英語輔導叢書

英語綜合用法詳解

(上)

Comprehensive English Usage

-How's & Why's-

Volume

蘇鵬編著

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内容簡介

這是一本綜合性的英語學習參考書。它針對一般英語教科書中常常語 焉不詳,甚至根本沒有觸及的問題,尤其是中國人在學習英語過程中最易 感到困惑不解的問題,分門別類,加以分析探討,以求得正確答案,此乃 本書之第一大特點。

本書在編輯過程中,曾參閱當代著名英語語言學家的著作二十餘種, 以確保語言之純正可靠,此乃本書之第二大特點。

全書共分兩部份。第一部份為詞語用法;第二部份包括語法及修詞等十幾個章節。全書共收詞語 700 餘條。全部採取正誤句對比方式,使問題重點突出,一目瞭然。每一條目下均有用法說明,例句、註釋,使讀者不但知其當然,而且知其所以然。此乃本書之第三大特點。

根據以上情况,本書對於英語自學者,大中學生以及一般英語工作者無不適用。

COMPREHENSIVE ENGLISH USAGE —HOW'S & WHY'S—

英語綜合用法詳解(上)

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PART ONE 第一部份

Chapter One 第一章

Commonly Confused Words and Phrases 常見混用詞語

在英語詞彙中,有很多同義詞語 (Synonym) 意義相似詞語 (analogous words and phrases),以及發音相同或近似詞語,經常被混淆使用。其原因主要是對這些詞語的涵義或發音,掌握得不夠確切,對其細微差別和習慣用法不夠清楚。

本章從中國人學習英語所產生的困難出發,針對一些常用詞語進行詳 盡的解釋和對比。

1. Ability, capacity

(1) ability "能力","才能",是最廣泛的用語。一般指具有做某種工作的實際能力,可用於智力或體力。可指先天的能力,也可用於經鍛練而獲得的能力。多用於人,有時亦用於事物。如:ability to speak English (能說英語) leadership ability (領導能力)等。

Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judaea. (Bible) 於是門徒定意,照人的力量捐錢,送去給獨太的弟兄們。

Natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study. (Bacon)

天賦像植物一樣,需要用學習的辦法不斷修剪。

(2) capacity 主要指能夠容納或吸收的"能力"。用於人和物。用於人時,多 指對知識的理解和接受,對於事物的忍耐力和寬容。是先天的,而非習 得的能力。例如: Had our great palace the capacity
To camp this host, we all would sup together. (Shak.)

假如我們的宮殿能容下這麼多人,我們就一起進餐了。

He appears to have shown extraordinary capacity for acclimatising himself to the American atmosphere. (Rev. of Rev.)

他對美國的氣氛似乎顯露出特大的適應能力。

例句1:我根據他們的能力大小支付工資。

誤:I pay them according to their capacity.

正: I pay them according to their ability.

例句2:該廳大有人滿之患。

誤:The hall was crowded to its utmost ability.

正: The hall was crowded to its utmost capacity.

例句 3:他極長於數學。

誤:He has a great ability for mathematics.

正: He has a great capacity for mathematics.

例句 4:作爲拳師,既能打人,又能挨打。

誤: A boxer has the capacity to hit, the ability to take punishment.

正: A boxer has the ability to hit, the capacity to take punishment.

[注意] (a) ability 之後可以接不定式,可以接介詞 "in", "for". 但不能接"Of + doing",例如:

例句:這隻水泵每天能抽相當多的水。

誤:The pump has an ability of pumping a certain amount of water every day.

IE: The pump has an capacity to pump a certain amount of water every day.

ability 或 abilities 多指"智力", 例如:

He is a man of great ability (abilities). 他極有才能。

(b) capacity 之後可以接不定式,接介詞 for 或 of + doing, 但偶然接within + noun. 例如:

He had found a new capacity within himself. (Kath. Cecil)

他發現自己具有一種新才能。

capacity 一般指潛在能力,試比較下列短語 (Web.).

capacity for weep 好哭(對悲慘情景敏感) capacity for work 有工作熱情(在任何條件下) capacity for payment 有償付能力(有收入,肯於付債) ability to weep = can weep 能哭(淚腺正常) ability to work = can work 能工作(有體力,有訓練) ability to pay = can pay 能支付(有錢)

2. Able, capable

(1) able "有能力的", "有才華的"。表示有超乎尋常的能力, 有制勝的 本領。含義較强。可置於名詞之前作定語或其後接動詞不定式。例如:

Able boys and girls ... will submit willingly to severe discipline in order to acquire some coveted knowledge or skill. (B. Russell) 有才智的男女兒童爲了獲得渴望的知識和技能,甘願遵守嚴格的紀律。

I can't write, and I don't know when I shall be able to learn. (Mr. Craik)

我不會寫字,我也不知道什麼時候才能學會。

(2) capable "有能力的", "有才能的", "可以做的"。表示有適應力, 足智多謀,能勝任等,很少指特殊能力。其後多接 of。例如:

My son is a very capable doctor.

