

## VOCABULARY · EPISODE 57

# Six Minutes of Words in Action

Key words &amp; expressions · English + Español

10 words

Your English Toolbox

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## words in action

### palabras en uso real · vocabulario en contexto vivo

**DEF**

vocabulary used in real, natural contexts — as part of sentences, stories, or conversations — rather than in isolation as a list

*Words in action is the difference between knowing a word and owning it. A word you have only seen in a list is fragile; a word you have heard in a story, a conversation, and used yourself is robust.*

**ES**

Vocabulario usado en contextos reales y naturales — como parte de frases, historias o conversaciones — en lugar de aislado como lista.

Es la diferencia entre conocer una palabra y poseerla.

**Seeing words in action — in real sentences — makes them stick far better than any word list.**

Seeing words in action — in real sentences — makes them stick far better than any word list. -> Ver las palabras en uso real — en frases reales — hace que se fijen mucho mejor que cualquier lista de palabras.

**This episode is designed to put six key words in action so that you hear them working naturally.**

This episode is designed to put six key words in action so that you hear them working naturally. -> Este episodio está diseñado para poner seis palabras clave en vocabulario en contexto vivo para que las escuches funcionando de forma natural.

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## to illustrate

### ilustrar con un ejemplo · aclarar algo mediante una historia

**DEF**

to make something clearer or easier to understand by giving examples, stories, or visual images; to demonstrate with evidence

*Illustrate is from the Latin 'to light up' — a good illustration throws light onto an idea that was previously in shadow. In language learning, illustrating a word with a story is far more powerful than giving a definition.*

**ES**

Hacer algo más claro o fácil de entender dando ejemplos, historias o imágenes visuales; demostrar con evidencia.

Del latín 'iluminar' — una buena ilustración arroja luz sobre una idea que estaba en la sombra.

**Let me illustrate what I mean with a story — it will make far more sense than a definition.**

Let me illustrate what I mean with a story — it will make far more sense than a definition. -> Déjame ilustrar lo que quiero decir con una historia — tendrá mucho más sentido que una definición.

**She illustrated the difference between 'lend' and 'borrow' with a single funny example that everyone remembered.**

She illustrated the difference between 'lend' and 'borrow' with a single funny example. -> Aclaró la diferencia entre 'lend' y 'borrow' mediante una historia con un solo ejemplo divertido que todos recordaron.

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## in context

en contexto · dentro de una frase o situación real, no de forma aislada

### DEF

encountered or used within a sentence or real situation rather than as an isolated item

*In context is the essential qualifier for vocabulary learning. A word in context carries meaning, emotion, grammar, and pragmatics all at once. A word on a flashcard carries only a definition. Learning words in context is two to three times more effective than learning vocabulary lists.*

### ES

Encontrado o usado dentro de una frase o situación real en lugar de como un elemento aislado.

El calificador esencial para el aprendizaje de vocabulario. Una palabra en contexto lleva significado, emoción, gramática y pragmática a la vez.

**Always learn a new word in context — read the full sentence it came from, not just the definition.**

Always learn a new word in context — read the full sentence it came from, not just the definition. -> Aprende siempre una palabra nueva en contexto — lee la frase completa de la que proviene, no solo la definición.

**She stopped memorising word lists and started learning words in context, and retention improved dramatically.**

She stopped memorising word lists and started learning words in context, and retention improved dramatically. -> Dejó de memorizar listas de palabras y empezó a aprender palabras en contexto, y la retención mejoró drásticamente.

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## usage

el uso · cómo se usa realmente una palabra o frase en situaciones reales

### DEF

the way in which a word, phrase or grammatical structure is actually used by real speakers in real situations

*Usage is what a dictionary cannot fully capture. A word may be technically correct but wrong in usage — too formal, too informal, used in a different context than intended. Native speakers feel usage instinctively; learners must build that feeling through exposure.*

### ES

La forma en que una palabra, frase o estructura gramatical es realmente usada por hablantes reales en situaciones reales.

