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to Selected Texts of Margaret Wise Brown

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THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ  
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**Discourse Study of Collocation with Reference to  
Selected Texts of Margaret Wise Brown**

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## Abstract

Native speakers can intuitively recognize the difference between text and non-text. Text, as they know, is not mere a collection of words used randomly, rather it is a form in which its parts are related to each other due to recognizable means. Accordingly, Halliday and Hasan (1976) stress the presence of an important element that contributes in achieving such relations- relations among parts of texts- and this element is called **cohesion**. Cohesion encompasses two kinds of devices: grammatical and lexical cohesion. Lexical cohesion in its turn is achieved through reiteration and collocation; collocation is the main concern of the study.

In the course of this study, Margaret Wise Brown's children's short stories are analysed depending on Halliday and Hasan's model to discover the way collocation is used. The study aims at 1) studying the essential role of cohesion in building up text, 2) analysing collocation which is one of cohesive devices in selected texts, and 3) investigating the types of collocation.

The study has reached to the conclusion that collocational devices are dealt with differently in the texts depending on the theme and the idea of the texts.

## الخلاصة

ان الناطقون بلغة الام يستطيعون فطرياً أن يميزوا بين النص و اللانص. ان النص كما يعرفونه ليس مجرد مجموعة من الكلمات المستعملة بشكل اعتباطي بل هو شكل مترابط الأجزاء و أجزاءه تترايط مع بعضها لوجود عنصر معين. طبقاً لذلك, أكد هاليداي و حسن في عام ١٩٧٦ على وجود عنصر مهم يساهم في تحقيق هكذا علاقات و يسمى هذا العنصر بالتماسك (Cohesion). يتطلب تحليل أي نص الاهتمام للحقيقة بأن التماسك يشمل نوعيين من الأدوات: الأدوات النحوية (Grammatical Cohesion) و الأدوات الدلالية (Lexical Cohesion), كل واحدة تنقسم بدورها الى أدوات فرعية أخرى. يعتبر التماسك الدلالي المبدأ الأساسي للدراسة الحالية و هو ينقسم الى نوعيين هما التكرار (Repetition) و المصاحبة (Collocation) و يتركز هدف الدراسة حول تحليل المصاحبة.

في سياق هذه الدراسة، يتم تحليل اثنين من القصص القصيرة للأطفال للكاتبة مارغريت وايز براون اعتماداً على نموذج هاليداي و حسن لاكتشاف الطريقة التي يتم فيها استخدام المصاحبة. تم

اختيار أعمال هذه الكاتبة للغتها البسيطة والغنية، وأيضاً لأنها واحدة من الكتاب الأمريكيين المميزين.

وتهدف الدراسة إلى: (١) دراسة الدور الأساسي للتماسك في بناء النص، (٢) تحليل المصاحبة التي هي واحدة من أدوات التماسك في النصوص المختارة، و (٣) التحقيق من أنواع المصاحبة. وقد توصلت الدراسة إلى استنتاج مفاده أن هناك اختلافاً واسعاً في استخدام أدوات المصاحبة في النصوص اعتماداً على الموضوع والفكرة النص. وفي جميع الأحوال، إن لهذه الأدوات أهمية في بناء النص و في اظهار و توضيح النص.

# Chapter one

## Collocation in English

The aim of the present chapter is to highlight the function of collocation in achieving connectedness in a text, depending on Halliday and Hasan's model. This chapter is intended to be divided into certain sections. The first section is concerned with showing up the relation between discourse and text and finding out whether collocation constructs one of them or both. In the second section a general framework of cohesion is presented within which cohesive devices can be conducted. The rest of the chapter is concerned with lexical cohesion and its device collocation.

