

Here is an extract from **David Lodge's** novel **Nice Work** (1988).

Part of the humour of the book derives from **the clash of two worlds**. A university academic (in **semiotic materialism**), Dr Robyn Penrose visits the world of the industrialist (Vic Wilcox is **Managing Director of Pringle's engineering firm**). Here is a passage which describes her impression of the other world (p. 121).

At Pringle's there was **scarcely** any **colour**, not a clean overall in sight, and instead of Mozart there was a deafening **demonic cacophony** that never **relented**. Nor had she been able to **comprehend** what was going on. There seemed to be no **logic** or **direction** to the factory's activities. **Individuals** or small **groups** of men worked on **separate tasks** with no perceptible relation to each other. **Components** were **stacked** in **piles** all over the factory floor like the **contents** of an **attic**. The whole **place** seem **designed** to **produce**, not goods for the outside world, but **misery** for the inmates. What Wilcox called the **machine shop** had seemed like a **prison**, and the **foundry** had seemed like hell.

And here is Vic Wilcox's reaction (the beginning and the end of the paragraph) to meeting Robyn Penrose (p. 116).

Jesus wept! Not just a lecturer in English Literature, not just a woman lecturer in English Literature, but a trendy lefty feminist lecturer in English Literature! A tall trendy leftist feminist lecturer in English Literature! Vic Wilcox scuttled into the Director's Lavatory as if in to a place of sanctuary. It was a large, dank, chilly room, empty at this moment, which had been lavishly appointed, in more prosperous times, with marble washbasins and brass taps, but was now badly in need of redecoration. He stood at the urinal and peed fiercely at the white ceramic wall, streaked with rusty tear-stains from the corroding pipes. What the hell was he going to do with this woman every Wednesday for the next two months? Stuart Baxter must be off his trolley, sending someone like that. Or was it a plot?

KEY to colour coding

dark blue	Old English/Anglo-Saxon (MnE >OE)
brown	Latin (MnE >Lat)
purple	Latin through French (MnE>Fr>Lat)
magenta	French (MnE>Fr)
dark green	Greek (MnE>Gk)
lighter green	Norse (MnE>ON)
black	names ignored

Does this information reveal anything about the nature of English lexis. How have the words been used in the two passages?

<<http://courses.nus.edu.sg/course/elltankw/EL1102-t6.htm>>