| | |
|---|---|
| タイトル | Sources of Collocational Choice (as mediated by metonymy and metaphor) |
| 著者 | JONES, Willie |
| 引用 | 北海学園大学人文論集, 5: 1-34 |
| 発行日 | 1995-10-31 |

# Sources of Collocational Choice (as mediated by metonymy and metaphor)

Willie JONES

## Summary

Language users face many decisions: not only, say, must we choose the particular words which convey the meaning that we wish to express, we must also choose words which form acceptable partnerships with those terms. Should we, for instance, select a particular noun from a set or family of apparent synonyms rather than one of its sister terms, we shall have to choose the appropriate adjectives, verbs and prepositions to accompany it; these choices are severely restricted, and the possible combinations are by no means always interchangeable.

One of the reasons for this is that many words and idiomatic phrases — which native speakers use intuitively — have in fact come to mean what they do by way of a number of evolutionary steps, and these steps have regularly been metaphorical or metonymic in nature: that is to say, they are transformations or translations of linguistic usage which are based upon similarity (by metaphor *across* linguistic domains) or upon family relationships (by metonymy *within* a domain).

The writer has selected for analysis four sets of familiar words which illustrate this phenomenon; the words in each of the sets might be thought to be roughly synonymous and therefore interchangeable within a given context. The aim of the analysis is to show that when we select one member of such a set, we co-select words to accompany that term which may not combine with other terms in the same set —

and that the reasons for this depend upon the pre-figurative nature of the terms from which the figurative terms have, over time, evolved.

**Key Words:** Collocation, Metonymy, Metaphor

# Sources of Collocational Choice (as mediated by metonymy and metaphor)

Willie JONES

**Introduction: Axiom 1**: *Most idioms as well as a great many individual nouns are figurative expressions, which — at an early stage in their evolution — are likely to have been used in a non-figurative way*. Japanese readers, and writers, of English may have difficulty with words or phrases that are used idiomatically, since idioms, in any language, are regularly derived by metonymy and metaphor from pre-figurative terms; and since the metaphor and / or metonymy which is embedded within a particular idiom is likely to be hidden, non-native speakers often complain that in their reading they have found themselves in a blind alley on their route to understanding: some dark term has proved impenetrably opaque: and has defeated interpretation.

**Axiom 2**: *The evolution of linguistic terms and idioms depends upon the idiosyncratic cultural habits of the community which first creates and uses them*. Since the metaphors and metonymies embedded in particular terms will have come into common use thanks to the unique conditions of the particular culture in which the term, word or

phrase, acquired its new, extended meanings, readers who have grown up in a culture with different cultural habits and traditions will not always be able to perceive why, or how, the shifts in meaning took place[1]. Non-native users of a language will need to realise that they always face this potential stumbling-block.

**Axiom 3**: *The metaphors and metonymies which are embedded in idioms and locutions of all kinds will prescribe the words with which those terms are able to collocate.* Native speakers of any language know this intuitively, but non-native speakers may well need to possess — as conscious knowledge — some awareness of a particular word's derivation and history in order to appreciate why certain other words will combine with it, while words which are apparently synonymous will not. Yet if they go to the lexicon to find out how such terms and idioms function, they often come away empty-handed.

1 **Thesis**: The synchronic approach to language teaching and learning is wilfully blind to the active presence of metaphors and metonymies in daily speech, where such figurative expressions are to be found quite as pervasively as in literary texts. Such an approach is therefore unable to indicate, for instance, the intimate interconnection that exists between the figures of rhetoric and the conventional — no less than the conversational — habits of implication, or implicature[2]. At the same time, too rigid and mechanical an application of the structuralist creed that language operates upon two axes — the syntagmatic and paradigmatic — may overlook the shifting interplay of relationships between words and their contexts . The image that I prefer is of an old mediæval dance, the 'hey' or 'branle', in which two linked circles of dancers move in opposite directions: rhetorical figures move one way,

syntactical figures the other, weaving in and out, hand to hand, as they trip rhythmically on what Milton calls "the light fantastic toe"[3].

2 **Aim**: In this paper, I wish to illustrate the way in which the figures of metonymy and metaphor effect and control linguistic change, and, thus, impose restrictions upon our choices of 'word combination'; our choices have as much to do with figurative family relationships as with systematic grids. Such word combinations are often spoken of these days — after J.R.Frith — as issues of 'collocation'.

3 **Word Combinations: Collocation (and Co-occurence)**

When a Japanese writer of English wishes to find an English equivalent for a Japanese word, the translator naturally looks for that word in a dictionary, where he (or she) will often be confronted with (or be confronted by) a list of synonyms — words which have, ostensibly, the same meaning. In seven cases out of ten, she (or he) will choose a word that does not 'slot into' the 'paradigmatic' space for which it is designated. If that is the word which the writer feels that (s)he must use, (s)he will have to ensure that the verbal context conforms: that the terms which surround it collocate with it: this may, of course, mean adapting the verbal context to suit the chosen term.

Only a limited number of adjectives 'go with' a particular noun, and those same epithets may not go with an apparent synonym of that noun. At the same time, particular nouns associate with particular verbs, while particular prepositions co-occur with particular verbs yet not with verbs which are, on the face of it, synonymous. One's freedom of choice in the matter is often severely restricted.

My argument will be that our verbal choices are restricted not only by syntactic, or grammatical, factors, but —— more saliently (more to the point) —— by the metonymic and metaphorical shifts undergone by a word during its long historical evolution. Since most current teaching dictionaries have, until recently, had a structuralist and synchronic bias, this is not an issue that they have cared to bother their heads about.

The situation may be about to change, however, as new types of dictionary come on to the market. *The Combinatory Dictionary of English*, edited by Benson, Benson and Ilson (Amsterdam, 1986) is quite a useful guide, but its entries are exiguous: one usually needs more explanation than it offers. The striking exception to this sad state of affairs, however, partly fills the lacuna left by English-speaking publishers: *The Kenkyusha Dictionary of English Collocations* was first published in 1939, and has just, this year (1995), been reprinted in a new edition. Nearly three thousand pages long, it is, at ¥5 a page, a remarkable bargain. I have referred to it with much profit, and shall cite it often.

