

Extracurricular Reading Series of College English

大学英语课外读物系列

Recitation Part

朗诵篇

主编 李学爱



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编者寄语

阅读作为英语学习的重要内容,是学习者获得语言知识,获取信息的重要手段和途径,阅读能力也是学生语言综合能力的体现。但在教学中我们注意到,学生提起“阅读”却仿佛“鸡肋”,所谓食之无味,弃之可惜。针对这种情况,我们产生了编写一套学生既感兴趣又看得懂的阅读丛书的想法。于是《大学英语课外读物系列》丛书诞生了。

我国许多英语学习的前辈都在不同场合提起朗读对语言学习的重要作用:朗读可以培养语感,改善语音语调,更是提高口语表达能力最直接最简便的方式。“书读百遍,其意自现”,可见朗读益处多多,但学习中同学们常常为找不到适合朗读的材料而苦恼。于是我们的这套丛书就由《上册:朗诵篇》开始。《上册:朗诵篇》选取的文章,短小精悍,寓意深刻,语言优美,朗朗上口,旨在通过大声朗读帮

助同学们开启通向英语世界的大门。兴趣是最好的老师。《中册:时尚篇》以同学们关注的时尚话题为线索,将学生在阅读报刊杂志中经常遇到的一些困难,以点带面,释疑解惑,引导大家学会这些与我们的生活息息相关的语言表达形式。英语在很多中国学生的心中是“痛苦”的代名词。“头悬梁,锥刺股”的精神固然可贵,但我们真的不能在轻松愉悦的氛围中学习英语吗?现代心理学的研究成果已经证明,快乐是开启心智的良方。《下册:幽默篇》让您带着轻松愉快的心情,了解西方文化,体会英语的玄机与奥妙,在开心的笑声中不知不觉地提高英语水平。如果在从前痛苦的经历中,你依然一无所获,那么《下册:幽默篇》也许将成为你英语学习新的开始。

这是一套为满足学生需求而诞生的丛书,这是一套经实践证明行之有效的阅读材料,这是一套凝结着大学英语教师心血和期望的丛书,我们相信,这套丛书一定会为大家的英语学习开辟新的道路。

由于学识所限,书中不妥及错漏之处恳请诸位同仁及广大读者批评指正。

编者于南开园
2006年1月4日

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1. Opportunity

The air we breathe is so freely available that we take it for granted. Yet without it we could not survive more than a few minutes. For the most part, the same air is available to everyone, and everyone needs it. Some people use the air to sustain them while they sit around and feel sorry for themselves. Others breathe in the air and use the energy it provides to make a magnificent life for themselves.

Opportunity is the same way. It is everywhere. Opportunity is so freely available that we take it for granted. Yet opportunity alone is not enough to create success. Opportunity must be seized and acted upon in order to have value. So many people are so anxious to “get in” on a “ground floor opportunity”, as if the opportunity will do all the work. That’s impossible.

Just as you need air to breathe, you need opportunity to succeed. It takes more than just breathing in the fresh air of opportunity, however. You must make use of that opportunity. That’s not up to the opportunity. That’s up to you. It doesn’t matter what “floor” the opportunity is on. What matters is what you do with it.

Translation

善待机会

我们呼吸的空气到处都有,以至我们对其视若无睹。可一旦失去它,我们只能活几分钟。大部分情况下,谁都能呼吸到空气,谁都需要空气。有些人靠呼吸空气活着,然而他们却碌碌无为,懊悔终

生。有的人则呼吸空气并利用它提供的能量使自己的生活绚丽多彩。

机会也是如此,机会无处不在。机会如此易得以至我们对此视为理所当然。然而只有机会并不能获得成功,我们必须抓住机会,见机行事,才能创造佳绩。许多人都渴望能夺得先机,似乎只要夺得先机就能万事大吉。这是不可能的。

正如你需要呼吸空气一样,你需要机会才能成功。然而成功靠的绝不仅仅是唾手可得的~~机会~~。你必须利用机会。成功并不是取决于机会,而是取决于你。重要的不是你在哪一个阶段遇见机会,而是面对机会你如何把握。

Remarks

此文将机会与空气相比,可谓恰当贴切。空气无处不在,以至我们对其存在视若无睹,只有面临失去它的危险时,我们才会真切地体会到它的可贵。机会在我们的身边一闪而过,没有抓住时我们可能也并不特别懊恼,因为我们知道,我们还年轻,机会还有的是。但当我们经历了人生诸多的困难和挫折后,可能会后悔为什么当初没有抓住那些机会,我们才会认识到从前的机会是多么的难得。说真的,机会并不像空气那样随处都在。不然的话,我们根本不用后悔。你说呢?

Open Questions for Discussion

1. How important do you think opportunity is?
2. Have you missed any opportunities in your life so far?
3. How can we make best use of opportunities?

2. A Little Change

Once, when I was racing home down a city sidewalk, a man sitting by the curb with a cup said, "A little change is better than no change." Startled out of my preoccupations^①, I stopped and looked at him. He smiled. I gave him a handful of change. Maybe it was a line^②, but I didn't care. It was a beautiful one.

