



Julia Sosnizka (Autor)

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Telefon: +49 (0)551 54724-0, E-Mail: info@cuvillier.de, Website: <https://cuvillier.de>



1 Introduction

In general terms, collocations can be defined as highly frequent and relatively fixed syntagmatic combinations of two or more words. The present study is concerned with the likelihood of a source language collocate to become a target language collocate. This can occur when the central word (node) of a given collocation is an English word-form which has entered the German language as an Anglicism. English, in this study, is the source language and German is the target language. The study explores whether collocations with identical nodes in English and German possess identical or equivalent collocates. This study relies on corpora of German and American business and news magazine articles for linguistic analysis. These corpora are considered representative of general and specialized journalistic writing. The two subsets of language are contrasted particularly with regard to the collocational behavior of Anglicisms.

Traditionally, a higher penetration of Anglicisms occurs in specialized text. However, countless Anglicisms are acceptable outside this category in everyday language. The present study claims that the frequent use of identical and equivalent source and target language collocates does not depend on the degree to which a subset of language is infiltrated with Anglicisms alone. In addition, other principles must apply. One of them is the ‘idiom principle’ which claims that a language user has available a large number of semi-preconstructed phrases that constitute single choices, i.e. words appear to be chosen in pairs or groups quite frequently (cf. Sinclair 1991: 110, 115). Therefore, the present study argues that the use of identical collocates in English and German is not a rare occurrence, but rather that the idiom principle is “far more pervasive and elusive than we have allowed so far” (ibid.: 111).

It should be noted that a study of this nature does not fit neatly into one area of linguistics. In examining collocations across languages and language varieties, the present study applies corpus-based computer linguistics. In addition, it refers to concepts and methodology specified in contrastive linguistics, e.g. *tertium comparationis* and translation studies (e.g. equivalence relations cf. chapter 3). More generally, the present study is embedded in British traditions of text analysis (cf. Stubbs 1996: 22 ff.), following the approaches of John Rupert Firth, M.A.K. Halliday, and John Sinclair in particular.

Already in 1957 Firth recognized that words combine not only according to grammatical rules, but that they also display collocational properties. He coined the term ‘collocation’ for the habitual or customary places of a word (cf. Firth [1951] 1957a: 181). Collocations



add decisively to the naturalness of language. Proficient native language users are intuitively aware that certain words in their language in some unspecified way tend to co-occur in relatively fixed and recurrent combinations. Consequently, collocations can also be described as psychological associations between words (cf. Hoey 2005: 5). Many collocations are so frequent that the choice of one of their constituents automatically triggers the selection of one or more other constituents in their immediate co-text. Collocations can be “evidenced by their [co-]occurrence in corpora more often than is explicable in terms of random distribution” (ibid.).

In the area of syntagmatic relations, linguistic investigations on word co-occurrences have not been very consistent. “[P]erhaps because its proper province is the rather ill-defined area of linguistic patterning that is neither clearly syntactic nor clearly semantic (Clear 1993: 271).” Collocations remain a complex, multifaceted linguistic phenomenon, which complicates the construction of distinct definitions and their thorough analysis. In recent times though, mainly due to the growing possibilities of corpus analysis, the number of investigations concentrating on word co-occurrences has increased significantly and some new and rewarding insights into their functioning have been gained (cf. for example Sinclair 1991, Kjellmer 1984, 1987, Hausmann 2004).

English functions both as a local and global medium of communication. It is an essential part of communication in multinational settings, often involving exclusively non-native speakers. The English language, therefore, can no longer be regarded as belonging to the native speakers of English as it is widely used all over the world. Over the past years, this dominance of the English language has led to an unprecedented influx of English words in other languages.

As a central phenomenon of languages in contact, ‘borrowing’ has secured a firm place in linguistics. Numerous studies on borrowing have been published. Many of these studies center their attention on Anglicisms and the language of the press. As a result of the influence of Anglicisms, journalists in all fields face difficulties in their practical work of writing. Some of these difficulties concern collocations which are at the heart of the present study.

