
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

Authentic Real English 地道英语

Catch-22

左右为难 进退两难



- 关于台词的备注:
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Feifei

大家好，欢迎来到 BBC 英语教学的《地道英语》节目。我是冯菲菲。

Rob

And hello, it's Rob here too. Oh Feifei, why the glum face?

Feifei

I didn't get it.

Rob

Get it?

Feifei

I didn't get the job.

Rob

Oh yes, the job. You went for a new job, one you really really wanted. One that you said would be perfect for.

Feifei

Clearly I'm not. 你看我收到的回绝信上说“经验不足”。But if I don't do the job, how do I get the experience?

Rob

Oh dear, it sounds like catch-22.

Feifei

Catch-22 是什么？是什么证书吗？

Rob

Nope, it just describes a situation where you can't win. Basically, you can't do one thing until you have done another thing which you can't do until you have done the first thing.

Feifei

So it's an impossible situation. 原来“catch-22”这个说法出自英文小说“Catch-22《第二十二条军规》”，它在现代用语中表示“左右为难，无法摆脱的困境”。

Rob

Let's hear some examples of this phrase in action.

Examples

I need my parents' car, but my mum says I need permission from my dad, then my dad said I need permission from my mum. I can't get permission from either. So I'm in a catch-22 situation.

To apply for a short-term student visa to study English in the UK, you have to be able to speak some English but you want to come to England to learn English! It's catch-22 for many potential students.

Feifei

这里是 BBC 英语教学的《地道英语》节目。Rob 刚才说我现在处于一个“catch-22 situation”，也就是说我进退两难，怎么都不是。

Rob

Yes Feifei, you can't get a new job without some experience of doing it, but you can't get the experience with doing the job. It's catch-22!

Feifei

It's a strange phrase, Rob.

Rob

Yes, as you mentioned earlier, it comes from the title of a book - Catch-22, written by Joseph Heller in 1961 which describes absurd bureaucratic constraints on soldiers in World War II.

But look Feifei, don't be too sad about the job, you've got plenty of experience for doing this job.

Feifei

That's because I've been here for 40 years.

Rob

But we respect you for expertise, especially in one task.

Feifei

What's that?

Rob

Making the tea. Now could you put the kettle on please?

Feifei

Oh, I really need a new job.

Rob

Bye.