

Deep Dive 3: Intermediate English Collocations

1

00:00:00,080 --> 00:00:01,360

Welcome back to the Deep Dive.

2

00:00:01,520 --> 00:00:08,240

Today, we're zeroing in on something you probably use all the time, maybe without even thinking about its full power, the dictionary.

3

00:00:08,240 --> 00:00:08,720

That's right.

4

00:00:08,880 --> 00:00:11,840

But we're going way beyond just looking up what a word means.

5

00:00:11,840 --> 00:00:12,640

Exactly.

6

00:00:12,720 --> 00:00:21,120

We want to unlock its hidden potential, show you how it can make your English sound not just correct, but, well, truly natural and impactful.

7

00:00:21,760 --> 00:00:22,480

More intuitive.

8

00:00:22,880 --> 00:00:28,000

We've been digging into a bunch of dictionary entries, looking at expert advice on linguistics.

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00:00:28,000 --> 00:00:30,480

Yeah, seeing how these tools really work under the hood.

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00:00:30,640 --> 00:00:40,240

And our mission for this deep dive is basically to reveal the secrets of word pairings, collocations, and how your dictionary is key to mastering them.

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00:00:40,240 --> 00:00:45,360

We want to give you some solid strategy, things you can actually use to, you know, refine your language.

12

00:00:45,360 --> 00:00:47,360

Help you sound like you've been speaking English forever.

13

00:00:47,760 --> 00:00:48,800

Okay, let's get into it.

14

00:00:48,960 --> 00:00:51,840

All right, so this idea of collocations.

15

00:00:52,480 --> 00:00:54,480

It might ring a bell for many listeners.

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00:00:54,800 --> 00:00:58,880

Essentially, it's about words that just naturally go together.

17

00:00:58,960 --> 00:01:00,080

Like peanut butter and jelly.

18

00:01:01,840 --> 00:01:03,360

Sort of, but for language.

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00:01:03,760 --> 00:01:07,840

It's not about strict grammar rules, more like common partnerships.

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00:01:08,400 --> 00:01:10,400

Words that like hanging out together.

21

00:01:10,400 --> 00:01:10,880

Okay.

22

00:01:10,960 --> 00:01:11,520

Think about it.

23

00:01:11,680 --> 00:01:13,200

You make a decision, right?

24

00:01:13,200 --> 00:01:14,440

You don't really do a decision.

25

00:01:14,440 --> 00:01:15,440

No, that sounds weird.

26

00:01:15,520 --> 00:01:17,440

Or you take a photo.

27

00:01:17,680 --> 00:01:19,280

You don't make a photo in English.

28

00:01:20,000 --> 00:01:22,880

These are collocations, these natural word alliances.

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00:01:23,000 --> 00:01:24,080

It's like an intuition.

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00:01:24,200 --> 00:01:27,840

An intuition native speakers have, but learners need to build.

31

00:01:28,000 --> 00:01:28,640

Precisely.

32

00:01:28,920 --> 00:01:32,800

And that's why understanding them is so, important if you really want to master the language.

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00:01:33,360 --> 00:01:36,000

It's not enough just to know the words individually.

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00:01:36,000 --> 00:01:37,840

You need to know their friends, so to speak.

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00:01:37,840 --> 00:01:38,479

Exactly.

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00:01:38,479 --> 00:01:39,759

Their usual companions.

37

00:01:40,240 --> 00:01:44,640

Knowing these pairs is what leads to really fluent, authentic sounding English.

38

00:01:44,640 --> 00:01:46,320

And helps you avoid those slightly.

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00:01:47,039 --> 00:01:48,120

Clunky phrases.

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00:01:48,120 --> 00:01:51,200

Yeah, those little things that can sometimes signal someone's still learning.

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00:01:51,440 --> 00:01:55,400

It's about sounding completely natural, not just getting the message across.

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00:01:55,440 --> 00:01:56,720

Okay, that makes a lot of sense.

43

00:01:56,920 --> 00:01:59,360

Which brings us to learner's dictionaries.

44

00:01:59,360 --> 00:02:00,640

These are different, aren't they?

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00:02:00,960 --> 00:02:01,760

Oh, definitely.

