



# 现代英语妙语语林

Modern English  
Expressions In Spotlight

高级本

汪福祥 / 著

石油工业出版社

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**Modern English  
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## 内 容 提 要

本书系国内首次出版的将习语、口语、俚语、谚语以及名人名言和双关语融为一体的妙语语林之著。

全书共分 15 课，每课都包括课文、谚语语林、对话、习语语林、口语语林、俚语语林、名人名言以及双关语语林等精美幽默的英语短文，并对习语、妙语进行了详细注释。本书习语高度集中，而且都在具体的语言情景中出现，不但使读者在较短的时间内获得大量丰富、地道的习语词条，而且还为这些习语的正确使用提供了幽默生动的语言情景。

该书既可作为高等院校讲授英语习语课程的教材，也可作为具有一定英语水平的广大英语爱好者手中必备的参考书。

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# Passing the Buck



Robert Rubin's strong dollar helped Japan, but the strategy may be ending



## Passing the Buck



推卸责任

这篇发表在 *Economists* (经济学家) 杂志的文章, 以习语 *Passing the Buck* 为标题, 长篇论说日本的经济状况。在诸如《经济学家》、《纽约时报》、《时代周刊》、《新闻周刊》、《读者文摘》和《泰晤士报》这样的英美报刊杂志中, 以 *Idioms* (成语)、*Idiomatic Expressions* (习语)、*Proverbs* (谚语)、*Slangs* (俚语)、*Colloquialisms* (口语)、*Famous Quotations* (名人名言) 以及 *Puns* (双关语) 作为标题的文章无处不有, 文章之中的习语、俚语以及谚语更是俯拾即是。

# A Blow Below the Belt



Cresson says Anglo-Saxon men don't like women

Even by British tabloid standards, The Sun had a succulent headline: BRITS BLAST POKER JIBE BY MRS TROG. And the woman in question was not just any Française. She was the new prime minister, Edith Cresson. Last week The Observer of London published what it claimed was a previously unused four-year-old interview with Cresson obtained by British journalist Naim Attallah, author of the 1987 book "Women". There Cresson reportedly explained one of those cultural gaps that obstruct understanding between France and the English-speaking peoples: "A man who is not interested in women is in some ways a little maimed," Cresson, 58, announced. "Anglo-Saxon men are not interested." On trips to London, she reportedly said, she noticed men did not look at



women as they passed on the street—an ungallantry no Frenchman would be guilty of. But she appeared to have a ready explanation: "The majority of those men are homosexual—perhaps not the majority—but in the U.S.A. there are already 25 percent of them and in England and Germany it is much the same. You cannot imagine it in the history of France."

leads her to think that in "the land of Proust, Gide, Verlaque, Cocteau... the love that dares not speak its name is uncommon."

Cresson was hardly unmanned. She said she did not recall giving "this so-called interview that came out of a drawer." In any case, said Cresson, publishing it was "not fair play." At the time she had lost one job as



# A Blow Below the Belt

暗中一击

此文发表在美国 Newsweek (新闻周刊) 1991 年 7 月 1 号刊的第 33 页。该文借用原 Hit Below the Belt 这一习语，以 A Blow Below the Belt 的形式出现，专文介绍 Cresson 对英、法两国间跨越文化鸿沟问题的独到看法。习语 Hit Below the Belt 的意思相当于汉语“暗箭中伤”，是流行于英美等国脍炙人口的习语之一。

## 'Everybody Is on Edge'



**Sierra Leone:** Outside the run-down capital, mystery rebels rule

VILLAGERS FLEEING REBEL ATTACKS IN the countryside cram the homes of relatives, living 10 or 15 to a room. The city's beaches, once a popular destination for European tourists, are nearly deserted. The Italian managers of the country's largest hydroelectric plant keep a speedboat moored offshore, ready to evacuate at a moment's notice. Rumors fly of an imminent attack on the international airport. The Russian who runs a beachside restaurant points to his empty tables and admits that after 17 years, he's thinking of getting out. "Everybody is on edge," he says. "This country could become another Liberia."