### 1.1 Discourse and Text

Problems in differentiating between discourse and text are something increasable. Often, the thing that makes it difficult is that linguists differ in their views about these two terms. Some researchers, like Hoey (1983), think that discourse is oral whereas text is written (Coulthard 1985, 3). Some others use only one term (see Harris 1952, and Stubbs 1983), whereas others use both like Brown and Yule (1983). Due to these differences, various definitions have been emerged. What are coming next are justifications for proving whether discourse and text are separated term or one term.

Discourse is defined by Matthews (2007, 107) as "Any coherent succession of sentences, spoken or (in most usage) written." It is a set of utterances which comprises any recognizable speech events, like a novel, lectures, an actual conversation, an interview, a speech of politician, and so on. It can be used to refer to a type or a style of language as in 'religious discourse'.

Discourse can be studied through what is called **discourse analysis**. It is something difficult to state one particular definition for this term. However, the definition of discourse analysis is that it is "an approach to the study of discourse which is based upon traditional grammatical concepts and terms" (Trask 2007, 76).

Text, on the other hand, is indicated by Halliday and Hasan (1976, 1-2) as one of different units that language is constructed of. Text is an instance of language and can be both spoken and written in whatever length or size, i.e. text makes sense to anyone who uses language. Indeed, they claim that text is "a unit of language in use", which is a semantic one. Widdowson (2004, 6-7) explains that texts are not only represented through groups of related sentences, rather they can be "minimal texts" too. For example single sentences can stand as text "STICK NO BILLS ", isolated phrases and words "OPEN ", and single letter "P" which refers to parking garage also can stand as text too (ibid.).

Regarding discourse, it is concerned with larger units like text and conversation through which people can communicate with each other. Indeed, when communicating, people use language to express their ideas and thoughts; for this, such language is totally meaningful (Ansari 2013, 15-16). This means that text is included within discourse and both are concerned with meaning.

To strengthen the idea, Widdowson (2004) claims that text is not identified by its "linguistic extent", rather by its "social intent", whereas discourse is the "process of interpretation". In other words, Widdowson regards discourse as a *process* that participants are involved in during the interaction, and text is the *production* of this process (ibid., 8).

If someone drives to a place and encounters a blue notice with capital white 'P', he/she would understand it as the word Parking. Generally, letter P is the sixteenth letter of English alphabet, but here it is regarded as a text, because of the *context*- one's social knowledge. Obviously, the driver *intends* to park his car in a parking garage, and by seeing this sign; he would interpret the meaning of it as "*Parking is permitted here*" or "*Here is a place for parking your car*" (ibid., 7).

So, the context- the social knowledge of the driver that there would be a place in society for parking his car, the illocutionary force- the driver intends to park his car in a suitable place, and the interpretation of the meaning of the letter P; all are the main objectives of discourse. Then, text is the letter P. since Halliday and Hasan (1976, 1) indicate "The word TEXT is used in linguistics to refer to any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole."

## 1.2 Cohesion in Discourse

Cohesion is a term used to indicate the most remarkable requirement of discourse, and then text. Cohesion has been introduced by the British linguist Michael Halliday which is prominent within his systemic linguistics. Collaborating with Hasan in 1976, he gives detailed explanation about what text is and how cohesion contributes to distinguish it from any random collection of sentences.

Halliday and Hasan demonstrate that text cannot be featured as a text without having three constituents: *texture*, *tie*, and *cohesion*; cohesion is the main constituent in supplying texture, tie and then constructing text. **Texture** is the feature of "being text", because it provides text by unity and makes it distinct from a random piece of sentences (ibid., 2). For example the two sentences *Eugene glances quickly at Mary. She tries to ignore him* are related to each other due to texture, in which *she* refers back to *Mary* and *him* refers back to *Eugene*. **Tie**, on the other hand, refers to "a single instance of cohesion, a term for one occurrence of a pair of cohesively related items" (ibid., 3). As in the previous example, tie can be constituted through the relation between (*him, she*) and (*Eugene, Mary*). However, it is impossible to say sentences like *Eugene glances at Mary. The cat runs quickly* are related, since *the cat* does not refer back to *Eugene* or to *Mary*. This is because there is no tie that can link the sentences together. The last constituent is **cohesion**. In fact, texture and tie are provided by cohesion, it is, therefore, regarded as the highest unit of text (ibid.).

