



**A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF ENGLISH VERB  
SYNONYMS: INFORM, NOTIFY AND ANNOUNCE**

**BY**


**PATTITA THEPSANG**

**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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ENTITLED

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SYNONYMS: INFORM, NOTIFY AND ANNOUNCE

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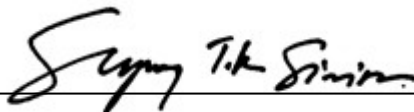
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## ABSTRACT

The study aimed to investigate the substitution of English synonymous verbs: *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*, focusing on the similarities and differences regarding grammatical patterns and noun collocations. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online (2022) was utilized as the fundamental source for the information of target verb synonyms. The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) was applied as a major corpus database for data collection. As the study was conducted in the two aspects previously mentioned, two hundred concordance lines of each target verb from COCA were analyzed manually. Furthermore, top twenty collocates of the three verbs were extracted and ranked by frequency, and the search was limited to nouns or nouns in prepositional phrase immediately following these synonyms. The results showed that the synonymous verbs shared the same core meaning since they were used to tell somebody or something, say something, and give information. The findings of the study indicated that as the target verb synonyms: *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*, are near synonyms, they cannot be substituted in every context despite having the same meaning. They are different in their grammatical patterns and noun collocations.

**Keywords:** synonyms, corpora, collocation, concordance lines, corpus-based data

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And finally, I do hope that anyone who is interested in a corpus-based study of synonyms will find this study useful. As we all may know, one of the important aspects for English language learners involves English synonyms, and it's necessary to understand their similarities and differences in order to apply them effectively.

Pattita Thepsang

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Currently, English plays an important role in numerous countries. There are many reasons for people to learn the English language, for instance, business, education, career, media, entertainment, etc. Crystal (2008) stated that the number of non-native speakers of English is significantly larger than English native speakers. English is the official language in 53 countries, and approximately 400 million people speak English as a first language. For a long period of time, English language teaching has been offered around the globe as well as in Thailand.

In the context of teaching English in Thailand, English is considered as a required subject in schools according to the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008). In order to comply with the main purpose of the current curriculum regarding foreign languages, developing communicative language skills is extremely necessary. As a result, teaching needs to focus on four skills of the English, with a broad vocabulary and good grammar. Wilkins (1972, p. 111) revealed that "without grammar, little can be conveyed, without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed".

However, although Thai students spend approximately 11 to 12 years in primary and secondary school learning English, most of them are still not able to have a conversation for communication after graduation. There are many different factors that cause this failure. For example, students have a limitation in vocabulary proficiency as McCarthy (1990) indicated that "no matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wider range of meanings, communication in L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way" (p. viii). Insufficient knowledge of synonyms is a problem, according to Phoocharoensil (2010) and Liu (2010), who explained that learners who can employ a variety of synonyms will be able to convey their message successfully and will rarely misinterpret the meaning. In this regard, Hunt (2014) stated that it was important for EFL learners to acquire English

collocations since they could be used to deliver their ideas more clearly, precisely, and powerfully by including the use of native idioms. Likewise, Anglin (1993, 2), showed that vocabulary knowledge is the fundamental building component of language; without it, neither language production nor understanding is possible. Moreover, Boonyasaquan (2006) also made clear that collocational behavior is an aspect that is missing in traditional grammar books and is neglected in the Thai EFL vocabulary teaching context. Besides, synonymy in the English language is considered to play a crucial role in terms of English learning as it is a technique to avoid using repetitive words in communication. This notion is in line with Phoocharoensil (2010), in those learners who need to improve English skills first have to master the knowledge of synonyms.

In light of the foregoing, corpus-based studies of English synonyms, therefore, were conducted to examine their interchangeability in order to encourage students to select words that are appropriate for context and form. Harley (2006), for example, indicated that words are not replaceable with synonyms in every context. As well, Cowan (2008) pointed out that grammar assists language learners understand the sentences' meaning accurately because it demonstrates how sentences can be constructed using words and word groups. The corpus is a structured collection of text that can be used for a variety of reasons, including evaluating lexical and grammatical patterns and finding errors (O'Keeffe, McCarthy, & Carter, 2010). Chambers (2010), Gilquin and (2010), Granger (2010), and Meyer (2002) pointed out that corpora may also be used to discover learners' difficulties and allow students to use concordance programs to use corpora for DDL or data-driven learning methodology. Furthermore, corpus analysis can be used to demonstrate changes in rules from the past to the present. This is according to the explanation of Akbana (2018); he showed that language has always been changing and developing together with the source of languages, which are individuals in society. The corpus consists of real-life examples of sources; it provides researchers with natural data on the use of language in which they can conduct different studies. Hence, corpora can be analyzed for synonymous words that are used in real contexts.

Numerous previous studies have emphasized the importance of conducting corpus-based study of synonyms, e.g., Watcharaporn (2017) and Nattika (2015)) provide a bit of detail of these studies before moving onto the gap of studies in this line, including the role of grammatical patterns. These studies are relevant to the vocabulary regarding daily usage, but the verb synonyms: *inform*, *notify* and *announce* which mostly concerns written context have not been carried out by any researcher yet.

The present study tries to fill out the gaps left by that previous research on synonyms by exploring the grammatical pattern and the noun collocation. This study intends to investigate these linguistic features among three verb synonyms because they truly play a significant role in the field of writing, such as e-mail, announcements, news, memorandums, publishing, and so on.

Since corpus-based studies could provide benefits to L2 and EFL learners in terms of language learning and getting familiar with real authentic language, and English teachers also benefit from corpora to enhance the meaningful input that is provided to learners, the present study attempts to apply the technique of corpus-based analysis in investigating synonymous aspects of the target verbs: *inform*, *notify* and *announce*. Hopefully, the findings of this present study may provide advocacy for vocabulary learning, including the factors affecting the strategy choices among L2 or EFL learners, particularly grammatical patterns and collocation associated with these verbs. Besides, this research might facilitate teachers who teach English to improve their teaching methods and also lead to the creation of new instructional media and materials for their students. In particular, the findings from this study potentially facilitate students using words in the right and appropriate context, so that they can enhance English language proficiency, especially the knowledge of vocabulary and language use.

## 1.2 Research Objectives

The study aimed to investigate English verbs synonyms of *inform*, *notify* and *announce* concerning terms of grammatical patterns and the most frequent noun collocations used with these synonymous verbs. To accomplish the aim, the study was carried out to address the following objectives:

1.2.1 To investigate the grammatical patterns associated with three synonymous verbs: *inform*, *notify* and *announce*.

1.2.2 To study the most frequent noun collocations used with three synonymous verbs.

### 1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 What are the grammatical patterns of three synonymous verbs: *inform*, *notify* and *announce*?

1.3.2 What are the most frequent noun collocations used with synonymous verbs: *inform*, *notify* and *announce*?

### 1.4. Definitions of Key Terms

The following are the definitions of key terms:

1.4.1 **Corpus** refers to an authentic text collected through systematics in both written and spoken languages, stored electronically on a computer, and used to obtain data regarding language in different genres.

