

18 FORMAS VERBAIS III

Free at last!

Posted 25 Jan 2001



After 12 years in prison, a Texas inmate walked free on Jan. 17. The exoneration came courtesy of University of Wisconsin-Madison law students and professors – and DNA tests proving that Christopher Ochoa, now 33, was innocent of a 1988 rape and murder.

Fortunately for Ochoa, evidence from the crime was still available for DNA fingerprinting, a simple test that can prove whether a biological sample did or did not come from a suspect.

The arrival of cheap and fast DNA fingerprinting is overturning the quest to convict the guilty and free the innocent. The technology is far more specific than earlier tests of antibodies in blood or semen. Terry Laber, who directed the blood laboratory at the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, says, "Before DNA, you'd have a good suspect, and do all the tests you could do, and you'd end up with 30 percent to 40 percent of the population qualifying."

But when biological samples – from blood, skin cells or semen – are DNA fingerprinted, the specific DNA sequence is extremely unlikely to be found except in the perpetrator. A match, Laber says, is "very powerful evidence."

→ Leaving death row

If the suspect's DNA does not match the sample, however, the test becomes convincing evidence for the defense. DNA tests have helped spring 10 people from death

row since 1993, according to Richard Dieter, executive director of the Death Penalty Information Center.

These 10, among 93 capital convictions that have been vacated since 1973, have helped raise public fears that executions may be based on questionable convictions. On Jan. 31, 2000, Illinois Governor George Ryan announced a "moratorium" on executions, after 13 men had been released from the state's death row. Ronald Jones, for example, was released in 1997 after being convicted of rape and murder in 1989. DNA tests did not link him to the crime scene.

Dieter says the technique is so "powerful and scientifically reliable" that it can, as in Ochoa's case, even refute a confession. "The public tends to put a lot of reliance on it. It can result in a dramatic shift" in legal status.

- Still, limits

But DNA fingerprinting does not help every convict who asks for it. In September, 2000, Derek Barnebei was executed in Virginia for raping and murdering his girlfriend. The test he'd sought located his DNA in tissue taken from under the victim's fingernails after the 1993 crime. Barnebei claimed innocence to the end.

DNA fingerprinting

is useful

to prosecutors

and defenders,

but no panacea.

While Dieter welcomes DNA's ability to illuminate guilt and innocence, he says it is "not a panacea for every case, it may not be involved in a simple shooting, where somebody dies but there are no bodily fluids left."

There's also a disturbing possibility that DNA fingerprinting could finger the wrong person – if labs make mistakes, or if cops plant evidence or lie on the witness stand. Such allegations – although they do not concern capital cases – are the focus of the ongoing Los Angeles police scandal.

(Disponível em: < http://whyfiles.org/126dna_forensic/index.html >. Acesso em: 06/07/2009)

THE OCHOA CASE AND FALSE CONFESSIONS

45 Death penalty opponents say the Ochoa case highlights a larger problem: False confessions made to avoid the death penalty. Ochoa, for example, confessed despite being innocent and having no criminal record. "The Ochoa case (...) serves to highlight the phenomenon of false confessions caused by fear of the death penalty," says Keith Findley, who co-directs the University of Wisconsin-Madison project that helped exonerate the Texas man.

Extraído de: Testing DNA Testing

(Disponível em: < http://whyfiles.org/126dna_forensic/4.html>. Acesso em: 06/07/2009)

FAMILIARIZAÇÃO COM O TEXTO

1 Observando a ilustração e o título, procure antecipar o assunto do texto.

2 Faça uma leitura rápida do texto para confirmar/descartar suas hipóteses. O texto respondeu às suas expectativas? A ilustração influenciou a formulação das hipóteses sobre o assunto?

3 Leia o texto novamente e localize as seguintes informações:

a O período de tempo que Ochoa passou na prisão: _____

b Os crimes dos quais ele foi acusado: _____

c O que ajudou a provar sua inocência: _____

d Uma definição de "DNA fingerprinting": _____

e O nome do prisioneiro que não conseguiu ser inocentado com o exame de DNA: _____

f 3 exemplos de amostras biológicas que servem para exame de DNA: _____

4 Com base no texto, assinale as afirmações corretas:

- a Ochoa foi o único condenado a livrar-se da pena de morte ao recorrer ao exame de DNA.
- b O resultado do exame de DNA tanto pode confirmar a culpa de um suspeito como pode isentá-lo da mesma.
- c O fato de o DNA do suspeito ser encontrado na vítima constitui uma forte evidência de sua ligação com o crime.
- d Não há nenhum risco na utilização do resultado da análise do DNA em processos criminais.

5 Utilize o contexto para inferir o significado das palavras/frases destacadas e assinale a alternativa correta:

- a If the suspect's DNA does not **match the sample**, however, the test becomes convincing evidence for the defense.

combinar com a amostra contaminar a amostra destruir a amostra

- b DNA tests have helped **spring** 10 people from death row since 1993,...

mandar condenar soltar

- c There's also a disturbing possibility that DNA fingerprinting could finger the wrong person -- if labs make mistakes, or if cops plant evidence or lie on the **witness stand**.

banco dos réus banco das testemunhas banco dos jurados

6 Utilizando o contexto, deduza o significado das palavras/frases destacadas:

- a ... a Texas **inmate walked free** on Jan. 17.

- b The arrival of cheap and fast DNA fingerprinting is overturning the quest to convict the **guilty** and **free** the innocent.

- c DNA tests have helped spring 10 people from **death row** since 1993,...

