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# Dealing with Word Combinations

## Povzetek

### Besedne zveze in njihova obravnava

Članek obravnava težave, povezane s prevajanjem besednih zvez, kot na primer fraznih glagolov, kolokacij in idiomov, iz slovenščine v angleščino in obratno. Avtor tudi oceni vrednost prevajalskih orodij in predlaga primerne prevajalske strategije.

## Abstract

### Dealing with Word Combinations

The article addresses problems associated with the translation of word combinations such as phrasal verbs, collocations and idioms between Slovene and English. The author evaluates the use of various translation tools and recommends appropriate translation strategies.

## Introduction

Corpus evidence has confirmed that language is strongly patterned with words occurring repeatedly in lexico-grammatical patterns. Many **multi-word expressions** or **word combinations** (*besedne zveze*) function as structural or se-

mantic units in English, and many of these show a strong degree of fixedness (*stalne besedne zveze*). Different multi-word expressions can be distinguished according to their **invariability** and **idiomaticity**, as we shall see below.

## Multi-word verbs

One characteristic feature of English is the frequent use of multi-word lexical verbs. The most common can be characterised as **phrasal verbs** and **prepositional verbs**. Phrasal verbs contain an adverbial particle (e.g. out, in, up, down, on, off, etc.) which has an extended meaning beyond its usual core spatial or locative meaning. The difference can be illustrated by the following example:

look up [into the sky] = prepositional verb  
look up [in a dictionary] = phrasal verb

In addition, we also find **phrasal-prepositional verbs** (V + adv particle + prep) such as 'get away with' and **multi-word verb constructions**, such as 'take a look at' (V + NP + prep), 'take into account' (V + prep phrase) and 'make do' (V + V).

The meaning of such multi-word lexical verbs is not always transparent, nor is it necessarily clear that they are functioning as single semantic units. Moreover, confusion can result from the fact that all the structural patterns we have mentioned above can also occur as **free combi-**



**nations** (*proste besedne zveze*) where each element has separate grammatical and semantic status. And it is hard to make the distinction between fixed and free: we are not dealing with an either/or situation here, but rather a cline from relatively free to relatively fixed. This means that such patterns can pose a problem when translating from English to Slovene, particularly as such units are often difficult to locate in or-

inary dictionaries or simply do not merit a separate entry. When translating into English they probably represent an even greater problem: many translations are **marked** by their preference for single word verbs, where a similar English text would contain many multi-word verbs. The best approach to take in the circumstances is to treat such patterns in the same way as collocations or idioms, which we shall turn to now.

## Collocations (*kolokacije*)

These are simply associations between lexical words so that the words co-occur more frequently than they would by chance; they are statistical associations rather than fixed expressions. The individual words in a collocation retain their own meaning. Words with similar meanings are often distinguished by their preferred collocations, for example:

small [amount, matter, part, print, quantity, sum, size, world]

little [air, baby, bit, boy, girl, kid, kiss, kitten, mistake, smack, thing, while]

Collocations are defined by the *BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English* (BBI) as **recurrent semi-fixed word combinations**. They can be divided into **grammatical collocations**, which consist of a dominant word (noun, adjective/participle, verb) plus a preposition or grammatical construction (clause, infinitive), and **lexical collocations**, where there is no dominant word. Lexical collocations consist of nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs; they usually do not contain prepositions, infinitives or clauses. In a free lexical combination, the two elements do not repeatedly co-occur, they are not bound together in any way, whereas we recognise the elements of a collocation as somehow 'belonging together'. Thus we distinguish between 'condemn murder' as a free combination and 'commit murder' as a collocation.

In the BBI, grammatical collocations are listed under the **dominant word**. Here are examples of the different patterns represented:

**N + prep:**  
apathy towards, interest in, excitement about, a policy on, respect for

**N + to + infinitive:**  
they had the right to do it, he made an effort to do it,

**N + that clause:**  
reach an agreement that, take an oath that  
**prep + N:**

by chance, by accident, in advance, at the ready, on the alert, on somebody's advice, to somebody's advantage

**adj + prep:**  
angry at, fond of, hungry for, tired of, deaf to [pleas]

**pred adj + to + infinitive:**  
it was necessary for them to, it was designed to operate at

**adj + that clause:**  
concerned that, afraid that, delighted that, surprised that

There are also a large number of **verb patterns** (too numerous to go into here, but including phrasal and multi-word verbs, as well as different patterns of complementation) which are listed under the **verb**.

As far as lexical collocations are concerned, the search procedure is complicated by the lack of a dominant word. The first step to take is to look under the **noun** if there is one; if there are two nouns, look under the **second noun**; if there is no noun, look under the **adjective**; and if there is no noun or adjective, look under the **verb**. Here are examples of the most common patterns:

**V + N/proN (or prep phrase):**  
come to an agreement, make an impression, reach a verdict, set an exam, sit an exam, pose a question, issue a warning, impose a fine, give a quote (*predračun*), confirm a suspicion, accept re-



sponsibility, perform an operation, reverse a decision, withdraw an offer, ease tension, renege on a promise, squander a fortune, revoke a license

adj + N:

rough estimate, sweeping generalisation, best wishes, chronic alcoholic, pitched battle, reckless driving, crushing defeat, land reform, house arrest

N + V ('characteristic'):

bees buzz, alarms go off, blood flows, traffic circulates, blizzards rage, demonstrators march

'unit' of N:

swarm of bees, flock of birds, bunch of flowers, article of clothing, piece of advice/information, act of violence

adv + adj:

strictly accurate, intimately acquainted, hopelessly lost, sound asleep, deeply absorbed, terribly upset

V + adv:

apologise humbly, affect profoundly, appreciate sincerely, argue heatedly, discuss calmly

Collocations show differing degrees of fixedness, from unrestricted where the lexical item is open to partnership with wide range of items (run a business /a car /a shop /a country /a risk), to semi-restricted, where the number of items is more determined (harbour a doubt /a grudge/an escaped convict), to familiar or restricted (vicious circle, innocent bystander, unrequited love, unmitigated disaster, rancid butter, rotten fish, amicable divorce, stark naked, pitch black); we might also add here irreversible binomials – pairs of nouns separated by 'and' whose order cannot be reversed (cash and carry, ups and downs, hit and miss, assault and battery). However, there are no clear divisions between these categories, again there is more of a cline.

## Idioms (*idiomi/frazemi*)

These are relatively invariable expressions with a **meaning that cannot be predicted** from or is **"not entirely derivable** from the meanings of their parts" (Biber et al 1999, 1024). Idioms are unique to a language (although that does not mean we can not translate them) and are **institutionalised**, i.e. the string of words is recognised and accepted as a lexical item of the language (Moon 1998). Idioms are metaphorical to a greater or lesser degree, and thus range from reasonably transparent (i.e. we can 'guess' the meaning) to opaque (the meaning has to be explained). But however transparent they are, we have to learn their meaning as a whole.

Idiomatic expressions are not completely invariable; so, for instance, the verb in phrases such as 'kick the bucket' (die) or 'beat about the bush' (prevaricate) may vary for tense, number and aspect. However, they are relatively fixed with regard to content words: thus '\*kick the pail', '\*hit the bucket with your foot', '\*beat about the shrub' are not idioms. Idiomatic phrases can represent many different kinds of structural units:

N phrase:

a piece of cake, a slap in the face, the last straw, pecking order

V + N phrase:

miss the boat, face the music, bite the bullet, kick a habit, keep an eye on, smell a rat, throw the book at, waste one's breath, grasp the nettle

adj + N:

red tape, green fingers, blue film, white elephant, black market

prep phrase:

not on your life, at daggers drawn, at your fingertips, on the tip of one's tongue, in a nutshell, from the horse's mouth, behind s.one's back

wh-questions:

What in the world ...? How on earth ...? What's up?

