

Aim: to understand and decode the world of non-literal spoken English

Learn English Idioms and Slang via The Scott Mills Show on BBC Radio 1

Introduction:

The Scott Mills Show on BBC Radio 1 (Mon-Fri, 4-7pm) is a goldmine for learners of English. Why? You can listen to this show online for free five nights a week, and you can download a free .mp3 podcast version of the show (without the music) each day. Scott's show is packed full of English idioms, phrasal verbs, slang words, funny expressions, in-jokes, catchphrases, and wordplay, but it's not a lesson – the conversations and chats are real and flow naturally. So there is a lot here for students of English to find out! Plus the show is really funny. :o)

In this lesson we'll look at some of the language used in a recent show, e.g. idioms, phrasal verbs, etc.

About the show:

The Scott Mills Show on BBC Radio 1

Monday to Friday from 4pm to 7pm



Scott Mills – DJ



Beccy Huxtable – Assistant Producer

The One That Doesn't Speak / The One That Spoke Once (TOTSO) – Producer

Other team members: PR4L (The Posh Radio 4 Lady), Tulip, Gemma

Early breakfast show: 1998-2004

Weekend breakfast show: 2004

Drivetime show: July 2004 to present

Honorary Doctorate of Arts (Southampton Solent University – 2009)

<https://purlandtraining.com>

Show's website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/scottmills>
Scott's Twitter: http://www.twitter.com/scott_mills
Unofficial Mills: <http://www.unofficialmills.co.uk>
Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scott_Mills

Free daily podcast: The Scott Mills Daily – contains all of the chat and features, without the music:

Podcast rss feed: <http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/podcasts/radio1/mills/rss.xml>
iTunes podcast: <http://itunes.apple.com/gb/podcast/scott-mills-daily/id135067306>

Regular features on the show:

- **Dear Scott** with the PR4L (listener feedback)
- **Oh! What's Occurring?** (daily phone in quiz)
- **What's Beccy's Forte?** (challenge)
- **Innuendo Bingo** (double entendres heard on TV and radio)
- **It's Only Bley Friday!** (primal shriek that welcomes the weekend)
- **Famous guests**, e.g. Matt Damon, Gerard Butler, David Hasselhoff ("The Hoff"), etc.

Why is it great for students of English?

Scott's show is packed with improvised figurative, non-literal language – language that doesn't mean what it should. The **literal** meaning is different from the **intended** meaning.

The show rewards regular, long-time listeners due to the high volume of catchphrases, repeated expressions, nicknames, and in-jokes.

All the resources are free! Listen live online, or download the daily podcast.

As they chat about a wide range of topics, the team paint highly imaginative pictures with words through the use of various language techniques.

Here are some of the techniques that the team use (both deliberately and naturally):

Idiomatic Language – Language that doesn't mean what it should:

IDIOMS
PHRASAL VERBS
EXPRESSIONS & COLLOQUIAL EXPRESSIONS
SLANG
CLICHÉS

Humorous Language:

General methods:

EXAGGERATION & HYPERBOLE
FLIGHTS OF FANCY & DELIGHT IN LANGUAGE

Humour through repetition:

NICKNAMES
CATCHPHRASES, RUNNING JOKES, & IN-JOKES
NON-STANDARD GRAMMAR

We're going to look at language taken from **ONE SINGLE SHOW**.

Example show:

Date show was broadcast: Thursday 18th March 2010 – 4-7pm
Podcast published: Friday 19th March 2010
Running time: 47:54 mins

I listened and wrote down **119** separate examples of non-literal language and wordplay in the above categories. From **ONE SINGLE SHOW!** We're going to look at some examples during this lesson.

Scott Mills – Language Quiz (25.03.10)

Choose the situation that matches the language

Note: definitions are from Cambridge Dictionaries Online: <http://dictionary.cambridge.org>

1. Idioms

“A group of words in a fixed order that have a particular meaning that is different from the meanings of each word understood on its own.”

Monday’s good for me.

- a) I like Mondays
- b) Monday is a suitable day for a meeting
- c) I had a great time last Monday

2. Phrasal Verbs

“A phrase which consists of a verb in combination with a preposition or adverb or both, the meaning of which is different from the meaning of its separate parts.”

It’s grossing me out!

- a) I feel really bored.
- b) I love what we’re doing now.
- c) I feel sick because you’re showing me something disgusting!

3. Expressions & Colloquial Expressions

“A word or group of words used in a particular situation or by particular people.”

In your face!

- a) I’ve won!
- b) I’m going to punch you in the face.
- c) Be careful.

4. Slang

“Very informal language that is usually spoken rather than written, used especially by particular groups of people.”

He was a bit gutted.

- a) He felt quite disappointed.
- b) He felt quite tired.
- c) He was preparing fish.

5. Clichés

“Something that people have said or done so much that it has become boring or has no real meaning.”

It’s not you, it’s me.

- a) I want to do something to help you.
- b) I’m breaking up with you, and it’s my fault.
- c) I’m breaking up with you, and I don’t want you to feel too upset, so I’m telling you it’s my fault, even though it isn’t.

6. Exaggeration & Hyperbole

Exaggeration: "When you describe something as larger, better, worse, etc. than it really is."

Hyperbole: "When you describe something as much better, more important, etc. than it really is."

We're going to be permanently orange.

- a) We're going to visit a foreign country.
- b) We will wear so much fake tan that our skin will be stained the colour orange for ever.
- c) We are going to get sunburnt.

7. Flights of Fancy & Delight in Language

Flight of Fancy: To go off the subject and explore an imaginary situation or world.

Delight in Language: To enjoy language for its own sake; for the sound it makes rather than just the meaning; exploring the creative possibilities of language, rather than only using it to communicate.

They put all your stuff in a massive bin bag, and you're off...

- a) I'm imagining going on holiday.
- b) I'm imagining working as a rubbish collector.
- c) I'm imagining getting fired from my job.

8. Nicknames

"An informal name for someone or something, especially a name which you are called by your friends or family, usually based on your proper name or your character."

Big Steve...

- a) ...is a very tall man.
- b) ...is a sports physiotherapist.
- c) ...is an insurance clerk.

9. Catchphrases, Running Jokes, & In-Jokes

Catchphrase: "A phrase which is often repeated by and therefore becomes connected with a particular organization or person, especially someone famous such as a television entertainer."

Running joke: "A running gag is a literary device which often takes the form of an amusing joke or a comical reference and appears repeatedly throughout a work of literature or other form of storytelling." (en.wikipedia.org)

In-joke: "A private joke which can only be understood by a limited group of people who have a special knowledge of something that is referred to in the joke."

You complete me.

- a) Scott is talking to his mum.
- b) Scott is talking to Beccy, his co-presenter.
- c) Scott is talking to a listener, who he has never spoken to before.

10. Non-standard Grammar

Scott and the team often use non-standard grammar in phrases which are repeated and later become catchphrases. They are also in-jokes because regular listeners know that they are deliberate mistakes, while new listeners often write in to complain about the use of non-standard grammar on national radio.

...off of the war and stuff. / ...old photos off of sepia

- a) Scott doesn't know how to use English grammar properly.
- b) Scott uses bad grammar for comic effect.

**Listen to Scott and Beccy and write down features
of non-literal English that you hear!**

Date of show: _____

IDIOMS:	PHRASAL VERBS:
EXPRESSIONS:	SLANG:
CLICHÉS:	EXAGGERATION & HYPERBOLE
FLIGHTS OF FANCY:	NICKNAMES:
CATCHPHRASES, RUNNING JOKES, & IN-JOKES	NON-STANDARD GRAMMAR: