

英语词语 轻松学

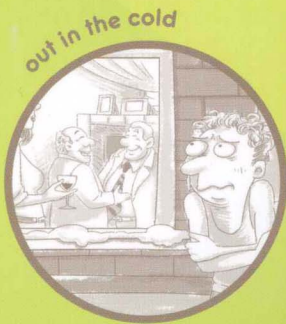
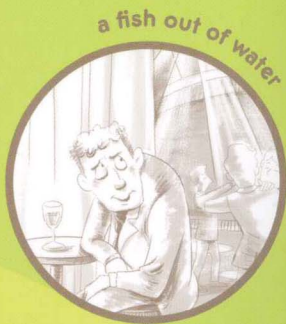
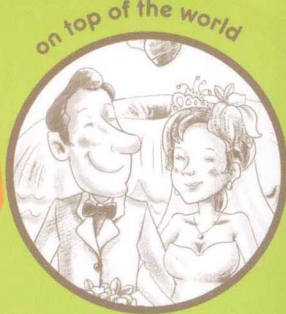
VOA经典栏目
词语趣谈

张同冰◎编

英语中那些特有的表达，
是否让你望文生义上过当？

式中频频出现，听新闻、观美剧常常遇到，
怎样学才能过目不忘？

每天一篇词语小故事，
换个视角学词语！



英语词语 轻松学

——VOA经典栏目
词语趣谈

张同冰◎编

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前 言

众所周知，语言是文化的载体，是文化的重要表现形式之一。语言不能脱离文化而存在，语言的理解和使用都以特定的文化背景为依托；每个民族的文化都必然在其语言中有所体现。

语言的这种文化载体特征决定了外语学习的过程必然会涉及所学语种的文化因素。有人甚至提出，外语学习就是“一个适应新文化的过程”。因此，我们应该认识到，外语学习不能局限于语言本身的语音、词汇和语法，还应尽可能在学习外语的同时掌握其中所蕴含的民族文化知识。

词汇是语言的基本单位，其中蕴含着丰富的文化内涵。英语词汇在长期使用过程中也积累了丰富的文化内涵。比如red一词，无论在英语国家还是在中国，红色往往与庆祝活动或喜庆的日子有关。例如英语里用red-letter day表示重要的、喜庆的日子。但英语中的red还可以暗示危险或紧急状态，比如red flag既表示红旗，也表示危险信号。还有，如果你在商务英语中看到in the red这个表达，可别以为是盈利这等好事，相反，它表示的是亏空、赤字。

本书英文材料取自美国之音英语学习频道（VOA Special English）中的“词汇掌故”栏目（Words and Their Stories），旨在向英语学习者介绍美国英语中生动有趣的单词、习语和惯用法，并从通俗词源学和历史典故的角度来解释某些英语单词、习语、惯用语的含义，产生的背景及其在使用过程中的演变情况等。通过阅读，读者不仅能学到地道的美国英语和丰富多彩的掌故，而且能增加对美国社会文化背景知识、历史传统与现状的了解。

本书译者秉持着忠实严谨又不失灵动圆润的翻译宗旨，力求做到英汉对照相得益彰，文意通畅，译笔精美。但囿于学力，译文不足之处难免。敬祈读者不吝批评指正。

张同冰

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英语词语轻松学

——VOA经典栏目词语趣谈



out in the cold

Part I

与天气和颜色相关的表达

1. Cold: She Felt the Cold Hard Reality of Life
寒冷：她感受到了现实生活的冷酷严峻
2. Hot: He Was a Hotheaded Hot Shot
热：他是个性急暴躁的莽汉
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4. Water: She Is In Hot Water
水：她惹上麻烦了
5. Colors: I'm Feeling Very Blue Today
颜色：我今天很郁闷



Cold: She Felt the Cold Hard Reality of Life

👂 Cold weather has a great effect on how our minds and our bodies work. Maybe that is why there are so many expressions that use the word **cold**.

For centuries, the body's blood has been linked closely with the emotions. People who show no human emotions or feelings, for example, are said to be **cold-blooded**. Cold-blooded people act in cruel ways. They may do brutal things to others, and not by accident.