Just a few years ago, none of this would have been imaginable in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, a tiny ex-British colony tucked away on the west coast of Africa. Most Sierra Leoneans rejoiced in April 1992 when a 27-year-old army captain named Valentine Strasser seized power in a bloodless coup and promised to end a year-old guerrilla war in the south. However, Strasser's military government has had even less success than the civilian regime it replaced. The war has spread throughout the country. The hastily expanded, poorly trained 12,000-man army controls little but the ramshackle seaside capital. At least 5,000 people have died in the conflict, and



On a Freetown street: A mural of the leader

## Everybody Is on Edge

人人恐慌不安



此文发表在1995年2月13日的《新闻周刊》上。该文习语 on edge 作为标题，专文论说 Sierra Leone 的紧张局势以及该地区人们恐慌不安的心理状态。习语 on edge 的意思包括“直立”，“紧张不安”，“易怒”以及“急切”等，也是人们在口语中常使用的一则习惯用语。



## Gilded Lily

CLAUDETTE COLBERT, 1903-1996

By RICHARD CORLISS

**S**HE WAS BORN UNDER THE ROOFS OF Paris and grew up on the sidewalks of New York. With these blessed accidents of heredity and environment, it is little wonder that Claudette Colbert came to embody an effervescent blend of couture elegance and city-girl pluck. She could play the Queen of Egypt, regally ignoring a siege of hiccups, in Cecil B. DeMille's *Cleopatra* or a gold digger getting more than by on sheer brass in *The Gilded Lily* and a dozen other blithe comedies. She was at home on the range in *Texas Lady*, or on the road showing Clark Gable how to hitch a ride (by exposing just a bit of leg) in her Oscar-winning role as the runaway heiress in *It Happened One Night*.

Colbert's movie career stretched back to the silent era and the first talkies, which she played in both English- and French-language versions. Her Broadway and West End roles kept her busy into her mid-80s. When she died last week at 92 at her home in Barbados, the sad news sent a reminder from old Hollywood to new American cinema once had a thing called glamour, and its name might have been Colbert.

Most of the actress-legends who played in early talkies were celestial ennuies, draped in hauteur. Colbert was different: she never forgot that she was Lily Chauchoin, a Manhattan gal who made it on her own. That spirit informed the Colbert heroine, who walked the earth in

die surly-burly swains like John Wayne and Joel McCrea just as neatly, brute force was no match for the smile in her eyes. Told she is "hard" in the 1933 *Jorch Singer*, she snaps, "Sure I am, just like glass. So hard nothing can cut it but diamonds. Come around with a fistful sometime—maybe we can get together." The comeback, the put-down, the come-on, all in one sprightly barrage. Cool Claudette: winner and still champion.

Some critics thought Colbert more a Star than an Actress. After all, she had

(1934) a played unfinch her a str Along th ply strik luzzinat such to Ernst L Wilder films C character anxiety



GREAT PROFILE: She walked the earth in sensible shoes and met each adversity with a throaty, musical laugh.

## Gilded Lily



画蛇添足

这是发表在1996年8月12日的Time(时代周刊)第56页上的一篇文章。该文以Gilded Lily这个习语作为标题,专文讨论好莱坞著名影星Claudette Colbert在1903至1996年之间的坎坷经历。在英语中,有gild the lily和paint the lily两种说法,意思都近似于汉语的“画蛇添足”。

# Settling an Old Score



Eager to punish her father's killers, Bangladesh's Prime Minister finds vengeance doesn't come easy

**I**N THE SHORT AND BLOOD-DRENCHED political history of Bangladesh, one night still stands out in the national memory. On Aug. 15, 1975, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the country's first Prime Minister and President, was murdered in his home in Dhaka along with 15 members of his family. Rahman was found with 20 bullet wounds—his pipe still clenched in his right hand. His killers later said they had wanted to "save the country"

try's constitution, but sent the 14 men into temporary exile in Libya. Subsequently, the officers were offered jobs in Bangladesh's foreign service in an attempt to scatter them safely around the globe. Twelve accepted, taking postings in such far-flung places as Algeria, Argentina, Canada, China and Senegal.

Hasina, who lived for two decades in the house where her family was slaughtered, carefully maintaining the bloodstains and bullet holes in the walls, wants those men back. In one of her first actions as Prime Minister, she sacked the six coup plotters still in the foreign service and ordered them home. Only one complied; the other five are said to have gone into hiding abroad. Last week she had three of the main conspirators, including the recently returned diplomat, arrested in Dhaka. Two days later she called a national day of mourning on the anniversary of her father's death, the first such observance in 21 years.

Hasina said in a recent interview, "The nation wants the killers to be punished," and public opinion is overwhelmingly in her favor. "There has to be a trial of the killers of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman," insists Rurail Islam Chowdhury.