Due to their extensive presence in language, collocations play a crucial role in text production. Although collocations are at first sight semantically transparent, not all of them can be translated literally. In rendering source-language collocations into any target language, a translator ideally aims at producing a collocation which is typical in the target language while, at the same time, preserving the meaning associated with the source language collocation. In the case of Anglicisms this ideal cannot be achieved, because one constituent

of the collocation (the Anglicism) is already untypical, i.e. not originating, in the target language. Source language collocation patterns which are untypical of the target language should not be carried over (cf. Baker 1992: 55). The corpus analysis will show though that this can be observed repeatedly and is usually owed to one of two strategies the journalist pursues to implement Anglicisms. Consider the following examples. The node is always identical in the source and target language.

(1)

NODE	
CASH	
COLLOCATE SL ¹	COLLOCATE TL ²
MANAGEMENT	MANAGEMENT

(2)

NODE	
RESEARCH	
COLLOCATE SL	COLLOCATE TL
FIRM	FIRMA

When producing text, the contemporary German journalist uses Anglicisms. This can be considered state-of-the-art in journalistic writing. Because of the status of the English language, journalists are most likely educated in English and have encountered the employed Anglicisms several times before in their source language (and perhaps also in the target language, i.e. the journalists mother tongue). It is presumed that consciously or unconsciously journalists will revert to previously learned source language (collocational) structures of the Anglicism. This leads either to the adoption of the entire collocation in its identical form as shown in example (1) above, or to the literal translations of the Anglicisms source language collocates as displayed in example (2) above. Either way, the influence of Anglicisms exceeds their mere word-forms found in German text.

The present study argues that replications of source language collocational structures exist within the target language, because according to Sinclair's 'idiom principle' and follow-up studies, words frequently appear to be chosen in pairs or groups. This is inherently different from strategic forms of lexical transfer such as intentional code-switching to fill a lexical gap, transfer of cognates, or the borrowing of words from another language for pragmatic purposes.

¹ SL stands for 'source language'.

² TL stands for 'target language'.



It is very likely that the frequencies of Anglicisms will continue to increase and that other linguistic levels outside of lexis will be increasingly affected (cf. Görlach 2002: 12). While the present study operates on the level of lexis, it attempts to illustrate the influence of Anglicisms beyond their isolated word-forms. Instead, their influence extends to the words in mediate and immediate adjacency of Anglicisms. The following hypotheses led to the conduction of the study.

1.1 Initial hypotheses

It is assumed that there exist word co-occurrences that are typical of certain types of text like business or news magazine articles in any given (source) language. It is expected that collocations are reproduced in target languages which have come under the increasing influence of Anglophone word-forms.

Hypothesis 1

The use of Anglicisms produces replications of source language collocational structures within the target language, i.e. Anglicisms feature identical or equivalent collocates in the source and target language corpora.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 1 is true for specialized and general journalistic texts.

1.2 Methodological approach

The used methodology stresses the need for analyzing authentic language data and takes business and news magazine articles as a starting point of analysis. To investigate norms of use, and consequently test the hypotheses, computerized corpora of naturally occurring data are essential. Intuition, whilst being a valuable resource, is in no way sufficient to cope adequately with this task. Large collections of language data are needed, and this places the analysis beyond the level that any purely manual approach could attempt. This study therefore belongs methodologically to the area of computer-based corpus linguistics. It employs a number of additional research paradigms from the disciplines of contrastive linguistics, translation studies and communication or media studies. The goal is to bring

together perspectives and knowledge from these disciplines, to describe the collocational behavior of Anglicisms in business and news magazines.

The first stage of analysis is the creation of four research corpora. The corpora comprise a total of 9,324,491 million words. Figure 1 gives an overview of these corpora.