- d There's also a disturbing possibility that DNA fingerprinting could **finger** the wrong person -- if labs make mistakes, or if cops plant evidence or lie in the witness stand.

7 No grupo de palavras abaixo, assinale os termos usados pelo autor para se referir a um preso, supostamente criminoso.

inmate convict cop perpetrator suspect

APRESENTAÇÃO E PRÁTICA DE ASPECTO LINGUÍSTICO MODAIS

OS MODAIS dão sentido especial aos verbos que acompanham. Observe a descrição de alguns deles. (Para ler sobre outros modais, vá aos Anexos, na página 153)

- **1. CAN:** indica possibilidade¹ ou habilidade/capacidade física²

Exemplo¹:

*Smoking **can** cause cancer.*

*Scotland **can** be very warm in September.*

Exemplo²:

***Can** you drive?*

*We **can** see the lake from our bedroom window.*

*"Chocolate addiction sounds like a joke, but many feel such intense craving, they insist they **can't** function without it."*

Fonte: Top Santé – Health & Beauty, November 1994, p.51

- **2. COULD:** indica o **passado de can**¹; indica também o **futuro condicional**², especialmente quando o autor está sugerindo algo (poderia).

Exemplo¹:

*My grandmother **could** speak five languages.*

*Alf played well, but he **couldn't** beat Jack.*

Exemplo²:

*The new medicine **could** be the solution to our problems.*

*This **could** be your big chance.*

*"It pays well, the hours are fine and your colleagues are great so why don't you like your job? It **could** be because you are just not suited to it."*

Fonte: Top Santé – Health & Beauty, November 1994, p.51

.3. MAY: indica permissão¹ ou probabilidade²

Exemplo¹:

May I turn on the television? (Posso?)

Exemplo²:

I **may** fly to Recife next week. (Talvez)

*"People with insomnia **may** be able to get a good night's sleep by simply exposing themselves to 15 minutes of daylight in the morning, say scientists."*

Fonte: Femail.co.uk, By James Chapman

.4. MIGHT: o mesmo que **may**, porém com menor ênfase:

Exemplo¹:

I wonder if I **might** ask you a favor? (poderia – formal)

Exemplo²:

Peter **might** phone. If he does, could you ask him to ring later?

*"Open people are happiest working in a job where they can use their creative skills and work with their ideas. They **might** work in public relations, the media and advertising, but on the more creative side, either in design or marketing."*

Fonte: Femail.co.uk, By Chrissy Harris

Os segmentos abaixo extraídos do texto "Free at last" contêm modais. Identifique-os e assinale os sentidos que eles atribuem aos verbos que acompanham:

a Fortunately for Ochoa, evidence from the crime was still available for DNA fingerprinting, a simple test that can prove whether a biological sample did or did not come from a suspect.

permissão

habilidade/capacidade

b "Before DNA, you'd have a good suspect, and do all the tests you could do, and you'd end up with 30 percent to 40 percent of the population qualifying."

habilidade/capacidade

probabilidade

c These 10, among 93 capital convictions that have been vacated since 1973, have helped raise public fears that executions may be based on questionable convictions.

probabilidade

permissão

d Dieter says the technique is so "powerful and scientifically reliable" that it can, as in Ochoa's case, even refute a confession.

possibilidade

habilidade/capacidade

e ...he says it is "not a panacea for every case, it may not be involved in a simple shooting, where somebody dies but there are no bodily fluids left."

probabilidade

permissão

f There's also a disturbing possibility that DNA fingerprinting could finger the wrong person -- if labs make mistakes, or if cops plant evidence or lie on the witness stand.

permissão

poderia (futuro condicional)

CONSOLIDAÇÃO

MARCADORES DISCURSIVOS E GRAU DOS ADJETIVOS

1 Sublinhe os marcadores discursivos dos segmentos do texto "Free at last" e relacione-os com as idéias que eles expressam.

Adição

Exemplificação

Oposição/contraste

Tempo

- a** After 12 years in prison, a Texas inmate walked free on Jan. 17. _____
- b** "Before DNA, you'd have a good suspect, and do all the tests you could do, and you'd end up with 30 percent to 40 percent of the population qualifying." _____
- c** If the suspect's DNA does not match the sample, however, the test becomes convincing evidence for the defense. _____
- d** Ronald Jones, for example, was released in 1997 after being convicted of rape and murder in 1989. _____
- e** But DNA fingerprinting does not help every convict who asks for it. _____
- f** There's also a disturbing possibility that DNA fingerprinting could finger the wrong person. _____
- g** Such allegations -- although they do not concern capital cases -- are the focus of the ongoing Los Angeles police scandal. _____

2 Faça uma leitura rápida do parágrafo abaixo:

The cheapest Big Macs are found in China, Malaysia, the Philippines and South Africa, and all cost less than \$1.20. In other words, these countries have the most undervalued currencies, by more than 50%. The most expensive Big Macs are found in Britain, Denmark and Switzerland, which by implication have the most overvalued currencies. Sterling, for example, is 12% overvalued against the dollar – less than two years ago, it was overvalued by 26%.

Fonte: "Big Macs Currencies", The Economist, April 19, 2001.

3 Descreva resumidamente a idéia geral do mesmo.

4 Leia o texto novamente e localize as seguintes informações:

a Dois países nos quais o sanduíche Big Mac é vendido por pouco mais de um dólar.

b A desvalorização da moeda desses países em relação ao dólar.

c Os países nos quais a moeda tem valor superior ao dólar.

5 Identifique os comparativos e superlativos utilizados no texto. Indique seus significados em português.

a _____

b _____

c _____

d _____

e _____

f _____

g _____