我兒子是個能幹的醫生。

The man is capable of lifting heavy weights. (Web. Dic.)

這個人能學很重的東西。

(This is) a knowledge which I believe this book to be capable of imparting, if studied diligently and not hurriedly cost aside for a more ambitious one. (Sweet)

如果這本書勤奮閱讀而不是把它馬上扔到一邊再找一本更高深的來看,我相信它能灌輸你一些知識。

例句1:這條法律是可以規避的。

誤:This law is able to be evaded.

IE: This law is capable of being evaded.

例句2:這座損毁的教堂可以修復。

誤:The ruined church is able to be restored.

正: The ruined church is capable of being restored.

〔注意〕 (a) able 的反意詞是 unable,通常表示暫時缺乏某種能力。 而 capable 的反意詞是 incapable,表示先天缺乏某種 能力。 (Evans). 例如:

例句1:因爲下大雪,那個冬天他常常不能開車去上班。

誤: Because of heavy snows, he was often *incapable* to drive to work that winter.

正: Because of heavy snows, he was often *unable* to drive to work that winter.

例句 2:他根本沒有指揮軍隊作戰的能力。

誤:He was quite *unable* to command troops in combat.

正: He was quite *incapable* of commanding troops in combat.

(b) able 的另一否定形式是 to be not able to do, 多用於 "將來時態"和"現在完成時態",這時不用 unable. 例如:

例句1:他明天不能來。

誤:He will be unable to come tomorrow.

正:He will not be able to come tomorrow.

例句2:我沒弄清楚他是誰。

誤:I have been unable to identify him.

正: I have not been able to identify him.

(c) 在作狀語 (adverbial) 時,多用 unable, 而不用 not able, 例如:

例 句:他站在那裏,話也說不出。

誤:He stood there, not able to speak.

正: He stood there, unable to speak.

(d) be able to do 只用於生物 (living things), 表示身心方面的能力。而 be capable of 既可用於生物,又可用於非生物 (inanimate), 指身心或法律方面的能力,(Poutsma) 例如:

How the plague shall I be able to pass for a Jew? (Sher.)

眞見鬼,怎麼能把我當成猶太人呢?

He is capable of any crime.

他無惡不作。

例 句: 這部機器,隨你做什麼都行。

誤:The machine is able to do anything you wish.

正: The machine is *capable* of doing anything you wish.

3. Abolish, cancel

Abolish 是"廢除","取銷"法律,習慣,舊風俗 (law, old custom, war)等。而 cancel 表示"取消"安排,計劃(plan, arrangement)等。例如:

All exploiting classes and systems should be abolished.

一切剝削階級及制度都應消滅。

The meeting has been cancelled already.

會議已經取消了。

例句1:她由於生病而取消了香港之行。

誤:She abolished her trip to Hong Kong as she fell ill. 正:She cancelled her trip to Hong Kong as she fell ill.

例句 2:許多壞風俗和法律應予以廢除。

誤:There are many bad customs and laws that ought to be cancelled.

IE: There are many bad customs and laws that ought to be abolished.

例句3:他已取消了他的假期。

誤:He has abolished his leave of absence.

正: He has cancelled his leave of absence.

〔注意〕 cancel 應讀 [kænsəl],按拼寫規則,以一個輔音字母結尾的重讀音節,應雙寫最後一個輔音字母,再加ed, 但在英國寫作 cancelled. 而美國則只寫一個"1": canceled.

4. Accident, incident

accident "事故", "不幸事件", 指未預知和偶然的事變。如車禍或跌傷等。 而 incident 是"附帶事件", "小事件", "事情"。指附隨於大事件中的 小事故, 小小的波瀾。如在政治上引起國際爭端或戰爭等。

"Of moving accidents by flood and field." (Shak.)

由洪水和戰爭所造成的悲慘事件。

"Thou cam'st not to thy place by accident;

It is the very place God meant for thee." (Trench.)

