

Dynamic Oral English for Today

实用英语口语突破

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前 言

这是一本专门为中国学生学习英语口语而设计编写的书。书中文章全部由作者亲笔撰写，无论题材的选择还是语言的运用，都颇具匠心，目的是为中国的中高级英语学习者英语会话提供广泛而恰当的素材，组织会话操练。全书充满话题式的、激发学习者学习兴趣的当代主旋律，具有全球性、前沿性、多样性、实用性。我们注重将语言学习与学习者的知识背景相结合，并为学习者提供尽可能多的信息量，展现层出不穷的使用语言的情景，以此大大提高他们学习英语的兴趣。实践证明，这是当前语言教学中卓有成效的途径。

我们选择“Dynamic”这个词为本书的题目，有其寓意，意在强调它“积极、充满活力、持续变化”的内涵。这正是本书考虑会话内容和会话要求的前提。在话题选择上，力求丰富、新颖、充满时代气息，便于引发畅谈与交流。会话的试题具有推动性，一改以往客观性试题的刻板拘谨，而是以主观试题为主，充分调动会话者个人感性经验的介入，给他们以广阔的创造性想象和思维的空间。

本书力求通过阅读、会话的实践活动来扩大学习者的词汇量，加强他们的“词汇能力”。这里所说的词汇能力指能在实际中应用所学词汇的能力，而不是孤立的强记硬背。新、难词汇与鼓励掌握的词语表达专门标出，意在强调词汇在上下文中理解与学习的重要性。例句的提供，也是出于同一目的。

在中国的教学改革，特别是大学、研究生阶段课程改革中，英语教学从单一的阅读语法教学转向提高学生听说读写综合能力的平衡发展上，强调英语口语教学已成为不可逆转的趋势。希望本书的出版为这一改革助一臂之力。

刘雁滨

2000年8月

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前言

这是一本专门为中国学生学习英语口语而设计编写的书。书中文章全部由作者亲笔撰写，无论题材的选择还是语言的运用，都颇具匠心，目的是为中国的中高级英语学习者英语会话提供广泛而恰当的素材，组织会话操练。全书充满话题式的、激发学习者学习兴趣的当代主旋律，具有全球性、前沿性、多样性、实用性。我们注重将语言学习与学习者的知识背景相结合，并为学习者提供尽可能多的信息量，展现层出不穷的使用语言的情景，以此大大提高他们学习英语的兴趣。实践证明，这是当前语言教学中卓有成效的途径。

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刘雁滨

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原书空白

Introduction

Learning is an active process. In learning English, the more active the student the greater possibilities for progress. That means that the student must be active in seeking out new ways to use the language and practicing in different ways to apply new vocabulary, expressions and language patterns.

Many students in China do not have an opportunity to converse with a foreigner or be taught by an English teacher. This book has been created for those individuals interested in advancing their English, but who perhaps by necessity must study alone.

The articles, specially written for this book are provided as stimulus material to provoke thinking and speaking. The expressions and vocabulary expansion and expression exercises are intended to be practiced out aloud. The speaking strategies at the end of each article have been designed to help students push their language, use the new language and take risks in using English.

A student's tape recorder is a best friend in learning English. If English-speaking friends are not readily available, there are still excellent strategies which can be used. Individuals using this book are encouraged to listen carefully to the accompanying tapes and practice the pronunciation of words. Following that, it is important to apply the language learned and to add it to existing language knowledge.

Most significantly, the student is urged to persevere in creating the small speeches, the lectures and to speak them out loud, preferably recording any spoken material. Listening to what has been said, identifying any errors or indulging in a little self praise for something well done are ways to make the most of this book.

We hope that your learning goes from strength to strength. Best wishes.

Pam Wadson

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Chapter 1



The Future and You

- 1.1 The future and futurologists
- 1.2 A look at the future-some forecasts
- 1.3 Space travel? It's closer than you think
- 1.4 Nostradamus: The man who could see the future?
- 1.5 Horoscopes and your future

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Chapter 1 The Future and You

1.1 The future and futurologists

Hindsight is easy, **foresight** is very difficult indeed.

Perhaps it is the ever-increasing pace of change that makes us so fascinated with the future. In his 1991 book “*Future Shock*” Alvin Toffler **popularized** the notion that the pace of so many aspects of life had **vastly** increased in the last 200 years: the speed of travel, knowledge **acquisition**, publications and technological developments.

