Book reviews

Annelies Häcki Buhofer, Marcel Dräger, Stefanie Meier, Tobias Roth: *Feste Wortverbindungen des Deutschen. Kollokationenwörterbuch für den Alltag* [Fixed multi-word expressions of German. Collocation dictionary for everyday use]. Tübingen: Francke Verlag, 2014. 1003 pp. ISBN 978-3-7720-8522-2.

Since collocations (fully or partly fixed word combinations) are usually placed somewhere between free word combinations, on the one hand, and idiomatic expressions, on the other, they have never been considered – as for the German language – possible entries either in traditional dictionaries or in collections of idioms and proverbs. Hence, lexicographers and scholars conducting their research in the field of phraseology repeatedly emphasized that there was an urgent need for a collocation dictionary of German (cf. Ettinger 1977: 151; Hausmann 1985: 123; Reder 2006: 224). The first important step toward realizing this desideratum was made in 2011, when a collocation dictionary edited by Uwe Quasthoff was published. Quasthoff used a corpus-driven approach, estimating the word co-occurrence frequencies in large corpora compiled at the Institute of Informatics, University of Leipzig. The result was a volume containing more than 3200 frequently used nouns, verbs and adjectives (base words) and their collocational partners (collocators).

In the meantime, a research team at the University of Basel was working on a project called *Feste Wortverbindungen des Deutschen. Kollokationenwörterbuch für den Alltag* [Fixed multi-word expressions of German. Collocation dictionary for everyday use]. The final outcome of this enterprise was a collocation dictionary of German published by Francke Verlag in Tübingen in autumn of 2014. The editors' main goal was to help both learners and native speakers of German compose correct and stylistically adequate texts by choosing the right word combinations. In other words, the editors aimed to create a useful linguistic tool not only for language learners and their teachers, but also for authors, translators and language editors – for all those, who want their texts to sound as authentic and natural as possible (p. x).

As the title reveals, the dictionary is intended for everyday use. Therefore, it contains about 2000 frequently used German nouns, verbs and adjectives with the corresponding collocations. This so-called basic vocabulary of German was established by means of an analysis and comparison of several already existing learners' vocabularies.[1] The editors applied corpus-driven approaches in order to

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[1] The list of all learners' vocabularies considered during establishing the basic vocabulary list used for the purposes of the dictionary can be accessed on the project's homepage: http://colloc.germa.unibas.ch/web/projekt/basiswortschatz/.

determine the most frequent collocations for the previously selected 1165 nouns, 495 verbs and 326 adjectives. For this purpose, they used large corpora including a wide range of genres. Besides, they considered not only text sets representing the Standard German language used in Germany, but also Swiss and Austrian corpora, thus obtaining useful information about different national varieties of Standard German.[2] In a further step, the computer-generated list of word co-occurrences and their frequencies was evaluated. After this process 95'000 'commonly used' collocations were selected to be codified in the dictionary (p. xix).

The editors' decision to also list some frequently used compound words might appear a disputable one, but only at first glance. Compounds, just as collocations, consist of more than one word and are (mostly) fully fixed. In this regard, both linguistic phenomena are very similar. Therefore, compounds cannot be completely excluded while editing a collocation dictionary. This is particularly true for the German language, which is known to be extremely rich in compounds.

The structure of the dictionary entries is very clear, which makes the volume easy to use. Each headword (a noun, verb or adjective) is followed by several relevant collocations. The collocations are arranged in categories according to the type of the collocator. For instance, in the case of a noun being the headword, one can usually find five main groups of possible collocational partners, namely adjectives and adverbs, verbs, nouns, phrases and compound nouns:

> **Gruß** m
> ADJEKTIVE/ADVERBIEN
> ■ **letzter** G. [...] | **kurzer** G.[...]
> VERBEN
> ■ [...] jmdm. einen Gruß **ausrichten** [...] | jmdm. Grüße **senden** [...]
> NOMEN
> ■ **Grüße** und Wünsche [...]
> PHRASEN
> ■ **freundliche** Grüße (Grußformell im Schriftverkehr, formell) [...]
> ZUSAMMENSETZUNGEN
> ■ **Willkommensgruß** | **Abschiedsgruß** ■ **Grußformel** | **Grußkarte**
> (p. 362)

Within each category the semantically related collocations are organized into smaller units. The adjectives describing a nice, sunny weather and those depicting a really bad weather are codified in two separate groups, to name an example (see p. 947).

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2 The list of the corpora used in the course of the project work can be accessed here: http://colloc.germa.unibas.ch/web/projekt/korpus/.

