



## 舊學邃密 新知深沉

語文是文化的載體。要掌握一種語文，對其所體現的文化豈能一無所知？為推廣中國文化，法定語文事務署邀請了兩位著名學者，在四月主持兩個文化講座。

四月十九日下午，北京大學中文系李零教授會在香港文化中心主講“說中國早期藝術中的外來影響”，討論中國藝術根源裏的外來因素。四月二十六日，美國普林斯頓大學東亞系中國語文組周質平教授會在香港中央圖書館主持另一個講座，講題為“親情與愛情——近代中國知識分子的婚戀情結”，以中國近代學者胡適的婚戀關係為主線，探索近代中國知識分子如何在傳統“父母之命”的婚姻制度之下爭取婚戀的自由。

名家演說，精彩可期。有興趣參加的同事，請與法定語文事務署訓練組黃翠媚女士(電話：2867 3003)聯絡。

南腔



北調

## 明天是我的東兒

葉春生

在一本給外國人學漢語用的教科書上，有這麼一個例句：“明天是我的東兒”，搞得老外們一頭霧水。什麼意思？

東西南北的“東”原是個方位詞，在漢語裏，“東兒”又可作“東道”講，那是由古時主位在東，賓位在西衍化而來的，“東”就是主人，“東兒”就是“東道主”，“我的東兒”就是“我請你們吃飯”。再說得地道一點：“趕明兒是我的東兒”。這才是正宗的北京土話。老廣注意：兒化音只需輕輕把舌頭翹起，不要讀成“兒子”的“兒”。

同樣道理，在最近一次漢語“托福”考試中，有這麼一句：“這個演員很紅”。外國朋友不理解，大多把“紅”改為“白”。他們認為，“紅”是血腥的象徵，“白”代表純潔，而不知道漢語裏“紅”象徵喜慶、順利、成功。這就是東西方理念的差別。

\* “托福”為美國“對非英語國家留學生的英語考試”(Test of English as a Foreign Language)英文縮寫(TOEFL)的音譯。

本文作者為內地中山大學中文系教授，專長民間文學、民俗文學，主要著作有《簡明民間文藝學》、《嶺南俗文學簡史》等。葉春生教授這次為《文訊》撰文，借一句地道的普通話，點出南北言殊的社會語言現象，旁及東西方文化理念的差異，言簡意賅。承蒙葉教授惠賜稿件，謹致謝忱。

## WORD FOR WORD



### HORSE TALK

***“That man has shown no slightest horse sense. What he can offer is only horseback opinions. Yet he still thinks he should be promoted. If wishes were horses, then beggars would ride. He is bound to be a failure.”***

In days of old, people used to travel on horseback. It was said that horses, especially the old ones, were shrewd and sensitive. They were acute observers of the situation and knew how to get round treacherous paths and lead people out of danger. ‘Horse sense’ is therefore used to refer to the ability to make sensible judgements and practical decisions.

‘Horseback opinions’, on the other hand, are not as positive as ‘horse sense’. Horse riding is exciting but bumpy. An opinion formed under such circumstances may be hasty and immature.

It is not likely to get you anywhere without more thorough consideration.

‘If wishes were horses, beggars would ride’ is a saying which cautions people against being an unrealistic dreamer. Success is not something you can pick from trees. Instead, you must strive for it. If wishing was all it took to succeed, there would be no failure in the world.

References to horses abound in the English language, but if you want to learn all horse-related phrases and idioms, you will have to ‘work like a horse’ too!