

# SURVIVING THE ENGLISH CORNER

外 教 告 诉 你 如 何

## 纵横英语角

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- 脱口而出，我们不拒绝成为全场焦点

广东省语言音像出版社



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## Surviving the English Corner

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# 前 言

流利的英语口语离不开勤学苦练，所以语言学家认为语言学习的三条诀窍就是：**Practice, Practice, Practice**（练习，练习，再练习）。然而，去哪儿找一个语言环境练习英语口语是很多中国学习者一直为之头痛的问题。

在教室里练口语？或许有时候可以！但是课堂所提供的练习时间是很有限制的，更何况很多人未必敢在老师在场的情况下自信说英语。跟同学或者同事在业余练习口语？相对来说熟悉的人一起更容易受到母语以及一些非语言因素交流的干扰。去英语国家学口语？昂贵的费用决非大多数的家庭和个人所能够承受。在众多选择面前，选择去英语角练口语变成了一种很好的有效途径。口语角是只有在母语为非英语的国家才存在的一种独特的学习现象。很多城市在公园有英语角，很多学校在校园里也有很多英语角。在这里，练习者的水平大致相当，从而有效避免了因为自卑而不敢开口的弊病，并且大家都有一个共同的愿望：学习用英语进行交流。

本书由在香港公共电台从事多年英语播音和二外教学的专家 Edward 先生和本刊主编共同撰写。书本分十五个章节，内容由浅入深，从口语角的各个层面进行分析，介绍了大量的交际技巧和实用表达范例，是引领广大英语口语教师和英语学习者进行口头英语教育和学习的指南。

我们欢迎广大师生在使用本书的过程中给我们提出宝贵意见；敬请从事英语语言教学和传播的同行不吝赐教。来稿请寄 Email:easytalk\_hu@hotmail.com

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## About the Author

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*E. Morton Jack*

Edward Morton Jack was born and brought up in rural Oxfordshire, England. He showed musical ability at an early age, and was awarded a Music Scholarship [piano] to Eton College. After graduating from the University of London with a BSc. Hons. degree in Psychology he worked in London for 18 months for the President of the Liszt Society, and continues to this day to be an elected Member of the Council of Management. In February 1999 he went to China to teach in Nanjing university, and traveled extensively throughout China and Tibet. He also learned putonghua. In Autumn 2000 he moved to Hong Kong to work as a full-time producer / presenter for Radio Television Hong Kong, reading the news and hosting a daily live mid-morning classical music programme.

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# *1*

## **WHY WE CHOOSE ENGLISH CORNERS TO PRACTICE ENGLISH**

为什么选择在英语角练口语

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English Corners are a great way to learn and improve English. This is because they are an informal *gathering* of people with one common aim - to speak and communicate in English. Nobody feels threatened at an English Corner, whatever his or her level of spoken English.



译文

去英语角是我们学习和提高英语的一个好方法。这是因为英语角是一个非正式的聚会，来这里的人都抱着同样的目的——用英语进行交流。在英语角，不管一个人的口语水平怎样，他或她都不会感到不自在。

【词汇指南】 *gathering* 聚会

In China it is very common that students have excellent English ability in writing and reading, but poor ability in speaking. This is because very few students actually have the chance to *speak* English, let alone with a native speaker. I once had the curious experience of making a *transaction* in a bank in Nanjing, and the teller could not understand what I was saying, so she passed me a pen and paper through her window. I wondered what use this would be if she couldn't understand me already, but nevertheless I wrote my request. She immediately took my meaning, and we continued this bizarre means of communication until my transaction was *complete*.

## 译文

在中国, 学生英语写作和阅读的能力不错, 但口语却非常薄弱的现象相当普遍。这是因为, 很少学生有机会说英语, 更不要说与讲英语的本国人员进行交谈。在南京的一间银行里, 我曾经有过一段奇怪的办事经历, 营业员不懂我说的话, 于是, 她从窗口把纸和笔递给我。我感到疑惑: 她既然听不懂, 这又于事何补? 但我还是写下了我的要求。她马上知道了我的意思, 我们继续着这种稀奇古怪的交流方式直至交易完成。

【词汇指南针】transaction 交易

complete 完成

What could be at the *root* of this very common problem in China? The answer is confidence. This is a point to which I shall return in the next chapter. Students lack confidence in communicating with spoken English, and the one reason for this is that they do not have enough opportunity to speak it. This is being increasingly realized by colleges and institutions throughout China. More and more foreign teachers are being employed, and this is a highly *commendable* trend. It will lead to a better level of spoken English in China for the future.

