

说

生动英语

Speak

Improve your oral English — effectively!

Vivid

English

Pam Wadeson / 刘雁滨



外文出版社

Speak Vivid English

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Preface

The English language is a rich and living language, flexible and vibrant. For the non-native speaker, there is a long road to travel before the idea of speaking vividly becomes important. There are many other language aspects to be concerned with in the early stages of learning English.

Yet listening to a native speaker soon reveals the vividness of the language and many students like to improve their understanding by considering the idioms, the similes and the other aspects of English. Usually it is much easier to learn these special aspects as receptive learning (listening), but many Chinese learners of English have a fascination with making their language more interesting, natural and vivid.

Consider the following:

I am very happy today. I have received my results and I have done really well. I feel thrilled.

A native speaker would not speak in this way.

If a person is happy/thrilled and is using everyday conversational language, it is more likely that the expression would be:

I'm over the moon! My results came and I've passed with flying colors.

Here the idioms *over the moon* and *pass with flying colors* add color to the language.

Another example:

Everything went very well at the official dinner.

It is more likely that a native speaker would say: *It all went like clockwork.*

Here the simile *like clockwork* clearly expresses the fact that everything was on time and worked precisely.

Expressions such as similes, metaphors and idioms help us to express our feelings and attitudes, sometimes with a touch of humor. Euphemisms help the speaker to express himself/herself without causing embarrassment.

A good example would be:

This company will begin a program of involuntary separation.

For the company this is a much less embarrassing way of saying:

We are going to start a program of firing employees.

It is never too early to learn some of the more natural expressions in English. The learner should, however, take care in using them—certainly not over use them and always ensure that they are used in the right context. To that point we have worked hard to give examples of naturally spoken English throughout this book.

In time it will become evident that understanding these forms that make English more vivid, and using them where appropriate will help the English learner become more adept at communicating.

Taking risks with your English and making the most of every opportunity to use your second language will lead to further success.

Best wishes for your continuing journey through the wonderful world of English.

Pam Wadeson

前 言

英语是一种丰富的、活着的语言。它是灵活可变的,充满活力的。对于英语为非母语的人们来说,要学会生动、简练地用英语表达似乎还有遥远的路要走。从最初的学习阶段开始,如果能了解一些生动、简练的表达方式,并给予相应的训练,要达到这样的目标还是指日可待的。

聆听英语为母语的人们交谈,会一下子将你置身于那种鲜活的语言中。于是许多学生就梦想有朝一日会听得懂,说得了这样的语言。在本书中,作者列举了**成语,委婉语,明喻,暗喻,外来语,缩略语和韵脚俚语**的表达和使用。这些语言的共同特性是:它们是**简明、鲜明和生动的语言现象**。

试比较下面的一组话,你可以看到什么样的不同呢?

I am very happy today. / I have received my results and I have done really well. / I feel thrilled.

一个纯粹的说英语的本地人是不会这样说话的。当他/她高兴极了的时候,当他/她用日常英语

表达这样的心情的时候,他/她的语言应该是这样的:

I'm over the moon! My results came and I've passed with flying colors.

显然,成语的表达 over the moon 和 pass with flying colors 使原本枯燥的句子富有了色彩。

再看另一个句子:

Everything went very well at the official dinner.

说英语的本地人却一定是这样说的:

It all went like clockwork.

说话的人用了 clockwork 这样的明喻,形容官方的晚宴一切按预先安排好的时间进行,象钟的机械装置一样极精确。

这种形象、生动的语言表达体现在英语的成语、比喻里,用以表现人们的感情、态度,有时还带有那么一缕幽默。而委婉语用来帮助人们表达他们难以启齿的事物,或避免那些直露的方式引起的听话方的尴尬。这样的例子是:

This company will begin a program of involuntary separation.

