

語境不同 英語各異

恒 大英萃

隔星期五見報

中學英語和大學英語教學之間的一個很大區別是，前者僅強調行文流暢，而後者則側重於學生能否於特定語境使用合適英語，以符合特定目的或角色。電子郵件通訊就是一個很好的例子。假設你正在向主管和同事發送一封電郵，你將如何起草電子郵件？以下是兩個例子。

示例 1:
Hey there,
I know there was a serious complaint from a customer yesterday. However, I have had too much on my plate and so I haven't replied to it yet. SORRY—will han-

dle it soon. But so far, none of you have sent me any ideas about his complaint yet. I beg your input to get away from this trouble, please...

Love,
XXX
示例 2:
Dear all,
I am drafting a reply to the customer's concern we received yesterday (for details, please refer to the customer's email below). However, the situation is quite complicated. Could you share your insights so that I could resolve the issue peacefully? Much appreciated if your comments could be received by tomorrow.
Best wishes,

XXX

當我向一些新生展示這兩個示例時，最初，某些學生認為示例 1 更好，因為當中有很多短語，例如「I have had too much on my plate」和「I beg your input...」但一封好的電郵通訊與詞彙的豐富程度無關，重點是電郵的用字是否切合該語境。當我提醒學生這應該是工作場所的電子郵件時，他們便選擇了示例 2。這是為什麼呢？

示例 1 用字太累贅，就像是一篇涉及太多個人情感的敘事。在工作場所中，忙碌的同事們大多對你是否很忙「I have had too much on my plate」以及你是否內疚「SORRY」不感興趣。所以寫電郵時，請保持簡潔，省略所有不必要的細節，並直接客觀地說明寫作目的：「I am drafting a reply to the customer's concern we received

yesterday... Could you share your insights?」請記得指明一個確切的日期以收集他們意見「if your comments could be received by tomorrow」。簡潔和精確對有效的工作溝通至關重要。

示例 1 第二個問題是措辭。郵件中有太多非正式的詞彙用法。例如，開首「Hey there,」以及結語「Love,」。「I have had too much on my plate」以及「I beg your input to get away from this trouble」也是過於口頭化和非正式的詞彙。另外，請避免在正式電子郵件中使用「haven't」之類的縮寫。

示例 1 的最後一個問題是語氣。句子「But so far, none of you have sent me any ideas about his complaint yet」聽起來很自大，作者似乎在指責主管和同事沒有發表意見。相反，示例 2 中的「Much appreciated if your comments could be received by tomorrow」聽起來不但有禮，而且不卑不亢。

新的 DSE 課程似乎也旨在提高學生的語境意識，但就培訓工作場所 / 學術英語的寫作 / 會話技能而言，似乎還不足夠。否則，我收到的某些正式電郵中就不會仍有非正式用語了。

■江影玉博士
香港恒生大學英文系高級講師



香港 恒生大學
THE HANG SENG UNIVERSITY
OF HONG KONG

快樂不用尋找 生來已經擁有

吹水同學會

隔星期五見報

(續 1 月 10 日期)

除了演戲，Ewan McGregor 的最大興趣就是電單車。原來他擁有約 15 部歷史悠久、在 1929 年製成的古董電單車。雖然陳舊，但是他可以站在這些古董電單車旁，看着它們一整天也不會厭。他這樣講述他對電單車的沉迷 (obsession on motorcycles)：「I've got some lovely, lovely old motorcycles that date back to 1929. There's about 15 of them, and I'd be quite happy to just stand and look at them all day.」有些人遇到壓力，需要做冥想去得到安靜 (Some people need to get the peace of mind by meditation when they face stress)，而 Ewan 的方法竟然是靠騎電單車：「I love to ride them, of course. It's like medita-

tion for me.」

說起電單車，有一次駕電單車去 Tunisia，看一些舊星球大戰的場景，誰不知連那兒的星球大戰粉絲都認不出他。他說：「We went down there and I didn't get recognized by anybody. I was wearing a Long Way Down t-shirt with 'McGregor' on the back, not one person recognized me. I found a poster of myself and I stood next to it, not one person.」(我們去到那兒，沒有人認得我。我穿着「a Long Way Down」的 T 恤，後面更印有「McGregor」，沒人認得我。我找到一張自己的海報，站在旁邊，還是沒人認得出我來。) 當你以為堂堂一個大明星不被人認得很沒面子時，對他來說卻是擁有真正自由的時刻，原來可以在一個不被認識的國度做沒人注意的普通人，是最幸福的事。

Ewan 本身也是一個由蘇格蘭隻身去荷里活闖蕩的成功例子，所以他十

分鼓勵年輕人出去闖，去探索這個世界，看看世界的其他地方，嘗試欣賞和自己生活習慣不一樣的人，所以他這樣說：「I think if you can encourage people to do something, it is to go out and explore the world and see parts of the world, and appreciate that people's lives are very different from ours, then I think that is a good thing to do.」

每個人都在尋找快樂，Ewan 直言他是個樂觀主義者，而且他經常都是這樣。或者人就是這樣，happy goes lucky，如果你是一個開心人，就很容易在生活中找到快樂。大家不妨學習 Ewan 的 positive affirmation：「I'm quite a happy person. I can find joy in lots of things. I am happy. I don't have to look for it. I don't have to do things to encourage my sense of optimism. I have it anyway.」快樂不用尋找，因為你生來已經擁有。

■馬漪楠

(曾獲行政長官卓越教學獎 (英國語文教育學習領域)，與丈夫岑皓軒合著暢銷書《Slang：屎爛英語 1，2 & 3》，《全家變泰》及《放養孩子——育出自學力》。)

《松鶴延年》

水墨大展

隔星期五見報

作者：秦天柱

簡介：秦天柱，1952 年生於四川省成都市。現任中國美術家協會理事、四川美術家協會副主席，四川省詩書畫院副院長、四川省中國畫學會副會長等、中國一級美術師。

擅長寫意花鳥畫，在中國當代花鳥畫領域獨樹一幟。秦氏主張借物傳情、有感而發，通過平實的物象宣洩情感。作品重意境、講構成，奔放而不粗狂、精細而不拘謹。畫面清新淡雅，在傳統的基礎上凝練新意，有詩一般的意蘊。



趣 談英語

逢星期五見報



LearnEnglish

In the news

by Andy Baxter (amended by Jon Porter)

What did the arrival of the Internet and 24-hour news mean for British newspapers?