My conviction that it is impossible to take a synchronic approach to issues of collocation was confirmed by a talk given at Hokkaido University a number of summers ago by Professor John Sinclair of Birmingham University, the Editor in Chief of the *Cobuild Dictionaries*. This is notably ironic since *Cobuild* is an enterprise which is itself firmly committed to a strictly synchronic approach to language description.

## 4 *Cobuild* and its Consequences

As everybody probably knows, one of the principles of *Cobuild* editorial policy is that no etymological information is given, while all rhetorical terminology is vehemently eschewed. Up to a point, many users find this helpful since they are not bemused by information that may strike them as extraneous or irrelevant. *Only* up to a point, however, since words in use today take their place in verbal orchestrations which time has fashioned and modified. Ignorance of the manner by which words or phrases arrived at their present status may be a serious bar to a full understanding of what we read —— and a handicap should we wish to write —— when the language is not our mother tongue.

Since native speakers are likely to know all this intuitively, or may not need to know it, they might not be able to articulate their innate perceptions; non-native speakers, however, may need to possess this information *as knowledge* in order to overcome their initial ignorance. Yet Professor Sinclair —— holding on hard to his faith in the synchronic approach —— professed not to know why certain terms combine with certain other terms and showed no apparent desire to find out.

This is very strange, since the purpose of Professor Sinclair's talk was to tell us that as the editors of *Cobuild* have worked upon the Birmingham Corpus, they have come to appreciate how strictly limited are the ways in which words may combine. On the other hand, it is not strange if the Editors of *Cobuild* are so wedded to their vows —— and to what they call "Real English" —— that they refuse to recognise that the reasons for such restrictions are in all cases historical, and that to understand the reasons for their existence requires diachronic under-

standing, and some sensitivity to a term's etymological and rhetorical under-pinning.

4. i As his first example, Professor Sinclair chose the word that occurs most often in the *Cobuild* corpus, / nice /, and, by listing the occurences of the word, he was able to show that the term only collocates with a surprisingly limited number of nouns and verbs, although he recognised that there might be some dialectical — or ideolectical — anomalies.

4. ii As his example of a rare word — one which occured only three times in the Birmingham Corpus — Professor Sinclair selected the word / gamut /, which combined in each case with the verb / to run /: the three examples agreed that you 'ran a gamut', and that the phrase co-occured with 'from' and 'to': you ran a gamut from one point to another point at some distance from the first.

Professor Sinclair claimed not to know why these particular collocational choices seemed to be the appropriate ones; I found his claim hard to credit since the merest glance at even so rudimentary a dictionary as the *Concise Oxford* would have told him. Since he went on to tell us that the Editors of *Cobuild* saw their next task as being to compile a list of the collocational choices that — in English — combine with the words in their Corpus, such an unwillingness to seek out the reasons for the combinations that words form with other words seemed especially odd — and potentially crippling; the editors are likely to find themselves ham-strung.

## 5 **On Gamut, Spectrum and Compass**

Let us consider why we 'run' a gamut, and why we do not 'walk'

one or 'stroll through' one, although we can 'cover' one or 'spread over' a 'whole' one; in doing so, we shall also understand why the adjectives which collocate with 'gamut' are 'entire' as well as 'whole'. Professor Sinclair clearly didn't relish wasting time on the word / gamut /, but for those of us who like to *spend* time on this sort of thing, this — as Miss Jean Brodie once observed of a rather different hobby — is the sort of thing we like.

5. i **Gamut**: A 'gamut' is a scale, like the 'tonic sol-fa', and that is why you 'run' one, as a singer or a pianist runs up and down a scale, or covers one, with his voice or hands: nobody 'walks' a scale, since that would imply inexperience or lack of skill, while to be unable to cover the entire scale would again presuppose inadequacy: here, the metaphorical usage conveys the implication, and our interpretation of the implication depends upon our recognition of the metaphor.

If we did not know this, how could we know that when Dorothy Parker said of a performance by Katherine Hepburn that she "ran the gamut of emotions from 'a' to 'b'", this was intended to be a deadly insult? The implication — a type of Gricean conventional implicature, I would suggest — is, of course, that Ms Hepburn's range is exceptionally narrow: the two ends of the alphabetical scale are 'a' and 'z', and you are not displaying much range of acting talent if you can only get as far as 'b'.

The *Cobuild* definition of / gamut / simply says that "the gamut of something is the wide variety of things that can be included within it", and omits all mention of 'scale' or 'range': this seems dogmatically uncooperative. Yet should we consider the evolution of / gamut /, we

shall find that the process is a paradigm of the way in which a word controls the words with which it may combine, thanks to the metonymic and metaphoric shifts of usage which the majority of words undergo during their history. In this respect, the evolution of 'gamut', a rarely-used word, is typical of the evolution of words which we use every day.

The tonic sol-fa is an octave, but in the Middle Ages the common scale had six pitches; there were basically three of these hexachords — which expanded into seven overlapping hexachords — depending on the note you started from. The lowest hexachord began on what is today the bottom line of the base staff — G, or gamma — but all three scales ran from 'ut' through 're', 'mi', 'fa', 'so' to 'la', themselves derived from the opening syllables of the lines of a hymn. 'Gamma' and 'ut' thus joined hands together as the lowest note of the lowest scale, and the portmanteau word — 'gamma+ut' reduced to 'gamut' — came to represent any complete scale. The latter part of this operation is a classic metonymy: part of a whole — the gamut — stands for the whole — the scale. Such a metonymic shift is a fundamental operation in the genesis as well as the evolution of a vast number of words.

By a further metonymic shift the term came to be used of any musical scale, not only the scale from which it originally derived. Thereafter — this time, though, by metaphor or catachresis — it came to be used of anything that could be thought of as being a scale or range, such as, for instance, the range of emotions that an actress might be expected to be capable of portraying.

