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Foreword

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List of abbreviations

BMUKK Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur
COBUILD..... Collins Birmingham University International Language Database
EFL..... English as a Foreign Language
ELF..... English as a Lingua Franca
ELT..... English Language Teaching
ENL English as a native language
L1 First Language
L2 Second Language
NES Native English Speaker
TEFL..... Teaching English as a Foreign Language

MYW..... Make Your Way
NH New Headway
L Laser

L B1/B1+ SB..... Laser B1/B1+ Student's Book
L B1/B1+ WB..... Laser B1/B1+ Work Book
MYW 5/6 SB..... Make Your Way 5/6 Student's Book
MYW 5/6 TRP..... Make Your Way 5/6 Test Resource Pack
NH 5/6 SB..... New Headway 5/6 Student's Book
NH 5/6 WB..... New Headway 5/6 Work Book

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1. Introduction

*“We do not know what to teach,
how much to teach,
and least of all how to teach,
hence the urgent need for empirical work.
(Granger 1998: 159)*

My interest into English phraseology already started in school. Strangely, I loved learning the various idioms and proverbs by heart our English teacher constantly put up on our class notice board. Considering that Granger and Meunier (2008: 248) point out how teachers and students tend to see idioms as “phraseological teddy bears, [...] because they are very popular for the fascinating cultural window they open onto the target language”, maybe it was not that strange. However, at university a much more common feature of the English phraseology soon caught my attention: collocations. When writing texts for my classes I repeatedly used wrong or rather inappropriate and unnatural collocations. Most of them resulted in so-called ‘Germanisms’ as I tended to translate expressions directly from my mother tongue German. While preparing for a presentation on the topic of collocations, I stumbled over some articles dealing with L1 influence on collocation use in EFL learners and I noticed that I was by far not the only one with exactly these problems. From that point onwards, my learner perspective slowly developed into a teacher’s perspective and I wondered how the phenomenon of collocations can be taught effectively. Since the rise of corpus linguistics, the importance of collocations for proficiency in a second of foreign language has been repeatedly emphasized. In order to sound natural and get close to target-like language use, collocational competence seems inevitable. However, not many suggestions have been made on how collocations are learnt or taught. Moreover, the analysis and evaluation of EFL course materials with regard to the treatment of collocations has been widely neglected, especially in the Austrian context. This is exactly where this very study seeks to make a contribution.

The chapter following this introduction is concerned with the controversy of defining collocations. It presents an overview of different approaches to researching collocations and describes different models of classifying collocations. Moreover, common characteristics of collocations are discussed. Finally, my working definition of ‘collocation’ for this thesis is provided.

Chapter three centres on the treatment of collocations in foreign language teaching. Various approaches to vocabulary teaching in general are briefly mentioned and the approach giving rise to the teaching of collocations, the lexical approach, is described in more detail. Furthermore, the differences in collocation use in native and non-native language users is elaborated on with a particular focus on the difficulties of collocation learning for foreign and second language learners. In the end, the relevance of collocation teaching and learning is pointed out.

One of the most essential questions in collocation teaching is addressed in chapter four: How can collocations successfully be taught. Several strategies of collocation teaching are described and principles of effective collocation teaching are discussed. Besides, the question of how to select essential collocations for teaching is dealt with in this chapter. Subsequently, a number of different materials and resources are introduced and useful formats of collocation exercises are presented.

In chapter five the relevance of the study is addressed along with the embedding of the analysis within previous research. The three coursebook series *Laser B1 & B1+*, *Make Your Way 5 & 6* and *New Headway 5 & 6* are introduced briefly before the methodology and procedure for the analysis is described.

Chapter six is concerned with the analysis of three different EFL coursebook series used in Austrian upper-secondary schools with regard to the treatment of collocations. This chapter seeks to investigate whether the aforementioned research findings from applied linguistics and suggestions for teaching are incorporated into EFL coursebook design. First, the external evaluation stage focuses on the claims made by the authors, the table of contents and the teachers' books. Second, the internal evaluation stage will provide a quantitative and qualitative in-depth analysis of explicit vocabulary exercises focusing on or dealing with collocations.

Chapter seven deals with the study's implications for teaching and gives suggestions for improving the various exercises included in the books. Furthermore, some ideas for supplementing the often not very varied ranges of exercises are presented.

In chapter eight the most important findings are summarized once more in order to provide a final evaluation of the treatment of collocations in the three coursebook series. Further possible and interesting research foci are also be mentioned.

2. Defining the indefinable

“You shall know a word by the company it keeps.”
(Firth 1957: 11)

Collocations are a widespread phenomenon, not only in English, but in all languages. Native speakers and most foreign language learners know and use many expressions like *a central feature*, *highly qualified* or *to receive severe criticism*, but only few people know that these lexical chunks are called collocations and even fewer know how they are defined. However, in order to be able to analyze schoolbooks with respect to collocation exercises, it first needs to be defined what the term ‘collocation’ means in general and more specifically, in terms of this paper. As this is not that easy and straight-forward, this chapter will give a brief overview of the controversy about defining and classifying collocations. It will first deal with different definitions of the term and the concept of collocations. Then, various approaches to the study of collocations will be discussed. Furthermore, different types and characteristics of collocations as well as diverse classification systems and models will be presented. Finally, I will delineate my working definition of collocations for the purpose of the course book analysis.

2.1 What is a collocation? – Different definitions

Each and every article, book or study on collocations - be it linguistic or pedagogical - begins with the discussion of what a collocation actually is. After reading numerous of these articles one can conclude that there is no single comprehensible definition of the term ‘collocation’ or as Fontenelle (1994: 9) puts it: “There is no such thing as a clear, non-controversial and all-embracing definition of a collocation”. Herbst (1996: 383) even goes a bit further by radically calling the use of the term ‘collocation’ a “Humpty-Dumpty situation“, referring to a scene in *Alice in Wonderland* when Humpty Dumpty says, “When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less”. Gitsaki (1999: 2) also claims that since the popularisation of the term by Firth “subsequent linguists and researchers have not defined ‘collocation’ in a more thorough and systematic way” and so the problem of how to define collocations has bothered not only linguists, but also teachers and students ever since. Handl

(2008: 48) puts it in a nutshell by saying that “linguists either disagree about the concept of collocation or tend to disregard it”.

The term ‘collocation’ originates from Latin where ‘collocare’ means ‘to set in order/ to arrange’ (Martyńska 2004: 2). As a term it was used quite intensively in a more restricted sense by Palmer (1933) already to describe mainly items whose meaning cannot be derived from its parts and which have to be acquired as whole entities, before Firth reused it in his sense of collocation as a part of word meaning (Nation 2001: 317). Hence, although Firth was actually not the first to use the term ‘collocation’ as such, he is often considered the ‘father of collocations’¹, because Firth truly was the first one who described collocations as “one of the ‘levels’ of meaning” (Gabrielatos 1994: 1). He considered the importance of co-occurring partners of a word the same as any other sense of meaning of a word (Carter & McCarthy 1988: 33). Since collocations became especially popular in linguistics with the rise of computerised corpora the definition problem of and the controversy about both the term ‘collocation’ and the concept behind it has still not been solved. Depending on which school or field of linguistics the researchers came from, different definitions and concepts flourished and have not been unified yet:

Collocation is the way in which words co-occur in natural text in statistically significant ways. Collocation is about the way words naturally co-occur in [...] ‘used language’. (Lewis 2000: 132)

Collocations are strings of specific lexical items, such as *rancid butter* and *curry favour*, that co-occur with a mutual expectancy greater than chance. (Nattinger & DeCarrico 1992: 36)

Collocation refers to the tendency of two or more words to co-occur in discourse, and is the last of Nation’s (1990) eight types of word knowledge to be covered. (Schmitt 2000: 76)²

Collocations represent lexical relations along the syntagmatic axis. (Gitsaki 1999: 2)

The relationship of collocation is fundamental in the study of vocabulary; it is a marriage contract between words, and some words are more firmly married to

¹ cf. Carter & McCarthy (1988), Gabrielatos (1994), Handl (2008), Hussein (1998), Martyńska (2004)

² Nation (1990) claims that in order to know a word a learner has to consider four categories in both receptive and productive terms, namely form (spoken + written), position (grammatical patterns + collocations), function (frequency + appropriateness) and meaning (concept + associations). This results in 16 features of a word, such as spoken and written form, appropriateness and collocations, one has to be able to identify in order to really know a word. (cf. Souza Hodne 2005: 3)

each other than others. It is an important organizing principle in the vocabulary of any language. (McCarthy 1990: 12)

In English as in any other language there are many fixed, identifiable, non-idiomatic phrases and constructions. Such groups of words are called recurrent combinations, fixed combinations or collocations. (Benson, Benson & Ilson 2009: XIX)

The different definitions above vary in some respects, but also share several common criteria. Although Nesselhauf (2004: 11) concludes that the only common descriptor of the many definitions of collocation is the notion that ‘collocation’ refers to “some kind of syntagmatic relation of words”, in the above-mentioned quotes many other important points which help to define collocations are pointed out. Co-occurrence seems to be a defining criterion, as well as relative fixedness, recurrence and statistical significance, which will be explored in chapter 2.3.2 in more detail. The question is, if there are apparently some common descriptors, why do the numerous definitions not include all of them, but differ? One might say that the diverse definitions above derive from different research approaches to describing collocations. These methodological and conceptual differences of defining one and the same phenomenon should become clearer, when looking at the different theories and classification systems which have been applied to the study of collocations.

2.2 Different approaches to defining collocations

The study of collocations has been approached from various perspectives and by various authors coming from different tendencies in linguistic fields of research. Many current articles summarize research on collocation as having been undertaken within two conceptually different, but somehow also overlapping traditions which both have been pursued by various renowned linguists, while others divide the research into three or four different approaches. Three different classification systems of approaches will be briefly addressed here.

2.2.1 Frequency- based vs. phraseological approach³

According to the frequency-based or statistically-oriented approach “a collocation is said to be the co-occurrence of words at a frequency that is higher than expected if words were combined arbitrarily in a language” (Souza Hodne 2009: 5). Firth, the founder of this approach, suggested that part of the word meaning would be created by its collocates and therefore words have to “be known by the company they keep” (Barfield & Gyllstad 2009: 3). Halliday (1961) expanded the approach and came up with the now crucial terms for collocational analysis, namely *node*, i.e. the item studied, *collocate*, i.e. the co-occurring item and *span*, i.e. the surroundings in which the former two may occur together (Barfield & Gyllstad 2009: 4). Sinclair (1987) then essentially contributed to the work on collocations by applying Firth’s ideas to the COBUILD project⁴.

In the phraseological approach, which was primarily pursued and taken forward by Russian phraseologists, collocations are seen as “word combination[s], displaying various degrees of fixedness” (Barfield & Gyllstad 2009: 5). Hence, the phraseological tradition has not been much involved in frequency and statistical investigations of word combinations, but has explored to which degree collocations are opaque and their single parts are substitutable (Barfield & Gyllstad 2009: 6). Souza Hodne (2009: 5) describes that followers of this tradition put great emphasis on “the relation between lexical and syntactic patterning in collocations”. Two supporters of this method of analysing collocations are, e.g., Cowie (1998) and Mel’čuk (1998).

2.2.2 The four approaches by Handl

In contrast to the binary categorization of different views Handl (2008: 48ff.) speaks of four major approaches to defining the term ‘collocation’. Two of these four approaches are more or less congruent with the frequency-based and the phraseological approach described above. The first approach is called text-oriented,

³ For a thorough summary of these two approaches consider Barfield and Gyllstad (2009: 2-7).

⁴ The COBUILD project is one of the greatest lexical and lexicographical undertakings whose goal it is to describe as precisely as possible recent written and spoken language use. Researchers working on it came up with several different dictionaries and a huge corpus primarily aimed at second language learners of English. See Carter (1998: 167-174) for more information.

because its followers, e.g. Sinclair, consider a collocation a word co-occurrence within a short span in a text. Another group of researchers highlights the “associative nature of collocations” (Handl 2008: 49), which means that this approach - similar to the phraseological approach portrayed above - stresses the syntagmatic lexical relations between the words that collocate. A third tradition - the basis for corpus linguistic studies of collocations - Handl describes as primarily statistically oriented and therefore comparable with the frequency-based approach. Finally, the last group is called the semantic type of definitions, because this group of researchers emphasises the aspects of meaning in the relation between the words occurring together (e.g. Hausmann, Benson).

2.2.3 Lexical vs. semantic vs. structural approach

Gitsaki (1999) and Martyńska (2004) speak of three different approaches to the study of collocations. Gitsaki (1999: 26) explains that in the *lexical composition approach*, which may be compared to the frequency-based approach and is based on Firth’s definition of collocation, it is assumed that the meaning of a word is constructed by the words that co-occur. The *semantic approach* tries to investigate collocations from a semantic view point and has the truly ambitious aim of finding out why some words collocate with certain other words or, in other words, what determines which items collocate and which do not (Martyńska 2004: 3). However, everyone who tried to answer this delicate issue, failed in providing a satisfying solution. While the first two approaches exclude grammar, a third one, the *structural approach*, includes grammatical and lexical words in their investigations as collocation in terms of this approach is “determined by structure and occurs in patterns” (Martyńska 2004: 3). Gitsaki (1999: 26) therefore sees the structural approach as the most appropriate and feasible one.

To sum up, all the different traditions described so far cannot be separated completely as they sometimes overlap and merge together. This is particularly true for the different classifications of collocations deriving from the approaches. Also, single approaches have often been criticized for not grasping the whole complexity of the concept of collocations. Talking about the frequency-based approach, Nation (2001: 324), for example, claims that “it is not sufficient to define a collocation as a

group of words that frequently occur together”, because then word co-occurrences such as *although he*, *but if* and *of the* would have to be called collocations too. He suggests that a word combination has to be closely structured, grammatically or lexically unpredictable and inflexible in order to call it ‘collocation’ which would result in a definition derived from both the frequency-based and the phraseological approach.

2.3 Classification of collocations

The variety of different approaches is also reflected in the various classifications of collocations, because the “classification systems depend on the point of view taken towards collocation and on the criteria used” (Handl 2008: 50). Criteria for defining collocations seem to be very useful and absolutely needed in order to distinguish them from other multi-word items such as idioms (*to lick somebody’s boots*), phrasal verbs (*to look forward to*), compound nouns (*fire escape*), binomials (*back and forth*), trinomials (*hook, line and sinker*) or fixed phrases (*on the other hand*)⁵. This, however, is unfortunately not always that easy. In this subchapter criteria for defining collocations as well as different classification systems will be discussed after clarifying which types of collocations exist.

2.3.1 Types of collocations

Collocations are not all the same if we look at their internal structures. Following the widely accepted system of Benson, Benson and Ilson (2009) collocations can roughly be divided into two major subclasses, namely lexical collocations and grammatical collocations, also called colligations. Lexical collocations only include nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs and can be further divided into seven subtypes according to the following syntactic patterns:

L1 = verb + noun/ pronoun/ prepositional phrase: <i>launch a missile</i>
L2 = verb + noun: <i>reject an appeal, crush resistance</i>
L3 = adjective/ noun used in an attributive way + noun: <i>strong tea, house arrest</i>
L4 = noun + verb naming the activity: <i>bombs explode, bees sting</i>
L5 = quantifier + noun: <i>a swarm of bees, a piece of advice</i>
L6 = adverb + adjective: <i>hopelessly addicted, sound asleep</i>
L7 = verb + adverb: <i>argue heatedly, apologize humbly</i>

Figure 1: Lexical collocations (Benson, Benson & Ilson 2009: XXXI- XXXIV)

⁵ Examples have been taken from Lewis (2000: 133f.).

Grammatical collocations can also be subcategorized according to their syntactic patterns:

G1 = noun + preposition: <i>blockade against, apathy towards</i>
G2 = noun + <i>to</i> -infinitive: <i>to be a fool to do, to feel a need to do</i>
G3 = noun + <i>that</i> -clause: <i>to reach an agreement that, to take an oath that</i>
G4 = preposition + noun: <i>by accident, in agony</i>
G5 = adjective + preposition: <i>fond of children, hungry for news</i>
G6 = adjective + <i>to</i> -infinitive: <i>sth. is necessary to work, sth. is nice to be</i>
G7 = adjective + <i>that</i> -clause: <i>to be afraid that, sth. is imperative that</i>
G8 = 19 different verb patterns in English, e.g. verb + <i>to</i> -infinitive, verb + bare infinitive

Figure 2: Grammatical collocations (Benson, Benson & Ilson 2009: XIX-XXX)

Consequently, grammatical collocations, or colligations, include words from closed word classes such as prepositions. McCarthy, O’Keeffe and Walsh (2010: 42) explain that “colligation [...] is a relationship of syntax” in which single words co-occur with grammar words or rather grammatical patterns. Martyńska (2004: 3) describes the two categories of grammatical and lexical collocations by saying that they “represent two distinctive but related aspects of one phenomenon”. Hence, there are two types of syntagmatic relations between lexemes or words, namely one dependant on grammar and one on lexis.

2.3.2 Characteristics of collocations

Similar to the by no means clear-cut and uncontroversial definition of the term ‘collocation’, researchers in this field unsurprisingly do not fully agree on common characteristics of collocations. Depending on which classification system is applied, different types of word combinations are subsumed under the term ‘collocation’. In addition, “the forest of terminology” is not clear as different authors use the same terms for different concepts and vice-versa, many different terms for the same concept are used (Kennedy 1990: 217). According to Handl (2008: 50ff.), criteria for defining collocations can generally be divided into two main types, namely ‘prerequisites’ and ‘continua’. The ‘prerequisites’ basically involve two more or less obvious conditions, namely that there has to be a co-occurrence of at least two words and that they have to be mentioned together in one context, but do not necessarily have to be adjacent. According to Handl (2008: 51), if these two preconditions are not fulfilled, one cannot talk about collocations at all. ‘Continua’ are more complex, as they are not a matter of application, but rather a matter of degree of application or as

Thornbury (2002: 115) puts it, neither of these criteria are “absolute values”. As ‘continua’ Handl (2008: 50ff.) describes the features of semantic transparency, compositionality, collocational range, frequency and predictability, which will now be explored in a bit more detail.

- Predictability

Predictability means that if one word occurs there is a great chance that a second specific word occurs with it. Handl (2008: 53) declares that the decisive notion of predictability or mutual expectancy of words derives from the two continua of frequency and collocational range. If the collocational range is limited, then a word will occur more frequently with another and therefore this certain combination will be more predictable. It is often claimed that predictability can be proved by completion and association tests (e.g. Handl 2008, Herbst 1996). However, this only applies in terms of native speakers. Learners are said to have severe problems with predicting which words occur together and which do not. Predictability or rather non-predictability is therefore often seen as one important factor why collocations are difficult to learn for second and foreign language learners (Fan 2009, McCarthy, O’Keeffe & Walsh 2010, Woolard 2000).

- Idiomaticity - Semantic transparency - Compositionality

Handl (2008: 48) claims that the meaning of a collocation can always be derived from its parts as it is not idiomatic and therefore the meaning is just the meaning of the sum of the single units. In fact, semantic transparency is usually seen as the most important feature in order to distinguish between collocations and idioms (e.g. Bahns & Eldaw 1993, Biskup 1992, Fontenelle 1994, Nesselhauf 2003). An idiom, often referred to as frozen expression, is described as “a single semantic entity” whose meaning cannot be derived from its single constituents (Fontenelle 1994: 2). Thus, in contrast to collocations, the meaning of the single words in an idiom do not sum up to the meaning of the whole expression.

- Collocational range

Herbst (1996: 385) states that “there are words which have a very wide range, others, where the selectional restrictions can be described through general semantic features, and words whose range is restricted to certain other words”. In other words,

some collocations have more potential collocates than others, depending on how strong or weak a collocate is (see chapter 2.3.2.1.). The collocational range ties in with the notion of relative fixedness of collocations which Biskup (1992: 85) describes as an important characteristic of collocations. This means that certain collocations allow substitution of elements by synonyms, while others are more fixed and do not allow any substitutions without sounding unnatural or inappropriate. If the collocational range is small, not many substitutions will be allowed, whereas if the collocational range is wide, a collocation will be more flexible.

- Arbitrariness

Arbitrariness means that there are no obvious semantic rules determining which words collocate and which do not, but that the choice is rather arbitrary and sometimes confusing, particularly for L2 learners (Fan 2009: 111, Lewis 1997: 17-19). A very prominent example is mentioned by McCarthy (1990: 12): 'Beige' and 'blond' both describe a similar colour; however, it is only possible in English to say 'beige car' and 'blond hair', but not *'blond car' and *'beige hair'. There is no clear reason why 'blond' cannot collocate with 'car' and 'beige' cannot collocate with 'hair'. Liu (2010: 8) describes the selection of words in such combinations as "semantically unmotivated".

What makes it really difficult is that the various characteristics and criteria are not straight-forward, but gradable and additionally interdependent and related. Handl (2008: 52) explains that e.g. semantic transparency and collocational ranges seem to be interrelated as in more restricted collocational ranges there is a higher tendency of the elements to be less semantically transparent than in collocations having a wider range.

Nation (2001: 329-332) takes another approach to defining characteristics of collocations and presents ten criteria ranging from minimum to maximum. With these ten characteristics he summarizes different points of view and includes various criteria mentioned by many authors. He agrees with Handl that it is not only important that a characteristic is apparent in order to define a word combination as a collocation, but what matters is the degree to which this criterion can be applied. Nation illustrates that if a collocation ranges on the very left on all of the ten scales

below, it can be described as “most lexicalised”, e.g. *hocus pocus*, and those ranging on the right hand side of most of the scales are “least lexicalised” (Nation 2001: 332). According to Nation, most collocations will only be on the left side on some of the scales, but not on all of them. Accordingly, the various criteria on these scales below are also seen as interdependent similar to the above mentioned ones.

1. Frequency	frequently occurring together	infrequently occurring together
2. Adjacency	next to each other	separated by several items
3. Grammatical connection	grammatically connected	grammatically unconnected
4. Grammatical structure	well structured	loosely related
5. Grammatical uniqueness	grammatically unique	grammatically regular
6. Grammatical fossilisation	no grammatical variation	changes in part of speech
7. Collocational specialisation	always mutually co- occurring	all occurring in a range of collocations
8. Lexical fossilisation	unchangeable	allowing substitution in all parts
9. Semantic opaqueness	semantically opaque	semantically transparent
10. Uniqueness of meaning	only one meaning	several meanings

Figure 3: Nation's ten gradable defining criteria of collocations

These characteristics contribute to the learning difficulties many foreign language learners are claimed to have with collocations. Therefore, they will be discussed again in some more detail in chapter 3.4 with special attention to why collocations are said to be such a huge challenge for learners.

2.3.3 Gradual classification systems

As there are different approaches to studying collocations, there are also different approaches to the classification of collocations. Handl (2008) describes four major approaches for categorizing collocations:

- binary classifications: e.g. Firth (1957)
- fixed classes: e.g. Weinreich (1969), Hausmann (1984)
- gradual classification: e.g. Howarth (1998), Conzett (2000)

- prototypical category: Schmid (2003)⁶

Earlier, researchers tried to put all kinds of formulaic sequences into fixed clear-cut categories or classify collocations by means of binary classification systems distinguishing only between free combinations and collocations without applying any other subdivisions or subcategories. However, these models have been declared obsolete and recently only gradual classification models have been used. Handl (2008) and Wray (2002) agree that gradual classification models are “the most convincing type of [...] classification for collocations as the different criteria for collocations are not a matter of application, but rather a matter of degree of application (Handl 2008: 50, see also chapter 2.3.2). Therefore, only the third group of gradual models will be dealt with in more detail here.

In order to have a better overview of what the notion of collocation includes, one might have a look at other multi-word items and criteria which exclude these items from the area of collocation. However, it is of course not surprising that the delimitation is not clear-cut, but rather realized in a continuum. As Gitsaki (1999: 3) claims:

Collocations seem to fall in the middle [of the continuum] as they blend together the semantic transparency of ‘free combinations’ and the syntagmatic restrictions of ‘idioms’.

Thus, the most important differentiation one needs to make is between free combination, collocation and idiom. In many continuum models the three categories of free combinations, collocations and idioms are contrasted to each other, sometimes in between the two far ends of free combinations and idioms more categories than just collocations are placed. Benson, Benson and Ilson (1986: 252) provide five major groups of lexical combinations. They distinguish between free combinations, idioms, collocations, transitional combinations and compounds. Collocations are described as “loosely fixed combinations” and are placed between the two other categories of free combinations on the unrestricted end and idioms on

⁶ Schmid's (2003) proposal to classify collocations as a prototypical category, i.e. the most typical examples are placed in the middle and the others in the periphery, is neglected here as it has not been described in more detail yet and has not been used by other authors (cf. Handl 2008: 50).

the frozen end of the combination continuum (Benson, Benson & Ilson 1986: 252f.). The authors state that collocations differ from free combinations in that the synonymous expressions are very limited in range and that collocations are “psychologically salient”, i.e. they come easily into one’s mind (Benson, Benson & Ilson 1986: 253). Within the category of collocations it is said that there is a range from not variable to slightly variable, i.e. not even within the boundaries of the class of collocations all expressions are fixed in the same way (Benson, Benson & Ilson 1986: 253f.). Between “normal” collocations and idioms there is still one more category, namely transitional combinations such as *all dressed up*, *the facts of life*, *to foot the bill* or *to curry favour*. They are a - as the name already suggests - transitional stage between the completely frozen idioms and ordinary collocations and are described as less variable than the latter (Benson, Benson & Ilson 1986: 254). However, it does not become clear where exactly the boundaries between the different categories lie, as they seem to be blurred.

Wood (1981) offers another model of the continuum from completely free objects to idioms on the restricted end (cited in Nattinger & DeCarrico 1992: 177f.):



Figure 4: collocational continuum by Wood (1981)

In this model, an idiom is described as “fully non-compositional, non-productive” and “a truly frozen piece of language”, whereas a free combination on the other side of the continuum is “fully compositional and productive” (Nattinger & DeCarrico 1992: 177). The meaning of a free combination derives from the meaning of the parts, as, e.g., in *see the river*, while idioms are completely unpredictable in form and meaning. In between the two ends of the continuum there is a range of more or less compositional and productive phrases, collocations and colligations. Colligations are described as more flexible as one construct of a colligation is “specified by category rather than as a distinct lexical item”, i.e. one item of the combination is taken from a closed word class, e.g. prepositions (Nattinger & DeCarrico 1992: 178).

Howarth’s (1998a: 28) continuum model has been adopted from Cowie (1982). It also offers four categories from free combinations, to restricted collocations, to figurative and pure idioms, both in the grammatical and lexical dimension of syntagmatic

relationships between words, i.e. eight categories all together. Free combinations here include only elements used in a literal sense which can be substituted freely, while restricted collocations are defined as consisting of at least one element used in a “specialised, often figurative sense” (Howarth 1998a: 28). Figurative idioms are distinguished from pure idioms by being ascribed a literal interpretation compared to the unitary meaning of pure idioms.

	Free combinations	Restricted collocations	Figurative idioms	Pure idioms
Lexical composites (verb + noun)	<i>blow a trumpet</i>	<i>blow a fuse</i>	<i>blow your own trumpet</i>	<i>blow the gaff</i>
Grammatical composites (preposition + noun)	<i>under the table</i>	<i>under attack</i>	<i>under the microscope</i>	<i>under the weather</i>

Figure 5: Howarth’s collocational continuum (1998a: 28)

Although this continuum seems practical and understandable, Wray (2002: 63) criticizes this approach as “superficial” as it “veers from form-based on the left to meaning-based on the right” similar to many other models which are also not continuous with regard to their reference points. Still, in order to distinguish between free combinations on the one hand, and idioms on the other, it seems to be useful as it provides comprehensible examples for the distinct categories.

Another important continuum model ranges from weak to strong collocations. McCarthy (1990: 12) and McCarthy, O’Keeffe and Walsh (2010: 30f.) speak of two classes, namely weak collocations, such as *brown hair* in which brown may collocate with a lot of other nouns, as opposed to strong collocations, such as *blond hair* in which blond usually only occurs with hair. This also becomes obvious when looking at intensifiers such as *very* and *really*, which may form uncountable numbers of collocations, whereas *profoundly* and *utterly* will collocate with much fewer words (McCarthy, O’Keeffe & Walsh 2010: 30). Lewis (1993) speaks of a continuum from weak to medium-strength to strong collocations (e.g. see a movie - see a doctor – see danger⁷). No matter which of the two models is applied, there is no doubt that the connection between the words which collocate can be stronger or weaker.