Generally, cohesion is defined by Crystal (2008, 85) as the property of any units which are larger than morphemes that with each other form constitutions, and such constituents are internally cohesive like, *the* (article)+ *rabbit* (noun). Often, people think that cohesion is the source of giving sense to any piece of language, which means that it makes the language meaningful. Thus, cohesion, according to Halliday and Hasan, is "a semantic one", in which it is a unit of meaning rather than a unit of form (1976, 4). Cohesion refers to linking something to what has gone before and such relation is set up where "the INTERPRETATION of



some element in discourse is dependent on that of another" (Halliday and Hasan 1976, 4). For example:

(1) I bought two canaries. The canaries are yellow with black beaks.

The interpretation of the second sentence depends highly on the first one, repeating the word "canaries" provide cohesion to the text.

Cohesion is realized through lexico- grammatical system. In other words, cohesion is expressed either through grammar or vocabulary. Thus, cohesion comprises two main types: **grammatical** and **lexical cohesion** (ibid., 6). These types are illustrated as the following:

Devices of grammatical cohesion:

1. Reference
2. Substitution
3. Ellipsis
4. Conjunction.

Devices of lexical cohesion:

1. Reiteration (repetition, synonym or near-synonym, superordinate, and general words )
2. Collocation

As far as lexical cohesion, mainly collocation, is the only concern of the study, thus the ongoing explanation is assigned for this type.

### **1.3 Lexical cohesion**

Halliday (2007, 2) explains that there is no language without having **vocabulary** or **lexicon** that contributes in forming one part of lexicogrammar. Lexicon refers to a dictionary, the vocabulary of a language, and people's knowledge of their own vocabulary (Murphy 2010, 4). Generally, lexicogrammar is divided into 'lexicology' and 'grammar' and each division is independent of each other. The lexicogrammar of a language emphasizes the idea that language is constructed through a network of choices, like choices in English

between '*past*', '*present*' and '*future*', or between '*hot*' and '*cold*'. These choices, then, are used as strings of words to create text through which people communicate with each other. Therefore, words of language can be grouped into **lexical**, or content, and **function words**. Halliday defines lexicology as "the study of lexical words." (Halliday 2007, 3-4)

Lexical or content words are those words that carry meanings by themselves. They include nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, such as: *chair*, *see*, *agley*, etc. New words can be easily added to these class of words from time to time, therefore they are regarded as **open classes**. Lexical words are open-ended since they are not fixed at all, and different changes can be made on them. Open classes are contrasted with **closed classes** in that they are totally limited and do not admit new members such as prepositions, auxiliary, articles, conjunctions, and so on; these classes are called **function words** ( Akmajian et al. 2001, 22-23).

Lexical cohesion is achieved by "the selection of vocabulary", rather than grammatical means like, reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction. Eggins (2004, 42) defines the analysis of lexical relations as "a way of systematically describing how words in a text relate to each other, how they cluster to build up lexical sets or lexical strings" (ibid.). This is to confirm that lexical cohesion is achieved when people relate lexical items (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) and events sequences (chains of clauses and sentences) in order to create a text. Moreover, lexical cohesion is created through two ways: either reiteration or collocation. Since the main concern of the paper is collocation, so only this device is explained.

### **1.3. Collocation**

Collocation is one type of lexical cohesion that is in some way problematic. The problem with collocation is that the elements of a sentence do not have the same referent (Halliday and Hasan 1976, 284-285). Tanskanen describes the relations that are provided by Halliday and Hasan's collocation as being subtle and subjective in which they cannot be strengthened by co-reference (2006, 34).

