A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF ENGLISH SYNONYMS: GARBAGE, TRASH, AND RUBBISH

BY

MISS BENYATHIP PANRUANG

AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

LANGUAGE INSTITUTE

THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC YEAR 2021

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AN INDEPENDENT STUDY

BY

BENYATHIP PANRUANG

ENTITLED

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GARBAGE, TRASH, AND RUBBISH

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the degree of Master of Arts in English Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the similarities and differences of synonymous nouns *garbage*, *trash* and *rubbish*, with a concentration on meanings, collocations and grammatical patterns. The sources of data used in this study are 1) two dictionaries, i.e. online Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary and online Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, and 2) the Corpus of Contemporary American English. This study found that garbage, trash and rubbish share the same core meaning, however they are loose synonyms since they still differ in terms of detailed meanings, collocations and grammatical patterns. For this reason, the three words cannot be used interchangeably in all contexts. Students can focus on the accurate use of synonyms for effective communication and be more aware in the differences between synonyms. Teachers of the English language should give emphasis on the similar as well as dissimilar properties of the synonymous words and consequently apply the results on learning both grammar and collocations.

Keywords: Synonym, Corpora, COCA, Collocation

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Symbols/Abbreviations	Terms
BNC	British National Corpus
COCA	Corpus of Contemporary American English
LDOCE	Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English
MWD	Merriam Webster's Dictionary
OALD	Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language defines what we are. It is an essential factor that dictates the difference between humans and animals. Language is humanity's greatest invention. All of our civilization rests upon it. As stated from Ethnologue, there are 7,139 spoken languages in the world. Clearly, the English language, commonly known as the universal language, is widely spoken worldwide. The English language is taught as a subject and even more, used as a medium of instruction in schools. Additionally, in the field of research, English is the most commonly studied foreign language. It is a powerful tool for communication in different parts of the world. An unusual fact is that the vast majority of speakers are not “native”. There are approximately 1.35 billion people around the world who speak English either natively or as a second language (Szmigiera, 2021). Owing to the size of the English-speaking population and its usage in our daily life, English came to be known as the lingua franca. English plays an important role in education, business, publishing, medicine, technology and in various fields. It is a language for knowledge, discoveries, development and progress. English language teachers are always trying to find ways to bridge the classroom to the real world. Educators had long embraced bringing authentic materials like video clips, news radio, advertisement, and newspaper articles into the classroom as an effective way to expose learners to natural language.

Modern English is a combination of many foreign words that have been included in the English dictionary. Vocabulary is something everybody says is very important, as we use a sea of words as we communicate. Vocabulary is one of the most essential language components in studying English (Nation, 2001). Familiarity with various vocabulary is vital in learning the English language. Vocabulary has a great impact on how you communicate and on reading comprehension. Vocabulary size is a fundamental factor of understanding text (Lu et al., 2015). A rich vocabulary helps you communicate effectively, understand others better and express yourself accurately through word choice. You can navigate different social environments and switch

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registers to be appropriate to the situation, time and place. As stated by Heng (2020), “given the significance of having extensive vocabulary knowledge, that is, knowing a lot of English words, particularly high frequency ones, many, if not all, English as a second or foreign language learners all over the world may have a strong interest in knowing and understanding how English vocabulary can be learned in an effective way”. Enriching vocabulary is one of the unique ways to improve English communication skills. Consequently, it is beneficial to learn synonyms in enhancing the vocabulary skills of the students. However, this is a challenging task for EFL teaching. Traditionally, teachers teach their students to get familiar with synonyms of words through translation, description and explanation with the use of dictionary.

A few decades ago, dictionaries, spell checkers, grammar checkers, and even speech synthesis were widely used to enhance the learners’ English communication skills. Nowadays, we need to keep up with the technological advances. The digital age has changed everything. As a result, people can easily access data through the internet with just few clicks. Moreover, online publication of relevant and innovative researches consisting of infinite number of words are made available and accessible to anyone. These texts are collectively called corpora, stored data in a computer that are utilized for language study.

This research is conducted to examine the similarities and differences of the nouns garbage, trash and rubbish in terms of their senses of meanings, collocations and grammatical patterns by gathering and analyzing data from Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, and the Corpus of Contemporary American English.

1. 2 Research Objectives

To determine the similarities and differences of the three synonyms garbage, trash and rubbish in terms of their meanings, collocations and grammatical pattern

1. 3 Research Questions

What are the similarities and differences of the three noun synonyms garbage, trash and rubbish in terms of meaning, collocations and grammatical patterns?

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1.4 Definition of Key Terms

Collocation - The usual association of a specific word with another word or words with great frequency.

Concordance Line - A comprehensive index of the words used in a text or a corpus, used to investigate language in various ways.

Corpus - A systematic collection of authentic text of both written and spoken language stored electronically on a computer used to obtain information about language in various genres that may not have been noticed through intuition alone.

Corpus-based study - The study of language in a collection of electronic texts, spoken or written, in terms of both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

COCA - Corpus of Contemporary American English, the largest free online database, developed by Mark Davies, containing billion words as of November 2021, from a variety of sources such as spoken, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, academic texts and with the update of 2020 from TV, and Movies subtitles, blogs and other web pages.

Parts of Speech - A category to which a word is assigned in accordance with its syntactic functions. In English, the main parts of speech are noun, pronoun, adjective, determiners, verb, adverb, preposition, conjunction, and interjection.

Synonym - A word or phrase that has close meaning or almost the same meaning as another word or phrase in the same language.

1. 5 Scope of the Study

This study was limited to a corpus-based analysis of English synonyms and focused only on three synonymous nouns, namely garbage, trash and rubbish. An exploration of authentic data from Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) was used to find the similarities and differences in meaning, collocations and grammatical pattern of the three synonyms garbage, trash and rubbish. The researcher used the meanings from online dictionaries, the online Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary and the online Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, and the Corpus of Contemporary American English to investigate the similarities and differences of the three synonyms garbage, trash and rubbish. In terms of collocations, the researcher looked for the collocations based on the noun, adjective and verb

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collocates. The comparison of collocations for the noun, adjective and verb collocates utilized the first 100 tokens of each list: noun collocates, adjective collocates and verb collocates of the three synonyms. Also, the noun, adjective and verb collocations, four words to the left and four words to the right of each synonym from the first 300 concordance lines were also taken into account. These concordance lines were taken from both spoken and written texts. The comparison of the grammatical patterns is derived from the first 300 concordance lines as well.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The research of the three English synonymous nouns is significant in several aspects.

1) The results of this study will show whether the three synonyms nouns are absolute or near synonymous and present how each word should be used in real contexts.

2) The findings of the study will enable English teachers and ESL learners to be aware of the semantic and collocational differences of the three synonyms, including the appropriate usage of words in various contexts.

3) The result of the study can help English learners understand the meaning, grammatical patterns and collocations of these three synonyms which can appear in different contexts.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This research comprises of five chapters as follows:

1) Chapter one consists of the introduction involved with background of the study, research objectives, research questions, definition of key terms, scope of the study, significance of the study and the organization of the study.

2) Chapter two explains about the reviewed related literature, information of corpus and corpus linguistics, followed by the concept of synonyms and criteria of distinguishing synonyms and ending with previous studies.

3) Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology.

4) Chapter four presents the results and discussions of the study

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5) Chapter five describes the summary of the study, summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations for further study.

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CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter will be separated into four parts. The first part looks at the concept of corpus. The second part focuses on the concept of synonyms and the characteristics of strict and loose synonyms. The third part explains the criteria for distinguishing synonyms namely, sense of meaning, grammatical patterns, and collocations. Finally, the fourth part presents previous relevant research studies.

2.1 The Concept of Corpora

2.1.1 Definition of Corpora

Corpus is derived from the Latin word "corpus" which literally translates to body. In language study, corpus simply means "body of texts". Corpus or corpora in plural form, is technically defined as a collection of written or spoken language that is used for studying the language (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online).

The development of such corpora is leading to a golden age in the study of language. Due to the wide collection of data at hand, it is easier to study the language on a larger scale including learning languages from the past. With the advent of the modern and digital era, experts and analysts have discovered methods that are not possible or easy to do manually. In modern linguistics, "corpus refers to a collection of texts or parts of texts upon which some general linguistic analysis can be conducted" (Meyer, 2002). A corpus is a principled and large collection of authentic texts that are stored in a computer and analyzed using software designed for corpus analysis.

Corpus linguistics is not a separate discipline of linguistics but a linguistic methodology and a specific study of linguistic phenomena (Li, 2016). Corpus linguistics is the study of language using corpora. This linguistic method of investigation utilizes a computer application that performs quantitative tests which pave the way for more meaningful and successful comprehension of "linguistic features, such as grammar and lexis but also the development of relevant disciplines: discourse analysis and second language learning" (Sukman, 2019).

