

英语易混淆词辨异

——词汇学应用

南强丛书

NANQIANGCHONGSHU

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Easily Confused English Words

——Lexicology in Practice

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厦门大学出版社

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前 言

孪生儿最难分辨,连非孪生同胞,乃至亲堂、中表、叔侄,因为本是同根,音容维肖,远处难以区分的也有的是。这时如贸然相认,常闹笑话。

英语词汇中也有许多孪生儿或血缘近亲,如不仔细审辨,张冠李戴,也易造成误解,其影响可能不止是笑话,不可不慎!

就词的相似来说,有同音异义(homophones),同形异词(homographs),因其意义截然不同,词典上也分列词条处理,反而不易混淆。还有同义词(synonyms)是一望便知不同的单词,也不至误以为一。另外一类是一些词源相关、词根相同、词形(有时乃至语音)相似的词。这些词之间词义常又相近或相关,但解释不完全相同,在一定语境中可以大不相同,乃至相反。特别在用法上各有分工,不可互换。把它用于不适当场合,就会出语病!如:

acceptance, acception

access, accession

adherence, adhesion

definite, definitive

displace, misplace

dispersal, dispersion

elemental, elementary

observance, observation

permissible, permissive

rational, reasonable

这一类词可笼统称为易混淆词。它们貌同心异，形似神非，如果想当然地自以为知其一即知其二，在阅读翻译时必然误解或感到费解，写作时不能达意。例如：一般词典常在两词之间互作释义，不易分辨，如：partly, partially。其中，partially 可能被定义为 partly, not completely, 也可能在 partial 词条之后加一个 partially *adv.*，那么“书一半用英语写”是 partly in English 还是 partially in English?

有时辞典中的中文语义相同。如 incident, incidental 都作“易发生的；伴随的”；locality, location 都作“场所”、“地点”；assent, consent 都是“同意”。此外还有 allure, lure; amend, emend; apprehend, comprehend; assume, presume; avenge, revenge; award, reward; bloom, blossom; certainty, certitude; contemporaneous, contemporary; continual, continuous……它们之间何时才同义？是否任何场合都可以交替使用？

以前上海租界公园门口挂着“中国人与狗不得入内！”的侮辱性的牌子。对这些帝国主义者，真应该“以其人之道还治其人之身”，也在别人可去而他们也想去的地方写上“不准入内！”可是且慢！英语怎么表达？是 No admittance 还是 No admission？

female voice 和 feminine voice; female education 和 feminine education 哪一个是对的？也许全对？

sensual pleasures 和 sensuous pleasures 在某一定语境下可以都讲得通，如果要表达夏天洗完澡，两腋风生，清凉无汗这种感觉，该用哪个？

该说 economic rent 还是 economical rent？

detract 和 distract 中的-tract 这个词根都表示 to pull, to draw, 而 de- 和 dis- 又都是一种表示消极意思的前缀，两词意义一样吗？

flammable 和 inflammable 之间是什么关系？

这一连串问题，会不断在学习英语过程中出现。如果说词汇学

可以通俗地定义为“词的科学”，似乎不能不指导学生解决这一类问题。如果在传统教材外，另以易混淆词为纲，自分别比较中讲授各组词条的词源、构成（前后词缀、词根）、词义转变、褒贬词性、书面语、口头语等等，一而再、再而三地通过解剖麻雀的方式来巩固一般词汇学书中所谈到的上述重要的问题。那么，既学到了概念，又解决了上述容易混淆的难点，更重要的是，可以学会如何运用辞书及活的口笔语教材，研究单词的办法。也许可以使理论更好地结合实践。

笔者以前在词汇学教学过程中，出于这种设想，上课时常就易混淆词先各列举若干例句，要求学生考虑、讨论，然后作结论式说明。笔者认为这种做法可以启发同学思维，而且由于易混淆性有似是而非的感觉，对比兴趣盎然，印象较为深刻。因反映良好，以后又以若干词条于研究生课中讨论，也有一定效果。

现自历年讲义中选出若干词条，整理成编。编排方式以每两词作一组（以免多词交叉对比，印象混乱，难以记忆），每组中先给例句让读者自行考虑有何区别后，再作说明。例句一概不加译文，只对各词条略给词典中一、二释义，供参考。为了突出区别，有时还将两词放在其它方面相同或极相似的结构中，作为对比。例如：

$$\begin{cases} \text{access to the throne} \\ \text{accession to the throne} \end{cases}$$