Halliday and Hasan (1976) highlight some aspects through which readers can identify the way words are collocated. The first aspect is **oppositeness**; they base this aspect on Lyons's 'classification of oppositeness'. Lyons (1968, 460) defines oppositeness as the most important semantic relations, in which he uses this term to mean the traditional antonymy of lexical relations. Oppositeness occurs where one word has different meaning to the other. Moreover, Lyons divides oppositeness into three relations: complementarity, antonym, converses.

Regarding the first type, Lyons defines **complementarity** as "lexical items that the denial of the one implies the assertion of the other and the assertion of the one implies the denial of the other" (ibid., 461). He gives pairs of words as examples of complementaries, these are: *single/married, male/female*, etc. Depending on the definition, if one says *Joe isn't married*, this implies *Joe is single*; and *Joe is married*, implies *Joe isn't single*. Complementarity also can be found in a set of incompatibility terms.

**Implicitly graded antonyms** can be regarded as a contrast to the first type, complementarity, in the idea that the denial of one item does not necessarily imply the assertion of the other. In sentence like *Our house is not big* does not imply *Our house is small*. In addition, the assertion of one item does not imply the denial of the other, if one says *Our house is small* does not mean *Our house is not big* (ibid., 465). In fact, it is not the matter of portraying the size of the house, as when one presents the redness of something as in *That's a red book*. The matter is with implicitly comparing the house as being bigger than other houses (Lyons 1977, 274).

The third type, **converseness**, is generally described in term of 'oppositeness', but the relation between words like *buy/sell* or *husband/wife* is called converseness. Lyons (1968, 467) explains this relation by stating that 'X bought Y from Z' and this implies 'Z sold Y to X'; the lexical substitution occurs due to the syntactic transformation. Thus, one can say that this relation is reciprocal one, which means, for example, 'X killed Y' implies 'Y was killed by X'.

There is another way through which collocation is achieved. Through Halliday and Hasan's explanation, one can say that collocation is formed by the means of ordered and non-ordered lexical sets. For example, days of the week as when *Friday* occurs in a sentence and

*Saturday* in another. This happens with numbers such as with *one... two... three*, or with *first... second*. Also, there is unordered series of colours as with *red... green, green... blue*, and other pairs like *north... south, road... rail, basement... roof*, in addition to hyponyms *drive... walk* (hyponyms of *go*), etc. (Halliday and Hasan 1976, 285). Sometimes lexical relations are resulted by **meronymy**. This is to say, meronymy is a relationship which is presented through a hierarchical relation, in which the vertical relation is called **meronymy**, while the horizontal relation is **co-meronymy** (Cruse 2006, 94). For example; in *a house has doors, windows, roof, and walls*, the vertical relation between *house* and *doors* is called **meronymy**.

Some pairs occur in similar contexts but their meaning relations cannot be classified in systematic semantic terms, rather they tend to share the same lexical environment; to occur in collocation with one another. For example, pairs like: '*ill... doctor*', '*door... window*'; '*laugh... joke*', '*king... crown*', '*bee... honey*', and so on (ibid., 285-286).

## Chapter 2

### **Analysing Collocation in Two of Margaret Wise Brown's Texts: *Wait Till the Moon is Full* and *The Color Kittens***

In order to illustrate how text words are linked to each other habitually, the study takes the works of children's writer Margaret Wise Brown. The study is specified to the assigned writer for her ability in using words that are significant in forming themes and ideas of a text. This can be seen in the coming analysis. The most unified the text is, the most understandable and efficient it would be. Therefore, her writings are featured with strength that touch children's fears and interests, the words that she uses contribute in constructing a rich literary text (<http://www.encyclopedia.com/children/academic-and-educational-journals/brown-margaret-wise-1910-1952>).

*Wait Till the Moon is Full* and *The Color Kittens* are the analytic text of the study that are listed at the end in the appendix. Talking about the technique of the study, cohesive words that are with each other provide ties are extracted and listed in a table by showing the type of device, this is the way Halliday and Hasan follow in their model.