Years later, his words haunt me like a riddle. I still struggle with the notion that a change isn't worth making if it's small. When I want to make a change in my own life, I want it to be big, even splashy^③.

Maybe my real problem is that I resist making changes by setting my sights too high, by getting grandiose^④. If I fail at change, after all, I can just stay stuck. This feels comfortable for a while, but eventually I start to chafe^⑤ in this place of no change at all. What if, instead of the trying to achieve the big, hard goals, based on "shoulds" I gave myself a little change?

Now is a good time to consider this, in this time of incremental^⑥ change, this season of long, slow softening of the ground, the air, the bud scales that protect embryonic^⑦ leaves. Perhaps a little change means releasing something small, something merely incremental, within myself. That's

- ① preoccupation *n.* 使人全神贯注的事物
- ② line *n.* 方式, 方法
- ③ splashy *adj.* 〈口〉惹人注意的, 显眼的, 轰动的
- ④ grandiose *adj.* 宏伟的, 壮丽的
- ⑤ chafe *vi.* 着恼, 不满, 焦躁
- ⑥ incremental *adj.* 增加的, 递增的
- ⑦ embryonic *adj.* 萌芽期的, 初期的

still tough to consider as a creature of a quick-fix culture that wants its changes fast.

True change, true forward motion, takes many small changes, minute by minute. And as Vincent van Gogh wrote in a letter to his brother, Theo, it's not so easy. "To make progress is a kind of miner's work; it doesn't advance as quickly as one would like, and as others also expect, but as one stands before such a task, the basic necessities are patience and faithfulness," van Gogh wrote. "In fact, I do not think much about the difficulties, because if one thought of them too much one would get stunned or disturbed."

Can our individual changes truly make a difference? A few months ago, I met an extraordinary man who decided to stop traveling by car — or anything else that runs on fossil fuel — after he witnessed the devastation of an oil spill. Thirty years later, he has walked and bicycled around the country, and a good part of the world, as well. He has moved and inspired thousands of people in his travels. He said to me, "You know, you can't change the world, but you can change yourself. And when you do, everyone around you has to respond."

I thought about how he makes his journey, literally one step at a time, and how this adds up to something large. May we begin on our own small changes, and begin again. May we start smaller, being kinder to ourselves and others, and know that, today, this is enough.

Translation

小变化

有一次,当我在人行便道上匆匆行走的时候,我听到一个男人说:“有点变化总比没有好(给点钱总比不给好)。”这个人坐在路边,手里拿只杯子。这句话让我大吃一惊,我停下脚步看着他,他则对我报以微笑。我给了他一些零钱。也许他说这话只是为了换个方法讨钱,但我不介意,这是一句很不错的台词。

数年之后,这句话仍然像个谜一样萦绕在我的心头。我始终有这样的观念:如果只是小改变,那就不值得改变。当我想对自己的生活作些改变的时候,我希望这种改变是巨大的、引人注目的。

也许我面临的真正问题是:我把目标定得太高,太雄心勃勃,结果却是无法改变。毕竟,如果我无法改变,我只能停滞不前。这让我在一段时间里感觉很舒服,但最终我开始觉得懊恼。假如我稍微改变一下自己,而不是妄图去实现那些困难的大目标,结果会是怎样的呢?

这是一个不断变化的时期,一个漫长的季节,大地在松软解冻,空气更加暖和,保护幼叶的苞片逐渐褪尽了颜色,正是考虑这个问题的好时机。也许一点点改变就意味着摆脱自己身上那些微小却正越积越多的东西。身处这样瞬息万变的年代,穷于应付的人们发现作些小改变也是很艰难的事情。

其实,真正的变化,真正向前的运动包含一点一滴的小变化。如同凡·高在给他的弟弟西奥的信中所说的,取得进步并不容易。“它就像采矿一样,并不像有人期望或想象的那般迅速。但是每个人在面临这样的任务时,他起码要耐心和尽职。”凡·高写道,“事实上,我并没有太多地考虑困难,因为考虑太多,我们就会被它吓倒或感到

不安。”

我们个人的变化真的如此关系重大吗？几个月前，我遇到了一个很特别的人，他在目睹了石油外溢所造成的破坏之后，决定不再驾车旅行或者借助任何以矿物燃料为动力的机器旅行。30年后，他靠步行和骑自行车游遍了全国，以及世界大部分地区。在旅行中，他感动并鼓舞了成千上万的人。他对我说：“你知道，你无法改变世界，但你可以改变你自己。当你改变了自己，周围的人就会有所反应。”

我想象着他是如何开始旅行的，他就是这么一步一步走过来的，每一步又使他迈出更大的一步。但愿我们开始慢慢地改变自己，并不断地改变。但愿我们作出小小的改变，更加善待自己和他人，并且懂得，在今天，这已足够。

Remarks

“A little change is better than no change”，语言文字真是很奇妙，一句话居然表达出两种完全不同的意思。通过这句由乞丐嘴里说出的寓意双关的话，作者产生了深刻的反思。身处这个瞬息万变的时代，我们是不是常为自己没有什么大的变化而苦恼呢？其实变化不在大小，只要我们愿意，我们随时都可以改变自己，并通过我们自己的改变，一点一滴地改变我们周围的环境，改变我们的社会。就如文中提到的那个“特别的人”，他在步行和骑自行车周游世界的旅行中，不但改变了自己，而且“周围的人”也会“有所反应”。

Open Questions for Discussion

1. Are you willing to make any change in your life, however small it is?
2. Do you think our individual changes can truly make a difference?

