

对照·汉语100点实用系列手册

100 Vivid Chinese Expressions

生动汉语

百例

大海捞针

To fish for a needle out of the sea

飞蛾扑火——自取灭亡

A moth darts into the flame
—courting destruction.

好钢用到刀刃上

Good steel should be saved
for the blade of a knife.

虎头蛇尾

A tiger's head but a snake's tail

画蛇添足

paint a snake and add feet onto it

鼠狼给鸡拜年——没安好心

a rat wishes "Happy New Year!"

a chicken—with evil intentions.

李红 编著

孙弢 译



北京大学出版社
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前言



千里之行,始于足下。

——[中国] 老子

谚语虽短,智慧深长。

——[希腊] 索福克勒斯

众所周知,汉语谚语、歇后语和成语是人类智慧的高度结晶,人口传颂,经久不衰。它们不仅是中国人民文化和修辞的艺术宝库,而且为外国人丰富他们的思想和言语提供了取之不尽的源泉。学习外语最成功的标志就是能否熟练地掌握这些生动的语言。成功了,我们就会引起别人的注意,赢得人们的尊重和羡慕;成功了,我们就能和这种语言和文化融合在一起,成为这个社会的一员,和这个社会的人民打成一片。

在我们的中文高级班里,我们发现外国学生们都已经掌握了语法、句型,以及大量的词汇,语言的基础非常扎实。但在实际生活中,他们的语言就显得非常呆板、乏味了。尽管语法正确,这些学生仍然无法生动地表达思想感情。学习外语就好像是盖一所房子。地基(发音)有了,屋架(语法)也起来了,砖墙也砌好了。但是要想让房子优美出众,建筑风格(生动的表达方式)是必不可少的。

正是为了这个目的,我们收集了汉语里最有趣的谚语、歇后语和成语,编辑了这本《生动汉语百例》。汉语有成千上万这类的语言,我们选的是最生动、流传最广的,而且我们倾向那些能

生动汉语百例

使我们浮想联翩的语句。比如,形容东西难找,我们说,大海里捞针。英文里说草垛里找针。这里的针、草垛、大海都是既简单生动又行之有效的比喻。

为了让学生恰当地应用这些词语,我们给每个条目都提供了两个长短不一的例句,以便学生体会中文语境。所有的例句都配有英文翻译,以加深对中文原意的准确理解。对词语和例句中重要的语法点和生词,我们也在小贴士中尽可能地提供一些解释。

本书是中国研究学社(China Studies Institute)中文老师们集体努力的成果。这些老师都积极参与了选择词语和提供例句的工作。中文项目的负责人肖峰更是花费了很多的时间完善注释和小贴士。没有他们的贡献,本书是无法完成的。当然,由于能力所限,书中存在的问题和错误在所难免,请各位读者不吝赐教。

既然高级班的学生已经学会了走路,我们要让他们飞跑,也许还要飞翔呢。在罗马做事要像个罗马人,在中国说话就要像个中国人。

编者

Preface



“One thousand mile journey begins with a single step.”

—Lao Zi

“A short saying oft contains much wisdom.”

—Sophocles

Proverbs, sayings, and idioms represent collective wisdoms in various societies, tested over the ages and among folks from all walks of life. They are a powerful cultural and linguistic treasure trove for not only the native speakers but also foreigners to find, to learn and to polish their speech. The mastery of these expressions is the ultimate litmus test for the foreign language learning. It gives us the power to command attention, respect and even admiration. It blends us immediately with the language and culture we study, bonding us as its members, rather than outsiders, and thus achieving the goal of cultural immersion.

In teaching our upper level immersion classes, we discover that students have generally achieved a solid command of Chinese grammatical structures, common patterns, and a reasonably large vocabulary. In other words, they have learned the basic essentials. To speak effectively in real life, however, is another challenge they have yet to take up. They are in dire need of something unique to express their thoughts and ideas, moving away from grammatically

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correct, but stylistically barren utterances. Learning a foreign language is very much like building a house. The foundation (pronunciation) is laid, the structure (grammar) put up, and the bricks (vocabulary) filled in. Yet, an architectural style (vivid expressions) has to be added to make it beautiful.

For that purpose, we have compiled a list of lively Chinese proverbs and sayings which we call Vivid Expressions. There are numerous such expressions in Chinese, but not all qualify as vivid. Our biases are set for those that are both image and thought provoking. For instance, to describe something impossible to locate, we say, “to fish for a needle out of the sea,” equivalent to “to find a needle in a haystack” in English. Here, needle, haystack, and ocean are vivid metaphors, simple and effective.