你回到你的家不是偶然的;這是上帝的意志。

"Her tone implied that bedroom fires were a quite ordinary incident of daily life in a place like Bursley." (Bennett)

她的聲調暗示說,臥室失火在伯斯雷這樣的地方是相當普通的日常小事。

例句1:他在一次車禍中死亡。

誤: He was killed in a motoring incident. 正: He was killed in a motoring accident.

例句 2:你可能意外割傷自己,不會是故意如此。

誤: You might cut yourself by *incident*, you would not cut yourself on purpose.

正: You might cut yourself by accident, you would not end on purpose.

例句 3:在任何合作制度下,意見衝突是不能避免的小事件。

誤: Conflict is an inevitable accident in any system of cooperation.

正: Conflict is an inevitable incident in any system of cooperation.

例句 4:中越邊境常常發生邊界事件。

誤: Frontier accidents have been common on the border between China and Vietnam.

正: Frontier incidents have been common on the border between China and Vietnam.

5. Act, action

(1) act "行爲", "舉動"。一般指行爲的"結果"是"瞬間"的, (momentary or instantaneous)"個人的"(individual) 行動。例如:

"That best portion of a good man's life, His little, nameless, umremembered acts Of kindness and of love." (Wordsworth)

一個善良的人生命中最實費的一部份, 就是他那種細小的,無名的,而不爲人 所記憶的慈愛而善良的種種行為。

"In act to shoot." (Dryden) 引弓即發。

(2) action "行動", "作法", "活動"。多指行動過程, 佔用較長的時間, 包括不同步驟。如 good actions (行善), chemical action (化學作用):

"By him [the Lord] actions are weighed". (Bible) 人的行爲他衡量。

"Only the actions of the just Smell sweet and blossom in their dust." (Shirly)

只有公正的行爲,才能發散出芳香,開花結果。

例句1:我們要想得救,必須迅速採取行動。

誤:Rapid act is needed if we are to be safed.

正:Rapid action is needed if we are to be safed. (行動過程)

例句 2: 這是他幹的, 他必須承擔其後果。

誤:It was his action and he must accept the consequences.

正:It was his act and he must accept the consequences. (個人的行動)

例句 3: 那個賊正在潛入房子時,當即被捕獲。

誤:The thief was caught in the action of breaking into the house. 正:The thief was caught in the act of breaking into the house.

例句 4:我們必須及早採取行動。

誤:We must take act before it is too late.

E: We must take action before it is too late.

[注意] (1) Fowler 指出:只有 action 才有集合意義,如:

我們必須期待國會在這次危機中採取行動。

正: We must look to Congress for act in this crisis.

誤: We must look to Congress for *action* in this crisis.

他還說,"在有疑意時,可以用 action 代替 act. 而照 我們現在的說法,應該把 "Acts of the Apostles". 應 說成"Actions of the Apostles" "使徒行傳")。

(2) Evans 在 "A Dictionary of Contemporary American Usage" "中,開宗明義地說act 和 action 之間的區別難以劃分。這兩個詞常常意義完全相同。例如:

His heroic act (或 action) was long remembered. (他的英勇行爲被人長記不忘)

接着他進一步又對這兩個詞作了分析:

(a) 當我們說明一個行為 (deed) 的性質或特徵時,必 須用 act, 例如:

An act of thoughtfulness

(深思熟慮的行動)

The act of a busybody

(多事老的行爲)

(b) 指一次單純的行為 (a deed) 或用"介詞短語"作 "定語" 時應該用 act, 如:

The act of a careless person (粗心人的行為)

如改用形容詞作"定語",用 action, 如:

A careless action (粗心的行為)

(c) 指當場的行爲或把行爲和言語 (words), 思想 (thought)作對比時,應該用act。如:

in the very act of making off with it (正常席辫而洮之際)

Acts, not words are what we need.

(我們需要的是行動,而不是言詞。)

在這種情况下,如果指集合意義的行為,仍應該用 action, 如:

Speech and action are different things. (言語和行動是不同的兩回事。)

(3) 在下列固定搭配中, act 和 action 不能互换,如:

an act of God (天災)
an act of grace (恩惠)
in the (very) act (當場)
read the riot act 宣讀騷動取締法
bring into action 使行動起來
in action 在行動中
take action 採取行動
see action 經歷戰鬥

6. Additional, additive

- (1) additional "附加的", "追加的", 如: additional tax (附加稅), 而 additive 是 "添加的", "加成的", 如: additive property "加成件"。
- (2) additional 指附加的 "同類事物"; 而 additive 指把"非同類物質"添加 進去,來改變其質量,如 food additive 調味品。

例句1:還得再用兩週時間才能完成這項工作。

誤: It will take an additive two weeks to finish the work.