⁷ Examples taken from Souza Hodne (2009: 7).

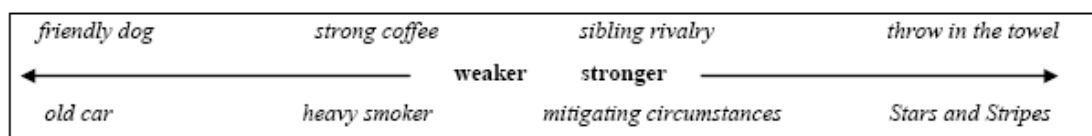


Figure 6: Conzett's continuum model (Conzett 2000: 74)

In Conzett's model above, which also shows a continuum from weak to strong, only the middle range is considered collocation, free combinations on the left side are excluded as well as the idioms on the right hand side (2000: 74).

Summing up, the problem with all these different continuum models seems to be that the boundaries between the categories stay fuzzy and the delimitations of free combination, collocation and idiom often remain uncertain. According to these different gradual classification systems, collocations have to be placed in the core area of the collocational continuum between free combinations on the unrestricted end and idioms on the restricted, but where exactly to draw the line has not been agreed on. It becomes clear once more that characteristics of collocations are never absolute, but gradable values and that not all collocations are the same, but have to be seen as ranging on a continuum.

2.4 My working definition

Considering the preceding discussion, it becomes obvious that neither linguists nor teachers have agreed upon how one can define a collocation and what to include in, and what to exclude from the category of collocations. Different researchers seem to take bits and pieces from various approaches and classifications in order to arrive at their own definition of the term 'collocation' which perfectly suits their purpose, at least for one article. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, I suggest combining those elements from different approaches that appear helpful in arriving at an appropriate definition of the term 'collocation' for this very paper.

However fuzzy and difficult the characterization and definition of collocations might be, Wei (1999: 4) argues that "it is [still] possible to construct a model that is not only sound theoretically, but also useful pedagogically". As a very suitable model for

teaching and pedagogical purposes Wei (1999: 4) then recommends the classification proposed by Benson, Benson and Ilson (1986) as it incorporates syntax and grammar as well as lexis by distinguishing between lexical and grammatical collocations. In contrast to many other collocation studies and publications which only concentrate on lexical collocations, this one will also include grammatical collocations. Grammatical collocations such as *autonomous from*, *to depend on* and *to look forward to +ing* are claimed to be particularly difficult for learners of second languages as they include one word from a closed word class, e.g. preposition, and they therefore deserve particular attention in an EFL classroom (Kennedy 1990: 217).

Although Wei (1999: 4) claims that “for the purpose of teaching as well as for theoretical coherence, it is desirable to expand the framework to include idioms and free combinations”, my working definition will exclude the two ends of the collocational continuum. Lewis (2000: 133f.) also subsumes many multi-word units such as phrasal verbs or idioms under the heading of ‘collocation’ and course books include many exercises dealing with these two classes of prefabricated sequences as well. Howarth (1998b: 169) remarks on that issue:

Of all categories of conventional lexical combinations, idioms have received the most attention in linguistic theory and description [...]. Idioms have also been almost the only phraseological category to be recognized in ELT materials [...]. However, they are the least frequent category in the type of texts under discussion here⁸, and arguably present less severe problems to learners. Far more significant is the central area of the spectrum – restricted collocations.

Since phrasal verbs and idioms have been of interest for language teaching for a longer period already and are therefore explored better than collocations, for the sake of new contributions these two categories will be neglected here. Another reason for excluding them is that the exercises in the schoolbooks on idioms and phrasal verbs are usually presented separately and also not declared ‘collocation exercises’.

Nesselhauf (2005: 18) explains that the different approaches are sometimes also mixed by “authors who primarily adopt a phraseological approach additionally

⁸ ‘here’ meaning in his article.

considering frequency as a defining criterion". This is exactly what happens for the purpose of my study. The definition of the term 'collocation' will be more in line with the definitions of the phraseological approach; however, frequency of items will be regarded as an important defining factor too as the two approaches do not exclude but rather seem to complement each other. When holding too tight to only one of these classifications, some important points might be missed. Liu (2010: 5), for example, speaks of a probably statistically high co-occurrence of the words "toy + children" which come together more often than "toy + man" or "toy + woman". What this example illustrates is that statistically frequent co-occurrences do not necessarily have to be very surprising or interesting hits for analysis and also do not necessarily present collocations in the phraseological sense of defining collocations. Liu (2010: 5) describes those collocations he denotes relevant for pedagogical purposes as "habitual combinations of words that are often treated as lexical items or units" in opposition to the much broader concept of collocations which is often used in corpus linguistics and sees collocations simply as certain words that "co-occur more often than by chance". So again it is implied that for teaching purposes, the phraseological definition of collocation as an expression which is more or less fixed and at the same time more or less transparent is more appropriate and useful.

Although continuum models have been criticized as well for their inconsistency (cf. Wray 2002), for my working definition a continuum model which ranges from fixed to loose as well as from strong to weak collocations similar to the models by Howarth (1998) and McCarthy (1990) seems appropriate, as not all collocations encountered in the different course books are of the same fixation type. What is even more important is that continuum models help to distinguish between free combinations and idioms and are therefore seem to be very useful.

To summarize, my working definition of collocations for this paper is the following: A collocation is a gradable, statistically significant grammatical or lexical combination of at least two lexemes on a syntagmatic level which is fixed as well as semantically transparent to certain degrees. It can be distinguished from free combinations and idioms on the basis of the gradable characteristics presented in chapter 2.3.2.

3. Collocations in Foreign Language Teaching

Collocation: Hard to pin down, but bloody useful.
Schmid (2003)⁹

Although it has been widely recognized by linguists that collocations are a pervasive feature of every language and therefore an important part of second language competence, not much attention has been put on collocation learning in various language learning theories and methods. After briefly addressing different approaches to teaching in general, I will describe how lexical approaches made way to the introduction of more vocabulary teaching and collocation teaching in particular into class. Furthermore, I will elaborate on the differences of collocation use between native speakers and foreign language learners as well as the reasons for the huge difficulties students seem to encounter when learning collocations. Finally, I will try to answer the question why collocations should be taught, i.e. why they are claimed to be so “bloody useful” by Schmid (2003).

3.1 Different approaches to vocabulary teaching

Throughout the history of second and foreign language teaching a wide variety of methods and approaches has emerged. They all have different foci and assign different priority to the teaching of vocabulary. In the case of some approaches vocabulary teaching is central, whereas in others it has been widely neglected. The following short summary of six different approaches has been adapted from Schmitt (2000: 10-14).

In the *Grammar-Translation Method*, which became popular in the beginning of the 19th century, the focus was on explicit teaching of grammar rules, vocabulary word lists and translation from and to the L1. Vocabulary was only taught in an isolated way through bilingual word lists and was often left to the students to learn.

The *Direct Method* emerged at the end of the 19th century as an answer to the *Grammar-Translation Method*. It focused on listening and speaking skills first,

⁹ “Collocation: Hard to pin down, but bloody useful” is the title of an article by Schmid (2003) referred to in Handl (2008: 65).

imitating L1 acquisition. Vocabulary was thought to develop naturally through oral language input during the lessons and only abstract words were presented in the traditional way with translation and grouping into topics.

Another approach, the *Reading Method*, emerged at the beginning of the 20th century. It emphasised reading as the only important skill as it was believed that native-like proficiency could not be achieved anyway and as people did not go abroad, there was no need for them to communicate with foreigners. Vocabulary was considered more important than grammar and was quickly expanded and controlled.

The focus of *Audiolingualism*, which was based on behaviourism and came up during the Second World War, was the teaching of structural patterns via repetitive drilling exercises, particularly focusing on pronunciation and memorization. The amount of vocabulary was kept low and only simple and familiar words were chosen to be taught.

The *Situational Approach* – as its name suggests - tried to equip the learners with vocabulary and grammatical structures they would need in particular situations, e.g. eating out, shopping. Consequently, the vocabulary input was very limited.

The focus in *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)* – which is still one of the most prominent approaches to language teaching worldwide - changed from accuracy to communicative competence, i.e. which kind of language is appropriate in particular circumstances. Grammar rules in this approach are more or less neglected, while the ability to get meaning across fluently is prioritized. Vocabulary has still not been given prominent status in this approach as again it is assumed that a large amount of language input is sufficient to develop the students' vocabulary. Sökmen (1997: 237) writes that “[a]s we enter the 21st century, acquisition of vocabulary has assumed a more important role, and as some would argue, the central role in learning a second language”. So finally, various *Lexical Approaches* that stress the importance of vocabulary learning and collocation learning in particular emerged. These will be discussed in the next subchapter as the basis for the justification of collocation learning.

3.1.1 Lexical approaches

As can be seen from the descriptions of the six different approaches above, grammar has long been seen as the most important aspect of EFL teaching and has been practised extensively. Lessons were often rule-governed, teacher-centred and very repetitive as structure-drills were on the agenda. It was often argued that the vocabulary load should be kept minimal and that mastering grammatical structures was the most important aim of EFL teaching (Lewis 1993: 115). Hill (2000: 49) states that it was more or less out of comfort to see grammar as the basis or the skeleton for language acquisition, as in contrast to the sheer amount of vocabulary, collocations and other possible lexical combinations grammar has - incorrectly - been assumed finite. Teaching grammar was seen to be easier than teaching vocabulary, because, for example, the limited number of English tenses could be “summarized on a half a dozen pages of a grammar book”, while the enormous lexicon of the English language was considered very hard if not even impossible to master (Hill 2000: 49).

Wilkins (1972) is regarded as one of the first researchers to recognize the importance of vocabulary for communication by saying that “[w]ithout grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” (cited in Lewis 1993: 115). Since then, several authors have put forward lexical approaches to language teaching which prioritize teaching vocabulary to teaching of grammatical rules and structures (e.g. *The Lexical Syllabus* by Willis 1990, *Lexical phrases and language teaching* by Nattinger and DeCarrico 1992 and *The Lexical Approach* by Michael Lewis 1993). Richard and Rodgers (2001: 132) give a very accurate summary of the central aspects of lexical approaches to language teaching:

A lexical approach in language teaching refers to one derived from the belief that the building blocks of language learning and communication are not grammar, functions, notions, or some other unit of planning and teaching but lexis, that is, words and word combinations. Lexical approaches in language teaching reflect a belief in the centrality of the lexicon to language structure, second language learning, and language use, and in particular to multiword lexical units or ‘chunks’ that are learned and used as single items.

They also review the three approaches mentioned above. The most recent one by Michael Lewis will now be described in more detail as he especially attributed a significant role to collocations in language teaching and made a considerable contribution to how they should be taught for EFL learners.

In the foreword to his book, *The Lexical Approach*, Michael Lewis (1993: vi) explains that his approach is in line with *Communicative Language Teaching* and that with the help of it, most importantly, the role of lexis shall be understood in the context of language teaching. First and foremost, he criticizes that the teaching of vocabulary has largely been unsystematic and random. Therefore, he calls for more principles of introducing and exploiting lexis in a useful way in class (Lewis 1993: 117). He calls for a focus on chunks of language instead of individual words:

[The lexical approach] focuses on developing learners' proficiency with words and word combinations. It is based on the idea that an important part of language acquisition is the ability to produce lexical phrases as chunks and that these chunks become the raw data by which learners perceive patterns of language traditionally thought of as grammar. (Lewis 1993: 95)

In the foreword to his book Lewis (1993: vi-vii) gives 20 key principles of *The Lexical Approach*. Due to the limited scope of this paper, only the five points which are considered most essential and useful for the purpose of this thesis are discussed.

- Language consists of grammaticalised lexis, not lexicalised grammar. Grammar, in the traditional sense of learning rules, is widely neglected in Lewis' approach. Lewis argues that ability to communicate as much as possible at early learning stages is most important, even if it means paying the price of grammatical inaccuracy at some point. However, he does not claim that a teacher should completely dismiss grammar; he only calls for a shift of emphasis towards lexis and a change in teaching methods (1993: 133).

- The grammar/ vocabulary dichotomy is invalid; much language consists of multi-word 'chunks'.

The standard dichotomy between grammar and vocabulary still promoted by many teachers and coursebooks is challenged by Lewis. He explains that language consists of chunks including both features of grammar and vocabulary which when combined result in coherent text (Lewis 1997: 7-11). Schmitt (2000: 14) refers to this phenomenon of lexical patterning as the underlying system of language as "lexicogrammar". Grammar and vocabulary cannot be separated completely, but should be seen as co-existing and interrelated partners.

- A central element of language teaching is raising students' awareness of, and developing their ability to 'chunk' language successfully.

Lewis (1993: 120) explains that “[c]hunking – breaking continuous text into useful component ‘bits’ is an intrinsic part of the Lexical Approach”. According to Lewis (1997: 9), many teachers already try to teach adjectives with co-occurring prepositions like *suspicious of* or *relevant to*. However, he argues that the lexical chunks need to be bigger than that and have to include the words which are not only possible, but highly likely to follow these structures. Furthermore, Lewis (1993: 195) claims that students do not need to learn how to link individual parts to create a whole, but to identify various multi-word components within the whole. Questions like “Are there any *words* you don’t understand?” frequently used by many teachers when reading texts with students are therefore sharply criticized by Lewis. Instead, he suggests asking for unknown structures or explicitly pointing at useful collocations and other multi-word items in a text.

- Receptive skills, particularly listening, are given enhanced status.

Lewis bases his lexical approach on Krashen’s hypothesis¹⁰ which suggests that solely massive amounts of comprehensible language input are required for learners’ success in acquiring language. Production in Krashen’s *Natural Approach* is not important. Therefore, it is suggested that in earlier stages of learning only receptive skills should be practised. Extensive reading is promoted from a very early stage of learning onwards, though over-load has to be avoided in order not to overwhelm students. Writing is delayed to a later point, similar to the process of first language acquisition in which writing is usually the last skill acquired. (Lewis 1993: 194)

- Collocation is integrated as an organising principle within syllabuses.

When pursuing a lexical approach to language teaching, not only a shift in emphasis from grammar to vocabulary is necessary, but also a change in how to teach vocabulary seems vital. For a long time, there was a clear tendency towards looking at vocabulary items in isolation, while the principle of collocation involves teaching and learning words in co- and context (Lewis 1993: 119). The principle of collocation changes the teaching of vocabulary tremendously by highlighting syntagmatic instead of paradigmatic relations. For Lewis (1993: 119) “[c]ollocation [...] provides

¹⁰ See Lewis (1993: 21-29) for more information on Krashen’s *Natural Approach*.

the most powerful organisation principle for language teaching, and for arranging for the efficient recording of new items". Collocations are therefore regarded as a major element in teaching and learning in the lexical approach. Lewis (1997: 119) claims that it is not enough to know the translation or the meaning of a word, but knowing a word also "involves mastering its collocational range and restrictions on that range".

3.1.2 Collocations - A neglected variable in current EFL teaching

While collocations play an important part in lexical approaches, various researchers throughout the world have identical concerns when it comes to the teaching of collocations: not enough attention is paid to them in the language classroom. For example, Boonyasquan (2009a: 80) claims that collocations are often neglected in the EFL education in her country:

Thai teachers appreciate very little the significance of collocations and action research on this topic is rarely undertaken although student's collocation errors are frequently observed.

Furthermore, if collocations are taught, it seems they are not taught in a very efficient way. Talking about the findings of her elaborate learner corpus study, Nesselhauf (2005: 252) concludes that the current practice of teaching collocation seems insufficient:

Three results obtained in the present study strongly indicate that the teaching of collocations ought to be improved: first, the high rate of deviation (about a third), second, the finding that the number of years the learners were taught English has no positive effect on collocation use, and third that the length of exposure to the language has only a slight positive effect.

In this quote, Nesselhauf points out that collocational competence does not automatically increase with the years of classroom instruction, i.e. the general language level of the learners does not correlate with their collocational competence. Even very advanced learners have problems producing correct or rather probable collocations. In the case of the students observed here it might be concluded that classroom practice seems to be rarely existent or that the applied teaching methods seem to be inefficient in leading students to high collocational competence.

As already mentioned in chapter 2, not all kinds of lexical combinations have received the same kind of attention in classroom teaching. Howarth (1998b: 169)

explains that idioms “have [...] been almost the only phraseological category to be recognized in ELT materials”, although they appear much less frequently in discourse and do usually not present huge problem areas for foreign language learners. Collocations, on the other hand, have not received much consideration in classroom teaching, although they seem to present a large problem area for learners and are additionally claimed to be communicatively much more useful than idioms (Howarth 1998b: 169).

The disregard of collocations in EFL teaching can partly be held responsible for the many difficulties learners seem to have with collocations. Still, there are many other reasons why collocations lead to errors in students’ productions. In the next chapters, the various difficulties for EFL learners will be explored together with the differences in language use which also account for these difficulties.

3.2 Differences in collocation use in learner and native language

Due to globalization English has become the most widely used language throughout the world with more non-native speakers than native speakers and with millions of speakers using English as a lingua franca. The term ELF¹¹ is used when “English is chosen as the means of communication among people from different first language backgrounds, across linguistic boundaries”, including primarily non-native, but also native speakers of English (Seidlhofer 2005: 339). With the rise of research on ELF the traditional clear divide between native and non-native speakers suddenly has been questioned. Furthermore, the prominent view in TEFL that a native-speaker norm or standard has to be taught to learners of English has recently been challenged as well. The wish and the need to acquire native-like competence in English does not necessarily seem to be prevalent in all learners. It is argued that

the overall aim of ELF speakers usually is to use the language in a way that is appropriate in the very communicative (ELF) situation they are in, which may in some cases be different to what might be considered ‘correct’ in terms of ENL standards. (Märzinger 2013: 7)

¹¹ For a more comprehensive overview on ELF consider Seidlhofer (2005 & 2011).

Thus, the major goal of the speakers of ELF is to reach mutual intelligibility (McKay 2002: 126). Grammatical, lexical and phonological accuracy seem to be less relevant as long as communication is not hindered.

While the concept of ELF is increasingly being researched and the number of ELF speakers is constantly rising, “the prevailing orientation in English language teaching and testing, and ELT materials remains undoubtedly towards ENL, with correctness and appropriateness still widely driven by NES use” (Jenkins 2012: 487). Therefore, this paper is based on the assumption that there is a clear distinction between native and non-native speakers as well as differences in their use of English. Furthermore, it is assumed that most EFL learners strive for native speaker competence and that most EFL teachers teach English close to either the American or British English standard variety.

In order to understand the reasons for EFL learners’ difficulties with collocations at all learning levels one has to consider the differences in language use and in collocation use in particular between native and non-native speakers of English. First, the grave distinction between ‘open choice’ principle and the ‘idiom’ principle in relation to native and non-native use of language will be explored, before looking at various studies on learners’ collocational performance and learners’ strategies to cope with lack of collocational knowledge.

3.2.1 The ‘open choice’ and the ‘idiom’ principle

Schmitt (2000: 79f.) comments on the differences in collocation use between native and non-native speakers:

Although it is not clear how collocational knowledge is acquired, it seems to be relatively difficult to achieve. This difficulty means that collocational knowledge is something that normally distinguishes native speakers from nonnative speakers. In an unpublished study, Levenston found that when native speakers responded to a completion task, they relied on collocational criteria to a large extent. On the other hand, even advanced L2 learners were much less likely to respond with collocationally based answers.

The main difference in language use between native and non-native speakers of English may be therefore explained on the basis of the ‘open-choice’ principle and

the 'idiom' principle coined by Sinclair (1987). With these two terms two significantly different ways of describing and interpreting language are illustrated. The 'open choice' principle, often also referred to as the 'slot-and-filler' model, is probably the traditional approach of seeing language. Language is described as being built up from "a very large number of complex choices [...] and the only restraint is grammaticalness" (Sinclair 1987: 319f.). Schmitt (2000: 76) explains that "[t]he open-choice principle tries to cover the idea that language is creative, and in most instances there is a wide variety of possible words that could be put into any 'slot'". On the contrary, the 'idiom' principle indicates that not all restraints in a text can be explained by grammatical choice as words do not appear randomly together to make up a text. For some restraints the natural world can account, as things which occur together in real life tend to co-occur in language as well. Furthermore, register is responsible for limiting the possibilities of lexical choice. However, still not all limitations on word choice can be explained through this (Sinclair 1987: 320). Schmitt (2000: 77) puts it in a nutshell by saying that "[t]he idiom principle highlights the fact that there are regularities in how words co-occur with each other; collocation is the term that covers this notion."

It is frequently argued that native speakers make use of the idiom principle much more than non-native speakers. McCarthy, O'Keeffe and Walsh (2010: 34) explain that "[n]ative speakers and expert users, because they have stored thousands of ready-made collocations are working top-down, and simply accessing collocations from memory". Hence, native speakers achieve their fluency by reducing processing time with the help of retrieving pre-fabricated lexical chunks from their mind and combining them (Lewis 1993: 121). Sinclair (1987: 320) summarizes it by saying that

[t]he principle of idiom is that a language user has available to him or her a large number of semi-preconstructed phrases that constitute single choices, even though they might appear to be analysable into segments.

Contrastingly, depending on their proficiency, second or foreign language learners are said to rely more on the 'open-choice' principle by creating language 'bottom-up', as it is called by McCarthy, O'Keeffe and Walsh (2010: 34). Learners are said to select single words and create a sentence from scratch without thinking of probable collocations or multi-word chunks. McCarthy, O'Keeffe and Walsh (2010: 34) claim that for beginners, who are faced with huge processing loads when uttering

something in a new language, this problem might be especially prominent. As another likely reason for bottom-up production they mention traditional methods and approaches to teaching. A lot of teaching still happens within the regular dichotomy between grammar and vocabulary. Vocabulary lessons are often concentrated on teaching lists of single items and grammar rules which then accounts for language learners only applying the 'open choice' principle in speaking and writing (McCarthy, O'Keeffe & Walsh 2010: 34). Woolard (2000: 30) claims that "this 'slot and filler' approach to the teaching of grammar and vocabulary has not sensitised our students to the collocational constraints on word combinations". Erroneous utterances are therefore said to be partly due to inappropriate teaching practice, as for example Siepmann (2008: 194) clearly points out:

Many errors stem from the word-based methodology which still has currency in the vocabulary sections of EFL/ ESL textbooks. This methodology induces the non-native speaker to learn separate items which may become paired in rather haphazard fashion; in sharp contrast, native speakers have at their disposal formulaic pairings which have become loosened.

Again, it is argued that the students' heavy reliance on the 'open choice' principle and their neglect of multi-word chunks seems to lead to many errors in their production. In the next subchapter the various mistakes students are likely to make in their use of collocations will be explored in more detail.

3.2.2 Studies on EFL learners' collocational competence

Since the emergence of lexical approaches and the recognition of the importance of multi-word units for second language learning and performance, numerous studies on EFL learners' phraseological, and in particular collocational, competence have been conducted. Howarth (1998a: 31ff.) distinguishes three different methods to investigating second language learners' phraseology:

1. Random recording of speech and writing (Howarth 1998a)
2. Experimental studies with a homogenous group (Bahns 1993, Biskup 1992)
3. Corpus-based approaches (Granger 1998, Fan 2009, Nesselhauf 2005)

No matter which approach to studying phraseological and collocational performance of EFL users is taken, the studies almost always come to the same conclusion: their use of collocations often lags behind the native speakers' use of collocations and if

collocations are used they are repeatedly used erroneously. Even advanced learners seem to have great difficulties with applying the correct collocations which suggests that phraseological competence does not develop at the same speed as language competence in general (see e.g. Bahns & Eldaw 1993, Nesselhauf 2005).

Herbst (1996: 391) claims that when testing the acceptability and predictability of collocations by German students of English compared to English native speakers, the German students' knowledge "shows obvious deficiencies". Furthermore, Durrant and Schmitt (2009: 158) note that

[a]dvanced learners do appear to use formulaic language, but often not to the same extent as natives. At the same time, learners tend to overuse (in comparison to native norms) a small range of favourite phrases, especially if they are frequent/ neutral items or are cognate to L1 forms.

Howarth (1998a: 36) claims as well that non-native speakers produced, quantitatively speaking, on average only a quarter of conventional combinations native speakers were using. In line with these findings, Fan (2009) noticed in her study on secondary students from Hong Kong that L2 learners not only used a much more restricted range of collocations, but that they tended to overuse simple collocations in comparison to their native British control group. This was particularly prevalent in the class of 'intensifier + adjectives', e.g. *very* was used twice as often by the L2 learners than by native students (Fan 2009: 115). Similarly, in a study with French native speakers, Granger (1998) found that learners generally underused amplifiers and tended to overuse more common amplifiers such as *totally* and *completely*, as they naturally collocate with more words than e.g. *highly*. Schmitt (2000: 81) calls "this liberal use of 'allrounders' [...] a 'safe bet' strategy" which learners think will help them make fewer errors. Durrant and Schmitt (2009: 174) speak of a conservative use of language when learners rely on forms that are familiar to them and use them repeatedly. A problem related to this is described by Lewis (1997: 33) and Sökmen (1997: 253). They both state that after a test where students had to fill in a collocational grid, it could not only be seen that learners made incorrect or unacceptable collocations, but that they also missed many possible or highly likely combinations of words. This illustrates that students are often not aware of the huge amount of possible combinations various words may offer.

Moon (1997: 58) remarks that the “avoidance strategy” is often said to be preferred by foreign language learners. Apparently, for learners it seems easier to use no multi-word items at all, because this helps when trying to avoid wrong interpretations of these units and consequently helps to avoid communicative errors. The reluctance or even fear to use collocations or other multi-word items - even where there are related terms in their mother tongues - might stem from the suspicion L2 learners acquired against using similar items to their mother tongue as they “have learned to be wary of ‘false friends’” (Moon 1997: 60). Therefore, many language learners seem to be over-cautious and tend to avoid such items completely.

Tying in with Moon’s (1997) conclusions above, Fan’s study provides evidence for negative L1 transfer, e.g. ‘circle’ was used by Hong Kong students to express ‘round’ as in the Chinese language there is only one lexeme to express ‘round’ and ‘circle’ (Fan 2009: 115). Similarly, many other studies clearly demonstrated that there is great influence from the L1, e.g. Bahns 1993, Bahns & Eldaw 1993, Biskup 1992, Granger 1998, Howarth 1998 and Nesselhauf 2003 & 2005. Nesselhauf (2005: 181) concludes from her analysis of erroneous collocations in a learner corpus that between 51% and 53% of the deviant verb-noun collocations are very likely to have been influenced by the learners’ L1. In her earlier study from 2003 she gives some excellently illustrative examples which clearly show the influence from the learners’ mother tongue German:

- **make homework* instead of *do homework*
- from German *Hausaufgaben machen* (verb mistake)
- **close lacks* instead of *close gaps*
- from German *Lücken schließen* (noun mistake)
- **train one’s muscles* instead of *to exercise*
- from German *seine Muskeln trainieren* (usage mistake)
- **draw a picture from* instead of *draw a picture of*
- from German *ein Bild zeichnen von* (preposition mistake)
(Nesselhauf 2003: 235)

As can be seen, L1 influence seems to be problematic not only for the acquisition of pronunciation or grammar system of a language, but also for the acquisition of the phraseological system L1 transfer and over-reliance on translation from the L1 pose great difficulties for the learners.

Gouverneur (2008: 223f.) and Howarth (1998b: 181) point out that high-frequency verbs such as *take* and *make* represent a problem area for second language learners at all levels of proficiency, primarily in production. Gouverneur (2008: 224) explains that “whilst the core meanings of the verbs usually seem to be mastered, their delexicalised uses, occurring mainly in phraseological patterns, have been shown to remain a stumbling block to native-like proficiency”. Moreover, Howarth (1998b: 181) found evidence that students tried to avoid using de-lexicalized verbs, which may be due to their uncertainty of appropriate collocates.

Furthermore, Fan’s study provides evidence that learners have difficulties in choosing the correct collocation when they know several synonyms of a word, but are not sure about which one to choose as the right collocation. L2 students produced utterances such as ‘curvy’ hair which “share[s] a common semantic component ‘round/ not straight’ with ‘curly’”, but is usually not used in a construction with hair by native speakers (Fan 2009: 118).