A brief look back at the last thirty years can easily reveal the **rapidity** of change. As Pearson and Cochrane from BT Laboratories observe: back then there were no personal computers, laptop computers, digital wrist watches or pocket calculators. There were no VHS recorders, no camcorders. In actual fact, the average car of today has more intelligence **imbedded** into it than the first **lunar lander** and some wrist watches today have more computing ability than some mainframe computers of thirty years ago.

In these past few decades, electronic based industries have seen a doubling in capability every twelve months or so, affecting a wide range of technologies. Given such **phenomenal** advances, most people want to know what the next steps are, what the products will be, how these changes will improve life and living standards

These days the very word **futurologist** sits easily with most people. It seems appropriate that there are people who earn a living by analyzing data, trends, utilizing computer modeling and providing advice based on such information. Of course, much of their work is based on educated guesswork. Unlike the soothsayers and seers of ancient times, there are huge data banks at hand with advanced projection methods available. Thus, many government organizations and companies around the world not only seek the assistance of professional futurologists, but rely on them to reveal the possibilities of the future.

Vocabulary expansion

1. hindsight 事后聪明, 事后想起来
2. foresight 预见, 先见之明, 深谋远虑, 展望
3. popularized 使流行, 普遍接受
4. vastly 极大地
5. acquisition 获得 (知识的)
6. rapidity 快速性



7. imbedded ③ 嵌入
8. lunar lander ③ 月球登陆车
9. phenomenal ③ 惊人的, 可感受到的
10. futurologist ③ 未来学家 (futurology: 一门预测社会与科学技术发展变化, 研究科学技术的进步与人类社会的相互影响、相互关系等的综合性学科)

Practice these expressions

11 ever-increasing 不断增加的

Example: The ever-increasing population has urged people to take quick measures to deal with it.

12 popularized the notion 使人普遍接受某种见解

Example: It took quite long time to popularize the notion that the earth is not flat.

13 Given such phenomenal advances 对这种非凡的进步, 在这种得天独厚的条件下

Example: Given such phenomenal advances, students of Qinghua University have multiple access to gain frontier knowledge in the area of science and technology.

14 the very ... 用于强调

Example: The very fact that people can carry on this experiment is critical.

- Practice saying the sentences given as examples above.
- Create a new sentence (or two) for each expression and say each one out aloud.

Push your language

- 1) Read the above article out aloud (record if you can).
- 2) If you were a futurologist what kinds of data could you use? How far ahead do you think futurologists can accurately predict? What events might be totally unforeseen?
- 3) Do you think futurologists are important to business? Talk for two minutes on this topic, explaining your answer.
- 4) Are there many differences between futurologists and seers from ancient times? Imagine that you have been asked this question in a radio interview. Record your answer then listen to it.
- 5) Consider the future and the things that you currently know. Write down on a sheet of paper what your predictions are for the world in one year's time. What will be the main changes? Did you find this easy or difficult to do? Why?

1.2 A look at the future – some forecasts

Possibly because of the arrival of the new millennium experts, leading scientists and futurologists

have made many predictions, both short and long – term. Thousands of them exist yet the task of finding and **perusing** through them can be both fascinating and frustrating.

The following are **arbitrarily** selected items which show what the future will possibly contain.

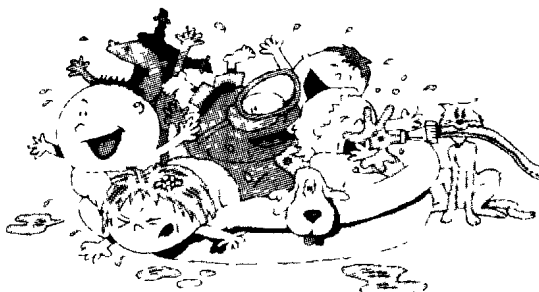
1. *Genetic engineering* will become increasingly important and common.
This will apply to plants and animals, including pets. **Gene** pools will be mapped, understood and managed by scientists.
2. *Human genome mapping* will expand rapidly.
This will lead to many breakthroughs in the prevention of diseases and the discovery of cures for cancer.
3. *Thumbprints and eye scanners* will replace personal identification numbers and passwords.
This will make e-cash popular and secure. Small hand-held scanners will **verify** the **authenticity** of any thumbprint. Thus, this technology will be used to open cars, doors to homes and offices.
4. *Speech-recognition* advances will make typing **obsolete**.
This will possibly lead to a change in the box-type computer in its current form.
5. *Electronic miniaturization* will continue to develop for individual use.
Pocket-size data centers for personal use will enable fax, telephone and computer functions to be available in a machine which is about the size of a small calculator.
6. *Portable energy sources* will become longer-lasting and more compact.
Fuel cells and batteries will provide the power for future electronic devices as they become more portable.
7. *Customization* will increase.
As the demand for personalized customization increases, the color, shape, size of many applications will change. This will range from mobile phones and office centers to cars and entertainment centers.
8. *Bio-monitoring devices* will become commonplace.
Wrist-watch like, these devices will monitor an individual's health status and provide data on blood pressure, heart-rate, stress levels and **abnormalities**.
9. *Super-materials* will be used in many applications.
Applying new scientific knowledge will see new materials created for high performance in transportation, computers, communication and energy.
10. *Smart appliances* will be widespread.
A small highly functional computer will provide home-climate control, automatically switch off appliances which have been accidentally left on, vacuum the house in the absence of people, analyze the contents of the refrigerator and recommend recipes for the items available in the kitchen.