The word has thus taken on a life of its own, one of those cata-

chrestic words which lexicographers call misapplications but which poets or rhetoricians are just as likely to call metaphors. Very often, they are terms which come into use because there is no 'literal' term for the thing to which they are applied, as we use the word 'leg', say, when we speak of a 'table leg'.

Upholders of the synchronic approach might consequently argue that we do not therefore need to know what the term's roots are, or were. I would reply that only if we have some sense of those roots shall we be able to select, with confidence, the verbs, adjectives and prepositions that normally collocate or combine with 'gamut' — or with whatever other word we desire to use. And if *Cobuild's* next task will have to be to list collocations and combinations, I cannot see how the editors will be able to do this effectively without going back to a word's roots or without admitting the metaphorical and metonymic nature of the family relationships that exist between whatever word they are describing and its partners in the semantic dance.

5. ii **Spectrum**: Let us consider a word that is often used in much the same way as 'gamut' — the word 'spectrum'. It is another metaphor with metonymic origins. The word 'spectrum' orginally meant a picture or an image, and from this was derived — by metonymy — the word 'spectre', an apparent image, an apparition. It does not seem to have been until the late seventeenth century that the word was taken over, by metonymy, to refer to the spectral colours refracted through a prism, after which it came to be used, by a much more extreme metonymic shift, to refer to ranges of phenomena of all kinds: not only, that is, to rays of light but also, for instance, to rays of sound. Finally, by a *metaphoric* shift, it has come to be used to refer to a range of

anything: topics or emotions or political opinions.

*Cobuild* deals much more helpfully with 'spectrum' than with 'gamut', although it refuses to admit that one of its definitions of 'spectrum' is metaphorical in origin, and that the word's collocational companions suit it because of its pre-metaphorical sense: they quote as examples "'both ends' of the political spectrum","the 'whole' spectrum of emotions", a questionnaire which "'covered' a broad spectrum of topics". 'Spectrum' shares some of these collocational adjuncts with 'gamut', but — and this is the point over which I may seem to be labouring — one would never be able 'to run a spectrum' anymore than one would be able to 'view or observe a gamut'.

*Kenkyusha* notes that we can 'measure' or 'analyze' a 'spectrum', and that the adjectives which go with 'spectrum' are — like those which go with 'gamut' — 'whole' and 'entire'. Yet we can also speak of a 'spectrum' as 'wide', 'broad' and 'narrow', which we would not be able to do of a 'gamut': nor can we 'measure' or 'analyze' a 'gamut' — a gamut is fixed: whatever scale you have selected, that is the scale. And though we can speak of a 'thin band' and a 'long range' since these adjectives suit the pre-metaphorical meanings of 'band' and 'range', we are not able to speak of a 'spectrum' as 'thin' or 'long', even if, in certain contexts, 'band' and 'range' might be used in place of 'gamut' or 'spectrum'. If we select 'spectrum', rather than 'gamut' — or if we select 'compass', say, rather than either — our choice will control our choice of adjectives, prepositions and verbs that combine with the word which we have chosen.

5. iii **Compass**: We derive the modern meaning of 'compass' — a

circular instrument with a magnetic needle by which we find our bearings — from the circular figure drawn by a 'pair of compasses', although this tool was first used — like a British sergeant-major's pacing stick — to measure one's length of stride. 'To compass' was simply to pace out a distance. John Evelyn, writing in 1644 of the Luxembourg Gardens in Paris, shows us how the second meaning may have come to dominate the first: "The Gardens are neere an English mile in compass, enclos'd with a stately wall, and in a good ayre": I need hardly say that I have not taken this example from *Cobuild*.

We also use the word 'compass' to refer to 'the points of the compass', a metonymic shift that occured when the encompassing box that held what we now call a compass was transferred to the thing which the box contained: the container for the thing contained, another classic metonymy — yet it seems to have been the contigent shape of the container alone which affected the transference. By a further metonymic shift, or side-ways step, the instrument which contains the needle that always points towards the north is called 'a compass'.

*Cobuild* gives three definitions for the present-day use of the term 'compass': i), the instrument we use to find our bearings; ii), the two-legged instrument we use for drawing circles; and iii), its metaphorical applications (which, of course, *Cobuild* does not admit are metaphorical). *Cobuild's* examples suggest that the metaphors derive from a fuzzy confusion of the various modern meanings of 'compass': i), a clarinet has a compass of three and a half octaves — a simple 'range', although we would never speak of a clarinet's 'spectrum'; 2), there is reality "beyond the mind's compass" — which could be either beyond our ability to walk a given distance or outside an area bounded by a

perimeter; 3), we may speak of "the global compass of politics", which clearly indicates, metaphorically, the notion of something both circular and inclusive, rather than something with two ends.

Since notions of measured distance and inclusive circularity appear to control the collocational adjuncts of the word 'compass', 'within' and 'beyond' seem appropriate choices. If I say that a job is 'within my compass', I may mean within my walking capability — my ability to walk the distance from starting point to finishing point — or within the perimeter, the circumference, of my ability: if it is a job that I cannot do, it is 'beyond my compass'. And so we also speak of a 'large' compass or a 'small' compass. We can also 'read a compass', along with a number of other things we cannot do with a 'gamut' or a 'spectrum', principally because of the wider range of its extended meanings, but all these still depend upon the metonymic and metaphorical shifts that the term has undergone[4].

## 6 Of Fields, Disciplines and Domains

6. i **Field**: In my editorial work I often come across the word 'field' in its metaphorical sense of 'field of study', 'academic discipline' or 'area of research'. Those who use it are often not aware that it is a metaphor — that it is, I would suggest, a catachresis — and they often collocate it with unsuitable adjectives, verbs and prepositions. The other day, for instance, I came across "to learn a field". Although we can learn how to plough, sow or reap a field, we cannot, in itself, 'learn' a field. We work 'in' a field, either literally or metaphorically, while we play 'on' a field, which is still, more or less, a literal expression.