正: It will take an additional two weeks to finish the work.

例句 2: 這在化學中叫做加成反應。

誤:This is called additional reaction in chemistry.

IE: This is called additive reaction in chemistry.

7. After, behind

(1) after "在……之後",多指時間或順序等,可以用作"介詞","副詞"和 "連詞"。在這裏和 behind 相比是指其"介詞"的用法。例如: I shall be free after one o'clock.

過了一點,我就有空了。

The French adjective comes after the noun.

法語的形容詞用在名詞後面。

(2) behind "在……之後",多指順序,也可指時間,它只能作"介詞",間或用作副詞。例如:

Don't speak evil of a man behind his back.

不要背後說别人的壞話。

The train is five minutes behind schedule.

這列車誤點五分鐘。

例句 1:他將在七月五號之後到達

誤:He will arrive behind 5 July.

IE: He will arrive after 5 July.

例句 2:在英國詩人中,米爾頓通常被排在莎翁之後。

誤:Milton is usually placed behind Shakespeare among English poets.

正: Milton is usually placed after Shakespeare among English poets.

例句 3:看戲時我恰好坐在我們數學老師的後面。

誤:In the theatre I happened to sit after our maths teacher.

正: In the theatre I happened to sit behind our maths teacher.

例句4:他總是拖欠債務。

誤: He is always after time with his payment.

正: He is always behind time with his payment.

(3) 這兩個詞的用法尚多,不能一一提出。有時都可以用在同一句子中,不 過含義不同。比較如下:

Shut the door after you.

Shut the door behind you.

第一句有運動意義:"隨手把門關上"。第二句表示靜止的位置; "關上你背後的門"。

They came one after another.

They came one behind another.

第一句:"他們陸續走進來"。第二句:"他們一個接着一個走進來"。

You come to class behind time.

You are behind the times.

第一句,"behind time",是"遲到"。第二句"behind the times"是"落伍"。

He is behind (after) time.

I am sorry I am late for dinner.

在這裏,behind time 和 after time 通用,都表示"遲到",但前者比較常多,而且含有責備的意思。 "behind time"針對一定"時刻"而說。而late for 是針對一定"事件"而說。

8. After, in, for

這三個詞作"介詞"(preposition) 使用時,都可以表示"在……若干時間之後"解,但用法不同,茲分述如下:

(1) 在"一般將來時態"(simple future tense) 和看來是"一般現在時態"(simple present tense) 而實際為將來時的句子中,用 in, 不能用 after 或 for:

例句1: 五天之後我再來看你。

誤: I'll come and see you again after five days.

誤:I'll come and see you again five days after.

誤:I'll come and see you again for five days.

正: I'll come and see you again in five days.

例句 2: 我盼他一星期之後到這裏來。

誤:I expect him here after a week.

誤: I expect him here a week after.

誤:I expect him here for a week.

IE: I expect him here in a week.

[注意] (a) "in+若干時間",可以表示"若干時間之後";也可以表示"若干時間之內"。試比較下列各句:

I shall see him again in a week.

(一星期之後……)

I shall see him several times in a week.

(一星期之內……)

He will graduate in three years.

(三年之後……)

He will learn another foreign language in three years. (三年之內……)

see him again和 graduate 是瞬間動詞;而 see him several times 和 learn another foreign language轉化為 延續動詞。(見 for long 和 for a long time 條)

(b) in + a week's time 和 within a week 意思不同:

The blossom will be out in a week's time. (花在一週左右便開)

The blossom will be out within a week. (花不到一週便開)

(2) 在"過去將來"(past future tense)的句子中,一般用in, 而不用 after 或 for; 例如:

例句3:二十分鐘後她去上班。

誤: After twenty minutes she would leave for the office.

誤:For twenty minutes she would leave for the office.

正: In twenty minutes she would leave for the office.

在具有"過去將來時"函義的句子中,也用 in:

例句 4: 我想幾分鐘後就會到達霍頓家的門前了。

誤:I expected to be arriving in front of the Horton's house after a few minutes.

正: I expected to be arriving in front of the Horton's house in a few minutes.

(3) 在"過去時態" (past tense) 的句子中,表示 "若干時間以後" 發生了什麼事,用 after + 若干時間;"或"若干時間 + after (或 later), 而不用 in 或 for:

例句 5:他四個星期之後到達了紐約。

誤: He arrived in New York in four weeks,

誤: He arrived in New York for four weeks.