46

00:02:01,960 --> 00:02:05,840

A good learner's dictionary is designed specifically for this challenge.

47

00:02:05,840 --> 00:02:09,280

Like the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, CALO.

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00:02:09,280 --> 00:02:10,000

We looked at that one.

49

00:02:10,000 --> 00:02:12,000

Yes, CALO is a perfect example.

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00:02:12,000 --> 00:02:16,560

It's built to help learners tackle exactly this, how words actually get used.

51

00:02:16,560 --> 00:02:16,920

It doesn't

52

00:02:17,000 --> 00:02:19,480

Just define, it shows you how to deploy the words.

53

00:02:19,480 --> 00:02:23,200

And it has that clever feature for highlighting collocations, right?

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00:02:23,200 --> 00:02:24,000

The bold type.

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00:02:24,000 --> 00:02:24,600

Exactly.

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00:02:24,600 --> 00:02:25,600

That's one of its best features.

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00:02:25,600 --> 00:02:27,360

It uses bold type right there in the entry.

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00:02:27,360 --> 00:02:28,400

So they jump out at you.

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00:02:28,480 --> 00:02:28,880

Right.

60

00:02:28,880 --> 00:02:32,240

It's a visual cue, like a little signpost saying, hey, pay attention.

61

00:02:32,560 --> 00:02:34,240

This word often travels with this one.

62

00:02:35,040 --> 00:02:36,640

You're not just reading a definition.

63

00:02:37,280 --> 00:02:38,720

You're seeing the word in action.

64

00:02:39,160 --> 00:02:40,440

Okay, let's make that concrete.

65

00:02:41,160 --> 00:02:43,520

You mentioned the example of pain from CALO.

66

00:02:43,560 --> 00:02:46,160

Yes, pain is a great one because it shows the range.

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00:02:46,680 --> 00:02:52,560

CALO immediately shows you it covers both physical and emotional suffering through these pairings.

68

00:02:52,560 --> 00:02:53,760

So like physical stuff.

69

00:02:54,000 --> 00:02:54,320

Right.

70

00:02:54,320 --> 00:02:58,800

You might see entries showing abdominal pain or feeling a sharp pain.

71

00:02:58,920 --> 00:02:59,079

Okay.

72

00:02:59,360 --> 00:03:04,080

Or if you're actually feeling it, you could be in pain or maybe dealing with constant pain.

73

00:03:04,240 --> 00:03:06,000

And if it's getting better.

74

00:03:06,240 --> 00:03:08,800

You might find phrases like ease the pain.

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00:03:09,800 --> 00:03:13,520

It even includes common expressions like various aches and pains.

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00:03:13,840 --> 00:03:15,200

It covers a lot of ground.

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00:03:16,400 --> 00:03:17,760

But you said emotional too.

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00:03:17,840 --> 00:03:19,280

Yes, and that's crucial.

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00:03:19,600 --> 00:03:20,960

It maps that out as well.

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00:03:21,200 --> 00:03:25,440

You might see examples like parents being in great pain after a loss.

81

00:03:25,440 --> 00:03:25,920

Wow.

82

00:03:26,240 --> 00:03:27,400

It's really comprehensive.

83

00:03:27,400 --> 00:03:32,920

It gives you a kind of framework for talking about something that's, you know, a pretty complex human experience.

84

00:03:32,920 --> 00:03:34,560

I remember when I was learning German,

85

00:03:35,600 --> 00:03:38,800

Finding the right way to express emotional distress was tough.

86

00:03:39,040 --> 00:03:40,320

Something like this would have been amazing.

87

00:03:40,320 --> 00:03:42,560

Yeah, finding the right verb for the noun.

88

00:03:42,560 --> 00:03:43,160

Exactly.

89

00:03:43,160 --> 00:03:45,440

And here's where it gets really interesting, I thought.

90

00:03:46,079 --> 00:03:50,079

CALO also includes informal stuff, like a pain in the neck.

91

00:03:50,400 --> 00:03:50,880

yes.

92

00:03:51,320 --> 00:03:52,480

That's a perfect illustration.

93

00:03:52,560 --> 00:03:54,160

That's not literal pain, obviously.