If a headword has several meanings, the collocations are arranged according to the different meanings. For instance, the German word *Heft* can mean both an issue of a newspaper/magazine and a small book used mostly by students for taking notes. The collocations for these two different meanings are listed in two separate groups (see pp. 380–381).

However, codifying the most common collocations of German was only one of the editors' main objectives. Aside from that, they aimed to help the dictionary users choose the most suitable word combinations and utilize them properly in their texts. For this purpose, they included example sentences, illustrating the way a collocation can be integrated into a particular context:

> **reinigen**
> VERBEN
> ■ etw. r. und **desinfizieren** *Wenn Sie von einem Hund gebissen wurden, müssen Sie die Wunde sofort reinigen und desinfizieren.*
> (p. 669)

Whenever several alternatives occur, the variants that are preferably used in everyday speech are marked with a ◊ sign:

> **Geschwindigkeit** f
> ADJEKTIVE/ADVERBIEN
> [...] erhöhte | hohe◊ | überhöhte | enorme G. [...]
> (p. 329)

The dictionary also provides information about possible stylistic or regional restrictions in the use of the collocations listed:

> **laufen**
> [...]
> ADJEKTIVE/ADVERBIEN/NOMEN
> [...] **sauber** l. (informell) [...]
> (p. 492)

> **Soße** f
> [...]
> ZUSAMMENSETZUNGEN
> [...] **Rahmsoße** A CH | **Sahnesoße** D [...]
> (p. 756)

As can be seen from these examples, the editors certainly fulfilled their objective of providing helpful additional information, which enables the dictionary users

to pick the best possible collocation and to integrate it adequately in the given context.

The dictionary is accompanied by a 'Supplement for self-study and use in the classroom' (*Beiheft für Selbsstudium und Unterricht*), which contains frequently used collocations from the semantic domain of 'Everyday life', an explanation of their meaning(s), several example sentences and a couple of exercises. The topics covered by the supplement include: 'Family', 'Food and drink', 'Health' and 'Weather'. In addition, on the dictionary's homepage the users are given free access to two more supplements with collocations from the semantic domains of 'Social life' (*Gesellschaft*) and 'Communication' (*Kommunikation*)[3]. Although it is not quite obvious why the editors chose to elaborate on these particular topics, the supplements are without any doubt of great help to give learners of German a better understanding of how collocations function in everyday speech.

To conclude, the collocation dictionary edited by Annelies Häcki Buhofer, Marcel Dräger, Stefanie Meier and Tobias Roth is a must-have for all those who are eager to improve their language skills, regardless of whether they are native speakers or learners of German. By not merely listing commonly used collocations, but by also showing how they can be naturally integrated into a text, this dictionary constitutes a unique work in the field of German lexicography. As such, it deserves high appreciation and the most heartfelt recommendations.

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3 The two additional supplements can be accessed here: http://colloc.germa.unibas.ch/web/media/cms_page_media/41/Beiheft_Gesellschaft.pdf and http://colloc.germa.unibas.ch/web/media/cms_page_media/41/Beiheft_Kommunikation.pdf.

Kateřina Šichová: *Mit Händen und Füßen reden. Verbale Phraseme im deutsch-tschechischen Vergleich* ['Mit Händen und Füßen reden'. A contrastive approach to verbal phraseological units in German and Czech] (Deutsch im Kontrast 27). Tübingen: Julius Groos Verlag/Stauffenburg, 2013. 435 pp. ISBN 978-3-87276-892-6.

This monograph is a revised version of the author's 2010 doctoral dissertation (submitted at the University of Regensburg, Germany), published as a part of the *Deutsch im Kontrast* [German in contrast] series by the *Institut für deutsche Sprache Mannheim*. It investigates both general questions and methodological issues that are connected to performing a contrastive inter-linguistic analysis of phrasemes. It also discusses issues related to the analysis of individual phraseological units. Thereby, Šichová uses a definition of phraseological units that is predominantly based on theoretical assumptions outlined by Čermák (2007).

The book is divided into two parts. The first part gives a thorough description of the previously applied approaches and the current state of the art. On the basis of this review the author then proposes her own comprehensive model for performing such an analysis. The viability of the proposed model is immediately tested on the basis of the carefully selected material of 500 German verbal phrasemes containing 'somatisms' (words related to body parts). In the second part of the book, the interested reader finds a complete list of the investigated phrasemes and their (partial) equivalents. This part also includes information on how they were classified, which enables a re-validation of the results.