1.4.2 **COCA** is the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), has more than 450 million words of texts collected from 1990 to the present and is the largest free online collection that covers spoken English, academic writing, fiction, magazines, and newspaper articles.

1.4.3 **Concordance line** is the findings gained through the software of corpus that present the utilizing the searched keyword in the middle in different settings.

1.4.4 **Collocation** is two or more words that frequently occur together. These combinations simply sound "right" to native English speakers, who employ them on a regular basis. On the contrary, other combinations may be unnatural and just sound "wrong". For example, *pay attention* (verb + noun), *strong smell* (adjective + noun), *birth certificate* (noun + noun), *totally unbelievable* (adverb + adjective) and etc.

1.4.5 **Grammatical pattern** is the structure of the words when forming a sentence or clause, for instance *inform* = *v + sb + about/of + sth* (Example: Please *inform* us of any change of address as soon as possible.), *notify* = *v + sb + of + sth* (Example: You will be

*notified* of any changes in the system.) and *announce* = *v* + *sth* + *to* + *sb* (Example: Cordon *announced* his resignation to staff members.)

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This study aimed to investigate three verb synonyms: *inform*, *notify*, and *announce* by utilizing the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online (2022) as a fundamental instrument. In addition, the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) was considered a significant instrument in collecting the data. The concordance lines were used to investigate and analyze the similarities and differences among these synonyms in terms of the grammatical patterns and the most frequent noun collocations.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study concerns the corpus-based study of three verb synonyms: *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*. The findings of the study may facilitate L2 and EFL students or learners understand how to use these verb synonyms correctly in specific contexts, both in spoken and written contexts. Besides, this study could assist English learners in selecting word choices more naturally. Moreover, the knowledge gained from this study can help raise awareness of appropriate grammatical patterns associated with them in a particular context. And the results of concordance lines would show how English teachers and L2 or EFL students are able to utilize the corpus as an additional instrument in terms of teaching and learning English.

In addition, the examples and interpretation from the concordance lines could help improve our understanding of the use of synonyms, and the grammatical patterns of noun collocations. Furthermore, they help us understand more about synonymous words and their sense of meaning. The excerpts from the corpus and interpretations can raise awareness of using language in context in that using only intuition and judgment may not be enough in proving the language in use, but authentic examples from the corpus and concordance lines could assist us in using certain word choices in certain contexts.

### **1.7 Organization of the Study**

The corpus-based study of synonymous verbs: *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*, is separated into five chapters as follows:

The first chapter is the introduction of the study. It comprises the background of the study, research objectives, research questions, definitions of key terms, scope of the study, significance of the study, and organization of the study.

The second chapter presents a review of the literature. The previous research related to this study is stated in this chapter.

The third chapter explains the research methodology relevant to methods, research instruments, research procedures, and data analysis.

The fourth chapter describes the results and discussion of the study in the area of similarities and differences regarding grammatical patterns and the most frequent noun collocations.

And the last chapter shows the conclusions and recommendations. It discusses the details of the summary of the study, summary of the main findings, pedagogical implications, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This chapter provides a description of corpus-based studies and reviews the related literature. It begins with the concept of corpus and corpus linguistics, focusing on the benefits of corpora to learners relating to gaining the correct data with speed and reliability, as discovering a selected word through corpora is greater than doing it manually. Likewise, a corpus also helps learners acquire the form of the foreign language as they are involved in investigating aspects of the native language based on authentic content or language used in real-world situations. The concordancing lines, subsequently, are a fundamental tool in corpus-based study to seek all the occurrences of a target word or phrase. Then, previous studies on synonyms, along with collocations were reviewed.

#### **2.1 The Concept of Corpus and Corpus Linguistics**

The first electronic collection of English words for linguistic use was called Corpus. Nelson Francis and Henry Kucera were the first to present it. They were the founders of the Brown Corpus at Brown University in 1961. “Corpus can refer to the electronic storage of numerous texts in which a computer is used to manage all the texts for a variety of uses” (Kennedy, 1998, p. 3). Corpus is a principled collection of text that can be used for several purposes such as examining lexical and grammatical patterns or identifying their errors (O’Keeffe, McCarthy, & Carter, 2010). Corpora can be employed to obtain the accurate data with speed and reliability, since using a selected language through corpora is better than doing it manually, it brings benefits to people who use them (Lindquist, 2009). An electronic corpus also offers researchers the frequency of each particular language use. Moreover, unusual language structures or other linguistic features can be revealed by a corpus that native speakers' linguistic intuition cannot. (Jones & Waller, 2015) Thus, a corpus can truly reveal the real-world use of language.

As previously mentioned, corpora provide tremendous benefits to users in comparison with dictionaries, which reflect traditional lexical storage. Rundell (2008)

stated that since the corporation of the Collins Dictionary publisher and Birmingham University created the Cobuild Corpus, it has played a significant part in the dictionary revolution. Lindquist (2009) also asserted that currently, corpus has been established by many dictionary publishers because it can contain a great number of texts; moreover, the most recent data is easy to update and convenient to gain the expected result. A corpus shows how language is used in real-world situations and brings an end to the so-called necessity of relying on a native speaker's intuition to tell what is generally or rarely used in English.

Besides its significant role in language learning, corpus linguistics is also regarded as an approach for studying language (Gries 2009), rather than a discipline of linguistics that focuses on analyzing real samples of language use. Corpus linguistics plays a larger part in English learning. Students will acquire the form of the foreign language as they are involved in investigating aspects of the native language based on authentic content. Corpus linguistics is a branch of linguistics that is based on the use of corpora. McEnery and Hardie (2012: 1) explained corpus linguistics as a significantly prominent area of linguistics; as stated by them, it focuses on a particular set of procedures and methods of learning language, in place of simply investigating a specific aspect of it. McEnery, Xiao and Tono, showed that since corpus linguistics is an entire system of methods and principles of how to apply corpora in language studies and teaching or learning, it surely has a theoretical status. Yet theoretical status is not theory in itself (7–8: 2006); hence they summarize that corpus linguistics is a methodology. According to Gries (2009), corpus linguistics is not directly related to linguistic theory, but it is compatible with some theories in specific ways; that is, corpus data can occur in some parts of any linguistic theories based on frequency evaluation. Corpora are often text files collocated in the form of quantitative or statistical data. Kittigodin (2014) explained that corpus-based linguistic study can show the real use of native language to learners, and also offer large insight into information for exact purposes.

According to Yoon (2008), the corpus sorting function will be displayed as concordance lines concordance lines, which can assist in the examination of lexical

grammatical structure. By employing a corpus, numerous examples have been used to illustrate data on lexical grammar in the context of usage.

