

外教社

# 汉语熟语 英译词典

A DICTIONARY OF  
CHINESE IDIOMATIC  
EXPRESSIONS WITH  
ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

上海外语教育出版社  
SHANGHAI FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION PRESS



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尹邦彦 编

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## 序

日前,年兄邦彦教授通过伊妹儿发来其编纂的《外教社汉语熟语英译词典》部分样稿,并嘱笔写序。看到在计算机屏幕上闪跃的文稿字符,我不由得想起了15年前他在江苏教育出版社出版的《汉英常用熟语词典》。15年来,邦彦教授继往开来,踵事增华,不断进取,往往夜以继日,废寝忘食,花了很大的工夫终于成就了目前这部词典,这是可喜可贺的事。

美国人类学家兼语言学家萨丕尔(Edward Sapir, 1884—1939)在其《语言论》中,提出了一个著名的命题:“语言有一个底座。说一种语言的人属于一个(或几个)种族,属于身体上某些特征与别人不同的一个群体。语言不脱离文化而存在,不脱离那种代代相传地决定着我们的生活面貌的风俗信仰总体。”并且还认为:“语言是我们所知道的最庞大最广博的艺术,是世代代无意识地创造出来的无名氏的作品,像山岳一样伟大。”语言积淀于文化底座上最渊博、最伟大的结晶之一,是历代社会生活中使用、流传最为广泛的。包括成语、俗语、谚语、惯用语、歇后语和格言在内的熟语,也是最富有群体种族属性特征的语言文化形态。鲁迅先生曾说,“成语和死古典不同,多是现世相的神髓,随手拈掇,自然使文字分外精神。”鲁迅先生在《门外文谈》中所言意味深长、趣味津津、比“古典”还要活、使文学更加精彩的“炼话”,即属此类。

汉语熟语作为汉民族语言的重要组成部分,体现着汉民族思维和认知模式、审美情趣和文化内涵。随着社会文明的进程和科学的发展,熟语现象也逐渐进入多种学术领域的视野,受到关注,许多方面的实际应用和跨文化交际已颇需要有这类专门辞书提供资料及查阅索解的便利。但是,编写汉语熟语英译词典有其吃力不讨好的一面。汉语熟语难以译得恰当,并且在多数情况下本身意义的比喻性使其字面意义与实际意义不相符;由于许多的汉语熟语出自历史典故、文学作品,自然而然地带有感情色彩,在翻译

成外语时不仅要求理解其语言上的意义,还要理解其使用场合的关联意义,即应注意切合语境,避免出现语体或感情色彩上的误译。这部历时多年编就的词典告诉我们:编者考虑了这些因素。词典收录语词精当,要而不烦;英译切合汉语词义,符合英语习惯,尽可能保留语词的感情色彩;精选范例,借此深化译释,弥补语词对译的局限性。词典内容丰富,信息齐全,体例严谨,近年来国内出版的同类词典中鲜有出其右者。我相信编者辛勤劳动的成果一定会受到广大读者的欢迎。

邦彦教授是汉语熟语英译方面的专家,发表过独具见解的论文和译述,他编写这部词典,明知其难而愿独任其难。在编写过程中,他查阅了浩繁的汉籍英译本和工具书,广收博采,扒梳抉剔,折中群言,择善而从,充分运用了自己的识见。我何敢序邦彦教授之大著,只能引先哲王荆公的两句诗以形容其人其书。诗云:看似平常最奇崛,成如容易却艰难。

是为序。

张柏然

2005年9月10日

于南京大学北园丁字楼

## 前 言

本词典系一部以汉英形式编排的,旨在介绍汉语熟语英译和使用的普及型专门语言工具书。它在本人独自编纂、并由杨治中教授审校的《汉英常用熟语词典》(南京:江苏教育出版社,1989.)的基础上作了较大幅度的修订和增补,从而形成6 400条左右词目。条目的译文力求切合汉语词义,尽量保留汉语色彩,同时符合英语习惯。例证力求典型,其译文多采自国内外正式出版的译本,援引作品的译者参见书后的“主要参考书目”,个别文字略有改动。对某些熟语则进行补译,并尽可能配以例证说明。

鉴于《汉英常用熟语词典》中的释义曾被国内外多部词典引用,有的在参考书目中列出,如 John S. Rohsenow 教授编著的《ABC 汉英谚语词典》(上海:汉语大词典出版社,2002.),本人甚感欣慰。但有个别词典在关于熟语的释义上,较多的、甚至一字不改的抄袭拙编,读者如发现本书与某部词典释义一样时,请再查一查1989年的拙编,是非就能辨别。

