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张正举 李淑芬

A GUIDE BOOK  
TO SPECIAL ENGLISH

特别英语收听指导

湖南大学出版社

# 特别英语收听指导

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## 特 别 英 语 收 听 指 导

本书是一本告诉读者怎样有效地收听《美国之音》“特别英语节目”的指导性和资料性相结合的书。

全书分三部分：第一部分系统介绍该节目的内容及其在世界各地听众中的影响，并着重介绍收听技巧、“特别英语”的写作风格和语言特点；第二部分为“特别英语”十个节目的广播稿选读；第三部分为最新1500个常用词表，以英汉双解形式列出。最后附有有关美国的背景材料、重要国际组织英语名称等。

对于广大渴望迅速提高听力的英语学习爱好者，这是一本难得的参考书。

### 特别英语收听指导

### A Guide Book to Special English

张正举 李淑芬

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## 编者的话

《美国之音》“特别英语节目”(Special English Programs of VOA)开播29年来,听众遍及世界各地,受到普遍好评。我国广大听众,尤其是青年学生对这个节目也怀有浓厚的兴趣。这个节目,题材丰富,语速较慢,容易听懂,适合初、中级学习英语者训练自己的听力,提高英语语感和表达能力。为了帮助听众排除收听中可能遇到的语言障碍,有效地收听这个节目,我们编写这本书,系统介绍该节目的内容安排、广播语言特点、常用词汇以及有关背景知识。编写材料,有些直接由“特别英语节目”编辑部提供,有些由近期广播录音整理;1500个常用词表采用的是VOA1984年最新版本,它是在1979年旧版本的基础上重新加以补充修订而成的。因此,本书选材较新,内容充实,适用性较强。

《特别英语收听指导》(A Guide Book to Special English)是一本指导性和资料性相结合的书。全书分四部分:第一部分系统介绍该节目的内容及其在世界各地听众中的影响,用实例深入浅出地讲解“特别英语”的写作风格和语言特点以及收听技巧;第二部分为“特别英语”十个节目的广播稿选读(1986年底至1987年初),入选文章文字流畅,语言规范,内容丰富多采,堪称特别英语佳作,通过阅读这

些作品，读者可进一步加深对第一部分内容的理解；第三部分为最新1500个常用词词表，以英汉双解形式列出，便于读者学习和记忆；最后附有有关美国背景材料以及重要国际组织英语名称，等等，供读者收听时参考。

为适应广大读者的阅读水平和熟悉“特别英语”的语言特色的需要，我们这本书用简明英语（即Special English）编写。在每章前面附有中文提要，以帮助初学者掌握每章的要领。建议读者在开始系统收听“特别英语节目”之前，认真阅读本书。读者有了这些语言知识准备，收听时就不会感到紧张、陌生和拘束，能很自然地进入语言环境，有效地提高收听效果。愿这本书成为广大读者的“收听之友”！

我们在编写这本书的过程中，得到了“美国之音”“特别英语节目”编辑部的支持，编辑部主任Frank C. Beardsley博士前后两次来信，对本书的撰写表示关心，并寄来许多宝贵的参考资料。值此本书出版之际，谨向“特别英语节目”编辑部及Frank C. Beardsley博士表示衷心的感谢。

最后，我们还希望读者注意，“美国之音”是美国的喉舌，它代表和维护美国的利益。因此，我们在收听它的节目时，要保持清醒的头脑，明辨是非，利用它训练听力，增长知识，了解美国，扩大视野，而脚跟始终站在我们中华大地的沃土上。

编者

1987年12月

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## Part One

### What "Special English" IS

#### 提 要

特别英语节目每次播放半小时。在每次10分钟国际新闻后，分别安排九个不同的专栏节目，分别介绍美国的历史、文化、生活习俗、世界最新科技成就，以及美语的特点等。

这个节目语言简洁易懂，用词严格限于1500个常用词以内，具有自己鲜明的语言风格。

最后，介绍了收听前、收听过程中和收听后等三个阶段的技巧。

听众可在每天6:30, 8:30, 20:30收听到特别英语节目。

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## **A Brief Introduction to "Special English"**

The Voice of America (VOA) is the Voice of the United States Government. It is broadcast in different languages to all over the world through 24 hours. The programs of VOA are varied and colourful. The news is always broadcast in time. The programs are designed to give you a variety of informed opinion so that you can make up your own mind about what is happening in the world. Since VOA reflects the opinions of American government, you should learn how to distinguish between right and wrong based on your country's interests.

Here we are not to introduce all of the programs of VOA in detail, only to focus our attention on Special English programs.

On October 1, 1959 the Voice of America (VOA) began broadcasting its first Special English news programs. The programs were originally broadcast only to Europe and the Middle East, but

the reaction of those who heard them was so enthusiastic that Special English news programs were soon being broadcast to other areas and, eventually, several series of feature programs were also added in Special English. Now almost everyone in the world can hear at least one 10-minute Special English news program every day of week; they are broadcast once each evening in Africa, Europe, and Latin America, twice each evening in the Middle East and South Asia, and three times each morning and once each evening in East Asia and Pacific. In addition to the news programs in Special English, there are now also 4-minute Daily Science Reports, and seven weekly feature program series, each broadcast on its own special day of the week.

To Chinese listeners, the VOA broadcasts a half hour program at 6:30, 8:30, 20:30 every day on short wave. The programs are the same as those to other parts of the world. The program begins with ten minutes of important world news. The news is followed by a short report on science or agriculture. On weekends, this short program is about American words and phrases. They explain the words and tell how they became part of the language.