Long ago, a 'field' was an open space; later on, it came to signify an enclosed space: both senses control who its contemporary collocational partners will — or can — be. It is also a word rich in metonymic derivatives: we now speak of 'oil fields' and 'gold fields', for instance, and though we usually think of a field as a horizontal plane upon which which, say, sheep may safely graze, in heraldry it is the vertical plane, the background against which lions rear.

If a field is an enclosed space, we say "the sheep are in the field", "the farmer is working in the field", so that should we then go on to use the term metaphorically — as we do when we speak of a person's area of academic study — it is natural to ask "What field do you work in?": the area of academic study is thought of as an area within a boundary, which is why we can plough but not learn a field.

If by 'field', however, we mean an open space, we would say 'on the field': "many men lie dead on the battlefield". A field of battle has — by metonymy — come to mean the field upon which any kind of contest is fought, as on a football field — a field, that is, of contest, in deadly earnest or in play. "There is a lot of activity on the field" would imply that people were playing a game, were engaged in a contest, whereas "there is a lot of activity in this field" would imply that you were speaking of academic work. A change of preposition changes the type of field that we are talking about, and the type of activity that is occuring 'in' it or 'on' it.

If, though, we were to say of a scientist that he is 'in the field', this would mean 'not in his laboratory': he would be on 'a field trip', examining his subject matter in its natural state rather than studying it

under controlled experimental conditions. When soldiers have 'a field day', they take part in special outdoor exercises. When you or I have 'a field day', this implies that our day has been extremely active, and probably successful.

By a further metonymic shift, the term 'field' has come to mean the contestants themselves, although, oddly, only when they are taking part in a race which follows a course rather than playing a game within or upon a designated area of ground: we speak of horses in a race as 'a field of horses' (from a field containing horses?), and, by analogy, 'a field of marathon runners' (who usually go nowhere near a field); the runner or horse who is in the front is 'leading the field'. This phrase can now be used as a metaphor: Hokkaido University has 'a strong field' of medical specialists and at present 'leads the field' in the practice of gene therapy. Such a usage would imply, conventionally, that universities are in competition with each other to be the best 'in their particular field'.

Yet when we use the verb 'to field' as a comparison derived from a metonymy, we may then speak of any kind of sporting club 'fielding a team' — that is, the club puts a team onto a field — while, again, this can be used metaphorically of any group of people engaged in a common activity: Hokkaido University 'fields a strong team' of medical research workers. A player in a ball game such as cricket — or baseball — 'fields' a ball when he catches it in his hands. This metonymy can also be used metaphorically when we may say of someone that he (or she) 'fielded a question' — this implies that she (or he) caught it, and usually dealt with it effectively. We can also speak of a 'field of vision', or 'field of fire', both of which are ranges or spans

of space that come within the range of our eyes or our guns.

*Kenkyusha* lists dozens of literal and metaphorical uses of 'field' and the verbs which will collocate with it. As metaphors, some of these verbs — such as 'cultivate', 'fertilize', and 'harvest' — relate to field as an area of ground that a man farms, while others — like 'conquer', 'dispute' or 'dominate' — relate to field as a place in which he fights. When we 'cover', 'discover', 'explore', 'seek' and 'widen' our field, we might be wishing either to cultivate it or to control it.

6. ii **Discipline**: The word 'discipline' is sometimes still used as a synonym for 'field of study', and in all its various contemporary senses it derives metonymically from the Latin for 'a learner', **discipulus**: hence, 1), what a learner learns is *his discipline*; 2), the controls, rules and regulations of a particular discipline which the worker must follow are *its disciplines*; 3), a teacher must impose *discipline upon* (or *over*) his pupil, in the form of obedience and submission; 4), if the learner misbehaves, the teacher will *discipline* (punish) him (verb).

*Cobuild* calls the first of these usages 'formal', which is its way of saying old-fashioned, and therefore not a word that users of "Real English" need bother about. It is the original metonymy: the name of a learner has been transferred to the subject that he learns. The other usages are also metonymically derived, since childish learners have to learn rules and regulations and are often punished if they fail to do so. A person whose duty it is to impose or enforce discipline upon his discipulus is a *disciplinarian*.

Verbs that collocate with these derived meanings are 'keep' and

'maintain', and a range of verbs that indicate either a 'tightening' or 'slackening' of discipline, as if discipline were bonds or bands into which the disciplined one had been strapped. You can also 'promote' discipline or you can 'undermine' it, as if it was something in daily danger of change, or of becoming weaker or of disappearing altogether without constant vigilance: all these usages appear to rely upon the pragmatically unstable nature of a pupil-teacher relationship.

Since a learner is often a disciple as well as a pupil, he 'follows' his teacher, and so, whereas we 'work in' a field, we 'follow' a discipline; and we tend therefore to follow 'its lead'. The discipline which we follow can be 'easy', which we would be unlikely to say of fields unless we added an infinitive: 'easy to work in', 'easy to plough'; it can also be 'strict', which fields never are. To teach 'a discipline' (with the indefinite article) would be to establish the methodology of one's science, but to teach 'discipline' (without the article) would be to attempt to make your pupil submit to the rules you wished to impose.

6. iii **Domain**: Issues 'fall', and 'lie', like snow, 'within' or 'outside' a 'domain', yet 'domain', unlike 'field', implies mastery and control of the area of our study; since it is an area over which we have jurisdiction, rule or authority, we can 'extend' our own domain while 'invading' someone else's. *Cobuild* cites 'the domain of philosophy', and suggests that 'domain' is synonymous with 'sphere' (as of influence, say); it pairs the meaning of 'control' or 'influence' with the metaphor 'kingdom', while concealing the fact that both 'sphere' and 'kingdom' as well as 'domain' are metaphors. Yet philosophy is just as much a kingdom as it is a sphere, since, by implication, it exercises control over its borders. "This question comes into the domain of philosophy". That sounds

odd to me: I would prefer "comes within" or even "comes under", since a 'domain' is ruled by a **dominus**, lord: the use of 'domain' implies that philosophy exercises rule 'over' its kingdom. Nonetheless, devout believers do hope that one day they will come into their kingdom.