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Lindquist (2009) states that, corpus linguistics is not a branch of linguistics on a par with syntax, morphology, semantics, pragmatics and other branches, since "corpus" does not tell you what is studied, but rather that a particular methodology is used. Corpus linguistics is thus a methodology, comprising a large number of related methods which can be used by scholars of many different theoretical leanings.

2.2 The Concept of Synonyms

The word synonym is derived from the Latin word "*synonymum*", in turn derived from Ancient Greek word "*synonymon*". Synonymy is a lexical relation that means sameness of meaning. According to the online Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE), synonyms are defined as words with the same meaning as another word in the same language. For instance, the words "destroy" and "ruin" are synonyms. Synonymy is important but difficult for language learners to grasp. In particular, the synonyms can lead to confusion for ESL learners and users for the reason that synonymous words are used in different ways that convey different meanings. Synonymy is significant in language and generally refers to "phenomenon of two or more different linguistic forms with the same meaning" (Stanojević, 2009). Therefore, synonyms are generally recognized as words or phrases that share the exact meaning or have close meanings. The Romanian linguist Bulgar states that "synonyms are those words which have almost the same meaning and they can be used interchangeably context-wise and they don't change the meaning of the context" (Bulgar, 2000, as cited in Kostadinovska-Stojchevska 2018). Synonyms can be lifesavers for someone who wants to limit the use of the same word in a given situation. Significantly, choosing the most appropriate synonym both verbally and non-verbally leads to better and more effective communication.

2.2.1 Strict and Loose Synonymy

Synonymy is probably the most familiar form of linguistic concepts among people in general. However, the general understanding of what is actually referred to by the term synonymy is somewhat confusing and its usage often inconsistent. Linguists employ a variety of definitions that may range from a loose notion of "similarity of meaning" to a very strict characterization as "identity of meaning and interchangeability

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in all conceivable contexts" (Noring, 2016). In the study of language, synonyms are classified as strict synonyms and loose synonyms.

Two words that can be substituted for each other in all contexts are considered as strict synonyms. Sukman (2019) suggested that two words are considered strict synonyms provided that their meanings are identical in every aspect and can be used interchangeably in all contexts. However, Palmer (1997) argues that "strict synonyms are non-existent because it is almost impossible that words which share exactly the same meaning would still be in use". Agreeably, Kreidler (1998) stated that "no two words share all the same linguistic features, and it would be useless to have two words which can completely substitute each other in all cases". Chung (2011), argues that "this kind of synonym has rarely been found in language since words are not always interchangeable in every context". Likewise, Paradis (2012) argues that strict "synonyms in English language have never been found". These statements imply that strict synonymy is far from happening or will never happen.

On the other hand, is the loose synonymy also known as near-synonymy. These words are used interchangeably even though there are times they do not mean the same thing (Brendel, 2008). Consequently, due to some factors, one word can be used appropriately in one context but not be appropriate in another context. Take for example the pair find and discover. As stated from the research of Petcharat and Phoocharoensil, (2017), "although similar in core meaning, find cannot substitute discover in all contexts, and vice versa". For example, "found" cannot be substituted for "discovered" in the sentence, "Martin Heinrich Klaproth discovered uranium in 1789." In addition, Nugroho (2018), examined the synonyms rich and wealthy and the result shows that these words cannot be used interchangeably. For instance, wealthy cannot substitute rich in some contexts, as illustrated with the statement "Meat is rich in protein."

The online Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English gives the meanings, pattern and collocations of couch, settee and sofa as follows:

Meaning: These words all mean "a comfortable seat."

Couch means "a comfortable piece of furniture big enough for two or three people to sit on: *Tom offered to sleep on the couch"*

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Settee means “a long comfortable seat with a back and usually with arms, for more than one person to sit on”: “*He went behind the settee and pretended to go to sleep”*

Sofa means “a comfortable seat with raised arms and a back that is wide enough for two or three people to sit on: He looked very big filling up that little sofa”.

These words may have the same meaning but you cannot substitute *settee* and *sofa* for the phrase “*couch* potato”.

On the other hand, is the loose synonymy also known as near-synonymy. Although the definitions for this phenomenon vary to a certain degree, loose synonymy is often used for words which have the same denotation, but are not interchangeable in every context (Brendel,2008). Consequently, due to some factors, one word can be used appropriately in one context but not be appropriate in another context. Take for example the pair find and discover. As stated from the research of Petcharat and Phoocharoensil, (2017), “although similar in core meaning, find cannot substitute discover in all contexts, and vice versa”. For example, “found” cannot replace “discovered” in the sentence, “Martin Heinrich Klaproth discovered uranium in 1789.” In addition, Nugroho (2018), examined the synonyms rich and wealthy and the result shows that these words cannot be used interchangeably. For instance, wealthy cannot substitute rich in some contexts as illustrated with the statement “Meat is rich in protein.”

2.3 Criteria for Distinguishing Synonyms

2.3.1 Sense of Meaning

There is no single appropriate definition of the term synonym that can provide fair and impartial criteria of similarity or sameness in the minds of literary experts. Many researchers have given their insights on the meaning of a word. Wittgenstein (1953), suggested that “the meaning of the word is its use in the language.” Specifically, Harris (1954) proposed that words with similar syntactic usage have similar meaning. The meaning, roots of words and its use in different contexts must be considered in knowing the meaning of each synonym (O’Keeffe, McCarthy, and Carter, 2007 as cited in Kiatthanakul, 2016).

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2.3.2 Grammatical Patterns

The Collins Online Dictionary defines grammar patterns as "ways of describing how words are used in English. A grammar pattern tells us what phrases or clauses are used with a given adjective, noun or verb. For example, the adjective *afraid* can be used with a that - clause (*He was afraid that…*) or prepositional phrase with *of* (*She is afraid of…*)."

Phoocharoensil (2010) is the proponent of using this criterion for distinguishing synonyms. It is a needed criterion that evaluates synonyms and characteristically classifies synonyms that share the same meaning but do not necessarily share the same grammatical pattern. The study by Petcharat and Phoocharoensil (2017), investigated the grammatical patterns of the synonyms *appropriate, proper* and *suitable*. The results showed that *appropriate, proper* and *suitable* share the same core meaning, but differ in collocation and grammatical structures. They found out that these three synonyms shared only "eight grammatical structures" and "that *appropriate* and *suitable* occur in all the grammatical structures of *proper*, but *proper* cannot occur in all structures of *appropriate* and *suitable*". Jarunwaraphan and Mallikamas, (2020), conducted a corpus-based study of English synonyms chance and opportunity utilizing COCA. They found out that "chance has more varieties of meanings which entail the meanings of opportunity. Therefore, opportunity cannot substitute for its near-synonym in all contexts, while chance can be used instead of opportunity to refer to the meaning of 'opportunity' in some contexts."

2.3.3 Collocations

Collocation is considerably one of the areas of difficulty that non-native speakers encounter when learning the English language.

As stated on the online Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, collocation is defined as "the way in which some words are often used together, or a particular combination of words used in this way". On the other hand, the online Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines collocation as "a combination of words in a language that happens very often and more frequently than would happen by chance". Sinclair (1991, p.170) as quoted from Louw (2007), defines collocations as

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> "the occurrence of two or more words within a short space of one another. The usual measure of proximity is a maximum of four words intervening. Collocations can be dramatic and interesting because they are unexpected, or they can be important in the lexical structure of language because of being frequently repeated…each citation or concordance line exemplifies a particular word or phrase. This word or phrase is called the node. It is normally presented with other words to the left and right and these are called collocates. The collocates can be counted and this measurement is called the span. Attention is concentrated on lexical occurrence…independently of grammatical pattern or positional relationship".

Bennett (2010, p.8) defines collocation as "the statistical tendency of words to co-occur. This means that when one word is used, there is a high statistical probability that a certain word or words will occur alongside it." Lindquist (2009, p.57), added that "collocation is the relation between a word and individual word forms which co-occur frequently with it". For example, Kiatthanakul (2015), examined the words achieved, accomplish, and attain. The findings show that most "collocations of the three words are nouns and prepositions which collocate with the three verbs in the most frequency. The first ranked of the collocates of attained that co-occur with this verb was the noun *level(s)*. The second ranked was the preposition *by*. The third ranked was the noun *status* followed by the fourth ranked and the fifth ranked, which were a preposition through and an adverb never, respectively. This implies that noun and preposition collocates often occur with *attained*".

2.4 Previous Related Studies

The study by Kiatthanakul (2015), focuses on three synonymous verbs which are *achieved*, *accomplished*, and *attained*. The study examined the past-tense and past-participle forms of these verbs "in terms of the sense of meaning and collocation in order to examine the similarities and differences with regards to using the most proper word in various contexts". The study is designed to examine the tenses and voice of the three verbs based on the data gathered from the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary (2015), Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2014). Additionally, the

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examination was also conducted on the three hundred concordance lines of Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). The results of the investigation suggested *achieved, accomplished and attained* share the same core meanings, however these words also exhibit slightly different senses of meanings when used as verbs and adjectives.

