



【英】David W. Ferguson 编著
周雅芳 译

我可能学的 是假英语

英语、中式英语和偏误英语
ENGLISH CHINGLISH AND WRONGLISH

翻译界、外语界

知名专家

陈明明 黄友义

联袂推荐！

中英对照讲解地道英语和中国人正在使用的英语；
中国外文局资深英籍定稿专家分类列举中式英语常见顽疾；
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前言

出版这本书，并不是为了要教大家怎么说英语，而是为了教那些已经掌握英语读写的朋友，怎么鉴别和避免在中译英，不管是在口头交流，还是书面翻译时常见的错误。本书也不教授基础的语法知识或如何选用恰当的语体风格，但书中包含了上千条经常被误解和误用的具体词汇、短语、表述例子。

本书面向的读者群体是高中或大学的学生和教师。同样，这本书对专业译者和那些在工作中需要使用英语的工作者来说，也将有所助益。

为了使本书更加易读易懂，我试着将它按照逻辑分成了几个章节。其中一章包含了一些独立的词类：动词、名词、副词、形容词。还有一章的内容是一些被误用的表述，这些表述更适合用在口语中，却经常被误用在书面语中。其中最长的一个章节包含了许多用法怪异的、词义被误解的，或是被滥用的表述，这些表述无法被简单地归类到某一特定的语法类别中。

希望这本书对广大的高阶英语学习者有所裨益。

English, Chinglish, and Wronglish

English: A language.

Chinglish: A form of English used in China. It is not necessarily wrong, but it sounds odd—a bit like an alien creature that is trying very hard to speak a language it has learned via intergalactic radio transmissions.

Wronglish: English, only wrong. The USA has been involved in a long-standing campaign to turn things that are Wronglish into English.

I have spent almost ten years editing documents translated into English by Chinese translators. Over this period I have noted a wide-ranging set of mistakes that are regular and repeated. This book contains more than one hundred examples. These are not errors being made by inexperienced individuals in the course of their work and later corrected; in many cases they are made by some of the best-qualified and most experienced of translators. They are clearly mistakes that are being taught within the system.

It is not surprising that this should be the case. After the founding of the PRC, it suffered many years of externally-imposed isolation.

序言

英语，中式英语，偏误英语

英语：指一门语言。

中式英语：指在中国使用的一种英语形式。这种英语形式的语法、语义不一定是错误的，但是听起来很奇怪，感觉就像是一种外星生物通过宇宙无线电波学了一门语言，并努力地想说好它。

偏误英语：指错误的英语。美国长期存在将偏误英语转变为“正确”英语的情况。

我有将近十年的汉英译稿编辑经验，经手的大多数译稿都存在各种具有规律性的、反复出现的语言偏误问题。这本书便包含上百种这样的例子。这些偏误，并不是指那些经验不够丰富的译者在翻译过程中会出现的、并且过后能进行修正的语言偏误；在更多情况下，这些偏误出自一些经验老到的资深译者之手，而其产生的根源明显在于译者所处的英语教育体系。

会产生这样的情况并不奇怪。改革开放前，由于各种因素，中国与西方国家多年来交流甚少，使得在很长一段时间内，许多中国偏远

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The combination of these factors meant that in many remote places, and for a long period, English was being taught in China by people who might never in their lives have spoken to or even met someone whose native language was English. It is hardly surprising that mistakes crept in, were repeated, and took root.

And English is hard work. Traditional English is a hybrid language—a blend of Germanic, Nordic, and Romance, with some hints of Celtic influence and plenty more. For every rule there are hordes of exceptions, and often there are numerous ways of saying the same thing. Formal English tends to be Romance-based. One reason for this is that from medieval times the nobility were French speakers; another is that the first people who could write were largely monks, and they wrote in Latin. Meanwhile, the common people still spoke Germanic languages. So, for example, in English you can say “*I started work...*”, or you can say “*I commenced employment...*” Both essentially mean the same thing, but one is German and the other is French.

