

漢文基本功

第275期

揠苗助長改成拔苗助長 是大作家誤導了小讀者

二月廿七日晚上，有人打電話來告知：香港電台《文采飛揚》節目主持人把成語「揠苗助長」讀成「拔苗助長」，誤導年紀較輕或文化較低的聽眾。我回覆他：改字的始作俑者是大作家郭沫若。

我這一輩人，讀中學時已知「揠苗助長」語出《孟子》及其用法。後來，讀郭沫若《雄雞集》，初次看到「揠」改成「拔」，且說明語出《孟子》。時值上世紀六十年代，內地颳起「淘汰生僻字」之風，有人認為「揠」字生僻，他順應「潮流」，以常用的「拔」字代替；是否歪曲原意，倒是不管了。大作家改字，自有小讀者跟風。

一九八八年四月，某政界紅人用了「拔苗助長」，香港《文匯報》即有文章回應。作者南風反對更改「揠」字，理由是此字「義為挺拔。把幼苗弄挺拔，看似助長其勢。而拔掉幼苗，又何有於助長？」南風先生為「揠苗助長」作了

正確的解釋。當時我估計必有人查書，查出《說文解字》把「揠」解釋為「拔」。後來，看到一些教中學甚至教大學、編字典的，居然都認為「揠」改為「拔」可通，自知所料不差。

其實，《說文解字》將「揠」解成「拔」，有欠準確。《小爾雅》：「拔心曰揠，拔根曰擢。」拔心，即南風先生說的挺拔；說得顯淺一點，是輕輕拉起。把拔心與拔根（連根拔起）混淆顯然是錯誤的。

我們也該原諒一千八百年的許慎先生。他編《說文解字》，正逢「一字多用，容易混淆」的年代。但要記住：「盡信書則不如無書」——這也是孟子的至理名言。

在文字分工精細的今天，不該讓時光倒流，回到「一字多用，容易混淆」的年代，更不該屈從「名人效應」。

容若

通識新世代

放眼天下

五星級英文

How to write a ghost story (9)

黑楊 (yeung@harkyeung.com)

I did not describe the student hall in London. I let the readers imagine. Instead I told a story about a Japanese to make the atmosphere special.

Now I am going to tell Hong Kong readers somewhere closer, a so-called haunted place they can go and have a look.

At the University of Hong Kong, there is a similar place, a historical building that looks like a castle. Now it is used as a hall for young men. Some Chinese believe that young men are full of the kind of bright energy that ghosts would prefer to avoid.

It was said to be the place where the Japanese executed the locals when they occupied Hong Kong during the war. For two years I had lived in an apartment building opposite to that castle. Once when my mother visited me, she immediately felt uncomfortable about the castle. She did not visit me again, saying that she was afraid. I had not met any ghost while I was there. It was an extraordinary apartment, no doubt. The first time I walked into it, immediately I wanted to stay in it, not unlike the feeling I had when I was in the Elizabeth Suite.

A few times during my encounters with hotels, I thought of writing ghost stories.

A hotel in Saigon, 1994. At that time Vietnam was attracting a lot of attention from international investors. That hotel was a busy and festive place. The café at its roof-top was nearly full all the time: a meeting place for the foreigners, especially business people. During the war the hotel was the place for press conferences. It was there, for the first time, I learnt that a financial storm was brewing in Asia.

Why I suddenly talked about financial matters? Do ghosts need money? In the earlier part of the story I talked about making offering to ghosts. It implied that ghosts, like human beings, need things to go along.