94

00:03:54,160 --> 00:03:55,040

No, it's an idiom.

95

00:03:55,200 --> 00:03:57,760

It means someone or something is just really annoying.

96

00:03:57,840 --> 00:04:01,680

And the key thing is, CALO actually tells you it's informal, right?

97

00:04:01,680 --> 00:04:03,200

It labels it informal.

98

00:04:03,280 --> 00:04:04,080

Precisely.

99

00:04:04,160 --> 00:04:05,760

And that's incredibly helpful.

100

00:04:06,000 --> 00:04:09,920

It's not just about what the phrase means, but when and where it's okay to use it.

101

00:04:10,080 --> 00:04:11,280

guides you on register.

102

00:04:11,760 --> 00:04:17,040

So it prevents you from sounding maybe too casual in a formal situation, or vice versa.

103

00:04:17,120 --> 00:04:17,839

Exactly right.

104

00:04:18,200 --> 00:04:20,560

A good learner's dictionary is a pragmatic guide.

105

00:04:20,800 --> 00:04:24,160

It helps you choose the right phrase for the specific context.

106

00:04:24,600 --> 00:04:28,160

That's a sign of really advanced language use, knowing those nuances.

107

00:04:28,400 --> 00:04:34,440

Okay, so print dictionaries like CA Lo are incredibly insightful, but we live in a digital age.

108

00:04:34,440 --> 00:04:35,920

What about online dictionaries?

109

00:04:36,080 --> 00:04:39,920

Well, they take all that insight and basically put it on steroids.

110

00:04:40,159 --> 00:04:42,240

Speed and depth are the big advantages.

111

00:04:42,240 --> 00:04:46,080

You mean like the Cambridge dictionary, online.dictionary.cambridge.org?

112

00:04:46,159 --> 00:04:47,760

Yes, that's a great example.

113

00:04:47,760 --> 00:04:48,680

The speed is obvious.

114

00:04:48,680 --> 00:04:50,000

You just type and search.

115

00:04:50,520 --> 00:04:54,000

But it's also the sheer amount of information you can access almost instantly.

116

00:04:54,000 --> 00:04:58,080

So faster searches, you've got the definitions, but also loads more examples.

117

00:04:58,080 --> 00:04:58,880

Loads more.

118

00:04:59,120 --> 00:05:01,760

A wealth of examples showing the keyword in different contexts.

119

00:05:01,760 --> 00:05:03,040

No more flipping through pages.

120

00:05:03,280 --> 00:05:05,920

Just a few clicks and you get this huge amount of linguistic data.

121

00:05:06,160 --> 00:05:08,480

Let's take another example, maybe advice.

122

00:05:08,960 --> 00:05:11,600

How would an online dictionary help there?

123

00:05:11,600 --> 00:05:12,720

It seems simple, but...

124

00:05:12,720 --> 00:05:13,360

That's a good one.

125

00:05:13,360 --> 00:05:14,480

It raises that question.

126

00:05:15,120 --> 00:05:18,320

How do you naturally talk about giving or getting guidance?

127

00:05:18,400 --> 00:05:18,680

Right.

128

00:05:19,480 --> 00:05:29,960

An online dictionary would quickly show you a whole range of natural pairings, things like, Give me some good advice, or maybe you choose to take your advice, or...

129

00:05:30,040 --> 00:05:33,120

Perhaps you need some advice about something specific.

130

00:05:33,440 --> 00:05:37,040

You might get expert advice for people with financial problems.

131

00:05:37,200 --> 00:05:40,320

Or ignore it completely and follow my own advice.

132

00:05:41,200 --> 00:05:41,920

Yes, that too.

133

00:05:41,920 --> 00:05:42,200

Nice.

134

00:05:42,400 --> 00:05:45,120

Or offer practical advice on finding a job.

135

00:05:45,600 --> 00:05:48,120

In serious cases, maybe seek legal advice.

136

00:05:48,120 --> 00:05:50,800

So it gives you these ready-made chunks of language.

137

00:05:50,800 --> 00:05:51,520

Exactly.

138

00:05:51,760 --> 00:05:54,640

Phrasal units you can just plug into your own speaking or writing.