JUSTICE? Sheikh Hasina Wazed, Bangladesh's Prime Minister, in front of a picture of her murdered father

## Settling an Old Score

算老帐



这是发表在《时代周刊》1996年8月26号刊上的一篇文章。该文用习语settle an old score作为标题,专文介绍孟加拉国首相Sheikh Hasina 报复谋杀其父亲的凶手的前后经过和所陷入的困境。该习语有几个变异形式:pay old scores, pay an old score, wipe off old scores, wipe off an old score, settle old scores, settle an old score, 其意思均是“报宿怨”,“雪旧仇”或“算老帐”。



## Buying a Pig in a Poke



**Money:** Can the author of a Warren Buffett book run a mutual fund with Buffett-like returns?



But can he paint like Pablo Picasso? Robert Hagstrom is in New York.

## Buying a Pig in a Poke



隔山买老牛

这是发表在《新闻周刊》1995年5月29号刊第41页上的一篇文章的标题。该文的标题照搬英语习语 *buy a pig in a poke*，其意思近似于汉语“隔山买老牛”的说法。此语不但常在英美报刊中出现，而且也常被用于人们日常口语会话之中。

# Let's Talk Turkey



Women hunters take to the wilderness, guns cocked and bows nocked



The smell of new blood: Erin Sloney, 17, takes aim at a paper target at an all-girl bow-archery workshop



## Let's Talk Turkey

咱们动动真格的

这是发表在《新闻周刊》1995年10月30号刊第57页上一篇文章的标题。该文用英语习语 **talk turkey** 作为标题，介绍西方社会的暴力事件。此语来自一则成语故事中一个白人和一个印第安人之间对话中的一句：**Let's talk turkey.** 意思是开门见山，有什么就说什么，可引申为“单刀直入”或“动真格的”。



## What, I'm Gonna Live?

Powerful new drugs bring welcome reprieves—and some unexpected complications—to AIDS patients

By CHRISTINE GORMAN

**T**WO MONTHS AGO, PUCK WAS DYING of AIDS. The 34-year-old San Francisco hairdresser (who doesn't use a last name) had made a will and signed over his power of attorney, and was searching for a way to rest what he thought

► Doctors at some large urban U.S. hospitals estimate that AIDS admissions are down as much as 60%. A few private practices dedicated to AIDS treatment have actually laid off workers.

► At least one of the "cynical" companies that purchase the life-insurance policies of AIDS patients at a discount—thus providing



## What, I'm Gonna Live?



什么？我能活着？

用口语表达法作为报刊的标题在《时代周刊》、《新闻周刊》或《经济学家》杂志上并非罕见。这就是发表在《时代周刊》1996年10月14号刊第45页上，用口语表示法作为标题的一篇文章。标题中的Gonna是going to在人们日常口语会话中所使用的变音形式。与之相同的变音形式还有：wanna = want to; goin' = going; Why'd ya = Why did you; See ya = See you 等等。

# Gimme Software



Windows 95 is a step forward, but PCs still aren't easy enough

BY STEVEN LEVY

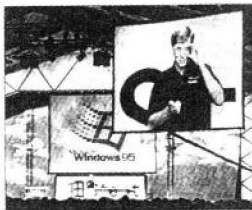
**T**HE POWER-GUITAR CHORDS ARE UNMISTAKABLY FAMILIAR, imprinted on us through decades of party time. They are the opening bars of "Start Me Up," the Rolling Stones tune rented by Microsoft to anthemize its ultra-bailihood computer-operating system, Windows 95. The purchase of that classic hook symbolizes the brilliant way that Microsoft marketing wizards have managed to fit an anachronistic mold into the Mount McKinley of software. In fact, the most impressive aspect of Windows 95 is just that: the way it promotes the ascension of computers, a formerly opaque scientific domain, into the center of American culture.

Certainly we are at a moment when what was once down is now very much up. Thirty years ago, around the time a Seattle private-school student named Bill Gates was twiddling his first bits, the Rolling Stones emerged as the dark side of the British pop invasion—scruffy-looking London rats whose songs were too hot for Ed Sullivan to handle uncensored. One album title said it all: they were exiles on Main Street. Clear across the spectrum was the world of computers. Anyone who mastered them was considered an egghead or a twit—not the type of person you'd have a beer with, let alone feature in a beer commercial. Who would have thought that in 1995, both deviant forces—computers and rock—would meet smack in the middle of the mainstream?

lives. In the '60s, it never went near one of a hundred million of us have gone digital. The point-and-click is our modern second-long common burden; the overly technical barrier from smoothly accessing and manipulating is often our love affair with computers is unrequited, or we can't easily figure out how to do simple tasks. The inability to drag a file to a file book up a CD-ROM is not an isolated phenomenon by the masses of people saddened. Thus users are thrilled at the prospect of views, as Windows 95 does, to remove the

their computing eye not all Microsoft marketing portrays where that will of desktop and posture person staring at a software that feels up button and 3-D equivalent of Porsche.