In order to help students to use these expressions properly, we have provided two examples for each entry in various contexts. They are all written in Chinese, but English translations are provided for easy and precise comprehension. The grammatical principles behind these expressions and some words are also explained, to the extent possible, immediately following the examples and in a section called Tips.

This project is a collective endeavor of the language faculty at China Studies Institute, which aims to promote cultural exchange between China and America and to help American students study in China. In various ways, they have all made contributions in selecting expressions and writing up examples. Andrew Xiao, our language coordinator, spent many additional hours in perfecting explanations and providing grammar tips. Without their hard work, this book wouldn't have been possible. For the errors in the book,

we sincerely appreciate suggestions and corrections.

Now that the advanced students have learned to walk, we want them to run, maybe even to fly. Do in Rome as Romans do, speak in China as Chinese speak.

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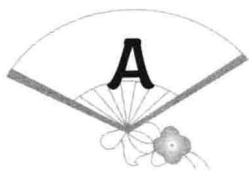
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1. 案板 上 的肉——任 人 宰 割
àn bǎn shàng de ròu rèn rén zǎi gē

Meat on a butcher's cutting board—to be chopped at someone's will

◆ **To be completely at other people's mercy**

歇后语, 贬义。

Two-part allegorical saying, derogatory.

Examples

两个球队的实力相差太大。在比赛中A队就像案板上的肉, 只能任B队宰割了。

There is a considerable gap in actual strength between the two teams. During the game, Team A was totally butchered by Team B.

A: 弱小国家在国际事务中没有任何影响, 都往往是案板上的肉, 任人宰割。

B: 我觉得你的想法有点太悲观了。

A: Weak and small nations have no influence in international affairs. They are completely at the mercy of more powerful countries.

B: I'm afraid that you are a bit over-pessimistic.



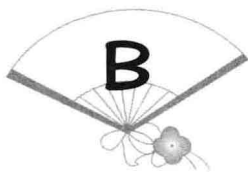
Tips

1. 像(xiàng): 动词, 和……差不多一样。常用结构为: A 像 B, 意思是 A 和 B 差不多一样。

Verb, to be similar to; usually used in the pattern: A xiàng B, meaning A is similar to B.

2. 任(rèn): 介词, 古汉语, 相当于现代汉语中的“被”, 表示被动, 引出动作的发出者, 现代汉语常用格式“A+任+B(动作的发出者)+动词”。

Preposition, used in classical Chinese as “bèi” in modern Chinese, indicating the passive voice and introducing the doer of an act; a usual pattern is “A+ rén+B (the doer)+Verb”.



bā zì hái méiyǒu yì piě

2. 八字还没有一撇

Not even the first stroke of the character for eight is done.

◆ **Nothing is accomplished yet.**

歇后语, 中性, 后一句省略, 用来表示事情还没有开始, 不要过早想以后美好的结果。

Two-part allegorical saying, neutral, with the second part of the intended meaning unsaid or omitted; indicating that an anticipated event or result has not yet started or been realized.

Examples:

锦标赛主赛场应该今年就完工, 可是现在八字还没有一撇呢。

The main stadium for the tournament should be finished by the end of this year, but so far nothing has been done yet.

A: 哥本哈根环境宣言讨论得怎么样啦?

B: 八字还没有一撇呢。发达国家和发展中国家还在讨价还价。

A: How is the discussion over the Copenhagen Declaration on the environment?

B: Nothing is accomplished yet. The developed and developing nations are still negotiating with each other.

Tips

1. 就(jiù): 副词, 用在动词前, 表示动作发生得很早或者很快。

Adverb, used before a verb to indicate that an action happened quickly or will happen soon.

2. 八(bā): 数词, 数字8, 汉字“八”一共两个笔画。左边第一笔叫“撇”。如果第一笔还没写, 那离完成还差得很远。

Noun, eight, the Chinese character eight is consisted of two strokes, and the first is a left-falling stroke called “piě”. If not even the first stroke is done, it is far from finishing up.

3. 还没有……呢(hái méiyǒu...ne): 表示动作或事件还没有发生或完成。

Denoting that an action or incident has not yet happened or finished.

4. 哥本哈根(Gēběnhāgēn): 专有名词, 丹麦的首都。
Proper noun, Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark.

5. 动词+得+形容词: 表示动作完成的情况或者程度。一般情况下, 形容词前边要加“很”、“非常”或者“太……了”等副词或结构。疑问句形式以“怎么样”、“吗”等结尾。

Verb + de + adjective: denoting the degree of the verb/act completion; usually, words or phrases like “hěn (very)”, “fēicháng (very much)”, or “tài...le (too much)” ; are used before the adjective. Its question form usually ends with “zěnmeyàng”, “ma”, etc.