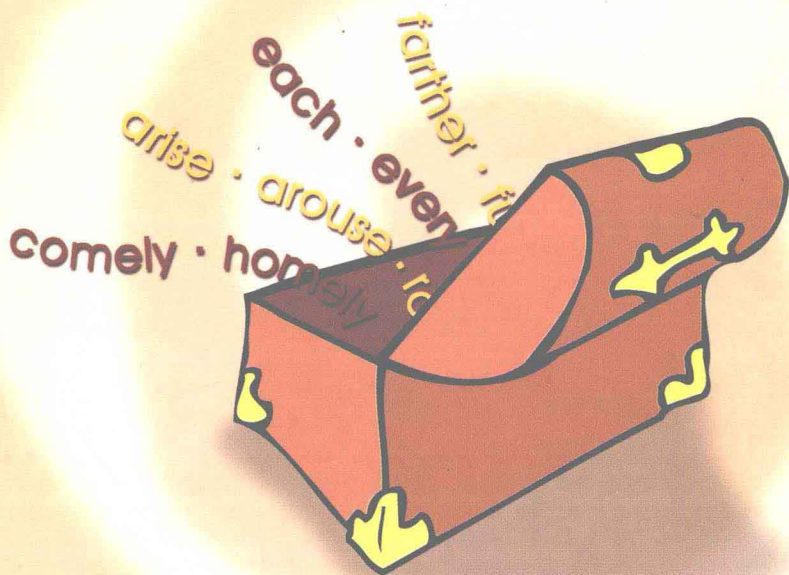


A Treasure Chest of English Usage

英文用法探索

平 · 凡 · 中 · 的 · 不 · 平 · 凡




吳帆 編著

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序

兩則笑話

曾讀過一則笑話。大意是，有一個小孩到河邊去釣魚，不慎失足落河。這時剛巧有一老翁在附近，費了一番功夫，終於把小孩救起。這時老翁就問到：How did you come to fall in the river? 小孩急急忙忙辯解道：I didn't come to fall in the river. I came to fish. 當然老翁用的 come 意思是 happen，而小孩不曉得 come 有這種用法，所以才出現「雞同鴨講」的局面。

另有一則笑話。大意是，有一個老太婆養了兩隻猴子 Tom 及 Mary 當寵物。有一天 Mary 死了，Tom 傷心過度竟然追隨而去。老太婆傷心之餘帶了兩隻猴子的遺體去找製標本的人。她想保留兩隻寵物當紀念。製標本的人就問：Do you want to have them mounted? 老太婆答曰：No, just have them hold their hands. 對於製標本的人來說，mounted 是「架起來」，而老太婆把這個字理解為「你要把牠們做成交配狀嗎？」因此她才會回答說：「不，讓牠們手牽著手就好了。」

常用字的理解不足

這兩則笑話雖然幽默詼諧，仍然有其嚴肅的含意。大部份的人，包括一些以英文為本國語的人士，對一些常用字的理解不足，甚至有嚴重的失誤，更甬說那些源自希臘或拉丁文而比較有深度或學術的字眼。本書的形成即是針對常用字理解不足而來。全書分成六章，它們分別是：

- 一. Words That Are Likely to Trip You Up (最易絆倒你的字)
- 二. Active Adjectives, Passive Adjectives, and False Cognates (主動之形容詞、被動之形容詞與易錯之同源詞)

- 三. Regular Verbs and Irregular Verbs (動詞規則與不規則變化之困擾)
- 四. Easily Confused Words (容易混淆的字)
- 五. If John Speaks English Good, He Doesn't Speak It Well. (從 good, well 兼談 make, do 及一些易錯的形容詞)
- 六. Common Words with Uncommon Meanings (平凡中的不平凡)

全書處理一千多個常用字或詞。每數個有關連的字或詞被分類成一個項目 (item)，全部有近三百個項目。貫穿全書最顯著的部份是「用法提示」及「成就測驗」。「用法提示」是對討論的字或詞提出一些趣味的、知性的、乃至文化的詮釋，藉此幫助讀者更深入瞭解，或甚至能博君一粲而心領神會。「成就測驗」部份為練習題，要實際對該字或詞有思考與理解，才能把題目做對。而做題目需要兼顧一個字的詞類變化、時態以及合乎邏輯。腦力受激盪，才會迸出火花。一個人要學游泳，你教他一大堆理論，卻不讓他下水。他一輩子也學不會游水。光說不練是不行的。最好的方法是把他帶到游泳池邊，推入水池中讓他先喝幾口水。同理，學英文也不能光看不練。Practice makes perfect 這句陳腔濫調仍然是至理名言。發音困難或容易混淆的字有音標 (K.K.) 提示，以利學習。書後附有「成就測驗」之解答 (Answers to Quizzes) 及總索引 (General Index)。總索引是非常方便的工具，只要查看總索引，便知道那一個字或詞是屬於那一個項目 (item)。同時總索引也釐清了本書的範圍。

平凡中的不平凡

本書取名《英文用法探索：平凡中的不平凡》。書名的靈感來自於講解托福 (TOEFL) 考題。記得剛開始接托福與 GRE 課程時，為了教學需要，做了很多的題目。當時有個發現，那就是這種層級很高的考試仍然會考一些很簡單的字，簡單到我們初中高中都學過的字。但是我們的大學畢業生卻陰溝裏翻船，不見得會做對題目。比如考 nice 一

字不是考你「好的」而是考你「精細的，講究的」，考 precious 不是考「珍貴的」而是考「矯揉造作的」，考 entertain 不是考「娛樂」而是考「懷抱」。像這樣的例子不勝枚舉。此一發現逼使我拿起字典從頭到尾把那些常用字（即前面所說初中高中都教過的字）重新做個評估。這個工作花了三個多月，但是很值得。因為這些字被串連組織起來，成為往後教學上的重頭戲之一。

更成熟的用字遣詞是作文不二法門

就某個意義而言，本書所處理的字詞是筆者十多年來教學上常常提出來與學生討論的課題。不管是在閱讀、文法、字彙或作文課上，這些常用字皆是我們念茲在茲的。因而在此必需挑明，這是一本用法的書。任何人只要翻到書後的總索引 (General Index) 瀏覽一下，便可看出來本書討論的字詞絕大部份都是相當基礎的。有那些字比 other, another, some time, sometime, sometimes, free, freely 更基本呢？然而我們的莘莘學子用這些字的時候，卻缺乏信心而沒把握。此種窘境尤其在寫英文作文時表露無遺。希望本書能夠提昇讀者造句能力，增進用法的理解，進而使英文作文遊刃有餘。能夠做到這些，則是編著者莫大的欣慰。

本書的編寫過程，中打及排版部份林婉琇小姐給予大力的幫忙，特此致謝。書林的美國編輯 Robert J. Ross 用心校訂，同時提出許多寶貴的見解，本人獲益良多。蘇正隆先生的執著使本書減少了一些失誤與不當，在此獻上無盡的感激。個人雖然盡力希望做到無懈可擊，然才學淺陋，難免有所疏失，尚祈各方高明不吝指正。

吳帆

謹識於台中

一九九九年九月

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**Words That Are Likely to
Trip You Up**

最易絆倒你的字