世「數」社經

升中生每年減逾一成

教育局宣布中一「五減一」自願縮班方案，主要是因應適齡學童未來數目大幅銳減的情況，希望藉以解決超額教師問題，並減低學校因收生不足而被殺校的危機，初步定為學校自願參加。教育局局長孫明揚稱之為「自願優化班級結構」計劃，這不但可以紓緩社會各界對小班教學的要求，另一方面亦鋪設了一個較佳的平台讓中學在學生銳減的過渡期彈性地去安排適當的教師編制，絕對具一箭雙鵰的功効。

近年升中學生數目每年遞減超過10%，未來5年預計由原來7萬之數減至4萬餘，蓋今年申請入讀小一的只有4萬餘人。倘以現時編制，而又沒有各項措施去解決，將有三成半的中學教師會被裁減。以

副局長陳維安指出中學教師每年流失率5%計算，5年之內仍未達到三成半之數。如今由學校自決逐步以內部調配方式，並獲25萬元額外津貼，雖然按班計算的津貼會被削減，但在保留減班前一年的核准教師編制，的確較具空間和彈性去安排5年中學生銳減所帶來的影響。

現時教育局無意下調每班人數而達到小班教學的模式，換句話說，政府仍然猶疑是否應在教育方面有策略的支出改動；這大概是特區政府的深層次矛盾，因為未來社會要發展，不投放資源在教育，恐怕日後要投放到社會的資源更大和更沒效益；希望孫公下一步認真考慮具質素的小班教學模式。

專業教育培訓顧問 呂康



New measures needed to cope with sandstorms

Editorial

Hong Kong yesterday was hit by a rarely, if ever, seen sandstorm. The air pollution index at almost all roadside stations hit a record high of 500 – the maximum possible reading. Citizens going outdoors generally complained about phlegm and sore throats, and eye irritation. Senior citizens, children and patients of chronic respiratory illnesses felt difficult in breathing. A number of people had to be sent to hospital for treatment.

Responding to this, Secretary for the Environment Edward Yau Tang-wah said, at a joint press conference yesterday with some Hong Kong Observatory officials and respiratory specialists, that government authorities concerns were taking relevant measures such as reminding people not to exert themselves to physical exercises or stay for long outdoors, and requiring schools to cancel physical-exercise classes for the sake of safety. He also believed that the air pollution by sandstorm would be improved with the arrival of a southeast monsoon in coming couple of days.

An old saying goes that "Under Heaven there are always unexpected storms." Until yesterday, Hong Kong people had known "sandstorm" as just a climatic or geographical word with the impression of women in Beijing wrapping their heads with gauze kerchiefs when going outdoors. No one in Hong Kong would have thought that the territory would be troubled by a sandstorm amid humid weather in early spring. Therefore, citizens were generally alarmed and disturbed by yesterday's air pollution caused by a sandstorm. Few knew what preventive and protective measures they could take.

On the other hand, as indicated by the tough situation that air pollution monitored by all roadside stations reached the maximum possible reading yesterday, threats to Hong Kong by major climate changes are likely to intensify with changes in its greater environment. The SAR Government must heighten its awareness and work out a mechanism and a set of measures to cope with a crisis caused up by climate changes, as it did with the outbreak of SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) and bird flu.. Otherwise, there could be very serious consequences.

As a matter of fact, if air pollution caused by the sandstorm like yesterday would last for a few more days, some citizens' health would likely deteriorate quickly. If this ever happens, then emergency rooms of public hospitals and private clinics would be crowded with patients suffering coughs, shortness of breath and asthma. Dr Yu Wai Cho, a specialist of respiratory system at Queen Mary Hospital, pointed out yesterday that the suspended particulates in the air yesterday were smaller than 10 μm which could penetrate deep down into human lungs. Ordinary masks or air filtering systems in office buildings could not block them out. As such they would considerably affect human health, particularly on patients suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or chronic heart disease. In Taiwan where was hit by the sandstorm one day earlier than Hong Kong, the number of patients with respiratory problems admitted to major hospitals sharply rose by 30%.