Nisani (2015) conducted a compare and contrast study in terms of thesis meaning, grammatical pattern, noun collocation and degree of formality of three synonymous adjectives *possible, probable,* and *likely*. The COCA and two online dictionaries, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary and Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English were used as sources. The results show that the three adjectives have differences in terms of meaning, grammatical pattern, noun collocations and stylistic related-information. In conclusion, these adjectives cannot be used interchangeably and corpus are reliable source of additional linguistic information that dictionaries cannot provide.

Petcharat and Phoocharoensil (2017), investigated the meaning, degrees of formality, collocations and grammatical patterns of three English synonyms namely *appropriate, proper*, and *suitable*. The data were collected from three different dictionaries and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English 6th edition (2014) and Longman Advanced American Dictionary 3rd edition (2013) were the basis of the meanings, degree of formality, collocations and significant grammatical patterns. Meanwhile, Macmillan Collocations Dictionary (2010) was the basis of collocations and grammatical patterns. The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) was the source of three hundred concordance lines, word frequency, degree of formality, collocations, and grammatical patterns of *appropriate*, *proper*, and *suitable*. The three words share similar core meaning but they have different detailed meaning and sense of meaning. The word *proper* has the highest number of noun collocations followed by *appropriate* and *suitable*. These synonyms share one noun collocation, three adverb collocations and eight grammatical patterns. In conclusion, the findings suggest that the differences in sense of meanings, collocations and grammatical patterns limits the chance to use the three synonyms interchangeably.

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Gu (2017) explored the genre, colligation collocation and semantic prosody of synonyms *obtain* and *gain*. The analysis was based on three online corpora tools namely, *Sketch Engine, BYU - BNC,* and *Just the Word*. It was discovered that *obtain* is more used in the physical sense while gain is more used in the metaphorical sense. The noun collocations of *obtain* include concrete concepts such as *information, property, copy* and *possessions*. The noun collocations of *gain* include abstract concepts like *confidence, insight, reputation* and *momentum* with positive denotation, which also contains the meaning "*take time and effort to get*". This implies that the typical meaning of gain is metaphoric rather than literal.

Phothijak (2018) investigated the similarities and differences of synonyms *assess* and *evaluate* in terms of collocation and grammatical patterns based on the analysis of 100 concordance lines collected from COCA. Some assess and evaluate words found in the concordance lines cannot be considered because the function is not as a verb, so the researcher needed to delete them. The results show that all patterns are shared by both words and each number of both patterns is quite the same. However, one pattern is noticeable; *Assess/Evaluate* + *adverb or Adverb* + *assess/evaluate*. The numerical information of *Evaluate* + adverb or Adverb + *evaluate* is 4 times less than *Assess* + adverb or Adverb + *assess*. This finding can be explained in that the usage of using Assess + adverb or Adverb + *assess* occurs more frequently in any publication than *Evaluate* + adverb or Adverb + *evaluate*. Furthermore, any concordance shows that patterns of *Evaluate* + adverb or "Adverb + *assess/evaluate"* are utilized more than the "*Assess/Evaluate* + *adverb*" by real English users. Hence, it could be inferred that most of the discourses containing *assess* and *evaluate* usually put the adverb in front of the verb, not after the verb. In terms of collocations, it only includes nouns. Based on the 100 concordance lines observed in the study, it can be inferred that the most frequently prominent collocations are taken by 5 nouns; *candidate, effect, effectiveness, impact* and *quality*. The result of investigation of the synonymous words in COCA reveals that there are shared collocations as well as dissimilarities. .

Al-Sayyed (2019) conducted a corpus-based study of the words *afraid, scared, frightened, terrified, startled, fearful, horrified* and *petrified* in terms of dialectal differences, frequency of occurrence, distribution in different genres and core meanings. The data were collected from four different sources namely, British National

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Corpus (BNC), the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), the online Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE) and the online Merriam Webster's Dictionary (MWD). The results from BNC and COCA show that *afraid, scared* and *frightened* were most frequently used. Also, most of the adjectives appear in fiction and spoken genres and are rarely seen in academic contexts. The LDOCE and COCA give more emphasis on the idiomatic meanings of the eight adjectives than MWD. And unlike MWD, LDOCE offers more sense of meanings for the words *afraid, scared* and *frightened*. It can be concluded that the data of the two corpora give extra meanings that are not found in these dictionaries."

Jarunwaraphan and Mallikamas (2020), conducted a quantitative as well as qualitative corpus-based study of two synonymous nouns, *chance* and *opportunity*. The data were gathered from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and online dictionaries. The result from COCA revealed that *opportunity* and *chance* are used most frequently in academic texts and spoken genre, respectively. Also, *opportunity* and *chance* are used least frequently in fiction and academic text, respectively. The list of collocations for each word show that *opportunity* is used more often in formal style and has more semantic preferences than *chance*. In conclusion, the synonyms *opportunity* and *chance* are classified as near-synonyms.

Condit (2022) studied the frequency distribution across registers, their collocational patterns and the interchangeability of the *change, alter* and *modify*. The data for frequency distribution across registers were gathered from the British National Corpus (BNC) while data for collocational pattern were collected by Sketch Engine. It was revealed that these three synonyms differ in formality and collocation patterns. The three verbs were near-synonyms but they often did not share common collocates. The word *change* has more meanings than *alter* and *modify*. The frequency of substituting *change* and *alter* is higher than for *modify*. Also, the word *alter* and *modify* has more usage frequency in written and formal language than *change*.

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CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter consists of 4 main parts: (1) the research method, (2) the research instrument, (3) the procedures used in the collection and analysis of the data and (4) the data analysis.

3.1 Research Method

This is a corpus-based study that focused on three English synonyms: garbage, trash and rubbish. The researcher collected the data on these three words using an online corpus program "Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)". The first 300 concordance lines of each synonym were collected from COCA to analyze and compare their meanings, collocations and grammatical patterns from all spoken and written texts.

3.2 Research Instruments

This corpus-based study is conducted using the following research instruments:

1) The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary Online and Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online. The researcher used it as a reference to show the parts of speech and meanings of the three synonyms to compare with the data collected from COCA.

2) Corpus of Contemporary American English was thoroughly explored to collect data related to the parts of speech, meanings and collocations based on the first 300 concordance lines.

3.3 Research Procedure

The researcher listed the meanings of the three synonyms words from the three sources, namely, the online Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, online Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English and the Corpus of Contemporary American English. The first 100 noun, adjective and verb lemmas that collocates with garbage, trash and rubbish were collected the from COCA. Also, the first 300 concordance lines

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for garbage, trash and rubbish were taken from the COCA as the basis for analyzing the first five most prominent collocations and grammatical patterns.

3.4 Data Analysis

The three main topics analyzed in this study are (1) Meanings (2) Collocations and (3) Grammatical patterns. The analysis of meaning was based on the meaning of each word taken from the three sources. The collocations of synonymous words garbage, trash and rubbish was analyzed based on the first 100 noun, adjective and verb lemmas as well as the first most prominent noun, adjective and verb collocates from the first 300 concordance lines. The grammatical patterns were analyzed based on the first 300 concordance lines collected from COCA.

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CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the data which answers the research question given in Chapter 1, which is: 1) What are the similarities and differences of the three noun synonyms garbage, trash and rubbish in terms of meanings, collocations and grammatical patterns?.

The data were categorized in three main topics: 1) definition from The Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary (online) and Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (online), and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), 2) the collocations from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), and 3) the grammatical patterns from Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA).

4.1 The Similarities and Differences in Meaning

4.1.1 Definition of Garbage from OALD, LDOCE and COCA

The table below shows the definition of the word "garbage" used as a noun.

Table 4.1

Definition of Garbage

Source	Meaning
OALD	1. (especially North American English) waste food, paper, etc. that you throw away
	2. (especially North American English) a place or container where waste food, paper, etc. can be placed
	3. (informal) something stupid or not true
LDOCE	1. (especially American English) waste material, such as paper, empty containers, and food thrown away
	2. Stupid words, ideas, etc.
COCA	1. Food that is discarded (as from a kitchen)

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The data in the above table show three definitions from OALD, two definitions from LDOCE and one definition from COCA. The data from OALD, LDOCE and COCA share the same meaning wherein garbage is defined as "waste material" such as food, papers or "empty containers thrown away". For example, "*Can you take out the garbage when you go?*". Meanwhile, OALD and LDOCE share another meaning stating that garbage is something stupid like words, ideas or something that is not true. As demonstrated in this sentence "*There was a lot of garbage reported about me in the newspapers.*" However, OALD includes an additional definition of "garbage" that is "a place or container where waste food, paper, etc. can be placed". For instance, "*Throw it in the garbage.*" This definition focuses on any container that can hold waste materials. In this context you may say, "Throw it in the trash." but you won't say "Throw it in the rubbish".