Examples like the one above described by Fan indicate that the assessment of collocational mistakes is not as easy and straight-forward as it might seem. The problem with collocations chosen by second language learners is that one often cannot actually classify combinations as ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ word combinations, but rather as “unusual, unnatural and very unlikely” ones compared to native speakers’ choices (McCarthy, O’Keeffe & Walsh 2010: 33). The collocation ‘curvy hair’ might be well understood by a native speaker and also by another non-native speaker in an ELF context, but it would immediately reveal the speaker or writer as non-native. Fontenelle (1994: 1) describes a situation in which one of his students produced the sentence “The heat had made the milk rotten”. He then had to explain that grammar-wise this sentence was perfectly well-written as well as probably understandable for a native speaker, but “that this very combination was likely to elicit some kind of mocking smile”. Thus, on the one hand, this creates enormous problems for the teacher who has to explain this phenomenon and in addition, to subsequently assess the students. On the other hand, it might also be difficult for the students to accept that a collocation is not totally wrong, but still unacceptable, inappropriate or just very unlikely with regard to native speaker language use.

To sum up, students seem to encounter many different problems when learning or producing collocational structures. The question why exactly collocations are that difficult for learners to acquire has not been dealt with yet. The next chapter will hopefully give more insight into this issue by exploring difficulties on the basis of the different properties of collocations discussed in chapter 2.3.2.

3.3 Difficulties for learners

As the outcomes of the various studies discussed in the previous chapter have demonstrated, collocations seem to be problematic at all levels of learning. Even among university students of English who generally have an excellent command of the English language, collocational deviations could be measured (e.g. Bahns 1993, Biskup 1992, Howarth 1998a, Laufer & Waldman 2011, Nesselhauf 2005).

The overall picture that emerges on the basis of collocation studies is that the use of collocations is problematic for L2 learners, regardless of the number of years of instruction they have received in L2, their native language, or type of task they are asked to perform. (Laufer & Waldman 2011: 651)

Therefore, in this chapter the difficulties collocations seem to pose for students of foreign languages will be summarized and explained in more detail in order to explain why collocations deserve special attention in the classroom. As we will see, some of the difficulties learners have with collocations seem to directly correlate with their characteristics discussed in chapter 2.3.2. These characteristics cannot be considered in isolation as they interplay and merge at some points.

- Arbitrariness

Even if McCarthy, O’Keeffe and Walsh (2010: 29) state that collocations “are difficult to predict, or to guess from intuition, and this is true for native speakers and non-native speakers alike”, most authors agree that collocations are indeed very hard to foresee for non-native speakers. However, native speakers seem to have an intuition about the appropriate co-occurrences and combinations of words¹² (see e.g. Biskup 1992, Conzett 2000, Handl 2008, Martyńska 2004). Therefore, one huge problem for

¹² Although it is called ‘intuition’ in all of the publications cited above, one might say that experience also contributes to the native speakers’ ability to predict word combinations. A native speaker simply has much more experience with the language than a language learner and can therefore predict collocations more easily.

learners is that “collocational use is not rule-governed and, in most cases, arbitrary and idiosyncratic” (Fan 2009: 120). Thus, because collocational combinations are not determined by logic or “semantically unmotivated” and cannot be acquired by learning rules for how to combine them, learners are often faced with the problem of how to tackle the huge amount of collocations in a language (Liu 2010: 8). Woolard (2000: 30) stresses that teachers have to make clear that collocations are arbitrary, i.e. that there is no reason why one *makes a decision* rather than *does a decision* or why a *car* can only be *powerful* while *tea* can only be *strong* even if *powerful* and *strong* can be used synonymously in other examples. The only answer a teacher can have for the students is that “this is simply the way the language is” (Woolard 2000: 34). Woolard goes on by saying that a teacher should never search for explanations why specific words can be used while others cannot, because there is no good one. He suggests rather looking at concordances from which it becomes clear in which circumstances and contexts a word may be used while another will not (Woolard 2000: 34f.)

- Semantic transparency

The transparency of meaning of most collocations is a problem, because collocations are easily understood by most EFL learners and are therefore often not recognized as lexical chunks which actually would have to be learned.

[W]hen encountering a new collocation, a learner does not make a conscious effort to understand or memorise it as it poses no specific perception problem to him or her. The collocation very often passes unnoticed because it does not require the learner to apply different mental operations consciously, and no trace or a weak trace only will be left in the learner’s memory for later recall. (Biskup 1992: 87)

Ying and O’Neill (2009: 181f.) also state that “collocations do not generally constitute comprehension problems, and therefore are largely neglected in the process of foreign language teaching and learning”. As a result, collocations often pose problems for production. Students do not seem to be aware of the phenomenon of collocation, consequently they do not pay attention to which words they combine and therefore produce nonconformist utterances. Again, this can be traced back to the reliance on the ‘open choice’ principle or to bottom-up language use of a foreign language learner.

- Pervasiveness

As another problem for EFL learners, and at the same time for teachers, the pervasiveness of collocations in language is identified. Ying and O'Neill (2009: 182) claim that students often feel overwhelmed by the sheer amount of possible word combinations that there are in the English language and therefore do not manage to make out which collocations need to be learned or how they could be studied successfully. Even if they have been acquainted with the concept of collocation already, students might feel frustrated because of not knowing where to start, which collocations are worth to be noted down, etc. Considering that one word may occur in a huge amount of various combinations, the number of collocations is much higher than the number of individual words in a language. The question therefore is, if collocations need to be learned in chunks in order to be stored effectively, how can one master to memorize these many expressions? This question will be dealt with in chapter 4 in greater detail.

- Language specificity and L1 influence

While every language largely consists of collocations and lexical chunks, in his article on Russian collocations Bolshakov (2004: 235) states that collocations are highly language specific. Furthermore, Martyńska (2004: 4) concludes that because every language has its own rules and subsequently its own collocations, learners and also translators are faced with great challenges. In more detail, one could argue that it is actually not language specificity, but rather dialectal or regional specificity which matters. Benson (1985: 65) states that whereas British native speakers of English *have a bath/ walk/ look*, American native speakers will preferably *take a bath/ walk/ look*. He claims that American users of the English language will use different collocations than a British person would use which then, according to Moon (1997: 59), may lead to “intervarietal” errors. However, these errors may not be as grave as the ones defined by Yamashita and Jiang (2010). Yamashita and Jiang (2010: 649) refer to collocations as a “cross-linguistic” phenomenon, which means that collocations often have counterparts in another language. These can be either congruent, which means that they “share identical lexical items” or incongruent, they “have different component words”. This, of course, is especially tricky for second and foreign language learners as there is no rule to which collocations are congruent and which are not. As pointed out in chapter 3.2.2, many deviant expressions are claimed

to stem from the overgeneralization that collocations consist of the same lexical items in their L1 and in the learner language ('false friends'). However, L1 transfer can, but does not automatically have to, take place even if there are congruent expressions in the two languages. On the one hand, L1 influence may be advantageous when learners deal with congruent collocations; on the other hand, it can also inhibit the learning process, particularly when dealing with incongruent collocations (Yamashita & Jiang 2010: 650).

3.4 Relevance of collocations

The significance of collocational competence is hardly ever questioned by researchers and language teachers anymore or, as Fan (2009: 111) puts it, "the importance of collocational knowledge in L2 competence is beyond dispute". Still, considering the huge difficulties learners are faced with when learning collocations, some teachers may ask why they should bother to challenge their students with them. Several important reasons which strongly argue for the teaching of collocations and show the advantages students have when being collocationally competent will be explored in more detail in this chapter.

- Native-like use of language/ Naturalness of speech

James (1998: 152) states that

[a]dherence to the collocational conventions of a foreign language contributes greatly to one's idiomaticity and nativelikeness, and not doing so announces one's foreignness. (cited in Boonyasquan 2009b: 99)

Consequently, it is important that also advanced learners, who may be very competent in many other aspects of a language such as the grammar system or pronunciation, use collocations correctly. Koosha and Jafarpour (2006: 194) claim that "[s]uch erroneous utterances like 'the manager of the university', 'heavy tea', 'to take fish' and 'to be bad in something' are not due to poor lexical or grammatical knowledge", but that they arise from the lack of collocational competence and would reveal an otherwise competent English user as foreign immediately. Therefore, in order to sound as natural and native-like as possible, students need to be taught collocations.

- Fluency

Hill (2000: 54f.) summarizes how collocations affect fluency:

Collocation allows us to think more quickly and communicate more efficiently. Native speakers can only speak at the speed they do because they are calling on a vast repertoire of ready-made language, immediately available from their mental lexicons. Similarly, they can listen at the speed of speech and read quickly because they are constantly recognising multi-word units rather than processing everything word-by-word.

This again goes back to the reliance of L2 learners on the 'open-choice' principle compared to the 'idiom' principle as discussed in subchapter 3.3.1. The role of prefabricated sequences for fluency in speaking and writing has recently been widely acknowledged by several other authors as well (see e.g. Pawley & Syder 1983 and Ellis 2001, both cited in Nation 2001: 323; Hill 2000; Martyńska 2004). Summarizing various psycholinguistic studies on collocations, Nesselhauf (2005: 2) concludes that

the human brain is much better equipped for memorizing than for processing, and that the availability of large numbers of prefabricated units reduces the processing effort and thus makes fluent language possible.

This means that processing time for language learners is reduced if they learn whole units of language instead of single words and therefore the intended message can be uttered more quickly, more easily and naturally. Students do not have to refer to a rule to produce the word combination, but the collocation is retrieved as one single item from memory (Nation 2001: 320). Morgan Lewis (2000: 16) states that "the more collocations learners have at their disposal, the less they need to grammaticalise." This results in shorter and less complex utterances on the side of the students. Furthermore, Yamashita and Jiang (2010: 648) point out that collocational competence would not only increase the students' fluency in speaking, but also their fluent reading skills. When collocationally competent, they would be able to chunk a text accordingly and therefore make sense of it more quickly and more meaningfully.

- Intonation

Foreign language students are often very hard to understand when speaking as their intonation and stress patterns are incorrect. Hill (2000) argues that this is due to their bottom-up approach of language use. Students tend to put single words together to form a sentence and they therefore often neglect stress patterns of whole phrases which makes it difficult for the listener to understand the meaning of an utterance. He

further explains that knowing more collocations and their stress patterns as a whole, intonation will automatically improve as well. Consequently, teaching collocations does not only seem to enhance the learners' fluent speaking skills, but also helps to improve intonation patterns. (Hill 2000: 56)

- Rapid increase of vocabulary range

Martyńska (2004: 11) declares that “[c]ollocations also boost the generation of a learner's lexicon, which is especially true for nouns”. She claims that each time nouns are worked on in class they should be presented with a range of verbal and adjectival collocations in order to build up a wide range of vocabulary as fast as possible. The adjectives and verbs do not have to be - or rather should not be - new to the students, because new collocational patterns with already known words already account for a wide number of new expressions that can be uttered afterwards. If the same is done for verbs and adverbs or adverbs and adjectives, the students' lexicon will increase at remarkable speed.

- Better understanding of different word meanings

Students get to know a range of word meanings if they learn the collocational range of a word with it. A different collocation often correlates with different usage, which again correlates with different word meanings. Hunston (2002: 76, cited in Souza Hodne 2009: 24) states that “one use of collocational information is to highlight the different meanings that a word has” and illustrates her point with the following example:

The meaning of *shed* is something like “lose” or “give”, but the precise meaning of each phrase depends on the collocate:
shed light (on) means “illuminate”, usually metaphorically;
shed tears means “cry” (literally) or “be sorrowful” (crying metaphorical tears);
shed blood means “suffer” or “die”, either literally or metaphorically;
shed jobs and *shed staff* mean “get rid of people”;
shed pounds means “lose weight”;
in *shed skin* and *shed clothes*, *shed* means “remove”;
shed cents is used to indicate that shares or a currency become reduced in value;
shed image means a deliberate changing of how one is perceived.

Accordingly, only the different collocational fields surrounding a word exemplify the various meanings a word might have. If words are only taught by translating them into the learners' L1 and providing synonyms, it would “neglect many of its varied and

rich meanings and could give students a false idea that there is *one* equivalent of this word in their language” (Souza Hodne 2009: 24).

- Preciseness of expression

According to Martyńska (2004: 11) another reason why collocations should not be neglected in EFL teaching is that “the usage of collocation determines precision and pertinence of the speech”. Consequently, collocations help the speaker or writer to get the meaning across properly and more precisely. Talking about students’ lack of collocational competence Hill (2000: 49) concludes:

Lack of competence in this area forces students into grammatical mistakes because they create longer utterances because they do not know the collocations which express precisely what they want to say.

Collocations and various multi-word units are often the most economical way of expressing something. However, when students are not equipped with the necessary collocational material they might not be able to get the message across to the recipient. Hill, Lewis and Lewis (2000: 93) even argue that the lack of collocational competence might equal a lack of ideas in the eyes of the correcting teacher as some ideas might not be able to be expressed by the students without the right collocations. Being collocationally competent therefore might result in a better style of writing. Whereas Nesselhauf (2005: 2) admits that using non-native-like collocations could result in irritation of the recipient and lead away from the core of the message, Wray (2002: 143) adopts a radical stance on this problem by arguing that “failing to use a nativelike expression can create an impression of brusqueness, disrespect or arrogance”. Although Wray’s perspective seems to be slightly exaggerated, it is certainly true that the use of inappropriate collocations may lead to misunderstandings.

- Cultural importance of collocations

McCarthy, O’Keeffe and Walsh (2010: 33) argue that collocations either change their meaning over time or that new collocations tend to be created. These collocations might reflect social changes and technological progress in our world. Recent common collocations such as *to insert a hyperlink*, *to unzip a file* and *to download a document*, would not have been produced or understood a few decades ago. Creating new collocations also often results in modifying the meaning of single words

as in *to burn a CD*, which does not have anything to do with fire or in *to surf the Web*, which does not have anything to do with being at the sea (McCarthy, O’Keeffe & Walsh 2010: 33). Souza Hodne (2009: 25f.) also acknowledges that “[o]bserving collocations in the English language today can help us identify important aspects of British and American culture and current events”. She illustrates this point by giving examples of collocations appearing increasingly after the 9/11 bombings in the US (*war on terror*, *anti- terror campaign*, etc.).

Now that the relevance of teaching collocations in EFL classrooms has been clearly pointed out, there is only one - actually the most important - question left to answer. How can these “bloody useful” collocations be taught effectively? This is what the next chapter is going to explore.

4. How to teach collocations

“Collocation need not be a difficult and off-putting aspect of vocabulary teaching.”

McCarthy, O’Keeffe & Walsh (2010: 38)

In this chapter I will address an important and interesting question about collocations especially in terms of teaching: How can collocations possibly be taught most effectively? It has been widely recognized that multi-word items have to be taught and therefore increased attention has been put on collocations in language teaching research in the last two decades. Nevertheless, Nesselhauf (2005: 3) concludes that “we are still far from the development of a coherent methodology and even further from a wide-spread and systematic treatment of collocations in language teaching materials and syllabi”. Hence, the problem is that publications on how to actually teach collocations are rare, discussions of principles of collocation teaching and concrete examples for useful and systematic teaching practices and exercises are even rarer. Besides the conceptual fuzziness this may also be one reason for why many teachers are not feeling comfortable about tackling the collocational problems of their students. However, as the quote above forcefully claims, there are some ways and suggestions which help teachers to focus on important aspects of collocation teaching. In this chapter I will review the basic strategies of collocation teaching and I will try to suggest helpful principles of collocation teaching on the basis of these strategies and ideas. Furthermore, I will summarize what has been said about the selection of collocational items for teaching with reference to different studies. Finally, different useful materials and resources for students and teachers will be briefly reviewed.

4.1 Strategies for collocation teaching

4.1.1 Explicit or implicit collocation teaching?

One of the many controversial subjects in EFL language teaching is the question whether implicit or explicit (vocabulary) teaching is to be preferred. According to Sökmen (1997: 239), “the pendulum has swung from direct teaching of vocabulary

(the grammar-translation method) to incidental (the communicative approach) and now, laudably, back to the middle: implicit and explicit learning". Both tendencies continue to exist side by side - not only in vocabulary teaching in general, but also in collocation teaching (Souza Hodne 2009: 12). On the one hand, it is argued that because of the sheer amount of phraseological units in a language only implicit teaching can be the key to success as it seems impossible to teach all collocations explicitly. On the other hand, the view persists that students are overwhelmed by the number of possible collocations and therefore need direct(ed) teaching of selected important structures. So, whereas, for example, Krashen suggests that learners only require huge amounts of language input and the students will then acquire enough collocations and lexical units just by being exposed to them, other approaches involve a great deal of explicit teaching with the help of language laboratories in which, e.g., corpus data is analysed (Richard & Rodgers 2001: 134). Overall, most researchers and teachers agree that only a combination of both implicit and explicit teaching methods is ideal for dealing with collocations in class.

Hill (2000: 54) argues that exposure to collocational items is much more important than production. In his view it is enough to hear and read collocational items several times in order to memorize them instead of actually producing them, because he says that "[g]ood quality input should lead to good quality retrieval" (Hill 2000: 54).

The role of the teacher, the classroom, and the materials all need to be changed. Instead of being a language practice facilitator, the teacher should be first and foremost language **provider** and the expert who helps students notice useful and interesting language." (Hill 2000:66, emphasis in the original)

Hence, it is argued that for teaching students' strategies to cope with collocations on their own, language input has to be increased in order to increase incidental learning. Kennedy (2008: 40) explains that exposure needs to be maximized "for learners to acquire multi-word sequences that cannot easily be taught explicitly." He recognizes implicit teaching as the better way of introducing as many collocations as possible to the students. Moreover, he calls for extensive reading of all sorts of texts in order to increase opportunities for students to meet collocations independently. Some authors even take a really strong opinion on implicit learning by declaring that phraseology is not teachable at all. Dörnyei, Durow and Zahran (2004: 87) state that phraseology can only be acquired incidentally by being exposed to the language in natural

surroundings, i.e. in a native speaker community and there is no chance to teach it explicitly (cf. Meunier & Gouverneur 2007: 129). Nesselhauf (2005: 237) also suggests that years of classroom instruction do not affect collocational competence positively, while the length of being exposed to the language in natural surroundings improves collocation use. Although the importance of natural input is acknowledged by Meunier and Gouverneur (2007: 129), they criticize this point of view as “disconcerting and discouraging in an EFL context” and argue for more research in order to find out how exactly collocations in particular and phraseology in general can be taught effectively. Granger and Meunier (2008: 251) also strongly argue against focusing on implicit collocation teaching only:

Given the limited number of hours devoted to foreign language teaching in schools, it would be utopian to expect grammar and phraseology to somehow take care of themselves.

Lewis (1997: 52) generally agrees that a great deal of exposure to language input is needed in order for effective learning to take place. However, he claims that explicit teaching and conscious learning is needed as well in order to help students to transform input into intake. In addition, Nesselhauf (2005: 253) acknowledges the importance of consciousness-raising and implicit teaching, but also argues for the necessity of teacher-guided explicit instruction of important individual collocations. Woolard (2000: 35) actually also promotes the view that collocation learning should primarily happen independently by the students and that it is the teachers’ responsibility to provide students with strategies of how to recognize and record useful collocations, particularly in discourse they encounter outside of class. However, he admits that “[s]tudents with limited time available for study will not learn high priority lexis if it is not deliberately selected and incorporated into learning materials. Collocations, then, must become part of that planned language input” (2000: 32). So the teachers’ task is not only to provide enough language, but also to point out helpful and useful collocations in texts and providing appropriate activities for practising these structures (Conzett 2000: 74).

Hence, while there are arguments for both approaches to teaching collocations, most authors agree that the only reasonable solution to cope with the sheer amount of collocations in a language is the combination of both implicit and explicit teaching. Kennedy (2008: 39) recognizes the importance of explicit teaching of phraseology.

However, he asks to consider that it is not possible to teach everything explicitly. He further advocates the explicit teaching of frequent collocations, such as *very good*, *enjoy life* or *send back*, but claims that infrequent collocations such as *finding solace* or *losing momentum* would lend themselves more to implicit learning. The careful selection of collocational items for teaching therefore seems to be essential and will be dealt with in chapter 4.3. What can be concluded from the different suggestions above is that a combined approach of explicit, direct teaching of collocations and implicit, indirect teaching will most probably lead to success, depending on what kind of collocations one is dealing with. Furthermore, a combination of both is more likely to motivate the students as it is more varied than just sticking to one approach.

4.1.2 Raising awareness

An important aspect mentioned by McCarthy, O’Keeffe and Walsh (2010: 36) as well as Lewis (1993: 186) is that learners usually have no expectations about learning collocations in English. Due to the still often traditionally taught vocabulary-grammar dichotomy, students might expect learning grammar rules and vocabulary as single words, but they generally do not seem to be aware that there is something more, namely word combinations which they have to pay attention to. Thus, as Nesselhauf (2005: 252) puts it, “clearly, the starting point for teaching collocations should therefore be to make learners more aware of the phenomenon”. Conzett (2000: 80) as well agrees with that:

The single most important thing for teachers, more than worrying whether or not something is a collocation, is to shift their and their students’ focus away from individual words to chunks of language.

McCarthy, O’Keeffe and Walsh (2010: 36) describe two fundamental ways of raising awareness: direct and indirect, also referred to as deductive and inductive. In the deductive approach the teacher first provides the student with an explanation what a collocation is, then gives examples and subsequently practices with the students. It also implies that the term ‘collocation’ is actually used in the classroom. On the other hand, when acting inductively, the teacher gives the students various activities right away in which they e.g. have to pair words and afterwards the teacher explains the underlying concept or rule. The indirect approach does not necessarily imply introducing the term ‘collocation’ (McCarthy, O’Keeffe & Walsh 2010: 36). Conzett

agrees that raising awareness is the very important starting point. However, she also argues for the explicit introduction of the term 'collocation'. She claims that the concept should not be too difficult to understand for students as it is the same in their L1 and "[o]nce explained, you can save a great deal of class time by using the term when appropriate" (Conzett 2000: 75). Additionally, this would be the first step towards raising awareness among the students that these kinds of lexical chunks exist (Meunier & Gouverneur 2007: 130). Hill, Lewis and Lewis (2000: 88ff.) on the other hand, give different metaphorical clues about how to introduce collocations to the students. A particularly useful and easily understandable one seems to be the metaphor of "words are like people". The different degrees of collocation are introduced as different kinds of relationships between people, ranging from marriage, loose friendship to acquaintance and one-night stands. Although the metaphorical explanation might be helpful for understanding the concept behind collocations, the term 'collocation' as such can additionally still be introduced.

Although many authors acknowledge and promote the significance of awareness-raising, only few explicit suggestions in terms of application are made. As one of the few, Hill (2000: 61) suggests having the students underline, for example, all *verb + noun* collocations in a text. As another valuable activity he suggests giving learners a node word and asking them to find as many collocates as possible. Students usually underestimate the possible word combinations of a single word. Therefore, collecting as many collocates as possible for one word might be an eye-opening experience for them as well as doing ' collocational grids'¹³. Additionally, Woolard (2000: 30) suggests using students' erroneous collocations from their own written texts in order to raise awareness for this highly prevalent phenomenon.

A very interesting approach to teaching collocations which puts raising awareness on the forefront is the AWARE-approach consisting of five steps of consciousness-building (adapted from Ying & O'Neill 2009: 183, emphases in the original):

- A**wareness-raising of important language features, in particular collocations
- W**hy should we learn collocations?
- A**cquiring noticed collocations using various strategies
- R**eflection on learning process and content

¹³ See chapter 4.4.3.

Exhibiting what has been learned

The two first stages of the approach are teacher-centred, while the next three steps seek to help students learn collocations more effectively and independently by helping them to develop and apply suitable learning strategies on their own. The teacher first introduces the concept of collocations and tries to make clear why it is important to learn collocations. Then the teacher introduces some strategies for recording and noticing collocations in texts while encouraging the students to come up with their own strategies. In the study by Ying and O'Neill (2009: 187-189), students developed a great variety of strategies for learning collocations:

- visual learning (imagining a picture when recording collocations)
- watching English movies with subtitles
- categorization of collocations into functional collocations vs. content/ theme collocations
- retelling/ rewriting a story by using the collocations from the original text
- building new sentences/ whole stories with recorded collocations

The reflection stage consists of students' reflecting on their learning process and particularly on the effectiveness of their adopted strategies. This can be done in learning journals or in discussions in class. In the exhibition stage, students show off their collocational competence in writing assignments or oral presentations.

4.1.3 Teaching rules vs. item learning

Thornbury (2002: 107) claims that there are two basic ways of dealing with learners' errors in using all kinds of word chunks¹⁴. On the one hand, one can teach rules, or, on the other, expose the students to many different appropriate examples. The problem with the first approach is, however, that there are no rules for building correct collocations. He gives a rather rare example where something like a rule can be applied, namely the case of distinguishing between *make* and *do*, which is usually particularly hard for German EFL learners. In the schoolbook he mentions, it is stated that "[*m*]ake usually means to create, bring into existence, or produce a result, [while] *do* usually means to perform an action" (Thornbury 2002: 108). To illustrate this point the following text is given:

¹⁴ Thornbury (2002: 106f.) here likewise refers to errors with phrasal verbs, collocations, multi-word units, compounds, idioms and even affixation.

*Last night I tried to **do** my homework. However, I kept **making** mistakes because the man upstairs was **doing** his exercises and **making** a noise.*

The introduction of some rules for learners might sound good at the beginning. However, when it turns out that there are many exceptions to the rule, it is very likely to frustrate the students more than it actually helps them. The second approach is described as an “item learning one” (Thornbury 2002: 109). Words or collocations are here learned as single items and have to be encountered by the students as often as possible to ensure the memorization. In other words, one might say that the key term for success is exposure. Wallace (1982: 92) also advocates this method as by claiming that collocation is “something which permeates all language”. Exposure to language and particularly collocations does not just mean giving the students lots of written and spoken input, but Wallace also gives some good ideas how one can focus on special things one wants to practice without losing the context as it often happens with the here criticized gap-filling and cloze tests. He strongly argues for practising collocations in context of real, authentic texts and for dismissing isolated sentences. Wallace (1982: 95) argues that ‘list’ exercises are “basically to consolidate vocabulary already known”, but not appropriate for introducing new collocations and would only result in confusing the learners.

What becomes clear from the discussion of different strategies for collocation teaching is that no single strategy will lead to success for the students, but that a combination of all these strategies might be the best solution. It definitely seems important to raise awareness of collocations in students as collocations often go unnoticed, because they rarely pose comprehension problems (cf. chapter 3.4). Furthermore, explicit teaching of particularly difficult and frequent collocational items in addition to implicit teaching of collocations by exposure seems to lead to great amounts of natural, authentic oral and written language output. Teaching rules does not seem to be a helpful strategy when teaching collocations as the lexical choice of which words go together is arbitrary and can usually not be explained by rules (cf. chapter 3.4).

4.2 Principles of collocation teaching

Although several publications try to give suggestions on how to teach collocations and examples of useful exercises for collocation teaching, Howarth (1996) concludes that “[t]he general impression is of collocations being introduced to language learners somewhat unsystematically” (cited in Nesselhauf 2005: 265). Principles on which the teaching should be based on are rarely discussed¹⁵. In this subchapter the few principles either based on general principles of vocabulary teaching and learning or on studies concerning learners’ use of collocations will be summarized.

4.2.1 Repetition

Lewis (1997: 51) mentions that there is broad agreement that complete acquisition of a word or a word combination only happens if the target structure is met by the learner several times, either explicitly taught or implicitly encountered in a text. He argues that “[t]he broad consensus is that each time you meet a word in context and (at least partly) understand it, you understand more of its meaning, and gradually integrate it into your lexicon for immediate access” (Lewis 1997: 51). Thus, target vocabulary and target collocations need to be met numerous times in order to transform input into intake. Kennedy (2003: 484) formulates the first important principle of collocation teaching very precisely:

Because frequency of experience significantly affects learning, the provision of systematic, repeated exposure to collocations in meaningful contexts lies at the heart of the teaching enterprise.

As the repetition of multi-word items that have to be acquired by the students is vital, teachers are held responsible for providing enough opportunities for students to meet the desired chunks of language in different contexts in order to be able to internalize them properly (Kennedy 2003: 483). Therefore, teachers, coursebooks and other teaching materials should recycle lexis on purpose.

