

Mysteries Resolved in English
for Chinese Learners Series
中国人学英语奥秘揭晓系列丛书

READING COMPREHENSION SECRETS

(Bilingual)

阅 读 揭 秘

(英汉双解)

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Abstract

内容简介

This book ,which is one of the volumes of *Mysteries Resolved in English for Chinese Learners Series* ,attempts to reveal the biggest stumbling-blocks in the way of reading comprehension of Chinese learners and provide methods to remove them with examples.

For instance ,the difference between English and Chinese in word order consists of one of the greatest difficulties for Chinese students ,who are at a loss when confronted with complex ,especially long sentences. Another example is the effort that native speakers make to try to avoid repetitions in English ,which often confuses Chinese learners of the language. And such difficult points have seldom been dealt with in books published before ,if at all.

This book attempts to make up for the indispensable link for Chinese learners.

本书是《中国人学英语奥秘揭晓系列丛书》之一 ,试图揭示中国学生在阅读理解方面最大的一些绊脚石 ,同时通过举例提供搬掉这些绊脚石的方法。

例如 ,英语和汉语词序的不同是中国学生学习中最大的困难之一 ,一遇到复杂的 ,特别是很长的句子 ,他们便束手无策。另外一个例子是以英语为母语的人在英语中尽量避免重复 ,也正是这一做法常常使中国学生迷惑不解。而这些难点在以前出版的书中很少有过讲解。

本书力图为中国学生弥补这不可缺少的一环。

Preface

前 言

After the publication of Volume One *Grammar* and Volume Two *Listening Comprehension Secrets of Mysteries Resolved in English for Chinese Learners Series*, the author began to write this volume, *Reading Comprehension Secrets*. The readers cannot wait to read this volume to see how mysteries are to be resolved in reading comprehension. Now here is the book for them. It is especially recommended that they read the "Introduction" to this book carefully first.

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Those who have helped in the writing of the book include Zhang Yuedong, Li Xiaoqing, Zhang Rangfen, Jasmine Li, and Liu Mengjiao.

The author is responsible for any unavoidable errors and mistakes in this book and open to any kind of criticism.

The author

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《中国人学英语奥秘揭晓系列丛书》的第一卷《语法学习》和第二卷《听力揭秘》面世以后,作者便开始写作本卷《阅读揭秘》,因为读者急切地想看到阅读奥秘该怎样揭晓。现在把本书呈献给读者,特别建议他们首先仔细阅读本书的“引言”部分。

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帮助本书编写的人员有张悦东、李晓晴、张让芬、李茉莉和刘梦姣。

由于作者水平有限，疏漏错误在所难免，敬请读者批评指正。

著者

1999 年 11 月于南开大学

Contents

目 录

Part I Introduction

第一部分 引言 (1)

Part II The Sentence Structure in English and Chinese

第二部分 英汉句子结构 (14)

Part III Avoidance of Repetitions in English

第三部分 英语中重复现象的避免 (68)

Part IV Vocabulary

第四部分 词汇 (99)

Part V Logical Order

第五部分 逻辑思维顺序..... (126)

Part VI General Exercises

第六部分 综合练习..... (139)

Appendix I Commonly Used Phrases and Expressions

附录 I 常用短语和表达法..... (252)

Appendix II Commonly Used Prefixes and Suffixes

附录 II 常用前缀和后缀..... (348)

Works Consulted

参考文献..... (359)

Part I Introduction

第一部分 引言

This book of *Reading Comprehension Secrets*, as one of the volumes of the *Mysteries Resolved in English for Chinese Learners Series*, is also unique of its kind — different from all other existing ones. It has several distinctive features as follows.

《阅读揭秘》一书为《中国人学英语奥秘揭晓系列丛书》之一，在同类书籍中是独具特色的，不同于现有的其它阅读理解书，它有以下几个特点。

1.1 Distinctive features of this book

本书特点

1.1.1 The first important feature

This book is bilingual, written in both English and Chinese. Those whose English is good enough are advised to read the English explanations and those whose English is not so good yet can read the English with the help of the Chinese. And even those whose English is a little too poor for the time being but who are determined to learn English well can read the book in Chinese only. Therefore, anybody who is interested in learning English will definitely benefit a lot from reading it.