## 译文

这个在中国普遍存在的问题的根源是什么? 是自信心。这一点我下章还会讲到。学生在用英语进行口语交流的时候缺乏自信, 原因之一便是他们讲英语的机会不够多。全国的大专院校都日渐意识到了这一点, 它们不断聘用更多的外教, 这一方向值得高度赞扬。这种趋势将把中国未来的英语口语水平提高到一个新台阶。

【词汇指南针】root 根源: 来源于

commendable 值得赞扬的; 可推荐的



China has a huge history and vast cultural heritage. However we are also fortunate that the pinyin system - the standard modern form of Romanized Chinese - has firmly established itself alongside the traditional form of written Chinese. Nowadays, throughout mainland China it is absolutely standard to see road and street signs all *bilingually* printed, as well as all manner of hotel and shop names, and many other things. This has made China a much friendlier place to the foreigner. The pervasiveness of the pinyin system has brought with it many great advantages to the China of today. Foremost amongst these is a far increased awareness of - and proficiency in - the Western alphabet. These mere 26 letters are capable of being combined in so many *permutations* that a truly rich and diverse English language has evolved from them.

## 译文

中国有着悠久的历史和丰富的文化遗产。然而，我们何其有幸，拼音制——这种罗马字化的中文现代标准形式——已和传统的书面汉字并肩站在一起。现在，全中国大陆的路、街和各种各样的旅馆商店以及许多其他东西，放眼望去，都以双语标出。对国际友人来说，这样的中国对他们更加友善。拼音体系的普及给今日中国带来了许多好处。这其中最重要的一点就是，对英文字母的感觉和熟练得以大大提高。经由不同的排列组合，仅仅这二十六个字母就演化成了如此丰富多样的英语语言。

【词汇指南针】dissuade 劝阻某人不做某事

bilingual 双语的

permutation 交换，变更

Literacy levels in China leapt by an *unprecedented* degree when young children were able to grapple with the written form of their language through the medium of the Roman alphabet. They were immediately far more easily able to commit to memory the sounds associated with their language.



译文

在中国，当年轻人能通过罗马拼音把握他们语言的书面形式时，他们的读书识字能力以前所未有的速度跳跃。他们很快比以前更容易地记住与语言有关的发音。

【词汇指南针】unprecedented 空前的；无先例的

But what other reasons are there that students congregate in English Corner to speak English? It is often a highly social event, a great meeting place for friends, and perhaps a place where *prospective* lovers may meet too. In the often slightly socially *repressed* society of today's China, where the gap between the generations is growing ever wider, young people can come to English Corner as a means of expressing themselves in a way that is perhaps beyond them within the *confines* of their own culture. Younger people and students in particular are growing further and further towards a Western influence, and the English corner provides an excellent let-out for this trend.

译文

学生聚在英语角讲英语的其他原因又是什么呢？英语角是一项非常的社交活动，一个交友的好地方，也有可能是邂逅未来情侣的地方。在今日社交经常略显压抑的中国，代沟愈来愈大，年轻人把英语角看作是一种超越他们自身文化约束来表达自我心声的方式。特别是年轻人包括年轻学生，他们越来越多地受到西方的影响，而英语角就为这种趋势提供了一种非常好的出路。

【词汇指南针】prospective 预期的，未来的

repress 压制，约束

confine 限制，局限

Each city and university has its own English Corner, sometimes several. The meeting time and place will be a regular fixture in many people weeks. It is a place where all social hang-ups and pre-occupations can be left behind. Everybody is glad simply of the chance to talk English to anybody who will listen. Foreigners often find it a bewildering and exhausting experience to be a guest of honour at an English Corner. Very likely they will be the centre of attention, and could have literally hundreds of students trying to attract and engage their attention all at the same time.

译文

每一座城市，每所大学都有各自的英语角，有时有好几个。活动时间和地点在很多人的时间里都有固定安排。在这里，所有的心事，所有的烦恼都可以通通抛之脑后。人人都只为有机会与愿意倾听的人用英语交流而感到高兴。外国人往往会觉得到英语角当嘉宾又累又迷惑。很有可能，他们会成为注意的焦点，几乎有几百学生同时都想吸引和占据他们的注意力。

【词汇指南针】occupation 工作，职业

exhausting 精疲力竭的

English Corner provides a safe haven and environment for everyone. It is always a friendly place. No one is rejected. It is often a place where perhaps even the less socially popular students can *shine*, often having the better English. They become immediately in demand, hot *property*, in the English Corner.

## 译文

英语角为每个人提供了一块安全的净土。它总是那么友善，没有人会被排斥在外。它经常为甚至社交不好的学生提供一席用武之地，来提高英语。在英语角，这些学生迅速成为炙手可热的人。

【词汇指南针】shine 照耀

property 财产

Topics for discussion in the English Corner are rarely *prescribed*, although sometimes a topic might be announced in advance so that students can prepare special vocabulary lists, and amaze each other with what they have learned. It is an excellent introduction to the idea of self-study in China, a familiar component of Western tertiary-level education which otherwise seems very much lacking from the Chinese system. It is one of the times when one can see the students' imaginations really fired. Their keenness to do well and to get ahead *impels* them onwards.