For example, a newspaper says the police are searching for a **cold-blooded killer**. The killer murdered someone, not in self-defense, or because he was reacting to anger or fear. He seemed to kill for no reason, and with no emotion, as if taking someone's life meant nothing.

Cold can affect other parts of the body. The feet, for example. Heavy socks can warm your feet, if your feet are really cold. But there is an expression — **to get cold feet** — that has nothing to do with cold or your feet.

The expression means being afraid to do something you had decided to do. For example, you agree to be president of an organization. But then you learn that all the other officers have resigned. All the work of the organization will be your responsibility. You are likely to get cold feet about being president when you understand the situation.

Cold can also affect your shoulder.

You give someone the **cold shoulder** when you refuse to speak to them. You treat them in a distant, cold way. The expression probably comes from the physical act of turning your back toward someone, instead of speaking to him face-to-face. You may give a cold shoulder to a friend who has not kept a promise he made to you. Or, to someone who has lied about you to others.

A **cold fish** is not a fish. It is a person. But it is a person who is unfriendly, unemotional and shows no love or warmth. A cold fish does not offer much of himself to anyone.

Someone who is a cold fish could be **cold-hearted**. A cold-hearted person is someone who has no sympathy. Several popular songs in recent years were about cold-hearted men or cold-hearted women who, without feeling, broke the hearts of their lovers.

Out in the cold is an expression often heard. It means not getting something that everybody else got. A person might say that everybody but him got a pay raise, that he was left out in the cold. And it is not a pleasant place to be.

中文译读 Chinese Translation

寒冷：她感受到了现实生活的冷酷严峻

寒冷的天气对人们的思维方式和身体活动有很大影响。这也许就是有那么表达中之所以使用cold（寒冷）这个词的缘故。

人体血液与情绪关系密切，这种说法已有几百年的历史。比如，人们会说那些薄情寡义、感情冷漠的人是冷血的（cold-blooded）。冷血无情的人心狠手辣，他们可能做出残暴的事情，而且并非出于偶然的原因。

例如，一家报纸报道，警方正在缉拿一个冷血杀手（cold-blooded killer）。该杀手杀了人，既不是出于自卫，也不是由于愤怒或恐惧。他杀人害命似乎毫无原因，也毫无感觉。对他来说，夺人性命好像是平平常常、不足为奇的事情。

寒冷会影响人体的其他部位，比如脚。如果你的脚确实很冷，你可以穿上厚袜子为脚保暖御寒。但是，有个短语——临阵畏缩（get cold feet）——却与寒冷和脚毫无关系。

这个短语的意思是，害怕去做你决定要做的事情。比如，你同意担任一个组织的主席，但随后你了解到，该组织的所有其他官员都已辞职，全部工作都将由你负责。了解这一情况后，你可能对担当主席一职就信心不足了。

寒冷还会影响人的肩膀。

当你不想和某个人说话时，你就冷落他（give sb the cold shoulder）。你疏远他，对他冷冰冰的。这个短语可能来自背对某人而不是面对面交谈的体态动作。当一个朋友失

信于你或有人在他人面前编造你的谎言时，你可能就会冷落他们。

cold fish 可不是冰冷的鱼。它是指一种人，是那种不友好、感情淡漠、待人无爱心、不热情的人。这种人不会对任何人表示关爱。

上述那种人可能冷酷无情（cold-hearted）。冷酷的人没有同情心。近年来，有几首流行歌曲唱的就是那些寡情薄义、令情人肝肠寸断的冷血男女。

out in the cold 这个表达我们经常听到。它的意思是受到冷落，没有得到其他人都得到的东西。一个人可能会说，除他之外，别人都涨了工资，而他却被冷落了。被晾在冷处让人可不舒服啊！



词语速递

Vocabulary Express

1. cold-blooded /,kəʊld 'blʌdɪd/ 冷血的，残忍的，无情的
2. get cold feet 临阵畏缩，胆怯
3. give sb the cold shoulder 冷落某人，冷淡地对待某人
4. cold fish 态度冷冰冰的人，冷漠无情的人
5. cold-hearted /,kəʊld 'hɑ:tɪd/ 缺乏同情心的，无情的，冷酷的
6. out in the cold 遭排斥，被冷落



轻松一刻

Time for Fun

The new baby

Mr. and Mrs. Taylor had a seven-year-old boy named Pat. Now Mrs. Taylor was expecting another child.

