

BBC Learning English – Q & A of the Week 125

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Rhyming Slang 押运俚语

- Feifei:** 大家好, 欢迎收听《你问我答》。我是冯菲菲。
- Rob:** And I'm Rob. Thanks for joining us. Shall we have a butcher's at today's question?
- Feifei:** Pardon? A butcher's? You're talking a strange language Rob!
- Rob:** I'm talking rhyming slang. Have a butcher's means have a look.
- Feifei:** That doesn't rhyme Rob.
- Rob:** I'll explain later. Anyway, hopefully we can help you and Cocoa, who's asked a question about this subject.

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Hi. I am a big fan of your great programme. Recently, I was confused about the phrase "rhyming slang" which I got from a comic in a newspaper. I've looked it up and known its meaning "同韵俚语", grasshopper=copper, for example. Could you please give me some more further explanations and samples? Looking forward to your help. Thanks a lot! Best wishes, Cocoa from Guangzhou China

- Feifei:** 来自广州的 Cocoa 想让我们通过大量举例来帮助她学习英语押韵俚语 rhyming slang. So come on 'my old china' tell us all about rhyming slang!
- Rob:** Ah Feifei, you've started talking in rhyming slang already. My old China means my old mate but do you know why?
- Feifei:** I don't actually.
- Rob:** Well, it comes from china plate and that rhymes with mate. But to make things quicker and more informal we say 'my old china'. Get it?
- Feifei:** I think so. My old China 在英语里的意思就是朋友, 哥们儿的意思。因为 China 这个词表示瓷器。China Plate 陶瓷盘子的简称。So you're not actually a China plate!

Rob: No I'm not. Rhyming slang is just about saying the name of an unrelated object that rhymes with the word you actually want to say.

Feifei: 押运俚语就是来找一个和你想表达意思听起来相像的另外一个词。这个词的意思可以和你要表达的词完全没有关系。But why?

Rob: For fun! It's an informal and colourful way to speak. Rhyming slang is believed to have started in the mid 19th century in the East end of London. Some people think it was spoken to hide the meaning from other people, possibly the police.

Feifei: 据说押运俚语发源于 19 世纪中期的东伦敦，那时候人们使用押运俚语是为了能在他人面前掩饰自己说话的真正意思。And you still hear it used today?

Rob: Yes you do. If you visit a market in London you'd probably hear the traders talking in Cockney rhyming slang. A bit like this.

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Go on gents, give your trouble and strife a treat. Cast your mince pies on these lovely weasels, take your pick and spend some bread!

Feifei: It sounds like another language! 上面的这位可是用了好多押运俚语，听起来都不像是在说英语。Can you explain it please Rob?

Rob: OK. Trouble and strife means wife.

Feifei: Trouble and strife 的意思就是夫人，太太。It doesn't rhyme in Chinese!

Rob: I thought not! How about mince pies?

Feifei: 英国传统的百果馅儿饼。

Rob: Mince pies means eyes.

Feifei: Mince pies 在这里的意思是眼睛 eyes. What about weasel?

Rob: That comes from the names of the animals, weasel and stoat which rhymes with coat.

Feifei: Weasel and stoat 黄鼠狼和白鼬的组合意思是大衣、外套 coat. And what does bread mean?

Rob: Bread and honey. That means money. Strange isn't it?

Feifei: Very odd. Bread and honey 面包和蜂蜜的意思是钱 money.

Rob: Let's hear the example again...

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Go on gents, give your trouble and strife a treat. Cast your mince pies on these lovely weasels, take your pick and spend some bread!

Feifei: So some of the phrases originate from the 19th Century?



Rob: They do but new ones have evolved. Listen to this.

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OK lads, after the game let's all go down the pub and get a round of Britneys.

Feifei: 他说咱们去趟酒馆然后买些 Britneys?!

Rob: Britneys! There's a pop singer called Britney Spears, so that rhymes with beers. Get a round of beers!

Feifei: Britney Spears – beers – 啤酒。这是一个相对比较新的押韵俚语。So should Cocoa be using rhyming slang when she speaks English?

Rob: It's not necessary but might be fun to try. Just make sure you're using the right words! You can have a look on the internet to find some more.

Feifei: I'll take a butcher's!

Rob: You could but do you know where taking a butcher's comes from?

Feifei: No, you were going to tell me Rob.

Rob: It comes from butcher's hook, the hook used for hanging meat on. Hook rhymes with look.

Feifei: Have a butcher's 的意思就是 have a look 看看。这个俚语来源于 butcher's hook. I think I'll stick with plain English!

Rob: It's your choice Feifei. Hopefully we've helped explain rhyming slang to Cocoa.

Feifei: 如果在英语学习种遇到任何问题，欢迎来信给我们。我们的邮箱地址是 questions.chinaelt@bbc.co.uk

Rob: Ok Feifei it's time for a cup of rosie.

Feifei: A cup of rosie – ah you mean a cup of...

Rob: Sshhh don't say a dickie bird, let's get the listeners to work it out.

Feifei: Good idea!

Both: 再见!