Another factor that is often neglected is the important distinction between written and spoken English. We speak a very different language from the one we write. When we speak we use shorter sentences, and less complex language. We sometimes ignore or even flout basic rules of grammar. Here is a simple example: in written English there are clear rules about when to use *less*, and when to use *fewer*. In spoken English *fewer* can sound a little pretentious, and it is not unusual to use *less* even though grammatically it is incorrect. So nobody would raise an eyebrow if they heard someone saying:

地区的英语教师，都从未与来自英语国家的人进行交谈，甚至连遇都未遇到过。在这样的情况下，各种英语偏误便容易乘虚而入，并被反复使用，直至最后根植于那些地区的英语教育体系中。

英语是一门难学的语言。传统英语更是多种语言杂合的产物——它混合了日耳曼语、斯堪的纳维亚语及拉丁语，且受到凯尔特语及其他一些语种的影响。因此，英语中的每条语法规则都存在许多特例，而描述同一件事物，也可以有多种不同的说法。正式的英语倾向于以拉丁语为词源，其中一个原因是因为，在中世纪时期，贵族使用的语言为法语¹；另一个原因，是因为当时掌握语言书写能力的大多是僧侣，而他们使用的语言也是拉丁语。与此同时，平民使用的日常语言还是日耳曼语。因此，在英语中表达“我开始工作了……”可以说“*I started work...*”，也可以用“*I commenced employment...*”。这两种表达方法所阐述的意思从本质上看是一样的，只不过一个源于日耳曼语，一个源于拉丁语。

另外一个经常被忽视的原因，是书面语与口语之间的重要区别。英语口语的表达方式与书面语存在巨大的区别。在口语中，英语表达趋向于使用简短、简单的句子，有时会直接忽略，甚至故意不遵从一些基本的语法规则。下面举个简单的例子：英语书面语中明确规定了什么时候用“*less*”，什么时候用“*fewer*”。而在口语中，“*fewer*”这个词听起来比较做作。因此，即使某些句子从语法上看使用“*less*”是错的，在日常口语中也依然可以这么使用。所以当你说出下面这样的句子时，没人会觉得这句话有问题：

1 法语属于拉丁语系。

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English, Chinglish and Wronglish

"Isn't it great! I make a lot less mistakes since I read English, Chinglish and Wronglish..."

Several expressions that are more suited to spoken English have made the opposite journey in China, and crop up regularly in formal documents—examples are “Besides...” “So far...” “What’s more...” “and so on...”

Nowadays, modern English enjoys the benefits of Americanization, involving the use of archaic expressions that have fallen out of use in the homeland (“I have gotten...”), and the forced adoption of new expressions that used to be wrong (“The demonstrators protested the new traffic law outside the government building...”).

Americanization is probably the biggest single issue for people trying to learn to speak ‘correct’ English. There are large numbers of words and expressions that used to be ‘wrong’ in formal English, and are in the process of becoming ‘right’ in American English. Verbs are a good example. They are a complicated topic with many rules about issues such as transitives and intransitives, and which verbs can be followed by an infinitive. American English increasingly solves these problems by lumping all verbs in together and using them however it pleases. I have already given the example of ‘*protest*’ above, which used to be an intransitive verb and is now a transitive verb.

‘Award’ is another example. In the olden days you couldn’t ‘award someone’. You had to *award something to someone*. Nowadays it is quite common to see sentences like “He awarded the best students in the class.”

There are a number of reasons for this. One is that a very large and growing number of Americans do not have English as their first

“Isn't it great! I make a lot less mistakes since I read *English, Chinglish and Wronglish...* 这难道不是很棒吗! 自从看了《我可能学的是假英语 英语、中式英语和偏误英语》之后我犯的英语错误就变少了……”

但一些仅适合在英语口语中使用的说法, 在中国却会出现在正式的文件上, 例如: “*Besides...*” “*So far...*” “*What's more...*” “*and so on...*”。

现如今, 受美式英语的影响, 一些原本在英国已经不使用的过时说法, 又重新进入视野 (例如: *I have gotten...*); 而一些在过去被认为是错误的表达方式, 也开始被迫收入到英语体系中, 例如: *The demonstrators protested the new traffic law outside the government building...*示威者在政府大楼外抗议新交通法规……)。

美式英语, 可能是英语学习者在学习如何正确地表达英语时, 将会面临的最大问题。很多单词与表达方式在过去的正式英语中被认为是“错误的”, 而如今却在美式英语中渐渐转变为“正确的”。动词使用方式的转变便是一个很好的例子。英语动词的使用规律很复杂, 例如: 及物动词与不及物动词的区别; 哪些动词后面能跟不定式, 哪些则不可以。但在美式英语中, 越来越多的人将这些动词的词性特点混为一谈, 随心所欲地乱用。例如上述例子中的“*protest*”便是一个不及物动词, 而在例句中却被当作及物动词来使用。

还有一个类似的例子便是动词“*award*”的用法。在以前不能直接说“*award someone*”, 只能说“*award something to someone*”。而现在, 像“*He awarded the best students in the class.* 他对班上的优秀

language. They don't actually know the difference between stuff that's right and stuff that's wrong, and by sheer weight of numbers they introduce anomalies into the language.