在两次出书过程中,曾参考《现代汉语词典》、《汉英词典》、《新时代汉英大词典》以及《中国俗语大辞典》等辞书、文学作品和政论著作100多部,在词典正文后的“主要参考书目”中有所反映,在此谨向有关作者、译者表示诚挚的谢意。特别要感谢南京大学杨治中教授、张柏然教授、柯平教授和解放军外国语学院严辰松教授在百忙中为书稿精心审订,柏然教授还为本书撰写了序言。还要感谢 Andy Kirpatrick 教授,在1993—1994年间我访学澳大利亚国立大学期间,他对本书的编纂提出许多指导意见并对许多词条释义的英译作了润色。镇江苏科勒翻译公司尹海波同志在后期工作中不仅为本书查阅并提供了大量资料,而且在帮助整理、校对、打印等烦琐的工作方面付出了辛劳。此外,参加文字校对工作的还有蓝红军和何文斌两位老师,本人谨向他们表示衷心的感谢。

承蒙上海外语教育出版社对本书稿的认可,我深深感谢该社

社长的信任和悉心指导。同时应感谢华东船舶工业学院的领导,他们对本课题大力支持和帮助,科技处批准了课题,并在资金上给予帮助。此外,对南京大学图书馆、澳大利亚国立大学图书馆、华东船舶工业学院图书馆、原镇江师专图书馆所给予的帮助表示谢意。最后我还要感谢我的妻子何重玲同志,她任劳任怨承担了几乎全部的家务,在去年退休后还在借阅、查找和核对中文资料方面花了很多精力和时间。

本书虽非草率之作,但个人的水平与能力毕竟有限,误漏之处在所难免,恳请读者批评指教。

尹邦彦  
2005年9月

# 汉语熟语英译词典

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## 体例说明

### 一、条目

1. 本词典词条包括条目、条目的汉语拼音、对应的英语译文、必要的解释说明文字,以及例证。
2. 条目按汉语拼音音序排列,拼音相同的,按阴平(ˉ)、阳平(ˊ)、上声(ˇ)、去声(ˋ)四声排序。同音字按笔画多少排序,笔画少的在前,若笔画亦相同,则按起笔笔形一、丨、丿、丶、冫的顺序排列。若首字字形相同、拼音和声调亦相同的,按第二字的拼音字母次序排列,以此类推。
3. 为方便检索,词典正文后附有条目笔画检索表。
4. 凡同义不同说法并能够互换的条目同列一起,中间用逗号隔开,再加“亦作”二字,前者称为主条目,后者称为副条目。副条目则另列条目,以参见的方式出现,不另示释义和例证。如:

【天高皇帝远】 tiān gāo huángdì yuǎn, 亦作【山高皇帝远】

The sky is high, the emperor far away — it is difficult to get justice. [Used metaphorically to mean that a person may do as he pleases without fear of interference]

可是,他们住在郊外,山高皇帝远。于是这五虎将就种地的种地,学手艺的学手艺,日子过得很不错。 (老舍:《正红旗下》)

Since they lived outside the city, “deep in the mountains remote from the emperor”, these brave young men farmed the land and learned skilled trades, supporting themselves comfortably.

【山高皇帝远】 shān gāo huángdì yuǎn 见【天高皇帝远】

### 二、释义

1. 条目一词多义,义项则分别译出,其前用阿拉伯数字标示。如:

【狐狸精】 húljīng

1. a wily old fox / a crafty scoundrel
2. she-fox — a vamp / a woman of easy virtue

【不中用】 bùzhōngyòng

1. good-for-nothing / worthless wretch

“落后他父亲死了,他是个不中用的货,又不会种田,又不会作生意。”

(吴敬梓:《儒林外史》)

“Later on his father died, but this fellow was good-for-nothing: he could neither till the land nor trade.”

2. to breathe *one's* last / to snuff it / dying

“佩珊,我想老太爷一定是不中用了!我见过——”

(茅盾:《子夜》)

“Peishan, I'm afraid it's all over with old Mr Wu! I've seen people——”

2. 凡同一意义有几种译法互相衬托时,对应译文不论是词、词组还是句子,一律用斜线“/”隔开。如:

**【事半功倍】** shì bàn gōng bèi effort halved, result doubled / to get twice the results for half the effort

**【一番手脚两番做】** yī fān shǒujiǎo liǎng fān zuò Things may obviously be done once, but they need twice to be finished. / It's just a superfluous action.