4.1.2 Definition of Trash from OALD, LDOCE and COCA

The table below shows the definition of the word "trash" used as a noun.

Table 4.2

Definition of Trash

Source	Meaning
OALD	1. (North American English) things that you throw because you no longer want or need them
	2. (informal, disapproving) objects, writing, ideas, etc. that you think are of poor quality
	3. (North American English. informal) an offensive word used to describe people that you do not respect
LDOCE	1. (American English) things that you throw away, such as empty bottles, used papers, food that has gone bad etc.
	2. (informal) something that is of very poor quality

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	3. (American English informal not polite) someone from a low social class who you do not respect because you think they are lazy or immoral - (white trash)
COCA	1. Nonsensical talk or writing
	2. Worthless people
	3. Worthless material that is discarded

From the data above, all three sources presented three definitions for the word "trash". The definitions from both dictionaries and COCA are similar. It can be observed that these definitions can be matched together to mean the same thing. The first match is the definition wherein trash means "things that you throw because you no longer want or need them" (OALD), things that you throw away, such as empty bottles, used papers, food that has gone bad etc. (LDOCE) and worthless material that is discarded (COCA). For example, "*The subway entrance was blocked with trash*." The second match is the definition wherein trash means "objects, writing, ideas, etc. that you think are of poor quality" (OALD), something that is of very poor quality (LDOCE) and nonsensical talk or writing (COCA). For example, "*How can you read that thrash?*" The third match is the definition wherein trash means an "offensive word used to describe people that you do not respect" (OALD), someone from a low social class who you do not respect because you think they are lazy or immoral (LDOCE) and worthless people (COCA). For example, "*We sought to distance ourselves from that, being white trash ourselves.*"

4.1.3 Definition of Rubbish from OALD, LDOCE and COCA

The table below shows the definition of the word "rubbish" used as a noun.

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Table 4.3

Definition of Rubbish

Source	Meaning
OALD	1. (especially British English) things you throw away because you no longer want or need them
	2. (British English, informal) (also used as an adjective) something that you think is of poor quality
	3. (British English, informal) comments, ideas, etc. that you think are stupid or wrong
LDOCE	1. Food, paper etc. that is no longer needed and has been thrown away
	2. (informal) objects, papers etc. that you no longer use and should throw away
	3. (informal) an idea, statement etc. that is rubbish is silly or wrong and does not deserve serious attention (nonsense)
	4. (informal) a film, book etc. that is rubbish is very bad
COCA	1. Worthless material that is discarded
	2. Nonsensical talk or writing

The data in the above table show three definitions of the word “rubbish” from OALD, four definitions from LDOCE and two definitions from COCA. The first two definitions from LDOCE can merge together to include food, objects, papers etc that you no longer use and should throw away. The definitions from OALD, LDOCE and COCA share similar meanings. Firstly, rubbish is defined as things “you throw away because you no longer want or need them” (OALD), objects, papers etc. that you no longer use and should throw away (LDOCE) and worthless material that is discarded (COCA). The word object and material can mean things thrown away or things someone no longer uses. For example, “*The streets were littered with rubbish*”. Secondly, rubbish is defined as “comments, ideas, etc. that you think are stupid or wrong” (OALD), an idea, statement etc. that is rubbish is silly or wrong and does not

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deserve serious attention (LDOCE) and nonsensical talk or writing (COCA). For example, "*What he said was just a load of old rubbish*." It is noticeable that OALD and LDOCE share another similar meaning wherein rubbish is defined as "something that you think is of poor quality and a film, book etc. that is rubbish is very bad". As can be seen in the table, something in the definition can mean film, book etc. and 'of poor quality' can mean 'very bad'. For example, "*I was told their new album's complete rubbish*."

According to the above tables, generally, *garbage*, *trash* and *rubbish* seem to have the similar core meaning, i.e. *something worthless*. However, differences can be identified. Table 4.1 illustrates that *garbage* has an additional meaning, i.e. *a place where waste is placed*. Table 4.2 suggests that *trash* means a *worthless person*. Moreover, as specified from the OALD, *rubbish* is the usual word in British English for the things that you throw away because you no longer want or need them. *Garbage* and *trash* are both used in North American English. Inside the home, *garbage* tends to mean waste food and other wet material, while *trash* is paper, card and dry material. In British English, you put your *rubbish* in a dustbin in the street to be collected by the *dustmen*. In North American English, your *garbage* and *trash* go in a *garbage* can/*trash* can in the street and are collected by *garbage* men/collectors. As for entities, these words are used with, *trash* can be used with people (*i.e. white trash*), while *garbage* and *rubbish* may not. This implies that *trash*, rather than *garbage* or *rubbish*, tends to be used more frequently with people.

The results of this analysis show that *garbage*, *trash* and *rubbish* do share similar core meaning but they also have slight differences. Each synonym has different usages. In terms of meanings, these three words can be, therefore, classified as *loose synonyms*.

4.2 Analysis of Noun, Adjective and Verb Collocates in COCA

This part reveals the most frequent noun, adjective and verb collocates, taking into account only the first 100 tokens of each list: of noun collocates of *garbage*, *trash* and *rubbish*, and their verb and adjective collocates lifted from the COCA. According to the results, names of people are included, however in this study they will be excluded from the analysis.

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This chapter presents the data which answers the research question given in Chapter 1, which is: 1) What are the similarities and differences of the three noun synonyms *garbage*, *trash* and *rubbish* in terms of meanings, collocations and grammatical patterns?

The data were categorized in three main topics: 1) definitions from The Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary (online) and Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (online), Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (6^{th} edition) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), 2) the collocations from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), and 3) the grammatical patterns from Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA).

4.2.1 Analysis of Noun Collocates for 'Garbage, Trash and Rubbish'

The table below shows the list of noun lemmas collocating with the synonymous words *garbage, trash and rubbish*.

Table 4.4

Noun Lemmas Collocating with 'Garbage, Trash and Rubbish'

Noun Lemmas Collocating with Garbage				
bag	landfill	curb	compost	lying
can	bunch	scow	filth	graffiti
truck	dumpster	sink	receptacle	roadside
disposal	smell	sewer	trawler	leftover
dump	household	debris	Monday	raccoon
collection	lid	junk	odor	sludge
piece	recycling	stench	memphis	trimming
plastic	chute	cart	drain	streetlight
pile	sack	incinerator	mattress	squatter
collector	alley	removal	litter	curbside
bin	strike	picker	scavenger	birther
pail	container	dishwasher	feces	incineration
heap	pit	gutter	jersey	parker
ton	America	recyclable	urine	mailbox
pickup	scrap	sanitation	shovel	canister
trash	barge	san	allocation	maggot
patch	hauler	compactor	janitor	composting
waste	load	cleaner	rind	Chicago

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sewage	mound	rag	cafeteria	manson
Noun Lemmas Collocating with ‘Trash’				
bag	dumpster	talker	litter	barge
can	treasure	gutter	roadside	pothole
piece	bottle	pit	curbside	napkin
bin	collector	folder	icon	cone
talk	basket	load	laundry	appliance
heap	landfill	sack	backyard	ghetto
pile	metal	weed	graffiti	pollutant
plastic	debris	alley	talking	raccoon
trailer	household	toilet	recyclable	cardboard
pickup	hauler	cart	lawn	redneck
container	lid	cracker	America	dumping
dump	waste	Hollywood	driveway	Kleenex
compactor	chute	bucket	cleanup	midden
truck	recycling	scrap	sewage	April
collection	disposal	incinerator	Euro	cafeteria
ton	junk	towel	compost	gin
barrel	mound	sidewalk	Tuesday	liner
garbage	removal	sink	whore	carton
receptacle	curb	wrapper	leftover	
Noun Lemmas Collocating with ‘Rubbish’				
heap	homeopathy	recycling	playground	quid
pile	England	hype	sticker	wasteland
load	garage	accumulation	antique	dung
bin	pit	gutter	landfill	reg
riddance	warming	America	seeker	refuse
dump	disposal	tonne	shed	baloney
bunch	mound	India	roadside	great
nonsense	rubble	mansion	Arabic	excrement
tip	filth	android	telling	bollock
ton	van	vendor	per	Israel
episode	ave	wagon	atheism	humbug
can	alley	propaganda	over	midden
trash	carpet	canal	auntie	potsherd
junk	cart	coke	assortment	UI
debris	sack	insult	stench	burdock

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weed rental scrap	removal mum gardener	Greek cleaning shaft	magnolia campsite skip	obscurantism MTV

From the above investigations, findings reveal that there are similar noun collocations but with slight differences. Upon thorough investigation of the noun collocates of *garbage*, *trash* and *rubbish*, the table that summarizes the shared noun collocates is provided for easier reference.