In addition to COPD and chronic heart disease patients, aged people and children are also the most vulnerable to climate changes. If the situation continues worsening, aged citizens in residential homes and day care centres may fall ill in groups. Senior citizens living alone at

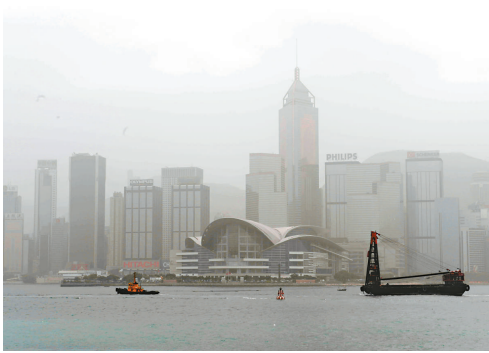
沙塵暴來襲須重訂指標及對策

本港昨日出現罕見的「鳳舞狂沙」現象，全港所有路邊空氣質素監測站均錄得超逾最高指數五百的「嚴重」級別水平，外出市民均感到喉鼻乾涸、眼睛刺痛，老人、小孩及呼吸道長期病患者更出現呼吸不暢等病症，多人需要送院。

對此，環境局局長邱騰華昨日聯同天文台負責人及呼吸系統專科醫生會見記者，表示已聯絡多個政府部門作出應對措施，包括提醒市民勿在戶外進行劇烈運動及長時間停留，亦要求學校停止體育課，以策安全，並相信沙塵天氣未來一兩日會隨着轉吹東南風而得到緩和。

所謂「天有不測風雲」，對港人來說，「沙塵暴」一向只是天文地理資料上的名詞，只會在電視新聞中看到北京的女士們外出要用紗巾包着頭、臉，任誰也不會想到一向只會為「回南」潮濕天氣發愁的本港也會有「黃沙蔽日」的一天，因此，昨日出現的沙塵天氣，在市民中造成頗大的困擾與不安，很多人都不知道該如何做好預防與保護措施。

另一方面，從昨日全港空氣質素監測站全面「爆燈」的嚴峻情況看來，未來本港面對重大氣候異變威脅的危機有可能會隨着「大環境」的變化而加劇，特區政府有必要提高憂患意識，如同防控沙土、禽流感一樣，及早制訂一整套的氣候危機應變



3月22日，沙塵覆蓋下的維多利亞港

機制及措施，否則後果可能會很嚴重。

事實是，昨日的沙塵暴天氣如果再持續多幾日，部分市民的健康狀況可能會急速惡化，那時，全港公立醫院的急診室和私家醫生診所可能會坐滿咳嗽、氣促以至哮喘發作的病人。據瑪麗醫院呼吸系統專科余衛祖醫生昨日指出，昨日瀰漫在空氣中的是十微米以下的懸浮粒子，這些微細的粒子可以直接進入肺的底部，一般口罩以至家居、辦公室的空氣過濾設施都無法將之阻隔，因此對人體健康的影響是較大的，特別是對慢性阻塞性肺病及慢性心臟病人更不利。而比香港早一天受到沙塵暴吹襲的台灣，各主要醫院的呼吸系統病人已急增三成。

全港14監測站 10個爆標

2010年3月11日，沙塵暴吹襲本港，空氣污染指數有史以來首次「爆標」，14個監測站讀取的指數中，10個創下500最高點。白天，觀塘污染指數最高，上升至475，其次是東區達到468，另外6個監測站包括塔門、旺角、沙田、大埔、中環、銅鑼灣污染指數介乎411至456。到了晚上9時，除了西面的4個監測站（荃灣、葵涌、東涌以及元朗）之外，其餘10個監測站的空氣污染指數均錄得500的爆標指數。

香港環保署於1995年6月推出空氣污染指數，根據指數等級：0至25屬「輕微」，26至50屬「中等」，51至100屬「偏高」，101至200屬「甚高」，201至500則為「嚴重」。同時間，空氣中

home may also face increased risks. Many parents also become very concerned whether schools should be closed in such weather, like under typhoon signals No 3 or No 8.