## 7 Of Goals, Aims and Purposes, Objectives and Intents

7. i **Goal**: The origin of the word 'goal' is unknown, but its primary meaning is still "the terminal point of a race" (Hoad), and if footballers pitch 'goal-posts', this is because the kicking of the ball between the posts comes at the end of a run and is the end-purpose of that run. The space between the posts is the 'goal-mouth' ('the goal', for short); when you legitimately propel the ball between the posts this is called, by another metonymy, 'a goal'[5].

In a race, you 'start towards', 'make for', and 'arrive at' (or reach) your goal; in a football match, you 'score' a goal (from, by metonymy, the scoring of a mark on a stick with a knife, to keep the tally, or score). Since attempts to reach or score goals are generally thought of as arduous undertakings, to 'reach' or 'arrive at' or 'achieve' our goal — or to 'score' or 'net' one — is correspondingly thought of as a praise-worthy achievement.

Metaphorically — which is how scientists use the word 'goal' — we 'set' a goal for ourselves. We may 'establish' our goal, and 'seek to define' it, so that others may know what it is; we shall 'work towards' it, and, with luck, we shall 'reach', or 'achieve', or even 'realise' it; we may, alas, 'miss' it, or 'fall short of' it. Our goals may, among other things, be 'short-term and immediate' or 'long-range and distant'; they may be 'realistic and attainable', or 'over-ambitious and impossible'.

7. ii **Aim**: If we are competing in a race, a goal is something that we wish 'to reach', whereas an 'aim' is something that we are anxious 'to hit'. There is, thus, an analogous relationship between propelling a foot-ball to 'score a goal' and propelling a stone, for example, to 'make a hit' — which may be why the verbs which collocate with 'aim' and 'goal' are more akin than we might have supposed: there is a certain fuzziness about the categories. We 'achieve' or 'fail to achieve' our aim, as we do our goal; we may also 'fall short of' our aim or we may 'over-shoot' it — as a footballer may if he shoots at the net and the ball clears the crossbar: the verb 'to shoot' seems to have been transferred, by analogy, from the domain of taking aim — with a bow and arrow, perhaps — to the domain of scoring goals.

'Aim' itself comes from a word that meant 'to direct a missile' — stone or football — and so the action of aiming has been transferred, by metonymy, to the object we wish to hit. Since we can 'pursue our aim', the object that we wish to hit may be on the move, like, I suppose, a stag. We can also 'pursue goals', oddly enough, which may be a metonymic shift of the analogy between fuzzy sets, since goals, being usually fixed posts, do not, on the whole, move: just as, the transference working the other way, we can 'score a bull's eye'.

We aim to have 'an effect upon something or somebody', and our aim is external to ourselves in the way that the end of an arduous race is not: we wish to reach our goal, and, in a way, to embrace it. To achieve our aim, however, is to establish a state of affairs that corresponds to whatever it is that we desire to see achieved, and that situation or state of affairs may, if our aim is accurate, be achieved with very little effort at all.

7. iii **Purpose**: In many modern instances, 'purpose' has become more or less conflated with 'aim' — we can 'have' an aim or goal and we can 'have' a purpose, we can 'accomplish' our purposes as well as our aims — yet, despite the fuzziness of the sets, should we choose 'purpose' rather than 'aim', we shall, in certain other instances, have to change many of the terms that combine with it, since the word 'purpose', which comes from **propositum**, refers to issues about which we might desire to make a 'proposition' rather than something that we are anxious to hit. And, thus, though we may 'achieve' our purpose, we cannot 'pursue' it or 'reach' it: it is something we have within us as a principle we start out with: it is an inner guide rather than external target.

One's purpose can, that is to say, refer to an 'object in hand' as well as to an 'object in view'; something can 'serve a purpose', something can be 'put to a good purpose', you can 'do something for a purpose'; we would not, in these instances, replace 'purpose' with 'aim'. "What is that to the purpose?", we might ask, whereas we could never ask "what is that to the aim?". Nor could we use the word 'aim' in such phrases as 'to little purpose', 'for all practical purposes' or 'on purpose', where notions of reality, deliberation, and rationality are involved, which is also why we might 'see or find no purpose in life', or decide that something has 'outlived its purpose(s)'. At the same time, something may 'fit our purposes' or 'frustrate' them. We may 'have an aim in life', but this is something quite different.

Thus, although 'purpose' may imply an end to be worked towards, it retains enough of its old meaning — of states of affairs or beliefs or wishes or views about the meaning of life — to affect the verbs, adjectives or prepositions that might collocate with it, terms that would

not collocate with 'aim', or 'goal', although on many occasions the terms might be interchangeable.

'Purposes' in the plural can also be 'firm' or 'fixed', and can combine with 'for' in such expressions as 'for military purposes' or 'for religious purposes'. Prepositions appear to work with 'purpose' in the singular: for instance, something can be 'beside the purpose', or there can be a purpose 'behind an action'.

7. iv **Objective**: The noun 'objective' in the sense of 'aim' is another tricky word, since it retains the notions of objectivity, externality and disinterestedness which are possessed by the adjective 'objective', and these notions have philosophical implications that may be difficult to resolve. And whereas 'aim' means to throw a missile in order to hit something, 'objective' comes from a word meaning "to throw or place in front of (oneself) 'a thing'", a word which turned itself later — again, of course, by metonymy — into the thing thrown: 'an object', or an obstacle, at any rate something that lies in one's way, and is visible to one's sight: something external to the mind but capable of being viewed by the eye — an object of consciousness — and, like a 'goal', it is something that we wish to 'reach' — and embrace.