Table 4.5

Shared Noun Collocations of 'Garbage, Trash and Rubbish'

Shared Noun Collocations			
Garbage, Trash and Rubbish	Garbage and Trash	Garbage and Rubbish	Trash and Rubbish
can disposal dump pile bin heap ton landfill sack alley pit America scrap load mound debris junk cart removal roadside	bag truck collection piece plastic collector pickup waste sewage dumpster lid barge curb sink incinerator recyclable compost receptacle litter cafeteria graffiti	trash stench gutter recycling filth bunch	weed midden

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	leftover raccoon compactor chute		

Table 4.5 illustrates the shared and similar noun collocations. *Garbage, trash* and *rubbish* have 20 common collocations. *Garbage* and *trash* have 25 common collocations. *Garbage* and *rubbish* have 6 common collocations. *Trash* and *rubbish* have 2 common collocations.

Sentences and phrases taken from the COCA can help illustrate the shared and similar noun collocations. *Garbage, trash* and *rubbish* collocates with the noun '*can'*. For example, "*And Kris still digs my cans out of the garbage to put them in the recycling.*", "*Empty beer cans filled the trash cans and lined the counter tops.*" and "*Everything was big, you know, all the rubbish, coke cans, sweet wrappers, dustbins, so when you were watching it…*" *Garbage* and *trash* collocates with the noun '*bag*'. For instance, "*Put the plastic bag inside a garbage bag.*" and "*Inside that trash bag is a green purse.*" *Garbage* and *rubbish* collocates with the noun '*stench*'. In particular, "*..leaving nothing behind him but a foul stench, like rotting garbage*" and "*Amid the stench of uncollected rubbish rotting in the sun, in spite of having, sometimes, to walk long*". *Trash* and *rubbish* collocates with the noun '*weed*'. Such as, "*A ripped sofa sat in the front yard and trash clotted the tall weeds.*" and "*Are areas outside your house clear of trash, high weeds, rubbish, etc.*?"

4.2.2 Analysis of Adjective Collocates for 'Garbage, Trash and Rubbish'

The table below shows the list of adjective lemmas collocating with the synonymous words *garbage, trash and rubbish*.

Table 4.6

Adjective Lemmas Collocating with 'Garbage, Trash and Rubbish'

Adjective Lemmas Collocating with 'Garbage'				
rotting	hefty	tabloid	mountainous	pungent

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absolute	steaming	septic	unsightly	sized
burning	heavy-duty	out-of-state	putrid	full-size
municipal	biodegradable	grinding	traitorous	woody
utter	flaming	discarded	half-eaten	cavernous
toxic	smelly	miscellaneous	verified	frugal
useless	decaying	spilled	compacted	open-air
racist	stinking	rancid	overflowing	un-American
worthless	inane	waste	non-recyclable	door-to-door
residential	fetid	bulging	buried	anti-government
failing	poisonous	overturned	flimsy	trashy
hazardous	makeshift	decomposing	sunken	ever-increasing
uncollected	processed	compostable	impromptu	corrugated
filthy	crumpled	bulky	soggy	revolting
rotten	unsubstantiated	bottled	attracting	whiny
stray	leftover	spoiled	innocuous	unsupported
radioactive	stale	waterproof	sanitary	grating
floating	incremental	lifeless	minded	moronic
recycled	assorted	elitist	topless	squishy
mindless	oversized	uneducated	palatable	homeopathic
Adjective Lemmas Collocating with ‘Trash’				
white	sweeping	glam	centrist	potomac
empty	stray	overturned	unworthy	bagged
burning	recycled	cubic	collected	emptied
broken	hefty	cardboard	burned	low-class
nearby	accumulated	disposable	composting	unscented
racist	citywide	vile	sanitary	non-recyclable
tabloid	abandoned	leftover	grimy	pitiful
worthless	hazardous	shattered	separating	waterproof
overflowing	right-wing	uneducated	potted	wooded
ignorant	scattered	smelly	stinking	insidious
floating	rusty rotting	out-of-state	fast-food	tattered
euro	biodegradable	degenerate	unopened	seeming
filthy	uncollected	stinky	amoral	pious
utter	trailer-park	crumpled	smoldering	two-story
discarded	vacant	rancid	windblown	soaked
residential	assorted	solar-powered	disposed	enclosed
emptying	unsightly	wheeled	high-class	

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municipal heavy-duty recyclable	soggy reusable galvanized	uneaten covered mindless	half-full decomposing dented	rife second-largest self-serving feral
Adjective Lemmas Collocating with 'Rubbish'				
absolute complete utter just pure total usual bloody pretty mere self-published burning sentimental useless pathetic sheer worthless stony accumulated unsubstantiated	absurd foolish municipal naive hazardous called synthetic ample floating trivial cubic scattered so incompatible charging neglected pretentious rotting illogical discarded	anthropogenic artful sparkly baseless indulgent grubby arranged self formulaic squalid fetid uncollected burnt watery pop stagnant failing homophobic wholesome ghostly	crumbling pious cant sometime idealistic marching indistinguishable superstitious compressed twentieth-century paranormal powered mythic impenetrable distressing hooded incoherent indecent inherited fearsome	evasive abject crumpled bossy patronizing rickety prodigious well-intentioned violet humbling banal void geologic noxious copious made-up kindred lunatic flammable allegorical

From the above investigations, findings reveal that there are similar adjective collocations but with slight differences. Upon thorough investigation of the adjective collocates of *garbage, trash* and *rubbish*, the table that summarizes the shared adjective collocates is provided for easier reference.

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Table 4.7

Shared Adjective Collocations of 'Garbage, Trash and Rubbish'

Shared Adjective Collocations			
Garbage, Trash and Rubbish	Garbage and Trash	Garbage and Rubbish	Trash and Rubbish
rotting municipal utter worthless hazardous floating crumpled discarded	burning racist residential filthy stray recycle mindless hefty heavy-duty biodegradable smelly stinking leftover assorted tabloid out-of-state rancid decomposing uneducated unsightly overflowing non-recyclable soggy	absolute useless failings fetid unsubstantiated	accumulated scattered cubic pious burnt/burned

Table 4.7 illustrates the shared and similar adjective collocations. *Garbage, trash* and *rubbish* have 8 common collocations. *Garbage* and *trash* have 24 common collocations. *Garbage* and *rubbish* have 5 common collocations. *Trash* and *rubbish* have 5 common collocations.

Sentences and phrases taken from the COCA can help illustrate the shared and similar adjective collocations. *Garbage, trash* and *rubbish* collocates with the adjective '*municipal'*. For example, "*In New York City, residents get their garbage picked up*

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by municipal employees.", "*Then we can go after municipal trash collection, the post office, unfair regulations on landlords, and food stamps*." and "*Halfway up Naipansea Road, there's a small municipal rubbish dump.*" *Garbage* and *trash* collocates with the adjective '*residential*'. For instance, "*He started at 18, with seven years of lifting residential garbage cans.*" and "*The city has 4,500 residential trash customers, with a staff of seven people making about 1,100 stops a day*". *Garbage* and *rubbish* collocates with the adjective '*absolute*'. In particular, "*It could be absolute garbage for all you know.*" and "*This type of hype journalism is absolute rubbish and you should be ashamed of yourself.*" *Trash* and *rubbish* collocates with the adjective '*accumulated*'. Such as, "*The accumulated trash included tires, construction materials, wood and mattresses.*" and "*When it melts, six months of accumulated acid rubbish sinks into the pond.*"

4.2.3 Analysis of Verb Collocates for 'Garbage, Trash and Rubbish'

The table below shows the list of verb lemmas collocating with the synonymous words *garbage, trash and rubbish*.