***Abbreviations:***

***P : Oppositeness.***

***O : Ordered and non-ordered sets***

## **2.2 Analysing Collocation in the Texts**

### **2.2.1 An Overview on Text1: *Wait Till the Moon is Full***

The story is about a little raccoon who wishes to see the night and the creatures who are active during the night, because he has never gone out his home at night. He asks his mother different questions regarding the night and reveals his wish for seeing it, but the answer for all his

questions is always being "wait till the moon is full." The little raccoon cannot understand why he should wait till the moon is full. In fact, the mother wants her child to see everything clearly, because the darkness would be faded by moonlight. The little raccoon wants to see the darkness of the night, the moon and all the creatures at night, but he has to wait till the moon is full. Pleasantly, one night, again, the little raccoon reveals his desire to see the night, suddenly the mother tells him to go out for "the moon is full."

### 2.2.2 Analysing the Text

<i>Cohesive devices</i>		<i>presupposed</i>
Night	P	Day
Thin	P	Fat
Dark	P	Bright
black	P	golden, blue, white, red
Little	P	Big
Under	P	Above
Raccoon	O	whisker, ears, head, paw
branch, tree tops	O	Tree
Moonlight	O	Moon
Night	O	dark... moon
Bed	O	Sleep
Bird	O	Nest...fly
bird, raccoon, rabbit, cat, cow, squirrel, gull, skunk, fish, owl	O	Animal
black, golden, blue,	O	color

white, red		
Sky	O	Wind, air, tree, moon, hill
Round	O	curve
Chestnut	O	Home
Hear	O	See

### 2.1 Table (1): Frequencies of collocation in text1

The total number of collocation in the text is **18** with **6** oppositeness and **12** ordered and non-ordered sets. Surely, those of ordered and non-ordered sets occupy the largest part of the text for having **66.66%**, while oppositeness occupies **33.33%**.

Concerning the types of oppositeness, there are **3** complementarities (*night: day*), (*black, golden; blue, white, red*), and (*under, above*), and **3** implicitly graded antonyms (*fat: thin*), (*bright: dark*), and (*little big*) in which the entire number is **6**.

Ordered and non-ordered sets include: meronymy, contextual relations, and hyponyms, that form almost the most part of the text among other types of lexical cohesion. Meronymy is the first relation that is presented through part-whole and part-part relations. Unity is provided as when whole and its parts are woven through the text, like raccoon and his *whiskers, ears, head, and paw*. Other words are related to each other due to context, since they are not co-referential; relationship occurs without reference. *Bird, nest, and fly* are not synonyms, meronymy, nor repetition, but with each other they provide connectedness and give meaning to the text. When these words are used together, the context can be understood as it is about a bird which either flies or sits in a nest.

Hyponym is another cohesive means that links parts of text. Hyponyms of superordinate *animal* are distributed over the text so as to provide connectedness and then the plot of the story is built, since animals are the main characters here. For this diversity this type is more

frequent than oppositeness, since the latter is restricted to words having opposite meanings, while the former is not bounded to such restrictions.

This sort of story is devoted to be read for children before sleep, since the theme of the story is built around what is going on at night. Therefore, Brown has used different collocated words in this respect such words are *night, black, sleep, moon, etc.*

### 2.2.3 An Overview on Text 2: *The Color Kittens*

The writer writes about two colour kittens who are fond of colouring places and discovering new colours through mixing one colour into another. One day while they are busy in colouring, they discover that they have no green paint, the colour that makes nearly every place they like to go. So, they determine to find out green paint through mixing colours. When they start mixing, they discover different colours like: orange, pink, purple, brown, and others. The writer intends to teach children the names of colours, how they are made and what things they can form.

