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China-EU textile talks continue

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26 August, 2005

THE ARTICLE

China-EU textile talks continue

BNE: Trade talks between China and the European Union are continuing. The two sides hope to settle a dispute over quotas on Chinese textiles. The problem is that the EU has reached its limit on the quantity of clothes it can import from China, even though a new agreement was made in June. Then, new quotas were agreed on ten different categories of textile products. However, millions of items of clothing are now stockpiled at EU ports, while frustrated store owners are worrying about empty shelves.

The EU Trade Commissioner said there was still a serious problem. The billion dollars of clothes in limbo at European ports has angered Chinese exporters. They fear future trade relations between China and the EU could be badly affected. Fashion importers and European retailers are putting strong pressure on the EU to increase the quotas and allow them to buy more clothes. They say their supplies are getting dangerously low. Conversely, EU manufacturers are worried about financial ruin because of low-cost Chinese imports.

WARM-UPS

1. MADE IN CHINA: In pairs / groups, talk about your feelings towards goods that are made in China. Do you choose to buy Chinese-made goods? Do you prefer Chinese-made goods?

2. CHINESE GOODS: In pairs / groups, talk about which of the following Chinese products you would or would not buy. Would you prefer to buy similar goods from another country?

- Clothes
- A computer
- Chicken
- Beer or wine
- A car
- Medicine
- Tea
- Chocolate

3. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

Clothes / disputes / China / quotas / clothes stores / Christmas shopping / Chinese exporters / being in limbo / fashion / low-cost Chinese imports

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

4. IMPORT: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "import". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

5. OPINIONS: Talk about these opinions with your partner(s). Do you agree or disagree with them?

- a. There should be no quotas anywhere in the world.
- b. Free trade is free trade. There should be no limits.
- c. Europe has a duty to protect its own textiles industry.
- d. The EU side should think about consumers, who want lower prices.
- e. Quotas don't seem to match the idea of globalization.
- f. Europe has to accept that China is more competitive than European companies.
- g. China will get its way.
- h. European industries must change quickly and become more efficient.

6. QUICK DEBATE: Students A think the EU should forget clothing quotas on Chinese clothes. Students B think the EU should keep the quotas the same. Change partners often.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. China and the EU are talking about producing new kinds of clothes. T / F
- b. The EU has reached its limit on the clothes it can import from China. T / F
- c. Billions of items of clothing are now stockpiled at EU ports. T / F
- d. European store owners are frustrated at having no clothes shelves. T / F
- e. The EU Trade Commissioner said there was a serious problem. T / F
- f. The future of EU-China trade relations looks good. T / F
- g. European retailers say their supplies are getting dangerously high. T / F
- h. EU manufacturers fear financial ruin because of low-cost imports. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| a. talks | store owners |
| b. settle | stacked up |
| c. quantity | no-man's-land |
| d. agreement | resolve |
| e. stockpiled | major |
| f. serious | failure |
| g. limbo | discussions |
| h. retailers | understanding |
| i. ruin | cheap |
| j. low-cost | amount |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. trade | made in June |
| b. settle a | pressure on the EU |
| c. the EU has reached | dispute |
| d. a new agreement was | Chinese imports |
| e. empty | could be badly affected |
| f. billion dollars of clothes | shelves |
| g. relations between China and the EU | talks |
| h. retailers are putting strong | in limbo at European ports |
| i. supplies are getting | its limit |
| j. low-cost | dangerously low |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

WORD ORDER: Put the underlined words back into the correct order.

China-EU textile talks continue

BNE: Trade talks between China and the European Union are continuing.

The two hope to settle sides a dispute over quotas on Chinese textiles.

The problem is that the EU limit its reached has on the quantity of clothes it can import from China, even though a new agreement was made in June. Then, new quotas ten were on agreed different categories of textile products. However, millions of items of clothing at are stockpiled now EU ports, while frustrated store owners are worrying about empty shelves.

The EU Trade Commissioner said there serious was a problem still. The billion dollars of clothes in limbo at European ports has angered Chinese exporters. They trade between future fear relations China and the EU could be badly affected. Fashion importers and European retailers are putting strong pressure on the EU quotas to the increase and allow them to buy more clothes. They say their supplies are getting dangerously low. Conversely, EU manufacturers are financial because about worried ruin of low-cost Chinese imports.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'stock' and 'pile'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. WORD ORDER: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers.