THE CORPORA		
LANGUAGE	GERMAN	ENGLISH
BUSINESS MAGAZINES	<i>WirtschaftsWoche 2008</i> 2,754,827 words	<i>BusinessWeek 2008</i> 1,413,686 words
NEWS MAGAZINES	<i>Der Spiegel 2008</i> 3,332,784 words	<i>Newsweek 2008</i> 1,823,194 words

Figure 1 The corpora

The corpora consist of German and American business and news magazine articles from *WirtschaftsWoche* and *BusinessWeek*, *Der Spiegel* and *Newsweek*. The 2008 volumes of these four magazines form the basis for the empirical research. The two types of magazines can be classified according to their ‘origin’, ‘function’, ‘subject matter’ and ‘audience’ (cf. section 4.1).

The corpora are representative samples of business language found in publications for knowledge dissemination and the language of general news reporting. Accepting the Firthian principle that language is varied and heterogeneous, the study differentiates the language of business magazines as ‘specialized’ from that of ‘general’ news reporting as found in news magazines.

The lexical analysis software *WordSmith Tools 5* (Scott 2008) is used to determine statistically which words significantly co-occur with previously identified key words (nodes) in the source language corpora. Because the majority of Anglicisms enter the German language without undergoing any changes in spelling, they can easily be identified afterwards in the target language corpora along with their collocates. Once a lexical base for analysis is established, more detailed analyses can be carried out.

Inherent in the methods described above are certain aspects that should be stated clearly at this stage. The present study focuses on the ‘idiom principle’ of Sinclair (1987, 1991) which sees language as being made up of prefabricated chunks of words. The concept of collocation is, therefore, essential for the research. Chomskyan notions of rationalist linguistic analysis that rely on intuition for the generation of data are rejected. It is not argued that intuitions have no place in such analysis, but that intuitions are often inaccurate or incomplete and that they should be firmly based on attested data (cf. Stubbs 1995: 249).



Intuition is still needed, but it is needed in the interpretation of quantitative data, not in the creation of them. In the context of this study, such interpretation is particularly useful for the analysis of equivalency relations of source and target language collocates (cf. section 3.2).

It is important to bear in mind that a corpus-based methodology also has its limitations. A rather small set of key words (cf. section 5.2) is selected to provide not only for a purely quantitative, but also a qualitative analysis. A limited in-depth examination is preferred, since it is expected to lead to a more valuable outcome and deliver more profound insights into the subject matter than an exclusively statistical approach.

In order to facilitate the reading of this work, an overview of what is found in each chapter is presented in section 1.3.

1.3 Structure of the study

This study is divided into seven chapters. Following this introductory chapter, collocation as a multifaceted phenomenon is introduced in chapter 2. The chapter provides a brief background on collocation within the broad field of syntagmatic relations. Previous descriptions of collocations and different approaches to define collocations are outlined. Subsequently, the key elements of collocation will be described. Chapter 2 concludes with an operational definition of collocation for the systematic, computer-aided identification of collocations in the corpora.

Chapter 3 introduces the linguistic disciplines and research paradigms relevant for the study and illustrates how these relate to its success. This chapter attends in particular to contrastive linguistics, translation studies and corpus linguistics and introduces terminology central to these disciplines and significant for this study.

Chapter 4 describes the four research corpora which were collected for the present study. It reports on the external criteria for corpus classification and the placement of the corpora along the general-specialized scale. Linguistic differences between business and news magazines are discussed as well. The corpora are mapped against descriptions of technical discourse and popular scientific writing. Moreover, the reasons for choosing to work with comparable corpora rather than parallel corpora are to be clarified. Finally, the procedure of compiling the corpora is illustrated and their matching criteria are presented. Chapter 4 fulfills a further important descriptive role, it describes the magazines as a mass communication medium and linguistic research object (corpus).



In chapter 5, the methods used for the empirical research are set out and further developed to meet the demands of a contrastive, corpus-based examination of authentic collocations in business and news magazines. The chapter defines ‘Anglicism’ as it is understood in this study. Furthermore the process of selecting adequate key words and the functioning of the lexical analysis software are explained.

