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- Li:** 大家好，欢迎收听《地道英语》我是杨莉。今天我的搭档是 Rob. Hi Rob.
- Rob:** Hi Li. It looks like you've been busy.
- Li:** I've just picked up some groceries from the local shop, you know - milk, eggs, bread, flour - I'm going to make a cake.
- Rob:** Oh great. So how was Mr Brown, the shopkeeper? Hasn't he just split up with his wife?
- Li:** He has. It was tricky in the shop. I didn't want to say anything to him just in case I mentioned his wife. I only said: "Good morning", and he just said: "Is it?"
- Rob:** Hmm, it sounds like you've been treading on eggshells.
- Li:** Oh no, the shop was very clean, nothing on the floor - I don't really think he's the sort of person to throw food around!
- Rob:** No Li - I mean you were trying very hard not to upset him - that's what treading on eggshells means.
- Li:** Oh! 这很类似汉语里的如履薄冰 treading on eggshells 在这里它意思是讲话谨慎，小心翼翼，避免让某人生气。So really it's about being sensitive to the situation?
- Rob:** Yes.
- Li:** Well, I was very sensitive. But what have eggshells got to do with it?
- Rob:** Well, if there were eggshells on the floor literally you would have to be very careful where you put your feet - but this phrase means being careful about what you say.
- Li:** Right! Treading on eggshells 这个短语很形象，走在鸡蛋壳上，一个人肯定要万分小心，在某种特定场合一个人说话也要特别小心：

## **Examples**

*I had to be so careful with what I said to my ex-girlfriend. The smallest thing made her angry: it was like treading on eggshells.*

*Ever since my argument with my neighbour about parking, I feel like I've been treading on eggshells.*

*Since my friend's father died, I don't know what to say to him: it's like treading on eggshells.*

- Li:** 听上去有时想小心翼翼都很不容易，因为你不知道到底应该说些什么。 So Rob, what should I have said to Mr Brown?
- Rob:** You could have said 'plenty more fish in the sea!'
- Li:** What?!
- Rob:** Or... 'I didn't like her much anyway'?
- Li:** Rob 这是在教给我们如何大胆说话，同小心翼翼正好相反。
- Rob:** Am I? Anyway let me help you with your shopping... oops (Rob 把鸡蛋摔倒了地板上!)
- Li:** Rob! You've dropped the eggs all over my kitchen floor.
- Rob:** Now you really will be walking on eggshells!
- Li:** That's not funny.
- Rob:** I didn't like your cakes much anyway.
- Both:** Bye.