Corpus-based research enables people to understand the lexical meaning by its word collocation, (Firth 1957). He also stated that discovering the co-occurrence structure in a corpus revealed collocates of the selected word. According to Hunston (2005), in any language example, word collocates can be distinguished. She mentioned that it is more reliable to receive the results through statistical analysis and that corpus is needed in this aspect. However, Sinclair (1990) explained that an important connection between grammar and lexis collocates is presented through corpus analysis. Since the software for analyzing corpora has been developed, it can encourage students to study various parts of grammar that are collocated with a specific word. Moreover, it also influences English teachers' methodology as they could plan lesson activities for the students to explore the language using software that allows them to make their own conclusions about the language. Some of the pedagogical implications of corpora are that teachers are able to use databases to notify and plan their classes and students can participate in their own language learning by exploring a corpus and investigating language use in real life.

## **2.2 Concordance Lines**

Concordancing, as a fundamental tool in a corpus study, refers to using software, known as a concordancer or a concordance program, to find all the occurrences of a particular word or phrase (O'Keeffe, McCarthy & Carter, 2007). Although there have been attempts to manually discover and record every example of certain words, the attempt has frequently caused problems, for example, inaccuracy caused by human errors. According to Lindquist (2009), using a concordance program enables researchers, teachers, and learners to search for a word or phrase in context with perfect accuracy in seconds and another benefit of corpus linguistics is that it can be used as a tool to analyze the language rules changes through time when people of various languages interact. The search word or phrase, referred to as the node, is presented in concordance lines and appears in the center of the line with seven or eight words. Thornbury (2004), stated that there are many grammar textbooks using concordance information to present grammar to learners,

encouraging them to observe the data and then find the rules accounting for the occurrences. Moreover, language teachers or learners themselves can use concordance as a “language-learning activity” (Gavioli 1997, p. 84), or language learning tool with a vast amount of information from which learners can ‘conduct inductive explorations of grammatical constructions’ (Meyer, 2004, p. 27). As a result, using concordance lines as an activity in language classes is very beneficial for L2 or EFL learners in order to get them accustomed to real authentic language.

### **2.3 Studies on Synonyms and Collocations**

In the context of vocabulary, there are various definitions of vocabulary given by experts. Vocabulary is related to word or lexis and it is a list of words and its meaning. John Read (2000) stated that vocabulary is about knowing the meaning of the words. When teaching a language, vocabulary should be prioritized, and requiring tests should be used to monitor students' progress in vocabulary learning and to evaluate whether their vocabulary knowledge is sufficient to meet their communication needs.

Synonymy in a language can be considered as a fundamental concept in lexicology. Synonyms are defined as “a word or phrase which has the same or nearly the same meaning as another word or phrase in the same language,” according to the Cambridge Dictionary (online, 2022). As stated by Webb and Nation (2017, p. 284), the idea of a word or phrase that has the same meaning as another word or phrase is known as synonymy. Cruse (2006, p.167) asserted that “a word is said to be a synonym of another word in the same language if one or more of its senses carries an adequately close similarity to one or more of the senses of the other word”. Each synonym has lexical meaning, which is defined as a word's meaning in relation to the physical world or abstract notions, without regard to any sentence in which the term may appear (Collins English Dictionary, 2016). According to Phoocharoensil (2010), distinguishing the similarities and differences of synonyms involves the formality of the context, dialects, the connotations, the grammatical structure, and the collocations of concern.

### 2.3.1 Grammatical Patterns

Grammatical patterns are considered as another aspect used to differentiate synonyms. According to Fang (2013), the same grammatical patterns can be utilized with a variety of synonyms. For instance, the synonymous verbs of *wish* and *hope* may usually be used with the infinitival ‘to’ such as “A lady *wishes* to see me urgently.” (Fang, 2013).

Sinclair (1991) stated that both lexis and syntax are two elements that are a natural combination of a single identity. Francis (1993) asserted that syntactic forms seemed to be strict lexis; in contrast, lexical items are often related to grammatical patterns in nature. Remarkably, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) suggested that the term lexico-grammar is cited to form a word between the compositions and collocations. In this regard, Lindquist (2009) pointed out that the use of corpora for proximate study of language use can expose not only their own lexical meaning but also their grammatical pattern. Therefore, studies on vocabulary and grammar teaching should be carried out concurrently in terms of helping L2 students use English naturally (Liu & Jiang, 2009). Grammatical patterns are possible to differentiate near-synonyms as displayed in the following examples from Phoocharoensil (2010):

*Ask/Beg + (somebody) + for + something*

*Ask/Beg + somebody + to-V.inf*

*Ask/Beg + to-V.inf*

*Ask/Beg + that + Subject + V.inf*

However, they also form in different patterns as follows:

*Ask + (somebody) + if/whether*

*Beg + (something) + (from + somebody)*

Chalong (2014, p. 97) explored the three words *abandon*, *renounce*, and *relinquish*. The results showed that even though these words share the meaning of “to leave something,” they do not completely have the same grammatical patterns. The two patterns they share are as follows.

*Abandon/Renounce/Relinquish + something*

*Abandon/Renounce/Relinquish + somebody*

The words also form in diverse patterns as follows:

*Abandon + somebody + to + something*

*Renounce + something + to + something*

*Relinquish + something + to + somebody*

From the above examples, when conveying the English language, L2 and EFL students or learners, therefore, need to be aware of the grammatical patterns that differ and are used differently.

### **2.3.2 Collocations**

A collocation refers to a grouping of two or more words that frequently occur together. Basically, collocation refers to normal combinations of words from the experience of native speakers' communication, which is stated by Bolinger and Sears (1981). According to Englishleap (2015, p.1), a collocation is a combination of words that are commonly used together; the simplest way of describing collocations is to say that they 'just sound right' to native English speakers.

Firth (1957) was first to introduce the term collocation; he indicated that "you shall know a word by the company it keeps" (p. 6). Sinclair (1991) asserted that a regular combination between items is a collocation, so that they co-occur more frequently than their respective frequencies. Cambridge Dictionaries Online (2022) defines collocation as "a word or phrase that is often used with another word or phrase, in a way that sounds correct to people who have spoken the language all their lives, but might not be expected from the meaning", for example "*in the phrase "a hard frost", "hard" is a collocation of "frost" and "strong" would not sound natural.* The word "*collocation*" is from the Latin language "*collocare*" that means "to set in order/to arrange".

Additionally, Halliday (1966) indicated that word-collocations are combinations that transcend grammar boundaries, whilst Bahns (1993) discussed collocations as an

aspect of lexicon studies that can be determined and perceived in a variety of ways. Lewis (1997) also explained that collocations can be distinguished into strong and weak ones relevant to their compatibility, while the measurement of frequency can be divided by their co-occurrence. Strong collocations are defined as tightly connected. On the other hand, weak collocations are considered as a combination of two common words, each of which can be combined with many other words (Sinclair, 1991).

Benson and Ilson (1986) classified collocations into two major types: grammatical collocations and lexical collocations. Grammatical collocation includes content words: a noun, an adjective, or a verb plus a preposition or infinitive, whereas lexical collocation consists of two lexical words that could be nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs. In this study, the researcher focused on both grammatical and lexical collocation as they investigated the most frequent noun collocates and nouns in prepositional phrases used with three verb synonyms.