Chapter 6 is perhaps the most important one in the study. It is dedicated exclusively to the quantitative and qualitative corpus analysis and the summary of the achieved results.

Chapter 7 concludes the study. The findings of the corpus analysis are summarized and the results of the study are mapped against the initial hypotheses. Chapter 7 ends with a proposal for further contrastive investigation of the representation of collocations in source and target languages.





2 Collocation

Collocations have captured the attention of different branches of linguistics for a long time. They hold a recognized linguistic and lexicographic status by now, but they still lack a systematic characterization and “there is no universally accepted formal definition of collocations” (Mel’čuk 1998: 23). The concept of collocation captures a range of similar phenomena. Although the term is used and understood in different ways (cf. Bahns 1993: 57), all definitions maintain a focus on the co-occurrence of words³.

The different views on the exact structure of collocations aim at the question of how to subdivide the large group of co-occurring words in a language into smaller, ideally clear-cut categories. The present chapter illustrates collocations as defined for this study, within the large class of related structures. Despite all variations, a clear methodological grounding for the study of collocations can be offered by viewing them as an embodiment of the ‘idiom principle’ and an operational definition of ‘collocation’ can be reached. The initial working definition of collocation in this study, “words that keep company with one another” (cf. subsection 2.2.1.1), will be refined by adding more specific criteria, and the chapter ends with the definition of collocation used in this study.

2.1 Collocation as a multifaceted phenomenon

Collocations operate on the syntagmatic rather than on the paradigmatic level. The problem with syntagmatic phenomena is that they belong to several different disciplines in linguistics. Collocations may be attributed to the field of phraseology but they allow for considerable variability of the co-occurrences (cf. Burger 2007: 175), which occasionally possess idiomatic structures. Being a very complex and arbitrary phenomenon, phraseological units have not been thoroughly researched yet.

A large part of the vocabulary of a language is made up of phraseological units. Phraseological units include compound nouns (*balance sheet*), phrasal verbs (*to comply with*), idioms (*ball park figure*) and collocations (*liquid assets*). Among these, collocations are least fixed. Other phraseological units are usually of a more static nature. By assigning collocations the status of phraseological units, their collective characteristics are emphasized: all phraseological units have “idiosyncratic interpretations that cross word boundaries” (Sag et al. 2002: 2). Phraseological units are pervasive in texts of all genres

³ Cf. Firth ([1951] 1957a: 181 and 1968: 182), Cowie (1978: 132), Hausmann (1985: 118), Cruse (1986: 40), Kjellmer (1987: 133), Sinclair (1991: 170), Sag et al. (2002: 7), Bartsch (2004: 76).



and domains (cf. Kjellmer 1987: 140) and “collocations make up the lion’s share of the phraseme inventory” (Mel’čuk 1998: 24). Some researchers even claim that most sentences contain at least one collocation (cf. Hoey 2005: 7). Seretan (2011: 2) summarizes the difficulty of defining collocations despite their high frequency as follows:

The importance of collocations lies in their prevalence in language, whereas the difficulty in handling them comes, principally, from their ambiguous linguistic status, their equivocal position at the intersection of lexicon and grammar, and the lack of a precise and operational definition.

In general, the term ‘collocation’ refers to the linguistic phenomenon that some words occur preferably with certain others (rather than their “synonyms”). Oftentimes, the reader or listener expects the appearance of one word in the immediate vicinity of another. This is not owed to constraints on the level of syntax, but on that of usage (cf. van Roey 1990: 46). Unlike idioms, collocations have a rather transparent meaning and are easy to decode (cf. Fillmore et al. 1988). Yet they are difficult to encode since they are unpredictable for non-native speakers and, “in general, do not preserve the meaning of (all of) their components across languages” (Seretan 2011: 2).

Collocations are constrained by syntactic (grammatical), semantic and lexical properties of words. At each level, linguists have attempted to formulate rules and constraints for their co-occurrence (cf. Fellbaum 2007: 8). Within the numerous approaches three major theories can be identified (cf. also Bahns 1996, Herbst 1996 and Klotz 2000).