这就比说 *We are going to start a program of firing employees.* 委婉而不伤害人。

为此,我们写了这本书,选择了现碟西方人常用的这些简明而生动的表达方式,并加之以例子。我们在此列举的种种语言现象都是自然而纯正的,建议学习这样的表达越早开始越好。但要当心在使用时不要滥用,要注意使用的场合和正确的语境。

我们可以肯定地说,在本书内所介绍的各种英语的表达形式如果用得恰当,会帮助英语学习者自然地、地道地、有效地用英语进行交流。

要敢于使用英语进行交流,不要怕出错。要尽可能地利用每一个机会使用英语。这才会使你的英语学习成功。

望您在英语世界中的遨游坚持下去,不断有所收获。

刘雁滨



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Chapter One

Some Favorite Idioms

常见成语

1.1 a gold digger

a woman who creates a relationship (including marriage) with a rich man in order to obtain money

与富人建立某种联系(包括婚姻)以谋取钱财的女子

Examples

- Dad's new woman friend is nothing but a *gold digger*. She doesn't even like the things he does.

父亲的新女人绝对是冲着他的钱来的。她连他做的事情都不喜欢。

- People usually think a pretty girl is a *gold digger* when she marries an old rich man.

人们一般认为漂亮女人嫁给富有的老人就是为了他的钱财。

1.2 a hidden agenda

to have a different purpose than the one indicated for doing something

另有用心;有不可捉摸的目的

Examples

- Don't be fooled by his apparent kindness. He's got a *hidden agenda*, for sure. He probably wants you to do some extra work for him, without pay.
别让他的表面善意蒙骗了。他肯定另有所图。他很可能想要你做超量工作而不付你工资。

- Be careful at the negotiation table; there is always a *hidden agenda* on both sides — usually profit.

在谈判桌上要当心:谈判的双方总会有着不可捉摸的用心的——通常是为了利润。

a part of the furniture

to have been in a place so long that people regard you as nearly a part of surroundings

在一个地方呆久了就被当作这个地方自然融合的一部分

Examples

- Don't worry about me. I've been here so long people just regard me as a *part*

of the furniture.

别为我担心。我在此这么久了,人们已经把我看成这里当然的一部分了。

- A good company shouldn't view their employees as a part of the furniture, but as individuals with special talents.

好的公司不应该把他们的员工只是当成公司里的一件东西,要把他们看作有着各自不同能力的个体。

1.4 a rip-off

something that is worth less than what was paid for

某物买得贵了,不值那样多钱;钱白花了

Examples

- That fruit we bought at the supermarket is a *rip off*. I saw the same fruit in the market for half the price.

我们在超级市场买的水果买贵了。我在平常市场看到同样的水果只是一半的价格。

- Don't buy that new cream for cleaning your face. It's a *rip off*. It's the same as it was before — just in a new pack-

age, but almost double the price.

别买那种新上市的洗面奶,白花钱。它还是以前的那种——就是把包装换了,价格却高了一倍。

1.5 a rough diamond/a diamond in the rough

a person who may seem rough and uneducated but has good qualities and characteristics

一个看似粗鲁、没有受过教育,但实际上是品格高尚、有特性的人

Examples

- The new student is *a bit of a rough diamond*. A bit crude but has a heart of gold.

这位新来的学生有点是那种外粗内秀的人,有点儿粗鲁但心地非常好。

- I don't mind it if a person is *a diamond in the rough*. They are usually very interesting individuals. Maybe their manners aren't perfect but they usually are warm hearted and genuine.

如果一个人虽行为粗鲁但心地很善良,

我是能和这样的人相处的。他们一般都是很有趣的个人。也许举止上不尽善尽美,但通常心眼儿好,真诚。

1.6 a skeleton in your closet

a secret (usually embarrassing or bad)
that has been kept for a long time by a
person, a family or a group of people
不可外扬的家丑或个人、群体的秘密

Examples

- We ' re no different from anyone else.
Every family *has skeletons in the closet*.
我们和别人都一样,每一个家庭都有不可外传的秘密。
- My grandmother always talked about
our skeleton in the family closet. It
turns out that my great grandfather
drank himself to death.

我祖母总能告诉我们一些家中的秘密故事。我祖父是酒喝多了而致死的就是这样知道的。

1.7 a spin doctor

a person whose job it is to ensure that the