139

00:05:55,000 --> 00:05:58,640

And there's another powerful tool often linked from these online dictionaries.

140

00:05:58,800 --> 00:06:00,720

You mean the smart thesaurus.

141

00:06:00,720 --> 00:06:02,320

Yes, the smart thesaurus.

142

00:06:02,320 --> 00:06:04,640

It's often overlooked, but it's incredibly useful.

143

00:06:05,200 --> 00:06:07,520

I get using a thesaurus for synonyms, obviously.

144

00:06:07,760 --> 00:06:09,960

But what makes a smart thesaurus, well, smart?

145

00:06:09,960 --> 00:06:11,120

What's the extra layer?

146

00:06:11,200 --> 00:06:12,160

That's a great question.

147

00:06:12,400 --> 00:06:15,840

It goes way beyond just listing words that mean roughly the same thing.

148

00:06:15,920 --> 00:06:16,160

Okay.

149

00:06:16,280 --> 00:06:20,240

What it does is map out the word's entire semantic network.

150

00:06:20,720 --> 00:06:22,080

It's neighborhood, if you like.

151

00:06:22,080 --> 00:06:23,920

Semantic network, meaning?

152

00:06:23,920 --> 00:06:29,440

It shows you not just synonyms, but related concepts, maybe antonyms, other phrases.

153

00:06:29,840 --> 00:06:31,360

associated with the core idea.

154

00:06:31,760 --> 00:06:34,640

So for advice, it wouldn't just give you counsel.

155

00:06:34,960 --> 00:06:40,800

It might show recommendation, guidance, suggestion, maybe even tip, or words of wisdom.

156

00:06:41,200 --> 00:06:46,480

It shows you the different shades of meaning, the different contexts where each related word fits best.

157

00:06:47,200 --> 00:06:50,159

so it helps you choose the perfect word, not just a word.

158

00:06:50,240 --> 00:06:50,960

Exactly.

159

00:06:50,960 --> 00:06:55,760

It moves you from just finding a replacement to really understanding the landscape around that word.

160

00:06:56,000 --> 00:06:57,360

A much deeper understanding.

161

00:06:57,520 --> 00:07:04,320

Okay, so we know words hang out together and dictionaries show us these pairings, but you also mentioned something else, crucial formality.

162

00:07:04,400 --> 00:07:07,600

Yes, that's another layer where good dictionaries really shine.

163

00:07:08,000 --> 00:07:13,360

Knowing the formality level of a collocation is vital for making sure your language fits the situation.

164

00:07:13,600 --> 00:07:16,800

Like being too casual in a job interview or too stiff with friends.

165

00:07:17,040 --> 00:07:17,680

Precisely.

166

00:07:18,240 --> 00:07:20,640

Let's go back to CALO for a second with the word offer.

167

00:07:20,640 --> 00:07:20,920

Okay.

168

00:07:21,600 --> 00:07:26,480

CALO points out that saying you'll take somebody up on an offer is informal.

169

00:07:26,560 --> 00:07:28,960

Great for chatting with a friend who offered you tickets, maybe.

170

00:07:28,960 --> 00:07:29,280

Right.

171

00:07:29,440 --> 00:07:30,400

Sounds natural there.

172

00:07:30,480 --> 00:07:33,760

But if you're in a business meeting discussing a proposal,

173

00:07:34,159 --> 00:07:37,280

The dictionary would guide you to the more formal alternative.

174

00:07:37,720 --> 00:07:39,200

Accept an offer.

175

00:07:39,440 --> 00:07:42,240

Same basic idea, but different context, different phrasing.

176

00:07:42,240 --> 00:07:42,880

Exactly.

177

00:07:42,960 --> 00:07:46,720

And the practical implication for you, the learner, is huge.

178

00:07:47,040 --> 00:07:51,120

Choosing the right collocation means your communication lands perfectly.

179

00:07:51,200 --> 00:07:52,480

Tailored to the moment.

180

00:07:52,480 --> 00:07:52,960

Yes.

181

00:07:53,360 --> 00:07:59,920

Whether it's casual coffee talk or a formal presentation, understanding these nuances gives you confidence and makes you sound, well,

182

00:08:00,560 --> 00:08:02,360

you really know the language inside out.