Firstly, one can speak of a collocation if the combined appearance of collocates is semantically inexplicable. For example, in English, you *brush your teeth*, but you do not **clean your teeth*. This notion of collocation, represented mainly by Hausmann, considers especially didactic and lexicographic aspects. During the 1980s Hausmann advocated the systematic treatment of the rediscovered concept of collocation in linguistics (cf. 1984, 1985, 1989). He defines collocations as combinations of two lexemes whose combining potential is limited by semantic rules and habitualness (cf. Hausmann 1984: 398). As constituents of collocations Hausmann admits only content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives) and disregards function words (prepositions, conjunctions, determiners etc.). In addition, the syntactic relationship between collocates is a central defining feature. Hausmann considers collocations as syntactically motivated combinations. The word-forms must be related syntactically and must be syntactically well-formed. This structural condition prevails over the proximity condition requiring them to appear within a short space of each other. In Hausmann’s view, the constituents of a collocation do not have equal status. He differentiates between ‘base’ as the dominant constituent and ‘collocate’ as the dominated



element of a collocation⁴. The relation between the two constituents of a collocation is said to be a directional rather than a mutual one (cf. Hausmann 1989: 1010). Hausmann's mainly lexicographic aim makes his notion of the directional nature of a collocation suitable for the establishment of dictionary reference structures. The 'base' is potentially listed in a collocations dictionary. A number of linguists, for example Cowie (cf. 1978: 132, also 1992, 2001) agree largely with Hausmann's notion. The inability to say why words collocate still represents a challenge today, although research has been done on this for example by Mel'čuk (1988).

A number of researchers added a statistical component to their definition of collocation as expressed for example by Kjellmer: a collocation is "a sequence of words that occurs more than once in identical form in a corpus, and which is grammatically well structured" (1987: 133). In his definition, Kjellmer includes corpora as research environments for collocations. This marks the transition to the second influential concept of collocation coined in British contextualism, the statistically and corpus oriented approach.

This concept of collocation was put forward mainly by the so-called 'Neo-Firthians' Halliday and Sinclair. It is stated that words can be regarded as collocations if they frequently co-occur within a text. This statistically oriented approach is closely linked to computer-based corpus linguistics, which has gained importance and whose potential has by far not been fully tapped.

Thirdly, collocations have also been addressed, though only to a limited extent, from the perspective of 'text cohesion'. Collocations in this approach are understood similarly as in contextualism as "the association of lexical items that regularly co-occur" (Halliday/Hasan 1976: 284). From the point of view of text cohesion, collocations contribute to the semantic unity of a text. The cohesive effect of collocations derives from the tendency of words to share the same lexical environment (ibid.: 286). This view of collocation explicitly states that collocation refers not only to pairs, but also to longer "chains of collocational cohesion" (ibid.: 287). Halliday and Hasan's concept of collocation is mentioned here for the sake of completeness, but is of secondary importance for linguistic theory (cf. Steinbügl 2005: 4) and this study.

The notion of collocation coined by Firth and his successors in the tradition of British contextualism is the most promising and useful approach for this study, but it has to be expanded by qualitative aspects in order to capture the many facets of the collocations in

⁴ Hausmann introduced his definitions of 'Basis' and 'Kollokator' in 1979 and further specified their differentiation in 1989.



this study. The historical background of the developments and terminology of collocation research and the contextualist concept of collocation, leading to a corpus-oriented concept of collocation, are presented in the following section.

2.2 Brief historical background

According to some researchers, including Gitsaki (cf. 1996: 13), the concept of collocation, though not named as such, was known and described already by the ancient Greeks. Carter and McCarthy (1988: 32) point out that the term ‘collocation’ has been used since the eighteenth century and Bartsch (2004: 28) states that ‘collocation’ was first used in a clearly linguistic context in 1750.