In the sense that we are considering, the noun 'objective' — as a result of its original significance — has a strong objective physical presence. While one's military 'aim' or 'purpose' will be to defeat the enemy, a military 'objective' is likely to be a piece of land, town or whatever that one wishes to capture or relieve, and it may be a step in a process rather than the end product itself. We 'set forth' our objectives as we do our 'goals', and we also 'work towards' them; if our

'objective' is military, however, we may 'capture' it, which we would not if it were a 'goal', and if we wish to 'reach', 'attain', 'gain' or 'win' our objective, it will be essential that we make a particular plan and follow a particular course of action.

7. v **Intent(ion)**: While an 'objective', like a 'goal', is external, an 'intent' or 'intention', like a 'purpose' is internal: it is a notion, desire or hope that is present in the mind — although that is a controversial thing to say, these days — and the mind is directed towards whatever we might wish to see 'brought about' or 'come to pass'. It derives from a word meaning 'to stretch', a sense still present in a verb like 'to intensify' and its cognates. It suggests total concentration upon the concept that is the focus of our thought, as well as the direction of the mind towards an object. It cannot strictly be used as a synonym for 'aim' or 'goal', since it is more like the movement of the mind before it finally fixes on a precise 'aim' or 'goal' whose attainment will enable the mind's intentions to be 'realised'.

If we choose 'intent' instead of 'intention' — *Cobuild* calls this a 'formal use' — we shall appear to be emphasising that our mind is firmly set upon working towards whatever it is we wish to see 'come to pass': our intent, like our purposes, can be 'firm', although not 'infirm', which a purpose sometimes is; nothing is likely to make us 'deviate' from it.

Since an 'intent' or an 'intention' is a mental formulation, we may wish to keep it secret, and it will thus be possible 'to hide' or 'to reveal' our intent (ions), 'to cherish' them, 'to clarify' them or 'disclose' them, 'to disguise' them or 'express' them, 'to announce' them or 'abandon'

them, 'declare' them or 'keep them in mind'. An intent, quite unlike aims or goals or purposes, can be 'unconscious', or it can 'avowed', while our intentions (with an 's') can be 'good and honorable' or 'petty and mean'. We can have 'every intention' of doing something, or 'no intention' whatsoever of doing it.

## 8 Of Review and Survey, Examination and Scrutiny, Investigation and Analysis

When we write up a scientific experiment, not only do we need to describe our aims and goals, we must also show how we have 'set about' and 'carried out' our work; we must 'explain' our procedures and methods; we may need to refer to work that has already been done by other workers in 'our field'. It is likely that we shall need to draw upon words from the group I propose to look at now: they are nouns, yet they are derived from verbs. 'Review' and 'survey' undergo no morphological change: 'a review' —— 'to review'; 'a survey' —— 'to survey' (where the only change is *phono*logical).

8. i **Review**: To review something is obviously to look at it, or, more precisely, to look at it again. The term implies an over-view: we view our topic or subject from beginning to end and from side to side, and we give an account of whatever it is that we are looking over, from our own point of view; yet our review is always presented to a higher authority —— for acceptance or rejection.

Consequently, the use of the term has been extended to refer to a military parade in which the soldiers on parade pass 'in review' in front of an inspecting general, who will then pass judgement upon what he has observed; his review may be 'favourable' or 'unfavourable', 'posi-

tive' or 'negative', and it will be passed on to The Army Council.

Critics review and write reviews of books, plays and films, and the same adjectives collocate, plus such terms as 'enthusiastic' or 'adverse', 'rave' or 'damning', and such reviews will be read and adjudged by the readers of the newspapers or journals in which they are printed.

Although both *The Combinatory Dictionary of English* and *Kenkyu-sha* say that you can 'do a review', this is a usage that I always edit out whenever I come across it, as it seems to me to be imprecise: you 'conduct a review' and 'carry out a review', you 'make a review of something' and 'write a review' 'of' or 'about' it. If you are the subject of the review you can 'receive' [or 'get'?] , 'good or bad', 'glowing or scathing' reviews, with variations upon these contrary epithets.

In all these instances, the reviewer is studying the way in which something is done, and is writing a report; reviewers are always employed or empowered by some authority to make and write their reviews — which are also reports — and these reports — like Royal Commissions — may be intended to recommend changes, should the reviewer or reviewers be authorised to make such recommendations. When authority decides that something needs to be looked at, it 'comes up for review', and while it is being reviewed it is 'under review'. In such instances, you review something to decide if it needs to be revised in any way.

8. ii **Survey**: Although 'survey' might seem to have the same meaning as 'review' — in the sense of 'overview', and a 'wide' overview at that — it does not usually turn up in quite the same contexts. One of its

cognate forms, 'surveyor', will indicate the difference: 'a surveyor' looks over and studies a piece of ground, which he measures and plots. The term may also contain something of the more modern sense of 'to supervise' (from the same roots, basically): to look something over in the role of a controller or manager.

Even so, a survey is not carried out — as is a review — to praise or damn or to determine if things need to be changed, but to see what you can do with the things as they are: a survey is conducted to find out how things stand: you are likely to want to act upon what you have found, rather than to change it. You might, for example, conduct a survey of a group of housewives to discover whether you would have any success in persuading them to buy the goods that you are hoping to market.

I have already indicated that we 'conduct' or 'carry out' a survey, and though the dictionaries again permit 'do', I would again resist this. We can 'set one up' a survey or 'institute' one. And as a survey can take the form of a questionnaire, we can also 'answer' one. Reviews 'praise' and 'blame', 'judge' and 'recommend', 'accept' or 'reject', while surveys 'find', 'indicate', 'reveal', 'show' and 'suggest'; there is sometimes a fuzzy overlap.

8. iii **Examination**: The noun 'examination' comes from the verb 'to examine', which meant originally 'to weigh', which, in turn, came, by metonymy, from a word meaning the 'tongue' (exãmen) of a balance. When we 'examine' something, we weigh it in the balance, and this is still true of the nuances that the word possesses which distinguish it — and its usage — from 'review' or 'survey'. A 'test' or 'examination'

seeks to confirm the existence or lack of a quality or condition with which the examiners themselves are already familiar, or a state of affairs that they anticipate they may, or may not, find. An 'examination' remains, fundamentally, a test, whether it is used to discover what students know, or to determine if a car is in a roadworthy condition, or to establish if a scientific experiment is valid or not.

