



现代英语双解趣味习语

刘家杰
朱善莹 编译

MODERN ENGLISH
IDIOMS FOR FUN

上海译文出版社

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前 言

习语在整个英语语言体系中占有很重要的地位，它是英语教学中必不可少的一部分。为了提高“听、说、读、写、译”中任何一种语言能力，都必须尽可能多地掌握习语。鉴于英语习语固有的种种特点，一条习语往往只适用于某种或某些场合，稍有不慎就会辞不达义，甚至会产生误解。为了使学英语的中国读者对英语习语有初步的了解，我们特编译了此书。

本书把浩繁的习语分门别类，选择了十组使用频率最高，趣味盎然且与日常生活有密切关联的习语。它们涉及到动物、树木、花草、衣服、颜色、食物、天气、人体某些器官等方面。注释简明，并配有不少例句。以 *wind* 一词的用法为例：

1. *I got wind of it through one of the department's clerks.* (得到风声)
2. *Bob's got the wind up.* (担心害怕)
3. *Put the wind up s'o.* (吓唬某人)
4. *It took the wind right out of Betty's sails.*
(挫其骄气)
5. *Thomson sails very close to the wind with some of his business deals.* (冒险)

更使中国读者感兴趣的是，书中这些生动典型的例句中，习语所构成的这些词排列方式很奇特。

有时语法上也不正规，然而它们就是英语中占有十分突出地位的习语所具有的特征。这类习语是约定俗成的，对于把英语作为第二语言的广大中国读者来说，要正确地掌握它和恰如其份地运用它显得至关重要，尤其在当今我国对外开放的形势下，与讲英语国家的人交往时，我们更要确切地使用各类常用习语，从而达到言简意赅的效果。

在编译过程中，得到了华东师范大学外语系孙梁教授的热忱指导，并由虞苏美教授和何天缘先生对本书进行了审校，在此谨深表谢意。

编译者

1990年5月于上海

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Animals (Domestic)

bull

(*n.*) take the bull by the horns = face and try to deal with a difficulty or problem instead of avoiding it 正视并着手解决困难(问题)而不回避: The government took the bull by the horns and asked the public to report any new price rises. 政府不畏困难, 要求公众报告物价上涨的新情况。

bulldoze

(*v.*) bully or force someone into doing something 威胁(强迫)某人做某事

bullnecked

(*adj.*) man with a very thick neck 粗短脖子的(男人)

calf-love

(*n.*) young boy's or girl's love 少男少女之间的爱恋

cat

(*n.*) 1. spiteful woman 有恶意的女人

(*adj.* of this) catty 恶毒的

(*n.*) 2. let the cat out of the bag = reveal a secret accidentally 无意中泄密: He let the cat out of the bag when he told her he was

coming to her birthday party. She didn't know they were giving her a party. 他告诉她他将参加她的生日聚会，这样无意中泄露了秘密，因为她并不知道他们将为她举办一个聚会。

(*n.*) 3. not room to swing a cat in = very narrow space 空间极狭窄（没有活动余地）：

There isn't room to swing a cat in this office. 这间办公室挤得没有活动的余地。

(*n.*) 4. When the cat's away the mice will play. Often used as 'When the cat's away...' = People get up to mischief when there's no one to watch over them. 猫儿不在，鼠儿成精。

(*adj.*) 1. cat-and-dog life = life/relationship full of quarrels 充满争吵的生活关系： That family leads a cat-and-dog life. 那家总是争吵不休。

(*adj.*) 2. cat and mouse game = cruel/unkind domination weaker person by stronger one; often toying with or torturing s'o* 强者对弱者的残酷控制（恶意摆布），常戏弄（折磨）某人： The captain always finds some new excuse for not giving the soldiers leave. It's a cat and mouse game. 这位

*s'o = someone; s't = something

上尉总是找到些新借口，不准士兵们请假。这是恶意的戏弄。

(*n.*) It's raining cats and dogs = It's raining very heavily. 倾盆大雨。

(参见 **fox**, p.25)

cat-burglar

(*n.*) burglar who enters a building by climbing up its side 飞贼

catcall

(*n.* and *v.*) sharp whistle of disapproval from audience or crowd (as at the theatre or a meeting) (在剧场或会议中)观众(人群)中发出表示不满的口哨声(嘘声)

cat-nap

(*n.*) short sleep in a chair (not in bed) 坐在椅子上(不在床上)打瞌睡: I sat in the armchair and had a cat-nap for twenty minutes. 我坐在扶手椅上打了20分钟的盹儿。

(参见 **kitten**, p. 11)

cow

(*v.*) frighten s'o into doing or accepting s't; or intimidate s'o 吓唬某人(使之)从事或接受某事, 威胁某人: She cowed them with one look. 她眼睛一瞪, 就镇住了他们。

