

Inglese Giuridico 2018-19

Lesson 7: 26 March 2019

Lexis: Linguistic devices

Linguistic Devices

- Collocation
- Connotation
- Idioms and Clichés

COLLOCATION/1

How words are used together:

- to have lunch, make a mistake,
- to change your mind
- a loaf of bread, a pint of beer
- utterly depressing
- a beautiful day, view, baby

COLLOCATION/2

Delexical verbs:

- Take: take a train; take it easy
- Get: get a bus; get married
- Have: have a break; have children
- Make: make an effort; make do
- Do: do exercise; do the dishes

COLLOCATION/3

Order of expressions in Bi-nominals and Tri-nominals:

- Black and White
- Romeo and Juliet
- Fish and Chips
- Sweet and Sour
- Rough and Smooth - Ups and Downs

- Blood, Sweat and Tears
- Left, Right and Centre

COLLOCATION EXAMPLES/1

Adjective + noun collocations

Nouns often have typical adjectives which go with them. Here are some examples.

Compare **article** and **thing**:

We say	<i>but not usually ...</i>
the real thing	the genuine thing
the genuine article	the real article

Examples:

I don't like recorded music, I prefer the **real thing**. [i.e. real, live music]

These trainers are the **genuine article**. Those others are just cheap imported copies.

Other examples:

You can give a **broad summary** of something. (*Not: ~~a wide summary~~*)

You can describe something in **great detail**. (*Not: ~~in big detail~~*)

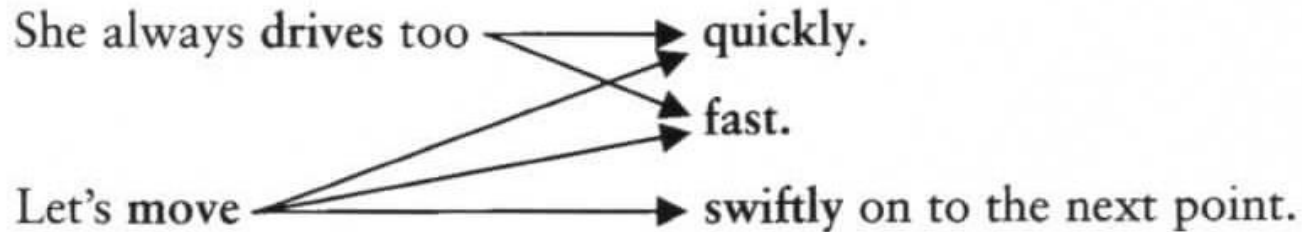
Some adjectives go with a restricted range of nouns.

For example: a **formidable task/opponent/amount/person**

COLLOCATION EXAMPLES/2

Verb + adverb collocations

Often, verbs have typical adverbs that collocate with them. The lines in the chart show which collocations are normal:



Other examples:

It's something I feel **strongly** about. (*Not: I ~~feel powerfully about~~*)

If I **remember rightly**, it happened at about six-thirty. (*Not: ~~If I remember perfectly~~*)

COLLOCATION EXAMPLES/3

Adverb + adjective collocations

It is useful to learn which adverbs most typically modify particular types of adjectives. For example, the adverb **utterly**, which means totally or completely, generally occurs before an adjective. The majority of these adjectives have a negative connotation. Typical examples are: **alien, appalling, blank, dismal, depressed, disgusting, distasteful, false, fatuous, impossible, lost, ludicrous, naïve, ridiculous**. Try to notice this kind of regularity when learning words.

COLLOCATION EXAMPLES/4

Verb + object collocations

Verbs and their objects often form collocations.

You raise your hand to ask a question. (*Not: ~~lift your hand~~*)

You can raise a family. (i.e. bring up children; *not: ~~lift a family~~*)

You can visit / go to / check out a website on the Internet.

COLLOCATION EXAMPLES/5

Language of Advertising:

- top-quality
- family-size
- chocolate-flavoured
- longer-lasting
- Buy one, get one free
- Value for money

CONNOTATION/1

- Meaning by reference to a recognisable thing/person
- Meaning by denotation (literal neutral) or connotation (cultural, associative)

See: <http://etymonline.com/index.php>

CONNOTATION/2

Words and expressions which have a particular cultural significance to speakers of a language:

- Once upon a time
- One giant leap
- 9/11
- Whistleblower

CONNOTATION/3

The feeling or ideas that are suggested by a word, rather than the actual meaning of the word. This may vary between users:

- Dog, Lion, Sheep, Wolf, Shark
- Black Cats
- Iron Lady

CONNOTATION/4

For example, the word cowboy, as used in an expression like **cowboy builders** or **cowboy plumbers**, has associations of dishonesty and unreliability.

The connotations which words have are often exploited in advertisements. For example, an advertisement for an Indian firm of builders took the slogan:

You've tried the cowboys. Now try the Indians.

This slogan draws on two sets of connotations – the *cowboy* association mentioned above and the association of *cowboys and Indians* as from Wild West films. It neatly suggests that Indians, as the traditional opponents of cowboys, embody as builders the opposite characteristics of honesty and reliability.

IDIOM

A complex lexical item which is longer than a word form but shorter than a sentence and which has a meaning that cannot be derived from the knowledge of its component parts.

A Survey of Modern English, Gramley and Patzold

IDIOM: a Classification

Concerned with:

- The individual (kick the bucket)
- The world (going to the dogs)
- Interaction between individuals (lead you up the garden path)
- Interaction between individual and the world (hit the nail on the head)

Pragmatic Classification of Idioms as an Aid for the Language Learner, Elsa Lattey

CLICHE

Repetition leads to loss of original meaning and sincerity

Clichés often deliberately signposted and exploited by reference and modification

- Please do not hesitate to contact me.
- It never rains, but it pours (as they say).
- A stone's throw from ...
- Long, sandy beaches – sun-drenched bays