

A GUIDE TO VOA

美国之音

英语广播收听指南

严文清

王迈迈

编著



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前 言

当今世界,英语已成为一种国际语言。它每时每刻无不以口头和书面的形式在国际社会生活中发挥着巨大的作用。在我国,记得一些英语单词,能借助词典理解一般书面英语的人已比较普遍,而能听懂英美人讲话,以至听懂英美广播的人却十分有限。许多人花了十二分的努力,学到的仍只限于书面语言,即“哑巴英语”。他们片面地认为只有到国外留学或是进外语学院方可得到实际英语交际环境,听懂地道的英语。一些具有一定听力的人,在脱离磁带后也苦于没有实际语言环境而影响了英语听力的继续提高。其实,在如今的社会经济条件下,每个人都可垂手为自己创造一个较为真实的活的英语语言环境,从而在没有教师的情况下,通过自学达到英语听力质的飞跃。《美国之音英语广播收听指南》的编著正是从收听英语广播这一可行的前提出发的。它试图为广大英语学习者提供一个简易的阶梯,以达到最终听懂英语广播的目的。

为了帮助英语学习者收听美国之音即 VOA 英语广播,本书简要介绍了 VOA 电台及其节目,分析了 VOA 英语广播新闻的主要特点,对比阐述了 VOA Special English(特别英语)与 Standard English(标准英语)的不同语言特色,并针对听众在收听 VOA 英语广播的过程中可能会遇到的种种困难,重点介绍了一些实用的收听技巧,还精选出 VOA 英语新闻实例 140 条,根据循序渐进的原则将特别英语(慢速)和标准英语(快速)相对照进行编排,并配有两盘磁带,以利于英语学习者首先听懂特别英语,进而顺利地实现从特别英语到标准英语的过度。

VOA 是世界上最大的新闻广播机构之一,它的英语节目象一部“活的教科书”,不仅能帮助我们掌握现代英语的发展动向,培养准确连贯的英语语感,学到地道的英语语言,而且

能帮助我们了解世界各国,特别是美国的历史背景、社会现状、风土人情、社会习俗和地区风貌。

VOA 英语广播采用的是美国普通话 (General American), 而我国留美人员必须通过的 TOEFL, Michigan Test, EPT 或 VST 等考试, 其听力部分正是采用的这种语音语调。据我们调查所知: 我国在这些考试中落选的考生, 绝大多数是听力过不了关; 而在考试中取得理想成绩的, 几乎全都坚持收听 VOA 英语广播。因此, 不难看出, 收听 VOA 英语广播是我们提高听力的一条重要途径, 是在国内环境下培养英语交际能力的一条比较现实的路子, 也是我们了解当今世界的重要渠道。

本书大部分文稿由湖北教育学院外语系张秋丽副教授审阅, 录音磁带及文字材料由美籍专家 Lyric Wallwork, Rebecca Ann Lerma, Wendeline Ruth Frecka 审听, 大部分英文稿的打字工作由彭培凤同志承担。本书在编写过程中, 还得到了湖北教育学院外语系刘隆平教授、刘特和、田湖龙副教授、李美华、李正明副研究馆员及院系领导的指导、鼓励和支持。在此一并向他们表示衷心的感谢。

限于编著者的水平, 书中不足及错漏之处在所难免, 敬请读者不吝赐教。

编著者

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一、VOA Special English

(特别英语)节目评介

美国之音(以下称 VOA)的英语节目,按播音速度可分为两种:一种是 Standard English(标准英语);一种叫作 Special English(特别英语)。

Special English 又叫“慢速英语”,是 VOA 电台专为全世界非英语国家初学英语的听众安排的一种简易、规范的英语广播节目。该节目创始于 50 年代末期,是 VOA 电台的专家们研究如何与世界各地的英语学习者进行交际的产物。它正式开播于 1959 年 10 月。当时只面向欧洲和中东,但由于这个节目适合许多国家英语学习者的需要,所以它的广播对象不久就扩大到世界其他地区,并很快在全世界范围内产生了广泛的影响。现在这个节目对欧洲、非洲和拉丁美洲每晚广播一次,对加勒比地区每晚广播一次(星期天除外),对东南亚广播次数最多,每天上午两次,晚上三次。

30 多年来,VOA 电台为了办好 Special English 节目,进行了大量的调查研究工作,对播音速度、内容及用词范围都作了具体规定,基本上达到了既能为英语学习者提供信息,又不损害英语本身风格的目的,使之成为 VOA 电台独具特色,拥有最大量听众的节目。

美国著名词汇学家 S. B. Flexmer 指明了 Special English 的三条标准,也就是它所“特别”的地方:

