

Q and A of the Week 你问我答

Using the word 'cast' 一词多意



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- Neil:** Hello and welcome to Question and Answer of the Week. I'm Neil and joining me in the studio today is Li.
- Yang Li:** Hi there.
- Neil:** On this programme, we answer *your* questions about English, so Li, cast your eyes over this one from Sun Ling.
- Yang Li:** 刚才 Neil 让我看看孙玲的问题。To cast your eyes over something 意思就是看一看。不过 'to cast' 作为动词还有其他一些用法。
- Neil:** And that's exactly what Sun Ling wants to know more about. She writes: "I don't know how to use the word 'cast' as it has a lot of different meanings. Which ones are used most frequently?"
- Yang Li:** 孙玲想让请我们解释 'cast' 这个词的多种用法。So Neil, what is the most common use of the word 'cast' then?
- Neil:** 'Cast' is most commonly used as a verb to describe something being thrown or falling upon something else.
- Yang Li:** 第一个意思是投, 掷。Neil 能举个例子吗?
- Neil:** Well, a fisherman might cast his net – or throw it – into the sea to catch fish.
- Yang Li:** 形容渔民在海上撒网捕鱼时就是 cast his net into the sea.
- Neil:** And during an election, you will cast your vote – literally, moving the piece of paper into the ballot box.
- Yang Li:** Of course! 大选时, 我们经常听到这个 cast your vote 意思是投票, 把自己的那一票投到选票箱里!
- Neil:** It can also be used metaphorically.
- Yang Li:** Metaphorically 比喻的用法, 这点很重要, cast 有哪些比喻的用法呢?

Neil: For example, I asked you at the start to 'cast your eyes' over the question – so you 'throw' your eyes upon the words on the page. If the weather is overcast, the clouds might cast a shadow on the ground – so the shadow falls on the ground.

Yang Li: 回到节目开始时的那句话, Neil 让我把眼睛投到纸上, 这就是比喻, 因为我不可能把眼珠子扣下来扔到什么地方。比喻用法还包括天上的云彩给大地投下一缕缕云影。

Neil: In many fairy tales, a wicked witch might cast a spell over someone – think of it as throwing an evil spell at someone!

Yang Li: 对了, 别忘了施展巫术的那些巫婆或巫师, to cast a spell, an evil spirit, at someone!

Neil: One phrase that you might read quite a lot in English is 'to cast doubt upon something'. That means something is questioned.

Yang Li: 另外在广播里和电视上我们还经常听到人们说, 他们对什么事情表示怀疑 to cast doubt upon something.

Neil: Let's hear some examples of 'to cast doubt upon' something.

Inserts

The results of the by-election have cast doubt upon the political party's future.

The newspaper article cast doubt upon the ability of the government to solve the banking crisis.

Yang Li: 以上是典型的媒体用语。不过 'cast'. 还有很多其他用法。

Neil: So we've seen that there are many uses of 'cast' as a verb, mostly to do with the idea of throwing or movement.

Yang Li: 以上我们讲解了 'cast' 作为动词的一些主要用法, 不过它也可以用作名词。Can you give us some examples of 'cast' as a noun, Neil?

Neil: OK let me see... Do you like going to the theatre?

Yang Li: Yes, I love the theatre!

Neil: Well, the group of actors in a play is called 'the cast'.

Yang Li: 一部影片, 电视剧或戏剧的整个剧组或演出班子就是 'the cast'. That's a useful word to know.

Neil: And how about this: if you break your arm, what happens?

Yang Li: Oh I hope that doesn't happen. 如果你把胳膊摔折了... You go to the hospital.

Neil: Well, yes, that's true, but what happens there?

Yang Li: 医生将给你打石膏 – the doctor will cover your arm in plaster.

- Neil:** And that plaster is called a...
- Yang Li:** Cast!
- Neil:** Exactly! Your arm will be put into a plaster cast which becomes hard. So, as you can see, there are really dozens of meanings behind the word cast.
- Yang Li:** 好了，孙玲希望今天的你问我答节目对你有帮助，不过就像你说的，'cast' 这个英语单词的确有很多用法。不过如果你能掌握以上的七八个主要用法，就是非常令人欣慰的。
- Neil:** Don't forget that if you have a question you'd like us to answer, you can send us an email.
- Yang Li:** 是的。其他同学如果你也有英语学习上的问题，请发电子邮件，我们的邮箱是 questions.chinaelt@bbc.co.uk.
- Neil:** Bye.
- Yang Li:** Bye.