本书第一个重要特点是双语讲解,即英汉双解。英语程度较高的人最好看英语解释,英语还不那么好的人可以借助汉语来阅读英语的讲解。甚至英语水平暂时稍差而又决心学好英语的人也可以只看汉语解释。所以,只要对学习英语感兴趣,任何读者在阅读本书时肯定都会大有裨益。

1.1.2 The second important feature

Unlike the existing books of reading comprehension, this book is not one of the test papers aimed at testing students on their comprehension. It is a book that students use to raise their level of English, especially in reading, on a large scale. Like the other volumes of this series, this book aims at revealing secrets of English learning. In other words, it will show how mysteries are to be resolved in reading for Chinese learners. After the biggest stumbling block is removed, they will feel that the English language has become easy to them to a great extent.

本书第二个重要特点是,它不同于现有的英语阅读书,不是用来测试学生理解能力的考题册,而是一本学生用来大幅度提高英语水平特别是提高阅读水平的书。像本系列丛书其他各卷一样,本卷目的在于揭示英语学习的奥秘。就是说本书要说明的是中国人学英语在阅读方面的奥秘将怎样揭晓。把最大的绊脚石搬掉以后学生们会产生一种感觉:英语学习在很大程度上变得容易了。

1.1.3 The third important feature

This book has accurately located where the real trouble of the Chinese learners lies in learning English. The differences of word order between English and Chinese have not only hindered the understanding of the English sentence structure but also obstructed effective reading comprehension in general in English as a result. By offering practical and effective solutions to the real trouble that has

been discovered , this book has provided an approach to the resolving of the mysteries in English for Chinese learners. Accordingly , the biggest stumbling block in reading comprehension — a full understanding of the sentence structure — has been removed. The result is that English reading has been made easier for Chinese students to a great extent.

本书第三个重要特点是已经准确地找到了中国人学英语真正的困难所在。英汉词序的差异不但一直阻碍了中国人对英语句子结构的理解 ,而且也妨碍了整体有效的阅读理解能力。本书对以上所发现的真正困难提供了实际而且有效的克服办法 ,使中国人学英语的奥秘得以揭晓。因此 ,在阅读理解方面最大的绊脚石 ,即充分理解英语句子结构方面的最大困难 ,也就被搬掉了。结果 ,英语阅读对中国学生来说 ,也就变得容易了。

1.1.4 The fourth important feature

This book is part of the result of the solidly based research item “Differences of the Logical Order Between English and Chinese Ways of Thinking ”, which the author has carried out in the past few years , sponsored by Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences. But it is not purely theoretical. Meanwhile , unlike other reading comprehension books ,it is not a book of exercises or test papers. In the end ,it is an organic combination of theory and practice. It has a solid theoretical foundation and sufficient examples to support it , with enough exercises for students to do , with the aim to enable them to attain proficiency in reading comprehension in English without undue effort.

本书第四个重要特点是它以坚实的科学研究为基础 ,是作者过去几年里所完成的天津社会科学院科研项目“英汉思维逻辑顺序对比研究”的部分成果。而且本书不是纯理论性的。同时 ,也不

像其它阅读理解书一样,它不是一本练习册或考题册,是理论与实践的结合。书中既有坚实的理论基础和大量的例证,又有足够的习题供学生练习。其目的是使学生不费太大力气就能攻克英语阅读关。

1.1.5 The fifth important feature

This book deals with a set of problems that have never been coped with so profoundly and in such unique ways that it is said, without any exaggeration, to have resolved the mysteries in reading comprehension for Chinese learners. See later parts of the book.

本书第五个重要特点是它以空前深刻和独特的方式解决了一系列难题。可以毫不夸大地说,中国学生在阅读理解中的奥秘在本书中已经揭晓。详见本书各个部分。

1.1.6 The sixth important feature

It should be made very clear that this book is not meant to be inclusive or comprehensive. On the contrary, it is intended to concentrate on a few key points where Chinese learners have had the greatest trouble and where the best possible solutions are to be offered. Therefore, the most important points are highlighted.