### 2.2.4 Analysing the Text

<u>Cohesive devices</u>		<u>presupposed</u>
Slept	P	woke up
Bright	P	Dark
Red	P	white, pink, yellow, orange, blue, purple, black, golden, brown
Splash	P	Pour
Little	P	Old
Buckets	O	Color
Baby	O	Nose



Cat	O	Eyes
Tree	O	leaves, flower, plum, orange, etc.
Sun	O	Sunshine
Island	O	Sea
Night	O	dark... dream... slept afternoon... evening...
Morning	O	night
color kittens	O	Color
One	O	Two... Three
kittens, pig, bumblebee, goat, beaver, dog	O	Creature
sea, sun, tree, grass, flower, fog, sky, water	O	Nature
plum, orange, berries, cherry, pears, apple	O	Fruit
chair, table, glass	O	Furniture
violet, rose	O	Flower
Red, white, pink, yellow, orange, blue, purple, black, golden, brown	O	Color
Happy	O	delighted... excited

**2.2 Table (2): Frequencies of collocation in text2**

The number of opposite words is **5** words by constituting **22.72%** of the text, and the number of ordered and non-ordered sets is **17** that constitute **77.27%**. So, the text encompasses **22** collocated words.

Oppositeness presents a good opportunity in constituting the text, it makes use of two types of oppositeness; complementarity and implicitly graded antonym. The incompatibility sets of *colors, slept; woke up* and *splashing; pouring* are complementarity. To prove that they belong to this type, examples are taken from the text:

***‘‘It didn’t make green. But it made pink.’’***

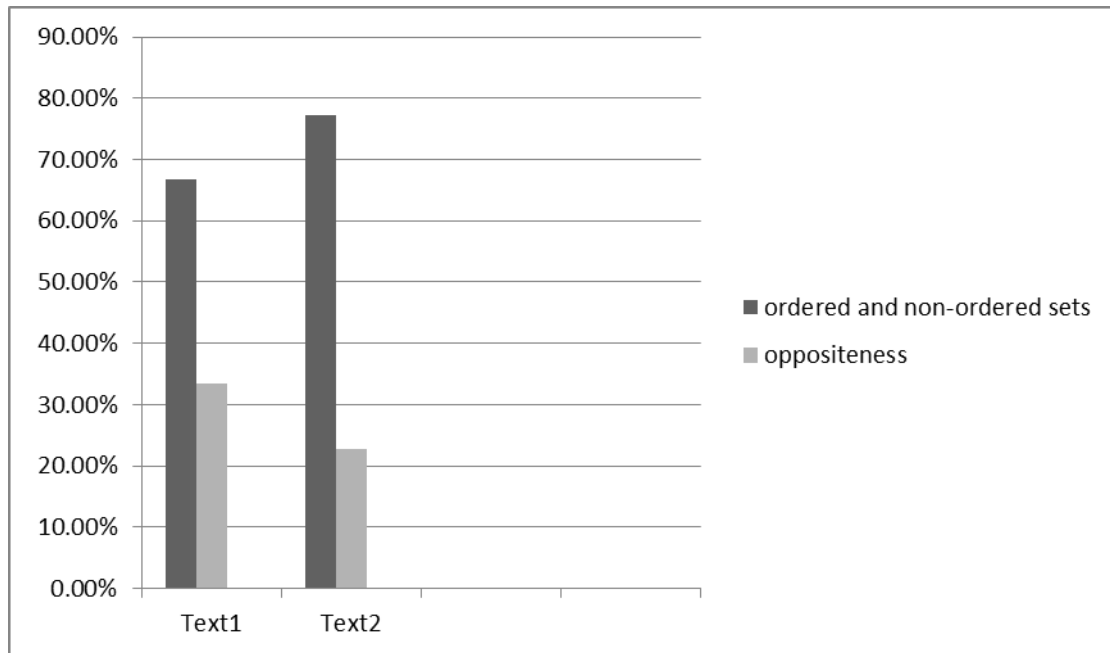
***‘‘as they slept they dreamed their dream’’ ‘‘And suddenly Brush woke up and Hush woke up’’***

By thinking deeply of the examples, one can notice the opposite meaning that is created by using words of this type. The first sentence denies *green* and asserts *pink*. This is to indicate that one colour is different from the other and to assert that there is nothing that is green and pink at the same time. Likewise, saying *they slept* and then *woke up* indicate different status in which the meaning of one is the negative of the other. Such differences verify the meaning of the text, because variety of situations and ideas are created due to such ties.