“你们瞧,订婚之后马上就结婚。其实何必一番手脚两番做。”

(钱钟书:《围城》)

“Just look at it. They're getting married right after the engagement. Actually why do they have to go through the trouble twice?”

3. 某些条目视需要先据字面直译,加破折号“—”后给以意译或解释。如:

**【染缸里拿不出白布来】** rǎngānglǐ ná bù chū bái bù lái Out of a dye vat you can't draw white cloth — good persons are not to be found among bad ones. [Commonly used to mean that one's reputation is tarnished by the bad company he keeps]

### 三、例证

1. 例证力求与条目文字相同。但由于本辞典对某些句型、结构不大稳定的熟语取其常见的说法立为条目,所引例证中的熟语允许与该词条有出入。如:

**【不管白猫黑猫,能捉老鼠就是好猫】** bùguǎn bái māo hēi māo, néng zhuō lǎoshǔ jiùshì hǎo māo It doesn't matter if the cat is black or white, as long as it catches mice. [Used to mean that no matter who he is or what measures are adopted, it will be fine, provided things can be done successfully by him]

在紫禁城看来,只要能捉老鼠,花猫白猫全是好猫。

(溥仪:《我的前半生》)

From the point of view of the Forbidden City all cats, whether

tabby or white were good cats provided they caught mice.

2. 在相当多的例证中,其熟语的英译与条目的对应译文不同,这一方面反映了译文要视具体语言环境而定,另一方面也说明了语言是活的,不能拘泥。如:

**【讨便宜】** tǎo piányi to seek undue advantage / to gain advantage at the expense of others

“有便宜大家讨开点,没事;要正经除非自己锅底没有黑!”

(赵树理:《小二黑结婚》)

“Why don't you give us all a little taste? The pot has no right to call the kettle black.”

3. 所引例证,因受原文上下文的限制,中、英文的个别词有不对应之处,有时为了使文义清楚,则使用圆括号“( )”,以示添加或注释的部分。如:

**【没笼头的马】** méi lǒngtóude mǎ a horse without a halter / an uncontrolled person

薛姨妈叹道:“他是没笼头的马,天天忙不了,那里肯在家一日。”

(曹雪芹:《红楼梦》)

“Ah, he's like a horse without a halter,” she sighed. “He's for ever rushing about outside. Not a day does he spend at home.”

**【青出于蓝而胜于蓝】** qīng chūyú lán ér shèngyú lán Green comes from blue but it excels blue — the pupil excels his teacher.

[Frequently used to mean that the younger generation outdoes the older generation]

(爸爸)破例开个玩笑:“青出于蓝而胜于蓝,这是规律。”

(母国政:《我们家的炊事员》)

Papa cracked a joke: “Well, you know, ‘the pupil often surpasses the master,’ that's the rule.”

4. 例证如系诗文,为节省篇幅,则接排,中间用斜线号“/”隔开。如:

**【妻离子散】** qī lí zǐ sàn with one's family scattered / separated from one's wife and children

他们都是战败国的俘虏 / 早已妻离子散、家破人亡。

(《艾青诗选》)

All prisoners of war from countries defeated. / Whose wives are long lost, sons dispersed, homes wrecked.

5. 凡有出处的例证,则在中文后注明,以备查考,英文则出自相应的文本,不再另注明。

## 目 录

体例说明 .....	i
词典正文 .....	1
主要参考书目 .....	941
条目笔画检索表 .....	947

## A

【哀莫大于心死】 āi mòdà yú xīn sǐ There is no grief so great as despair. / Nothing is more lamentable than a dead heart. / There is no vulture like despair. / Nothing gives so much cause for sorrow as the death of one's heart.

【挨金似金,挨玉似玉】 āi jīn sì jīn, āi yù sì yù What's near gold looks like gold, and what's next to jade looks like jade. / People are influenced by the company they keep. [Used metaphorically to mean that social environment can exert a great influence upon a person's way of thinking and life-style]

【挨门逐户】 āi mén zhú hù from house to house / from door to door

“把巷头,巷尾,全封锁起来,挨家挨户的查,赶快!” (高云览:《小城春秋》)  
“Seal off both ends of the lane; make a house-to-house search! Quick!”

【唉声叹气】 āi shēng tàn qì to sigh / to sigh and groan / to mope and sigh  
当天晚上,一家人为了筹措路费的问题,没有好好睡觉,只是唉声叹气。

(梁斌:《红旗谱》)

Sighing and groaning as they discussed ways and means, they hardly slept at all that night.

他们的希望破灭了,只有低下头去,唉声叹气。 (梁斌:《红旗谱》)

But now that he had failed and their hopes were dashed, they could only droop and sigh.