According to the corpus-based *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (Biber et al 1999) idioms are probably far less frequent than we think. They are more common in fiction and fictional dialogue than in real life conversation or news or academic texts. Certain phrases, such as 'bear in mind' and 'take into account' do appear frequently in expository writing; and colloquial idioms, such as 'miss the train' and 'get on



the fast track' are used strikingly in news reports; but in most fields the number of idioms we might expect to encounter is limited. The same is true of other fixed expressions such as **proverbs** (*pregovori*), **similes** (*primere*) (as cool as a cucumber; like gold dust) **catch phrases** or **quotations**

(An eye for an eye; Curiouser and curiouser; We are not amused; Make my day), and **social formulae** (How do you do? Long time, no see! Cheers! Hip, hip, hooray! Ladies and gentlemen.)

## Translating fixed expressions

When translating fixed expressions, we may find **one-to-one correspondence** at lexical, structural and semantic levels, e.g. black sheep – *črna ovca*; or **semantic correspondence** e.g. hot potato – *vroč kostanj*; e.g. *Kot ptiček na veji* – As free as a bird (recent article about an escaped prisoner) or settle for **descriptive correspondence**, e.g. white elephant – *prava zguba*. In translating from Slovene, the problem will largely be one of stylistic marking: if the translator is unfamiliar with appropriate fixed expressions then the translation is likely to be much less idiomatic than the original and thus be differently received by the reader (for instance, in tourist brochures and promotional texts idioms are routinely used, often in a self-conscious way, to create a hyperbolic effect). In translating from English, the translator may be faced with an extremely difficult problem, as in the following literary example:

'Pass the frying pan.'

'You've forgotten the magic word,' said Harry irritably.

The effect of this simple sentence on the rest of the family was incredible ...

'I meant "please"!' said Harry quickly. 'I didn't mean –'

(Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, J. K. Rowling, p. 7)

'Prinesi mi ponev s slanino.'

Harry je imel vsega dovolj.

"Bodi bolj vljuden, sicer te bom začaral v krastačo," se je razjezil.

Učinek tega stavka na Dursleyjeve je bil neverjeten ...

"Ne, ne, saj ga ne bi začaral," je hitro rekel Harry. "Takoj grem po slanino".

(*Harry Potter: Dvorana skrivnosti*, pp. 5–6)

The 'magic word' in question is simply 'please', as in the idiom 'What's the magic word?' used to teach children, and sometimes adults, to be polite. The Slovene expression *Kako se reče?* does not really help in this context, as it could not be misinterpreted in the same way. In the circumstances, the translator has decided to make the threat an overt one (in the original it is totally unintentional) which of course changes the whole nature of the exchange and is somewhat out of character for Harry. It also leads to an odd inconsistency, with him threatening to use magic on his cousin, then saying he would not.

A further literary example shows a proverb being translated as if it were non-idiomatic:

Koenig je zdrsnil bliže k meni. "Bi rad kaj spumpal iz mene, Bleichert? Bi tudi ti rad trosil grde reči o Fritzieu?"

"Ne, samo radoveden sem."

"Radovednost je pokončala mačko. Zapomni si to."

(*Črna dalija*, James Ellroy, DZS 2000, p. 130)

Readers unfamiliar with the English proverb 'Curiosity killed the cat' might well react with perplexity to this turn in the conversation and the meaning of the exchange will be rendered much less transparent. The translator would have been better advised using a Slovene expression such as *Ne vtikaj nosu v stvari, ki te ne briga* – *jo* in place of the two short sentences.

Outside of literary translation and subtitling, such problems are probably relatively infrequent, so let us now return the far more common issue of how to deal with collocations.