Regarding English teaching and learning, making students aware of collocations is essential. Students who are L2 or EFL learners always have a problem of mother-tongue interference on top of many other problems in terms of learning English as a foreign or second language. Therefore, teachers should know how to introduce collocations into their class.

## 2.4 Previous Studies

Numerous corpus-based studies have focused on English synonyms and corpora have been created to examine the concept of synonyms as well as the relationship between corpora and synonymous studies. The following is the relevant research.

Grammatical patterns can disclose the similarity or difference in syntactic patterns of synonyms that can help differentiate between strict synonyms and loose synonyms. Jirananthiporn (2018) showed that the students should be provided with the lexico-grammatical patterns when synonyms are presented. Gu (2017) explained the synonyms *obtain* and *gain* through BNC corpus. They showed that the syntactic pattern of these words was similar in the pattern of “*verb + object noun*” and “*verb + adverb*”. Nevertheless, the finding indicated that *obtain* is the most frequently conveyed in the

passive voice. Similarly, Petcharat and Phoocharoensil (2017) found that *proper*, *appropriate*, and *suitable* could not be used interchangeably in all grammatical contexts although they shared common core meaning.

Kiatthanakul (2010) investigated three synonymous verbs, *achieved*, *accomplished*, and *attained*, the past-tense and past-participle forms regarding the sense of meaning and collocation were focused on in this study, to investigate the similarities and differences in terms of using the most appropriate in different contexts. This study began with the first three hundred concordance lines of each verb collected from and the data was gathered from two dictionaries. The findings indicated that *achieved*, *accomplished*, and *attained* shared some common meanings and collocations, hence they were considered as near-synonyms. However, there appear to be some differences in terms of their meanings and collocations. This indicates that the target synonyms on this study can be substituted for each other in certain contexts. Phoocharoensil's (2010) work also showed the similarities and differences of five synonymous words: *ask*, *beg*, *plead*, *request*, and *appeal* according to their meanings, connotations, collocations, grammatical patterns, formality, and dialects. The researcher displayed examples of loose synonyms in English, which all mean "asking someone to do something". This research emphasized the importance of their lexical, syntactic, and stylistic information. The findings of his study revealed that all words are able to share the same core meaning and they can also be used interchangeably. However, when *beg* is in some idiomatic expressions, the substitution cannot be made, for example, "*I beg your pardon*". *Beg* cannot be replaced with *ask*. The researcher investigated that those dictionaries' linguistic details don't provide comprehensive details of every word. The corpus-based data appear useful as they support supplying additional information not existent in the dictionaries. Moreover, learners are able to search for more sample sentences of synonyms from corpora, enabling them to have access to subtle meanings of them.

In the context of collocations, different collocates that co-exist with the selected synonyms can indirectly indicate the capability of synonyms set to replace each other in some specific contexts. Sumintana and Tawilapakul (2019) investigated the synonyms *cure* and *heal*, utilizing the corpus data obtained from COCA. It was revealed that *cure* is mostly followed by disease and problems, for example cancer and disease, whereas *heal* frequently

co-occurs with emotional injuries and something abstract, such as wounds and people. Therefore, it found that they were loose synonyms since the pattern in collocation is different. Along the same line, using corpus data in COCA, Aroonmanakun (2015) found that *fast* was used to focus on the high speed of the action (e.g., *fast* bike, *fast* computers, *fast* internet), in contrast, *quick* was mostly relevant to the action being performed in a short time (e.g., *quick* answer, *quick* call, and *quick* drink). The corpus data can also provide learners' collocational awareness since it disclosed the frequency of collocations of the words and offered a mutual information (MI) score that shows how often each word is connected (Shaw, 2011). According to Hunston (2002), an MI score of 3 or higher stated that two items were collocated. Thus, besides observing the frequency, MI scores should also be observed in order to find the strength of collocation of the words.

Chung (2011) discovered that synonyms *create* and *produce* shared some senses of meaning, but the corpus data drawn from Brown Corpus and Frown Corpus showed that *create* tended to co-occur with objects in a fewer quantity which involved a high level of creativity, while *produce* seemed to be used by objects in a larger quantity with a low level of creativity. Jarunwaraphan and Mallikamas (2020) also created the same conclusion that near-synonyms can provide connotations differently even though they have overlapping core meanings. Using the data from COCA, the study revealed that the verb collocates of *chance* seemed to convey negativity (e.g., decrease *chances* and lost all chances), on the contrary, the collocates of *opportunity* disclosed more positive connotations (e.g., creates enormous *opportunities* and afforded the *opportunities*). Lastly, Figes (2013) investigated three synonyms: *fancy*, *want*, and *wish*, the similarities and differences in terms of meaning, grammatical patterns, and genre were emphasized in this study. The instruments in the study were the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Longman Language Activator Thesaurus online (2002). The findings revealed in this study indicated that these synonyms had a similar sense regarding meaning 'want to have or do something'. However, the grammatical structure and degree of formality of these verbs varied. For the grammatical structure, *want* and *wish* had a similar pattern. Therefore, it can be inferred that both verbs may be used interchangeably in some contexts. The word *wish* was the most formal word in terms of the degree of formality, followed by *want* and *fancy*.

In summary, the findings from previous studies as mentioned above concluded that while those synonyms share the same sense of meaning, due to their differences in grammatical structures and collocations, they cannot be employed interchangeably. Synonyms should be conveyed correctly to describe the exact sense of meaning. Additionally, using English synonyms in appropriate context is essential for those who are interested in learning English.

The main aim of the present study is to explore the different usage of the targeted synonyms; *inform*, *notify* and *announce*, with a focus on similarities and differences between the two perspectives, which are grammatical patterns and noun collocations. The following chapter elaborates the methodology which has been designed to investigate the targeted words.



## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used a corpus-based methodology to explore the interchangeability of three verb synonyms: *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*, in order to facilitate students in selecting words that are appropriate for context and convey them naturally. To address the two research questions of this study: 1) *what are the grammatical patterns of three verb synonyms: inform, notify, and announce* and 2) *what are the most frequent noun collocations used with these verb synonyms: inform, notify, and announce*, the LDECE (online, 2022) and the information from COCA were employed to analyze the data associated with grammatical patterns and noun collocations. In this chapter, the methodology of the present study is presented, including target word studied, research instruments, research procedures, research procedures, and data analysis, respectively.

#### 3.1 Target Words Studied

According to Laufer (1990), synonymy is one of the difficulties learners always find in vocabulary learning. For this reason, many L2 or EFL learners often encounter this problem in English learning. Most English teachers might consult various dictionaries in terms of finding out the meaning of words during their teaching in the class, but these sources are unable to reveal whether words in this synonymous set can completely substitute for one another in every context or not.

This corpus-based study was, therefore, conducted on three English verb synonyms purposively selected: *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*. These verbs indeed play a significant role in classroom activity regarding writing skills as their meanings are related to “telling somebody or something, saying something, and giving information, which is related to e-mail, announcements, memorandums, letters, news, publishing, and so on. Therefore, these target verbs were chosen to be investigated in this study. The study aims to investigate their grammatical patterns and noun collocations to assist students to be able deliver these words in the proper context

### 3.2 Research Instruments

The first research instrument used in this corpus-based study was the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online (2022), which is the primary resource used for obtaining information on the selected synonymous verbs. This dictionary provides learners with grammar notes to assist learners to avoid the mistake of using grammatical patterns or structures incorrectly, collocations to help them increase comprehension in reading and listening skills and also improve students' other language skills in speaking or writing English, and most importantly, the thesaurus notes, which help learners find the most appropriate word or phrase in a set of synonyms. For these reasons, the researcher of this study then made the decision to select this online dictionary in order to investigate three synonymous verbs for this corpus-based research. Besides, this dictionary is capable of providing such information as word meanings and grammatical patterns, and it claims that the data was drawn from natural authentic English based on language corpora.

Furthermore, another significant source used in this study was the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). Liu (2010) stated that COCA is the largest free online resource containing more than 450 million words of texts with comprehensive and representative data covering spoken English, fiction, magazines, newspaper articles, and academic writing (no L2 data, though). Likewise, COCA is a user-friendly search engine, powerful, multifunctional, and contains contemporariness in its data" (p.13). According to Yusu (2014), there are five main reasons why COCA should be employed in this study. First, the large size of the corpus furnishes enough patterning of English lexical and grammatical terms. Second, the COCA operating procedure is very accessible, so particular linguistic knowledge or great computer proficiency are not needed while in the process of applying and getting through to all the resources. Third, the corpus was created on the basis of being a balanced corpus in terms of genre. Spoken, news, academic, fiction, and magazines are the equally balanced five genres. Thus, it provides learners a more realistic picture of how and where words are used. Fourth, the texts are distributed in terms of time. Learners have been able to access the American historical changing period of English every five years since 1990. This predominant plot assists learners to gain metalinguistic awareness, part of speech, collocates, synonyms, and overall frequency.

Finally, their centers are surrounded with key words or node words and provide an ideal input that enables students to perceive how the words fit in grammaticality with other words along with clues to meaning through surrounding words. As a result, COCA then was the major instrument that the researcher aimed to apply in this study.

### 3.3 Research Procedures

The lexical information for the three verb synonyms: *inform*, *notify* and *announce* from the online dictionary; Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online (2022), was listed and sorted. This dictionary showed word meanings in different contexts and significant grammatical patterns of target synonyms. Following the collection of data from the online dictionary, the concordance lines from COCA were gathered for investigation, as well as the top 20 nouns that frequently co-occurred with these target words. With the qualitative analysis and investigation, the information from COCA subsequently revealed the grammatical and collocational information on the specific words searched for.

#### 3.3.1 Research Design

A research design is described as "a plan for performing a study with maximal control over factors that may intervene with the validity of the findings" as stated by Burns and Grove (2003:195). And Parahoo (1997:142) asserted that "a plan that explains how, when, and where data are to be collected and evaluated" is what a study design is.

This corpus-based study employed both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods. For the quantitative analysis, 200 concordance lines for each synonymous verbs were retrieved from the COCA for exploring grammatical patterns, while noun collocations were investigated by conducting frequency analysis. Then the qualitative method was applied. The top twenty noun collocates were categorized according to the theme of their semantic preference in order to study their semantic features and pragmatic meanings.

The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online (2022) was then utilized to discover and compare the information of the three verb synonyms with the data from the COCA in terms of their meaning, grammatical patterns and noun collocations.

### 3.3.2 Data Collection

The LDECE (online, 2022) along with the COCA were chosen as the instruments of the research in this study. The reasons behind the selection of these materials were that COCA is the largest American corpus, and is a free online resource that has extensive and representative information in over 450 million words of text. Besides, it is freely accessible and widely used among English learners. Additionally, the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online (2022) was selected since it offers various information consisting of definitions, examples, grammatical patterns and pronunciation.

To carry out the study, the online dictionary; LDCE, was utilized as a fundamental instrument to discuss the word meaning and grammatical patterns of the synonymous verbs: *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*. Subsequently, the COCA was employed to investigate the deep details of similarities and differences associated with grammatical patterns and noun collocations. The findings from both sources were used to compare and contrast in order to find out if they were equivalent. With the tremendous number of occurrences in COCA, consisting of more than one billion words in 485,202 texts, including 20 million words each year from 1990-2019, the researcher in this study thus selected two hundred concordance lines for each verb synonym to study due to the time constraint and the scale of this study. The analysis of the concordance lines was involved in this stage. The researcher limited the specific part of speech to only the verbs of interest, a period was put between the selected verb and speech tag in parenthesis like *inform.[v\*]* and thus the concordance lines were discovered.

The results for frequent noun collocations were explored by selecting the top 20 noun collocates that often co-occurred with these target synonyms. It is noteworthy that noun-collocations were only focused on in this study since noun-collocates and nouns in prepositional phrases appeared frequently in the target concordance lines. In this context, both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed. The findings were observed from a quantitative perspective when examining the grammatical patterns and also the frequency of nouns collocates for each verb synonym, whereas the qualitative method was used to find their semantic preference. To discover the frequency of noun collocates, the

top twenty nouns that tend to co-occur with three synonymous verbs were presented, displaying the number of their frequency.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

The data first was collected from the online dictionary; Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online (2022), which was used to investigate the meanings of the target synonyms as well as to compare and contrast them for similarities and differences among the three synonyms. The online dictionary provided data about word meanings, word families, significant grammatical patterns, and examples from the corpus.

For corpus-based data analysis, in order to gain in-depth information about these verbs, the COCA was then utilized to explore the words. The noun collocates analysis was performed by selecting the frequency of the top 20 noun collocates that often co-occurred with the target synonyms, thereafter the nouns were categorized into the theme of semantic preference. For the results of grammatical patterns, two hundred concordance lines were compiled to be analyzed: six hundred concordance lines in total were collected to investigate and acquire the findings.

The data from the online dictionary was then compared with those from COCA. It was found that the corpus provided much more information than the LDCE (online, 2022). More detailed findings of this corpus-based study will be accomplished by describing them further in the next chapter.

In conclusion, this chapter's primary emphasis is the study's methodology, including instruments, research procedures (research design and data collection), and data analysis. Both LDCE and COCA were employed as instruments to examine the similarities and differences among the target verb synonyms. Both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were applied in this study. The 200 concordance lines were drawn from COCA to analyze the detailed grammatical patterns, whereas the top 20 noun collocates were investigated by conducting frequency analysis to find out the most frequent noun or noun in prepositional phrases that appeared after the selected verbs. Lastly, the top 20 noun collocates were categorized according to the theme of their semantic preference in order to study their semantic features and pragmatic meanings.

## CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The previous chapter presented the methodology applied in the study. This chapter showed the findings mainly from the COCA and the LDCE (online, 2022). This chapter focused on the similarities and differences among three synonymous verbs concerning the data of grammatical patterns and noun collocations. The two concordance lines for each verb retrieved from COCA are presented to show how the words are used in the authentic context. The frequency of the top 20 noun co-occurring words was presented as the most frequent noun co-occurred with the target words. The grammatical patterns of *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*, and noun collocates of *inform*, *notify*, and *announce* were also presented to demonstrate their similarities and differences in this chapter.

