

The sky clouding over in the distance, taken in New Taipei City's Teapot Mountain in June.

PHOTO: PAUL COOPER, TAIPEI TIMES

遠方天空烏雲逼近，六月攝於新北市的茶壺山。 照片：台北時報記者古德謙



CHINESE PRACTICE

雷聲大雨點小

lei2 sheng1 da4 yu3 dian3 xiao3

「雷聲大雨點小」出自於宋朝僧人釋道原所撰寫的「景德傳燈錄」，該書為中國佛教禪宗史，記載歷代禪宗大師與僧人的禪法。書中第二十八卷以「雷聲甚大，雨點全無」描述天空烏雲密布時雷電交加，令人以為大雨將至，但是開始下雨之後，卻只有小小的雨滴。其後衍生出成語「雷聲大雨點小」，形容情況看似將有令人印象深刻的結果，而其實不然。

此說法可用於譬喻某人聲勢浩大卻實際行動不足，例如政客於大選前宣布各式各樣的承諾，當選後卻言而無信；又如老闆看似怒火中燒、令員工惴惴不安，其後卻不爆發。英文中也有些類似的諺語，如“all talk and no action”和“his bark is worse than his bite.”

(台北時報記者古德謙整理)

- ◆ 他喜歡高談闊論，但總是雷聲大雨點小，從不付諸行動。
(He really likes to talk the talk, but it never comes to anything. He just doesn't walk the walk.)
- ◆ 政府一再保證要改善經濟，但雷聲大雨點小，至今沒有成效。
(The government has repeatedly said that it will improve the economy, but it's all talk and no action, and things are still not getting any better.)



英文練習

all words and no action; their bark is worse than their bite

The idiom 雷聲大雨點小 is originally from a Song dynasty record of Ch'an (Zen) masters and other prominent Buddhist monks called the *Complete Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, written by the monk Shi Daoyuan and dating to 1004AD. In chapter 28 it has the line, “雷聲甚大，雨點全無,” meaning “the rumblings of thunder are loud, but there are but a few raindrops.” Out of this would later come the saying 雷聲大雨點小, having essentially the same meaning, and used metaphorically: for when dark clouds form, and there is the sound of

thunder and lightning flashes across the sky, making everyone think that there is going to be a huge storm, or that something significant will happen, in the end nothing does. Think of your boss at work, when they look like they're about to explode but don't: their “bark is worse than their bite.” Or of a politician who makes promises, but doesn't deliver: “All words and no action,” as we might say in English.

(Paul Cooper, Taipei Times)

- ◆ I wouldn't worry about him. He gets angry easily, but his bark is worse than his bite.
(不用把他的事放在心上。他總是雷聲大雨點小。)
- ◆ Have you repaired the garden gate, like you said you would last week? You're all talk and no action.