Interestingly, the technology for all of these is available now. Many of the products and processes

have been tried or have had **prototypes** already made. It is just a matter of getting them on to the market and into use.

Vocabulary expansion

1. perusing 浏览 (长时间) 细读
2. arbitrarily 任意地
3. gene 基因
4. verify 验证
5. authenticity 真实性
6. obsolete 已废弃的, 过时的
7. customization 定做
8. bio-monitoring devices 生物检测仪
9. abnormalities 不规则, 反常
10. prototypes 生产原形, 样板 (指用特定方法生产出来的第一件物品)



Practice these expressions

11 in the prevention of 防止某事发生

Example: This equipment is used in the prevention of fire.

12 verify the authenticity of 证实某事的真实性

Example: A lot of trial work has been done to verify the authenticity of this experiment.

13 in the absence of 在某人不在场的情况下

Example: The meeting could not be held in the absence of the board's chairperson.

- Practice saying the sentences given as examples above.

- Create a new sentence (or two) for each expression and say each one out aloud.

Push your language

- 1) Read the above article out aloud (record if you can).
- 2) Many of the advances are viewed by most people as bringing benefits. Can you think of any disadvantages that some of these ideas for the future will bring?
Make a short speech that outlines some of the main problems such new advances might bring.
- 3) Make a prediction about the car of the future (5 – 10 years later).
What will it possibly be like? What kinds of changes will it have? Be as imaginative as possible.
- 4) Imagine that you have been asked to present your ideas (from Number 1 and Number 2) on a television program. Present your ideas in a confident manner.

1.3 Space travel? It's closer than you think

Some people regard the future as far off – something that is hundreds of years to come. In actual fact it is really closer than that.

There are some remarkable **indicators** that the future is “**upon us**”. Take, for example the fact that there are already plans on the drawing board for an orbiting space station which is for tourists, not astronauts. A space hotel, **conceived** by Shimizu, a Japanese based company is viewed as a reality in “the future”, but not in terms of twenty years or so – much sooner than that – perhaps within the decade. Tour operators Space Adventures and Zegrahm Space Voyages already exist and are taking bookings for the first commercial passenger flights into space. Would-be passengers are willing to pay in the vicinity of \$ 120,000 for a trip 100 miles above the earth.

There is actually a great deal of interest in the idea of future space travel for tourists. More than fifteen companies in Europe and the United States are working hard to win a \$ 15 million “X Prize”, which will be awarded to the first group to launch a space vehicle which can carry three people to a height of more than 100 kilometers above the earth, return them safely to earth and launch again within two weeks.

Such **incentives** have given way to a **glimpse** of the future, with groups such as the Texas – based Lone Star Space Access Corporation (Houston) maintaining that they will most likely have a “**hyper-sonic**” craft (the Cosmos Mariner) available within a few years. The concept is **staggering**. Flying in an orbit of 100 kilometers above Earth, the possibilities are that the time to travel between New York and London would be a mere 20 minutes. In real terms it would take more time to ascend and descend than to travel the Atlantic Ocean.

Yet another company, Starchaser Industries in Manchester, England, anticipates the likelihood of a working rocket before 2005.

One of the significant changes to push the future into reality has been that big business has started to realize the possibilities. Instead of national governments controlling the **notion** of space and the future of space travel, people with **vision** and a sense of risk have begun to invest money – and with good reason. At the First US Space Tourism Conference held in 1999, it was estimated that the space tourism could eventually grow to a \$ 10 billion a year industry – in the US alone!

If business people and investors seek to analyse and want to be part of a new industry that seems to have a solid future, then why not space tourism? There are millions of people around the globe who would love to experience something different, to see their planet from space and to travel on a holiday in zero-gravity sub-orbital flights. I know I would

Vocabulary expansion

1. indicators 迹象
2. upon us 发生了