Lo que un diccionario no puede capturar completamente. Una palabra puede ser técnicamente correcta pero incorrecta en el uso.

**Grammar rules tell you what is possible; usage tells you what is normal — focus on usage.**

Grammar rules tell you what is possible; usage tells you what is normal — focus on usage. -> Las reglas gramaticales te dicen lo que es posible; el uso te dice lo que es normal — enfócate en el uso.

**She looked up the word, found it was technically correct, but native speakers told her the usage was not natural.**

She looked up the word, found it was technically correct, but native speakers told her the usage was not natural. -> Buscó la palabra, encontró que era técnicamente correcta, pero los hablantes nativos le dijeron que el uso no era natural.

## to put something to use

### 5 poner algo en práctica · aplicar un conocimiento o nueva palabra en una situación real

#### DEF

to apply knowledge, a skill or a new word in a real situation — moving from knowing to doing

*Put something to use is the action that transforms passive learning into active ability. You can know a word perfectly and never put it to use. The gap between knowing and using is the biggest gap in language learning, and it is closed only by deliberate production.*

#### ES

Aplicar conocimiento, una habilidad o una nueva palabra en una situación real — pasar de saber a hacer.

La acción que transforma el aprendizaje pasivo en habilidad activa. La brecha entre saber y usar es la mayor brecha en el aprendizaje de idiomas.

**Put every new word to use within twenty-four hours — write a sentence or use it in conversation.**

Put every new word to use within twenty-four hours — write a sentence or use it in conversation. -> Pon cada nueva palabra en práctica dentro de las veinticuatro horas — escribe una frase o úsala en conversación.

**She put every phrasal verb she learned to use in a real message that day, and the words stuck.**

She put every phrasal verb she learned to use in a real message that day, and the words stuck. -> Puso en práctica cada phrasal verb que aprendía en un mensaje real ese día, y las palabras se quedaron.

## to give an example

### 6 dar un ejemplo · proporcionar un caso específico que hace una idea abstracta clara

#### DEF

to provide a specific case or instance that makes an abstract idea clear and concrete

*Give an example is the most powerful communication tool. Abstract ideas without examples feel distant and forgettable. Examples make vocabulary memorable — they connect a word to a real situation. When teaching or explaining in English, the best speakers use examples constantly.*

#### ES

Proporcionar un caso o instancia específica que hace una idea abstracta clara y concreta.

La herramienta de comunicación más poderosa. Las ideas abstractas sin ejemplos se sienten distantes e inolvidables.

**Give an example whenever you explain a word — 'for instance', 'like when you', 'imagine that'.**

Give an example whenever you explain a word — 'for instance', 'like when you', 'imagine that'. -> Da un ejemplo siempre que expliques una palabra — 'for instance', 'like when you', 'imagine that'.

**She always asked her teacher to give an example before she accepted any grammar explanation as correct.**

She always asked her teacher to give an example before she accepted any grammar explanation as correct. -> Siempre pedía a su profesora que diera un ejemplo antes de aceptar cualquier explicación gramatical como correcta.

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## meaningful

significativo · con conexión real a tu vida, intereses o experiencia

### DEF

having a real connection to your life, interests, or experience — making learning more memorable and engaging

*Meaningful is the key adjective in vocabulary research. Words that are personally meaningful are retained far better than neutral words. If you learn 'resilience' in the context of a failure you personally experienced, it will stay with you. Make vocabulary personally meaningful whenever possible.*

### ES

Que tiene una conexión real con tu vida, intereses o experiencia — haciendo que el aprendizaje sea más memorable y atractivo.

El adjetivo clave en la investigación de vocabulario. Las palabras personalmente significativas se retienen mucho mejor que las neutrales.

**Make vocabulary meaningful — connect every new word to a real experience or personal story.**

Make vocabulary meaningful — connect every new word to a real experience or personal story. -> Haz el vocabulario significativo — conecta cada nueva palabra a una experiencia real o historia personal.