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "CHINA EXPORTS" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about China and the goods it exports.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|------------|---------------|
| • talks | • serious |
| • dispute | • limbo |
| • import | • affected |
| • quotas | • pressure |
| • millions | • dangerously |
| • shelves | • low-cost |

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What did you think when you first read this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What do you think of this problem?
- d. What do you think of quotas?
- e. Do you think China should be allowed to export as much as it wants to Europe?
- f. What do you think of Chinese made goods?
- g. Do you think China will flood Europe with its goods?
- h. Should Europe try to protect its manufacturing industry?
- i. Are you worried about empty shelves in stores?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Do you think Chinese exporters should be angry?
- d. Do you think this problem will have a negative impact on EU-China trade relations?
- e. Do you think EU negotiators should think more about European store owners?
- f. Do you think China should sell its clothes elsewhere?
- g. What do you think will happen to the clothes in the ports?
- h. Have you ever experienced a serious problem in something you've done?
- i. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

ROLE PLAY: This role play is to discuss whether or not the European Union should accept more Chinese imports. Team up with classmates who have the same role as you. Develop your roles and discuss ideas and “strategies” before the role play begins.

Introduce yourself to the other role players.

Role A – Chinese side

You think the European Union should have no quotas on textiles. Today’s world is all about free trade. European retailers have ordered Chinese goods. EU officials should not stop them from reaching the consumer.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY THERE SHOULD BE NO QUOTAS.

Role B – European side

You must protect European manufacturers from cheap Chinese products. You think European made goods are better quality. Quotas are a normal part of international trading laws.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY QUOTAS ARE NECESSARY.

Role C – European retailer

You don’t understand the European negotiators. They are hurting your business and your profits. The busy Christmas period is coming soon and you desperately need the clothes that are stockpiled in ports.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY QUOTAS ARE BAD.

Role D – European clothing manufacturer

You don’t care about free trade. You think the EU has a duty to protect European manufacturers. Millions of jobs could be lost if the cheap Chinese products are allowed into Europe.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY QUOTAS ARE NECESSARY.

Change roles and repeat the role play. Comment in groups about the differences between the two role plays.

In pairs / groups, discuss whether you really believe in what you said while you were in your roles.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

China-EU textile talks continue

BNE: Trade talks between China and the European Union are _____. The two sides hope to settle a dispute over quotas on Chinese _____. The problem is that the EU has reached its limit on the _____ of clothes it can import from China, even though a new agreement was made in June. Then, new quotas were _____ on ten different categories of textile _____. However, millions of items of clothing are now stockpiled at EU ports, while frustrated store owners are worrying about _____ shelves.

The EU Trade Commissioner said there was still a _____ problem. The billion dollars of clothes in _____ at European ports has angered Chinese exporters. They fear future trade _____ between China and the EU could be badly affected. Fashion importers and European _____ are putting strong pressure on the EU to increase the quotas and allow them to buy more clothes. They say their _____ are getting dangerously low. Conversely, EU manufacturers are worried about financial _____ because of low-cost Chinese imports.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on the standoff between the EU and China. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. LETTER: Write a letter to the EU Trade Commissioner. Tell him what you think of his policy not to increase textile quotas and allow more Chinese imports into Europe. Read your letters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

4. FREE TRADE: Write a short essay on free trade. Do you think there should be quota systems between different countries or for certain products? Tell your classmates the main points of your essay in your next lesson. Did you all have similar views?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. T c. F d. F e. T f. F g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. talks	discussions
b. settle	resolve
c. quantity	amount
d. agreement	understanding
e. stockpiled	stacked up
f. serious	major
g. limbo	no-man's-land
h. retailers	store owners
i. ruin	failure
j. low-cost	cheap

PHRASE MATCH:

a. trade	talks
b. settle a	dispute
c. the EU has reached	its limit
d. a new agreement was	made in June
e. empty	shelves
f. billion dollars of clothes	in limbo at European ports
g. relations between China and the EU	could be badly affected
h. retailers are putting strong	pressure on the EU
i. supplies are getting	dangerously low
j. low-cost	Chinese imports

WORD ORDER:

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BNE: Trade talks between China and the European Union are continuing. The two sides hope to settle a dispute over quotas on Chinese textiles. The problem is that the EU has reached its limit on the quantity of clothes it can import from China, even though a new agreement was made in June. Then, new quotas were agreed on ten different categories of textile products. However, millions of items of clothing are now stockpiled at EU ports, while frustrated store owners are worrying about empty shelves.

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