IE: He arrived in New York after four weeks.

正: He arrived in New York four weeks after (或 later).

(注意) 在上面的句子中(例句5), 雖然 after four weeks 和 four weeks after 都可用,但以後者較爲常用。不過after four weeks 强調"間隔";用 four weeks after 强調"時間"。

在表示"若干時間之後",雖然 after不能用於"將來時態", 但表示"在某事件 (event) 之後";或"在時間點 (point of time) 之後", after 旣可用於"將來時態";也可用於 過去時態;例如:

We will discuss that matter after dinner.

(我們飯後再談這個問題。)

I shall be free after one o'clock.

(一點之後我就沒事了。)

He came to live here after his father's death. (他父親去世之後他才來這裏住的。) (4) 在"一般將來時"和看來是"一般現在時"(實際函義爲將來時)的"否定句"中,表示"在若干時間之後"應該用 for; 不能用 after 或 in:

例句 6:一小時之後太陽才會昇起。(過一小時太陽才會昇起。)

誤:The sun will not rise in an hour.

誤: The sun will not rise after an hour.

正: The sun will not rise for an hour.

例句 7: 火車五分鐘之後才會到。(火車在五分鐘之內到不了。)

誤: The train isn't due in five minutes.

誤:The train isn't due after five minutes.

正: The train isn't due for five minutes.

[注意] for 用於將來時否定句,表一段時間(a period of time), 而 before 表示"時間的點"(a point of time) (C.E. Eckersley)。 例如:

He will not be here for an hour yet.

(他在一小時內還來不了;過一小時才能來。)

He will not be here before seven o'clock.

(他在七點之前到不了這裏。)

9. Ago, before

(1) ago 是從現在算起,指若干時間"以前",動詞需用過去時。before 一般 是從過去或將來的某時刻算起,指那時的若干時間之前,而和現在無關, 一般和過去完成時連用,易於混用,例如:

例句1:我三天之前見過他。

誤:I met him three days before.

正:I met him three days ago.

例句 2:他們告訴我說,她兩週前到香港去了。

誤: They told me that she had left for Hong Kong two weeks ago.

E: They told me that she had left for Hong Kong two weeks before.

例句 3:你到達廣州時,也許你會發現你父親在幾天之前早已到北京去了。

誤: When you arrive in Canton, maybe you will find that your father has already left for Peking some days ago.

正: When you arrive in Canton, maybe you will find that your father has already left for Peking some days before.

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(2) 如果泛指若干時間之前(非特定某個時間),一般也用 before, 而不用 ago. 例如:

例句 4:通常我總是把一兩小時之前剛學過的單詞和短語盡力拿來使用。

誤:Usually I try to use a word or phrase that I have just learned an hour or two ago.

正: Usually I try to use a word or phrase that I have just learned an hour or two before.

(3) 如果只說"以前",不加若干時間,在"現在完成時"(present perfect tense)和"一般過去時"(simple past)動詞的句子中,用 before,而不用 ago,例如:

例句 5:我以前看過這個電影了。

誤:I have seen the film ago.

正: I have seen the film before.

例句 6:她以前對我們說過這個故事。

誤: She told us the story ago.

正: She told us the story before.

(4) 如果句中是"過去完成時"(past perfect), 可以用"若干時間"+ before, 這一短語, 也可單用 before, 不加若干時間, 但 ago 不能這樣用, 例如:

例句7:我一年以前到這裏來過。

誤:I had come here a year ago.

正: I had come here a year before.

(5) ago 後面的句子只能用 that, 不能用 since。例如:

例句8:他是三星期以前回來的。

. 誤:It was three weeks ago since he returned.

E: It was three weeks ago that he returned.

正: He returned three weeks ago.

例句 9:他回來已經三個星期了。(和上面句子的意思相近)。

IE: It is three weeks since he returned.

(6) 一般說, ago 只用於"過去時", 而 before 用於"完成時"。但在"情態助動詞+完成不定式"中,"分詞完成式","動名詞完成式"或"不定式完成式"中用 ago 不用 before。

例句10:她可能在三個月之前到倫敦去過。

誤:She may have visited London three months before.

IE: She may have visited London three months ago.

例句11:他在十天前去過那裏,所以他自動提出要作我的响導。

誤: Having been there ten days before, he offers to be my guide.

正: Having been there ten days ago, he offers to be my guide.