As with 'survey' and 'review', an 'examination' is also an inspection, but with a difference: when we 'survey' something we do not, necessarily, know what we shall discover; when we 'inspect' or 'examine' something, we have a standard expectation to guide us. A doctor does not 'review' or 'survey' a patient, he 'examines' one: he has the knowledge to be able to recognise and interpret the patient's symptoms. If we use the words 'examination' or 'examine', we imply that whoever is doing the examining — the examiner — will be able to recognise and interpret the signs.

The presence and knowledge of the examiner is thus an important feature in our selection and understanding of the word. If you are an examiner, you will 'set' and 'give' an examination, whereas you would 'plan' and then 'set up' a survey; if it is a scholastic examination, the examinees 'sit' it, which is another pragmatic metonymy.

'Examinations' like 'reviews' are 'held' when they are public and formal occasions, but if they are scientific or medical experiments, 'examinations' will be 'carried out' or 'conducted' or 'performed'. If we are responsible for 'invigilating' or 'watching-over' or 'over-seeing' an examination, we 'administer' or 'conduct' it — just as a doctor will 'admininster medicine' or 'conduct an experiment'.

If we sit an examination, we may either 'pass' it or 'fail' it, as experiments which we conduct or carry out may also 'pass' or 'fail' the test to which we put them (we 'put things *to*' the test), and while a review will 'evaluate' — as an examination will, too — a survey will 'describe' — which, as a rule, an examination will not. Examinations may be 'difficult' or 'easy', they may be 'competitive' or 'routine', they may be 'careful and in-depth' or 'careless and superfical'.

We '*conduct* an experiment *on*' something, or '*make* an examination *of* it', while what is examined is 'the subject *of*', or 'is subject *to*' an examination, or 'undergoes' an examination. We examine for flaws, proficiency or signs of sickness, and examinations 'reveal', 'disclose' and 'show', as do 'reviews' and 'surveys', but with the difference that they are likely to reveal or show what we were, in the first place, looking for. We 'work for', 'revise for', 'prepare for' and 'withdraw from' an examination. If we do not measure up to the standard we shall fail the test.

8. iv **Scrutiny**: What the people of Latium 'scrutinized' was garbage (their word for 'garbage' was **scruta**), to see if they could find anything that might be of use to them; they would obviously have had to do that 'thoroughly', 'carefully', 'closely': they would have had to 'pick things over' — which is what rag-pickers do — to seek out what was hidden beneath the layers at the top: whatever it was, it was bound to be dirty[6].

The terms which collocate with 'scrutiny' all suggest that we scrutinize something in order to look for and identify faults. We 'submit something to' 'close' scrutiny, which will either 'bear' or 'not bear' our scrutiny. If we are 'open to scrutiny', the phrase suggests

that we have nothing in our closet that we wish to hide; if we are 'under scrutiny', this means that somebody — the police, perhaps — is watching us carefully to detect whether or not we are misbehaving. Although *Cobuild's* examples support this interpretation, their definitions make no mention of the decidedly critical nature of scrutiny's probing gaze.

*Kenkyusha's* examples — many more than *Cobuild's*, of course — offer further support. A woman 'scrutinizes herself *anxiously*', clearly afraid that she will find blemishes, a man 'scrutinizes a document *carefully* before signing it', obviously worried in case there are hidden pitfalls, things are scrutinized 'narrowly' (with narrowed eyes, for sharper vision) and 'keenly', records are scrutinized 'for any sign of wrong-doing'. What we may also notice here is that we do not carry out or conduct a scrutiny of whatever it is: we simply 'scrutinize' it: when there is a verb, we should use it, rather than be tempted to use a longer-winded phrase.

The noun selects its own companion verbs: a woman's work 'merits scrutiny', which implies, I think, that you won't find any flaws in it; otherwise, things 'endure', 'escape', 'survive' and 'withstand' the scrutineer's investigation. Scrutiny 'focuses on' something to 'reveal' its true nature; and not only can scrutiny be 'close', it can also be 'critical', 'harsh' and 'relentless', the last of these not an epithet that would collocate easily with 'survey' or 'review', even with 'examination'.

8. v **Investigation**: Our contemporary use of the word 'vestige' retains traces of its original signification more obviously — it is closer to its

source — than our present-day use of the verb 'to investigate': 'a vestige' is still a trace of something, a spoor, a track mark left in the grass for a man like Sherlock Holmes to follow. The verb 'to investigate' derives from the notion of following a thing's track or trace, which is what that arch-investigator Holmes is always doing: yet most of us are not aware of the relationship between what Holmes is up to and the word we use to describe his doing it. Nonetheless, the words which collocate with the verb and its cognates preserve that original relationship.

Of course, the verbs we choose to accompany the noun are those that accompany 'review' or 'survey': 'to conduct' and 'to carry out'. We may now pause to notice that the first of these verbs derives from the notion of being led forward: while we track a trace we shall be led forward by the marks we are 'following'. Thus we not only 'carry out' an investigation, we can also 'lead' or 'follow' one; we can, indeed, simply 'forward' one — that is, set an investigation in motion and keep it in motion by support and direction, although this is not, these days, a common usage.

What investigators mostly do, however, is 'pursue' an investigation — as one pursues a trail — which they may first of all have 'launched' or 'initiated'. They may 'commence' or 'start an investigation'; if they 'undertake it', they then 'set out upon it'. It seems entirely natural, too, that investigations — as well as surveys — should 'disclose', 'show', and 'reveal', and no surprise that they also 'unearth' as well as 'uncover' or 'discover', while they regularly 'find evidence of' or 'traces of' something or other; and investigations as well as analyses lead to 'findings'.