Pat had seen babies in other people's houses and had not liked them very much, so he was not delighted about the news that there was soon going to be one in his house too.

One evening Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were making plans for the baby's arrival. "This house won't be big enough for us all when the baby comes," said Mr. Taylor.

Pat came into the room just then and said, "What are you talking about?" "We were saying that we'll have to move to another house now, because the new baby's coming," his mother answered.

"It's no use," said Pat hopelessly, "He'll follow us there."



Hot: He Was a Hotheaded Hot Shot

Every language has its own special words and expressions. And a story can be told about each of them.

Hot is a simple, easily-understood word. So are most of the expressions made with the word hot. But not always, as we shall see.

The words hot potato, for example, give you no idea at all to the meaning of the expression, **hot potato**.

The potato is a popular vegetable in the United States. Many people like baked potatoes, cooked in an oven or fire. Imagine trying to carry a hot, baked potato in your hand. It would be difficult, even painful, to do so.

Now we are getting close to the meaning of hot potato.

Some publicly-disputed issues are highly emotional. The issues must be treated carefully, or they will be difficult and painful if an elected official has to deal with them. As difficult and painful as holding a hot potato.

One such hot potato is taxes.

Calling for higher taxes can mean defeat for a politician. And yet, if taxes are not raised, some very popular government programs could be cut. And that also can make a politician very unpopular. So the questions must be dealt with carefully...the same way you would handle any other hot potato.

Another expression is **not so hot**. If you ask someone how **she** feels, she may answer "not so hot." What she means is she does not feel well.

Not so hot also is a way of saying that you do not really like something. You may tell a friend that the new play you saw last night is not so hot. That means you did not consider it a success.

A **hot shot** is a person — often a young person — who thinks he can do anything.

At least he wants to try. He is very sure he can succeed. But often he fails. The expression was born in the military forces. A hot shot was a soldier who fired without aiming carefully.

Hot is a word that is often used to talk about anger.

A person who becomes angry easily is called a **hothead**. An angry person's neck often becomes red. We say he is **hot under the collar**. You could say that your friend is no hothead. But he got hot under the collar when someone took his radio.

In nineteen sixty-three, **hot line** appeared as a new expression.

The hot line was a direct communications link between the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States. The hot line had an important purpose: to prevent accidental war between the two competitors during the period known as the Cold War. The American president and the Soviet leader were able to communicate directly and immediately on the hot line. This helped prevent any conflict during an international crisis.

中文译读 Chinese Translation

热：他是个性急暴躁的莽汉

每种语言都有其特有的词汇及表达。这些词汇及表达的背后都有一个故事。

hot这个词简单易懂，由它构成的大多数表达意思也都不难。不过也有例外，下面我们就会看到一些。

比如hot potato这个词语，意思可与“热土豆”一点儿都不沾边。

土豆在美国是一种广受欢迎的蔬菜。许多人喜欢吃烤箱或炉火烤出来的土豆。设想一下，手里要拿着一个烫乎乎的烤土豆那是什么感觉？很困难，甚至挺遭罪吧？

现在，我们距离hot potato的真正含义越来越近了。

一些公众有争议的问题高度敏感。当选官员应对这些问题可得谨慎，应对不好的话，那就像手里拿了个滚烫的土豆，难办又难受。

税收就是个让人挠头的棘手问题。

呼吁提高税收对一位政客可能意味着惨败。然而，假如不提高税收，一些深受欢迎的政府项目就会遭到削减，这同样会使一位政客大失民心。所以，处理这些问题一定要谨慎……处理其他敏感问题时同样不能大意。

另一个表达是not so hot。如果你问某人她感觉怎么样，对方可能会说“not so