本书第六个重要特点,应该明确说明,其意图不是包罗万象或应有尽有。相反,本书旨在集中讲述学生遇到的、困难最大的几个关键点,且为之提供一些有可能是最好的解决办法。因此,本书重点突出。

1.2 Concepts to be clarified

需要澄清的几个认识问题

In order to improve the quality of reading comprehension, there are a few concepts that must be clarified before we move to the next part of the book. Students are often puzzled as to what to do with regard to those concepts such as Intensive Reading and Extensive

Reading , Easy Readings and Difficult Readings , Vocabulary and Structure , Reading and Writing , Listening and Speaking .

为了提高阅读质量 ,在开始讲解下一部分以前 ,有几个概念必须澄清。例如精读和泛读、容易和困难读物、词汇和结构、读写和听说。学生遇到这几个问题经常是迷惑不解、不知所措。

1.2.1 Intensive Reading and Extensive Reading

精读和泛读

Many students wonder why reading is divided into Intensive and Extensive and how one should do one and how the other. In fact , this is not a new problem. We will understand better if we quote *Of Studies* by the famous English philosopher and essayist Francis Bacon (1561 – 1626) in the following.

很多学生不明白为什么把阅读分成精读和泛读以及这两种阅读各自怎样做法。实际上 ,这不是一个新问题。如果我们把英国著名哲学家和散文家弗兰西斯·培根(1561 – 1626)的《谈学习》引证如下 ,我们会更加明白。

Of Studies

Studies serve for delight , for ornament , and for ability. Their chief use for delight , is in privateness and retiring ; for ornament , is in discourse ; and for ability , is in the judgement and disposition of business. For expert men can execute , and perhaps judge of particulars , one by one ; but the general counsels , and the plots and marshalling of affairs , come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies , is sloth ; to use them too much for ornament , is affectation ; to make judgement only by their rules , is the humour of a scholar. . . . Read not to contradict and confute ; nor to believe and take for granted ; nor to find talk and discourse ; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted , others to be swal-

lowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books; else, distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. . .

谈读书(译文)

读书足以怡情,足以博采,足以长才。其怡情也,最见于独处幽居之时;其博采也,最见于高谈阔论之中;其长才也,最见于处世判事之际。练达之士虽能分别处理细事或一一判别枝节,然纵观统筹、全局策划,则舍好学深思者莫属。读书费时过多易惰,文才藻饰太盛则矫,全凭条文断事乃学究故态……读书时不可存心诘难作者,不可尽信书上所言,亦不可只为寻章摘句,而应推敲细思。书有可浅尝者,有可吞食者,少数则需咀嚼消化。换言之,有只需读其部分者,有只需大体涉猎者,少数则需全读,读时需全神贯注,孜孜不倦。书亦可请人代读,取其所作摘要,但只限题材较次或价值不高者,否则书经提炼犹如水经蒸馏,淡而无味矣。读书使人充实,讨论使人机智,笔记使人准确。因此不常作笔记者须记忆特强,不常讨论者须天生聪颖,不常读书者须欺世有术,始能无知而显有知……

(《英语学习》1962年第9期)

Here in the above essay, Bacon clearly explains the purpose and the ways of reading. He divides books into different kinds according

to the purposes. Important books should be read carefully and in detail ; books that are not so important may be read less carefully , in part or even read by other people or by going through the extracts of them.

培根在以上文章中 阐明了阅读的目的和方法 ,并且根据不同目的把书籍分成不同的类型。重要的书应该精心、详细阅读 ;不那么重要的书可以不那么细心地阅读 ,部分阅读 ,甚至由别人代读或阅读摘要。

The first kind refers obviously to what is now called Intensive Reading. Here students are expected to try to understand everything they meet with in reading : words , sentence structures , meanings , shades of meaning , etc. One tries to get as deep as possible in comprehension. Readers are supposed to pay attention to the quality rather than the quantity of their reading. This kind of reading is responsible for the improvement of the quality of reading. Therefore , it is essential and must be made use of.

