David Crystal

The Wonderful World of Language

Edited with Notes

by

Nobuo Okada

SEIBIDO

はしがき

私たちは、ことばによって外界を把握し、自分の思想を形づくり、さらに、ことばによって自分の生き方を決めます。また、ことばによって人を励まし、勇気づけ、苦しみから解放し、楽しませ、喜ばせますが、逆に、ことばによって人を悲しませ、苦しめ、怒らせ、極端な場合には、自殺に追いやることすらあります。また、歴史を振り返ってみると、人類が、ことばによって、知識や技術を共有し、協力し合い、豊かな文化や高度な文明をつくってきたことがわかります。本書を出版するのは、大学生の皆さんがことばに関して正しい知識と認識をもたれるお手伝いがしたいと思ったからにほかなりません。

本書の原著は、世界的な言語学者であるデイヴィッド・クリスタル(David Crystal)が 2010 年 に Yale University Press か ら 出 版 し た *A Little Book of Language* です。原著は、若い読者を想定し、ことばの諸相に光を当て、ことばの実態や本質を明らかにすることを意図したものです。英語は平易で、読みやすく、論旨も明晰です。語り口も肩肘張らない自然な語り口です。しかし、中身は、言語学の世界的権威が、蘊蓄を傾け、ことばに対する愛着を込めて執筆しただけあり、ことばの世界に対する読者の知的好奇心を大いにそそる内容になっています。

本書は、40 章からなる原著の中から大学の教養(liberal arts)教育にふさわしい章を 12 章ほど選び出し、それに英語の語句や文法の理解や習得を助ける注や内容の理解を助ける解説を施したものです。ことばの達人クリスタルの英語を熟読し、英語そのものを楽しみながら、ことばに対する造詣を深め、ことばについて思索していただければありがたいと思います。

クリスタル略歴

クリスタルは、1941 年に北アイルランドのリズバーン(Lisburn)で生まれ、幼年期をウェールズのホーリーヘッド(Holyhead)で過ごしました。1951 年にリバプールに引っ越しし、St. Mary's College で中等教育を受けました。ロンドン大学のユニヴァーシティー・カレッジ(University College)で英語を専攻し(1959-62)、著名な英語学者であるランドルフ・クワーク(Randolph Quirk)の薫陶を受けました。その後、ウェールズ大学やレディング大学で教鞭をとり、現在は、ホーリーヘッドに住みながら国内の各地や国外に仕事に出掛けています。

出版した著書の数はすでに 100 冊を超えていますが、その中には、*The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*(2nd ed., 2003), *The Stories of English*(2004), *How Language Works*(2006), *By Hook or By Crook: a Journey in Search of English*(2007), *Txtng: The Gr8 Db8*(2008)などの名著もあります。クリスタルは、著書に加えて、膨大な数に上る論文やエッセイを執筆していますが、彼のウェブサイト(<http://www.davidcrystal.com/>)にアクセスすれば、彼のエッセイや論文を読むことができます。

クリスタルの活動は多彩で、言語学書の執筆のほか、BBC テレビ・ラジオの番組のコンサルタントを務めたり、番組の脚本を執筆したり、自ら番組に出演したりしています。1995 年には英語に対する功績を認められ、OBE(Officer(of the Order)of the British Empire 大英帝国四等勲士)に叙されました。また、2000 年には英国学士院特別会員(Fellow of the British Academy)に選ばれました。現在、ウェールズ大学の言語学の名誉教授(Honorary Professor)であり、また、外国語としての英語の教育にかかわる世界中の教師の学会である IATEFL(International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language)のパトロン(patron)でもあります。

本書の使い方

本書は英語のリーディング教材です。ことばに関するまとまりのある文章を読んで理解し、その上で、ことばについて考える習慣を身につけることを目的としてつくったものです。Exercises には 3 種類の問題を用意しています。第 1 問は True or False で、本文の内容を正しく理解しているかどうかをチェックする問題です。第 2 問は、語句の理解や文法力をチェックする問題です。第 3 問は、本文の内容についてどのように考えるかを問う問題ですが、友達同士で話し合えば自分の考えを一層明晰にすることもできますし、内容をより深く理解することもできると思います。

本書にはネイティブスピーカーが吹き込んだ CD(別売)があります。リスニング力の育成に利用してください。

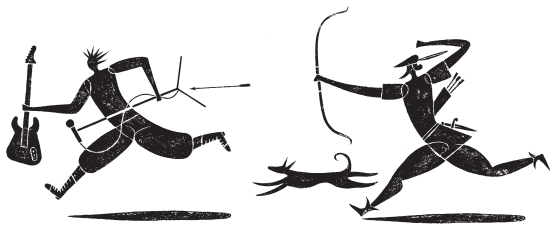
最後に、この場をお借りして、注をつけるにあたって編注者の質問に丁寧にお答えくださったクリスタル氏にお礼を申し上げるとともに、本書の企画から刊行に至る全過程でお世話くださった(株)成美堂の菅野英一氏と小亀正人氏に感謝いたします。

