

allowed to be combined with the base; the selection is shaped by usage, by the conventions in the community of speakers. The kind of restriction observed in idioms is different: the constituent elements are reciprocally chosen; they exhibit a bidirectional relationship (Penadés, 2012).

Although there is an almost absolute agreement that collocations cannot be treated as typical phraseological units (i.e. they cannot form part of the central area of phraseology), there is some disagreement over the question of whether, or not, they can be classified as phraseological expressions at all. Bosque (2001) argues strongly against the treatment of collocations as phraseological expressions. In his opinion, collocations do not belong to the periphery of phraseology; they belong to the interface of lexis and grammar. Thus, he rejects the idea that syntax is hopeless to account for collocations. On the contrary, collocations in Bosque's opinion can be derived from syntactical rules.

## CONCLUSION

The rationale for the topic of this dissertation has been the observation that the growth of the domain of phraseology in the last three decades has come at the price of an increasing level of indeterminacy in the delimitation of its research object. This indeterminacy affects several aspects of phraseological research being the use of terminology and the definition of key concepts one of the most important ones. By contrasting the relation between prototypical elements and peripheral ones, that is, between idioms and collocations, we have found out that the borderline that lies behind their delimitation is unclear. Rather, we should think of them as part of a *continuum* for which there is no deep-rooted reason to state at which point idioms do start and collocations really finish.

The growth of phraseology has also brought about confusion giving way to an object of research that has become more and more indeterminate. There is an alarming lack of resolution over what constitutes a phraseological unit, where phraseology begins and where it ends, or what lies within its remit and what lies beyond it. These questions have received multiple answers. Indeed, with the expansion of the domain of phraseology, it has become more difficult to answer these questions. Inevitably, the growth of phraseology must come at the price of indeterminacy and the most sensible solution is gradation.

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