4.2.2 Systematicity

Morgan Lewis (2000: 13) explains that the meaning of a word or rather the difference of meaning between two similar or even partly synonymous words, e.g. *wound* and

¹⁵ Nesselhauf (2005) presents an exception by discussing several principles of teaching collocations.

injury, can best be explained by the principle of collocation and by comparing and contrasting the collocational fields of these two words. In some cases there is no difference in the dictionary definition between two words, but a difference in their usage. Therefore, synonymous words should be taught together with their differing collocational fields in order to illustrate how the synonyms are used appropriately.

Often, learners confuse not only whole collocations, but elements of similar collocations. In order to prevent students from doing so, contrastive teaching of collocations that are either alike in form or in meaning such as *get in contact* – *come into contact* or *catch a glimpse* – *catch a glance* is advocated. Furthermore, a contrastive approach to teaching comparable collocations including figurative and literal senses like *take measures* – *take measurements*, *enter school* – *enter the school* and *hit the nail on the head* – *hammer a nail into the wall* seems advantageous. (Nesselhauf 2005: 266)

In their study, Webb and Kagimoto (2011: 270f.) found that teaching multiple collocates together with only few node word is more effective than teaching a smaller number of collocates for several node words. Therefore, they suggest teaching a smaller number of node words, but more collocates with it in order to increase learning (cf. also Nesselhauf 2005: 266).

An example is the collocation *reach a conclusion*. If this collocation is learnt in isolation, the learner remains unaware of the potential and restrictions of *reach*. Therefore, several common collocations with the verb *reach* in the given sense should be taught simultaneously (e.g. *reach a decision*, *a conclusion*, *a compromise*, *an agreement*, *a goal*). (Nesselhauf 2005: 266f.)

To sum up, systematic teaching means contrasting similar words and their collocational fields in order to clearly demonstrate their differences in usage. Furthermore, it means teaching more collocates for one node word simultaneously as this enhances learning and teaching form- or meaning-related collocations contrastively in order to prevent students from confusing them.

4.2.3 Expanding the half-known

Often students only know one way of expanding their range of vocabulary, namely adding new words to their vocabulary log and learning them as new single items.

However, collocations present an easy way to become more flexible in the English language and to enhance one's communicative ability simply by adding collocations to the already known words or as Woolard (2000: 31) puts it:

[L]earning more vocabulary is not just learning new words, it is often learning familiar words in new combinations.

Souza Hodne (2009: 19) affirms that an enlargement of a students' vocabulary can be achieved by concentrating on teaching students collocates for their already acquired words. In line with that, Morgan Lewis (2000: 24) argues for revising basic, already known words and gradually introducing more collocates for these node words, e.g. to supply the students with the collocates *occasional* and *chain* when *heavy smoker* is learned.

4.2.4 L1 contrast

While Lewis (1993: 194) carefully claims that "[o]ccasionally, it may be valuable for students to have the contrast between English and their own language pointed out", Bahns (1993: 60) has a much stronger opinion on this issue. He states that only those collocations need to be learned which do not have a direct translational equivalence in the English language. He gives the German examples *Foto machen*, *Feuer legen*, *Kompliment machen* or *Wahrheit sagen*. As "learners seem to rely on a 'hypothesis of transferability'", contrasting language-specific collocations with the L1 of the students is seen as highly desirable (Bahns 1993: 61). Yamashita and Jiang (2010: 663) also state that "L2 educators should pay attention to the lexical networks in learners' L1 when teaching L2 collocations". They claim that teachers can definitely take advantage of their own learning experience and may even be able to predict collocational problems because of L1 transfer and can prevent errors from happening. Morgan Lewis (2000:16) explicitly argues for the importance of translating collocations as whole phrases into the learners' L1 "bearing in mind that the structure of the expression may be very different in one language from the equivalent expression in the other". Nesselhauf (2005: 270) also points out that particularly these collocations which tend to lead to problems for learners need to be contrasted with the L1 and that "[t]he use of negative evidence seems indispensable for this purpose, and should therefore also be a principle for at least some aspects of advanced collocation teaching".

Critics may now argue that this contrastive approach poses a problem in the multilingual reality of foreign language teaching and that it cannot be applied if the teacher does not speak the native tongue(s) of the class. However, Yamashita and Jiang (2010: 664) state that not having the same L1 as the students does not necessarily mean not being able to take advantage of L1 and L2 contrast. They suggest that the teacher may ask the students if there are similar or congruent expressions in their mother tongues or if the uttered collocations have been directly translated from their L1s. Thus, teachers can get a better understanding of the learners' problems with producing unnatural collocations. Furthermore, Yamashita and Jiang (2010: 664) believe that

[i]f the class includes students from various L1 backgrounds, this extra step might provide a valuable opportunity for both teachers and learners to learn about collocations in different languages and help raise linguistic awareness.

Hence, even in multilingual classes teachers should not completely dismiss the option of contrasting the learner language with the students' different L1s.

4.2.5 Noticing, retrieval and generation

Nation (2001: 63-75) outlines three psychological processes of learning vocabulary in general: noticing a word, retrieving a word and using a word generatively. Noticing happens when the learner is made aware of a language item and therefore gives attention to it. This first stage always includes some sort of de-contextualisation of the word, shifting the focus from the message to the language system (Nation 2001: 64). The second process in memorizing a word or a chunk is retrieval "whereby the learner retrieves either the form or meaning of a word from memory thereby strengthening the memory of that word" (Coxhead 2008: 155). Nation (2001: 67) distinguishes between receptive retrieval in reading and listening and productive retrieval in writing and speaking. The generation process occurs "when previously met words are subsequently met or used in ways that differ from the previous meeting of the word" (Nation 2001: 68). In the table below Nation describes situations showing that either noticing, retrieval or generation is happening along with exercise formats that are likely to foster the three stages of the vocabulary learning process.

Psychological conditions encouraging learning	Signs that the conditions are likely to be occurring	Design features of the activity that promote the conditions
Noticing a word	The learner consults a glossary The learner pauses over the word The learner negotiates the word	Definition, glosses, highlighting Unknown words in salient positions
Retrieving a word	The learner pauses to recall a meaning The learner does not need to consult a dictionary or gloss The learner produces a previously unknown word	Retelling spoken or written input
Using the word generatively	The learner produces a word in a new sentence context The learners produce associations, causal links, etc.	Role play based on written input Retelling without the input text Brainstorming

Figure 7: Noticing, retrieval and generation (Nation 2001: 75)

Considering that collocations should be learned as whole chunks like one-word items, these three processes also apply to collocation learning and can therefore be regarded as valuable when teaching collocations and when designing exercises for collocation practice (see e.g. Coxhead 2008, Gouverneur 2008).

4.3 The selection of collocations for teaching

The number of collocations in every language is simply overwhelming. As Wei (1999: 4) states, in the *Collins COBUILD English Words in Use*, more than 100,000 collocations are given, while the *BBJ Combinatory Dictionary of English* lists about 70,000 collocations under 14,000 entries. Simply from these numbers it becomes clear that all of these collocations neither can nor have to be taught in an EFL language classroom. Therefore, teaching collocations seems to be a matter of wise selection of the necessary items to be dealt with in class. Koprowski (2005: 322) amongst many others admits that the selection process is complicated by the sheer amount of lexical chunks available. Although many authors agree that there has to be some selection of useful and important collocations for teaching, there is not much agreement on which items deserve attention in classrooms and which do not. Therefore, different suggestions on what makes a collocation worth being treated in class or not will be explored in more detail in the next few subchapters.

4.3.1 Dissimilarity from L1

In relation to his study, Bahns (1993) promotes collocation teaching which keeps the L1 of the students in mind. He argues that “[t]he collocations chosen [...] will have to

be different in each case, depending on the L1 of the learners” Bahns (1993: 61). So, there cannot be a worldwide consensus on which collocations to include and which to exclude from teaching. As mentioned earlier in 4.2.4, Bahns (1993: 60) suggests that collocations which have the same lexical components in the foreign language, i.e. are congruent, do not need to be taught explicitly as they can easily be directly transferred, i.e. translated word-for-word, from the learners’ mother tongue. Although Nesselhauf (2003: 238 & 2005: 259) comes to the conclusion that non-congruent collocations are the main source of errors for learners and therefore calls for more emphasis on these collocations, she disagrees with Bahns’ suggestion to completely dismiss non-congruent collocations from explicit teaching. The results of her two studies on learner language demonstrate that learners also make mistakes when collocations are lexically the same in two languages and consequently, congruent collocations cannot be entirely neglected in teaching.

4.3.2 De-lexicalized words

As pointed out in chapter 3.3.2, several studies have found that collocations with de-lexicalised verbs such as *get*, *put*, *take*, *do*, and *make* are apparently often problematic for students, even at very advanced levels (e.g. Howarth 1998, Gouverneur 2008). Fontenelle (1994: 4, emphases in the original) even claims that

[s]uch collocations are often a nightmare to language students (just imagine the great pains students have to take with the distinction between *make* and *do* in English!).

Souza Hodne (2009: 20) and Hill, Lewis and Lewis (2000: 116) therefore conclude that drawing attention to these particular kinds of collocations seems to be reasonable. Hill (2000: 62) also argues that de-lexicalized verbs lend themselves perfectly for easily expanding the learners’ repertoire of lexis as “[s]tudents who know 2,000 words and six collocations with each, know 12,000 expressions”. Woolard (2000: 33) does not suggest only selecting de-lexicalized verbs, but also less lexicalized words in general. Woolard gives the example of the high-content word *penicillin* vs. *drug*. For the word *drug*, which is less lexicalized many more collocations can be found than for *penicillin* and those words collocating with *drug* will also be more useful for the students as they are more likely to use the word *drug* than the word *penicillin* (Woolard 2000: 33). Lewis (1997: 48) agrees by saying that

“the more de-lexicalised a word is, and the higher its collocational range, the more important it is to meet, acquire and record it in a Collocation or Expression.”

4.3.3 Frequency and range

An important aspect for deciding whether a particular collocation deserves special attention in the EFL classroom or not, is the aspect of frequency of occurrence. Exceptional and infrequent word combinations learners will not encounter regularly are not very likely to be commonly needed and therefore would not help students in becoming fluent speakers of English. Koprowski (2005: 324) even argues that frequency and range¹⁶ of a collocation are the two most important and most objective criteria for giving priority to a lexical item, because they can be proved by corpus data. Kennedy (2008: 39) affirms that from a pedagogical point of view “[t]he focus of explicit teaching and learning should be the items of a language which are frequent and useful.” He argues that high-frequency collocations occurring in many different usages need to be learned first, while infrequent collocations, no matter if they are strong or weak, should be kept for implicit learning (Kennedy 2003: 484). Nation (2001: 325) gives a precise account of how frequent a collocation has to be in order to be taught by saying that “[if] the frequency of the collocation would be sufficient to place it in the most frequent 2,000 words, then it clearly deserves classroom time”.

4.3.4 Medium-strength collocations

Hill (2000: 64) states that collocations ranging in the middle of the continuum between weak and strong collocations make up most of the language we encounter in texts or spoken discourse. This is also why according to Hill (2000: 62) medium-strength collocations should be the focus in teaching:

A nomadic tribe is a strong collocation because *nomadic* collocates with a very limited number of nouns; *a big flat* is a weak collocation and of little interest to teachers, but *He’s recovering from a major operation* is a complex medium-strength collocation. Each individual word may be known to students, but they probably do not know the whole collocation.

¹⁶ Range is determined as the consistent appearance of a collocation throughout different registers and text types (Koprowski 2005: 324) .

As a result, even if a collocation consists of basic or previously learned words, the collocation as one language item needs further instruction as well.

When reading texts, Morgan Lewis (2000: 18) strongly argues for a teacher-centred selection of essential collocations in the text as he claims that students cannot be expected to choose the most useful collocations themselves. Therefore, the teacher's role should be to point out essential collocations in texts which need to be recorded. He experienced that "after a period of teacher-dominated instruction [...], learners begin to notice more of this kind of language for themselves, and start asking [...] about items in text" which then leads to a more independent and learner-centred approach again (Morgan Lewis 2000: 18). Similarly, Conzett (2000: 75) highlights the importance of the teacher's role as a guide towards the recognition of essential collocations and argues for active selection and incorporation of useful collocations by the teacher.

Considering all the suggestions on which collocations are the most important ones and therefore deserve special attention, Fan's (2009: 121) contribution to this discussion seems especially interesting:

While it is important to teach, for example, collocations [...] which occur 'more frequently', teachers should have confidence in focusing on collocational use they see as relevant to the making of meaning in a particular context, taking into account the language needs of their students irrespective of whether such use concerns only lexical words or both lexical and grammatical words.

Consequently, first and foremost, it is important to also look at the students' needs and interests and to identify which collocations they require for different purposes, e.g. for particular essay topics or different text types. Nesselhauf (2005: 258) also states that

in the classroom there must remain scope for treating collocations as they come up, and for diagnosing and counteracting difficulties of individual learners or groups.

4.4 Materials and resources for teaching collocations

In order to teach collocations effectively, a range of materials and resources is needed. Besides the EFL textbook as the most important - or at least mostly used - resource for teaching, different other materials and resources can be easily integrated into EFL classes, particularly for teaching collocations. Due to the fact that textbooks will be dealt with extensively in chapters 5 and 6, in this chapter only dictionaries, corpora and concordances, vocabulary logs and suggestions on exercises and various exercise formats are discussed.

4.4.1 Dictionaries

When it comes to teaching vocabulary in general and collocations in particular, it seems to be obvious that dictionary work would comprise an important part of the work load and that dictionaries present a useful resource tool for students and teachers. Although Benson, Benson and Ilson (1987: 256) and Woolard (2000: 36) criticize that traditional mono- and bilingual dictionaries only contain very little collocational information, Lewis complains that monolingual dictionaries are widely underused in EFL classrooms. Learners seem to see dictionaries simply as a means to look up the meanings of unknown words. However, dictionaries, particularly monolingual ones, include much more information such as collocational range of a word, synonyms, pronunciation, etc. and can therefore be used for many different exercises in class. Online dictionaries also lend themselves perfectly for working on collocations as they often present frequent collocations for the search item and the search can be conducted much faster than in printed dictionaries. (Lewis 1993: 180f.)

Another type of dictionary particularly helpful for working with collocations is a collocation dictionary which “deal[s] exclusively with co-text and provide[s] a much more comprehensive account of a word’s collocates than the traditional dictionary” (Woolard 2000: 38). Particularly for writing assignments, collocation dictionaries are seen as invaluable resources which help students to produce more natural and more precise texts with fewer mistakes (OCD¹⁷ 2002: vii). A collocation dictionary can help learners to find a large range of highly likely collocations in a short time and can

¹⁷ OCD = Oxford Collocations Dictionary for students of English

therefore easily enhance the students' collocational competence. In Lewis' (2000) very practical book *Teaching collocations*, collocation dictionaries are described as precious resources for in-class use and various authors give suggestions on how to integrate them in a useful way (cf. e.g. Conzett 2000, Woolard 2000). Hill, Lewis and Lewis (2000: 99-114) even give a whole list of useful exercises with collocation dictionaries which can easily be integrated into classroom teaching.

4.4.2 Corpora and concordances

Collocations only became important because of the rise of corpus studies which demonstrated that "formulaic sequences pervade most language use" (Meunier & Gouverneur 2007: 120). Naturally, as the importance of collocation only increased because of corpus linguistics, corpora¹⁸ in general and concordances¹⁹ in particular present inexhaustible, useful and easily accessible sources of authentic language samples for collocation teaching and learning. McCarthy, O'Keeffe and Walsh (2010: 49), for example, perceive concordances as "an excellent way of building up [...] knowledge of collocation and colligation" and Woolard (2000: 40) states that "[c]oncordances provide much richer sources of co-textual information than dictionaries, and they can lead to a more efficient exploration of the collocates of a word." According to Michael Lewis (2000: 198), two major advantages of concordances are the persistent contextualisation and the repeated exposure to a new collocation in a short time. Particularly the repetition aspect seems very valuable as "[i]n normal reading or EFL textbooks vocabulary recycling, it may take weeks, even years, before a learner meets a particular lexical item, particularly a multi-word phrasal item, seven times" (Michael Lewis 2000: 198, cf. chapter 4.2.1). Woolard (2000: 42) claims that "concordancing is an essential tool for effective independent learning" and states that the more concordances students work through, the more sensitive they become towards possible collocations which is in turn very important for their productive skills, i.e. speaking and writing. He also suggests having students correct their own texts via applying concordancing for inappropriate expressions.

¹⁸ A corpus is a collection of texts, either spoken or written like the British National Corpus (BNC) or the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). Corpora are primarily used for linguistic research and increasingly also for designing language teaching materials.

¹⁹ A concordance is a list of keywords mostly taken from a corpus or any other selection of texts displayed in the middle of a page with parts of the context left and right to the word (see http://www.ict4lt.org/en/en_mod2-4.htm, 8.2.2013).

As an example, the concordance below shows the common word patterns, i.e. grammatical collocations, of the verb *depend*. It shows that 'on' is the most common preposition occurring after 'depend' and that also 'upon' is a probable solution. The learners' attention is drawn to the immediately following words of the key word and they might be able to infer on their own from these examples how the word is used.

he resolution capabilities of an electrostatic system DEPEND on both the choice of magnification and chromatic attributes of a corporation whose nature and effect might DEPEND on the facts of the particular reorganization involves of carbohydrate, protein, oils, and fats. People DEPEND less on seeds for foods in Australia, New Zealand, outside their own control. First and foremost, they DEPEND on the inhuman idiocies of the Communist regime. On freedom, and the future of freedom around the world, DEPEND, in a very real sense, on their ability to build grassy? The answers to questions such as these certainly DEPEND to some extent upon the educator's own social-class position can count on useful assistance. Faculty members DEPEND on their department chairmen to promote their interests confused with the average 'Broadway Spirituals' which DEPEND for their racial flavor upon sundry allusions to the Western frontier, for example, could quite literally DEPEND on a man's strength and ability to bring home the bounty. The first two forces are directly interrelated and DEPEND upon film thickness, whereas *f* is independent of

Figure 8: Concordance of *depend*

(<http://conc.lex tutor.ca/concordancers/wwwassocwords.pl>, 8.2.2013)

Kennedy (2008: 38), however, is criticizing the use of corpora and concordances in class as he claims that differences between word meanings can also be taken from good dictionaries. Expecting students to act like “aspiring descriptive linguists” is simply too much and he supposes that motivation among the students will decrease if they “sit in front of a screen looking at unrelated lines of text” (Kennedy 2008: 38). Michael Lewis (2000: 192) also sees the inclusion of corpus data a bit more critically, but still argues for it in class:

Learners are not amateur applied linguists and raw unedited corpus data is likely to overwhelm many ordinary learners. If teachers are going to use corpus data with their learners, they may need to edit by making a suitable **selection of examples**. At the same time, they must **not** edit the examples they **do** include. (emphases in the original)

Woolard (2000:34) recommends using slightly edited concordances with students if in the unedited version some confusion may arise and he admits that students will, of course, need to be trained on how to use corpora and concordances. Michael Lewis (2000: 193) suggests that for pedagogical purposes smaller, more specific corpora would be more appropriate.

To sum up, the use of corpora and concordances in class can be helpful and rewarding for the learners if some simple rules are taken into account. Learners should not be overwhelmed by the amount of data they are presented with, they

need training in applying concordancing programmes and if working with printed examples, preferably the corpus data or the concordance should be adapted for the learners' level in advance by deleting confusing examples from the list.

4.4.3 Suggested activities and formats for collocation exercises

In terms of activities, it is suggested that teachers should keep a record of wrongly or inappropriately used collocations by students in order to bring them back to class and work on collocational knowledge (Woolard 2000: 30). Additionally, Conzett (2000: 80) argues for the integration of collocation teaching into reading and writing activities. She suggests collecting collocations together with the students before they begin writing or to highlight collocations in texts the students' writings are based on. Then the learners have enough collocations at hand before they start writing a text and inappropriate and imprecise expressions which may result in understanding problems might be prevented.

Hill, Lewis and Lewis (2000: 88) state that explicit collocation exercises should have two purposes:

[F]irstly, the immediate one of practising new collocations and building learners' mental lexicons. The second, more long-term purpose is to make learners more aware of collocation as a powerful way of improving their ability to write precisely and well.

Subsequently, they give a list of different exercise formats which are claimed to be suitable for teaching and practising collocations (Hill, Lewis & Lewis 2000: 106-115):

- correcting common collocational mistakes in isolated sentences
- different gap-filling exercises (adverb + adjective, verb + adverb phrase)
- matching exercise with two word lists (+ fill in gaps in sentences afterwards)
- odd-one-out exercises
- matching verbs into groups of collocates
- missing word: students get a list of nouns and they have to find the missing collocating verb or the other way round

Lewis (1997: 89) adds that identifying chunks in texts as an activity is the most fundamental skill students need to learn.

A typical exercise format, the collocational grid, is missing in this list. Conzett (2000: 78) states that these grids “can be done for many groups of words with similar or related meanings, and for different kinds of grammatical pairs such as subjects and verbs, verbs and objects, adjectives and nouns, etc.”. They are very useful as more collocations for one word can be made clear and students can easily get to know the slight differences in usage and between synonymous or near-synonymous words in collocational grids like the one below.

	a blow	the police	military service	the issue	one's duty	one's responsibility
dodge	+	+	+	+		
duck				+		
evade			+	+		
shirk					+	+

Table 1: Collocation grid (Wu 2013: 472)

More information on useful exercise formats will be provided in chapter 7, in which the implications of the analysis of schoolbooks for teaching are discussed and in which suggestions for improvement of the included exercises are given.

4.4.4 Vocabulary logs

McCarthy, O’Keeffe and Walsh (2010: 38) note that organizing “the learning process will almost certainly lead to better and more long-lasting learning”. Hence, vocabulary notebooks in which students organize their newly learned words and chunks of language are an important part of collocational instruction and could be improved in many ways. Students tend to record single words and translations only and forget to record information about the possible word combinations or do not find it important to write that down. Lewis (1993: 118) adds that the recording of vocabulary has to be systematized. He claims that the listing of words with their L1 translation is “pointless” and does not have any “pedagogic value” at all, because “[i]f you want to forget something, put it in a list” (Stevick cited in Lewis 1993: 118). Lewis states that instead of making an L1/ L2-entry in the vocabulary log, it would make much more sense to record different multi-word items and even whole sentences in a way that they can be retrieved as whole items (Lewis 1993: 121). Conzett (2000: 76f.) explains that she finds it useful to record the context of a new word next to collocations in a notebook.

Context might be supplied by texts read, the teacher or by dictionaries. The information about collocations can also be provided by the teacher or by collocation dictionaries. Hill (2000: 62) suggests that students can have different sections in their notebooks, arranging the collocations in different ways, e.g.:

1. Grammatically: *noun + noun, adjective + noun, verb + noun*
2. By common key word: collocations with *do, make, get, put, speak* etc.
3. By topic: collocations to talk about holidays, travel, work etc.”

Hill, Lewis and Lewis (2000: 99) and Lewis (1997: 78-81) present another useful technique of recording collocations, namely the ‘5-1 box’ or ‘5-5-1 box’. This is often used for noting *verb + noun* or *adjective + noun* collocations. These boxes can also be easily adapted for different activities, either omitting the node word or omitting the collocates and have the students find the missing part(s).

apply for a be out of a find a hunt for a resign from a	job	attract be subject to deserve react to provoke	adverse blunt constant helpful severe	criticism
---	-----	--	---	-----------

Figure 9: ‘5-1 box’ (Hill, Lewis & Lewis 2000: 99) and ‘5-5-1 box’ (Lewis 1997: 79)

Lewis (1997: 80) suggests that the teacher should supervise which words are recorded in these boxes as not all possible collocates should be noted down, but only those which collocate strongly or frequently or if they are particularly interesting for the learners. Furthermore, not all spaces in a box have to be filled at a time, but spaces can be left free for later occurring collocates.

Summing up, this chapter provides an overview of different strategies for teaching collocations as well as principles of collocation teaching which should be considered by teachers and EFL coursebooks. Furthermore, it has been argued that not all collocations can be taught in a classroom setting and that therefore important collocations need to be selected for teaching by means of balancing different criteria. Finally, different materials and resources for teaching collocations have been summarized and suggestions for activities and exercise formats have been given.

5. Frame of analysis

*“ELT coursebooks publishing is a multi-million pound industry,
yet the whole business of product assessment is
haphazard and under-researched.”*

(Sheldon 1988: 237)

In this chapter I will explore the reasons why a study on collocations in coursebooks is relevant to future EFL teachers. Before commenting on previous research on collocations in textbook, I will elaborate on the treatment of collocations in the Austrian curriculum and the CEFR, on which the selected EFL books are based on. Finally, I will describe the methodology and procedure of the coursebook analysis as well as limitations of the study.

5.1 Relevance of the study

5.1.1 Collocations in the Austrian AHS curriculum and the CEFR

In the Austrian AHS curriculum for foreign languages in the upper secondary, lexis in general and phraseology in particular are mentioned as an important part of linguistic competence. In accordance with Lewis (1993: 194), receptive vocabulary skills are given special prominence.

Wortschatz und Idiomatik sind situationsorientiert, im Kontext und systematisch zu erweitern. Dabei ist insgesamt zu beachten, dass das rezeptive Sprachvermögen der Schülerinnen und Schüler im Bereich von Wortschatz und Idiomatik das produktive Sprachvermögen übertrifft.

(Bmukk 2004: 3)

Consequently, vocabulary and phraseology are mentioned in the Austrian curriculum; however, collocations in particular are not referred to in any section of the certainly not very detailed curriculum. In contrast to the Austrian curriculum, The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)* is more explicit about collocations. This framework, developed in 2001 by the Council of Europe, gives general guidelines on the teaching of foreign languages in Europe. It also acts as a tool for describing learners' language proficiency by giving six reference levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2) introduced to enable a comparison of examinations and tests across national boundaries (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Cadre1_en.asp, 26

March 2013). In chapter 5 of the framework, under the heading of *linguistic competence*, collocations are mentioned twice as parts of both lexical and semantic competence. Both competences are considered vital for a language user in order to achieve native-like proficiency in a foreign language. The following table displays the lexical elements considered important for lexical competence in the CEFR.

Lexical elements		Examples
a) Fixed expressions	sentential formulae	<i>How do you do?</i>
	phrasal idioms	<i>It's a long shot</i>
	fixed frames	<i>Please may I have...?</i>
	other fixed phrases such as phrasal verbs and compound prepositions	<i>to put up with</i> <i>in front of</i>
	fixed collocations	<i>to make a speech/mistake</i>
b) Single word forms		<i>tank</i>

Figure 10: Lexical elements in the CEFR (Souza Hodne 2009: 23)

Collocations here belong to the category of fixed expressions described as “consisting of several words, which are used and learnt as wholes” (CEFR 2001: 110). Collocations seem to get more importance than the single word forms as they are mentioned earlier in the text and are illustrated by more examples.

Semantic competence which “deals with the learner’s awareness and control of the organisation of meaning” is divided into *lexical semantics*, *grammatical semantics* and *pragmatic semantics* (CEFR 2001: 115). *Lexical semantics*, in particular, considers issues of word meaning such as:

- Relation of word to general context:
 - Reference
 - Connotation
 - Exponence of general specific notions
 - Interlexical relations, such as:
 - Synonymy/ antonymy
 - Hyponymy
 - *Collocation*
 - Part-whole relations
 - Componential analysis
 - Translation equivalence
- (CEFR 2001: 115, my emphasis)

As most recent EFL books are based on the CEFR, they indirectly acknowledge the importance of all interlexical relations, such as collocation, for language competence and one might conclude that therefore, they should include collocation exercises in their syllabus.