## Translating and using collocations

Before we can translate a collocation we have to be able to recognise it as such and establish its meaning; we then have to determine whether, in the context in question, it is translatable by a collocation, by a single word, or by a free combination. For example, it may be the case that a collocation in one language may be translated in many contexts by a single word in the other: *angleški jezik* – English, *rdeča barva* – red, *prioritetna naloga* – priority, *gorski svet* – mountains, *spraviti v red* – tidy, *skomigniti z rameni* – shrug. Similarly, when translating single words or combinations of words we have to establish whether or not the translation solution might involve a collocation (or idiomatic expression). So in particular contexts we may well find the following translations: *birokracija* – red tape, *odnesti* – make off with, *preložiti* – put off, *poslabšanje* – turn for the worse.

## Using books and CD-ROMs

To see how these tools may be used, let us take as an example the Slovene collocation *hud udarec*, which we have found in an economic report. We might be confident about the noun 'blow' as an appropriate translation in the context, but what adjective should modify it? The *Slovensko-angleški slovar* on CD-ROM offers: "bad; evil; (čas, doba) hard; (rana) bad, (občutljiva) sore; (jezen) angry; ZDA sore, mad" – none of which seem appropriate. Let's take a look at the *BBJ*. This offers the following modifying adjectives: "a body; crushing, hard, heavy, powerful, resounding, severe, staggering, telling; decisive; fatal, mortal; glancing, light ~". This might be enough to confirm an already held idea; on the other hand it might leave us feeling equally bemused, as it offers no illustrative contexts for this plethora of possibilities.

The *Cobuild English Collocations* on CD-ROM is more helpful. It offers 8,765 collocates for 'blow', with the 20 most frequent containing

## Tools

There are a number of tools that can help us here. The most obvious are dictionaries, in particular specialist dictionaries of collocations and idioms (see *References* at the end of this article). Dictionaries on CD-ROM, such as the excellent *Oxford English Dictionary*, are more convenient for searching, but of course most are still unavailable in this format. The *Collins Cobuild English Collocations* on CD-ROM (1995 version) features 140,000 collocations and provides 2.6 million examples of actual use from The Bank of English corpus. There are also of course, corpus-es available online that can be accessed for free, such as the *Collins Cobuild Concordance and Collocations Sampler* (demo facility, 55 million words of spoken and written text) and the *British National Corpus* (SARA page, 40 million words; for addresses and other links, see end of article).

the adjectives 'major' (166 examples), 'serious' (149), 'severe' (133), 'body' (110) and 'devastating' (108). Clicking on any of these will bring up 20 examples with an immediate context of around 12-15 words; a further click will display a wider context of about 40 words – more than enough to make the exact use and text type completely clear (the type of source is cited below the quotation). The main selection criterion should, of course, be similarity of context, but information concerning relative frequency can also be of value to the translator. When translating from English a text concerned with the economy, one may wonder how stylistically marked the collocation 'body blow' is: the fact that 'body' is the 4<sup>th</sup> most frequent adjective and overall 12<sup>th</sup> on the list of collocates of 'blow' suggests that the collocation is unlikely to be restricted to only one particular field (such as sport). Clicking on the first of the 20 examples gives us the following:



"... is growing into a fear that tourism, like many other sectors of the economy, is in for a heavy body blow. For more than a month now, the Federal Government has been in softening-up mode, preparing Australia ...

Source: Journalism (Australian)"

## Online searches<sup>1</sup>

A single word search via the Collins Cobuild collocation sampler (free demo facility) will offer the hundred "statistically most significant" collocates for the word in question, listed in order of significance. Searching via the concordancer will offer up to 40 lines of concordances; the search can be restricted to one or more of British text, American text or British transcribed speech and can be further refined using "query syntax". Thus word combinations with intervening words can be sought, as well as inflected forms (blows, blowing, blew etc.), word sets and parts of speech (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, article, past participle, *-ing* form, past tense). Searching the BNC using the SARA facility will provide you with a maximum of 50 randomly-generated sentences featuring the target word(s); again the search can be refined using special characters.