12年来编写讲义一再更新过程中承黄丽蓉、苏宗文两君经常提供资料，提出建议；成书阶段，又得林立、李红梅、李美华、许紫红诸君热情协助整理、补充例句，林、李二位出力尤多，实为可感。

本书曾由“南强丛书”评审出版领导小组请葛德纯教授审阅全文，特表谢意。

作者

1994. 4

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词 目 表*

A		
1	abjure	adjure
2	abrogate	arrogate
3	abuse	misuse
4	accede	concede
4	accede	exceed
5	accept	except
6	acceptance	acceptation
	acceptation → acceptance	
6	access	accession
	accession → access	
7	accidental	incidental
9	accord (in accord with)	ac-
	cordance (in accordance with)	
	accordance (in accordance with)	
	→ accord (in accord with)	
9	acquirement	acquisition
	acquisition → acquirement	
10	activate	actuate
	actuate → activate	
11	adapt	adopt
12	addition	edition
13	adherence	adhesion
	adhesion → adherence	
	adjure → abjure	
13	admissible	admittable
14	admission	admittance
	admittable → admissible	
	admittance → admission	
	adopt → adapt	
16	adopted	adoptive
	adoptive → adopted	
16	advance	advanced
17	advance	advancement
	advanced → advance	
	advancement → advance	
18	adventure	venture
18	adverse	averse
19	advert	avert
20	affect	effect
21	affectation	affection
	affection → affectation	

* “→”表示“见前…条”。

22	affinity	infinity
22	allude	elude
23	allure	lure
24	alternate	alternative
	alternative	→ alternate
25	amend	emend
26	amiable	amicable
	amicable	→ amiable
27	amity	enmity
27	amoral	immoral
28	antiquated	antique
	antique	→ antiquated
28	appraise	apprise
29	appraise	praise
30	apprehend	comprehend
	apprise	→ appraise
31	arbitrator	arbitrator
	arbitrator	→ arbiter
	arrogate	→ abrogate
31	artisan	artist
	artist	→ artisan
32	aspire	inspire
33	assent	consent
34	assignation	assignment
	assignment	→ assignation
34	assimilate	simulate
35	assume	presume
36	avenge	revenge
	averse	→ adverse
	avert	→ advert
37	avocation	vocation

37 | award reward

B

39	bail	bale
	bale	→ bail
40	baleful	baneful
	baneful	→ baleful
40	beneficent	beneficial
	beneficial	→ beneficent
41	biannual	biennial
	biennial	→ biannual
41	bloom	blossom
	blossom	→ bloom
42	born	borne
	borne	→ born

C

43	catalogue	category
	category	→ catalogue
43	censor	censure
	censure	→ censor
44	ceremonial	ceremonious
	ceremonious	→ ceremonial
46	certainty	certitude
	certitude	→ certainty
46	cessation	cession
	cession	→ cessation
47	cession	session
47	cheerful	cheery
	cheery	→ cheerful

48	childish childlike		consciousness → conscience
	childlike → childish		consent → assent
50	classic classical	60	consequent consequential
	classical → classic		consequential → consequent
51	clench clinch	61	consistent constant
51	climactic climatic		constant → consistent
	climatic → climactic	62	constrain restrain
	clinch → clench	63	constructional constructive
52	coherence cohesion		constructive → constructional
	cohesion → coherence	63	consul council
53	collide collude	64	contemporaneous contempo-
	collude → collide		rary
54	comic comical		contemporary → contemporane-
	comical → comic		ous
55	command commend	65	contemptible contemptuous
	commend → command		contemptuous → contemptible
56	complacent complaisant	66	continual continuous
	complaisant → complacent		continuous → continual
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57	comprehensible comprehen-		dent
	sive	68	corporal corporeal
	comprehensive → comprehensi-		corporeal → corporal
	ble		correspondent → co-respondent
	concede → accede	69	corps corpse
58	confident confidential		corpse → corps
	confidential → confident	69	costume custom
59	congenial congenital		council → consul
	congenital → congenial	70	council counsel
			counsel → council
60	conscience consciousness	71	courtesy curtsy
60	conscientious conscious	71	credence credit
	conscious → conscientious		