2010 年 10 月　編註者

Contents

CHAPTER 1

Discovering Grammar



子供は生後 18 カ月になるまでに身の周りのことについて語る語が 50 語程度使えるようになる。これは発表語彙であり、理解語彙はその 3 ～ 4 倍に上るだろう。最初に子供が発話するのは mama とか dada とか doggie とかの 1 語文だが、生後 18 カ月ごろから juice gone とか daddy gone とかの 2 語文が出てくる。

1-02

It must be quite a magical moment when a child realizes that, if sounds are strung together in a certain way, things start to happen. Say 'dada', and the man talks to you. Say 'mama', and the woman does. Say 'bye-bye', and people wave at you. Say 'all gone', and someone takes your dish away or gives you some more to eat. Say 'night-night', and people give you kisses.

Once children have worked out that words are interesting and useful, the flood-gates open. By 18 months, most have learned to say about 50 words. What are they talking about, these tiny language-users?

They talk about what's going on around them – what's happening in the 'here and now' – using words like the following (of course, they won't all be pronounced perfectly at this age):

- words to talk about people, such as the members of their family as well as visitors – 'dada', 'grandma', 'Tom', and 'milkman'.
- words to talk about the events of the day, such as 'hello', 'night-night', 'all gone', and 'fall down'.
- words to talk about the actions that people do, such as 'kiss', 'tickle', and 'go' – and also the main words that *stop* actions happening: 'no' and 'don't'.
- words to talk about food, such as 'milk', 'juice', 'drink', and 'din-din'.

- words for parts of the body, such as 'nose' and 'toes', and what some of those body-parts do, such as 'wee-wee'.
- words for clothing, such as 'hat', 'nappy' (or 'diaper' in America), and 'pyjamas' (usually pronounced 'jamas' at this age).
- words for animals, including the really exciting ones seen on the television or a DVD, such as 'dog', 'bird', and 'Tigger'; they are often made child-friendly by adding an extra bit – 'doggie', 'birdie', 'kitty', and 'moo-cow'.
- words for vehicles, another highly exciting world, such as 'car', 'tractor', 'train', and 'bus', and not forgetting unusual means of transport, such as 'wheelbarrow' (pronounced 'eeba' by my son Steven at that age).
- words for toys and games, such as 'ball', 'book', and 'claphands'.
- words for household objects, such as 'cup', 'light', and 'spoon' – and especially those which make a noise, such as 'clock' and 'hoover'.
- words for identifying locations, such as 'where', 'there', and 'look', and the very important 'in' and 'on'.
- words for describing things, such as 'big', 'hot', and 'yum-yum'.
- words which show you're taking part in a conversation, such as the reply-words 'yes' and 'ta'.

This is a pretty impressive range of vocabulary for someone who didn't have any words at all six months before. It shows how, once the vocal organs are mature enough to cope, babies rapidly put them to use to talk about the world.

It's the speed of learning that impresses me most. If children have an active vocabulary of around 50 words at 18 months, that means they must have been coming out with a new word, on average, every three or four days! And they understand many more words than that. Their passive vocabulary which I talked about at the end of Chapter 3 is probably three or four times larger. Children understand an awful lot of what is being said around them.

CD 1-03

But there's a limit to what you can say, if you're restricted to saying just one word at a time. It's virtually impossible to have a sensible conversation if all you have available are one-word sentences. It makes a good party game, actually. Two people have to talk about a topic, such as where they went on holiday, but they're only allowed to say one word each ('Holiday?', 'France', 'Weather?', 'Lovely'). It gets tricky very quickly, as the sentences they really want to say (such as 'What did you do?'

and 'We had a great hotel just by the beach') are banned.

Young children evidently begin to feel the need to say more complicated things at around 18 months, because that's the age when they start joining words together. They stop saying 'gone' and start saying 'teddy gone', 'juice gone', 'daddy gone'. They no longer say 'milk' but start telling us things about the milk – 'milk there', 'milk gone', 'milk cup' (meaning 'the milk is in the cup').

CD 1-04

Adults are really rather pleased when children reach this stage, because communication has been a bit hit-and-miss previously. Here's the sort of thing that happens. I remember, when my daughter Sue was about 16 months, she came toddling into the sitting room holding a favourite teddy bear. She stood in front of me and said 'push'. I thought for a moment what she might mean, and then gave her a playful push. That wasn't right. She put on a cross face and said 'No! Push'. So I made another guess, and said: 'Come on, then. Give me a push', and I waited. That wasn't right either. 'No!! Push!'

I was at a loss, and she could see it, so she took me by the hand and brought me into the other room, where there was a toy swing. She put her teddy on the seat and turned to me. 'Push!' So that was it. I had to push teddy on the swing.

'Why didn't you tell me that at the beginning?' I asked her, and got a cold stare for my pains. I know what she was thinking. It was something like this: 'Look, I'm not even one-and-a-half yet, and I only know how to say single-word sentences. I haven't learned much grammar! Give me a break!'