Table 4.8

Verb Lemmas Collocating with 'Garbage, Trash and Rubbish'

Verb Lemmas Collocating with 'Garbage'				
throw	trash	clog	puke	feast
pick	litter	pelt	honk	upend
dump	rummage	forage	fuss	leach
collect	sort	waft	shovel	avail
fill	shove	cart	decompose	officiate
toss	scavenge	rifle	fatten	stew
clean	discard	scrounge	rehash	plunk
recycle	accumulate	sludge	nose	incinerate
stuff	spout	sling	latex	maul
spew	sift	foul	boilerplate	festoon
smell	peddle	reek	sneer	gas
pile	paw	mouth	creek	defecate
haul	chuck	smolder	drench	firebomb
dig	rot	fester	clutter	chute

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empty	raid	mow	gop	grub
strew	unload	scrap	earmark	unlatch
overflow	pollute	weed	input	wad
dispose	heap	bundle	freshen	swill
root	churn	ew	pech	indent
stink	deposit	truck	compost	dade
Verb Lemmas Collocating with ‘Trash’				
throw	sort	salvage	troll	mew
pick	overflow	relegate	crumple	pirouet
toss	deposit	lig	congregate	lidded
dump	rummage	rifle	co-opt	
collect	accumulate	front	carted	
fill	retrieve	mop	upend	
empty	scatter	forage	wrest	
haul	sift	clot	consign	
clean	vomit	nose	squish	
recycle	stash	moe	scrounge	
burn	destine	takeout	overshoot	
dig	clutter	bulge	overwork	
litter	stink	rust	pulp	
pile	near	vacuum	molder	
stuff	chuck	truck	billeted	
strew	mow	compact	elongate	
discard	scavenge	smolder	spritz	
dispose	heap	spear	rampage	
sweep	spews	incinerate	hurdle	
wash	wade	right	patter	
Verb Lemmas Collocating with ‘Rubbish’				
throw	chat	paraphrase	babble	throb
collect	haul	reek	rustle	consign
clear	stink	forage	exile	scavenge
dump	discard	rummage	ingest	ricochet
spout	sift	shovel	layer	flog
strew	boom	clutter	inundate	liberalize
stuff	heap	cart	nip	clobber
pile	preach	clamber	rust	regurgitate
dispose	accommodate	hawk	mire	refocus

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dismiss	mutter	site	brim	mushroom
toss	enlist	backslide	glitter	off-load
sort	rot	plaster	crane	rut
accumulate	erect	rhyme	dabble	titillate
recycle	man	purify	sidestep	homogenize
trash	buckle	thrash	jot	transmute
utter	spew	approximate	repudiate	true
litter	bank	screech	stammer	dither
empty	rearrange	riddle	stud	avow
root	overflow	decode	instigate	junk
scatter	espouse	bombard	peck	stilt

From the above investigations, findings reveal that there are similar verb collocations but with slight differences. Upon thorough as investigation of verb collocates of *garbage, trash* and *rubbish,* the table that summarizes the shared verb collocates is provided for easier reference.

Table 4.9

Shared Verb Collocations of 'Garbage, Trash and Rubbish'

Shared Verb Collocations			
Garbage, Trash and Rubbish	Garbage and Trash	Garbage and Rubbish	Trash and Rubbish
throw	pick	trash	scatter
dump	fill	spout	consign
collect	clean	reek	
toss	stuff	shovel	
recycle	dig	rot	
spew	rummage	root	
pile	chuck		
haul	rifle		
empty	scourge		
litter	mow		
sort	nose		
scavenge	upend		
accumulate	incinerate		

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sift clutter strew overflow dispose stink heap	truck		

The table illustrates the shared and similar verb collocations. *Garbage, trash* and *rubbish* have 20 common collocations. *Garbage* and *trash* have 14 common collocations. *Garbage* and *rubbish* have 6 common collocations. *Trash* and *rubbish* have 2 common collocations.

Sentences and phrases taken from the COCA can help illustrate the shared and similar verb collocations. *Garbage, trash* and *rubbish* collocates with the verb '*throw'*. For "example, "*I took the roll from her hands and threw it into the garbage can myself.*", "*Wouldn't he just get rid of them nearby, throw them away like trash?*" and "*… the woman was not there to throw the rubbish.*". *Garbage* and *trash* collocates with the past tense of the verb '*fill*'. For instance, "*They filled the cafeteria garbage cans with oozing sludge.*" and "*His father quickly remarried while his mother filled the trash cans with empty vodka bottles she hid in brown paper bags.*". *Garbage* and *rubbish* collocates with the verb 'spout'. In particular, "*And they likely would spout a lot of garbage in that position if they were given the chance.*" and " *"Oh, hush before you spout worse rubbish."*". *Trash* and *rubbish* collocates with the verb '*scattered*'. Such as, "*The room was a mess, and trash was scattered on the floor.*" and "*Environmentalists estimate 50 tons of rubbish are scattered across Everest as well as a more macabre form of litter.*".

The investigation shows that *garbage, trash* and *rubbish* share higher noun (20) and verb collocates (20) than adjective collocates (8). It is clear that among all the pairs, namely *garbage* and *trash, garbage* and *rubbish* and *trash* and *rubbish,* the pair *garbage* and *trash* share the most common noun, adjective and verb collocates.

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4.2.4 The Result of Investigation of Garbage, Trash and Rubbish in COCA

Collocations include nouns, adjectives and verbs. Based on 300 concordance lines observed in this study, it can be inferred that the most frequently prominent collocations are taken by 5 nouns, 5 adjectives and 5 verbs. These findings are shown in the table below.

Table 4.10

Frequency of Each Collocation of 'Garbage, Trash and Rubbish'

Synonym	Part of Speech	Collocations	Frequency
Garbage	noun	can	32
		bag	22
		collection	20
		disposal	10
		truck	9
	adjective	full	3
		great	3
		complete	2
		residential	2
		large	2
	verb	throw	7
		pick	4
		pile	4
		get	3
		put	3
Trash	noun	can	54
		bag	15
		bin	12
		heap	5
		truck	5
	adjective	white	6
		empty	4
		full	2
		recycled	2
		great	2

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	verb	take talk throw dump pick	9 6 5 4 3
Rubbish	noun	heap bin people tip dump	10 6 6 4 4
	adjective	other absolute complete old pure	7 6 5 3 2
	verb	speak use talk collect feel	4 4 3 3 3

From the above investigations, findings reveal that there are no shared collocations among the three synonyms. However, there are shared collocations between two synonyms. It can also be observed that there are differences. Upon thorough investigation of the collocations of *garbage, trash* and *rubbish*, the table that summarizes the shared collocates is provided for easier reference.

Table 4.11

Shared Collocations of 'Garbage, Trash and Rubbish'

Part of Speech	Collocations	Frequency		
		Garbage	Trash	Rubbish
Shared Collocations				

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Noun	can	32	54	-
	bag	22	15	-
	truck	9	5	-
	bin	-	12	6
	heap	-	5	10
Adjective	full	3	2	-
	great	3	2	-
	complete	2	-	5
Verb	throw	7	5	-
	pick	4	3	-
	talk	-	6	3

Table 4.11 illustrates the shared and dissimilar collocations. *Can, bag* and *truck,* are shown as the shared noun collocates between *garbage* and *trash* and each ordinal frequency is the same. *Bin* and *heap* are the shared noun collocations between *trash* and *rubbish*. It can be observed that *garbage* and *rubbish* have dissimilar noun collocates. Meanwhile, *full and great* are the shared adjective collocates between *garbage* and *trash* and each numerical frequency is nearly the same. Also, *complete* is the shared adjective collocates between *garbage* and rubbish. It is apparent that *trash* and *rubbish* have dissimilar adjective collocates. As for the third part of speech, *throw* and *pick* are shown as the shared verb collocates between *garbage* and *trash*. *Talk* is the shared verb collocates between *trash* and *rubbish*. And obviously, *garbage* and *rubbish* have dissimilar verb collocates. *Collection, disposal, people, tip* and *dump* are defined as differentiated noun collocations. *Human, residential, large, white, empty, recycled, other, absolute, old* and *pure* are defined as differentiated adjective collocations. *Pile, put, get, take, dump, speak, feel, collect* and *use* are defined as differentiated verb collocations.

According to the investigation using the parts of speech lemmas, garbage, trash and rubbish have common collocations among each other. On the other hand, the investigation using the concordance shows that *garbage, trash* and *rubbish* do not have shared collocates among each other. The collocations of the three nouns are shared differently depending on the sense of meanings of the nouns.

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4.3 Analysis of Grammatical Patterns

In this study, *garbage*, *trash* and *rubbish* were investigated for their grammatical patterns. The results presented in the table below display the grammatical pattern of three synonyms from the first 300 concordance lines from COCA.

4.3.1 Analysis of Grammatical Patterns of the Word 'Garbage'

There are twelve grammatical patterns found in the first 300 concordance lines from COCA for the word *garbage*.

1. adjective + garbage + bag/s or can/s or bin/s or collection/s

   Example:

   - *One lone black garbage bag* sat in the middle of the room.
   - The use of *compostable garbage bags* may add value to this resource.
   - I have been throwing *huge garbage bags* of wood shavings
   - Residents have to use *clear garbage bags* so that recycling truck drivers can visually see it.
   - I left a living situation, carrying my *familiar garbage bags*
   - Human flesh was decomposing inside *nearby garbage bags*.
   - There are *designated garbage cans* for people to use.
   - She dropped the card bits into *three different garbage cans*.
   - The New York Times calls it "*a flying garbage can*."
   - I sent them to their final resting place in the *outside garbage can* without even having a taste.
   - The *longer garbage collection* is delayed, the greater the accumulation of garbage.
   - Without a *regular garbage collection*, individual networks begin to malfunction.
   - Hays had twice *weekly garbage collection*.

2. subject + verb + object + into + a/the/- + garbage + noun

   Example:

   - *Children threw basketballs into a garbage* can sized plastic bucket.