**She retained words far better when she found a meaningful personal connection to each one.**

She retained words far better when she found a meaningful personal connection to each one. -> Retuvo las palabras mucho mejor cuando encontró una conexión personal significativa con cada una.

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## to encounter a word

encontrarse con una palabra · toparse con una palabra inesperadamente mientras lees o escuchas

### DEF

to come across a word unexpectedly in something you are reading, watching or listening to

*Encounter a word is the incidental learning action. When you encounter a word rather than look it up on purpose, you have context, emotion and memory attached. Deliberately increasing the sources where you encounter English — books, films, podcasts, conversations — accelerates vocabulary growth.*

### ES

Toparse con una palabra inesperadamente en algo que estás leyendo, viendo o escuchando.

La acción del aprendizaje incidental. Cuando te encuentras con una palabra en lugar de buscarla intencionalmente, tienes contexto, emoción y memoria adjuntos.

**Every word you encounter in a real English text is worth noting — context makes it stick.**

Every word you encounter in a real English text is worth noting — context makes it stick. -> Cada palabra con la que te encuentres en un texto real en inglés vale la pena anotar — el contexto la hace perdurar.

**She kept a small notebook for words she encountered in the wild and reviewed it every week.**

She kept a small notebook for words she encountered in the wild and reviewed it every week. -> Tenía un pequeño cuaderno para palabras con las que se topaba inesperadamente y lo revisaba cada semana.

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## collocations

### colocaciones · parejas o grupos de palabras que van juntas naturalmente en inglés

#### DEF

pairs or groups of words that naturally go together in English and are commonly used as a unit by native speakers

*Collocations are the secret of natural English. 'Make a decision' is correct; 'do a decision' is wrong. 'Heavy rain' is correct; 'strong rain' is wrong. These are not grammar rules — they are patterns. Learning vocabulary as collocations rather than single words accelerates naturalness more than any grammar study.*

#### ES

Parejas o grupos de palabras que van juntas naturalmente en inglés y son comúnmente usadas como una unidad por hablantes nativos.

El secreto del inglés natural. 'Make a decision' es correcto; 'do a decision' es incorrecto. Aprender vocabulario como colocaciones acelera la naturalidad más que cualquier estudio gramatical.

**Learn collocations, not just single words — 'make a mistake', not just 'mistake' alone.**

Learn collocations, not just single words — 'make a mistake', not just 'mistake' alone. -> Aprende colocaciones, no solo palabras individuales — 'make a mistake', no solo 'mistake' sola.

**She stopped saying 'do a mistake' and 'strong rain' once she started learning vocabulary through collocations.**

She stopped saying 'do a mistake' and 'strong rain' once she started learning vocabulary through collocations. -> Dejó de decir 'do a mistake' y 'strong rain' cuando empezó a aprender vocabulario a través de colocaciones.

## to sink in

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### calar hondo · que una información o palabra sea completamente absorbida después de un tiempo

#### DEF

for information, understanding or a new word to become fully understood and absorbed — often after a delay

*Sink in is the word for the lag between hearing and understanding. You can encounter a word several times before it finally sinks in — meaning you have truly absorbed it and could use it spontaneously. This is why repeated exposure matters: the word needs to sink in, and that takes time.*

#### ES

Que una información, comprensión o nueva palabra sea completamente comprendida y absorbida — a menudo después de un retraso.

La palabra para el retraso entre escuchar y comprender. Puedes encontrar una palabra varias veces antes de que finalmente cale — esto es por lo que la exposición repetida importa.

**Do not worry if new words do not sink in immediately — the brain needs repeated exposure.**

Do not worry if new words do not sink in immediately — the brain needs repeated exposure. -> No te preocupes si las palabras nuevas no calan de inmediato — el cerebro necesita exposición repetida.

**She heard 'to get over something' a dozen times before it finally sank in and she could use it naturally.**

She heard 'to get over something' a dozen times before it finally sank in and she could use it naturally. -> Escuchó 'to get over something' una docena de veces antes de que finalmente calara hondo y pudiera usarlo naturalmente.