A longer Special English report follows the

science or word program. These longer feature reports are about many different things. They are different each day of the week.

Here is a list of them below.

### A List of Special English Programs

Day	Program	Time (北京时间)	Meter (波段)	kHz (千赫)
Every Day	News		19.5	15395
Sunday	People in America	0630	25.2	11923
			31.4	9545
Monday	This is America	0830	41.6	7210
			49.0	6130
Tuesday	Science in the News		16.9	17765
Wednesday	Space and Man		16.9	17740
			19.5	15410
Thursday	the Making of a Nation	2030	25.1	11965
			31.1	9660
Friday	American Mosaic		31.4	9555
			41.2	7285
Saturday	American Stories		48.9	6185

What exactly is Special English and what has made its programs so popular? It is easy to answer. Because (1) it is American English based on a vocabulary of about 1,500 of the most useful and common words, (2) it is written and broadcast in short, direct sentences, and (3) it is read over the air at 90 words per minute, or about two-third the speed of standard English programs. In addition to its clarity, directness, and ease of comprehension, one of the basic reasons for the popularity

of Special English is that, like all American English, it is a vital, living, adaptable language, constantly changing to meet the needs of modern life.

Despite all the care that goes into the Special English programs, it is good English, it is the level of English Americans speak most frequently. Although there are hundreds of thousands of words in the English language, and although professional speakers, lawyers, writers and others do use more complex sentences, all linguists know that most people use only several thousand basic words in our everyday dealings, and use them in simple, direct sentences more often than not. Thus, though created by VOA for some of its programs, Special English is actually the level of English the nativeborn Americans have been speaking and hearing most frequently all their lives. Special English is not overly simplified or childish. It is good, simple adult English. Because of this, Special English programs are appreciated by both those who have but little skill or practice in English, and those who have a great deal of skill and practice.

VOA broadcasts its Special English programs for only one reason: those who want to hear English-language broadcasts may do so even though they might have difficulty comprehending the total

vocabulary, complex sentences, or rapid speech of more advanced Standard English. The Special English programs have, however, turned out to have a special additional value to many listeners. Millions of listeners around the world now use the programs to learn or increase their knowledge of English. Thus, in many countries the Special English programs are required listening for entire classes of students. Many others who are formal students of English, or who are studying it on their own, tape the programs for repeated listenings to improve their listening comprehension, vocabulary, and conversational skills.

Special English has been communicating ideas to people in every part of the world for almost 28 years. Its listeners reach all across the English language, from beginners to native [English speakers. There are millions of its listeners at every corner of the globe and of every occupation and age.

The Special English programs of VOA have grown to be a well-deserved and very popular success all around the world.

## II

### The Features of writing Broadcast Scripts

Broadcast writing which is writing for the ear is a little different from newspaper copy which is writing for the eye alone. Although the principles of broadcast writing are not different from those of print journalism—clarity, accuracy, honesty of expression. There are, however, some differences in the application of these principles.

The first rule of broadcast news is that the story must be clear at once. Unlike the newspaper reader, the listener has no second chance to go over the material. Radio and TV news is as fleeting as the wind—here for the instant, then gone.

There are several ways the broadcast news writer makes his or her copy clear.

Broadcast news writers use *everyday words*, the language of conversation. Colloquialisms and contractions are acceptable. The style is informal. Look at some brief news items on the CBS (哥伦比亚广播公司) television news program "Newsbreak".

- (1) Nato (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 北大西洋公约组织) foreign ministers, meeting in Rome, today said nyet (俄语 *Нет*, = no) to Moscow—rejecting the Soviet demand for a moratorium on deployment of nuclear arms in Europe.

北约组织外长今天在罗马会晤，会议拒绝苏联关于禁止在欧洲部署核武器的要求。

- (2) A Singapore Airlines jumbo jet left Southeast Asia today with a new way to help passengers pass the time. The plane, bound for San Francisco, is fitted out with six slot machines—for high fliers.

今天，一架新加坡大型喷气式客机离开东南亚飞往三藩市。该机新安装了六台游戏机，它使遨游天际的旅客们愉快地度过旅程。

Broadcast news writers *simplify the complex*. The story written for a newspaper plunges right into the heart of the event. The broadcast story often has a brief introduction before the theme is stated. Each of the stories above has an introductory clause or sentence. Now let's look at another story:

The mayor and the city council are feuding again. This time, the issue is the city's



sales tax.

市长与市议会又掀起争论，这次争论焦点是关于城市销售税问题。

The writer used this as a brief introduction to the heart of the story. The writer then went into the details:

The city council last night turned down a proposal to increase the city sales tax from 3 to 4 percent. Mayor George Grogan said the city faces trouble unless it takes in more revenue. And the only way the mayor can see to add to revenue is to raise the sales tax. But the council voted six to one against the increase.

昨晚市议会否决了将城市销售税从3%提高到4%的提案。乔治亚·格罗根市长说市府如不能增加收益将面临困境。市长认为唯一的增收途径就是提高销售税。但是议会投票以六比一反对增加税率。

*Sentences are short for broadcast stories. Long sentences cannot be read easily by the announcer, and the listener has a hard time following them. We know the way to write short sentences. Follow the S-V-O style. Look at the broadcast version. Every sentence begins with a subject, and the verb*