5.1.2 Importance of schoolbooks

Even if Jiang (2009: 102-103) is specifically talking about China when claiming that “[o]wing to the heavy reliance on textbooks at most Chinese schools, the importance of, and need for, well-written, suitable textbooks is self-evident”, this very quote seems to be true for Austria as well. The considerable importance of schoolbooks as major source for information and as medium of instruction for EFL teaching in general and for teaching collocations in particular cannot be denied (Handl 2008, Lewis 2000). However, Sheldon (1988: 237) admits that “[f]eelings fluctuate between the perception that they are valid, labour-saving tools, and the doleful belief that ‘masses of rubbish is skilfully marketed’ (Brumfit 1980: 39)”. Textbooks are often criticized for their lack or inappropriateness of their collocation treatment. Moon (1997: 58) for example remarks that the difficulties in teaching collocations and multi-word units are partly due to the “inadequacy or misleadingness of many teaching and reference materials”. Moreover, Gouverneur (2008: 224) asks herself whether students’ deficiencies in collocational competence can only be attributed to ineffective teaching methods or if the inappropriate teaching material can at least partly be blamed for the students’ problems with collocations. Lewis (1993: 183) shares this critical view towards current EFL coursebooks:

It is reasonable to assume that collocation will be only tentatively introduced to mass market textbooks precisely because it is a new idea for many non-native teachers, and there is at the moment no adequate reference work in which they can easily look up possible and impossible collocations with certainty.

Course books are therefore not always seen as ideal sources for dealing with the complex issue of collocations and other prefabricated chunks. For that reason, it seems necessary to take a critical stance towards the materials a teacher is working with in order “to make decisions concerning the selection from the textbook of what is appropriate, and the extension/ exploitation, adaptation and supplementation of this as necessary” (McGrath 2002: 12).

5.1.3 Previous research on collocations in EFL coursebooks

Although textbook research has become more prominent in the last few years, studies on collocations in EFL textbooks and other materials are very scarce (Gouverneur 2008: 224). Meunier and Gouverneur (2007: 121) analysed “the place of phraseology in textbooks, [...] the metalinguistic terminology used to refer to it, and [...] the way phraseological exercises are integrated in the syllabus” with the help of the TeMa-corpus²⁰. Gouverneur (2008) also took a corpus-driven approach to investigate the treatment of phraseological patterns of *take* and *make* in three intermediate and advanced textbook series with the help of the TeMa-corpus. Souza Hodne (2009) had a look at the distribution of collocations and their usefulness in vocabulary exercises in two Norwegian schoolbooks and tried to give suggestions for further improvement of collocational materials in these books. In his quantitative approach to analysing collocations in Japanese EFL coursebooks, Koya (2004) found that the four different series he investigated lack collocations in general. The results of the three other studies more or less mimic these findings or as Gouverneur (2008: 224) puts it:

The handful of studies available have [...] demonstrated that although phraseology has become more prominent in ELT materials, there is still room for substantial improvement.

Thus, looking at the scarce research available at the moment, it can be concluded that the treatment of phraseology and collocations in general is not considered ideal in most instances. This study wants to contribute to the lack of research by investigating the treatment of collocation in explicit vocabulary exercises in three coursebook series used in the Austrian grammar schools.

According to Meunier and Gouverneur (2007: 120) the graphic below represents the “ideal ELT world”. According to this scheme, textbook writers should include recent findings of linguistics and particularly in the case of collocations and other multi-word units, findings from corpus linguistics.

²⁰ TeMa stands for textbook material and is a corpus compiled of textbook materials only. For more information on TeMa see Gouverneur (2008: 226-230).

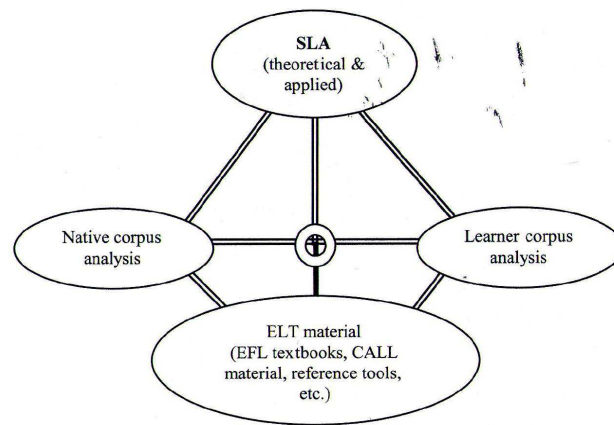


Figure 11: Ideal ELT world (Meunier & Gouverneur 2007: 120)

Considering that collocations and phraseology in general were given priority in linguistics in recent years, one would think that they have arrived in coursebooks in a reasonable manner, which is, however, not the case. Therefore, in this present study, it shall now be investigated in how far research findings have been integrated into the selected coursebooks.

5.2 The three selected coursebook series

As a future teacher in an Austrian grammar school (AHS) I decided to focus on AHS coursebooks only. The textbook series analyzed are:

- *Laser B1 & B1+*
student's books, work books and teacher's books
- *Make Your Way 5 & 6*
student's books, test resource packs²¹ and teacher's books
- *New Headway 5 & 6*
student's books, work books and teacher's books

Altogether, 18 books are investigated. The three textbook series have been approved as suitable for in-class teaching by the Austrian Ministry of Education. Additionally, they were chosen because, according to the information I received per email from the BMUKK, they are the three most frequently used coursebook series in the upper secondary in Austria and apparently, many teachers rely on the materials presented in these books.

²¹ The test resource packs are not actual workbooks for the students, but resources of extra material and test material for the teacher to copy for the learners. There is no real workbook with extra material for the students available in the *Make Your Way*-series.

For the analysis the pre-intermediate and intermediate level, equating the 5th and 6th form of the Austrian AHS and the B1 level of the CEFR (i.e. 9th or 10th grade), was chosen. The reason was that many authors claim that an improvement in collocational competence can only be noticed in advanced learners and that mastery of the phraseological inventory of a language distinguishes advanced from intermediate learners (e.g. Laufer & Waldmann 2011: 648). Learners on an intermediate level hardly use phraseological sequences and collocations in their writings and Ying and O'Neill (2009: 181), for example, state that "[...] most foreign language learners of English at the intermediate level of language proficiency lack this collocational competence, and this insufficiency could lead to [...] general problems in their language production." In line with Hill (2000: 68) who states that intermediate learners need "a huge injection of lexis" in order to become advanced, Morgan Lewis (2000: 14) argues that the reason why students often get stuck at the intermediate level of language proficiency is simply their lack of collocational awareness and competence (cf. chapter 4.2.3):

Most intermediate students would improve dramatically if they spent less time trying to perfect their grammar and learn new, rare words, and instead simply learned to use the words they already know in the huge number of collocations of which these words are parts (Morgan Lewis 2000: 14).

So, particularly from the intermediate level onwards, collocational competence with their already existing vocabulary should be sought to improve (Moras 2001). Therefore, it will be interesting to see what range and what kinds of collocation exercises are included in the different textbook series.

Another reason for choosing the intermediate level for the analysis is the fact that most studies on collocational competence and also on EFL material focus on the advanced level of language proficiency. Consequently, the present study seeks to contribute on the intermediate level of language proficiency.

5.3 Methodology and procedure

Although Sheldon (1988: 245) criticizes that “coursebook assessment is fundamentally a subjective, rule-of-thumb activity, and that no neat formula, grid, or system will ever provide a definitive yardstick”, different systems of and criteria for analysing and evaluating coursebooks have been compiled (e.g. Cunningsworth 1995, McDonough & Shaw 2003, McGrath 2002). As an appropriate methodological framework for my page-by-page analysis of the three chosen textbook series, the two-step approach of external and internal evaluation by McDonough and Shaw (2003: 61) was chosen:

[A]n external evaluation that offers a brief ‘overview’ of the materials from the outside (cover, introduction, table of contents), [...] is then followed by a closer and more detailed internal evaluation.

The ‘external evaluation’-stage consists of examining what the author or publishers state about the aims, methodology, etc. of the book. In this stage the book cover, the introduction and the table of contents are scrutinized. McDonough and Shaw (2003: 63) explain that this external evaluation is important because “the claims made for the materials by the author/publisher can be quite strong and will need critical evaluation in order to see if their claims can be justified.” During the ‘internal evaluation’-stage, also referred to as ‘in-depth analysis’ by Cunningsworth (1995) and McGrath (2002), it is important to “analyse the extent to which the aforementioned factors in the external evaluation stage match up with the internal consistency and organization of the materials as stated by the author/publisher” (McDonough & Shaw 2003: 66f.). Cunningsworth (1995: 2) describes the in-depth technique as an active process of searching for information in the textbooks and analysing if the material lives up to the expectations and criteria the evaluator has set beforehand. He also recommends examining “how specific items are dealt with, particularly those which relate to students’ learning needs” (Cunningsworth 1995: 2). The main focus in this study will therefore be on the in-depth analysis of the treatment of collocations in and evaluation of vocabulary exercises which explicitly include collocations. The internal evaluation will include quantitative and qualitative investigation methods, i.e. the coursebooks will be compared with regard to the amount of collocation exercises included, the variety of exercise formats presented and the inclusion of the principles and strategies of collocation teaching.

6. Analysis: Collocations in EFL coursebooks

“Currently, few textbooks for ESL students address collocations explicitly.”
Conzett (2000: 76)

This chapter presents the results of a page-by-page analysis of three different coursebook series with regard to their treatment of collocations. After establishing that the chosen books are approximately the same length in terms of page numbers and units and therefore quantitatively comparable, the amount and quality of collocational input in the books has been analyzed. I have also attempted to interpret the results on the basis of the theory of teaching collocations presented in chapters 3 and 4. Speaking about their textbook study, Meunier and Gouverneur (2007: 123) state that

the aim of our analysis is not to criticise the editor’s job, nor to rank the textbooks in a hit parade like way. Our aim is simply to present an overall picture of the current situation and explore avenues for the future.

Similar to this quote, the aim of this thesis is not to evaluate which book is best suitable for collocation teaching in an Austrian grammar school, but to provide an overview of what is there in terms of collocations and to analyze how considerations about collocations in TEFL theory is put into practice in EFL coursebooks.

6.1. External evaluation

As already pointed out in chapter 5.3, the external evaluation deals with claims made by authors or publishers on the covers and introductory pages of the coursebooks. Hence, the book cover, the table of contents and particularly the teachers’ books have been analyzed in order to find out what the books or rather their authors claim about the collocational input in the three selected coursebooks.

6.1.1 Tables of contents

McDonough and Shaw (2003: 65) state that

[t]he table of contents may sometimes be seen as a 'bridge' between the external and internal stages of the evaluation and can often reveal useful information about the organization of the materials.

Therefore, it is worth having a look at the table of contents of the textbooks to see if and how collocations are mentioned there at all. The table of contents is usually also informative concerning the organisation of the book with regard to the treatment of skills and language aspects. The table of contents of the work and teacher's books have not been analyzed as they are not very detailed and give no information about the treatment of lexis in general and collocations in particular.

The *Laser* table of contents demonstrates that the B1 textbook is divided into 16 units and contains revision pages after every second unit. Every unit contains the same sections, namely 'Reading', 'Dictionary Corner 1', 'Grammar 1', 'Listening', 'Dictionary Corner 2', 'Grammar 2', 'Soundstation', 'Speaking', 'Use your English!', 'Writing Skills' and 'Get Ready to Write'. Collocations are mentioned explicitly in four units (2, 6, 10, and 14) of the B1 textbook index. Furthermore, the table of contents tells us that there is a two-page 'Pattern and collocation database' at the very end of the book. The division into units is the same in the B1+ textbook. However, several sections in the units are organised differently only containing 'Topic', 'Reading', 'Grammar', 'Vocabulary', 'Listening', 'Speaking', 'Use of English' and 'Writing'. Collocations are referred to seven times in units 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12 and 14.

The *Make Your Way* tables of contents show that the *MYW 5 SB*²² is divided into six longer 'extensive units' along with seven shorter 'compact units' dealing with different topics, while *MYW 6 SB* contains five extensive and six compact units. The units are split up into several topic-based sections. The table of contents shows which exercises are to expect for practicing the four skills listening, speaking, reading and writing as well as grammar and vocabulary. Interestingly, the compact units do apparently not include grammar exercises. The vocabulary sections in the book are called 'Working with words' which seems to imply an underlying concept based on words rather than chunks. In most of the units the vocabulary is arranged according to the topics dealt with in the respective unit. Furthermore, every unit additionally

²² For space-saving reasons abbreviations for the different books are subsequently used throughout the analysis. Consider the index of abbreviations at the beginning of this thesis for clarification.

contains a 'Vocabulary station' which is revealed as the obligatory word list of every textbook at the end of the unit. Collocations are mentioned once in the table of contents of student's book 5 saying that there is a 'language booster' activity dealing with collocations of *make* and *do* in the 2nd compact unit. In the *MYW 6 SB* table of contents collocations are not mentioned at all.

According to the table of contents *NH 5 SB* contains 12 units and one extra unit. The contents of the units are divided into two sections: language input and skills development. Under the heading of 'Language Input' one can find the sections 'Language Focus' (dealing with grammar issues), 'Vocabulary' and 'Everyday English' and under the heading of 'Skills Development' the four skills 'Reading', 'Listening', 'Speaking' and 'Writing' are listed. Collocations are only explicitly mentioned in the vocabulary section of unit 2. Units 9 and 12 include 'hot verbs' (*make, do, take, get, bring, take, come, go*) along with units 8 and 10 containing 'words that go together'. *NH 6 SB* is also divided into twelve units and the different sections named above. Under the heading of vocabulary, collocations are mentioned explicitly twice in units 3 and 6 and also referred to as 'words that go together' in units 2 and 11. Examples in the table of contents like *play football, go skiing, absolutely wonderful* and *get engaged* indicate that collocations are also dealt with in units 2, 8 and 12.

Concluding from the tables of contents, the *Laser*-series seems to be dealing more explicitly with collocations than the other two book series as it mentions the term 'collocation' more often. Furthermore, the *LB1 SB* is the only book containing a 'Pattern and Collocation base' explicitly mentioned in the textbook index. According to Meunier and Gouverneur (2007: 125)

[t]he explicitness of the textbooks regarding their focus on phraseology can have direct implications on the learner's language awareness, i.e. by looking at the back cover of his/her book[sic] course book, the learner is made aware of the existence of linguistic phenomena such as collocations, idioms or phrasal verbs (although no definition or explanation is provided at this stage as to that those phenomena are).

Taking that into account, *MYW 5 + 6* do not seem to cope ideally with the treatment of collocations in their table of contents. Relying on the table of contents of *MYW 6* only could lead to the conclusion that it does not include collocation exercises at all.

Collocations are not presented overtly and therefore the students' linguistic awareness towards this important phraseological feature of the language is not raised. As it is pointed out above, the most important thing is not to provide an explanation or a description of the phenomenon right away, but to make the students pay attention to it. Therefore, it might be concluded that compared to the *Laser*-books, the *MYW*- and *NH*-series could improve the presentation of collocations in their table of contents. However, relying only on the table of contents and on external evaluation features may lead the reader to deceptive generalisations and therefore it is important to analyze the books in more depth, which will happen in chapter 6.2.

What can also already be seen in terms of the external investigation of the table of contents is that grammar and vocabulary seem to be treated separately by all three books, at least to some extent. Each unit contains sections only devoted to grammar issues as well as sections solely concerned with vocabulary. Lewis (1997: 55) argues that contemporary foreign language teaching is diverse and often recognizes that the learning of grammar rules and wordlists is not sufficient. Unfortunately, this is not always true for coursebooks:

[O]ld habits die hard, and examination shows even the best modern textbooks retain a strong tendency to focus attention on vocabulary and grammar in the form of individual words and particular sentences. The old dichotomy persists. (Lewis 1997: 55)

Furthermore, McCarthy, O'Keeffe and Walsh (2010: 48) state that it is a great challenge for teachers and learners that coursebooks and other course materials often still hold on to the strict division between grammar and vocabulary. In contrast, all books selected for the analysis include sections named 'Language in Use' or 'Use your English' which deal with grammar and vocabulary in an integrated way and put emphasis on 'lexicogrammar'. This is particularly important as the 'Language in Use'-formats will be part of the new standardized Austrian Matura in English²³.

To sum up, in the coursebooks vocabulary is still practiced separately from grammar in some exercises, but the lexical approach slowly seems to find its way into EFL

²³ In 2014/2015 a new standardized Matura (= school leaving examination or A-levels) for the subjects of English, German and Mathematics will be introduced in Austrian AHS schools. In English, one part of the exams, the 'Language in Use'-formats, deals with 'lexicogrammar' and examines whether students are proficient in their use of the English grammar as well as the English lexicon in an integrated way (see <https://www.bifie.at/node/78>, 20.5.2013).

coursebooks as well via integrated exercises combining lexical and grammatical features.

6.1.2 Claims made by the authors

In order to see what the authors and publishers claim about their books, it is necessary to check the teacher's books for detailed comments on how skills work and how different language aspects are said to be handled in the different series. Furthermore, the back covers and the introductory pages of the text- and workbooks were investigated with regard to information on what the students might expect from these courses, particularly concerning lexis.

As the *Laser*-series is written by different authors, the claims and the announcements in the *LB1* differ slightly from those in the *LB1+* books. Still, the back covers of both *LB1/B1+ SB* and *LB1/B1+ WB* similarly claim that the focus in the vocabulary sections lies on "topic-based lexis collocations, word patterns, word formation, phrasal verbs and metaphorical use of language". The B1 teacher's book describes the focus of 'Dictionary Corner 2' as lying on patterns, collocations, word formation or phrasal verbs. The same is announced for the 'Vocabulary builder' sections in the B1+ teacher's book. Furthermore, the back covers of the B1/B1+ teacher's books claim that the "[l]exical and grammatical syllabus [is] based on the Threshold level of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference".

The back covers of *MYW 5 & 6 SB* only give little information about what skills are taught, but no information about vocabulary or grammar aspects. It only tells the reader that the *Make Your Way*-series can be situated in a communicative approach and that it includes texts and topics which try to motivate and educate students. Regarding lexis, the information is not very revealing. In the teacher's book, however, more information is given about how lexis is treated and practiced. The sections of 'Working with words' are said to deal with lexis and to have a particular focus on systematic treatment of *lexical chunks* and *collocations*. The 'Vocabulary station' is described as containing the unit vocabulary in combination with translation, paraphrased word meaning, example sentences and phonetic transcription (*MYW 5/6 TB* 2010: 4). Collocations are explicitly mentioned a second time:

Der **Language booster** sieht vertiefende Übungen zu Kollokationen und Phraseologismen, wie sie für idiomatisches Alltagsenglisch typisch sind, vor und dient gleichzeitig der Bewusstmachung – *Awareness raising* – sprachlicher Strukturen. (MYW 5/6 TB 2010: 4; emphases in original)

Hence, there seems to be a focus on the introduction and practice of collocations along with other phraseological phenomena in the *Make Your Way*-series.

Apart from a note on the *NH 5 WB* back cover announcing the “revision of key vocabulary and functions”, the covers and the introductory pages of the *New Headway*-series textbooks do not provide any information about the treatment of neither lexis nor grammar. Additionally, the teacher’s books are also not very explicit about the treatment of vocabulary. It is stated that vocabulary is integrated in all exercises of one unit and additionally practiced in separate sections, but collocations are not referred to (NH 5/6 TB 2010/2011: 4). Furthermore, it is said that a bilingual word list can be found at the end of every unit. Collocations or lexical chunks are not mentioned at all, neither on any cover of the books nor in any introductory section of the book series.

To sum up, the different course books also differ with regard to the information given on the book covers as well as in the teacher’s books. Interestingly, the results also differ from the results of the ‘table of contents’-analysis. For example, the *MYW*-series does not give extensive information about collocations on the back covers and introductory pages of the student’s books similar to its table of contents. However, the teacher’s book is very informative and revealing in terms of the treatment of lexis in general and collocations in particular by claiming that lexical chunks are treated systematically. The *Laser*-series, quite explicit about its collocational contents in the student’s books indexes, neither informs the student nor the teacher about the treatment of collocations in the books.

6. 2. Internal evaluation

The internal evaluation of the coursebooks is a close scrutiny of the explicit exercises devoted to collocation teaching, no matter if they are referred to as a collocation exercise explicitly or not. Therefore, the books have been scanned for sections under

the headings of ‘vocabulary’, ‘working with words’ and other headings suggesting that the exercises deal with lexis. The ‘Language in use’ or ‘Use of/your English’ sections particularly aimed at developing language skills for the new Matura have been included as well as they typically deal with lexis, grammar and lexicogrammar in a combined way. The internal evaluation can be divided into a quantitative and a qualitative part.

6.2.1 Quantitative analysis

In order to see whether there are differences in terms of numbers of collocation exercises between the book series, all explicit vocabulary exercises in the student’s books as well as in the work books have been counted. Subsequently, those with collocational focus or content have been extracted and added up as well. Furthermore, the headings have been analyzed in order to find those exercises explicitly referred to as collocation exercises. The outcome of the quantitative examination is presented in the table below.

	General explicit vocabulary exercises		Explicit vocabulary exercises dealing with collocations		Explicitly called collocation exercises	
Grade	5	6	5	6	5	6
<i>Laser SB</i>	71	111	11	24	0	7
<i>MYW SB</i>	44	46	15	15	0	0
<i>NH SB</i>	66	59	24	15	0	0
<i>Laser WB</i>	43	50	9	5	0	0
<i>MYW TRP</i>	18	25	1	2	0	0
<i>NH WB</i>	23	33	7	8	0	0

Table 2: Quantitative results of coursebook analysis

First, as can be seen in this table above, all books include explicit vocabulary exercises focusing exclusively on the practice of the lexicon in general and, more importantly, explicit vocabulary exercises including or dealing with collocations in particular. Considering that most authors suggest taking both implicit and explicit teaching of collocations into account, the fact that explicit exercises are included in each of the text- and workbooks appears to be very positive (cf. chapter 4.1.1).

Second, the number of general explicit vocabulary exercises varies widely between the different book series. Whereas *L B1+ SB* contains 111 exercises focusing on

lexis, the *MYW 5 SB* only contains 44 vocabulary exercises, although the latter contains 18 pages more in total. Furthermore, the number also varies greatly within the series from workbook to textbook and slightly between the levels. Generally, it can be observed that the work books all include fewer vocabulary exercises than their student books equivalents, in most cases not even half of the exercises. This seems to be due to the overall lower page number in the work books²⁴. The great difference between the three student's books, however, cannot be explained because of varying page numbers, as they are approximately the same in all of the student's books. One could conclude therefore, that the *Laser*-series seems to put more emphasis on lexis in general, or rather on explicit exercises focusing on lexis, than the two other coursebook series.

Moreover, the share of collocation exercises also differs considerably between the different books ranging from 24 in *LB1+ SB* to only one in *MYW 5 TRP*. The highest number of exercises focusing on collocation is included in both the *L B1+ SB* and the *NH 5 SB* with 24 activities each. Considering the huge difference in the overall number of vocabulary exercises between these two books, the high number of collocation exercises has to be valued more in the *NH 5 SB* as in terms of percentage it includes many more collocation exercises than the *LB1+ SB*. While collocation exercises comprise 36,4% of vocabulary exercises in the *NH 5 SB*, only 21,6% of vocabulary exercises deal with collocations in the *LB1+ SB*. Particularly if the outcome of the external evaluation of the table of contents is considered, the results here seem surprising. In the *NH 5 SB* table of contents collocations are only mentioned once. However, according to the quantitative results, collocation exercises comprise more than a third of all vocabulary exercises in the book. This clearly demonstrates that relying on an external evaluation only may lead to wrong conclusions about the collocational contents of a coursebook.

Furthermore, the work books, which should actually focus on further practising important aspects introduced in the student books, contain many fewer instances of collocation exercises than the student books. The reason might again be the striking overall difference in page numbers between work and student's books.

²⁴ On average, the analyzed work books comprise 91 pages, while the chosen textbooks are 204 pages long.

As already mentioned earlier, in order to be able to judge which book seems to attach the greatest significance to collocations, not only the total numbers, but the proportion of collocation exercises has to be investigated. The following table displays the percentage of collocation exercises in relation to all lexical exercises in the different coursebooks.

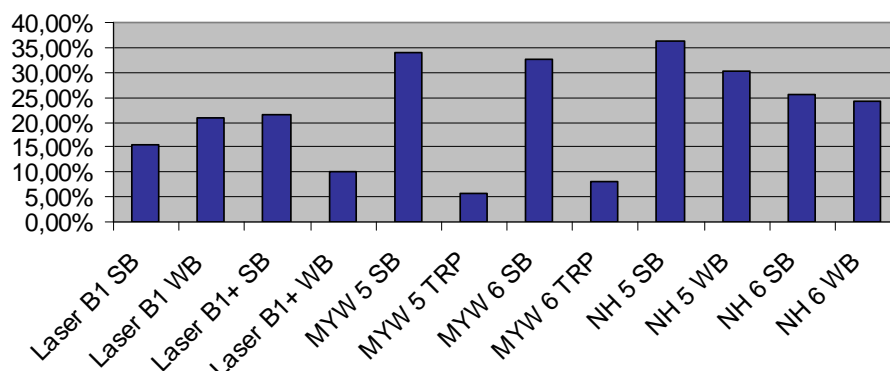


Figure 12: Percentage of collocation exercises in the three coursebook series in relation to all lexical exercises included

The diagram above demonstrates that the *New Headway*-series includes the most collocation exercises in terms of percentage. Although the *Laser*-series includes a very similar number of collocation exercises to the *NH*-series, the percentage of collocation exercises in relation to the amount of general vocabulary exercises included is much lower. Furthermore, similar to the above results, work books in general include percentage-wise fewer collocation exercises than the textbooks of the same series, except in the case of *L B1 WB*. Particularly striking is the dissimilarity between the *MYW* student books and the test resource packs. While the *MYW* student books include nearly as many collocation exercises as the *NH*- books in terms of percentage, the *MYW* test resource packs include neither number-wise nor percentage-wise many of them. One could therefore assume that the focus of the additional resource pack does not lie on lexis in general or collocations in particular.

Furthermore, looking at Table 2 again, particularly striking is that only one book, namely *LB1+ SB*, explicitly names seven of its exercises focusing on collocations as ‘collocation exercises’. These seven activities are exactly the seven instances the word ‘collocation’ appears in the *L B1+ SB* table of contents. All the other books, although they mention collocations in their table of contents and in the teacher’s books, do not name their collocation exercises as collocation exercises throughout

the book. Both the student's books of *New Headway 5* and *Make Your Way 5* refer to collocations in their tables of contents, but still do not name their collocation exercises accordingly, but rather call the exercises 'Words that go together' (*NH 5 SB* 2007: 68) or 'which verbs go with which nouns' (*MYW 5 SB* 2010: 73). As the explicitness of coursebooks with respect to collocations is said to have a direct influence on students' awareness, this aspect will be further elaborated on in the qualitative part of the analysis (cf. chapter 6.2.2.2).

To sum up, the outcome of the quantitative analysis indicates that the *New Headway*-series seems to ascribe more importance to the teaching and learning of collocations than the other two book series. The *New Headway* books include the most collocation exercises in terms of total numbers as well as in terms of percentage. The *Make Your Way*-series is ranked third and last in terms of total numbers of collocation exercises. However, if one looks at the proportion of collocation exercises among general vocabulary exercises (34% in *MYW 5 SB* and 33% in *MYW 6 SB*), the *MYW*- books seem to actually put a lot more emphasis on collocations and chunks than the *Laser*- books (15% in *L B1 SB* and 22% in *L B1+ SB*). This seems to clearly parallel the claims of the authors in the *MYW* teacher's books that collocations are focused on systematically (cf. chapter 6.1.2). Thus, considering total numbers, percentage and the outcomes of the external evaluation, the *MYW*-series seems to attach more significance to collocations than the *Laser*-series. Concerning the explicitness about collocations, the *Laser*-series seems to follow the most favourable approach by actually calling collocation exercises 'collocation exercises', at least in their 6th form book.

6.2.2 Qualitative analysis

In the qualitative part of the in-depth analysis, all explicit collocation exercises are analyzed with regard to consideration of the various principles of collocation teaching, different teaching strategies, suggestions for exercise formats and selection criteria. The variety of exercises is scrutinized in order to get an overall impression of how varied the presented exercises are and if there are differences between the book series. Furthermore, the aspect of how de-lexicalised verbs are treated is investigated more closely to see how an important aspect of collocation teaching is

dealt with differently in various books. Moreover, the inclusion of suggested materials such as corpora or dictionaries has been looked at. A few appropriate exercises have been chosen as illustrative examples for demonstrating how linguistic TEFL theory is put into practice in EFL coursebooks.