Only a cynic would substance of Windows unfavourably with "Let It Be." The components are to make us more primarily the ideas like long the name easily add percept. There's no real in



Big brother Bill: Addressing Windows 95 buyers

## Gimme Software

给我容易操作的软件



这是发表在《新闻周刊》1995年9月4号刊上的一篇以口语表达法为标题的文章。文章用Gimme Software这样口语化的语言形式作为标题，论述个人电脑所遇到的困惑。与前面图中所用的Gonna一样，gimme也是一种口语会话时的变音形式，由give me变音而来。但值得注意的是，虽然语言专家告诫学生不要随意使用这样的变音形式，但作为英美头号报刊的《时代周刊》和《新闻周刊》，使用这样的口语形式在特定的场合无疑会强化语言的感染力和宣传力。

# WHY ARE MEN SUCH WIMPS?



**S**HOBA DE IS INDIA'S BEST-SELLING English-language author, and one of its most controversial. Her novels, which usually portray women as the stronger of the sexes, deal with sexuality in explicit terms (though that has not prevented their being used as university texts in Bombay and as far afield as London and Chicago). Her latest book, a fast-selling nonfiction work published in late January and entitled "Surviving Men: The Smart Woman's Guide to Staying on Top," sets out to deflate the ego of the Indian male while also delivering a few well-aimed barbs at women. It's a "satir-sheathed harpoon," she says, intended to promote a dialogue between the sexes. De, 49, who has also been a model, a magazine editor and a newspaper columnist, lives in Bombay with her second husband and four of their six children. She spoke there with NEWSWEEK'S Sudip Mazumdar. Excerpts.



**MAZUMDAR:** What prompted you to write "Surviving Men"?

**DE:** Four years ago a few incidents triggered the idea of the book. It must have been screaming to get out. It is a product of concentrated man-watching for over 25 years. I have always found men slightly ridiculous in their posing and pretensions. It's this sense of ridicule that dominates the book.

**"On a scale of 1 to 10, I give Indian men 6. European or American men get 3 or 4; their notions of self are so inflated."**

— SHOBHA DE



## Why Are Men Such Wimps?

为何男人如此的没骨气?

这是发表在《时代周刊》上的一篇以口语表达法为标题的议论文。标题中的 wimp, 一般的英语词典没有收录。英语口语词典中对此词的解释是: A person who has no strong will, 相当于汉语的“没骨气”。我们在《妙语语林》一书中专门设 Colloquialisms in Spotlight 一栏的原因便出于此。

## Better Late Than Never



**Technology:** At last, Apple launches an audacious plan to allow cloning of its Macintosh computers



A billion-dollar company? Kahng and his clone

rev. Power Computing, some experts say, could prove no less formidable. It's headed by a master clonee who once introduced Leading Edge, an IBM knockoff from South Korea that for a time during the mid 1980s was the third best-selling personal computer in the United States. And cloned Macs will be cheap. If today's increasingly cost-conscious computer buyers take an interest, it will bring manufacturers like Gateway 2000 and IBM.

**Affordable prices:** Stephen Kahng, head of the Silicon Valley start-up, is nothing if not ambitious. He aims to build a \$1 billion company within five years by selling Macs (built around Apple's proprietary easy-to-use operating system and its new ultrastar PowerPC microprocessor) at prices everyone can afford—reportedly around \$1,000, roughly a third less than Apple's. That may cannibalize Apple's sales. But the company bets such losses will be more than offset by licensing fees and peripheral business the clones bring in. "Every time someone buys a computer," says Apple vice president Don Sprickland, "they buy other stuff too." Like Apple software, printers, scanners and modems.

**P**oor Apple, if you buy the conventional wisdom, the once vaunted computer maker can't quite get it right. Success isn't guaranteed. Over the years



## Better Late Than Never

迟总比不到好

用家喻户晓的谚语作为文章的标题在英美报刊中是常有的事。这篇文章就是用 Better late than never 这条脍炙人口的谚语作为标题的。此文发表在《新闻周刊》1995年1月9号刊第49页上，专门评述“苹果”牌计算机的竞争机遇以及该公司的发展战略。

# All's Well That Ends Well



An unscripted drama fires up a Broadway comedy

Nicol Williamson really knows how to get into a part. As the ghost of the legendary actor John Barrymore in the new Broadway comedy "I Hate Hamlet," he's perfectly cast: he's a brilliant actor, he's mercurial and he once had a reputation as a world-class carouser. Now, a month after opening night, Williamson is staying right in character—and embroidering his own colorful legend.