Such searches can be a useful way of checking whether a Slovene collocation can be translated directly into English. For instance, one may be tempted to translate *stara celina* by '[the] old continent' and yet searching for this via SARA brings only one hit: "I have brought you folks here from all over Scandinavia because some of you are fresh from the States and this little old continent is different from back home"; this would suggest that 'old continent' is not a collocation. Similarly, searching for 'seventh art' (as a translation for *sedma umetnost*) brings no solutions at all, while 'red thread' (for *rdeča nit*) brings 5 results, all of which are non-idiomatic and have no connection with the idea of a 'recurring theme'. Or perhaps you wish to check whether it is chickens that lay golden eggs in English, as they do in Slovene? A search

A look at other examples confirms that the collocation is a regular one in such a context and can thus be translated by a collocation that does not carry any connotations beyond the most obvious one.

quickly reveals that it is 'the goose that lays the golden egg'. You need to translate the collocation *brez večjih incidentov*: you search for 'without + 1incident\*' (this allows for 1 intervening word and the plural of the noun) and find that 'without incident' is the usual collocation, but that the noun can be pre-modified by 'major' or 'serious' and that it is usually in the singular. If translating the collocation *po poročilih*, a search will confirm that the usual preposition is 'according to' and that the noun can be either singular (a/the report) or plural (reports). Similarly, searching for alternative translations for *po podatkih*, reveals only one occurrence of 'according to data', but a large number of results for 'according to figures'. A closer look at the 40 lines displayed shows that this pattern is most often followed by: the preposition 'from' plus the name of the source of the figures; a past participle plus 'by' (released by, compiled by, published by, prepared by); or by the preposition 'out' followed by a time adverbial, e.g. 'out yesterday'.

It is likely that the same collocations recur in similar texts and thus bi-lingual (mono-directional) glossaries of collocations and the syntactical patterns accompanying them can soon be built up. Within specialist areas, there are also on-line facilities that may help establish whether a collocation exists and how it is used. Thus the Eurodicautom site (see references) will allow you to look for words, phrases, a list of words, or a root; you can also specify the number of documents to display. Searching for the words 'entry ticket' that I encountered in a text relating to funding for EU projects and was unfamiliar with led to a text containing a sen-

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed discussion of the use of corpora as a translation tool the reader is referred to Nataša Hirci's article in *Mostovi* 2001.



tence that confirmed its use: "For the candidate countries, writing the formal letter of interest

and agreeing the entry ticket is just the beginning of a lengthy process."

## In conclusion

When translating, we should be focusing on the frequently recurring lexico-grammatical patterns that characterise languages rather than individual lexical items on the one hand and 'grammar' on the other (for example, the appropriate use of prepositions is largely a matter of collocation). Translating from English, we need to pay particular attention to the recognition of lexical and grammatical collocations, as well as idioms and other fixed expressions, so that we can distinguish them from free combinations and select an appropriate translation strategy.

Translating into English, the texts we produce will be (unintentionally) stylistically marked if we fail to use the collocations that would naturally occur in the contexts in question. Monolingual dictionaries and CD-ROM resources can be of great assistance here, as can online corpora, although all have their limitations. Ultimately, it is probably up to each of us to create our own bilingual resources of the collocations that occur frequently in the types of texts we most often translate.

## Exercises

Here are some exercises on the translation of collocations and idioms for practice and information.