183

00:08:02,360 --> 00:08:06,720

I remember hearing someone use a super informal phrase in a professional e-mail.

184

00:08:06,800 --> 00:08:07,120

Yeah.

185

00:08:07,360 --> 00:08:11,680

Once, it wasn't wrong exactly, but it felt jarring.

186

00:08:11,960 --> 00:08:14,440

Yeah, those labels in the dictionary help avoid that.

187

00:08:14,480 --> 00:08:15,040

They really do.

188

00:08:15,040 --> 00:08:21,040

So pulling these threads together, it feels like we need to fundamentally shift how we think about dictionaries.

189

00:08:21,040 --> 00:08:22,280

They're not just word lists.

190

00:08:22,480 --> 00:08:23,200

Not at all.

191

00:08:23,200 --> 00:08:24,800

They're more like guides.

192

00:08:25,200 --> 00:08:28,160

teaching us how to actually use the language effectively.

193

00:08:28,160 --> 00:08:38,320

How to make our speaking and writing sound right, feel natural, whether that's through the word pairings, the formality, or even understanding that whole semantic network you mentioned.

194

00:08:38,320 --> 00:08:44,000

It's about gaining that confidence, feeling truly comfortable with your linguistic choices.

195

00:08:44,240 --> 00:08:48,160

Okay, so for someone listening who's thinking, right, I need to do this.

196

00:08:48,600 --> 00:08:50,240

What's the practical advice?

197

00:08:50,480 --> 00:08:54,800

How do you make collocations part of your actual learning routine?

198

00:08:54,800 --> 00:08:56,960

Well, first step, choose the right tool.

199

00:08:57,520 --> 00:09:01,360

When you're buying or using a dictionary, make sure it's a good learner's dictionary.

200

00:09:01,360 --> 00:09:04,000

One that specifically highlights collocations.

201

00:09:04,240 --> 00:09:06,480

Look for the bold type, the usage example.

202

00:09:06,480 --> 00:09:06,920

Exactly.

203

00:09:06,920 --> 00:09:08,960

Don't just settle for basic definitions.

204

00:09:08,960 --> 00:09:10,560

You need those usage patterns.

205

00:09:10,640 --> 00:09:11,200

And then.

206

00:09:11,760 --> 00:09:13,360

Just reading isn't enough, presumably.

207

00:09:13,360 --> 00:09:14,480

No, it needs to be active.

208

00:09:14,600 --> 00:09:21,120

When you find a new collocation, maybe reading an article, listening to something, or in your dictionary, don't just passively notice it.

209

00:09:21,120 --> 00:09:22,000

Do something with it.

210

00:09:22,160 --> 00:09:22,720

Yes.

211

00:09:23,200 --> 00:09:25,600

Highlight it in your dictionary if it's print.

212

00:09:26,320 --> 00:09:28,080

Or, even better, write it down.

213

00:09:28,480 --> 00:09:31,040

Transfer it to a dedicated vocabulary notebook.

214

00:09:31,520 --> 00:09:32,640

the classic notebook.

215

00:09:32,720 --> 00:09:33,520

It still works.

216

00:09:33,920 --> 00:09:34,960

And maybe group them.

217

00:09:35,120 --> 00:09:42,560

Group collocations by topic, like collocations for travel, or by function, like ways to express agreement.

218

00:09:42,720 --> 00:09:45,120

That makes them easier to remember and use later.

219

00:09:45,200 --> 00:09:45,920

Makes sense.

220

00:09:45,920 --> 00:09:47,840

It's about really engaging with them.

221

00:09:47,840 --> 00:09:48,400

It is.

222

00:09:48,640 --> 00:09:53,920

That focused attention helps lock them into your memory so you can actually pull them out when you need them.

223

00:09:54,160 --> 00:09:56,080

So here's a challenge for everyone listening.

224

00:09:56,280 --> 00:09:59,760

Like 2 or 3 words you've learned recently, or just ones you find interesting.

225

00:10:00,160 --> 00:10:02,320

Look them up in a good learner's dictionary.

226

00:10:02,400 --> 00:10:03,360

Online or print.