72	credible	creditable
	credit	→ credence
	creditable	→ credible
73	crumble	crumple
	crumple	→ crumble
	curtsy	→ courtesy
	custom	→ costume

D

74	daze	dazzle
	dazzle	→ daze
75	deadly	deathly
	deathly	→ deadly
76	debar	disbar
77	deceit	deception
77	deceitful	deceptive
	deception	→ deceit
	deceptive	→ deceitful
78	decided	decisive
	decisive	→ decided
79	declaim	disclaim
80	deduce	deduct
	deduct	→ deduce
80	defective	deficient
82	defensible	defensive
	defensive	→ defensible
82	deference	deferment
	deferment	→ deference
	deficient	→ defective
83	definite	definitive

	definitive	→ definite
84	delicate	delicious
	delicious	→ delicate
85	deliverance	delivery
	delivery	→ deliverance
86	delusion	illusion
88	denominate	nominate
88	deportation	deportment
	deportment	→ deportation
89	depose	dispose
89	deprecate	depreciate
	depreciate	→ deprecate
90	derange	disarrange
91	derelict	dereliction
	dereliction	→ derelict
91	desert	dessert
	dessert	→ desert
92	desirable	desirous
	desirous	→ desirable
92	despair	desperation
	desperation	→ despair
93	destination	destiny
	destiny	→ destination
93	detract	distract
94	detract	subtract
95	direct	directly
	directly	→ direct
96	disability	inability
	disarrange	→ derange
96	disassemble	dissemble
	disbar	→ debar

97	disbelief	unbelief	108	educational	educative
97	disburse	disperse		educative → educational	
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98	discreet	discrete	109	effective	efficient
	discrete	→ discreet	110	effectual	efficacious
99	disinterested	uninterested		efficacious → effectual	
99	dispersal	dispersion		efficient → effective	
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100	displace	misplace	112	electric	electrical
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102	disposal	disposition	112	elemental	elementary
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103	divers	diverse	115	emergence	emergency
	diverse	→ divers		emergency → emergence	
104	diversion	diversity	115	emigrate	immigrate
	diversity	→ diversion	116	eminent	imminent
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				emotive → emotional	
			117	endemic	epidemic
				enmity	→ amity
105	earthly	earthy	118	enormity	enormousness
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107	economic	economical		entry → entrance	
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	edible	→ eatable		envious → enviable	
	edition	→ addition			

E

	epidemic → endemic
120	epigraph epitaph
	epitaph → epigraph
121	equable equitable
	equitable → equable
122	eruption irruption
123	especially specially
123	estimate estimation
	estimation → estimate
124	evasion evasiveness
	evasiveness → evasion
124	every one everyone
	everyone → every one
	exceed → accede
125	exceedingly excessively
	except → accept
125	exceptionable exceptional
	exceptional → exceptionable
	excessively → exceedingly

F

127	facility faculty
128	facility felicity
129	factitious fictitious
	faculty → facility
130	falsehood falseness
	falseness → falsehood
131	farther further
131	fatal fateful
	fateful → fatal

	felicity → facility
132	female feminine
	feminine → female
134	festal festive
	festive → festal
	fictitious → factitious
134	flare glare
135	flashing flashy
	flashy → flashing
136	flavour savour
137	fleshly fleshy
	fleshy → fleshly
138	forceful forcible
	forcible → forceful
138	forego forgo
	forgo → forego
139	funeral funereal
	funereal → funeral
	further → farther

G

141	gape gaze
	gaze → gape
141	genteel gentle
	gentle → genteel
142	gesticulation gesture
	gesture → gesticulation
143	glance glimpse
	glare → flare
144	gleam glimmer

	glimmer → gleam
	glimpse → glance
145	glisten glitter
	glitter → glisten
145	glorify glory
	glory → glorify
146	gold golden
	golden → gold
147	gourmand gourmet
	gourmet → gourmand
147	graceful gracious
	gracious → graceful
149	grand grandiose
	grandiose → grand
149	grateful gratified
150	gratification gratitude
	gratified → grateful
	gratitude → gratification
151	grief grievance
	grievance → grief
151	groan moan
152	growl howl