"Holmes", we may note, " is investigating the theft of the Six Napoleons", but "Inspector Lestrade is leading the investigation into the Westminster murder". The pattern of prepositional use is similar to the pattern found with other words in this group: '*(up)on* investigation we discovered', 'the matter is *under* investigation'; since investigations usually culminate in actions taken once all the facts are known, we can also say 'pending investigation' —— waiting, that is, upon the results of an investigation before we act.

While an 'investigation' shares a number of adjectival choices with its mess-mates, it can also be 'fruitful' or 'fruitless', as well as 'diligent', 'laborious', 'exhaustive' and 'exhausting', 'pioneering' and 'on-the-spot': none of these epithets suits other members of the set, with the possible exception of 'survey', for while reviews may be exhausting as well as exhaustive, we should probably choose the term 'investigation' if those were the adjectives we had decided we needed to use.

8. vi **Analysis** When the Greeks analysed something they un-loosed or undid it. Later, it came to mean an investigation of the constituents of a thing, the parts of which something is made. Nowadays, we use the word to refer to a descriptive breakdown of the structural composition of things, whether they are novels or physical substances, paintings —— or sentences such as this —— to discover and describe how the parts are put together.

The verbs which collocate with 'analysis' are familiar: 'make', 'conduct' and 'carry out': you 'carry out an analysis'. And when a subject is 'under analysis', it 'undergoes' analysis —— we 'undertake' a review or a survey. An analysis can be 'close' and 'thorough'; it can

also, however, be 'painstaking', and since such work regularly takes time and effort, it can be 'penetrating'[7], for it needs to pierce the surface of and go deeply into its subject matter: it is not, that is to say, an overview: it is 'in-depth'. It can take the prepositions 'upon' and 'in', in such phrases as "'upon (or 'after'/'through') analysis' we discovered", or "'in the last analysis', there is nothing more to be said".

It cannot, however, take the prepositions 'about' and 'into', as numbers of my medical friends seem to suppose when they regularly write *"we analysed /investigated about..." or *"we analysed / investigated into...", since my friends appear to suppose that to analyze or to investigate is somehow on a par with 'to speak / write about' or with 'to look into'.

*Kenkyusha* lists many epithets that collocate with 'analysis': 'accurate', 'character', and 'blood', 'reasoned' and 'rigorous', and it also notes several verbs which do not normally collocate with the other words in this group, since an 'analysis' is — in 'the final analysis' — not quite the same thing as an 'examination': a problem can 'defy' or 'resist' analysis; it can even 'elude' it.

**Conclusion**

Whether my brief investigation of a necessarily limited number of sets of words has convinced those sceptical of my starting point (and my aim), I cannot be sure. Naturally, I hope that I have achieved my goal of demonstrating that when we select certain words from certain sets, we must co-select appropriate words to accompany them, and that our collocational choices will — almost certainly — depend upon the historical and rhetorical evolution of our chosen word. To understand

all this fully we shall, in addition, need to have some understanding of the specific characteristics of the particular culture in which such metonymic and metaphorical transferences spontaneously, and, as if by nature, effortlessly occur.

## Notes

1 I myself am not able to understand many American idioms because I am ignorant of the cultural conditions that gave them birth.

2 I have written several essays about these topics for *The Northern Review*, the house magazine of the English Department, The Institute of Language and Culture Studies, Hokkaido University.

3 Languages have their own rhythms, their dancing measures: the rhythm of English is stress-timed, while the rhythm of Japanese is syllable-timed; in English the stressed syllables in the words that carry meaning fall on the rhythmic beat, and sensitivity to the rhythm of the language is essential if we hope to pick up the meaning of what we hear; similarly, if we wish to write well, we must be able to compose with the rhythmic flow of the language in our mind's ear. I have written articles about this topic, too, for the same journal.

4 The act of pitching posts — or wickets, in cricket, say — gives us, by metonymic derivation, the word 'pitch' meaning 'field': a 'football pitch', a 'cricket or hockey pitch', but not a *'baseball pitch', since no posts are pitched in the ground, like tent poles, to mark its limits.

5 We can also 'box the compass'. This orginally meant a sailor's

ability to name the thirty-two boxed points of the compass in their correct order. By metonymic shift, it later came to refer to the shifts in the directions of the wind when they blew 'from every quarter in rapid succession' (Brewer). We can now use the term metaphorically for a person who shifts his opinions — his political opinions, for instance — with great rapidity, particularly if he ends up where he began.

6 One of Britain's best known literary journals around the middle of this century was Dr Leavis's Cambridge magazine *Scrutiny*, famous for the savagery with which it turned over, upside down and inside out the texts of which it disapproved, the texts that it wished to pronounce to be rotten and desired to denounce as garbage.

7 I have just come across — in *The Japan Times* — a quite egregious example of a word that the writer has selected by mistake. Since the writer is presumably an Englishman, and a journalist at that, the mistake demonstrates the errors to which we are all prone when we think we know what a word means but are mistaken, because we are unaware of the word's fundamental sense. In a review of the fifth (cricket) Test Match between England and the West Indies, England's first innings score of 440 is described as 'impenetrable': this is impossible. What the writer must have meant was 'impregnable', the word which sometimes collocates with 'score' in this context. Military fortifications, however, can be both impregnable and impenetrable, while mysteries can be impenetrable but not impregnable. Whether this was a slip of the journalistic pen, or a genuine error, who can say? As it turned out, the score was far from being impregnable: the West Indies might easily have won.

I try to use the word correctly at the end of paragraph 1, page 1.

## Bibliography

*The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, ed. T. F. Hoad (Oxford, 1986)

*The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English*, ed. by Benson, Benson and Ilson (Amsterdam, 1986)

*Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary*, Editor in Chief, John Sinclair (London, 1987)

*The Kenkyusha Dictionary of English Collocations* (Tokyo, new edition, 1995)

*The Oxford Dictionary of Music*, ed Michael Kennedy (Oxford, new edition, 1994)

*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, ed. Lesley Brown (Oxford, 1993)

*The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (second edition, Oxford, 1970)

*Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, revised edition (London, 1990)