1. *How would you translate the following collocations and idioms involving 'black'?*

[accident] black spot, black eye, black box [flight recorder], black economy, in the black, black and blue, in black and white, black out (v. & n.), black ice, black look, black mark, [on the] black market, black-tie [event]

2. *How would you translate the following collocations and idioms involving 'črn'?*

črna noč, črna tema, črne oči, črno pivo, črn od sonca, črna revščina, črna nevhvaležnost, črni kontinent, črno zlato, črna lista (črn seznam), zadeti v črno, črna gradnja

3. *How would you translate the following collocations involving the noun 'red'?*

pravni red, vrstni red, dnevni red (na sestanku), privaditi se na dnevni red, dnevni red konference, sedežni red, vozni red, hišni red, spraviti lase/obleko v red

4. *How would you translate the following involving the verb 'sodelovati'?*

čprav sta delala na istem področju, nista sodelovala ...

dobro in korektno sodelovati ...

vsi, ki so sodelovali pri knjigi ...

sodeloval je pri projektu ...

v komisijah sodeluje širok krog občanov ...

sodeluje v domačih in tujih revijah ...

sodelovati na natečaju ...

sodelovati na razstavi / sejmu ...

sodelovati na tečaju / konferenci ...

otroci pri pouku sodelujejo ...

aktivno sodelovati ...

5. *How would you translate the following newspaper headlines?*

Streli v prazno

Neprofitna stanovanja še vedno kamen spotike ...

Ribičem se slabo piše ...

Dišijo jim boljši avti ...

Bosta Kad in Sod pljunila v lastno skledo? ...

Vročje kovanje podtaknili vladi ...

Koprski policisti so strli trd oreh ...

Z udarci po žepu nad prometno kulturo ...

Ustavno sodišče pod žensko roko ...

Nakup banke še vroča tema ...



Dvaindvajset milijard na mah ...  
 Brez muje se magistre kuje ...  
 Italijan je živel na veliki nogi ...  
 Občutljivi fant vstal iz pepela ...  
 Čeh je ostal v senci Zahoviča ...  
 Vladni sokol še vedno brez kril ...

6. The two headlines below are from articles about all the new coffee shops in Britain. Which is easier to translate into Slovene and why?

The bitter truth about Britain's coffee craze  
 Spilling the beans

## Reference works

*Collins Cobuild English Collocations* on CD-ROM

*Oxford English Dictionary* on CD-ROM

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*The Most Practical Reference to the Idiomatic Expressions of Contemporary English*. Spears, R.A. and Kirkpatrick, B. (1993) USA: National Textbook Company.

Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language

## Internet resources

*Collins Cobuild Concordance and Collocations Sampler* at <http://www.cobuild.collins.co.uk/form.html>

*British National Corpus* at <http://sara.nat-corp.ox.ac.uk/lookup.html>

*Eurodicautom* on EU-related language use at [http://europa.eu.int/geninfo/query\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/geninfo/query_en.htm)

*International Corpus of English* on international variants<sup>2</sup> <http://www.hku.hk/english/research/ice/index.htm>

*Wolverhampton Business English Corpus* <http://www.elda.fr/cata/text/W0028.html>

*Business Letter Corpus* with an online KWIC concordancer <http://isweb9.infoseek.co.jp/school/ysomeya/>

For general information on corpora and many useful links go to David Leefs site at <http://devoted.to/corpora>

*FIDA* corpus of Slovene at <http://www.fi-da.net/>

<sup>2</sup> Thanks to Šarolta Godnič Vičič for drawing my attention to this and the following three sites.



Beseda corpus, Fran Ramovš Slovene Institute at ZRC SAZU

[http://bos.zrc-sazu.si/main\\_si\\_12.html](http://bos.zrc-sazu.si/main_si_12.html)

Parallel Slovene-English Corpus of texts developed by 3<sup>rd</sup> Year students of the Department of Translation, FF, guided by Špela Vintar:

## Key to exercises

Note that these are suggested translations only; other possibilities will depend on the context.