【挨板子】 ái bǎn zi to get the caning / to be punished

无论是按照国家的法律,或者是按照党的纪律,他都逃不了挨板子。

Whether tried according to the law of the state or according to the Party discipline, he cannot escape the caning he deserves.

【挨打受骂】 āi dǎ shòu mà to be scolded and beaten / to get beatings and abuse

“人家的奴才跟主子赚些好体面,我们这等奴才白陪着挨打受骂的。”

(曹雪芹:《红楼梦》)

“Other people's slaves get some reflected credit from their masters. All we get for waiting on you is beatings and abuse.”

【挨饿受冻】 āi è shòu dòng to go cold and hungry / to suffer from hunger and poverty

“妈妈若是疼我，听我的话，有年纪的人，自己保重些。妈妈这一辈子，想来还不致挨冻受饿。”

(曹雪芹：《红楼梦》)

“If you're fond of me, mother, take my advice and now that you're old take better care of your health. I can't believe you'll ever go cold or hungry.”

他们也跟祖祖辈辈挨饿受冻的渔民一样，住的是鸽子笼似的小土房。

(高云览：《小城春秋》)

Like the fishermen, who had known nothing but hunger and poverty for generations, they also lived in ramshackle abodes resembling pigeon cages.

【矮半截】ǎi bàn jié to be a grade lower than sb / to be inferior to others (薛蟠)自此便加一倍小心，不免气概又矮了半截下来。

(曹雪芹：《红楼梦》)

After then Xue Pan took greater pains not to provoke her, and inevitably this humbled him still more.

这使他丢了面子，在本城群众面前矮了一截。(汪曾祺：《皮凤三榷房子》)

He had lost face over it, and had dropped a notch in the eyes of the people of his hometown.

【矮人面前莫说短】ǎi rén miànqián mò shuō duǎn One doesn't talk about shortness in front of dwarfs. [Used to mean that one should not talk about others' shortcomings in their presence in order to avoid hurting their feelings]

【矮子看戏，随人上下】ǎizi kàn xì, suí rén shàngxià Like a dwarf watching a show, one's view is subjected to the person that supports him — one acts indecisively or has no control over his own business.

【矮子里选将军】ǎizili xuǎn jiāngjūn to pick a general from among the dwarfs — to choose the best person available / In the country of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.

矮子里拔将军，旧日默默无闻的杜大胆儿，竟成了今天的高手。

(刘绍棠：《小荷才露尖尖角》)

It was necessary to “pick a general from among the dwarfs” — to choose the best person available. So Bold Fellow Du, unknown to the public in the past, now unexpectedly became a master grower.

“班子问题需要重新考虑，现在总不得已，矮子里拔将军。”

(谌容：《减去十岁》)

“The question of the leading group will have to be reconsidered. I was

forced to appoint the best of a bad lot.”

【爱不释手】 ài bù shì shǒu can hardly tear oneself away from ... / to love sth too much to part with it / can hardly bear to put sth down

这部小说很有意义,简直使我爱不释手。

The novel is so instructive that I can hardly tear myself away from it.

他瞅着老花农对这烟斗爱不释手的样子,便说:“您要是喜欢这烟斗,就送给您吧!” (冯骥才:《雕花烟斗》)

Observing how happy the old man was with the pipe in his hands, Tang said: “If you really like this pipe, it is yours!”

【爱才若渴】 ài cái ruò kě to have a passion for talent / to thirst for talents  
他们发现了佳人并非因为“爱才若渴”而做婊子的,佳人只为的是钱。

(《鲁迅全集》)

They discovered that it was money alone, not “a passion for talent” that made beauties turn prostitute.

老残道:“官保爱才若渴,兄弟实在钦佩的。” (刘鹗:《老残游记》)

“I have great respect for the provincial governor who admires talent so much,” said Lao Can.

【爱财如命】 ài cái rú mìng to love money as much as life / to love nothing better than money / money rather than life

他爱钱如命,可是为维持事情,不得不狠了心。 (老舍:《骆驼祥子》)

Though it was like spending his life's blood, he gritted his teeth in order to keep the job.

【爱答不理】 ài dā bù lǐ to look cold and indifferent / to ignore / to leave sb in the cold

“(我)亲眼看见那老家伙对待那些求见的教友们,不是爱答不理,就是骂个狗血喷头。” (孙犁:《风云初记》)

“And there I saw for myself how that old scoundrel treated Christians who wanted to see him. Some were simply ignored, others doused in a torrent of abuse.”