H

154	hard hardly
	hardly → hard
154	healthful healthy
	healthy → healthful
155	hesitancy hesitation
	hesitation → hesitancy

156	high highly
	highly → high
156	historic historical
	historical → historic
158	honorable honorary
	honorary → honorable
	howl → growl
159	human humane
	humane → human
159	humiliation humility
	humility → humiliation

I

161	identification identity
	identity → identification
	illegible → eligible
	illusion → delusion
161	illustrative illustrious
	illustrious → illustrative
162	imaginary imaginative
	imaginative → imaginary
	immerge → emerge
	immigrate → emigrate
	imminent → eminent
	immoral → amoral
163	immunity impunity
164	imperative imperious
	imperious → imperative
164	impersonate personify
165	imprudent impudent

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	inability → disability		irruption → eruption
166	incapable unable		
166	incident incidental		J
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	incidental → incident		judicious → judicial
168	industrial industrious	177	junction juncture
	industrious → industrial		juncture → junction
	infinity → affinity		
168	inflammable inflammatory		K
	inflammatory → inflammable	179	kind kindly
169	informant informer		kindly → kind
	informer → informant		
169	ingenious ingenuous		L
	ingenuous → ingenious	180	last latest
170	inhibit prohibit		latest → last
170	inquest inquiry	180	legislation legislature
	inquiry → inquest		legislature → legislation
171	insidious invidious	181	lengthened lengthy
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	institute → institution	181	limit limitation
	institution → institute		limitation → limit
172	instructional instructive	182	lineage lineage
	instructive → instructional		lineage → lineage
173	intellectual intelligent	183	literal literary
	intelligent → intellectual		literary → literal
174	intense intensive	183	locality location
	intensive → intense		location → locality
175	intent intention		lure → allure
	intention → intent		

184	luxuriant	luxurious
	luxurious	→ luxuriant

M

186	magic	magical
	magical	→ magic
187	masterful	masterly
	masterly	→ masterful
	misplace	→ displace
	mistrust	→ distrust
	misuse	→ abuse
	moan	→ groan
188	mode	mood
189	momentary	momentous
	momentous	→ momentary
	mood	→ mode
189	moral	morale
	morale	→ moral
190	motif	motive
	motive	→ motif

N

192	negligent	negligible
	negligible	→ negligent
	nominate	→ denominate

O

193	observance	observation
	observation	→ observance
	obtrude	→ intrude

P

194	partially	partly
	partly	→ partially
195	peaceable	peaceful
	peaceful	→ peaceable
196	pence	pennies
	pennies	→ pence
196	permissible	permissive
	permissive	→ permissible
197	perpetrate	perpetuate
	perpetuate	→ perpetrate
197	personage	personality
	personality	→ personage
	personify	→ impersonate
198	perspicacious	perspicuous
	perspicuous	→ perspicacious
199	potent	potential
	potential	→ potent
200	practicable	practical
	practical	→ practicable
	praise	→ appraise
201	precede	proceed
	presume	→ assume
	proceed	→ precede
	prohibit	→ inhibit

R

202	rational	reasonable
	reasonable	→ rational

replace → displace
 restrain → constrain
 revenge → avenge
 reward → award

S

savour → flavour
 203 seasonable seasonal
 seasonal → seasonable
 204 sensible sensitive
 sensitive → sensible
 205 sensual sensuous
 sensuous → sensual
 205 sentiment sentimentality
 sentimentality → sentiment
 session → cession
 206 shade shadow
 shadow → shade
 simulate → assimilate
 207 sociable social
 social → sociable
 specially → especially
 208 spiritual spirituous
 spirituous → spiritual
 208 stimulant stimulus
 stimulus → stimulant
 209 storey story
 story → storey
 subtract → detract

210 suit suite
 suite → suit

T

211 tasteful tasty
 tasty → tasteful
 211 temporal temporary
 temporary → temporal
 212 tortuous torturous
 torturous → tortuous
 213 transient transitory
 transitory → transient
 214 triumphal triumphant
 triumphant → triumphal

U

unable → incapable
 unbelief → disbelief
 uninterested → disinterested

V

venture → adventure
 216 verbal verbose
 verbose → verbal
 216 virtual virtuous
 virtuous → virtual
 vocation → avocation