3. Manners

The tired ex-teacher edged^① closer to the counter at K-mart. Her left leg hurt and she hoped she had taken all of pills for the day — the ones for her high blood pressure, dizziness and a host of other ills. “Thank goodness I retired years ago,” she thought to herself, “I don’t have the energy to teach these days.”

Just before the line to the counter formed, she spotted a young man with four children and a pregnant wife or girlfriend in tow^②. The teacher couldn’t miss the tattoo^③ on his neck. He’s been to prison, she thought. She continued checking him out. His white T-shirt, shaved hair and baggy pants led her to surmise^④. He’s a gang member.

The teacher tried to let the man go ahead of her.

“You can go first,” she offered.

“No, you go first,” he insisted.

“No, you have more people with you,” said the teacher.

“We should respect our elders,” parried^⑤ the man. And with that, he gestured with a sweeping motion indicating the way for the woman.

A brief smile flickered on her lips as she hobbled^⑥ in front of him. The teacher in her decided she couldn’t let the moment go and she turned back

① edge *vi.* 侧着移动, 徐徐移动

② in tow (被)拖着, 陪伴着

③ tattoo *n.* 文身

④ surmise *vt. & vi.* 推测, 猜测

⑤ parry *vt. & vi.* 避开, 回避, 闪避

⑥ hobble *vi.* 摇晃不稳地行进

to him and asked, "Who taught you your good manners?"

"You did, Mrs. Simpson, in third grade."

Translation

风度

退休教师疲惫地一步一步向前挪着,眼看着离商店的柜台越来越近了,她的左腿却痛了起来。此时,她希望自己已经服用了当天治疗高血压、头昏以及其他病的一大堆药。她心想:“谢天谢地,多亏几年前就退休了,最近我已经没有体力教书了。”

就在柜台前的队刚要排好之际,她瞥见一个年轻人带着4个孩子,身后还跟着他怀孕的妻子抑或是女朋友。女教师一眼就看到他脖子上的文身,心想他肯定是蹲过监狱。她继续打量他,白色的T恤衫,剃过的光头及宽松的裤子,由此猜想他一定不是好人。

老教师想让他排在她前面。

“你在前面吧。”她提议道。

“不,还是您在前面。”他坚持道。

“不,你们人多。”老教师说。

“我们应该尊敬长者。”年轻人推辞着,同时把手一挥做了个请的动作,给退休教师让出路来。

就在她蹒跚着走到他前面时,她的嘴角露出了一丝微笑。不能让这事就这么过去了,于是老教师回过身问:

“谁教会了你这些礼貌?”

“是您,辛普森太太,在三年级的时候。”

Remarks

多年前一位老师不经意播下善的种子,多年后终于开花结果。那位外表看似粗鲁缺乏教养的男子,却一直把老师多年前的教诲牢记在心。善因必有善果。也许这正是这篇小小的故事所要告诉我们的吧。

Open Questions for Discussion

1. What are good manners in your opinion?
2. How do you think of the young man in the story?

4. *Relish the Moment*

Tucked away in our subconscious is an idyllic^① vision. We see ourselves on a long trip that spans the continent. We are by train. Out the windows, we drink in the passing scene of cars on nearby highways, of children waving at a crossing, of cattle grazing on a distant hillside, of smoke pouring from a power plant, of row upon row of corn and wheat, of flatlands and valleys, of mountains and rolling hillsides, of city skylines and village halls.

But uppmoost in our minds is the final destination. On a certain day at a certain hour, we will pull into the station. Bands will be playing and flags waving. Once we get there, so many wonderful dreams will come true and the pieces of our lives will fit together like a completed jigsaw puzzle^②. How restlessly we pace the aisles, damning the minutes for loitering^③— waiting, waiting, waiting for the station.

“When we reach the station, that will be it!” we cry. “When I’m 18!” “When I buy a new 450SL Mercedes Benz!” “When I put the last kid through college!” “When I have paid off the mortgage!” “When I get a promotion!” “When I reach the age of retirement, I shall live happily ever after!”

Sooner or later, we must realize there is no station, no one place to arrive at once and for all. The true joy of life is the trip. The station is only a dream. It constantly outdistances us.

“Relish the moment” is a good motto. It isn’t the burdens of today that

① idyllic *adj.* 田园诗的, 田园风光的

② jigsaw puzzle 拼图玩具, 七巧板

③ loiter *vi.* 闲逛, 游荡, 徘徊