6.2.2.1 Variety of exercises

In order to analyze the variety of exercises included in each of the different coursebook series, the exercises have been put into six different groups of exercise formats which seem to dominate in the three coursebook series. The categorisation of exercise formats has been adapted and expanded from Lewis (1997: 89ff.).

- Matching exercises (matching the parts of a collocation, e.g. verb + noun)
- Completion exercises (gap-filling or completing phrases)
- Odd-one-out exercises (cross out wrong one or choose correct one)
- Collocation grids
- Independent use of collocations in speaking or writing
- Others²⁵

Then all the collocation exercises in the different books have been assigned to one of these categories and measured quantitatively. The overall variety of exercise types in all the books is displayed in the pie chart below.

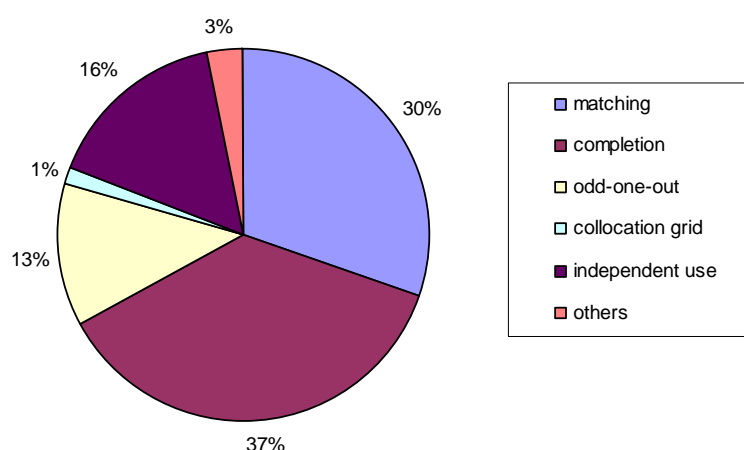


Figure 13: Overall variety of exercise formats in the coursebooks

²⁵ This comprises exercise formats which were only found once in one of the books and are therefore not statistically significant, e.g. 'grouping collocations topic-wise' in *NH 5 SB* or 'identifying chunks' in the *MYW 5 SB*.

From the pie chart above, it can be concluded that only two exercise types make up more than two thirds (67%) of all the exercises included in the books: matching and completion exercises. The remaining third consists of three different exercise types and the category 'others'. This seems to indicate that the overall tendency in the books selected seems to be to practice collocations on the basis of matching and completion exercises. In relation to her study of advanced-level coursebooks, Gouverneur (2008: 237) claims that

[g]iven the fact that collocational use is a major problem for advanced learners, and that completing a sentence requires their being able to retrieve and use the pattern appropriately, the prevalence of complete exercises at both levels is very positive.

Hence, the fact that completion tasks make up the highest percentage of exercises in the selected coursebooks (37%), can be seen as positive if we follow Gouverneur's line of argument. Matching exercises, comprising another 30% of all the collocation exercises, are not always considered useful, although recommended as a particularly valuable type of lexical exercise by Lewis (1997: 89) or Thornbury (2002: 121). In contrast, Nesselhauf (2005: 267) criticizes the common practice of having students match words from two columns as she claims that

such exercises can be solved, however, even if the learner has only a vague idea of the general meaning of the verb, and can therefore not be considered exercises for practising collocations at all.

Nesselhauf (2005: 267) argues for the use of collocational grids and states that they are considered much more useful, although they are rarely used in textbooks. In line with Nesselhauf's claim, I found that only two books from the same series include collocational grids, namely the *MYW 5 SB* and *MYW 6 SB*. Both encompass one collocational grid (cf. Figure 15). Therefore, it can be suggested that the *Laser-* and the *New Headway*-series could increase their variety positively by reducing the amount of matching exercises and including collocational grids into their coursebooks. Furthermore, it would also be advisable for the *Make Your Way*-series to include some more collocational grids as one grid per book also does not seem to be sufficient.

6 Matching verbs and nouns

- Match the verbs with the correct nouns by placing a tick (✓) in the right boxes. Note that there are more than 9 correct answers.

	potatoes	dishes	floor	silver	fire	breakfast	table	beds	shopping
peel									
make									
do									
wash									
lay									
cook									
polish									
sweep									
clean									
light									

- Some of your answers can be made into **compound nouns**. For example, you can say to *peel the potatoes* and you can have a *potato peeler*. Which answers do you think can be made into compound nouns? Write a list.

Figure 14: Collocational grid (MYW 6 SB 2010: 36)

The collocation grid in Figure 14 focuses on topic-based ‘verb + noun collocations’ about housework. As indicated in the instructions to the collocation grid, there are more than nine correct answers and therefore, the collocational potential and restrictions of the verbs and the nouns respectively are demonstrated at the same time. The note below the grid gives an additional, lexically challenging exercise dealing with the issue of word formation.

Furthermore, the different books vary greatly concerning the selection of exercises. The distribution of the different exercise types throughout the three coursebooks is shown in the following three block diagrams.

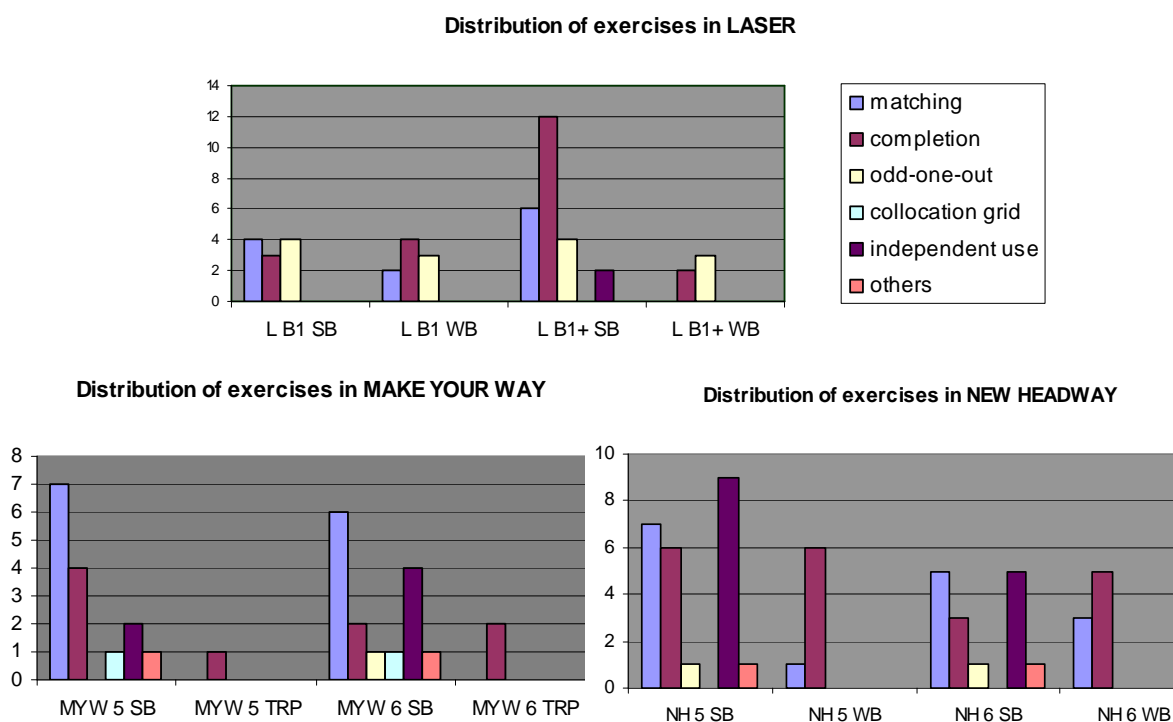


Figure 15: Distribution of exercise formats throughout the coursebook series

Generally, it can be observed that the textbooks all show greater variation in exercise types than the workbooks. While the textbooks all include at least three different categories of exercise formats, only one workbook, the *L B1 WB*, contains three different types of exercises. All the other workbooks contain only two different sorts of exercises and the *MYW* teacher's resource packs even only include completion tasks. In comparison with the quantitative results, the difference in exercise variety between text- and workbooks might be traced back to the overall difference in numbers of collocation exercises between these two types of books (cf. chapter 6.2.1).

Furthermore, the variation of exercises in textbooks also shows discrepancies between the different series. *MYW 6 SB* contains all six different collocation exercise formats and *MYW 5 SB* at least five different ones. *NH 5 & 6 SB* both contain five different types, only disregarding collocation grids. In contrast, the *Laser*-series covers four different categories of exercises in the *LB 1+ SB* and three in the *LB 1 SB*. Therefore, the *MYW*-series seems to have the most varied textbooks concerning the incorporation of different collocation exercises, while the *Laser*-series is least varied.

Particularly striking is the fact that compared to the other two series the *NH* textbooks seem to put great emphasis on the independent use of collocations with nine exercises on independent use in *NH 5 SB* and five exercises of this type in *NH 6 SB*. In comparison, the *Laser*-series seems to widely neglect the independent use-exercises by only including two of them in the *L B1+ SB* and none in the *L B1 SB* book. The *MYW*-series ranges in the middle of the continuum in this respect. The *MYW*-series seems to focus on the practice of matching activities with seven matching exercises in *MYW 5 SB* and six of them in *MYW 6 SB*.

6.2.2.2 Application of collocation teaching strategies

In chapter 4.1 different strategies for teaching collocations have been discussed. Implicit and explicit strategies have been opposed and awareness-raising was described as an important approach to teaching collocations. Moreover, rule-based

and item-learning strategies have been contrasted. This subchapter explores which of these strategies are applied to which degree in the different books.

- Explicit vs. implicit teaching strategy

A vital question concerning collocation teaching strategies is whether collocations are better taught through explicit collocation exercises or by implicitly providing students with extensive language input in order for the students to acquire them more or less incidentally. Based on the discussion in chapter 4.1.1, preferably, these two strategies should not be applied alone, but together, complementing each other. Therefore, in coursebooks, ideally, both strategies should find application. As the analysis showed that all coursebooks include explicit exercises focusing on collocations, it can be concluded that the coursebooks do follow the explicit strategy of collocation teaching, at least to some extent. As, however, only these explicit exercises have been analyzed, no statement can be made about if and how the implicit strategy of teaching collocations is put into practice in the coursebooks. In order to do so, all reading texts and exercises focusing on other aspects of vocabulary or grammar in the book would have had to be analyzed regarding their collocational content, ideally with the help of a coursebook-based corpus such as the TeMa-corpus. This was not possible due to the constraints of this diploma thesis. Therefore, it can only be assumed that the implicit strategy is partly pursued with regard to the fact that collocations from explicit exercises do not repeatedly show up in explicit vocabulary exercises and therefore might be again referred to in reading texts or in exercises focusing on any other language aspect. Nevertheless, this is only speculation and cannot be proved or explored in more detail here.

- Awareness-raising

Awareness-raising has been recognized as an important strategy in teaching collocations by different authors (cf. chapter 4.1.2). Therefore, exercise formats claimed to be appropriate for raising the students' awareness are searched for in the coursebooks. Furthermore, not only particular exercises contribute to the consciousness-raising process, but, according to Vellenga (2004), the metalanguage of guidelines and headings in EFL textbooks is very likely to affect learners and additionally functions as linguistic input. Hence, similar to what Meunier and Gouverneur (2007) did in their corpus-based coursebook analysis, the headings of

vocabulary sections and the metalanguage used in the guidelines to the vocabulary sections, particularly to those dealing with collocations have been analyzed. Furthermore, the teacher's books have been scanned for suggestions and background information on collocations.

Exercises particularly appropriate for awareness-raising are said to be collocational grids, having students underline all the relevant word combinations in a text (e.g. all verb + noun collocations), having students correct their own collocational mistakes and brainstorming how many collocates can be found for one word (cf. chapter 4.1.2). As mentioned before, collocational grids are only included in the *MYW 5 SB* and the *MYW 6 SB*. The other three formats suggested as profitable for the consciousness-raising process are not included in any of the investigated books. However, in the below extract from the *L B1+* teacher's book, suggestions for teachers are given how to raise students' awareness towards the numerous collocations of the two often confused de-lexicalized verbs *make* and *do*. It is suggested to start out from having the students correct a wrong sentence on the blackboard and then have the students brainstorm for as many collocations they can find for *make* and *do* before having them do the exercise in the student's book.

Collocations: make / do

2 Complete the phrases using either *make* or *do*.

..... an appointment	..... your homework
..... a complaint	..... the bed
..... some exercise	..... friends
..... the housework	..... a mistake
..... a noise	..... sure
..... up your mind	..... well at something
..... your best	..... a decision
..... a fuss	..... an effort
..... a mess	..... you good
..... a phone call	..... money
..... the washing-up	..... the shopping
..... a suggestion	..... a meal

► Exercise 2

Aim: to practise collocations with *make/do*

- Before students attempt this task, write this sentence on the board: *I get home from school at 3.30 and make my homework before I go to basketball practice.*
- Elicit what is wrong with the sentence. (you *do* homework, not *make* it)
- Explain that there are many collocations in English that use the verbs *make* and *do*.
- Ask students to tell you as many of the collocations they know with *make* or *do* and write them on the board.
- Students then work individually or with a partner to complete the phrases.
- Elicit answers.
- Encourage students to make a note of collocations that they learn in their notebooks.

Figure 16: Matching exercise and teaching suggestions (LB1+SB 2008: 107; LB1+TB 2011:111)

However, there are only three instances of activities described as particularly suitable for raising awareness to be found in the twelve investigated books. Considering that raising awareness plays a significant role in teaching collocations, one could argue that these three activities do not seem to put enough emphasis on this strategy of collocation teaching in the three coursebook series.

In the *LB 1 SB/WB*, the headings of collocation exercises are all very general such as 'Dictionary corner' and collocations are referred to as phrases in instructions such as 'Match to make phrases'. Grammatical collocations or colligations are referred to as patterns in guidelines such as 'Choose the correct words to complete the word patterns'. In the *L B1+ SB* the term 'collocation' is placed in the headlines of collocation exercises, whereas it is not used in the workbook of the same level. In the teacher's book of the *LB1* it is also noted that students are prone to confuse *make* and *do*. However, it does not provide a rule for how to apply those two verbs correctly or any information for the teacher on how to handle the learners' difficulties (L B1 TB 2008: 45).

In the metalanguage of the guidelines to collocation exercises in the *Make Your Way*-series the term 'collocation' is not used at all, apart from one occurrence which is described in more detail below. The headings for collocation exercises, in the student's books as well as in the test resource packs, are all very general such as 'Language booster' or 'Working with words' and the instructions read 'Match the two halves to make expressions' or 'Which verbs go with which nouns'. Collocations are referred to as 'expressions', but not as collocations as such. The *MYW* teachers' books do not elaborate on the collocation activities included, they only provide the exercise solutions. No information on how to define collocations or on learner's difficulties with certain collocations is included. There is only one instance in the *MYW*-series where the students' attention is deliberately drawn to the phenomenon of collocations and where the arbitrary nature of collocations and the difficulties arising from that are mentioned (see Figure 17). Furthermore, the students are advised that intelligently guessing might sometimes solve the problem of not knowing which words can combine with which. However, this suggestion can only be applied restrictively as in this case the possible word combinations are naturally limited because of the physical impossibility of e.g. **tearing a bone*. Still, it can be claimed that students would have to know what the single words mean first, in order to be able to "make an intelligent guess" (MYW 6 SB 2010: 184).

9 Language booster

A Work in pairs and decide which of these parts of the body can be

torn broken swollen sore pulled bruised sprained dislocated



ankle



rib



shoulder



nose



wrist



throat



muscle



toe nail

Example: A: "You can break an ankle, can't you?"

B: "Yes, or you can sprain it, but I don't think you can dislocate it."

Although it can sometimes be a bit tricky to know if these adjectives can be used to describe certain parts of the body, you can usually make an intelligent guess.

Example: You can physically pull a muscle or ligament, but you can't pull a bone or a nose.

B Sometimes the reason why we use a certain adjective with a certain noun is not so obvious. These collocations are much more restrictive.

ligament: Band

- Match these adjectives with the nouns.

- | | |
|---------------|------------|
| 1 beer | a eye |
| 2 splitting | b lip |
| 3 black | c ear |
| 4 upset | d headache |
| 5 fat | e belly |
| 6 cauliflower | f chin |
| 7 double | g stomach |
| 8 runny | h nose |

- Work in pairs and decide who might have each of these things.

Example: A middle-aged man who drinks too much and doesn't do any exercise will probably have a beer belly.

Figure 17: Language booster exercise (MYW 6 SB 2010: 184)

The workbooks of the *New Headway*-series do not mention the term 'collocation' explicitly at all, neither in their table of contents nor in the instructions to the exercises. Either very general headings such as 'Vocabulary' are used or the terminology is simplified by subsuming the exercises under headings like 'Words that go together' or 'Verb + preposition'. The same is true for the *NH 5 SB*. Although the term 'collocation' is mentioned once in its table of contents, it is never mentioned again in any of the headlines or instructions throughout the book. In the *NH 6 SB*

terminology is also mostly simplified by naming the collocation activities ‘Vocabulary and idioms’, ‘Useful phrases’ or even ‘Words’²⁶. In the *NH 5/6* teacher’s books, collocations are mentioned explicitly in several of the introductory paragraphs telling the teacher which skills or language aspects are practised in this unit. As an example, under the heading of ‘learning aims’ the *NH 5 TB* declares that verb + noun collocations on the topic of *work* are practiced (NH 5 TB 2010:58). In the *NH 6* teacher’s book (2011: 47) the following suggestion on how to use the term ‘collocation’ with students is given:

In diesen Übungen geht es um collocations. Wenn Ihre SchülerInnen mit dem Begriff noch nicht viel anfangen können, fragen Sie sie zunächst nach ihnen bekannten Wörtern, die zusammengehören, z.B: *egg: to fry, to boil, to break*.

One could argue that if the students cannot relate to the term ‘collocation’ yet, it seems to be the teacher’s job to introduce the term and explain it (cf. e.g. Conzett 2000). As a comment on an exercise dealing with verb + noun collocations, the *NH 5* teacher’s book tells the teacher that this exercise should help the students in terms of developing a ‘feeling for collocations’ (NH 5 teacher’s book, 2010: 74). This remark is the only one which might be handled as an explicit comment on the important process of consciousness-raising.

As can be seen from the results in this subchapter, the books are unequally explicit about collocations and therefore indirectly follow a different approach on awareness-raising. Particularly the teacher’s books are very different from each other. While the *New Headway*-teacher’s books sometimes even give suggestions on which problems students might encounter with particular kinds of collocations or on how the term ‘collocation’ should be dealt with, the *MYW* teacher’s books do not even mention collocations, except on its general introductory pages which include information on how language aspects in general are dealt with (cf. chapter 6.1.2).

To sum up, the present coursebooks seem to address phraseological phenomena with very general lexical terms and seem to refrain from using the term ‘collocation’ as such, although explicitly introducing the concept and the term is favoured by many

²⁶ In the instructions to a roleplay activity the students are asked to ‘Use these words’, although the box nearly exclusively contains collocations such as ‘bring the bill’, ‘load the van’ or ‘make the salad’ (NH 6 SB, 2011: 37).

researchers and is said to increase awareness of collocations (e.g. Conzett 2000, McCarthy, O’Keeffe & Walsh 2010, Meunier & Gouverneur 2007). Meunier & Gouverneur (2007: 130) strongly argue for the use of precise terms when talking about phraseology in general and collocations in particular.

For language awareness to be most profitable, learners should be introduced to the terms used to denote some of the essential linguistic phenomena they are trying to get to grips with.

In order to explain the obvious reluctance to name collocation exercises as such and to include definitions and further suggestions on teaching collocations, one has to go back to the discussion in chapter 1 of this thesis. Textbook designers are certainly faced with the problem of terminological inconsistency and the lack of agreement about how to actually define a collocation. This might also be one reason that keeps coursebook authors from including the term ‘collocation’ explicitly and from providing definitions of what collocations are and how they can be defined. Along similar lines, Meunier and Gouverneur (2007: 131) claim that “[a] precise and clear-cut typology of phraseological units would undoubtedly be more than welcome by researchers and ELT specialists”. As long as there is no such common ground in linguistics and TEFL research, it seems to be the teacher’s job to provide students with a helpful and student-friendly definition of ‘collocation’ and to raise the student’s awareness towards this important linguistic phenomenon.

- Rule-learning vs. item-learning

Most explicit collocation exercises in the three different coursebook series seem to follow an item-learning approach. Collocations are presented and practised without giving the students rules for building or finding the correct combinations. This seems to be more or less understandable as collocations are described as arbitrary and there are not many rules for which words combine with each other and which do not (cf. chapter 2). A clear indication that an item-learning approach is pursued can, for example, be found in the *L B1+* teacher’s book. In addition to an exercise in which sports collocations are practiced, it suggests to “[e]ncourage students to make a note of these collocations in their notebooks and to learn them by heart” (LB1+ TB 2011: 129). Learning vocabulary by heart and writing it down in a notebook clearly hints at

an item-learning approach in which single language items²⁷ are taught to be memorized by students rather than teaching rules.

The rule-based strategy of teaching collocations as described by Thornbury (2002) is referred to twice in the *New Headway*-series in relation to collocations with de-lexicalized verbs and once in the *Laser*-series. The *NH 5* teacher's book indicates that students might often confuse *make* and *do* and it advises to provide the students with a simple rule. *Do* is said to be used when "an idea of work" is meant, while *make* is used when talking about creativity (NH 5 TB 2010: 67). However, it is admitted that there are many exceptions to the rules (ibid.). Furthermore, the *NH 6* teacher's book follows the rule-learning approach for the teaching of sports collocations with the de-lexicalized verbs *go*, *do* and *play*.

The rules are as follows:

- We use *play* with a game which uses a ball, often in teams
- We use *go* with a sporting activity, ending in *-ing*.
- We use *do* with a sporting activity, often an exercise activity, not ending in *-ing*. (NH 6 TB 2011: 19)

Again, it is explained that there are exceptions to the rule like *do boxing*. The *L B1+ WB* also gives suggestions on teaching particular collocations with the help of a rule. For an exercise in which different sports should be matched with either 'court' or 'pitch', the teacher's book provides a kind of a rule or rather a pattern for the pupils to follow:

Explain that a court is usually smaller than a pitch. A court is often indoors, while a pitch is usually outdoors. Individual sports are often played on a court, while team games are often played on a pitch. (*L B1+ WB*: 129)

However, it is also emphasized that the danger lies in students over-generalizing the rule and producing the collocation 'golf pitch' instead of 'golf course'.

Similar to what most researchers agree on²⁸, the item-learning approach for teaching collocations seems to be favoured by most textbook designers. Rule-based teaching only seems to be restrictedly recommended for de-lexicalized verbs and for specific topic-based collocations.

²⁷ In this respect, language item stands for word, collocation or any other bigger lexical chunk.

²⁸ Rule-based teaching of collocations is only possible for a few specific collocations (cf. chapter 4.1.3)

6.2.2.3 Application of collocation teaching principles

This subchapter investigates whether and to what extent the exercises are based on the few previously introduced principles of collocation teaching. No exercise containing all of the described principles has been found in any of the scrutinized books. Therefore, it seems obvious that different activities are based on different principles, but that one activity is very unlikely to stick to all of the principles. Lewis (1997: 86) also claims that “[a] little well-chosen variety is better than dogmatic adherence to any set of principles.” Therefore, exercises have been chosen which are clearly based on at least one of the principles in order to illustrate how these they are put in practice.

- Repetition

On the very important principle of repetition, which is essential not only in collocation teaching, but in language teaching in general, nothing much can be said in the course of this thesis. Due to the fact that only explicit vocabulary exercises have been investigated, the repeated inclusion of particular collocations cannot be analyzed. Due to limited space in the books, it seems more likely that an explicitly introduced collocational item will be repeatedly referred to in a text, in a listening activity or in the course of a grammar exercise in an implicit way, rather than explicitly practising it again in the same book. While this assumption cannot be proved due to the limited scope of this thesis, one short comment can be made about the repetition of collocations in the workbooks. Some workbooks do include exercises in which the collocational structures introduced in the student’s books are repeatedly practiced. The *L B1 WB* contains four exercises dealing with the same collocations as the exercises in the corresponding student’s book. All of the five additional collocation exercises from the *L B1+ WB* take up features introduced in the student’s book for further practice. The distinction between *make/do*-collocations, for example, is introduced with the help of a simple matching activity in the student’s book and then repeatedly practiced with a gap-filling activity in the equivalent workbook. The *MYW 5/6* test resource packs both only take up one collocational feature from the corresponding student’s book. The *MYW 5 TRP* repeats collocations with *make* and *do* introduced in the student’s book and the *MYW 5 TRP* repeatedly practices body collocations. In the *NH 5 WB* only three of the seven included collocation exercises deal with the same collocational issues that are addressed in the *NH 5 SB*. The *NH 6*

WB does not focus on any of the collocational patterns from the *NH 6 SB*, but introduces completely new collocations. It also provides a *make* and *do* exercise, although the collocations of *make* and *do* are already introduced in the *NH 5 SB*. Interestingly, *NH* workbooks seem to generally focus more on colligational patterns than the corresponding students' books by providing several exercises dealing with grammatical collocations.

- Systematicity

The principle of systematicity suggests that similar collocations should be introduced simultaneously and that synonymous words are better introduced with their collocational fields in order to make clear the differences between two words. Moreover, systematic treatment of collocations also involves teaching more collocates for one node word as this seems to be more advantageous for the learning and memorizing process than teaching many node words and only few collocations (cf. Kagimoto & Webb 2011).

In the activity in Figure 18 below, students have to pick the right word in order to arrive at a 'correct' or rather highly likely collocation that a native speaker would use. This exercise perfectly illustrates the principle of systematicity, because the differences between two similar words are shown with the help of collocations. Words like *hour/time*, *trouble/problem* and *movement/motion*, which can be used synonymously in some cases, but not in combinations with the same collocates, are dealt with contrastively in this exercise (cf. chapter 4.2.2 on systematicity).

1 Choose the correct words.

<p>1 be wide <i>asleep/awake</i></p> <p>2 be fast <i>asleep/awake</i></p> <p>3 have a high <i>fever/temperature</i></p> <p>4 a narrow <i>escape/freedom</i></p> <p>5 be far <i>away/distant</i></p>	<p>6 for a long <i>hour/time</i></p> <p>7 take a short <i>way/cut</i></p> <p>8 in slow <i>movement/motion</i></p> <p>9 in a deep <i>noise/voice</i></p> <p>10 be in big <i>trouble/problem</i></p>
---	--

Figure 18: Odd-one out exercise displaying the principle of systematicity (LB1 SB 2008: 19)

Furthermore, the corresponding teacher's book gives teaching suggestions for explaining to the students that although some words may be used synonymously in some cases, this does not necessarily have to be true for all their usages. Restrictions on the collocability of words are said to be the reason for this.

Dictionary Corner

Aim: to introduce and practise collocations

- 1 • Explain that in English certain words are used together.
- Write the following on the board and ask students to fill in the gaps in the sentences with the appropriate adjectives:

► On the Board

good / fine / lovely
 That's a _____ dress.
 How are you? _____, thanks.
 I wish you all _____ luck in the test!

- Explain that even though the three adjectives have similar meanings, they cannot be used interchangeably to describe these nouns.

Figure 19: Teaching suggestions (L B1 TB 2008: 19)

Similar to the exercise in Figure 19, all the *make* and *do* discrimination exercises stick to the principle of systematicity by contrasting two very similar and easily confusable words with the help of their different collocational fields and therefore showing the students how they are properly used.

VOCABULARY
 Adjectives for food, towns, and people

1 In each group, *four* of the adjectives cannot go with the noun. Which ones?

junk	fast	delicious	tasteless
fresh			
disgusting	disgusted	FOOD	plain
frozen	rich	home-grown	tasteful
		vegetarian	starving
		wealthy	
excited	exciting	home	old
polluted		university	young
capital		modern	busy
antique	cosmopolitan	agricultural	
	historic	small	
young	sophisticated	long	elderly
expensive			antique
bored	boring	PEOPLE	shy
wealthy	sociable	outgoing	starving
		rude	tall
		crowded	

This odd-one out exercise in Figure 20 shows how only three node words (nouns) are taught with many different collocating adjectives and therefore also conforms to the principle of systematicity (cf. Kagimoto & Webb 2011). Furthermore, this activity seems to stick to the principle of 'expanding the half-known' by presenting new adjectives for already known words, if one can assume that the nouns *food*, *town* and *people* are known to a 6th form student. This principle will be elaborated on in the next paragraph.