### 4.1 Grammatical patterns

One of the criteria for differentiating the target synonyms is the grammatical pattern. It is considered as one of the criteria to classify synonyms, as explained by Phoocharoensil (2010). In order to address research question number one on what are the grammatical patterns of three verb synonyms: *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*, the following section presents and discusses similarities and differences among these words, which were provided by LDCE (online, 2022), and the COCA. Two hundred concordance lines for each word, and a total of six hundred concordance lines, which were used as the principal data in this study, were collected from COCA to observe the similarities and differences among these target words; *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*, in comparison between the two instruments of the study. The result of possible grammatical patterns is presented below.

#### 4.1.1 Inform

The possible grammatical patterns of *inform* with the examples from the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online (2022) were listed below in order to see the possible patterns compared to the Corpus of Contemporary American (COCA).

**Table 1** Possible grammatical patterns of *inform* from LDCE

No.	Possible Grammatical Patterns from LDCE	
	Patterns	Example
1	<i>inform</i> + sb + about/of + sth	Please <b><i>inform us of</i></b> any change of address as soon as possible.
2	<i>inform</i> + sb + that	We regret to <b><i>inform you that</i></b> your application has been rejected.

The two hundred concordance lines were selected from COCA with the purpose of discovering whether the structures of the target word (*inform*) that appeared in the LDEC (online, 2022) were found in real usage and also discovering other grammatical patterns other than those provided by the online dictionary. The following was the results of grammatical patterns that most often appear with the verb '*inform*'

**Table 2** Possible grammatical patterns of *inform* from COCA

No.	Patterns	Frequency	Percentage
1	<i>inform</i> + sth	48	24
2	<i>inform</i> + sb + prep. (about/of) + sth	35	17.5
3	<i>inform</i> + sth + prep. (of/by/to/with/for) + sth	27	13.5
4	<i>inform</i> + sb	25	12.5
5	<i>inform</i> + sb + that	12	6
6	<i>inform</i> + conj. + v.	11	5.5
7	<i>inform</i> + prep. (on/of) + sb/sth	8	4
8	<i>inform</i> + sb/sth + adv. clause	7	3.5
9	<i>inform</i> + sb + prep. (on) + sth	6	3
10	<i>inform</i> + sb + n. clause	3	1.5
11	<i>inform</i> + sb (omission of that) s. + v.	3	1.5

12	<i>inform</i> + sth + prep. phrase	3	1.5
13	<i>inform</i> + sth + v./v. infinitive	3	1.5
14	<i>inform</i> + sth + that	2	1
15	<i>inform</i> + sb + of + sb	2	1
16	<i>inform</i> + sb + adv.	2	1
17	<i>inform</i> + on + sb	2	1
18	<i>inform</i> + conj. + s. + v.	1	0.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

In comparison, it obviously appeared that the possible grammatical patterns of the verb *inform* from the LDCE, for instance, *inform* + *sb* + *about/of* + *sth* and *inform* + *sb* + *that* were similar to the ones that turned up in COCA.

Based on the grammatical structures of the verb *inform* from COCA, two hundred concordance lines revealed that the most frequent patterns occurred with the verb *inform* falling into *inform* + *sth*, with a frequency at 48 times. The second highest frequency was *inform* + *sb* + *prep. (about/of)* + *sth* at 35 times. The third frequency revealed the pattern of *inform* + *sth* + *prep. (of/by/to/with/for)* + *sth* with 27 times of frequency. The fourth rank of frequency was the pattern of *inform* + *sb*, which was counted at 25 times. The fifth rank showed the structure was *inform* + *sb* + *that* with a frequency at 12 times. The sixth rank was the pattern of *inform* + *conj.* + *v.* with a frequency at 11 times. Moreover, the frequency rank of eleven grammatical patterns from 2 to 8 times consisted of *inform* + *prep. (on/of)* + *sb/sth* (8 times), *inform* + *sb/sth* + *adv. clause* (7 times), *inform* + *sb* + *prep. (on)* + *sth* (6 times), *inform* + *sb* + *n. clause* (3 times), *inform* + *sb* (*omission of that*) *s. + v.* (3 times), *inform* + *sth* + *prep. phrase* (3 times), *inform* + *sth* + *v./v. infinitive* (3 times), *inform* + *sth* + *that* (2 times), *inform* + *sb* + *of* + *sb* (2 times), *inform* + *sb* + *adv.* (2 times), and *inform* + *on* + *sb* (2 times), respectively. Additionally, the structure of *inform* + *conj.* + *s. + v.* (1 time) was rarely found occurring while investigating the verb *inform*. The following were some of examples of the grammatical patterns associated with “*inform*” taken from the concordance lines in COCA.

1. inform + sth (48 times)

*on the right issues. # While scenario building can help **inform a vision**, a scenario itself is neither a vision*

2. inform + sb + prep. (about/of) + sth (35 times)

*litigation department revised engagement letters so that they **inform clients about Iowa procedural law**, the logistics and timing of*

3. inform + sth + prep. (of/by/to/with/for) + sth (27 times)

*each of these three themes and discuss how the research might **inform classroom practice with ELLs**. # Essential Role of Vocabulary*

4. inform + sb (25 times)

*asking his permission as usual to travel. I will also **inform my uncle Qadri and my dear brother Sa' d**.#*

5. inform + sb + that (12 times)

*had just felt the northern wind and had come in to **inform Jackie that** summer was on its last legs, something he never*

6. inform + conj. + v. (11 times)

*significance. A state grass was designated to help **inform and educate** citizens and tourists about this resource.*

7. inform + prep. + sb/sth (8 times)

*use in entering the White House grounds, and whom to **inform of our acceptance or regret**. An invitation from the President or*

8. inform + sb/sth + adv. clause (7 times)

*Anderson, aha!) so he could contact him and **inform him how** unimpressive his little show was. He lives with Rache*

9. inform + sb + prep. (on) + sth (6 times)

*at-will presumption, it is always important that the employer **inform employees on application forms**, in offer letters, in personnel*

10. inform + sb + n. clause (3 times)/inform + sb (omission of that) s. + v. (3 times)/

inform + sth + prep. phrase (3 times)

- at this as well. *vc* does a lot of work to **inform everyone of what** is going on, but don't let *vc*

- demon, and slits her roommate' s throat, to **inform others Dean Winchester is back**. Sam sees a dog on the

- place. Finally, we presented a set of principles that **inform our research in this area** and discussed some of their more

#### 4.1.2 Notify

In order to compare the possible grammatical patterns between the two instruments, the findings from LDCE (online, 2022) and the COCA were shown in Table 3 and Table 4 below.