一、(特别英语)节目评介

(1) 它是一种由美国人最常用的 1500 个基本单词为主体构成的美国英语;

(2) 它用简短、明晰的句子写作和广播;

(3) 它以每分钟 90 个单词的速度,即 $2/3$ 的 Standard English(标准英语)速度进行广播。

Special English 的节目可分为两大类:一类是新闻节目;一类是专题节目。

1. 新闻节目

VOA Special English 的新闻广播向听众提供世界范围内的政治、经济、军事、外交、国际关系、宗教、天气以及各种重大事件和珍闻奇事等各个方面的信息,每天向东南亚地区广播五次,早上两次,晚上三次,每逢半点播出。

Special English 的新闻节目每次长约十分钟,大都播出十条左右新闻,近一千个单词,每条新闻多为一分钟,但偶尔也有长达两分钟的要闻。除头条新闻外,每条新闻都由一个电头引导,这样显得结构分明,条理清晰,适宜初学英语的人收听。在节目结束之前,播音员常常用三四句话重播其中三条新闻的提要,以加深听众对要闻的印象。

Special English 新闻中 70% 左右的内容与同时整点播出的 Standard English 新闻相同,但相同新闻的先后次序有所变动。每次节目的开头和结尾大同小异,格式比较固定。

为了让读者进一步获得感性认识,现举出实例一则。下面是一次十分钟特别英语新闻节目的全文:

It is now 2230 Greenwich Mean Time. And this is VOA, the Voice of America broadcasting in Special English. From Washington, here is the news.

Heavy fighting continues in El Salvador between government troops and rebel forces. The Salvador Army says 432 persons have been killed in the fighting. Airforce helicopters continue to attack areas held by the rebels. The rebels have asked for a temporary ceasefire to permit civilians to leave the battle areas. In Washington, Nicaragua says it will reopen a ceasefire with the rebels if the rebels withdraw to bases in Honduras. Nicaragua has dropped its demand that the rebels in Honduras lay down their arms before there can be a ceasefire. The chief rebel negotiator said the proposal calls for a rebel retreat. He said ceasefire should permit both sides to keep their positions and their weapons.

News from the United Nations Iran and Iraq have answered a UN proposal for a ceasefire in the Gulf War. Ambassadors from both countries gave the answers in a meeting with U. N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar. But the answers will not be announced until the General discusses them with the Security Council. Reports say western diplomats are not hopeful that Iran will accept the ceasefire. Iran has said Iraq must be named as the aggressor in the war before ceasefire can be declared.

一、(特别英语)节目评介

Sri Lanka Five Indian soldiers have been killed and at least two wounded when a bomb exploded under an Indian army truck in northern Sri Lanka. Officials believe Tamil guerillas placed the bomb under the truck. An Indian spokesman in Colombo said the soldiers were in the Bulahu area when a bomb exploded. More than 220 Indian soldiers have been killed since the Indian army began its offensive against the Tamil rebels.

Pakistan Chinese Premier Li Peng has told Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto that China will continue to provide humanitarian aid to Afghanistan refugees in Pakistan. A Pakistani Foreign Ministry spokesman said Mr. Li announced the aid plan during a meeting with Mr. Bhutto on the first day of his visit to Pakistan. The two leaders will continue their talks Wednesday.

In Financial News The American Stock Market opened lower Monday, but the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 20 points when it closed. London Stock Market also opened lower but later gained strength. In Tokyo the Nikkei Average closed 30 points higher than last week's price, but in Hong Kong stocks were down 37 points. Financial experts say the lower value of the American dollar is causing some concern and is reducing stock sales.

Washington The Commerce Department says Japan

has stopped selling computer parts at unfair prices on world markets. Officials said they now have evidence Japanese companies are honoring an earlier computer agreement signed by both countries. But they said American officials need more evidence that Japan is opening its computer markets to American trade.

In South Korea The Chief Government Lawyer reportedly has called on police to launch a campaign against political violence. The official, Lee Chong Nam, reportedly said violence at political gathering damages the possibilities for fair elections Sunday. About 100 people attacked a hotel in Pusan where opposition presidential candidate Kim Dae Jung was staying. At least twelve people were reported injured and more than ten were arrested.

Washington Defense Department officials have denied an American news report that Soviet sabotage forces have secretly entered the United States Subic Bay Naval Base in the Philippines. Spokesman at Soviet embassy in Manila also denied the report. The American publication Newsweek said the navy is investigating evidence that members of Soviet special forces have entered the Subic Bay Base and other American Bases in Asia. The report also said the Soviets entered secret areas of the Subic Bay Base several times.