In fact, northern areas of China have been hit by sandstorm twice after the Spring Festival. The latest one even spread to southern China, which was rarely seen before. Days ago, Xinhua News Agency already reported that the West Lake (Xihu) in Hangzhou was overwhelmed by a sandstorm with young green leaves of willows covered by sands... And later the sandstorm spread to Fujian and Taiwan. At that time, were Hong Kong's Environment Bureau and Observatory fully aware of the situation or did they manage to gather enough information? Did they contact the Central Meteorological Centre for more detailed data? Did they issue any early warning about the sandstorm to relevant authorities and citizens? It seems a thorough review is needed on such issues so as to make improvement.

We must also be aware that China is entering a period of high frequency of sandstorms, as warned by the chief weather forecaster of the National Meteorological Centre. The current sandstorm will be over by the night of March 22. But there will be another one around March 24. And in April and May, north China may be hit by six to nine sandstorms, which are more than those seen in the same period of 2009. Thus it may not be alarmist to say that the air pollution index at roadside stations across Hong Kong would hit the maximal reading again at any time.

23 March 2010

WORDS AND USAGE:

① Respond to sth or sb (phrasal verb) – To react to or to answer something or someone.

Examples: 1. I need you to respond to the points in the report by end of the day. 2. When are you going to respond to my letter?

② Block sth out (phrasal verb) – To stop sth from coming in.

Examples: 1. The trees block out much of sunlight. 2. I'm so used to the traffic now I just block it out.

③ Vulnerable (adj) – Able to be easily physically, emotionally or mentally hurt, influenced or attacked.

Examples: 1. The enemy's position is vulnerable. 2. Achilles was vulnerable only in his heel.

④ Fall ill (phrasal verb) – To become ill.

Examples: 1. Tom fell ill just before he was to perform. 2. We both fell ill after eating the baked fish.

⑤ Alarmist (adj) – Intentionally showing only the bad and dangerous things in a situation to worry people.

Examples: 1. The government has dismissed newspaper reports of 200 dead in the disaster as alarmist. 2. The public health measures taken in response to swine flu now are criticised by many as alarmist.

社評

而除了慢性心、肺病患者以外，長者和小孩通常都是氣候異變下的高危一族，如情況持續惡化，全港安老院、護理中心有可能會出現成群的老人發病，家居老人獨處的風險也會增加；而全港學校在如此惡劣的天氣下是否有需要如同三號、八號風球般停課，也是眾多家長極為關注的問題。

其實，中國北方和華北地區，春節過後已經出現過兩次大型沙塵暴天氣，最近的一次已罕有地擴展到南部地區，新華社日前已報道杭州西湖為沙塵所籠罩，嫩綠的柳葉上都是沙塵……，再稍後沙塵更已落到福建以至台灣；但本港環境局、天文台對此有無足夠的警覺以及資料掌握？有無及時向中央氣象台要求取得更多有關的訊息？有無及早向各部門及市民發出「沙塵暴」的預警？看來都有作出進一步檢討與改善的必要。

不可不知的是：北京中央氣象台首席預報員昨日發出預警：中國正進入沙塵暴「多發期」，眼前這輪沙塵暴將於二十二日夜間基本結束，但二十四日前後還會再有一次；而四至五月，北方地區的沙塵暴天氣可能有六次到九次，比二〇〇九年同期偏多。如此香港路邊空氣監測站隨時再出現全線「爆燈」，並非危言聳聽。

2010/03/23 大公報社評

通識記憶體



的懸浮粒子隨之飆升至每立方米600至700微克，是世界衛生組織標準的12至14倍，身處「超高」懸浮粒子的環境超過2小時，即會導致心跳加速，中風風險增加54%；孕婦吸入路邊廢氣，可導致胎兒智商降低。

空氣污染指數亮紅燈，中小學立即採取應變措施，教育局呼籲學生減少戶外活動。不過，位於「爆標」空氣污染水平的蘇浙小學，在灣仔舉行運動會後1小時，就因空氣太差而腰斬；藍田循道衛理小學亦要取消課後的足球及籃球練習；沙田區吳氏宗親總會泰伯紀念學校、觀塘區樂善堂楊仲明小學等均因此取消體育課。