1. [accident] black spot – *črna točka*, black eye – *podpluto oko*, black box [flight recorder] – *črna skrinjica*, black economy – *črna ekonomija*, in the black – *v plusu* / *v pozitivnem stanju*, black and blue – *hudo pretepen*, in black and white – *črno na belem*, black out – *v. omedleti*, *črno se mi dela pred očmi* / *n. zmanjka elektrike*, black ice – *poledica* (although the English expression has the added sense of 'invisible'), black look – *grdo gledati*, black mark – *črna pika*, [on the] black market – *na črno* / *črni trg*, black-tie [event] – *formalno obleka* / *večerna toaleta obvezna*

2. *črna noč* – dark night, *črna tema* – pitch black, *črne oči* – dark eyes, *črno pivo* – dark beer / stout, *črn od sonca* – suntanned, as brown as a berry, *črna revščina* – abject poverty, *črna nehvaležnost* – base/rank ingratitude, *črni kontinent* – Africa ('the dark Continent' rarely used), *črno zlato* – 'black gold' may be used for oil (infrequent) but not coal, *črna lista* (*črn seznam*) – list of suspects, *zadeti v črno* – hit the nail on the head, get it in one, *črna gradnja* – illegal building / without planning permission

3. *pravni red* – legal system / laws / legislation, *vrstni red* – order, *dnevni red* (*na sestanku*) – agenda, *privaditi se na dnevni red* – adapt to a new routine, *dnevni red konference* – conference programme (agenda), *sedežni red* – seating arrangement, *vozni red* – timetable, *hišni red* – house rules, *spraviti lase/obleko v red* – tidy your hair/clothes

4. *čeprav sta delala na istem področju, nista sodelovala* – although they worked in the same field, they didn't work together

Presentation <http://www.ai.ijs.si/~spela/trans-index.html>

Search <http://nl2.ijs.si/corpus/index2-bi.html>

*dobro in korektno sodelovati* – work together in an appropriate fashion

*vsi, ki so sodelovali pri knjigi* – all those who worked on the book

*sodeloval je pri projektu* – took part in the project

*v komisijah sodeluje širok krog občanov* – the commission is made up of a wide range of citizens

*sodeluje v domačih in tujih revijah* – contributes to / appears in local and international reviews

*sodelovati na natečaju* – submit an application / offer [OR take part in an invitation to tender]

*sodelovati na razstavi / sejmu* – appear / exhibit at an exhibition / fair

*sodelovati na tečaju / konferenci* – attend a course / conference

*otroci pri pouku sodelujejo* – the children contribute to / get involved in classes

*aktivno sodelovati* – play an active part in / actively contribute / actively participate

5. *Strelj v prazno* – A shot in the dark

*Neprofitna stanovanja še vedno kamen spotike* – Low cost/subsidised housing still a stumbling block

*Ribičem se slabo piše* – Things look bad for fishermen / Fishermen face difficult times

*Dišijo jim boljši avti* – A taste/fancy for classy cars

*Bosta Kad in Sod pljunila v lastno skledo?* – Will CAF and SCF shoot themselves in the foot / score an own goal? (The play on words is lost)

*Vročje kovanje podtaknili vladi* – Time bomb under the Government

*Koprski policisti so strli trd oreh* – Koper police crack it / difficult case



*Z udarci po žepu nad prometno kulturo* – Hitting motorists where it hurts / motorists' wallets  
*Ustavno sodišče pod žensko roko* – Woman to head constitutional court

*Nakup banke še vroča tema* – Sale of bank still a burning issue

*Dvaindvajset milijard na mah* – 22 billion at a stroke / at one go

*Brez muje se magistre kuje* – An easy route to a master's degree (The allusion is lost)

*Italijan je živel na veliki nogi* – Italian's life of luxury / lived it up (Note that nationality is not usually referred in the English press unless relevant to the story)

*Občutljivi fant vstal iz pepela* – Vulnerable player makes a comeback

*Čeh je ostal v senci Zahoviča* – Čeh overshadowed by Zahovič

*Vladni sokol še vedno brez kril* – Government yet yet to take off (Note that 'hawk' would not have the same connotations)

6. The first headline involves a collocation that can easily be translated (*grenka resnica*), while the second depends on idiom, meaning 'to disclose a secret', as well as on the polysemic 'bean' (*fižol, kavino zrno*).