Playing Barrymore, he comes back from the dead to coach a slick Los Angeles TV star who's going to play Hamlet (Barrymore's most famous role) in a summer production in New York's Central Park. Actually, he doesn't coach so much as goad. So no one in the audience was surprised one night, a fortnight ago, to hear Barrymore suddenly bark at his protégé, "Put some life into it! Use your head!" And later in the same act, when the ghost engaged the inept TV star in a sword fight, no one thought anything was amiss when Barrymore



ROBIN PLATTER—TWIN IMAGES

Brilliant and mercurial: *The living legend*

a pretty dysfunctional little family." Williamson is hailed as inspiring by Ar-



## All's Well That Ends Well

结局好，万事好

All's well that ends well 也是一条有口皆碑的常用谚语。谚语，由于其语言的简洁和思想内容的丰富性，常成为人们会话中的调味品和作家从事写作活动的一大武器。由于谚语特有的语言功效，广告专家和产品广告的制作商们常在谚语的字里行间寻找广告语言的闪光点。某食品广告打出的 Tasting is believing 和某香水广告打出的 Smelling is believing 就是在 Seeing is believing 这条谚语中找到感觉的。我们在本书中设专栏介绍常用的英语谚语，其目的就是使大家熟悉并掌握谚语这一人际交往和信息传播中的有力武器。

# The Blues in High Cotton



**Music:** A homegrown art gets repackaged for a new generation of listeners

BY MALCOLM JONES  
THE NEW CAMBRIDGE, Mass., nightclub House of Blues is a juke joint wanna-be. Promoting — you might say enticing — live blues music, this latest branchchild of Isaac Tygett, mastermind of the Hard Rock Cafe, makes a fetish out of funkiness. Its plain wooden walls are covered with Mississippi Delta folk art; its ceilings wear graffiti. And while the place has been open only since last November, someone has scuffed the paint off the chairs to make them look old.

The House of Blues night



The Holmes Brothers perform at the House of Blues, a postmodern roadhouse in Cambridge, Mass.

## The Blues in High Cotton

布鲁斯异常火爆



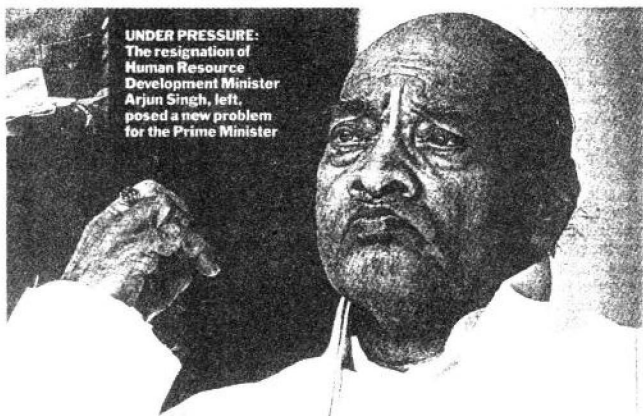
除了谚语，俚语也是倍受英美报刊杂志青睐的一个语言现象。尽管教科书或学校的教师们并不鼓励学生们使用俚语，但打开美国的《纽约时报》、《乡村之声》、《时代周刊》、《新闻周刊》、《读者文摘》以及英国的《经济学家》和《泰晤士报》等报刊杂志，俚语确实成了这些报刊杂志版面上闪闪发光的精美装饰品。此文发表在《新闻周刊》1993年7月19号刊，用 *in high cotton* 这样一个俚语把读者的注意力吸引到美国布鲁斯音乐厅的火爆场面，使人把美国布鲁斯音乐的火爆与棉农大丰收的场景联系在一起，这样的语言宣传效果恐怕非俚语莫属。



# Rude Awakenings



After a nightmare of scandals and electoral losses, Rao struggles to put life into his Congress Party



## Rude Awakenings



如梦初醒

人们喜欢俚语，人们青睐俚语，因为俚语来自人们的日常生活，与人们日常生活中的感受和体验息息相关。此外，俚语的语体精悍、喻意深远，在朴实的语体中蕴藏着大量极不寻常的思想哲理和精神食粮。这篇以 Rude Awakenings 的俚语为标题的文章，把人们的注意力吸引到“选举中的猫腻”，不但对落选者是个 rude awakening，对读者也照样是个 rude awakening，这大概也是 awakening 以复数形式出现的一个原因吧。