Another kind of reading Bacon mentioned corresponds to what is now meant by Extensive Reading. Here students are expected to try to read as extensively or widely as possible. In order to read extensively , readers are supposed to learn speed reading. They do not stop and ponder on the meaning of every word or phrase or sentence. They do not have to consult the dictionary for things they do not understand they come across unless they think it is absolutely necessary to do so. They just read on and on without stopping for the general meaning. Sometimes , they may read for nothing but pleasure or interest , or even simply for killing the time. The purpose of this kind of reading is for readers to get the feel of the language they are reading in. The effect is a wide foundation on which Inten-

sive Reading is based and the result is rapid progress the readers make under the combined pushing force of Intensive Reading and Extensive Reading.

So , both Intensive Reading and Extensive Reading are important , and equally important at that. Neither is dispensible.

第一类阅读显然指的是我们现在所说的精读。这种阅读要求学生力求理解阅读中所遇到的一切现象 :词语、句子结构、意义、意调等。读者想法尽量往深处理解 ,应该注意的是阅读的质量而不是数量。这种阅读可保证阅读质量的提高 ,因此不可缺少、必须采用。

培根提到的另一类阅读相当于我们现在所说的泛读。这种阅读要求学生尽可能大量或广泛地阅读。为了阅读广泛 ,学生应该学会快速阅读 ,不必停下来思考每个字句的意义 ,除非认为绝对必要。遇到不懂的东西不必都要查词典 ,只需不停地往前浏览 ,求得大意。有时候 ,可以只为兴趣或乐趣 ,甚至只是为了消磨时间而阅读。这类阅读的目的是让读者获得语感 ,其作用是为精读奠定广泛的基础 ,其结果则是读者在精读、泛读共同推动下所做的突飞猛进的进步。

所以 ,精读、泛读都是重要的 ,而且两者同等重要 ,不可缺少。

1.2.2 Easy readings and difficult readings

容易读物和困难读物

Many students do not know whether they should read easy things or difficult ones in order to raise their reading ability. It depends. In Intensive Reading , they should do relatively difficult materials. This is determined by its aim , which is supposed to get deep into the reading materials. If they are too easy to read , that aim will not be realized.

On the other hand , with Extensive Reading , students are sup-

posed to do relatively easy materials. The reason is obvious. If they do things that are very difficult to them, they will move very slowly in reading. There will be no “extensiveness” of reading to talk about. Readers can never expect to achieve the aim of reading extensively or widely.

Therefore, it is advisable to read comparatively difficult materials in Intensive Reading but read relatively easy things in Extensive Reading.

许多学生不知道,为了提高阅读能力应该阅读容易懂的材料还是难懂的材料。这个问题要看情况。精读要读比较难懂的材料。这是由精读的目的所决定的。精读的目的就是要把阅读材料搞透彻,如果阅读材料太容易,则达不到目的。

另一方面,在泛读中学生应该读比较容易的材料,原因是明显的。如果他们阅读很困难的东西,阅读进度必然很慢,根本谈不上“泛”读,也达不到博览群书的目的。

所以,精读最好要读比较难的阅读材料,而泛读要读比较容易的材料。

1.2.3 Vocabulary and structure

词汇和结构

Chinese learners of English are often distressed as to the relationship between the vocabulary and the structure in their reading. In other words, they cannot decide which is more important, words or sentence structures, and how to learn one and how to learn the other.

For full comprehension, to master both the vocabulary and the structures of a reading passage is essential. The relationship between them is just like that between bricks and mortar for a building. If you have bricks only, without any mortar to hold them together,

you can never build a good house with them. Similarly , if one knows the words of a reading passage without knowing how they are organized together , one can never understand the passage properly. So , the words and the structures go hand in hand and are equally important. We cannot stress one to the neglect of the other.