227

00:10:03,440 --> 00:10:03,840

Right.

228

00:10:04,240 --> 00:10:06,400

And actively hunt for those collocations.

229

00:10:06,400 --> 00:10:08,800

Write down a few that seem useful or surprising.

230

00:10:08,800 --> 00:10:11,080

You might find whole new ways to say things.

231

00:10:11,080 --> 00:10:14,320

And when you do that, think back to how we broke down pain.

232

00:10:14,920 --> 00:10:16,160

Remember categorizing?

233

00:10:16,480 --> 00:10:19,920

like causing pain, feeling pain, stopping pain, exactly.

234

00:10:20,240 --> 00:10:25,840

Thinking in those kinds of categories can be incredibly powerful when you're organizing the collocations you find.

235

00:10:25,840 --> 00:10:33,200

It's not just memorizing random phrases, you're building like mental maps, precisely frameworks for expressing ideas.

236

00:10:33,800 --> 00:10:43,760

So for making pain go away, you collect things like alleviate pain, ease pain, lessen pain, relieve pain, soothe pain, or even noting that pain subsides.

237

00:10:43,840 --> 00:10:46,680

And each one has a slightly different feel, doesn't it?

238

00:10:46,680 --> 00:10:47,040

does.

239

00:10:47,040 --> 00:10:50,240

Soothe feels gentler than maybe relieve.

240

00:10:50,880 --> 00:10:56,160

This kind of strategic collecting turns a simple word list into a nuanced toolkit you can actually deploy.

241

00:10:56,160 --> 00:10:58,960

A toolkit for expressing yourself more precisely.

242

00:10:58,960 --> 00:10:59,760

That's the goal.

243

00:11:00,040 --> 00:11:01,480

You mentioned ache earlier as well.

244

00:11:01,480 --> 00:11:02,880

That could be another good exercise, right?

245

00:11:03,280 --> 00:11:04,560

Compare pain and ache.

246

00:11:04,560 --> 00:11:05,040

Absolutely.

247

00:11:05,040 --> 00:11:06,160

Look them both up.

248

00:11:06,240 --> 00:11:11,280

See how their different collocations highlight their slightly different uses, even though they seem similar.

249

00:11:11,760 --> 00:11:13,760

It's a great way to explore those subtleties.

250

00:11:13,840 --> 00:11:14,640

Fascinating.

251

00:11:14,960 --> 00:11:16,880

Okay, so wrapping up our deep dive today.

252

00:11:16,960 --> 00:11:18,240

The big message is,

253

00:11:18,960 --> 00:11:20,800

Don't underestimate your dictionary.

254

00:11:20,960 --> 00:11:21,560

Definitely not.

255

00:11:21,680 --> 00:11:23,680

It's far more than just definitions.

256

00:11:23,760 --> 00:11:36,480

It's really an invaluable guide, a compass maybe, to navigate the world of collocations, which, as we've seen, is just essential if you want your communication to sound natural, effective, and precise.

257

00:11:36,640 --> 00:11:39,200

In English or really any language you're learning.

258

00:11:39,200 --> 00:11:40,560

And the impact this can have.

259

00:11:41,200 --> 00:11:42,360

It's profound, really.

260

00:11:42,720 --> 00:11:50,160

Actively looking for and learning these word partnerships boosts your fluency, your precision, and ultimately your confidence.

261

00:11:50,160 --> 00:11:51,920

You stop just translating in your head.

262

00:11:52,000 --> 00:11:54,960

Yeah, you start to actually think more naturally in the language itself.

263

00:11:55,320 --> 00:11:56,640

It's a significant shift.

264

00:11:56,960 --> 00:12:01,680

That's all the time we have for this deep dive, but we want to leave you with a final thought to mull over.

265

00:12:02,560 --> 00:12:08,720

What other tools are sitting right there, maybe on your desk or just a click away in your browser that you're overlooking?

266

00:12:08,880 --> 00:12:11,760

Tools waiting for you to unlock their full potential.

267

00:12:11,960 --> 00:12:12,880

That's a good question.

268

00:12:12,880 --> 00:12:18,800

Your dictionary, as we've explored today, might seriously be just the beginning of a whole new approach to learning.