This intersects with what is perhaps the most pernicious of all issues affecting the study of English—the relentless dumbing down of educational standards in the two most influential English speaking countries, the USA and the UK.

In the 1960s, during the time that I was at school in the UK, progressive educationalists decided that English grammar would no longer be taught in schools because it was 'old-fashioned'. Whole generations of pupils, some of whom would go on to become teachers, grew up with only a rudimentary understanding of grammar and punctuation. Shortly afterwards spelling followed the same pathway.

More recently, governments have acknowledged the error and tried to remedy this problem. But it's not easy for teachers to teach what they never learned themselves, even if there is a will. I had a recent exchange with a primary school teacher who was lamenting the fact that he was being asked to teach basic punctuation to his pupils, and described punctuation marks like semi-colons, hyphens, and apostrophes as 'hard' and 'complicated'. He decried the inhibiting effect that the obligation to teach them had on his pupils' 'creativity'.

Of all the arguments against teaching grammar and punctuation to young children, this has to be the silliest and most spurious. For a start, you cannot teach people to be 'creative'. People either have a creative instinct, or they don't. And grammar and punctuation are tools. They can be used to lend subtlety and tone to your writing. If I might employ an analogy, no one with any sense would claim

学员进行了奖励。”这样的句子却比比皆是。

造成这种语言偏误的原因有很多。其中之一，就是因为有很大一部分美国人的母语并不是英语，并且这部分人的数量还在增长当中。他们并没有办法分辨哪些说法是对的、哪些是错的，且因为这部分人的人数众多，他们使用的一些不规范用法便也被带到了英语语言体系当中。

除上述原因之外，还有一个可能最致命的因素——美国与英国这两个最具影响力的英语国家正在不断下降的教育标准。

20世纪60年代，当我还只是一名英国在校生的时候，一些进步的教育家认为不应该再在学校中教授英语语法，因为这种做法已经过时了。因此那一代的小学生只懂得一些最基本的语法和标点符号，而他们中的一部分人长大后将成为教师。在那不久之后，拼写教育也步上了同样的后尘。

近来，政府已意识到这些决定的错误性，并努力地想弥补已经造成的不良后果。但对于那些从来没接受过语法与拼写教育的教师来说，即使他们本身有弥补这方面教学的意愿，也力不从心了。最近我和一名正在教授标点符号的小学教师交谈过，他表示教学过程很令人崩溃，那些标点符号，例如：分号、连字符、省略号的使用方法对他来说很是“困难”“复杂”，他认为将这些知识作为义务教学的一部分，会抑制学生的“创造力”。

在所有反对向孩子们教授语法和标点符号的论调中，这个意见肯定是最愚昧，也最虚伪的。首先，你无法教授别人怎样才能具有“创造力”，这种天赋是与生俱来的。而语法及标点符号只是用来辅助表

that teaching a cabinet-maker how to use her chisels will inhibit her creativity.

It is true that there are many great writers who have flouted the rules of grammar and punctuation—James Joyce, for example, or more recently Irvine Welsh, the author of *Trainspotting*. But there is a world of difference between ignoring punctuation in the deliberate pursuit of an artistic effect, and ignoring punctuation because you have no idea how to use it.

The result of all this is that the native-speaking population becomes less and less reliable as a source of guidance. Any foreign visitor who reads the discussion forums on ‘quality’ British media websites like the well-read *Guardian* newspaper will quickly become rather demoralised by the number of contributors who believe that ‘lose’ is spelt ‘loose’. (Well, ‘choose’ is spelt ‘choose’!) At least *lose* is a four-letter word. Growing in popularity is the idea that ‘led’ is spell ‘lead’. (Well, ‘head’ is spelt ‘head’!) It’s quite an achievement to emerge from university with a degree, and still not know how to spell a three-letter word in your own native language.

Here is an excellent example of what I am talking about. The following sentence is an extract from an article in the Daily Telegraph—a newspaper that would certainly consider itself ‘a cut above the rest’.