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- *PZ Myers tossing the Holy Eucharist into a garbage* can is absolutely comparable to an ethnic hate.
- *He took out all the desk drawers and emptied them into a garbage* bin.
- *I threw them into the garbage* and put on a new tape.
- *He crumples the pack and tosses it into a garbage* can.

3. adjective + garbage

   Example:

   - Look at all that *awesome garbage*.
   - Actually nothing, or *just garbage*.
   - Stemmed from an activist's complaints that were *complete garbage*.
   - These once-said discards were seen as *lifeless garbage*.
   - Through all the *external garbage*, he has kept the Astros in contention.
   - The buildup of natural gas emitted by the *rotting garbage*.
   - Their food items are *absolute garbage*.

4. verb + a/the/- + garbage

   Example:

   - ..including *removing garbage* and replacing broken street lights
   - You're gonna *slam garbage* at me.
   - Maybe we could train them to *eat garbage*.
   - Private firms *haul garbage* because the municipal unions were expensive.
   - Everyday, 300 trucks *bring garbage* to be fed into its enormous furnace.
   - "I used to *wrap garbage*," said his mother.

5. noun + of + garbage

   Example:

   - The sender has the right to comment on the *state of garbage* and expect the receiver to follow the directive.

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- The *amount of garbage* and sludge delivered will increase this year.
- As mentioned in a previous section, the *collection of garbage* is highly dependent on the usage of SSF.
- They want me to find all the *footage of garbage* mensorry.

6. adjective + noun + of + garbage

   Example:

   - And it's this *swelling stream of garbage* from a growing population.
   - This demonstrates the improvement in the *average efficiency of garbage* collection as the cluster size is decreased.
   - Recycling has diverted *dramatic amounts of garbage* from landfills
   - I noticed *a plastic bag of garbage* nestled against the signpost.
   - ..which allows *a large number of garbage* sectors to stay
   - She's just *a lying evil sack of garbage* that's trying a last-ditch effort to make her husband look good.

7. verb + preposition + garbage

   Example:

   - Nowadays, a larger percentage *buys into the garbage* and claims victim-hood.
   - ..polluted Ngong river, which *reeks of garbage* and feces.
   - ..different from Emma's book, which *was strewn with garbage* and noisy with taxi horns.
   - A newborn *is rescued from a garbage* can after a boy sees his teenage sister.

8. adjective + garbage + noun

   Example:

   - Such *a low life garbage women* that exist now.
   - ..throws the contents into his *grinding garbage truck*.
   - ..holding *large garbage sacks*

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- A rather unfortunate incident involving *a Venetian garbage scow* chugs down the mighty Mississippi.
- This is *Faux Nooz-style garbage journalism* that's clearly an attempt to wind up fanboiz.
- Take some garbage up to the mountains and create *a seasonal garbage dump* for bears.
- Hays has *twice weekly garbage* collection.

9. garbage + noun

   Example:

   - The *garbage crusher*'s broken down again.
   - Some of us dads fiddle with the *garbage disposal* without understanding it.
   - A *garbage dumpster* occupies the center.
   - He convinced his *garbage hauler* to start collecting recyclables.
   - For anyone in doubt, my husband is a *garbage man*.
   - A tethered donkey munched in a *garbage pile*.
   - Is that *garbage truck* moving?

10. garbage + verb

    Example:

    - *Garbage is piling up*.
    - I noticed a plastic bag of *garbage nestled* against the signpost.
    - We will get more of the more easily palatable *garbage pushed* on us year in, year out.
    - It was fun, but the *garbage was* gross.
    - *Garbage will be picked up* twice a week and yard trimmings and recyclables.
    - Another piece of *garbage is written* by Mary.

11. garbage + adverb

    Example:

    - Reject this *garbage publicly*.
    - Dispose of their *garbage properly*.
    - I took the *garbage out*

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- He gets the *garbage halfway* to the street
- There's *garbage everywhere*
- He feared *garbage eventually* would cover all the vast, once vibrant salt marshes

12. garbage + preposition

    Example:

    - Flocks of pigeons fatten themselves on *garbage in* the street.
    - Forbidding among other things the throwing of *garbage into* the rivers.
    - They just understand today's marriage is *garbage for* men.
    - Please do whatever you can to avoid this *garbage from* spreading.
    - She walks to my car, a bag of *garbage in* her hand.

4.3.2 Analysis of Grammatical Patterns of the Word 'Trash'

There are twelve grammatical patterns found in the first 300 concordance lines from COCA for the word *trash*.

1. noun + of + trash

   Example:

   - I am so sick of hearing this *load of trash* about Janelle leaving.
   - All while staring down the *alley of trash* and shadows.
   - Investigators spent six days sifting through 6,000 *tons of trash* at the local landfill.
   - Climbing a *mountain of trash* bags.
   - Americans' *views of trash* changed swiftly.
   - I expect this *kind of trash*.
   - The trunk of the car actually contained a *bag of trash*.

2. adjective + noun + of + trash

   Example:

   - Ashton is *a complete piece of trash* for cheating on his wife.
   - There's been *a non stop flow of trash* coming out of Clarke's mouth

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- Eventually *every stray piece of trash* eventually finds its way to our lakes and oceans.
- The same rebels the *degenerate piece of trash* in the White House helped.

3. subject + verb + object + into + a/the/- + trash + noun

   Example:

   - *I tossed it all into the trash bag*, dragged the bin curbside myself.
   - *I tossed the magazines and newspapers into the trash basket* and set it beside the door.
   - *He patted his hair and hook-shot his paper towel into the trash can*.
   - *He placed them into the trash can*.
   - *He dropped the jug back into the trash can*.
   - *He dumped half the pack into the trash can*.
   - As *I toss the empty bourbon bottle into the trash can*, I spot Angela getting covered in sap.

4. subject + verb + adjective + trash + noun

   Example:

   - *Lucy Stone Shook out a plastic trash bag* and bent down to scoop up the torn paper
   - *From there, he took up a plastic trash bag* and started working his way up the slope
   - *Jill gets four trash bags* and we start sorting.

5. adjective + trash + noun

   Example:

   - The act of navigating your fender through these *black-and-white trash cars* is a real delight.
   - Pile of rubbish and furniture that was waiting for the *weekly trash collection*.
   - That happens within the Caribbean, poor black and *white trash communities*.

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- Most of these artifacts are distinct from *more typical domestic trash deposits* in that they are fire-stained.
- Charlton left plenty of evidence for this by keeping an *enormous trash dump* in the backyard.
- Fiber is *a biological trash hauler*, grabbing toxic molecules.
- ..holding *a bookmarked trash novel* in her hand.
- But has to swerve back as *a speeding trash truck* rounds a bend.

6. adjective + trash

   Example:

   - *Regular trash* and recycling pickup service will resume on Dec. 28.
   - The discarded fast-food containers and *other trash* amounted to more than 11 percent of all *highway trash*.
   - There is not much difference between *great trash* and great art.

7. adjective + trash + bag/s or bin/s or can/s

   Example:

   - I'm about to drop the shepherdess into a *plastic trash bag* full of my mother's other useless belongings.
   - A man walked out of the back room with a *thirty-gallon trash bag* slung over his shoulder.
   - ..had once been a big steel *municipal trash bin*.
   - Pushing his *wheeled trash bin*.
   - Her lifeless body was found in one of those *big green trash bins* that could be found all over the city.
   - ..balancing the *empty trash can* on his knee.
   - Kids in their late teens stood huddled around *a nearby trash can*, smoking cigarettes and talking loudly.

8. verb + a/the/- + trash +/- noun

   Example:

   - LOL's to all the silly people on here *talking trash* about this cake.
   - He *threw trash* at me.
   - *Lay trash* bags on the floor.

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- Mother and son boarded a plane *clutching trash* bags stuffed with a few belongings.
- Which *were causing trash* build-up and safety concerns.
- I can see that this *is trash* but I like it.
- He turns up Fifteenth Street and *dodges trash* cans rolled in the gutter.
- I never *counted trash* cans.

9. verb + preposition + trash + noun

   Example:

   - After a tire iron *was removed from a trash can* in front of the store.
   - I *went over to the trash* can and *looked inside the trash can* and there was a mouse.
   - *Jump in that trash bin*.
   - ..body parts being unceremoniously torn apart and *dumped into the trash bags*.
   - They will automatically *go in the trash bin*.
   - I was showing him the kids *eating at the trash can*.
   - They don't *live in trash dumps*.

10. trash + adverb

    Example:

    - Eventually every stray piece of *trash eventually* finds its way to our lakes and oceans.
    - We'll sort through *trash longingly* searching for a half-eaten tin of dog food.
    - Click Trash and Empty the *trash now*.
    - If Jake told him that some fools had put their *trash out* the night before.
    - I took out the *trash yesterday*.
    - It's kind of hard to enjoy the beach with so much *trash all over*.