(*adj.* of this) cowed 畏惧的: They had a very cowed manner. 他们的举止战战兢兢。

dog

(n.) 1. a gay/lucky/old/sly dog = a lively/lucky/roguish/sly person (used affectionately) 一个充满活力的(走运的, 恶作剧的, 狡猾的)人(亲昵的用法): Harry's a sly dog. He didn't say he'd won £ 2000. 哈里可真狡猾, 他没说明赢了2000英镑。

(n.) 2. go to the dogs = ruin oneself/be ruined/deteriorate morally 堕落; 破产; 道德败坏: Jack's gone to the dogs altogether. He drinks all day long now. 杰克已完全堕落了, 他现在整天酗酒。

(n.) 3. have/lead a dog's life = have an unhappy life; often simply, 'It's a dog's life.' 过着受折磨的日子(常简为: It's a dog's life.)

(n.) 4. lead s'o a dog's life = constantly make s'o unhappy 不断折磨某人: He leads her a dog's life. 他使她受尽折磨。

(n.) 5. give a dog a bad name (and hang him) = give s'o a bad reputation and it often remains; often used simply as 'Give a dog a bad name' 人言可畏(常简为: Give a dog a bad name); 'No one trusts him since that woman called him a thief.' — 'Yes, it's unfair, but give a dog a bad name...' “因为那个女人叫了他小偷, 所以没有人再信任他

了。”——“是的，这不公平，但人言可畏……”

(n.) 6. help a lame dog over a stile = help s'o in trouble; often used without 'over a stile' 帮助陷在困境中的人(常省略 over a stile): I don't mind helping a lame dog now and again, but I'm not made of money (= rich). 我并不反对偶而资助别人渡过难关，但我不是富翁。

(n.) 7. let sleeping dogs lie = avoid s'o or a situation or topic that could cause trouble or could revive an old trouble 莫惹是非: Don't mention George's name to Roger. They had a very bad row two years ago. Let sleeping dogs lie, if you follow me. 不要在罗杰面前提起乔治的名字，两年前他们俩曾大吵了一场。我的意思是切莫惹事生非。

(n.) 8. underdog = s'o who has to do what others tell him 听命他人而行事者: Pity the underdog. He seems to have no life of his own. 可怜那个听命于他人的人吧，他似乎一切都身不由己。/ Arthur will always be an underdog. He's afraid to give orders. 亚瑟只能永远任人摆布，他怕发号施令。

(n.) 9. put on some dog = give oneself an air of importance 自命不凡: You'd better put on some dog if you want them to consider you for the job as manager! 假如你要他们考

虑让你出任经理，那么你最好摆点架子出来！

(*n.*) 10. You can't/It's hard to/teach an old dog new tricks = It's difficult to teach new ways to s'o set in his habits. 很难使因循守旧的人接受新事物。

(*n.*) 11. a dog in the manger = s'o who stops others enjoying/using s't that is useless to himself 自己不能享用亦不让他人享用的人

(*v.*) dog s'o = follow behind s'o closely (like a detective) (像侦探一般)紧紧跟踪

(*adj.*) dogged ['dɒɡɪd] = determined 顽固的，固执的

dogsbody

(*n.*) s'o who is like a slave because everyone gives him orders; often with 'general' 勤杂工(常与 general 连用); He's the general dogsbody in the office. 在办公室里，他是个打杂的。

dog-tired

(*adj.*) tired out/exhausted 精疲力竭的: I'm dog-tired after that walk. 那次步行累得我精疲力竭。

donkey

(*n.*) foolish person 傻瓜，蠢人

(*adj.*) 1. do the donkey work = do the hard/heavy work of a job; often monotonous, routine work 艰苦而费力的(常指单调乏味，

例行的事务): It's easy enough to read a lot of statistics but who does the donkey work and prepares them? 阅读大量的统计数字是轻而易举的, 然而谁来承担那些枯燥乏味的准备工作呢?

(*adj.*) 2. I haven't seen him for donkey's ages/years = for a long time. 我很久未见到他了。

mule

(*n.*) stubborn person 顽固的人; 固执的人;

He's/a mule/as stubborn as a mule. 他像骡一样顽固。

(*adj.* of this) mulish (*n.* -ness, *adv.* -ly) 顽固的

goat

(*n.*) 1. separate the sheep from the goats = separate the good from the wicked, or decide which are which 区分善恶, 良莠; 断定是非; It didn't take the new teacher long to separate the sheep from the goats. 这位新教师不久就能把优生和差生区分开来。

