

BBC Learning English – Ask About Britain

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Talking Money 聊聊金钱

Li: 大家好，欢迎收听BBC的英国问答节目，在这里我们将为大家讲解英国的风俗人情。我是杨莉。

William: And my name is William Kremer. What's our question today Li?

Li: Ah well, today's question is a really interesting cultural one. 我们今天的问题来自黄玛丽，她现在在英国生活。请听他的提问。

Insert

Mali: *Hello. My name is Mali. I go to the BBC website every day. It's good. I want to find out why British people tend to be less open about their salaries than the Chinese. Thanks.*

Li: 玛丽想知道为什么和中国人相比，英国人顾忌谈论工资问题？less open 不那么开放。Is that true, William? Are British people really less open about their salaries?

William: Well, let's find out! I've invited some of our BBC Learning English colleagues up here to the studio today. And when they arrive let's just ask them how much they earn. And we'll see how they react.

Li: How they react – 看看他们的反应会是什么。这太有意思了。

William: Well, we'll have to find out, won't we? Right, well the first person we're expecting is Diarmuid. And I think he's just waiting outside. There he is... Derm! Come in.

Diarmuid: Hello everyone.

Li: Hello Derm.

William: Take a seat.



Diarmuid: Oh thank you very much.

William: Thank you very much for coming today.

Diarmuid: Oh that's really my pleasure.

Li: 我们有个问题想请教您一下。 We have a little question for you Derm.

Diarmuid: Ooh.

Li: What's your salary, Derm?

Diarmuid: My salary? Erm... I don't really want to say.

William: Are you sure you don't?

Diarmuid: Yeah, no I definitely don't -

William: You definitely don't want to tell us.

Diarmuid: Hmm... I don't want you to know!

William: OK, so, this is an Ask about Britain question and the questioner this week wants to know "Why don't British people want to talk about their salaries?" So why is it? Why is it you don't want to talk about it?

Diarmuid: Well one reason not to talk about it with colleagues is because it might make us feel jealous or resentful to each other if one earns more or less than the other. So that's why I don't want to tell you guys in case I earn more money than you or worse, you earn more money than me. So that's the reason I wouldn't talk about it with colleagues. The other reason I wouldn't talk about with people in general is because if they discover that I earn more money they might want to borrow some...

Li: Hmm... 也就是说你怕别人嫉妒你 jealous 嫉妒甚至 resentful 生气愤恨的。而且你更担心的是他们可能还会朝你借钱 they might want to borrow some. 所以你要守口如瓶。不过你对谁不保密呢? So who do you tell about your salary? Who does know what your salary is?

Diarmuid: Probably my mum.

William: Your mum?

Diarmuid: My mum, so she can proud of me.

William: OK... so you say "Mum, I've got a pay rise".

Diarmuid: Yes.

William: Diarmuid you've been to China many times.

Diarmuid: Yes.

William: And I was just wondering if anybody has ever asked you any other questions which you felt a little bit uncomfortable about answering when you've been in China.

Diarmuid: Not necessarily uncomfortable because I think I'm quite a sort of open-minded person. But sometimes people have expressed surprise that I wasn't married, you know, or that I didn't have any children. And they were very quick to ask those questions you know, "Tell me about your wife or your family" or asking these questions. And if you say that you don't have a wife or children they're very quick to say "Why?!" which if you think about it, to British people that's a little bit personal because you may have to admit the terrible fact that nobody wants you!

William: Oh Diarmuid that can't be true.

Li: Yeah it's obviously a cultural difference isn't it?

Diarmuid: Oh I think so.

Li: 是的在英国，人们对于评论一个人的年龄和婚姻状况非常谨慎小心。People are very open-minded in this country about how old you should be when you get married or, you know, you can remain single all of your life.

Diarmuid: It looks like I'm doing that.

William: OK Derm, thanks very much for coming along today and I'm sorry if we've upset you.

Diarmuid: No no I'm fine, I'm fine. But I'm still not telling you. Ok bye bye.

Li: Thank you, thank you for joining us.

William: See you.

Diarmuid: Bye bye.

Li: William 我们刚才是不是太不客气了？不过挺有意思的！

William: That's right. Normally these questions about money are a little bit inappropriate in this country.

Li: Inappropriate 不得体，不合适的。

William: But... I think Li that because we're making a programme we can say that we're doing it in the name of research.

Li: Ha ha. In the name of research – 打着科研的旗号。真高尚！

William: Do you think we should ask another person?

Li: I think we should. Just to make sure that we have done reliable research.

William: Exactly, it needs to be reliable. Ok, well the next person that we've got coming in is our colleague Finn, Finn Aberdein. Here he is.

Li: Oh Finn. Thank you for coming.

Finn: Hello, hello. Thank you for having me.

Li: We are friends aren't we Finn?

Finn: We are indeed.

Li: Could I ask you a question?

- Finn: Please do Li.
- Li: 你挣多少钱? How much do you earn?
- Finn: How much do I earn?! Oh I don't know if I can tell you that. I don't know if I can tell everyone in China that either.
- Li: We are friends aren't we?
- William: We're really good friends, so...
- Finn: But we do the same job and if one of us earns more then I might be a bit upset.
- Li: 这和穆达刚才说的一样, 你不想让我们这些同事们嫉妒你。 哎 Finn 你对中国和中国人很了解, 那么你觉得他们提出的那些问题会让你感觉不得体或者不舒服 - inappropriate?
- Finn: Well I actually like them because it's a cultural difference and I think it's nice to experience different cultures. And I remember when I first went to China on the plane to China I was reading about the culture and it said that people always ask you if you're married. And now, on this plane there was a beautiful air stewardess and I thought "Ok, this is Chinese culture so maybe I can try asking her if she's married".
- Li: Did you?
- Finn: And I said 你结婚了吗? And she said "Actually, not yet"!
- Li: But... just a bit of cultural comparison.... 但是为什么英国人对谈论工资总是那么敏感, 有抵触?
- Finn: Perhaps one analysis, one kind of answer would be to do with the class system,
- Li: 等级制度。
- Finn: Yes. And I think that because of that perhaps people are slightly less willing to talk about their income.

- William: We're very kind of self-conscious about class aren't we and we don't like to, if you're rich, you don't like to act like a rich person. People don't like to show what class they're in do they?
- Finn: I think that the divisions, yes, are perhaps more blurred than they used to be and I think people within each class, such as they still exist, are perhaps intentionally blurring them because they might be aspiring to be in a higher class or if you're in a higher class perhaps hiding that to an extent.
- Li: 很有意思。人们不愿意谈工资的另一个原因是在模糊社会等级的分界 **blurring class divisions**. Very interesting.
- William: Very interesting. Can I just ask you one question before we finish?
- Finn: Please.
- William: Are you married?
- Finn: I'm not married yet Will.
- William: OK. I just wanted to make sure, I just wanted to check you're not married yet.
- Finn: OK.
- William: Thanks Finn for coming in.
- Finn: Thank you very much.
- Li: Thanks Finn. That's very interesting. 好了，我们非常感谢黄玛丽朋友的提问。如果您对英国文化有任何疑问，请别忘了给我们发邮件，我们的电子邮箱是...
- William: chinaelt@bbc.co.uk. And Li I've just got one more question for you, before we finish today.
- Li: What? A question for me?
- William: Just one more question.

Li: I hope it's not too tricky.

William: No. What's your bank account number and sort code?

Li: Oh.. if I can.. I wish I can remember!

William: No you're not supposed to tell me that! Bye bye everyone!

Li: Bye bye.