At first, this looked like the end of printed newspapers. The national newspapers were worried that they would lose all their readers, so most of them decided to create an online version. But they still had a problem: how to make money?

There was simply too much news and too much information freely available 'out there'. But was it accurate? Whose opinions should we trust? A survey found that 60 per cent of UK adults think it is worth paying for a 'good newspaper', and most of those said they believed more of what they read in paid-for newspapers.

Here was something newspapers understood – here was what they could offer: news plus comment and opinion.

And the Internet now offered new opportunities. A newspaper was just that: news printed on paper. But the Internet now offered newspapers different places to publish, and in different media. Many newspapers now have podcasts and video too.

This may explain why the readership of newspapers online in the UK is very different from the readership of printed newspapers. The most popular printed newspaper in the UK is *The Sun*. It has a daily circulation of nearly two million, and is the most popular newspaper written in English in the world. The 'mid-market' audience mainly reads the *Daily Mail*, which sells nearly 1.7 million copies. Of the 'quality' newspapers, the most popular is *The Daily Telegraph*, which sells nearly half a million copies, followed by *The Times* and the *Guardian*.



Online, it's a different story. The most popular site is *The Mail*, which has 1.8 million 'browsers' every day. And the next most popular site is the *Guardian*, with 1.4 million browsers daily.

In fact, many of these browsers are not from the UK. *The Mail* and *Guardian* are the two most read newspapers in the USA, with *The New York Times* in third place.

No, the newspaper is not dead, just changing form, and now reaching more people than ever.

Activity 1

Are the sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- 1 There are no more printed newspapers in Britain.
- 2 People trust newspapers more than the Internet.
- 3 Most newspapers have a website.
- 4 The most popular newspaper is also the most popular newspaper website.
- 5 People from other countries also read British newspapers online.

For more fun activities to help you learn English visit www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish

Send your feedback to learnenglish@britishcouncil.org

© British Council 2016

從甲骨文到行書 演變由繁至簡

中 文視野

隔星期五見報

文字為人類文明的產物，字體則是文字符號的體系。不論中外文化，當中的文字皆經歷了不少演變，才成為今天成熟的體系。以中國漢字為例，漢字的字體演變，主要經歷了甲骨文、金文、小篆、隸書、草書、楷書及行書等幾個發展階段。字體的演變一般是緩慢和漸進的，新字體出現不代表舊的就要廢除，而是要經過一段新舊並存的時間，才由新體代替舊體。可是這不代表舊體就此消滅，只是並不在社會通行而已。就像今天，我們仍很容易見到使用小篆的圖章及書法作品。

小篆始於秦代，為秦始皇統一中國的政策之一。若我們細究當中漢字的結構，便可以發現，其實小篆當中有不少字形演變，已不能再按六書去區分 (漢字字形構造方式傳統稱為「六書」，分別是象形、指事、會意、形聲、假借及轉注)。至漢代，由篆書變成隸書，更是漢字形體的一大改變，可說是漢字形體的分水嶺。基於追求書寫的便捷，隸書打破了篆書的結構，漸趨簡化；亦把篆書的彎曲筆畫變為平直，書體失去篆書原有的圖像意味。

與隸書同時於漢代社會使用的還有草書。草書在

寫法上不求每一筆畫都清楚，粗具輪廓便可。由於草書的字體難以辨認，故發展到後來，少作為一般應用，而多作為具藝術價值的書法使用。

楷書是隸書進一步的簡化，跟隸書相比，它的筆畫更平直，結構更方正，寫起來更便捷。故自漢末以後，楷書就取代了隸書，在社會上作為正式的書體應用，直至現在。

楷書通行後，又有一調和草書和楷書的字體，叫行書。行書以楷書為基礎，加入一些草書的寫法，書寫比楷書快，但沒草書潦草，所以從魏晉後成為書翁手稿日常應用的字體。

總括而言，漢字形體演變的趨勢是由繁至簡，從隸書變為楷書、行書後，漢字的結構就沒什麼大的變化，雖然當中可能因為書寫習慣或印刷方式的不同，而導致同一文字出現不同的符號體式 (如異體字、俗體字及印刷體中有所謂的宋體、明體)，但內裏的結構都是大同小異，不影響大眾閱讀理解。

針對同一文字出現不同符號體式的情況，中國先於 1955 年發布了《第一批異體字整理表》，共淘汰了 1,055 個異體字；再於 2013 年頒布《通用規範漢字表》，成為社會一般應用領域的漢字規範後。香港也於上世紀八十年代，按社會需要，研訂了《常用字字形表》，並以此為依據，先後編訂《小學常用字表》及《香港小學學習字詞表》。

■林嘉穎博士
香港浸會大學國際學院講師



星期一

• 通識博客 (一小時專集、通識追蹤)
• 百搭通識

星期二

• 通識博客 / 通識中國

星期三

• 中文星級學堂
• 百科啟智 STEM

星期四

• 通識文憑試摘星攻略

星期五

• 文江學海