

About this script

Please note that this is not a word for word transcript of the programme as broadcast. In the recording and editing process changes may have been made which may not be reflected here.

关于台词的备注:

请注意这不是广播节目的逐字稿件。本文稿可能没有体现录制、编辑过程中对节目做出的改变。

Elite 一词两意

Success through endeavour

Create the difference

Knowledge is power

Hinc lucem et pocula sacra

Li: 我嚟，多么有激励性的豪言壮语呀！这是谁的至理名言呢 William?

William: Those are university slogans, Li.

Li: University slogans, 大学口号。你是不是在考虑在职上大学呢?

William: Er... No, it's not that. This is of course Question and Answer of the Week, the programme where we answer a listener's question about the English language. And today our question comes from our regular listener Serena. Can you read Serena's question for us, Li?

Li: Sure! Serena 把她的问题发到了我们的邮箱，也就 questions.chinaelt@bbc.co.uk, 如果你也有英语学习上的问题也欢迎你把问题发过来。Serena 是这样写的: Dear Sir or Madam, I am a big fan of your programme – 谢谢你的这番话 Serena! - recently I get confused about a phrase "elite without being elitist", which is the slogan of the University of Leicester. Could you please explain that to me? Thank you very much. I look forward to hearing from you soon. 啊，听上去 Serena 不太清楚 elite without being elitist 这个短语是什么意思，她说这句话来自英国莱斯特大学的口号。

William: Hmm. Now actually I don't think this is the official University of Leicester slogan, but it is a phrase that features a lot on their website. And I can understand why Serena is confused. The reason is that the word 'elite' has two slightly different meanings.

Li: 是的 elite 这个词有两个意思，所以容易混淆。

William: See if you can guess what the first meaning of elite is from these examples:



Examples

*An elite team of soldiers have been sent to rescue the hostages.
Catherine is so bright – she always comes top of the class. I'm sure she'll end up at an elite university.
Ed Viesturs belongs to a tiny elite within mountaineers, who have climbed all 14 mountains that are over 8,000 metres high.*

William: In that clip we heard about an elite team of soldiers, an elite university and a tiny elite within mountaineers.

Li: So here elite means the best of the best 意思是精英。

William: Exactly. And notice, by the way, that elite is used as an adjective and also as a noun. So when people talk about an elite in this context they mean a small group of the most talented people.

Li: Hmm. 那么 elite 的另一个意思是什么 William?

William: Well, see if you can guess. Let's listen to some more examples:

Examples

*In my view, this country is still governed by a rich elite of businessmen, bankers and politicians.
My grandfather tried so hard to become a member of an elite club, but they wouldn't have him because he was Jewish.*

William: So, in those examples, an elite means a small group of rich and powerful people.

Li: Elite 指少数权贵阶层。

William: So if you hear terms like 'the ruling elite' or 'the social elite' it means the most powerful people in society. Now, to come back to Serena's question, the adjective elitist follows this second meaning.

Li: 明白了, 也就是说 elitist 是从 elite 这个词的第二个意思派生出来的, 形容一种态度, 瞧不起社会中下层的, 或者是势利眼的。

William: Correct. So 'elite without being elitist' means...

Li: “精英但不势力”这句话的意思是, 我们造就社会精英, 但是我们不以社会地位取人。

William: Exactly.

Li: So... I have a question. Can you say that this word elitist is quite a negative word?

William: Well, yes. I don't think anyone would say "I'm proud to be elitist"; I think it is quite negative. And, interestingly this word belongs to a group of adjectives which end in -ist and which describe forms of prejudice.



- Li:** Hmm. **Prejudice** 歧视。他说,很多表示歧视的词都是以 **ist**, 也就是 **i-s-t** 结尾的, 比如种族歧视 **racist** ?
- William:** Yes. And we also have **sexist**...
- Li:** **Sexist** 性别歧视。
- William:** And **ageist**.
- Li:** **Ageist** 年龄歧视。这些名词可不是被现代社会里所崇尚的。
- William:** No, but of course to be elite is not necessarily a bad thing. It can be a very good thing.
- Li:** 究竟是正面意思还是负面意思, 这全取决于上下文了, 所以要特别注意, 不过我觉得这番讨论很有意思, 谢谢你 **Serena**.
- William:** And for more English language questions, go to bbcukchina.com. Goodbye for now!
- Li:** Bye!