【爱戴高帽子】 ài dài gāomàozi to love to wear a high hat — fond of flattery [Commonly used to mean that one is fond of being praised sky-high]

【爱叫的麻雀不长肉】 àijiaode máquè bù zhǎng ròu A sparrow who likes to chirp won't put on weight. [Commonly used to mean that a person who indulges in empty talk won't make any practical achievements]

【爱面子】 ài miànzi to feel concern about face-saving / to care too much about one's "face".

这个爱面子的小学毕业生,看见所有的人都在笑他的叔父。

(柳青:《创业史》)

The sensitive young fellow had noticed that several people were laughing at his uncle.

【爱莫能助】 ài mò néng zhù would be glad to help but cannot / to be desirous but unable to help / to be willing but powerless to help

这件事,我们是爱莫能助了。

We are willing to help but unable to do so about this.

【爱亲做亲】 ài qīn zuò qīn Loving families made good in-laws. / to become relatives by marriage

你我爱亲做亲,我不争你的财礼,你也不争我的装奁,只要做几件布草衣服。

(吴敬梓:《儒林外史》)

Since we want to be related, I wouldn't ask you for any presents and you needn't ask me for a dowry; all we need do is prepare a few simple clothes.

【爱人者人恒爱之,敬人者人恒敬之】 àirénzhě rén héng ài zhī, jìngrénzhě rén héng jìng zhī He who loves is loved; he who respects is respected.

【爱屋及乌】 ài wū jí wū When one loves another the affection extends even to the crows on the roof. / If you love someone, you should accept everything and everyone that the person loves. / Love me, love my dog.

大约与“爱屋及乌”同理的“慕仙至鹤”,鹤因神仙的荫护关系,而被人们认为享有千年的传奇寿命。

(周晓枫:《鸟群》)

Similar to the Western saying of "love me, love my dog," the Chinese have the phrase, "admire an immortal, admire his crane." Because of its being an immortal's protégé, a crane was believed to enjoy a lifespan of one thousand years.

【爱之欲其生,恶之欲其死】 ài zhī yù qí shēng, wù zhī yù qí sǐ When you love a person, you wish him to live; when you hate him, you wish him to die. / To love a thing means wanting it to live, to hate a thing means wanting it to perish.

后主曰“‘爱之欲其生,恶之欲其死。’卿何不容一宦官耶?”

(罗贯中:《三国演义》)

“‘We desire those we love to live, those we hate to die..’ Can you not



learn to live a single eunuch official?"

【碍面子】 ài miànzi to be afraid of hurting sb's feelings / for fear of offending sb

大家对喜富的意见，提一千条也有，可是一来没有准备，二来碍于老恒元的面子。  
(赵树理：《李有才板话》)

The people had many grievances against Xifu, but in the first place, this opportunity to voice them publicly was unexpected; in the second place, they were afraid of offending old man Yan.

【碍手碍脚】 ài shǒu ài jiǎo to be a drag / to be a nuisance / to get in sb's way

有了孩子，会碍手碍脚，耽搁工夫。  
(周立波：《山乡巨变》)

Children would be a drag and would slow down the work.

“赤手空拳，谁也救护不了谁，光是碍手碍脚，还不如一个单身人儿利落哩。”

(孙犁：《风云初记》)

“Could he look after me with his bare hands? We'd just get in each other's way. I'd do better alone.”

【安不可忘危，治不可忘乱】 ān bùkě wàng wēi, zhì bùkě wàng luàn Never relax your vigilance while you live in peace, and never be unprepared for the possible rebellion while your country has a good public order. / Always be provided against danger and rebellion. [A warning that one should ever be prepared for danger in spite of enjoying security]

【安分守己】 ān fèn shǒu jǐ to behave properly / to be content with one's lot and not to give any trouble / to act according to one's station

这个老人说话又慢、声音又低，他用一种什么方法教导儿子安分守己过光景的呢？  
(柳青：《创业史》)

The old man spoke slowly and in a low voice; how had he been able to teach his son to know his place?

只要你在那边安分守己，你一生穿衣吃饭一点也不用忧愁。(巴金：《家》)

As long as you remember to act according to your station, you'll never want for food or clothing.

【安富尊荣】 ān fù zūn róng to be accustomed to living a peaceful and prosperous life / to enjoy one's wealth and high rank

宝玉道：“谁都象三妹妹好多心。事事我常劝你，你别听那些俗语，想那俗事，只管安富尊荣才是。”  
(曹雪芹：《红楼梦》)

“Other people don't worry as much as you, third sister,” said Baoyu. “I'm