During early linguistic research on syntagmatic relations, forerunners of the term ‘collocation’ were coined. In 1909, Charles Bally studied syntagmatic relations between word combinations. He used the term ‘fixité variable’ to describe the different degrees of fixedness of word combinations (cf. Hausmann 1979: 189). Bally differentiates between ‘associations libres’, ‘groupements usuels’ and ‘unites phraséologiques’. Depending on the applied definition of collocation, their understanding today is closely related, if not equivalent, to what Bally labeled ‘groupements usuels’ and ‘unites phraséologiques’.

During the early 1930s, Walter Porzig observed syntagmatic relations between words, which led to awareness of the phenomenon that in the use of one word another word is implicitly included (cf. Porzig [1934] 1973: 78). Porzig referred to these relationships as ‘wesenhafte Bedeutungsbeziehungen’ (cf. *ibid.*: 79) and regarded them as semantic relations. His concept of ‘wesenhafte Bedeutungsbeziehungen’ ultimately rests on the claim that the meaning of a word is established with reference to the syntagmatic relations it contracts with other words (similar to the later view held by Firth, Palmer and Coseriu). Whether Porzig assumed a direct syntactic relation underlying these syntagmatic relations is not clearly stated. Porzig did not explicitly set apart different types of such ‘wesenhafte Bedeutungsbeziehungen’, but his ideas contain some of the basic ideas of later research concerned with phraseology and collocations.

In an article in 1967, Eugenio Coseriu developed the concept of ‘lexical solidarities’. Coseriu’s ‘lexical solidarities’ can be regarded as a further development of Porzig’s concept (cf. Lipka 1990: 164). Neither Porzig nor Coseriu were concerned with the nature and structural properties of the relations between the constituents of collocations (cf. Bartsch 2004: 35). As a fully formed concept, ‘collocation’ was established only in the twentieth century.



Harold Palmer was perhaps the first to pay attention to ‘collocation’ in the modern sense. He included over 6,000 frequent collocations (cf. Howatt 1984: 238, Nelson 2000: 159) in his teaching materials for students to memorize as one linguistic item. Palmer (1938/1968: x) defines collocation in this context as follows.

‘[C]ollocation’ (a succession of two or more words that may best be learnt as if it were a single word) [...].

Clearly, Palmer did not limit the number of constituents of a collocation. Also, from his examples it can be seen that Palmer admitted both lexical and grammatical words as collocates (*a good many, make a fool of*). In an attempt to define collocations more closely, Palmer (1938/1968: xii) already differentiated ‘collocations’ from ‘phrases’, always maintaining his focus on learners of English:

Phrases are distinguished from collocations. While collocations are comparable in meaning and function to ordinary single “words”, (and indeed are often translated by single words in the student’s mother-tongue), phrases are more in the nature of conversational formulas, sayings, proverbs, etc.

This didactic interest in collocations provided a strong motivation for their study, collection and analysis from the perspective of (foreign) language teaching. In the first edition of the *Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, A.S. Hornby included collocational information (cf. Seretan 2011: 8) aimed at foreign learners of English. This pedagogical trend in the research of collocations was later continued, most notably, by Anthony Cowie and Peter Howarth. Thus, collocations unveiled largely from pedagogical observations on language acquisition that associated them with a high level of proficiency, which could only be achieved by speakers through memorization (cf. *ibid.*: 9). Until today, this interest remains. Hornby’s dictionaries continue to be a great commercial success (cf. preface OALD) and collocation dictionaries are compiled for many languages.

Bally, Porzig, Palmer and Hornby had already conducted research on habitual word co-occurrences and the term ‘collocation’ was already in use in linguistics. But it was John Rupert Firth who established collocation as a central concept of his theory. Firth popularized the term ‘collocation’, derived from the Latin word *collocare* - to place together, to assemble (cf. Seretan 2011: 9).



