example answers:

- *Oh, it's been really great. No complaints here! And how's it going for you?*

Not bad, can't complain! And how is your summer going?

- *It's treating me pretty well! I've gotten a lot out of it so far. And how's summer going for you?*

3. So, what have you been up to lately? 你最近都在干嘛啊?

这个是真的熟人之间的问话方式，“最近都干什么好玩儿的事儿啦？”或者也可以问 **“How's it going?”** A person asking this question is asking about the awesome things you've done recently. Another way to ask this question is “How's it going?” Usually, you only ask this question if you're already familiar with the person. That is, you've seen them or met them before.

Example answers:

- *Not much. My last class is on Thursday, so I'm excited about that! What have you been up to?*

- *Let's see... Well, I started a new job last week, but other than that, everything is pretty much the same. What have you been up to?*

- *Well, have you heard that I moved to a new apartment?*

- *What can I say? Nothing too exciting. Things are good—how about you?*

4. So what do you do when you're not working/studying?

所以你不上班儿/不上学的时候一般都在干嘛?

其实问的就是你平时的兴趣爱好啦。

This question is asking, **“What are your hobbies?”** It's also very common for people to ask, **“What do you like to do outside of work?”** or **“What do you do when you're not busy with (school)?”**

Example answers:

- *Well, recently I started playing volleyball on the weekends.*
- *Usually, I spend my free time doing activities with my family.*

5. Do you follow (Taylor Swift)? 你会关注霉霉吗 （任意名人）？

可以是最近比较火的明星，也可以是政客，比如川普大爷。但是聊政治需要功底和政治敏感度和把控度，轻易别聊，后果自负。This question is asking if you're interested in a certain topic or person and if you keep up with it/them on social media or television.

Example answers:

- *Oh, yeah! I love him/that show. Why?*
- *Sometimes. A little bit here and there. Why?*
- *No—actually, I haven't heard of him. Who is he?*

6. Would you mind giving me a hand with this? 你能搭把手帮我吗？

This question is asking for help. Instead of asking a more formal question like, “Could you please help me?” most native speakers will ask for help with a phrase like this.

Example answers:

Sure thing!

You got it!

I'm afraid I can't. My arms hurt a lot today. Maybe (Anthony) could, though.

7. What sort of stuff do you do on the weekends? 你周末都干点啥？

This question is asking about your weekend activities. The phrase “sort of stuff” means “things” or “activities.”

Example answers:

- *Let's see...I usually spend my weekends reading and relaxing at home. How about you?*
- *Well, I tend to go to a lot of concerts. How about you?*

8. So, what's your take on (the latest movie)? 所以你对 XX 是怎么看的?

这句话其实是问你对某件事物的看法和态度。This question is asking “What's your opinion of (the latest movie)?” or “What do you think about (a specific event)?”

Example answers:

- *Oh, I really like it! What do you think?*
- *To be honest, I think it's just okay. How about you?*
- *Ehh—I don't know to be honest. What's your take?*
- *Hmmm, I'm on the fence...*

* “On the fence” 用来表示你不置可否，不知道该怎么看。

9. Are you here with anybody? 你是跟别人一起来的吗?

一般问这个问题的目的不单纯，哈哈，是在试探你是否有伴侣了，那就是说问话人多半是对你有意思。。。This question is asking if you came to the event or location (like a bar or club) with another person. Usually, people ask this question as an indirect way of asking if you're in a romantic relationship.

Example answers:

- *Yeah—I came with my boyfriend.*
- *I just came with a bunch of my coworkers.*

10. Do you feel like grabbing a bite? 你想去吃点什么嘛？

这是邀请你离场去吃东西的开场白。This question is an invitation to leave together and get something to eat. You might also hear, “Do you want to grab a bite to eat?”

Example answers:

- *Actually, yeah! I'd love to. Where would you like to go?*
- *It depends. Where are you thinking of going?*
- *Mmm, not today. But I'm game for grabbing a bite together later this week.*
- *No thanks—I'm not really hungry. But thanks for asking.*

即便拒绝也要客气地表示感谢，或者承诺改天。

11. Would you be up for a (movie/ coffee) some time? 你想以后哪天干点 XXX 吗？

一般如果是异性这么问你，就是有特殊含义了，人家对你有意思！！不光是仅仅看个电影或是喝个咖啡这么简单！！！哈哈！所以在说 yes 前要想清楚自己的心。This question is asking if you'd like to do an activity together in the future.

Example answers:

- *I'm down! Let's do it!*
- *Sure. When are you thinking of going?*
- *It depends on what day, but yes.*
- *I'm not really interested in seeing a movie, but thank you.*

怎么样，这几句话都不算太难吧？寒暄涉及的都是最基本的对话内容，你只需要多听多学多模仿，拿出自信，大胆练习，很快就能有明显提升！而且最重要的是摆正心态，不要嫌弃 small talk 的肤浅，说不定在你寒暄的时候，你的未来的好友正在暗中观察你哟！