## 译文

在英语角讨论的话题很少事先透露，尽管有时为了让学生准备专门的词汇，或以己所学折服别人，话题可能事先被宣布。把自学——中国教育体系所缺乏的这种西方高等教育常见



的组成部分——引入中国是很好的。只有在这种时刻，我们才能看到学生想象力真正被激发。他们要求学习与进步的热忱激励着他们前进。

【词汇指南针】

prescribe 规定，指定

impel 推进，驱使

Where and how do you usually practise your spoken English? Can you just name a few?

But to return to the central idea of this opening section **Why do we choose English Corners to practise English**, the answer really is very simple. There is a burning desire within the hearts of most Chinese students, for whom English is compulsory at university, to do well at

it, and to be good at it. Students whose major is English are of course immediately at an advantage over non English major students when it comes to English oral ability, but still there seems almost to be a *race* in China, for the success of this *emerging* generation of bilingual students.

但回到开头部分的中心问题“为什么选择英语角学口语”答案也确实很简单。在大学，英语是必修课，大部分学生的内心深处都有要学好英语的强烈愿望。在英语口语能力方面，英语专业学生当然比非英语专业学生有优势，但现在在中国似乎有一种竞赛，目的就是把年轻一代培养成双语学生。

【词汇指南针】

race 比赛

emerging 形成



Just why is English so important to them all? English seems to have been recognized as the international language. There may be a greater number of Chinese speakers in the world statistically speaking, but nevertheless English is the most widely used and understood language on the planet. It is also often considered to be one of the simplest languages to master at a basic level, whilst also containing the highest shades of meaning for specific communication at the highest level, so it suits both *amateur* and professional *alike*, as it were.

## 译文

那英语对他们为什么都如此重要？英语似乎已被公认为国际语言。从统计上说，世界上讲中文的更多，然而，英语却是世界上用得最广泛和最容易被理解的语言。英语被认为是最容易初步掌握的语言之一，而就是这种初步知识所包涵的最丰富含义也足以用来进行最高层次的具体交流，跟过去一样，它交流起来可浅可深。

【词汇指南】*amateur* 业余的

*alike* 一样地

This status of English in the world at the moment is one that is not likely to be changed, and it has therefore been recognized in China that one of the best ways to get ahead, and indeed help the country develop, is to increase the level of English spoken and understood across the country. It is quite astonishing just how much English is understood, really, when one considers China's recent history. A mere generation ago there were very few English speakers in China. Now every city has hordes of students eager to practise with visiting foreigners and travellers. The country

and its people have done an amazing amount to pull themselves up. The economic, social and educational *revolution* that has taken place, and *is* taking place in China today, is a *marvel* to behold.

译文

目前，英语在世界上的地位不太可能改变，因此，在中国，人们认识到提高全国讲英语懂英语的水平是真正可以促进国家发展的最好途径之一。回想一下中国不久前的样子，我们都会为有这么多人懂英语而感到震惊。仅仅一代人之前，中国很少有人讲英语。而今，在每座城市都有成群结队的想与来访外宾和旅游者练习英语的学生。国家和民族已经为自我提升做了大量工作。今日中国已发生的和正在发生的经济、社会和教育改革都应该被看成是一个奇迹。

【词汇指南】 revolution 革命

marvel 令人惊奇

English Corner is an essential part of this trend - one might almost say evolution- in China today, towards better use of the English language. The determination of the students is quite *remarkable*, and must be given the utmost encouragement.

译文

在今日中国，对于英语的更好运用，英语角便是这种趋势的必要组成部分——有人甚至会说是一种‘进化’。学生学英语的决心相当大，必须给予最大的鼓励。

【词汇指南】 remarkable 显著的，非凡的

# 2

## HOW TO MAKE A SUCCESS IN THE ENGLISH CORNER

如何纵横英语角

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The best way to succeed in English Corner is to have confidence. This is often very hard for Chinese students. Often their level of comprehension in English is very good, both of written and spoken English, but their ability actually to speak English themselves often *lags far behind*. So how can we increase the level of confidence in Chinese students?



译文

在决胜英语角最好的办法就是自信。这对中国学生来说经常是很困难的。其实，他们不管书面和口头英语的理解能力都是很不错的，只是他们真正讲英语的能力常常滞后罢了。怎么来提高中国学生的自信呢？

【词汇指南针】lag behind 落后的

To determine how we may help the students to raise their level of confidence we need first to establish the reasons behind this *lack* of confidence.



译文

在决定怎样帮助这些学生增强信心之前，我们首先需要弄清楚他们缺乏自信的原因所在。

【词汇指南针】lack 缺少

Part of the reason for the lack of confidence is cultural. Students are not generally encouraged to be noisy or to communicate freely. This is an aspect of Chinese education that is gradually changing, although it is not only in the classroom that this element of Chinese culture can be