Figure 20: Odd-one out exercise (NH 5 SB 2011: 52)

- Expanding the half-known

The principle of ‘expanding the half-known’ can be observed in many of the exercises in the various coursebooks. For example, it is mentioned in the *NH 5* teacher’s book in the description of one odd-one-out exercise in which the wrong noun has to be crossed out similarly to the above exercise (*NH 5 TB* 2010: 74). In this description it is thoroughly explained that the verbs dealt with in this exercise such as *tell*, *give*, *make*, *carry* or *keep* should already be known by the students at this stage, but that they are still often combined with the wrong nouns. Therefore, the correct collocations need to be practiced in order to expand previous vocabulary knowledge as it is suggested in chapter 4.2.3. In their TeMa-based study on the treatment of phraseology in ELT coursebooks, Meunier and Gouverneur (2007: 130) criticize the lack of information on how to teach collocations:

While most textbooks use specific terms like ‘collocations’, they often fail to provide teachers and/or learners with definitions or explanations about what collocations actually are and about the best ways of teaching and learning them.

Therefore, it seems favourable that the teachers are given background information on the estimated difficulties of the learners and to provide them with an explanation why it is important to practice exactly these word combinations.

Similarly, all the differentiation exercises between *do* and *make* rely on the principle of ‘expanding the half-known’. *Do* and *make* are very simple and common verbs which are learned relatively soon and should undoubtedly be known by students attending the 5th or 6th form of a grammar school (i.e. grade 9 or 10). However, students are often not aware of the collocational potential of these two verbs and do not know which words they can be combined with. As explained in chapter 3.2.2 and 4.3.2, the two words are often confused by learners because of their near-synonymy and therefore need extra attention (cf. e.g. Fontenelle 2004, Howarth 1998a). Exercises which make clear collocational ranges of *make* and *do* seem to help students to discriminate between the two words. Furthermore, in this way, a student’s vocabulary is easily enlarged by developing their superficial into extensive vocabulary knowledge, i.e. by ‘expanding the half-known’.

- L1 contrast

Interestingly, the contrastive approach intensively promoted by Bahns (1993) and Nesselhauf (2003 & 2005) does not seem to be present in any of the coursebooks. This is not surprising for the *Laser*- and the *New Headway*-series as they are both published by British companies for world-wide use and can therefore not make references to a specific L1 amongst the most likely very multilingual learners. However, it nearly seems bizarre that the *Make your Way*-series, which is written and published in Austria by Austrian authors and used in Austrian grammar school only, does not make any reference to the learner's L1 concerning collocations. Neither do the teacher's books nor the student's books mention any problems related to the learner's L1 use or provide activities in which, e.g. translation is involved. The same is true for the exclusive extra material for Austrian AHS included in the *New Headway*-books. Even the Austrian curriculum states that a reflective contrastive approach to languages is advantageous by stating that contrastive observations should be applied where appropriate in order to enhance the effectiveness of language acquisition (BMUKK 2004: 2). One speculative explanation might be that the Austrian coursebooks designers are aware of the multilingual context²⁹ their *Make Your Way*-series is used in and therefore refrain from including exercises which focus on the difference of certain English collocations from the German language. Another hypothesis is that the coursebook authors adhere strictly to the 'target language only'- policy which is widely pursued in TEFL throughout the world and states that only the target language should be used in the EFL classroom and that the students' L1 is actually not needed. The Austrian curriculum also primarily follows this policy:

Als Unterrichtssprache ist so viel Zielsprache wie möglich, so wenig Deutsch wie nötig einzusetzen (BMUKK 2004: 2).

However, as described above, the curriculum also leaves some free space for a contrastive approach when it is considered helpful and advantageous for the students.

²⁹ The numbers of pupils with a different L1 than German have rapidly increased in the last decade, particularly in Vienna. In 2008, 38,2% of all pupils in Vienna did not have German as their mother tongue. Throughout Austria, about a fifth of the pupils speak a different L1 than German. Still, pupils in the 9th or 10th grade of Austrian upper-secondary schools generally have native-like competence in German. Furthermore, German is the dominant language in teaching contexts in Austria and the language of instruction for nearly all other subjects (except foreign languages and CLIL-projects). For further information on the multilingual background of Austrian pupils consult e.g. <http://derstandard.at/3197604> (30.3.2013).

No matter which of the hypotheses might be true, one can definitely conclude that supplementary material would be needed, particularly when dealing with collocations prone to L1 influence such as de-lexicalized verb collocations or collocations dissimilar in structure or meaning from L1 collocations.

- Noticing, retrieval and generation

In their study, Meunier and Gouverneur (2007: 132) claim that effective activities focusing on phraseology should be composed following a 3-step process. The relation between those three steps and the principle of 'noticing, retrieval and generation' as described by Nation (2001) can be seen in Table 3 below. Furthermore, the relation of their model to the 3P-method and the O-H-E-method of teaching can be observed. The three stages of these two teaching cycles correlate with the three-staged learning process by Nation (2001).

	Exercises	Tasks	Learning process	3 p-method	O-H-E method
Step 1	Focus on compositionality	Match two parts of an expression	Noticing	Present	Observe
Step 2	Focus on meaning	Replace part of a sentence with items from a box	Retrieving	Practise	Hypothesise
Step 3	Focus on use	Write a sentence with the expression	Generating	Produce	Experiment

Table 3: Three ideal steps of collocation exercises (Meunier & Gouverneur 2007: 132)

Exercises focusing on 'compositionality' are e.g. matching of the two parts of a collocation or putting them into categories. The focus on 'meaning' is highlighted by exercises in which collocations have to be matched with their definitions or the replacing of highlighted passages in a sentence with items from a box. Gap-filling exercises in which the appropriate expressions are not given or independent-use exercises integrated in speaking or writing activities both have a focus on 'use'. (Meunier & Gouverneur 2007: 132)

The following task progression taken from *NH 5 SB* (2007: 17) perfectly conforms to the principle of 'noticing, retrieval and generation' described in chapter 4.2.5. Furthermore, it displays the three steps of ideal exercise composition explained by Meunier and Gouverneur (2007). First, the new collocations are introduced with a matching activity. Students *notice* which verbs collocate with which nouns and bring the two separate parts together (= focus on compositionality). Then, two exercises follow focusing on the *retrieval* of the above introduced collocations. The students reuse the collocations when filling in the table and the gap text with the given expressions (= focus on meaning). In the subsequent tasks the pupils are supposed to use the collocations *generatively* in speaking and writing. They have to integrate their newly acquired lexical knowledge into their communicative competence and apply the new expressions in different contexts (= focus on use).

VOCABULARY AND SPEAKING
Daily life

1 Work with a partner. Match the verbs and nouns.

have wash watch text	the news on TV your friends your hair breakfast
have clear up do send	an email the mess a shower the washing-up
make relax listen do	to music your homework a cup of coffee in front of the TV
cook go put on read	magazines a meal make-up to the toilet

T 2.6 Listen, check, and repeat.

2 Where do you usually do the activities in exercise 1? Write them in the chart.

Kitchen	Bathroom	Living room	Bedroom

Discuss with your partner. Then use some of the verbs and nouns in exercise 1 to tell your partner about your daily life.

3 Complete these sentences with the correct words.

- I never _____ breakfast on weekdays, only at weekends.
- I have a hot _____ every morning and every evening.
- My sister washes her _____ at least four times a week.
- She didn't have time to _____ any make-up this morning.
- My brother never reads books or newspapers, he only reads music _____.
- I don't often do the _____ because we've got a dishwasher.
- I'm going to _____ a cup of coffee. Does anybody want one?
- My dad always _____ the ten o'clock news on TV.
- My mum says I text my _____ too much.
- You* made this mess, so *you* _____ it up!
- Can I _____ an email from your computer?
- How can you listen to _____ while you're working?
- I'm always so tired after work, I just want to _____ in front of the TV.
- I cooked a _____ for ten people last night.
- I didn't forget to _____ my homework, I forgot to *bring* it.
- Can you wait a minute? I need to _____ to the toilet.

T 2.7 Listen, check, and practise the sentences.

4 What is your favourite room? Why do you like it? What do you do in that room? Write some notes about it.

My bedroom - I've got lots of posters on the walls. I listen to music and do my homework. I watch TV with my friends ...

5 Describe your favourite room to a partner and say what you do there. Don't say which room it is. Can your partner guess?

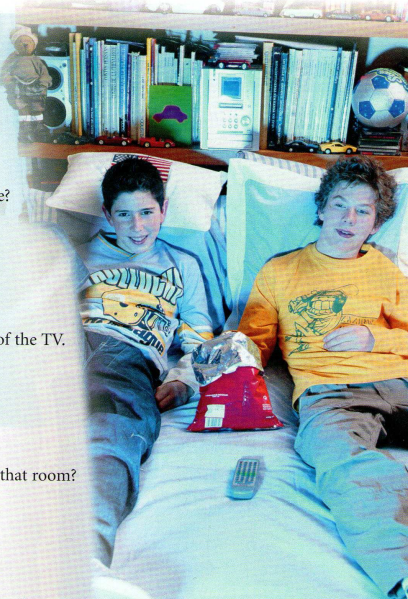


Figure 21: Task progression of collocation exercises (NH 5 SB 2007: 17)

However, only a few other exercises conform to this model of a vocabulary exercise by displaying all three steps and by being based on the principle of 'noticing, retrieval and generation'. There are some exercises in which two of these steps are included and some which only focus on one of these steps. This is the case when one isolated collocation activity is placed in the books unrelated to the other activities on the same page or in the same context. Most exercises included in the different workbooks and in the revision sections of the textbooks typically consist of only one of the above described steps as these exercises are usually considered as revision of the already introduced and practiced collocational structures.

To put it in a nutshell, the various principles of effective collocation teaching thoroughly described in subchapter 4.2, are applied to differing degrees in the various coursebooks. Extracts from the coursebooks demonstrate that various exercises either display signs of one or even more of the five principles. Therefore, it can be concluded that all of the publishers make an effort and try to put TEFL theory into practice, at least to some extent. These attempts might be a good starting point; considering, however, that many of the exercises in the books do not conform to any of the described principles, one might say that these tries do not seem to be sufficient. Therefore, it can be said that the coursebooks could and need to be enhanced by including more activities applying the various principles of collocation teaching.

6.2.2.4 Treatment of de-lexicalized verbs

As de-lexicalized words such as *get*, *put*, *take* and *make* and *do* are claimed to be especially difficult for EFL learners (cf. chapter 3.2.2), the coursebooks have been analyzed with respect to the treatment of exactly these words in combination with their collocates. First, all the books have been investigated whether they contained exercises on de-lexicalized verbs and then the exercise formats have been scrutinized. Furthermore, the teacher's books have been scanned for theoretical suggestions and ideas on how to cope with the learning difficulties of the students with collocations of these particular verbs.

Apart from *MYW 6 SB*, *MYW 6 TRP* and *NH 5 WB*, all books (student's books and workbooks) contain at least one exercise aiming at practising collocations with de-lexicalized verbs. The exercise formats for practising collocations are dominated by matching and gap-filling exercises, comparable to the overall picture of the distribution of exercises seen in chapter 6.2.2.1. Table 4 shows which kind of exercises dealing with de-lexicalized verbs are included in the various coursebooks.

	matching	completion	odd-one out	independent use	total number
Laser B1 SB	1	1	-	-	2
Laser B1 WB	-	1	1	-	2
Laser B1+ SB	2	-	-	-	2
Laser B1+ WB	-	1	-	-	1
MYW 5 SB	1	-	-	1	2
MYW 5 TRP	-	1	-	-	1
MYW 6 SB	-	-	-	-	0
MYW 6 TRP	-	-	-	-	0
NH 5 SB	3	3	-	1	7
NH 5 WB	-	-	-	-	0
NH 6 SB	1	-	-	-	1
NH 6 WB	1	1	-	-	2

Table 4: Collocation exercises dealing with de-lexicalized verbs

Table 4 clearly demonstrates that, again, the two most widely used exercise formats when practising collocations with de-lexicalized verbs, are completion and matching tasks.

Particularly prominent amongst the de-lexicalized verb exercises are discrimination exercises between *make* and *do*. They are included in *MYW 5 SB/ TRP*, *NH 5 SB*, *NH 6 WB* and all four books of the *Laser*-series. This seems to be comparable to Woolard's (2000: 30) observation that "this particular *verb + noun* pattern has been recognised and given attention in most traditional EFL courses and coursebooks". He claims that *make/do* collocation exercises lend themselves perfectly for introducing the concept of collocations to the students (Woolard 2000: 30). I would go even further by claiming that with the help of *make/do* collocations one cannot only explain the concept of collocation, but the fundamental importance of these word combinations in producing precise language.

One should think that the workbooks follow the pattern of the student books and contain exercises for further practising the previously introduced language items.

This is, however, not the case in the *New Headway*-series. While *NH 5 SB* introduces the collocations of *make/do*, there is no extra exercise for it in the corresponding workbook. On the other hand, in the *NH 6 WB* there is a discrimination exercise for *make/do*, whereas this topic is not addressed in the equivalent student's book. Considering the principle of repetition, this might not be ideal for the memorization process and the retention of the introduced collocations with *make* or *do*. The integration of a further activity on *make/do*-distinction in the *NH 5 WB* would seem preferable in this respect.

Write the phrases in the correct box.
Some of them can go in more than one box.

a decision • someone a favour • a dream
part in something • a mistake • fun of someone
your homework • a bath • care of someone
an effort • an idea • a fuss • your best
pity on someone • up your mind
time to do something • the housework
a good/nice time • someone good • a holiday

MAKE ...
a decision

DO ...

HAVE ...

TAKE ...
a decision

The extract from *L B1 SB* in Figure 22 shows an exercise for practising collocations with the de-lexicalized verbs *make*, *do*, *have* and *take*. It is a typical matching exercise in which the appropriate nouns or noun phrases have to be matched with the verbs. It is presented in an isolated way without any further follow-up activity.

Figure 22: Matching exercise with de-lexicalized verbs (LB 1 SB 2008: 55)

Figure 23 displays a typical discrimination exercise between *make* and *do*. It is a combination of a matching and completion exercise. In a first step, nouns or noun phrases are matched with the correct verbs in the right column. In a second step, the whole collocations have to be filled into a gapped text, consisting of isolated, incoherent sentences in order to show the students how the complete collocations are used in context.

make and do

1 Add the words and phrases to the correct columns.

friends	the washing-up	up your mind	a course
me a favour	my best	a fortune	a noise

MAKE	DO
friends	

2 Complete the sentences with a phrase and *make* or *do* in the correct form.

- I _____ last night. It's your turn tonight.
- Please tell the children not to _____. I'm trying to work.
- I _____, but I still failed the exam.
- I don't know if I want the chicken or the fish. I just can't _____.
- My sister's very popular. She _____ very easily.
- Could you _____ and give me a lift to the station? Thanks.
- My grandfather _____ in business. He's a rich man.
- I'm going to _____ in Spanish before I go to Spain.

Figure 23: *make* and *do* exercise (NH 5 2007: 73)

6.2.2.5 Materials and resources for collocation teaching

Chapter 4.4 has pointed out that dictionaries, corpora and concordances are considered as valuable resources for teaching collocations. Furthermore, it has been explained that the inclusion of whole collocations instead of single words in the student's notebooks seems favourable. Concluding from the analysis here, it seems that this has not been recognized yet by EFL textbook designers. Some of the teachers' books give casual comments on the inclusion of collocations or 'phrases' in the student's notebooks (e.g. *L B1+ TB* 2011: 129 or *NH 5 TB* 2010: 18). However, there are no extra exercises included in which the writing of useful vocabulary notebook entries is practiced or addressed. Collocation dictionaries are not mentioned in any of the coursebooks, the same is true for corpora and concordances. Furthermore, only one reference to the use of a dictionary in relation to a collocation exercise can be found. In addition to a 'verb + noun' collocation exercise it is suggested that the use of dictionaries could be practiced if they were used for finding which one of the collocations in the exercise is the odd-one out (*NH 5 TB* 2010: 74). This clearly seems to show that recent developments in linguistic research on collocations have not yet been integrated into the books at hand.

6.3 Summary of the results

The dual approach of external and internal evaluation demonstrated that the claims made by the authors and the first impression of a coursebook do not always correlate with its actual contents of the coursebooks. The *Laser*-series, dealing quite overtly with collocations and using the term 'collocation' in its tables of contents, does not use the term 'collocation' in the metalanguage throughout its text- and workbooks. Furthermore, in terms of percentage, the *Laser*-books contain the fewest instances of collocation exercises. With regard to the *Make Your Way*-series one could conclude that no collocation exercises are included in the books by looking at the table of contents only. However, considering the outcomes of the quantitative analysis, the *MYW* student's books contain the most collocation exercises in terms of percentage. Moreover, it is claimed on the introductory pages of the *MYW* teacher's books that awareness-raising of collocational structures plays an important role in this coursebook series. Nevertheless, only one example of an exercise actively drawing

the students' attention to the phenomenon of collocations could be located throughout the text- and workbooks of the *MYW*-series (see Figure 17). Still, great similarities in the use of the term 'collocation' could be identified within the table of contents of the books and the metalanguage of the vocabulary exercises throughout the student's and work books. The term 'collocation' is not often used explicitly, neither in the table of contents nor in the instructions to the different collocation exercises throughout the three coursebook series.

The collocation exercise formats included in the three different coursebook series can be put into six categories. These six categories are not evenly distributed across the different series. While the *MYW*-series contains all six types of collocation exercises, the *Laser*-series only covers four of them. Furthermore, the results indicate that students' books are more varied with respect to collocation exercises than the corresponding workbooks and that the different coursebook series all emphasize different exercise types.

With respect to the application of the various collocation teaching principles, it can be concluded that all books include at least some of the principles of collocation teaching, but none of the books bases all of its exercises on all of the described principles. The inclusion of the widely supported principle of teaching collocations contrastively with the learner's L1 seems to be completely absent in all of the books. In the case of the globally published and used *Laser* and the *New Headway* series, this seems certainly comprehensible. However, the question remains why the *Make Your Way*-books which are only used in Austria do not refer to the learner's L1.

Furthermore, discrimination exercises between *make* and *do* and exercises on de-lexicalized verbs, which are widely included in nearly all of the coursebooks, seem to be perfect examples for the inclusion of many different principles. The principle of 'systematicity' is applied as two near-synonymous words are contrasted with the help of their collocational fields. Thereby, the danger of students getting them mixed up seems to be reduced. Furthermore, the principle of 'expanding the half-known' is pursued in these activities as the two verbs are usually known to the pupils from an early learning stage onwards and it is just the collocational range which is broadened by these discrimination exercises.

In terms of strategies, the investigation has focused on the application of explicit collocation teaching strategies while the application of implicit teaching strategies has been neglected due to the limited scope of this thesis. It could be shown that all the books at least partly pursue the explicit strategy of teaching collocations as they all include explicit collocation exercises. Furthermore, the books generally seem to rely more on the item-learning strategy rather than the rule-based strategy of teaching collocations, which is only restrictedly recommended for particular types of collocations. The strategy of 'raising awareness' is applied partly, but not to a great extent. Only few exercises claimed to be particularly useful for raising awareness are contained in the books and the metalanguage used does not seem to contribute to the consciousness-raising process. Terminology considering collocations seems to be simplified in all of the books. Collocation exercises are often not named as such, but subsumed under very general headings, not suggesting any relation to collocations at the first glance. Headings such as 'Working with words' rather suggest a concept based on words and do not help to make students aware of the fact that language does not only exist of single words put together, but of longer lexical chunks. In this respect, one could conclude that dealing more overtly with the term 'collocation' seems to be more profitable when it comes to raising the student's consciousness towards the concept.

Similar to the reluctance of using the term 'collocation' explicitly, the coursebooks refrain from including a lot of background information on the teaching or learning of collocations. Only little information on difficulties learners might have with certain aspects of collocation learning or suggestions on which strategies to use for specific types of collocations is included. A definition of collocations which goes beyond 'collocations are words that go together' seems to be completely omitted in all book series. In relation to the various definitions discussed in chapter 2 such a definition is not too precise. However, in teaching contexts, it seems to be appropriate as a "pedagogical [...] decision" (Conzett 2000: 74). It is often more important to reduce a definition to the most necessary points than to overwhelm students with a highly complicated linguistic definition of a phenomenon. Still, it can be assumed that a bit more information would be favourable, particularly in the teachers' books in order to provide them with some solid background knowledge they might then confidently base their teaching on.

Considering that the study of collocations only came up because of the rise of corpus studies, it seems remarkable that none of the books include any work on or even reference to corpora, concordances or collocation dictionaries. Concluding from the many suggestions in chapter 4.4, the wide range of corpus-based material seems to be beneficial for the learning of collocations. Therefore, it might be concluded, that all three coursebook series could be improved by adding some coursework on concordances, dictionaries, online dictionary resources and particularly collocation dictionaries.

Trying to reach a conclusion about which of the investigated books is best suitable for Austrian EFL learners concerning the teaching of collocations seems neither possible nor appropriate. Moreover, this has not been the objective of this thesis as it has been clearly stated in the beginning of this chapter. All of the books seem to include some good attempts and suggestions on collocation teaching, but still all of them seem to have some deficiencies in the one or other respect. Assuming that they are all not completely flawless when it comes to the consideration of TEFL theory about collocations, the implications for teaching seem to be obvious, no matter which of the books is chosen. In order to provide students with a wide variety of collocation practice and different helpful strategies the books will need to be supplemented by extra material on collocations. Suggestions for adapting and supplementing EFL coursebook materials will therefore be given in the next chapter.

7. Implications for teaching

“Until textbook writers address it explicitly, adding the study of collocation to the curriculum does require a little extra effort.”
Conzett (2000: 86)

Concluding from the EFL coursebook evaluation in chapter 6, the treatment of collocations in the various coursebooks does not always seem ideal and particular aspects described as valuable for the teaching of collocations are partly completely neglected. Therefore, as Conzett mentions above, teachers have to put in some extra effort in order to supply students with enough efficient collocation exercises. In this short chapter a few suggestions on useful exercise formats and on how the various textbooks can easily be complemented are presented.

7.1 Adaptation and supplementation of coursebook materials

As it has been claimed in chapter 5 already, EFL coursebooks are undoubtedly a valuable resource for teaching in general as well as for teaching collocations in particular. Lewis (1993: 180), for example, also states that students need some kind of guideline which is partly provided by coursebooks. At the same time, he affirms that coursebooks might, in some respects, also need adaption and supplementation. With regard to the investigated coursebooks this seems to be the case for the aspect of collocation, at least to some extent. Taiwo (2004) even clearly states that a coursebook alone “cannot possibly handle the complex nature of lexical collocations acquisition” and therefore other materials should be integrated into teaching collocations. So, according to him, a coursebook does not necessary have to be deficient in some way in order to be complemented by extra materials on collocations.

McGrath (2002: 60) claims as well that “if we are not wholly satisfied with what the coursebook has to offer we have a responsibility to do something about it.” He mentions two main reasons for adapting coursebook material. Adaptation is either needed if the material is deficient in some way or if the given material is not suitable for the circumstances of the teaching. Learners’ needs and interests need to be

taken into account as well as time constraints. (McGrath 2002: 64) In the case of the investigated coursebooks, I would argue that the materials on collocation are not necessarily deficient or not suitable. However, they seem to be incomplete in the sense that not all important principles of collocation teaching and suggestions for useful exercise are considered and that not enough space is devoted to beneficial strategies of collocation teaching.

According to McGrath (2002: 59) there are three main possibilities for adding to the coursebook:

- Adaption: extension or exploitation of the existing material
- Supplementation: new materials are introduced additionally
- Changing: more radical forms of adaptation, such as modifications to procedure or changes in context/ content

For the above stated reason that the exercises included in the analyzed coursebooks seem to be incomplete, the strategy of supplementation will be applied in the following additional material that can easily be integrated in every EFL classroom.

7.2 Suggestions for improvement

In this section concrete examples for exercises and activities focusing on neglected collocational aspects are provided.

7.2.1 Collocation grids

Collocational grids, described as highly appropriate for teaching collocations by Nesselhauf (2005: 267), are only included in two of the analysed books, namely in the two student's books of the *Make Your Way* series. These two collocational grids integrated there both focus on topic-based verb + noun collocations. Farrokh (2012: 67) describes collocational grids as suitable for demonstrating acceptable and highly likely collocations as well as restrictions on the collocability of words. She further claims that grids are particularly useful for raising learners' awareness of combinations of de-lexicalized verbs and nouns. As the investigated coursebooks do include a lot of exercises on de-lexicalized words, but none of them in form of a collocation grid, Activity 1 deals with de-lexicalized verbs in a collocation grid.

Activity 1:

Fill in the collocation grid dealing with common verb + noun collocations. Note that some nouns can collocate with more than one verb and vice versa!

	homework	a plan	advice	a call	a baby	a bath	a look	a photo
to make								
to do								
to take								
to get								
to give (sb)								
to have								

Table 5: Collocation grid with de-lexicalized verbs

As an optional follow up activity, students can be asked to brainstorm in groups or use (collocation) dictionaries to find as many different collocations with the de-lexicalized verbs as possible. Then they could take their favourite collocation with each of the verbs and write six sentences. The whole activity can be done alone or in pairs.

When filling in this collocational grid, the students might also differentiate between possible and highly probable combinations and mark them differently (one + for possible, two ++ for highly likely) with the help of a corpus or a dictionary or with the help of the 'resource teacher'.

Activity 2:

	weapon	drug	dose of a poison	wounds	danger	combat	enemies	blow	disease	poison	injuries	accident	mistake	step
fatal			+	+							+	+	+	+
deadly								+	+	+				
mortal				+	+	+	+	+	+		+			
lethal	+	+	+											

Figure 24: Collocation grid (Karoly 2005: 67)

A collocation grid like the one in Activity 2 might be used to demonstrate differences in use between near-synonymous words. Students simply might get the filled-in

collocation grid and write sentences or build up a story with the help of the thematically related collocations. It can also be left to be filled in by the students with the help of a collocation dictionary. Systematic teaching of near-synonymous words in combination with their collocates is advantageous as students learn how the near-synonyms are used correctly in different context and combinations.

The big advantage of collocation grids is that they can easily be expanded to cater for the students' needs. Collocation grids can include verb + noun or adjective + noun collocations interesting for a specific topic from the coursebook and will then present a pre-writing activity in order to provide the students with necessary language for their writing task. Furthermore, collocation grid activities can easily be adapted and expanded for any other purposes, such as practising collocations with de-lexicalized verbs as in Activity 1.

7.2.2 Awareness-raising activities

Many articles deal with the important issue of raising awareness of collocations as a first step for acquiring them. Different authors suggest that raising awareness is essential for the students' learning process (cf. chapter 4.1.2). However, only few of them give concrete suggestions of how to exactly raise consciousness and which exercises lend themselves for raising awareness. Furthermore, the investigated schoolbooks do not make any reference to consciousness-raising activities and only include a few of them. Therefore, some ideas for raising the learners' awareness towards collocations shall be given here.

As a kind of awareness-raising activity Woolard (2000: 32) suggests that teachers may add extra collocational exercises to reading texts in the coursebooks in order to activate collocational knowledge and point to the rich language chunks which can be found in those texts.

A very simple activity which can easily be integrated is taking an article or any other interesting and suitable text from the learners' coursebook and having students underline collocations they find important. This can be done as a starting activity for writing an essay and so provides students with necessary and essential language for

a specific topic, or just to raise the students' awareness to the many lexical chunks in the English language. An exercise could look like the following example based on a short newspaper article from *MYW 5 SB* (2010:16):

Activity 3:

Underline as many collocations as you can find in this text.

Female artists dominate the Grammys

The 52nd Annual Grammy Awards, which took place on January 31, 2010, at Staples Center in Los Angeles, California, were dominated by a trio of female artists: Superstar Beyoncé took home six Grammys, including Song of the Year award for "Single Ladies". 20-year-old country-pop princess Taylor Swift won four Grammys, including the prestigious Album of the Year award for "Fearless". New York's dance queen Lady Gaga, who put on a breathtaking performance of her hit song "Poker Face" (Best Dance Recording), won two awards.