2.2.1 The contextualist concept

‘Contextualism’ developed as a theory of language in direct opposition to the decontextualized observation of language within American (Bloomfield) and European (Saussure) structuralism. Contextualists argue that language should be studied in authentic instances of use, not as intuitive, invented, isolated sentences. The unit of study must be whole texts and the study of ‘context’ should be central in linguistics (cf. Firth 1968: 174/179). Firth, the founder of British contextualism, worked in the structuralist tradition that was prevalent in his time. His ideas were strongly influenced by those of anthropologist Bronisław Malinowski (cf. Steiner 1983: 96). The influence of Malinowski’s work shaped Firth’s conviction that language should be studied as a social and cultural phenomenon by regarding its ‘context of situation’ beyond the purely linguistic facts (cf. Firth 1957c, Robins [1971] 2004: 33). This has been attempted variously in recent years, but has yet to be fully integrated into a comprehensive linguistic theory (cf. Bartsch 2004: 31). Firth’s further developments of Malinowski’s (1923) concepts of ‘context of situation’ and ‘context of culture’ form the basis of a significant part of his theory of language (cf. Robins [1971] 2004: 33).

Firth argued that the meaning of a word derives just as much from the particular situation in which it occurs as from the syntactic or syntagmatic relations it enters. This idea, which mixes language with the objects physically present during a conversation to ascertain the meaning involved, is known as Firth’s ‘contextual theory of meaning’ or his theory of ‘context of situation’. According to Violi (2000: 103), a syntagmatic and pragmatic view can be distinguished.

[In contextualism] a syntactic or syntagmatic approach is adopted when considering the meaning of a linguistic (or other) sign to be a function of its relation to other linguistic (or other) signs in its context, and a pragmatic approach is adopted when meaning is defined as a function of its situational context.

Some of Firth’s ideas on meaning were developed in his article “The Technique of Semantics” (1935). This article marks the beginning of contextualism, which reached its peak during the late 1930s and the first decade after World War II. Firth emphasizes both the relational and the situational context. He also recognizes contextual relations at all levels, phonology, grammar, or lexicography as manifestations of meaning (cf. also [1951] 1957a).



Contextualist descriptions of language regard linguistics essentially as a social science. The social context of the linguistic code is the culture - seen as a network of information systems, and the social context of language behavior is the situation in which socio-cultural meanings are exchanged by means of, amongst other things, the linguistic code (cf. Halliday 1984). Finally, this socio-cultural perception of meaning is connected to pragmatic approaches to semantics (especially those of Wittgenstein 1953: 80) and may be best summarized in Halliday's (1984: 22) words:

Context is in this kind of model a construct of cultural meanings, realised functionally in the form of acts of meaning in the various semiotic modes, of which language is one. The ongoing processes of linguistic choice, whereby a speaker is selecting within the resources of the linguistic system, are effectively cultural choices, and acts of meaning are cultural acts.

2.2.1.1 Firth

'Collocation' and 'collocability' were introduced to the academic discussion by Firth ([1951] 1957a: 194), who mentioned these terms in his essay "Modes of Meaning" for the first time:

I propose to bring forward as a technical term, meaning by 'collocation', and to apply the test of 'collocability'.

Firth developed his linguistic models based on the notion of 'meaning by collocation'. Contextualists assume that in characterizing a word, its context plays the most important role: "You shall know a word by the company it keeps!" (ibid.: 179). While this characterization provides a good understanding of the concept of collocation, it remains quite vague, as nothing is said about its linguistic status and properties.

In contextualism, the concept of collocation plays a central role; collocating words define each other. In particular, contextualists argue that the meaning of words is defined by their co-occurrence (or collocation) with other words (cf. Seretan 2011: 16). Firth discusses 'meaning by collocation', which he defines as an "abstraction on the syntagmatic level [...] not directly concerned with the conceptual idea approach to the meaning of the words" (Firth [1951] 1957a: 196). Thus, part of a meaning of a word is the fact that it collocates with another word. The words with which it collocates, however, are often strictly limited. Firth, like Palmer, illustrated collocations mainly by means of examples and did not develop a clearly outlined concept in his essay. This vagueness in definitions led to several