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11. trash + noun

    Example:

    - ..you will see *trash people* just dump on other properties
    - It was so bad that she kept a *trash pail* beneath her desk throughout the debate
    - ..but it wants to see ways to improve the *trash issue* in the city.
    - Firefighters said that the blaze was just a *trash fire*.
    - We relegate our darkest moments to the *trash heap* outside the confessional and the reconciliation room.
    - ..that adds teeth to the country's regulations regarding *trash disposal*.

12. trash + verb

    Example:

    - Five thousand tons of *trash are* still *delivered* there each day.
    - The scattered papers and *trash blown* into filthy piles
    - There has been a non-stop flow of *trash coming out* of Clarke's mouth
    - The *trash had to be taken* to the burn barrel
    - Some people's *trash is turning* into fast food for grizzly bears
    - Trucks haul the 40 to 75 tons of *trash produced* there daily.
    - Jeff made a bonfire of *trash to warm* me.

4.3.3 Analysis of Grammatical Patterns of the Word 'Rubbish'

There are eight grammatical patterns found in the first 300 concordance lines from COCA for the word *rubbish*.

1. verb + a/ the / - + rubbish

   Example:

   - Mother says most people *speak rubbish*.
   - It*'s rubbish* and one of the new infected is called Alec-is-a-twat.
   - The philosophy here is to *rediscover rubbish* and reuse.
   - John *collected rubbish* around the house.

2. adjective + noun + of + rubbish

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Example:

- That has got to be one of the *biggest loads of rubbish* I have viewed.
- But your book is *the most poisonous piece of rubbish*.
- *Some piles of rubbish* sometimes spilled onto her lawn.
- It will send an additional *51 tons of rubbish* to the local landfill.
- You *absolute piece of rubbish*.
- Don't bring *all kinds of rubbish*.
- You're the one that wrote this *inflammatory piece of rubbish*.

3. subject + verb + object (rubbish)

   Example:

   - *John collected rubbish* around the house.
   - *He shoveled the rubbish* into the bags.
   - *Stop hanging onto rubbish* like this.
   - *I* can't wait to *get rid* of this *rubbish*.
   - Next morning *Inkululeko was busy gathering up the rubbish* the jobbing gardener had swept under the shrubs.

4. adjective + rubbish

   Example:

   - All the *other rubbish* about Israeli conspiracies.
   - In general doctors are *pretty rubbish* at using a sphygmomanometer.
   - The *old rubbish* cannot wholly remain with a new building.
   - Despite everything, this heap of *trivial rubbish* circulating in the media served Karadzic himself well.

5. rubbish + verb

   Example:

   - Heroic modernism's engagement with *rubbish was refocused* by a renowned concern
   - A space of dust and *rubbish separated* it from the village.
   - Trying to get rid of that *rubbish polluting* the internet.
   - The *rubbish lies* everywhere.

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- It is not right to say a show is *rubbish based on* one episode.

6. rubbish + noun

   Example:

   - The polls were left open and *rubbish bags* with filled out lost ballots
   - Toss your CV straight into the *rubbish bin*.
   - The *rubbish boys* will stash your trash in a flash.
   - I enjoy being used as a *rubbish dump*
   - I picked this dress and this ribbon from your *rubbish heap*.
   - I think using a *rubbish image* is sort of acceptable
   - I was ready to dismiss Prototype 2 as a *rubbish sequel*.
   - Green *rubbish sacks* are piled on the hood and trunk of the car.

7. rubbish + preposition

   Example:

   - The sentimental *rubbish of* a little rich boy
   - I can't wait to get rid of this *rubbish off* my computer
   - Picking up *rubbish off* the beach
   - I don't think I have ever heard more *rubbish in* my life
   - He shoveled the *rubbish into* the bags with his hands

8. rubbish + adverb

   Example:

   - The writers of this *rubbish obviously* have zero experience
   - The smoke from the burning *rubbish outside* creeps through cracks in the windows.
   - Piles of *rubbish sometimes* spilled onto her lawn
   - I mean none of your *rubbish here*.

The investigations reveal that garbage, trash and rubbish have shared grammatical patterns. The results are presented in the table below.

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Table 4.12

Shared and Different Grammatical Patterns of 'Garbage, Trash and Rubbish'

Synonyms	Shared Grammatical Patterns
garbage, *trash* and *rubbish*	- *adjective + noun + of + garbage/trash/rubbish* - *garbage/trash/rubbish + noun* - *garbage/trash/rubbish + verb* - *garbage/trash/rubbish + adverb* - *adjective + garbage/trash/rubbish*
garbage and *trash*	- *adjective + garbage/trash + noun*
garbage and *rubbish*	- *verb + a/the/- garbage/rubbish* - *garbage/rubbish + preposition*
	Different Grammatical Patterns
garbage	- *adjective + garbage + bag/s or can/s or bin/s or collection/s* - *subject + verb + object + into + a/the/- garbage + noun* - *verb + a/the/- + garbage* - *noun + of + garbage* - *verb + preposition + garbage* - *adjective + garbage + noun* - *garbage + preposition*
trash	- *noun + of + trash* - *subject + verb + object + into + a/the/- + trash + noun* - *subject + verb + adjective + trash + noun* - *adjective + trash + noun* - *adjective + trash + bag/s or bin/s or can/s* - *verb + a/the/- + trash +/- noun* - *verb + preposition + trash + noun*
rubbish	- *verb + a/the/- + rubbish* - *subject + verb + object (rubbish)* - *rubbish + preposition*

The table demonstrates that these three synonyms share 5 grammatical patterns. The pair *garbage* and *trash* share 1 grammatical pattern while the pair *garbage* and

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rubbish share 2 grammatical patterns. Apparently, the pair trash and rubbish have no common grammatical pattern. The findings indicate that the three synonyms cannot be used interchangeably in all grammatical context since they do not share all the same grammatical patterns. Consequently, the result is in line with research finding of Phoocharoensil (2010). Synonyms which share a common core meaning do not imply the same grammatical pattern.

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CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter consists of four topics: 1) a summary of the study, 2) summary of the findings, 3) conclusion, 4) recommendations for future research and 5) pedagogical implications.

5.1 Summary of the Study

The study was aimed at investigating the similarities and differences among three synonymous nouns, namely, garbage, trash and rubbish using three distinguishing criteria: meaning, collocations and grammatical patterns. The study used a corpus-based methodology to investigate the similarities and differences of the three synonyms. The information on garbage, trash and rubbish was derived from the online Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, and Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. The two online dictionaries which provide standard pronunciation, clear definitions, example sentences and grammatical information, were used as the main source of the primary definitions, and the Corpus of Contemporary American English was used as the main corpus database for comparison. The meanings and examples were gathered from OALD and LDOCE to compare with the meanings from the first 300 concordance lines drawn from COCA and find more information not mentioned in the dictionaries. The first one hundred tokens of collocation lemmas of each noun from COCA were investigated according to the noun collocates, verb collocates and adverb collocates. Also, the top five collocations of each noun were examined from the first three hundred concordance lines of the COCA. The findings are summarized in the next section.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

This section summarizes the results of the study according to the meaning, collocations and grammatical patterns of the three synonymous nouns namely: *garbage*, *trash* and *rubbish*. The result of the study can be summarized as follows:

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a. The investigation has observed that although garbage, trash and rubbish share the same meaning of something thrown away or something of a poor quality, they have other different meanings. Garbage means *a container where waste can be placed*. Trash means *someone worthless or of low social class*. In addition, garbage and trash are both used in North American English while rubbish is the usual word in British English.
b. The three synonymous nouns co-occur with shared and dissimilar collocations. According to the data gathered from the first 100 tokens of collocation lemmas, the three synonyms mostly share common noun collocations. However, based on data from the first 300 concordance lines, the three synonymous nouns do not share common collocations.
c. The three synonymous nouns are used in five similar grammatical patterns. A slight difference is found.

5.3 Conclusion

The following conclusion can be drawn:

a. In spite of the fact that garbage, trash and rubbish share the same core meaning, the three nouns cannot be utilized interchangeably in every context. The reason is that there are some differences in terms of collocations and grammatical patterns.
b. The investigation has observed that garbage, trash and rubbish are near synonyms.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

The following recommendations should be adapted for further research characterized sequentially:

a. Other perspectives of focus can be applied. These are pragmatic functions, semantic prosody, and cross-sociolinguistic functions.
b. Data from other corpora such as the British National Corpus (BNC) can be used in comparison.
c. As mentioned in the limitation section, it would be more beneficial to include all word families and increase the number of concordance lines.

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5.5 Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this present study offer the following pedagogical implications:

a. Students can focus on the accurate use of synonyms for effective communication and be more aware of the differences between synonyms.
b. Teachers of the English language should give emphasis on the similar as well as dissimilar properties of synonymous words and consequently apply the results for learning both grammar and collocations.

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