**Table 3** Possible grammatical patterns of *notify* from LDCE

No.	Possible Grammatical Patterns from LDCE	
	Patterns	Examples
1	<i>notify</i> + sb + of + sth	<i>You will be notified of any changes in the system.</i>
2	<i>notify</i> + sb + that	<i>In August we were notified that our article had been rejected</i>

The two hundred concordance lines were selected from COCA for exploring whether the structures of the target word (*notify*) that appeared in the LDEC were found in corpus, and also discovering the grammatical patterns other than those provided by the online dictionary. The following table presents the grammatical patterns that appeared with the verb '*notify*'

**Table 4** Possible grammatical patterns of *notify* from COCA

No.	Patterns	Frequency	Percentage
1	<i>notify</i> + sb	58	29
2	<i>notify</i> + sb + prep. (about/of) + sth	52	26
3	<i>notify</i> + sth	13	6.5
4	<i>notify</i> + sb + prep. phrase	12	6
5	<i>notify</i> + sb + that	10	5
6	<i>notify</i> + prep. phrase	9	4.5
7	<i>notify</i> + sb + adv. clause	9	4.5
8	<i>notify</i> + sb + adv.	7	3.5
9	<i>notify</i> + sb + n. clause	7	3.5
10	<i>notify</i> + sth + of + sth	4	2
11	<i>notify</i> + adv.	3	1.5
12	<i>notify</i> + sb/sth + v./v. infinitive	3	1.5
13	<i>notify</i> + sb + conj. + v./gerund	3	1.5
14	<i>notify</i> + sb +for + sb/sth	2	1
15	<i>notify</i> + sth + that	1	0.5
16	<i>notify</i> + prep. + sb	1	0.5
17	<i>notify</i> + sb + adj. clause	1	0.5
18	<i>notify</i> + sb + v.	1	0.5
19	<i>notify</i> + sth + gerund	1	0.5
20	<i>notify</i> + sb (omission of that) + s. + v.	1	0.5
21	<i>notify</i> + sth + from + sb	1	0.5
22	<i>notify</i> + sb + on + sth	1	0.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4 and Table 5 compare the results of the grammatical patterns of the verb “*inform*” from two resources: LDCE (online, 2022) and COCA. The patterns of “*notify* + *sb* + *of* + *sth*” and “*notify* + *sb* + *that*” from LDCE and the possible grammatical patterns

found in the COCA can be seen. As a result, it can be concluded that the structures from LDCE which tended to link to the ones in COCA are not that different.

As for the results of the grammatical structures of the verb *notify* from COCA, twenty-two ranks were obtained from investigating among two hundred concordance lines. The findings showed the most frequent patterns to the least frequent ones appearing with the target verb. The first rank, or the most frequent patterns that appeared with the verb *notify*, was *notify + sb*, with a frequency at 58 times. The second highest frequency, with a frequency at 52 times, was *notify + sb + prep. (about/of) + sth*, followed by *notify + sth*, (13 times), *notify + sb + adv. clause* (12 times), *notify + sb + that* (10 times).

The four patterns found frequently as they were ranked from 4–9 times were *notify + prep. phrase* (9 times), *notify + sb + adv. clause* (9 times), *notify + sb + adv* (7 times), *notify + sb + n. clause* (7 times), and *notify + sth + of + sth* (4 times), respectively. The patterns that appeared from 2 to 3 times included *notify + adv* (3 times), *notify + sb/sth + v./v. infinitive* (3 times), *notify + sb + conj. + v./gerund* (3 times), and *notify + sb + for + sb/sth* (2 times). And the last eight patterns, which rarely occurred with the verb of *notify* with a frequency of 1 time, consisted of *notify + sth + that* (1 times), *notify + prep. + sb* (1 times), *notify + sb + adj. clause* (1 times), *notify + sb + v.* (1 times), *notify + sth + gerund* (1 times), *notify + sb (omission of that) + s. + v.* (1 times), *notify + sth + from + sb* (1 times), and *notify + sb + on + sth* (1 times). In addition, some examples of the grammatical patterns related to “*notify*” taken from the concordance lines in COCA are listed below.

1. *notify + sb* (58 times)

*the court clerks and notify them about Grayson so they could **notify his clients**. I called the first clerk. But I could*

2. *notify + sb + prep. (about/of) + sth* (52 times)

*service we provide to the public. We encourage hikers to **notify a friend or family member of their hiking itinerary**.*

3. *notify + sth* (13 times)

*But Act 196 also requires that the new transit authority itself **notify jurisdictions**, which also triggers a 30-day window for opting*

4. notify + sb + prep. phrase (12 times)

*Carl's a class three offender. He has to **notify any resident within a designated area**. So we'll be going*

5. notify + sb + that (10 times)

*to the hospital also. So I called my mom to **notify her that** I was in labor also, and the joke really*

6. notify + prep. phrase (9 times) and notify + sb + adv. clause (9 times)

*- Why I let him put me down as who to **notify in case of emergency** I'll never know.*

*It's like*

*- During the investigation. 246 #Finally, the provider should notify a user whenever the provider accesses information in the user's*

7. notify + sb + adv. (7 times)

*a history of violence...and advise anyone spotting him to **notify authorities at once**. I love this music.*

8. notify + sth + of + sth (4 times) and notify + sb + adj. clause (4 times)

*- Occurrence Reporting B # SNF # Failure of the licensee to **notify CDPH of financial occurrences** as described in Health and Safety*

*- But Act 196 also requires that the new transit authority itself **notify jurisdictions, which** also triggers a 30-day window for opting*

9. notify + adv. (3 times)/notify + sb or sth + v. or v. infinitive (3 times)/notify + sb + conj. + v. or gerund (3 times)

*- Plescia acknowledged Tuesday that the agency's failure to **notify nearly 200** women about abnormal Pap smears was a "significant*

*- this Saturday afternoon the building is empty. Koolhaas had to **notify city officials to get** access, and they 're waiting for us*

*- fees also will be waived temporarily. The industry promised to **notify customers and franchising** officials at least 30 days in advance*

10. notify + sb +for + sb/sth (2 times)

*longer offers the 16GB model, just 8 GB (which says **notify me for more information**, not buy now).*

### 4.1.3 Announce

In terms of comparing the possible grammatical patterns between the two resources, the findings from LDCE (online, 2022) and the COCA are presented in Table 5 and Table 6 below.

**Table 5** Possible grammatical patterns of *announce* from LDCE

No.	Possible Grammatical Patterns from LDCE	
	Patterns	Examples
1	<i>announce</i> + sth + to + sb	<i>Cordon announced his resignation to staff members on Wednesday.</i>
2	<i>announce</i> + sth (a decision/intention/plan)	- <i>In August we were notified that our article had been rejected</i> - <i>A government spokesman announced that the hostages had been released.</i>
3	<i>announce</i> + that	<i>Furthermore, there are another grammatical pattern of announce that are available in the corpus area in the dictionary.</i>
4	<i>announce</i> + sb/yourself	- <i>All visitors to the apartment building must be announced.</i> - <i>After announcing himself at the reception desk, James was led upstairs.</i>

The two hundred concordance lines collected from COCA for the purpose of exploring if the grammatical patterns of the target synonym (*announce*) that occurred in the LDCE (online, 2022) were investigated. Table 6 below presents the grammatical patterns that appear with the verb "*announce*".