The Ladies' night was interrupted only to a small extent by Southern rock band Kings of Leon. The four rock guys won three awards, including Record of the Year for "Use Somebody".

The Zac Brown Band won Best New Artist, and the Black Eyed Peas also won three awards.

A night full of sparkling performances of the current pop hits became more subdued when Michael Jackson's children Prince Michael and Paris walked hand-in-hand onstage to accept their dad's lifetime achievement award. In a touching speech they thanked the crowd and MJ's fans and promised to continue spreading their father's message of love. When they had finished, they and their father received a standing ovation.

A musical tribute was also paid to the legendary singer, in which Celine Dion, Usher, Jennifer Hudson and Smokey Robinson sang "Earth Song", one of MJ's biggest hits.

Figure 25: 'Female artists dominate the Grammys' (MYW 5 SB 2010: 16)

Possible answers might be:

to take place, to take home, a breathtaking/sparkling performance, a hit song, to win/accept an award, a lifetime achievement award, a touching speech, to receive a standing ovation, to pay tribute to somebody, a legendary singer

The instructions for texts like the one in Activity 3 can be easily varied depending on what the teachers plan to do with the text or on what they want to practice with the students. Some example instructions are given here:

- Underline all the 'verb + noun', 'verb + preposition', 'adjective + noun', 'adverb + adjective' collocations in the text.
- Underline all collocations you find particularly useful.
- Underline all collocations that are new to you.

If the exercise is used as preparation for writing an essay on the same topic, the students can be asked to underline all collocations they find relevant for writing about this topic.

As a prerequisite for all these guidelines the students should be familiar with the concept of collocations. Furthermore, a newspaper article or any other text rich in collocations can also be used to introduce the concept of collocations to the students. Hill, Lewis and Lewis (2000: 98) suggest having the learners underline all nouns in a text that they have already read for gist. Then, learners should underline the verbs which go before the nouns, if there are any. As a last step the whole collocation should be underlined when appropriate. In this systematic way learners realize that language consists of larger chunks and they might eventually stop breaking down the language into single words, i.e. they change from the 'open-choice principle' to the 'idiom principle' of language construction. Hill, Lewis and Lewis (2000: 98) recommend taking a short text for the introduction of the concept of 'collocation' and highlighting all the lexical chunks in the text in order to make clear how many there are.

Activities in which collocational errors have to be corrected are also said to raise the students' awareness of the importance of choosing the correct collocation, like Activity 4 taken from McCarthy and O'Dell (2005: 9).

Activity 4:

Correct the eight collocation errors in this text. Use a dictionary to help you if necessary.

In the morning I made some work in the garden, then I spent a rest for about an hour before going out to have some shopping in town. It was my sister's birthday and I wanted to do a special effort to cook a nice meal for her. I gave a look at a new Thai cookery book in the bookshop and decided to buy it. It has some totally easy recipes and I managed to do a good impression with my very first Thai meal. I think my sister utterly enjoyed her birthday.

7.2.3 L1-integration

With respect to the notable omission of a contrastive approach to collocations in EFL teaching materials Granger (1998: 159) remarks that

[f]or obvious commercial reasons, most EFL material is aimed at all learners, irrespective of their mother tongue. Given the essentially language-specific nature of prefabs, this is a major issue that must be addressed if we are serious about giving learners the most efficient learning aids.

As none of the books includes exercises focusing on the L1/L2-difference in collocations, teachers should think of integrating a more contrastive approach into their teaching on their own and to supplement the books with exercises focusing exactly on the difficulties German EFL learners may encounter. Therefore, in this section some concrete suggestions on how to integrate the L1 in the teaching of collocations are given.

Nesselhauf proposes that odd-one-out exercises are suitable for the teaching of collocations which are prone to be influenced by the learners' L1. A prerequisite for the usefulness of such activities is the inclusion of "deviations that actually occur in learner language" (Nesselhauf 2005: 271). Hill, Lewis and Lewis (2000: 107) give some incorrect example sentences candidates came up with in an exam and also Nesselhauf (2005: 184) gives some examples for German L1-interference errors from her learner corpus. Based on these examples the following exercise was designed:

Activity 5:
Mark and correct the mistakes in the following sentences by providing the correct collocations:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. If you want to lose weight, you need to make a diet.2. If you are too fat, you need to miss some weight.3. To improve your health you need to do some sacrifices.4. If you want to be really fit, you need to make more exercise.5. At the party yesterday I only talked small talk.6. We have to give a motive for closing the company down.7. In Brighton's clubs many young people consume drugs.8. In these deprived conditions it is hard for children to unfold their personality.9. Many women chose making career over having a baby.10. He is such a player. He always wants to win every girl's interest.
In order to make the detection of errors easier, the wrong expressions may be underlined or italicized.

Clearly, such an exercise would be even more profitable, if errors made by the students themselves were collected and then presented in an exercise like this or as Hill, Lewis and Lewis' (2000: 107) put it: "This type of exercise is particularly useful as feedback after learners have done a piece of written work".

Another activity proposed by Lewis (1997: 93) in order to raise awareness of differences in L1 and L2 collocations is Activity 6.

Activity 6:

Fill in the second column with an adjective which is opposite in meaning to the adjective in the first column and also makes a correct collocation with the word in the third column.

light	<i>dark</i>	green
light	<i>heavy</i>	suitcase
light	<i>heavy</i>	rain
light	<i>hard</i>	work

Now find the equivalent expressions in German.

Students here should notice that there are different opposites of 'light' depending on what words it is collocating with. Furthermore, by presenting students the correct collocations with the opposite words, inappropriate collocations like 'strong rain', directly translated from the German L1, might be inhibited. This, of course, can be done for many other English expressions as well.

7.2.4 Incorporation of corpora, concordances and dictionaries³⁰

We have seen from the analysis that corpora, concordances and even dictionaries are, unfortunately, completely neglected in the three investigated coursebooks series. Addressing a concordance or working with corpora should not be too difficult, as the internet is usually easily available and accessible in every school. However, students certainly need training in order to be able to use these electronic sources,

³⁰ For further information on how to use corpora and concordances usefully in class, the website below can be consulted. Suggestions on activities and exercises on corpora or concordances are given along with general information on corpora and concordancing programmes: http://www.ict4lt.org/en/en_mod2-4.htm (5.4.2013)

e.g. for running a concordance in an online corpus. Therefore, a simplified version of how to include authentic corpus material in class is presented in Activity 7, which was developed during a course at university by myself in order to demonstrate how a typical exercise in the lexical approach may look like:

Activity 7: *Make/ Do* discrimination exercise³¹

Students are given two pages of corpus extracts containing sentences with collocations both with *make* and *do*. They also get two mind maps displaying the words *make* and *do* in the middle of the page and cut-out strings displaying possible noun and noun phrase collocates. With the help of the corpus extracts they can find the right solutions. Another possibility would be to have the students do the matching first and only then hand out the corpus extracts for the students to check if their answers were correct.

Hill, Lewis and Lewis (2000: 99-106) provide many different activities for dictionary work, particularly for collocation dictionaries. The following two exercises are taken from this selection.

Activity 8: Find a better word

With the help of a collocation dictionary find better ways of expressing the following word combinations:

a new idea *a silly idea* *a very interesting idea*
an unusual idea *a nice idea* *a very good idea*

Possible answers would be, for example:

innovative, ridiculous, striking, bizarre, bright, imaginative

Activities like this also raise the students' awareness towards the many possibilities collocations give them in order to express precisely what they want to say. The same can be done with any word combinations such as *effect*, *change* or *problem* (Hill, Lewis & Lewis 2000: 100).

³¹ All the materials needed for this activity can be found in the appendix of this thesis.

Activity 9: Near synonyms

Two or more words with similar meaning are contrasted with the help of their collocational fields. In order to clearly see the difference in use between these two words, as an example, *wound* vs. *injury* can be taken or for more advanced learners a group of words with near-synonymous meaning like *mistake*, *error*, *fault*, *problem* and *defect*. The learners are then asked to look for verb and adjective collocates of these words.

As a second step, the learners may translate some of the newly found collocations into their L1 as “this will help learners build an understanding of how English words are used” (Hill, Lewis & Lewis 2000: 102).

This activity perfectly conforms to three principles of collocation teaching. The principle of ‘systematicity’ is considered as near-synonymous words are contrasted with the help of their collocational range. Furthermore, half-known words are expanded by adding collocates to already known node words and the L1 contrast is also addressed.

Conzett (2000: 76) also gives a few suggestions on how to adapt coursebooks in relation to the inexistence of collocations in coursebooks. She suggests having the students accomplish the usually bilingual wordlists in their books by constantly adding collocations to the words learned. The collocations can be supplied by the teacher, if he or she is confident enough, or students might address corpora or collocation dictionaries for help.

This collection of suggestions for including extra material and for supplementing the investigated coursebooks is not claimed to be complete. The exercises presented here are rather considered as ideas and suggestions for what might be possible in collocation teaching. Hill, Lewis and Lewis (2000), for example, give many other profitable suggestions for teaching of collocations which can easily be integrated into an EFL classroom for extending the collocational input from the coursebooks. To conclude this chapter with a quote, Hill, Lewis and Lewis (2000: 116) state:

Although writing exercises can be very frustrating, it is one of the best ways you can yourself develop a clearer understanding of collocation and in turn help your learners to notice, record and learn language from the texts they read in a way which builds their mental lexicons efficiently and systematically.

Hence, designing extra collocation activities does not only help the students, but the teacher as well in order to build up a solid knowledge and awareness of collocations.

8. Conclusion

The teaching of lexis in general and phraseology in particular has only recently gained more importance in TEFL research. Particularly the teaching of collocations has been widely neglected in favour of the longstanding tradition to focus on grammar. This present diploma thesis has tried to contribute to the research on collocation teaching and coursebooks. It can be divided into a theoretical and a practical part.

First, this paper has provided an overview of the controversy about defining and classifying collocations. No consensus has been reached yet as to how collocations can be defined. In this respect, it has been concluded that it is more important to make a pedagogical decision and decide what is important in the context of this thesis in order to arrive at an appropriate working definition of 'collocations'. The lexical approach by Michael Lewis, which finally gave rise to a more lexically-based syllabus, has been reviewed in contrast to earlier, mostly grammar-based approaches to TEFL. Furthermore, the differences in collocation use between native and non-native speakers have been addressed and explained on the basis of Sinclair's (1987) 'idiom principle'. Various studies on the collocational competence of EFL learners have been analyzed. The results demonstrate that EFL learners' collocational competence often lags behind their general language competence and that even very advanced learners have serious issues with using appropriate and native-like collocations. Furthermore, important reasons for teaching and learning collocations have been discussed. In a next step, different publications on effective teaching of collocations have been summarized with regard to the use of different strategies of teaching collocations and principles of collocation teaching. It is widely agreed that all of the millions of English collocations neither can nor have to be taught. Therefore, comprehensible selection criteria for deciding which collocations are important for TEFL have been provided. Moreover, various teaching resources and exercise formats particularly suggested as useful for the teaching of collocations have been discussed.

Since lexis in general and phraseology in particular are considered an important part of the Austrian AHS curriculum as well as the CEFR, an analysis of teaching material

forms the latter part of this thesis. The analysis of three different EFL coursebook series widely used throughout Austria aims to shed light on the current treatment of collocations in EFL teaching materials. Generally the different books seem to pursue similar trends when it comes to the variety of exercise formats and the practice material of collocations. Terminology concerning collocations seems to be simplified in all of the books and all of the authors refrain from providing extensive definitions as well as theoretical suggestions on the teaching of collocations. Furthermore, some principles and strategies are considered in all of the books, while others, like the strategy of raising awareness or the principle of 'L1 contrast', are widely neglected.

It can therefore be concluded that although collocations play an increasing role in EFL language research, EFL coursebooks still lag behind with their treatment of collocations. The implications for teaching therefore seem to be clear. In order to provide students with fully comprehensible and effective materials for learning collocations, the coursebooks need to be supplemented with extra material, particularly when it comes to awareness-raising and learning difficulties because of L1 interference.

Since the scope of a diploma thesis is limited, it was only possible to provide a brief overview of previous research on the teaching of collocations. Furthermore, the selection of coursebooks and exercises for the empirical part of this thesis could not be overly extensive. Additional corpus-based analyses of the here selected and other Austrian EFL coursebooks might yield different results on the treatment of collocations. In the future, it would also be interesting to investigate extra EFL course materials available for the investigated books on accompanying CDs or on the internet in order to see if and what kind of additional collocation exercises are included in these media.

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APPENDIX

Words in context

In your group, find the collocations with **do** and **make**.
The examples below are taken from the BNC (British National Corpus), which can be found online: <http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/>

Brownie Owl continued: 'I think Farmer Bolsover is mostly afraid that we might do damage to his crops by not keeping to the paths, or taking a fancy to the fruit in his orchard.'

'My wife used to do the gardening at home.

But you must make an effort since there is no way the ferret can free itself.

My job could be at stake if I make an error of judgment.'

As managers, we hope that they will do the right thing.

'Do me a great favour, Peg.'

Make a decision on whether or not you like your negative qualities.

Which means when you do business with ANZ you can be sure of dealing with the same bank at both ends of the transaction.

Does this mean we should sit back and do nothing?

If a woman can make an excuse for a man she loves and wants to hang on to, she will.

When the cheers and the clapping had died down at last, Don Mini stood up to make a speech.

'I am thrilled,' said Marcelle, 'I did not think it would be as easy as this to make friends with an English gentleman.'

My brothers didn't have to do housework!

I remember coming home from school and before you could do homework or go out to play there were always chores to do — you know, our own set of chores.

I never saw anyone make a cup of tea (nobody drinks coffee, it's too expensive) or smoke a cigarette without offering the same to everyone else.



'I'm only saying, why not take a bit more time before you make up your mind?

She phoned up the doctors and said she'd make an appointment for me.

Do this outside in case you make a mess.

'Henri will be home for his supper at six o'clock and I have to do the shopping.'

If I make a promise to you in return for your supplying me with three, quite useless, chocolate wrappers, which I will instantly throw away, there is a perfectly good contract provided that the promise was seriously intended (below, p. 205).

Don't do your hair too elaborately.

'Bear with me a moment while I make a phone call.'

Erm, that carried on for a while, I thought I was doing very very well, being able to do a job like that.

If you make a mistake with Word, right, then you can always undo it, right, if you ever make a mistake don't panic cos you can always undo it but you only get the one chance if you go on working then you can't undo it.

But for the sake, I think we have to make an exception, perhaps in Joe's case, because he actually is a musician as well.

It can't be all fun being Princess Diana, but at least she doesn't have to do the ironing, clean the bathroom, cut the grass or do the supper.

Oh well I'd better go and do the dishes I think.

And then I usually have to do the washing up as well.

I'd just like to tell you, that when you do something wrong, they never figure you out, and when you do something right, they make you do something wrong.

Do you think, in fact, Michael, that, that parents actually can do harm to their children by insisting on being involved in their teaching at too early a stage, for example by forcing their children to read?

I think if I make a cake today I I'd rather put sultanas in.

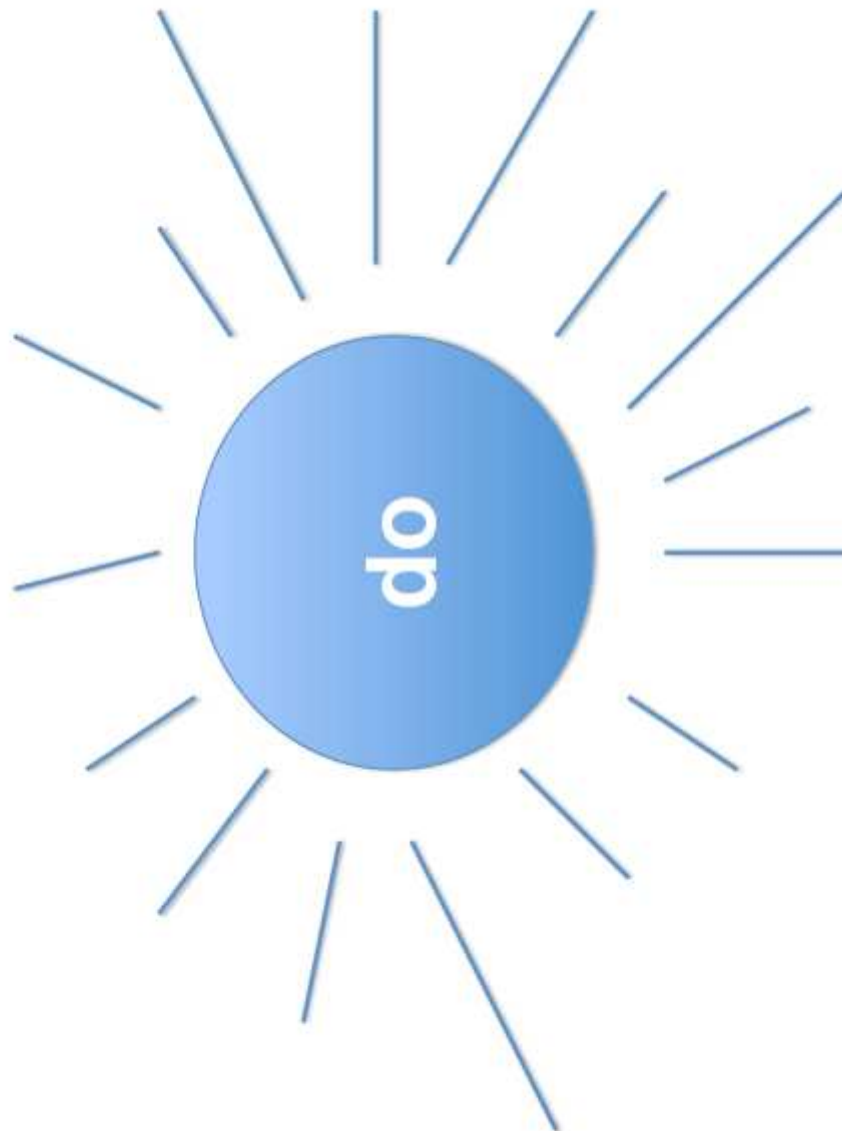
Source: www.bnc.bl.uk (June 9, 2012)



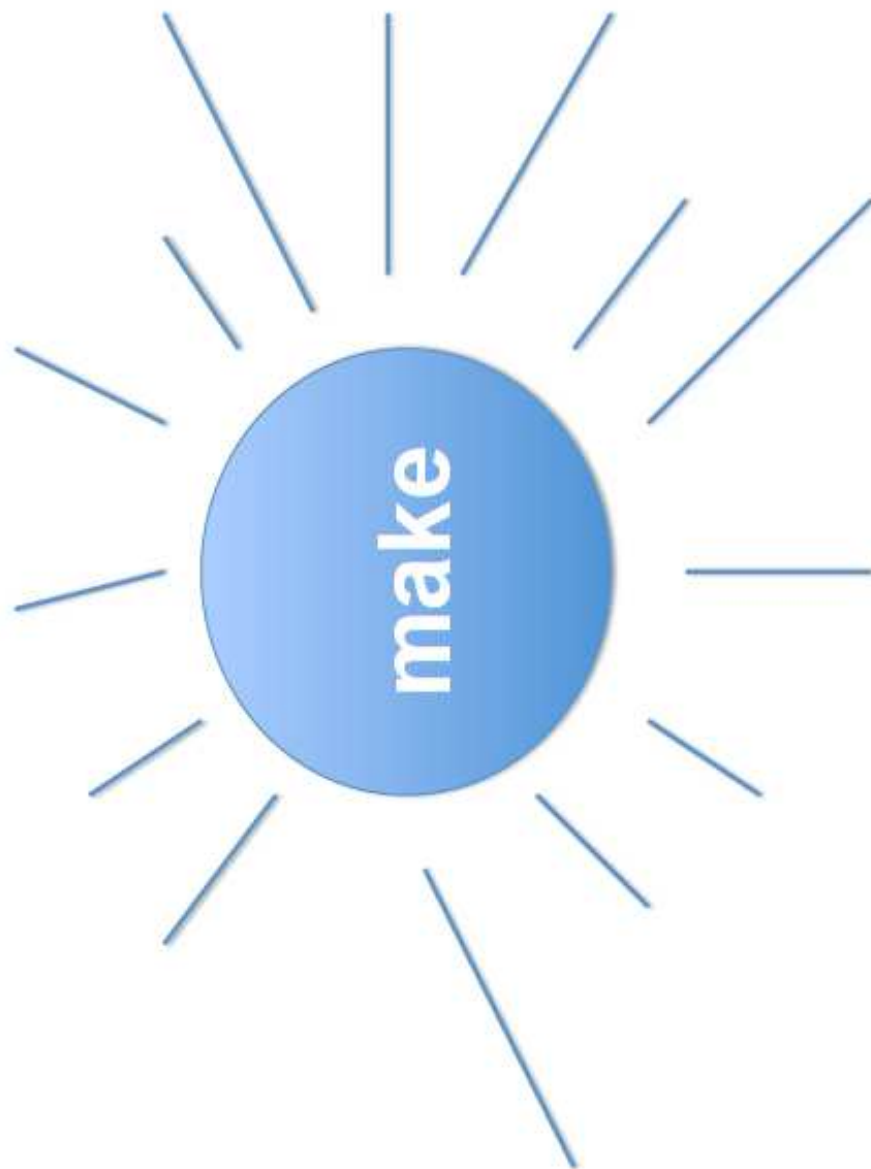
Collocates for MAKE and DO. Print and cut.

damage	an error
the gardening	a cake
harm	an exception
sth. wrong/ right	a mistake
the washing- up	a phone call
the ironing	a promise
a job	a mess
one's hair	up one's mind
the shopping	an appointment
homework	cup of tea
housework	friends
nothing	a speech
business	an excuse
a great favour	a decision
the right thing	an effort

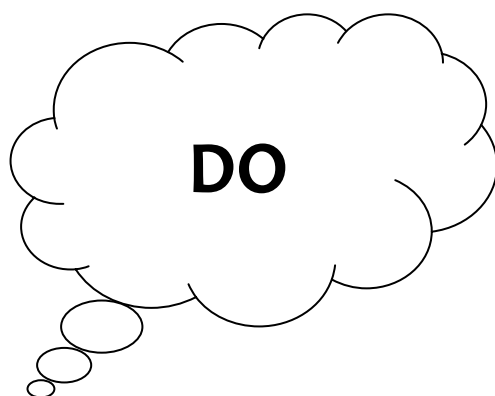
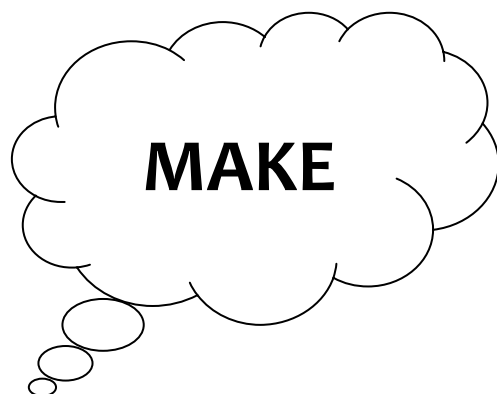
Mind map for DO



Mind map for MAKE



Students' handout for noting down the collocations.



Abstract: English

This thesis is concerned with the teaching of collocations in EFL classrooms and their treatment in EFL coursebooks. The aim of this paper is to give insights into how recent TEFL theory on teaching collocations is incorporated into three recent upper-secondary EFL coursebooks widely used in Austria. Collocations in Austrian EFL coursebooks have not been the focus of research yet, which is where this study seeks to contribute.

The theoretical section gives a rather detailed overview of previous research on the teaching and learning of collocations. The discussion of the various definitions and classification systems of collocations shows that in linguistic research no consensus has been yet reached on how to define collocations. On the basis of various studies on learners' collocation use it is demonstrated that non-native speakers often have considerable difficulties with using collocations correctly as they tend to rely more on the 'open choice' rather than the 'idiom' principle. In addition, the relevance of collocations for ELF learners is pointed out. Furthermore, different strategies for teaching collocations and principles of collocation teaching are summarized. Based on the assumption that not all collocations can be taught, selection criteria of essential collocations for teaching are examined. Moreover, valuable resources and useful exercise formats for teaching collocations are introduced.

The empirical part is based on an external and internal evaluation of the three EFL coursebook series *Laser*, *Make Your Way* and *New Headway* used in Austria. The dual approach of evaluation shows that the claims made by the authors do not automatically correlate with the actual contents of the books. On the basis of close scrutiny of explicit collocation exercises the integration of strategies and principles of collocation teaching along with the incorporation of suggested exercise formats is investigated. Although many of the theoretical suggestions are partly considered in the coursebooks, there seems to be a strong need for further activities on awareness-raising, L1 contrast and activities focusing on dictionary and corpora use. Therefore, some ideas on how to supplement the present coursebooks with efficient materials for collocation teaching are provided.

Abstract: German

Die vorliegende Arbeit beschäftigt sich mit dem Lehren von Kollokationen und deren Aufarbeitung in Schulbüchern für den englischen Fremdsprachenunterricht. Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es, Einblicke in die Umsetzung linguistischer Forschungsergebnisse in drei aktuellen, vielfach verwendeten Englischschulbüchern der österreichischen AHS-Oberstufe zu geben. Kollokationen in österreichischen Englischschulbüchern wurden bisher noch nicht wissenschaftlich untersucht, wozu diese Arbeit beitragen will.

Der theoretische Teil bietet einen detaillierten Überblick über die Erforschung des Lehrens und Lernens von Kollokationen. Die Diskussion verschiedener Definitionen und Klassifikationssysteme zeigt, dass in der linguistischen Forschung noch kein Konsens über die genaue Definition von Kollokationen erzielt werden konnte. Anhand verschiedener Studien über den Gebrauch von Kollokationen Lernender wird erläutert, dass SchülerInnen oftmals erhebliche Schwierigkeiten haben Kollokationen richtig anzuwenden, weil sie sich scheinbar eher auf das ‘open-choice principle’ als auf das ‘idiom principle’ verlassen. Ferner wird die Relevanz von Kollokationen für Englischlernende deutlich gemacht. Überdies werden verschiedene Strategien und Prinzipien des Lehrens von Kollokationen zusammengefasst. Basierend auf der Annahme, dass nicht alle Kollokationen gelehrt werden können, werden Kriterien für die Selektion wichtiger Kollokationen untersucht. Außerdem werden besonders nützliche Hilfsmittel und sinnvolle Übungsformate für das Lehren von Kollokationen vorgestellt.

Der empirische Teil beruht auf einer externen und internen Evaluation der drei in Österreich verwendeten englischen Schulbuchserien *Laser*, *Make Your Way* und *New Headway*. Der duale Forschungsansatz offenbart, dass die Behauptungen der Autoren nicht durchgehend mit den tatsächlichen Inhalten der Bücher übereinstimmen. Anhand einer detaillierten Analyse der expliziten Kollokationsübungen wird die Integration von Strategien und Grundlagen des Lehrens von Kollokationen sowie von empfohlenen Übungsformaten dargestellt. Einige dieser theoretischen Anregungen werden in den Kursbüchern ansatzweise umgesetzt. Dennoch scheinen weitere Übungen, die das Bewusstsein für Kollokationen steigern, sowie Übungen, die auf den Unterschied englischer

Kollokationen zu denen der Muttersprache hinweisen und Aufgaben, die sich mit der Verwendung von Wörterbüchern und Korpora beschäftigen, benötigt zu werden. Infolgedessen werden einige Ideen zur Erweiterung der vorliegenden Schulbücher mit effizienten Materialien um Kollokationen zu lehren dargestellt.

Non-plagiarism declaration

To the best of my knowledge and belief, I hereby declare that I have written this paper in English by myself and that it does not involve plagiarism. All quotations and paraphrased passages from other authors have been properly marked within the text and all sources used have been acknowledged in the bibliographical references. Furthermore, I have not previously submitted this work or any version of it for assessment at any other university or institution in Austria or abroad.

Vienna, June 2013

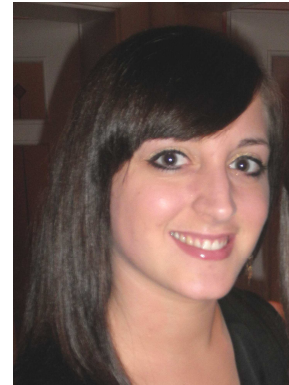


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