News from Brussels An international organization of

一、(特别英语)节目评介

reporters has called on Malaysia to end a ban declared last week on three newspapers. The organization, the International Federation of Journalists said it rejects the Malaysian government charge that newspaper reporters increase tension between the Chinese and Malays and it called on the government to give civil rights to 91 persons arrested. The government says it is holding them without trial in an effort to prevent violence between the two groups. Chinese and Malays in Malaysia are disputing an Education Ministry plan to use school officials who do not speak Mandarin in Chinese schools.

In the South Pacific Australian and New Zealand Labor Unions say they will end bans against shipping trade with Fiji. Officials said they decided to end the bans because Fiji's new leader Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka has removed restrictions on the Unions and said Trade Unions in Fiji would remain free. The Australian and New Zealand Labor Unions declared the bans last month after Colonel Rabuka closed Fiji's Labor Unions.

And Finally in This News from Washington The speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives says the Reagan Administration needs to show congress it is seriously attempting to reduce the huge federal deficit. The speaker, Jim Wright, told reporters Administration officials have

一、(特别英语)节目评介

already rejected some Congressional proposals about ways to cut the deficit. Negotiators from Administration and Congress have begun a second week of talks on ways to cut the deficit. Some progress has been reported. The American publication Newsweek said the Administration is proposing to reduce spending by as \$ 63,000 million over a two-year period.

Now briefly here again look at the major news stories of the hour.

Heavy fighting continues in El Salvador between government troops and rebel forces. Iran and Iraq have answered a United Nation's proposal for a ceasefire in the Gulf War. And five Indian soldiers have been killed and at least two wounded in northern Sri Lanka. That's the news in Special English. Bill White reporting from Washington.

2. 专题节目(一)

Special English 的专题节目 (Feature Programs), 从时间上看, 可分为两大类: 一是每五分钟一次的专题, 二是每十五分钟一次的专题。本节先介绍每五分钟一次的专题节目。

Special English 五分钟一次的专题节目安排在 Special English 新闻节目之后和(或)每十五分钟一次的专题节目之前播出, 每星期播七次。根据内容, 可分为三个小类, 即: Science Report (科学报道), 逢星期一、三、五播出, 每天播六遍; Agriculture Report (农业报道), 逢星期二、四播出, 每天播

一、(特别英语)节目评介

六遍: Words And Their Stories (词语掌故),逢星期六和星期天播出,每天播五遍。这三个专题各具特色,具有相对的独立性,听众每听完一个节目,都会获得一个完整的印象。

Science Report (科学报道) 这一专题节目每周向听众介绍三篇有关现代科学技术最新发展情况的报道,涉及物理、化学、天文、地理、生物、环卫、心理、教育、医学和计算机等方面。适宜理工科大学生和科技工作者收集信息,积累资料,学习科技英语。

下面是一则实例:

Now the daily Special English Science Report. This is Stam Basby.

People usually are surprised to hear that a young athlete has died suddenly. How can it happen? Young athletes seem so strong and healthy. In most cases doctors learn that the athletes suffered from a disorder that weakened the heart and the athlete never knew. Doctors say this is what happened to former American basketball player Pete Maverige. Maverige died of a heart attack. earlier this month. He was 40 years old. An examination showed that Maverige was with only one of the two major arteries that carry blood to the heart. Existing artery had grown bigger to do the work of the missing one. But it could not carry blood as fast as the normal artery. Over the years scar tissue formed on the weak side of the

heart. Less and less oxygen could get through. Pete Maverige was a basketball star in college. He then played very successfully for ten years as a professional. Doctors examined him many times during his sports career, yet they never discovered the problem with his heart. Doctors say the problem was extremely rare. It would not have appeared in normal medical test for athletes. A much more common heart disorder that kills young athletes is called hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. In this disorder the heart becomes bigger and thicker on one side. Blood-flow is restricted. Intense physical activity can cause the heart to miss a beat or even stop. Athletes with hypertrophic cardiomyopathy usually die of a heart attack before they are 35 years old. Most die without ever showing signs of a disorder. Today's science report was written by Nancy Stanbarg. This is Stam Basby.

Agriculture Report (农业报道) Agriculture Report 是为农业科技工作者和生产者安排的一个专题。它专门报道世界各国,特别是美国现代化农业生产的最新成就,报道科学家对农业生产某一方面的研究进展,以及他们对影响农业生产的某一自然现象进行分析和研究的近况。此外,它还经常向听众介绍发展中国家农业生产的一些有益经验等内容。

下面是一则实例:

Now the Special English Agriculture Report. This is