CD 1-05

Certainly, to make it clear what she wanted to say, she would have had to know a bit more grammar than she already had. If she'd meant my first guess, she should have said something like 'push me' or 'you push me'. If she'd meant my second guess, she should have said 'me push' or 'me push you'. As it was, she meant to say 'you push teddy' – or even, 'come with me into the other room and give teddy a push on the swing'.

All this was well beyond her, at 16 months. But things would soon change. A few months later she would be able to say 'push me'. Soon after age two she would be able to say 'you push teddy'. And the long version? That would come sometime after her third birthday, once she'd learned to handle such important linking words as 'and'.

So what is this grammar she is discovering? What is grammar? Think about

'push' again, for a moment. What was wrong with that? It didn't make sense. I understood what the word meant, but I couldn't see what she was getting at. So that's the first big thing we have to appreciate about grammar. Grammar is the way we make sense of words. Without grammar, there's only vagueness.

CD 1-06

The trouble with words is that most of them have got more than one meaning – they're *ambiguous*. We can see this straight away if we look in a dictionary. Most of the entries give more than one meaning for a word. Take a word like 'band'. We might think its meaning is obvious: 'a pop group'. But that's only one of the meanings of 'band'. It could just as easily refer to a group of marching musician soldiers. Or a group of soldiers or outlaws, such as those who followed Robin Hood. Or a piece of elastic used for holding things together. Or a flat strip of material forming part of a dress or a hat. If we look the word 'band' up in a dictionary, we'll find it has about a dozen meanings. How do we know which is which?

The answer is simple. We put the word into a sentence. And we use the grammar of the sentence to tell us what the word means. For example:

- The newsreader on the television tells us: 'Soldiers were fighting a band of rebels in the south of the country.' That has to be the 'group of outlaws' meaning. It couldn't possibly mean a pop group.
- The DJ on the radio says: 'The band has a new single out this month.' That has to be the pop group.
- The lady in the shop offers us a choice: 'You can have the jacket with a red band on the sleeve or a green one'. That has to be the strip of material.

In each case, the other words in the sentence help us to work out which meaning of 'band' is the right one.

That is what sentences are for. They help us to make sense of words. Without sentences, what we say simply won't make sense. Little children have to learn that lesson. And so do we, if we want to understand how language works. We need to learn all about the ways our language allows words to come together in sentences. Some ways are possible:

The poodle chased the cat.

And some aren't:

Poodle cat the the chased.

Changing the *order* of the words can change the meaning:

The cat chased the poodle.

And changing the *endings* of words can change the meaning too:

The poodl<u>es</u> chased the cat<u>s</u>.

There are hundreds of ways of building sentences out of words, and children have learned most of them by the time they go to school. They can make sentences that describe events, ask questions, give commands, and do all sorts of other things. They can join them together to tell stories, hold conversations, and send text messages. Without sentences, they'd be lost.

 1-07

So, when we study a language, we need to work out how its sentences are built. Each language does it in a different way. Some languages, such as French, change the endings of words more than English does. Some languages, such as Chinese, don't have endings like English at all. Some languages, such as Welsh, put the words in a different order.

If we want to understand how people express their ideas and understand each other, then we need to study the way they build their sentences. And the study of the structure of sentences is what we call grammar.

PLAYING WITH GRAMMAR

One of the easiest ways of making a joke is to take a word and use grammar to play with its meaning. Comedians and TV sitcoms do this all the time. They say something which makes you think of a word in one way, and then the next sentence does something totally different. We get a surprise, and that makes us laugh. Here's an example.

Soldiers were fighting a band of rebels in the south of the country. They didn't like their last album.

There's no limit to the number of jokes waiting to be told in this way. (I'm not saying they're good jokes, mind!) Here's the opening line of another one. You can make up whatever punchline you like.

Sharon had a bright green band on her hat. It …

EXERCISES

1. 本文の内容に合うものにはＴを、合わないものにはＦを ( ) に書き込みなさい。

1. By 12 months, most children have learned to say about 50 words. ( )
2. Children's active vocabulary is probably three or four times larger than their passive vocabulary. ( )
3. Most words have more than one meaning. ( )

2. ( ) に入る適切な語を下の語群から選び、必要があれば適切な語形に変えて書き込みなさい。

1. When my daughter said 'push', I gave her a playful push. But she ( ) on a cross face and said 'No! Push!'.
2. I only know how to say single-word sentences. I haven't learned much grammar! Give me a ( ).
3. I understood what the word meant, but I couldn't see what she was ( ) at.
4. The ( ) with words is that most of them are ambiguous.
5. The study of the structure of sentences is what we ( ) grammar.

break	call	get	put	trouble

3. 次の三つの文はいずれも二通りの意味で解釈することができます (多義です)。それらの意味を言いなさい。

1. I saw Mary near the bank.
2. The shooting of the hunters is terrible.
3. I like Chris more than Jackie.