The second group consists of *little, old* and *bright, dark* that are implicitly gradable antonyms, it is possible to say '*this man is older than me*', or '*his face is very dark*' depending on the degree of disparity.

The text has **17** other collocational ties that are made of the mixture of variant words like animals, fruits, colours, numbers, parts of the day; places, natural elements, etc., in which all contribute in proving rich cohesive ties. More collocated words are presented here depending on the requirement of the text. The story is made of various words in order to support and develop its theme, the theme of the story is concerned with teaching children how count, how to discover colours, etc. In any text, ordered and non-ordered sets of words give opportunities for creating a meaningful texts, regardless of the number of cohesive ties that have been used.

The following is a statistical representation of the frequency of each device in the text:



### 2.3 Table (3): Frequencies of collocation in Brown's texts

The unbalanced relation between them is estimated by marking their number of frequencies:

- The number frequency of oppositeness is **6** that constitute **33.33%** of text1.
- The number frequency of oppositeness is **5** that constitute **22.72%** of text2.
- The number frequency of ordered and non-ordered sets is **12** that constitute **66.66%** of text1.
- The number frequency of ordered and non-ordered sets is **17** that constitute **77.27%** of text2.

Brown makes use of collocation in both texts and the two sub-devices of collocation have also been used, regardless the distinctions in frequencies, for example no text lacks oppositeness or lacks ordered and non-ordered sets. The reasons for such complete usage are:

1. Ordered and non-ordered sets are featured with diversity, in which writer feels that she is free in using different forms of ordered and non-ordered words. She can use whole and their parts, types of certain things, ordered series, non-ordered series, and other patterns. It provides the text with creativity and richness. That is to say, the best feature for this type is the diversity in its form. Also, there is no connotative reference between them, they provide

creativity, expand number of ties for achieving cohesion, etc. For such properties, this sub-device is frequently used.

2. Oppositeness, on the other hand, may not be preferred for its diversity, but it is used frequently by the writer for another reason. Children might find oppositeness difficult to be tackled than synonym or others, but here the writer perceives oppositeness as a tool for increasing children's awareness. When, for example, *sun* and *moon* are used in a text, they give opposite meanings to open up wide possibilities for encompassing ideas and information throughout the provided ties. This means that words like *moonlight*, *sunlight*, *white*, *yellow*, *heat*, *night*, *day*, etc. can be presented to give children the chance to recognize words and later ask more information about them. If *sun* is mentioned alone, the text would be restricted only to its relational words, while with mentioning night, many collocational patterns are supplied.

## **Conclusion**

The study arrives at the following concluding remarks:

1. Two texts by Margaret Wise Brown have been analysed concerning collocation which is being exhaustively and differently used; they are different in the number of frequencies of each device. Oppositeness and ordered and non-ordered sets are used unequally, but it is ordered and non-ordered sets that are presented highly for its variety.
2. Author's use of collocation is bounded by the idea and the theme of the story. For example more prominence is given to collocation in text 2; text1 contains 18 collocated words while text2 has 22 collocated ties. This is because Text1 is a story of pre-sleep which demands specific words while text 2 which is didactic text and requires more collocated words through which more understanding is achieved. In text 2, types of colour, animal, fruit, as well as number are presented. Just like teachers who very often verify their lessons with collocated words for the purpose of facilitation, the author followed the same strategy in this text. This means that one author can use the device of collocation incommensurately, depending on the kind and the theme of the text.
3. Though unequal, collocation devices have contributed in strengthening and clarifying themes of the texts by relating one lexical word to other lexical words within the texts, and this is the essential aim of cohesive devices.

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