In recent weeks, the amount of Western-inspired TV programmes such as talent and talk shows—“deemed trashy and vulgar” have been axed by two thirds during prime time.¹

1 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/8995123/Chinas-vice-presidentorders-more-thought-control-over-students.html>

达的工具，它们可以使你的文章更加巧妙且富有格调。若用类比来描述的话，这就跟没有一个正常人会觉得，教一名细木工如何使用凿子，会抑制她的创造力是一样的。

虽然有很多伟大的作家都没有遵从语法及标点符号的使用规则，例如詹姆斯·乔伊斯，又或是年代较近的《猜火车》的作者欧文·威尔士。但是，为了追求艺术形式而故意忽略标点符号使用规则，与因为不知道如何使用而忽略有着天壤之别。

这些做法和论调造成的后果，便是英语母语者所使用的语言对于英语学习者所能起到的指导作用越来越小。当国外网民浏览英国那些比较大的严肃媒体网站，如《卫报》时，他们很快就会被那些认为“lose”应该拼为“loose”（当然了，“choose”还是“choose”）的撰稿人搞得一头雾水。好吧，如果说“lose”需要四个字母，拼错情有可原。那么当越来越多的人将“led”拼为“lead”（当然了，“head”还是“head”！）时，我只能说那些能从大学顺利毕业，却仍然无法用母语拼对一个由三个字母组成的单词的人，真的太了不起了。

这里便有一个绝佳的例子，能完美阐述我上面的观点。这句话是从《每日邮报》的一篇文章中摘录出来的。《每日邮报》自认为比别的报纸“更胜一筹”。

In recent weeks, the amount of Western-inspired TV programmes such as talent and talk shows—“deemed trashy and vulgar” have been axed by two thirds during prime time.

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A generous examiner might conclude that there are five grammatical errors in the sentence; a more exacting one might argue that there are six. Well done to the journalist and the sub-editor from one of Britain's top newspapers, who managed in the space of 28 words to include quite so many mistakes, and then failed to spot any of them on reading or re-reading the work.

Here is another example, which is even worse (or better, depending on your perspective). Connie St Louis has a prominent place in the field of science journalism. She came to widespread public attention in 2015, when she launched a campaign on social networks to pillory a Nobel prizewinning scientist, Sir Tim Hunt, for what she claimed to be 'sexist and misogynist' comments he had made during a speech in Korea.

Ms St Louis is a Board Member of the World Federation of Science Journalists. She stood as a successful candidate for this post during the 2015 election. Here are some extracts from her electoral address and the CV she made available:

- *According to latest figures it is been engulfed by the relentless march of the science public relations army... (x)*
- *According to the latest figures it has been engulfed by the relentless march of the science public relations army... (√)*
- *This programme was received successful reviews within and outside the BBC... (x)*
- *This programme received successful reviews within and outside the BBC... (√)*

一位比较大度的审核员大概会说这句话有5个语法错误，而一位比较谨慎的则会认为这句话有6个错误。不得不说，这名来自英国最佳报社的记者和他的助理编辑真是太厉害了，毕竟不是谁都能在短短的、只有28个单词的句子里囊括这么多的错误，并且做到在发表前没有发现其中任何一个。

下面这个例子比上述情况更加糟糕（也可能在你看来是稍微好一点）。康妮·圣·路易斯是一名在科学新闻领域表现十分突出的记者。2015年，诺贝尔奖科学家蒂姆·亨特爵士在韩国演讲时发表了关于“性别歧视”和“厌女”的言论，康妮·圣·路易斯为此在社交网络上发起了一场针对蒂姆·亨特爵士的批判活动，从而声名鹊起。

同年，康妮·圣·路易斯女士作为一名候选人被成功选入世界科学记者联盟，成为董事会成员。下面这些句子是从她公开的个人竞选简介中摘录出来的：

- *According to latest figures it is been engulfed by the relentless march of the science public relations army... (x)*
- *According to the latest figures it has been engulfed by the relentless march of the science public relations army... (√)*
- *This programme was received successful reviews within and outside the BBC... (x)*
- *This programme received successful reviews within and outside the BBC... (√)*

- *These programmes have been heralding as both ground breaking and as 'an extraordinary contribution'...* (x)
- *These programmes have been hailed as both 'groundbreaking' and as 'an extraordinary contribution'...* (√)
- *I played a major role in responding to, two serious compliance breeches in the BBC...* (x)
- *I played a major role in responding to two serious compliance breaches in the BBC...* (√)
- *A career highlight was been invited to produce the 1997 Reith Lectures with Patricia Williams on race...* (x)
- *A career highlight was being invited to produce the 1997 Reith Lectures with Patricia Williams on race...* (√)

One would assume that Ms St Louis took some time and trouble over her electoral address, rather than scribbling it on the back of a cigarette packet during her lunch break. And yet some of these errors are jaw-dropping.

As well as her activities with the World Federation of Science Journalists, Ms St Louis is a senior lecturer with London City University (now part of the University of London). She teaches a Master's Degree in Science Journalism.¹

What these two examples highlight very clearly is that even native-speaking sources must be treated with great caution when trying to get things right. So what to do? Here are a few practical suggestions:

1 As of November 2017 this course appears to have been cancelled, and Ms St Louis no longer appears to work for this university.