How did the author proceed? As for the selection of her material, Šichová identified all dictionary entries referring to body parts, body organs or body products (called 'somatisms') in selected dictionaries. After compiling a comprehensive list of somatisms, she linked the selected nouns to phrasemes that contain the respective expressions and that are attested in dictionaries (some phrasemes were added on the basis of her introspection and corpora research). Having done this for both languages in question (German and Czech), she conducted a survey – both among native speakers and in language corpora – as to the actual usage of the identified phrasemes. This procedure generated the above-mentioned list of 500 generally used German phrasemes containing somatisms. The list excludes regional variants, archaic and highly literary phrasemes as well as phraseological units that contain vulgar somatisms, such as *Arsch* (arse). These reductions are based on the author's deliberate decision to investigate neutral, unmarked language only. The 500 phrasemes were taken as the foundation for her analysis and were then contrasted to the 375 phrasemes containing somatisms that the author identified for Czech. For each of the 500 German phrasemes her aim was to find – wherever possible – the phraseologically-bound Czech counterpart also

containing a somatism. When such an equivalent was not available, Šichová looked for a functional counterpart – a phraseme with the same meaning.

The crucial decision to be taken in contrastive analysis concerns the delineation of the *tertium comparationis*: Šichová chooses to assign the main importance to the meaning of the individual phraseme (in German). At the same time, she does not neglect structural and lexical differences among the identified Czech-German semantic counterparts – they form additional criteria for her categorization. In Chapter 5.2 ('*Ein neues Modell für den phraseologischen Vergleich*') the author gives a detailed overview of the four steps that she identifies as necessary for her new model of contrastive phraseological analysis. After the first step – a semantic analysis investigating the nuanced meaning of the given phraseme – the analysis of its (morpho-syntactic) structure – step two – and individual lexical components –step three – is performed. The contrastive procedure is concluded by step four: the identification of equivalence type. In Chapter 5.3 ('*Typologie der Äquivalenz – exemplarische Analyse*'), which is rich in examples and insightful discussions of various borderline cases, the author proposes the following categorization. Full equivalence includes phrasemes that resemble one another with regard to their meaning, structure and lexical components to such a degree that they may be viewed as synonymous, whereas partial equivalence is defined not only with respect to the categories of structure and lexis as such, but also with respect to their so-called relational scope (*relationeller Bereich*), covering anything from difference in frequency to the occurrence of monocollocable lexemes.

At this point one of the most interesting aspects of the model proposed by Šichová needs to be drawn attention to: the author is very consistent in her application of Korhonen's (2007) arguments that for the sake of phraseological comparison it is not necessary to take into account regular typological, system-inherent inter-linguistic differences. On pages 165–166 therefore Šichová provides a list of the most significant structural features that are to be ascribed to Czech-German differences in language typology and thus do not present a hindrance to full equivalence (e.g. the number of cases: 7 in Czech, 4 in German; lack of the use of articles in Czech; the different realization of negation, etc.). At the same time, she does not forget to mention the same phenomenon found on the lexical level: several somatisms are referred to by two lexemes in one language, while having only one equivalent in the other (e.g. *Fuß/Bein* in German having the Czech counterpart *noha*, meaning both 'leg' and 'foot').

The above-mentioned chapters, 5.2 and 5.3, are the ones that will be of interest to the widest readership as they present a comprehensive, clear and applicable approach to contrastive phraseological analysis. The following chapters, 5.4

('*Auswertung des Vergleichs*') and 5.5 ('*Interpretation der Ergebnisse*'), will be of interest predominantly to scholars doing research in the field of Czech-German contrastive linguistics. However, Chapter 5.4 is a great source of inspiration for future research since it shows the exact implementation of the proposed method, and Chapter 5.5 poses two very important questions: i) whether somatic phrasemes form a specific microsystem (which draws on Čermák (2007)) and ii) whether the analysis of more languages would reveal that the high level of equivalence of phraseological units containing somatisms – which can be identified for the two languages in question – is a language independent category that is not explicable by the areal theory and the hundreds of years of close contact between Czech and German.

There are only a few minor comments to be made regarding some specific decisions taken by the author. For example, the decision to list Czech phrasemes containing the verb *to be* with its literary form *být* rather than the more widely used colloquial *bejt* is disputable since many Czech phrasemes attested in the book otherwise make use of colloquial morphology (e.g. *být s nervama hin*). Given the structure of the book, it would also be helpful to more clearly indicate in the table of contents where the specifications that concern the *relationeller Bereich* and language-typological observations can be found. This seems of particular relevance in the light of the new model that the book proposes.

This book is of major interest to scholars working in the field of contrastive linguistics, phraseography and Czech-German studies. It provides a significant contribution to methodological issues connected to the contrastive analysis of phraseological units while taking into account typological differences and integrating structural (formal) and stylistic (pragmatic) features into a viable holistic model. In addition, the comprehensive list of Czech-German phraseological counterparts provides superb phraseo-didactic material that certainly deserves finding its readership.

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