As to how to learn words , it all depends. Different people have different views , experiences and therefore different ways and methods to suggest. Some people may suggest memorizing as many new words as possible within a short period of time , say , two weeks , reading articles or books out of which the words have been chosen in order to consolidate them , and then repeating the same process for more new words out of new sources. Other people may be opposed to that idea and recommend learning new words while learning texts. Once the texts are learnt , the new words will be naturally memorized. There are still others who may give their advice that one should learn new words by learning the texts by heart. Here it is not a matter of right and wrong. One should try to find one's own best way to do it.

However , readers are referred to one of the volumes of this series entitled *Vocabulary Secrets* , which is due to come out soon.

For grammatical structures , there are many books to choose from. Any one will do , but that will have to go with *Grammar* , a volume of this series , which is unique and will be of unusual help to Chinese learners of English.

学习英语的中国学生常常对阅读中词汇和结构之间的关系感到苦恼。换句话说 ,他们弄不清词汇和结构哪一方面更重要以及怎样学习词汇又怎样学习句子结构。

为了充分理解一篇阅读文章 ,既掌握它的词汇又掌握它的语

法结构是非常重要的。词汇和语法结构的关系就像盖房子用的砖和水泥之间的关系一样。如果只有砖而没有水泥,就永远也盖不成好房子。同样,如果只认识一篇文章的字词而不懂这些字词是怎样组织在一起的,就不可能准确地理解这篇文章。因此,词汇和结构是相辅相成的,并且是同等重要的,不可强调其中一方面而忽视另一方面。

至于学习单词,完全要看情况。不同的人有不同的观点、不同的经验,从而也就提出不同的方式和方法。有的人可能建议在一段很短的时间内,比方说两个星期内,突击记忆文章或书本中选出的生词,接着为了巩固生词就阅读这些文章或书本,然后重复这种做法,突击更多的生词。其他人有可能就反对这种做法而提倡边学文章边学生词,文章学会了,生词自然就记住了。还有的人可能出这样的主意,即通过背诵文章来学习生词。这里没有对错的问题,而是应该想法找到适合自己的最佳方法。

不过,读者可以参考即将出版的本系列丛书之一《词汇揭秘》。

要学习语法结构,有许多书可供选择,任选一种即可。但是那只是为了配合本系列丛书之一《语法学习》而采用的。因为《语法学习》这本书是非常独特的,对中国学生将起到非同一般的帮助作用。

1.2.4 Reading and writing, and listening and speaking 读写和听说

Chinese learners of English often ask such questions as “Why can't I understand the very simple English by native speakers either in person or on the tape since I can read such and such books in the original?” and “I can read quite difficult English but I can't speak it at all. How is that?”

In order to solve these problems, it is first of all necessary to understand the following fact.

There are two aspects in the study of English : one is the skill aspect and the other is the knowledge aspect. The great majority of the Chinese students work hard to learn the skills of English as a foreign language but not knowledge about the language. Reading , writing , listening and speaking are the four basic skills of English. Reading and listening are receptive or called input while writing and speaking are productive or called output. Without any input , there can be no output. That is why one can never expect to learn writing without learning reading. Similarly , one can never learn to speak without learning listening.

Meanwhile , we must pay attention to the universal truth : when it comes to learning a skill , you acquire it if you practise it and you do not if you do not practise it. The most obvious example is swimming. If you attended many lectures and read a lot of books about swimming , you would be very knowledgeable about it. However , you would be drowned in deep water unless you learnt the skill of swimming. Your abundance of knowledge about swimming without actually knowing how to swim would not save your life. The conclusion is that we learn the skill of swimming by swimming. Similarly , we must learn the skills of reading , writing , listening and speaking by practising them respectively.

The trouble is specifically what to practise and how to do it in order to acquire each of the four abilities in English. Readers are advised to refer to the following parts of this book and *Vocabulary Secrets* of this series for reading and to the relevant volumes of *Writing Secrets* , *Listening Comprehension Secrets* , *Oral English Secrets* of this series for the other abilities , respectively.

中国学生经常问这样的问题 : 既然我都能看懂英文原文的某