(*n.*) 2. It/That gets my goat = It/That annoys me. 这(那)使我烦恼。

(*n.*) 3. play the (giddy) goat = play the fool 胡闹; 做傻事

(*n.*) scapegoat = s'o blamed / punished for another's mistakes/wrongs 替罪羊; 代人受过

者: They made a colonel the scapegoat for the general's mistake. 他们把一位上校做替罪羊, 让他承担那位将军的过失。

horse

(n.) 1. a dark horse = s'o whose abilities/chances are unknown 黑马; 实力难测的竞争者: Peter will pass the exam but Edward's a dark horse. 彼德将通过这场考试, 然而爱德华是一个实力难以预料的竞争对手。

(n.) 2. flog a dead horse = waste time/energy on s't already established/decided/finished/settled; try to revive interest in s't already past 枉费精力: You're flogging a dead horse if you're trying to make him change his political views. 假若你要使他改变政治观点, 那将是徒劳的。 / Trying to interest the general public in fourteenth century music is like flogging a dead horse. 要使公众对14世纪的音乐产生兴趣真是白费心血。

(n.) 3. look a gift horse in the mouth = find fault with a present (from telling a horse's age by its teeth) 对礼物吹毛求疵(出自从马齿可知其年龄): 'He only gave me a cheap bicycle.' — 'I daresay, but you shouldn't look a gift horse in the mouth.' “他只给了我一辆廉价的自行车。”——“我想是的, 但你不该对礼物吹毛求疵。”

(n.) 4. be on/get up on/one's high horse = behave as though one is superior 趾高气扬: He got up on his high horse because he's related to the Prime Minister. 他趾高气扬, 因为他与首相沾亲。

(n.) 5. That's a horse of another/a different colour = That's another/a different/matter. 那完全是另一回事(不同之事): Taking the exam is one thing but passing it is a horse of a different colour. 参加考试是一回事, 通过考试则是另一回事。

(n.) 6. Michael eats/works like a horse = a lot/hard. 迈克食量极大(工作努力)。

(n.) 7. put the cart before the horse = do things in the wrong order 本末倒置: Learn to walk before you run. Don't try putting the cart before the horse. 先学会走路再学跑步, 不要本末倒置。

(n.) 8. You've backed the wrong horse = You've made the wrong/a bad/decision. 你作出了错误(不恰当)的决定。

(n.) 9. Hold your horses! = Wait a moment! /Don't be in such a hurry. 等一会!(别急!)

(n.) 10. Wild horses won't/wouldn't/couldn't drag/draw it (the truth/a secret) from/out of me. 守口如瓶。

(*adj.*) (straight) from the horse's mouth = a reliable tip, piece of advice or information 可靠的提示 (忠告; 信息): It's/I've had it/I've got it/straight from the horse's mouth. The new hotel isn't making any money. 据可靠消息, 这家新旅社没有丝毫赢利。

horsy

(*adj.*) 1. (person) associated with horses, horse-racing 爱马的; 爱赛马的(人)

(*adj.*) 2. bossy and loud-voiced; often used of woman 专横的, 大声的 (常用于形容女人); She's very horsy. 她很专横。

horseplay

(*n.*) noisy, rough play, usually in fun; e.g. a pillow fight, or snatching a friend's hat and throwing it from one to the other 粗俗而喧闹的玩耍 (通常在开玩笑时, 打枕头战或夺走一位友人的帽子, 互相抛掷): He had to stop their horseplay when it got too rough. 当他们的胡闹变得粗野时, 他不得不加以制止。

horse-sense

(*n.*) good/common/sense 常识

hound

(*v.*) chase/worry s'o 追逐某人; 使某人担忧; The soldiers hounded the deserters all over the country. 士兵在全国各地追捕逃兵。/

The landlord hounded the tenants until they paid their rent. 房东不断纠缠着房客，直至他们付了房租。/He was hounded out of the country by public anger. 迫于民愤，他只得离开该国。

kitten

(n.) have kittens = be very surprised/annoyed/frightened; often with 'nearly' 非常惊奇(生气); 惊恐(常与 nearly 连用): She nearly had kittens when he dropped her teapot. 当他把她的茶壶掉在地上时，她差点生气。

lamb

(n.) Heaven tempers the wind to the shorn lamb = Heaven protects the weak/unprotected 老天保护弱者(无助者)

pig

(n.) 1. dirty/greedy/bad-mannered person 肮脏(贪婪; 举止粗野)的人

(n.) 2. buy a pig in a poke = buy s't on chance (not examining/seeing it/knowing its value); from Fr. *poche*, Engl. bag or sack (不经检查; 不经察看; 不知其价值)瞎买某物 (Poke 原出自法文 *poche*, 英语中为 bag 或 sack): You often buy a pig in a poke when you buy by letter. 邮购往往是盲目购买。

(n.) 3. make a pig of oneself = be greedy/eat too much/overeat 贪婪地吃; 吃得过多(过