**Table 6** Possible grammatical patterns of *announce* from COCA

No.	Patterns	Frequency	Percentage
1	<i>announce</i> + sth	71	35.5
2	<i>announce</i> + sth + prep. phrase	23	11.5
3	<i>announce</i> + sth + v./gerund	16	8
4	<i>announce</i> + sth + prep. (with/for/of/to/on) + sth	15	7.5
5	<i>announce</i> + prep. phrase	9	4.5
6	<i>announce</i> + for + sth	8	4
7	<i>announce</i> + (omission of that) + s. + v.	8	4
8	<i>announce</i> + adv.	7	3.5
9	<i>announce</i> + sb + prep. phrase	7	3.5
10	<i>announce</i> + for + sb	6	3
11	<i>announce</i> + sth + adv.	5	2.5
12	<i>announce</i> + sth + that	5	2.5
13	<i>announce</i> + sb	4	2
14	<i>announce</i> + n. clause	3	1.5
15	<i>announce</i> + sth + conj. + s. + v.	3	1.5
16	<i>announce</i> + v./gerund	2	1
17	<i>announce</i> + for + sb	2	1
18	<i>announce</i> + prep. + sth	2	1
19	<i>announce</i> + sb + for + sb	1	0.5
20	<i>announce</i> + sb + from + sth	1	0.5
21	<i>announce</i> + v. + adv.	1	0.5
22	<i>announce</i> + sth + adj. clause	1	0.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

The comparison of Table 5 and Table 6, and the analysis of the grammatical patterns of the verb “*announce*” between LDCE and COCA revealed that there were some patterns lists as shown in Table 6, which provided the possible grammatical patterns by

COCA. For example, *announce + sth + to + sb*, and *announce + that*. Consequently, it can be inferred that these structures from LDCE are not similar to the ones from COCA.

In terms of the grammatical structures of the verb *announce* from COCA, twenty-two structures were found among two hundred concordance lines. The patterns as shown in Table 6 above were listed from the most to the least frequent patterns that showed up with the target verb “*announce*.” The first pattern sequence of the verb *announce* was *announce + sth* with a frequency at 71 times, followed by *announce + sth + prep. phrase* with its frequency at 23 times, *announce + sth + v. /gerund* at 16 times, and *announce + sth + prep. (with/for/of/to/on) + sth* at 15 times. The pattern frequency from 5-9 times consisted of *announce + prep. phrase* (9 times), *announce + for + sth* (8 times), *announce + (omission of that) + s. + v.* (8 times), *announce + adv.* (7 times), *announce + sb + prep. phrase* (7 times), *announce + for + sb* (6 times), *announce + sth + adv.* (5 times), and *announce + sth + that* (5 times). Furthermore, the structures with a frequency from 2-4 times were eight patterns, for instance, *announce + sb* (4 times), *announce + adv. clause* (3 times), *announce + sth + conj. + s. + v.* (3 times), *announce + v./gerund* (2 times), *announce + for + sb* (2 times) and *announce + prep. + sth* (2 times). However, there were four patterns which were found the least among the grammatical patterns of the verb *announce*, which was composed of *announce + sb + for + sb* (1 time), *announce + sb + from + sth* (1 time), *announce + v. + adv.* (1 time), and *announce + sth + adj. clause* (1 time). The following were some of examples of the grammatical patterns involved in “*announce*” taken from the concordance lines in COCA.

1. *announce + sth* (71 times)

*One Direction is the latest artist to **announce a 3D concert movie**, which is already producing mass hysteria!*

2. *announce + sth + prep. phrase* (23 times)

*except for once or twice a year when I **announce it on my blog**. In those cases, I take auditions*

3. *announce + sth + v./gerund* (16 times)

*The administration does not plan to publicly **announce its decision to abandon the 1994 agreement** anytime soon,*

4. announce + sth + prep. (with/for/of/to/on) + sth (15 times)

*I'm here today to **announce my support for the North American Free Trade**, of fair trade*

5. announce + prep. phrase (9 times)

*#Good. So to get things started, you 'll **announce from an event** at your home in the next few days.*

6. announce + for + sth (8 times) and announce + (omission of that) + s. + v. (8 times)

*- #his hometown."# The twins are due to **announce for either Kentucky or Maryland** Oct. 29. SMU remains an extreme*

*- #is expected to plead guilty. He's expected to **announce he will cooperate** with the government to provide information*

7. announce + adv. (7 times) and announce + sb + prep. phrase (7 times)

*- #I find myself at dinner with my mother, to **announce loudly** to the waiter, "This is my mother,"*

*- #Vice President and longtime Delaware Senator Joe Biden will **announce his candidacy on Wednesday**. For the " PBS NewsHour,"*

8. announce + for + sb (6 times)

*#us this week-that Mario Cuomo was going to **announce for President** this week, this past week.*

9. announce + sth + adv. (5 times) and announce + sth + that (5 times)

*- #of companies. #But lawyers say that many companies **announce products early** and it is difficult to say just when a product*

*- #over 65 will more than double. Tonight, I will **announce measures that** will work to address this fundamental shift in our*

10. announce + sb (4 times)

*#even boinked her. Now you have three seconds to **announce me**. It's Bud Bundy. I have here this last*

After the three synonymous verbs' grammatical patterns were completely analyzed, the structures of these verbs were compared to find out whether these synonyms were

similar or different regarding their grammatical patterns. The following tables presented the comparison and shared possible grammatical patterns of these three verb synonyms from two hundred concordance lines in the COCA.

**Table 7** Comparison of possible grammatical patterns of verb synonyms from COCA

<b>Inform</b>	<b>Notify</b>	<b>Announce</b>
<p><b><i>inform</i> + sth</b>  <i>inform</i> + sb + prep. (about/of) + sth  <i>inform</i> + sth + prep. (of/by/to/with/for) + sth</p> <p><b><i>inform</i> + sb</b>  <i>inform</i> + sb + that  <i>inform</i> + conj. + v.</p> <p><i>inform</i> + prep. (on/of) + sb/sth  <i>inform</i> + sb/sth + adv. clause  <i>inform</i> + sb + prep. (on) + sth  <i>inform</i> + sb + n. clause  <i>inform</i> + sb (omission of that) + s. + v.</p> <p><i>inform</i> + sth + prep. phrase  <i>inform</i> + sth + v./v. infinitive</p> <p><b><i>inform</i> + sth + that</b></p> <p><i>inform</i> + sb + of + sb  <i>inform</i> + sb + adv.  <i>inform</i> + on + sb  <i>inform</i> + conj. + s. + v.</p>	<p><b><i>notify</i> + sb</b>  <i>notify</i> + sb + prep. (about/of) + sth</p> <p><b><i>notify</i> + sth</b></p> <p><i>notify</i> + sb + prep. phrase  <i>notify</i> + sb + that  <i>notify</i> + prep. phrase  <i>notify</i> + sb + adv. clause  <i>notify</i> + sb + adv.  <i>notify</i> + sb + n. clause  <i>notify</i> + sth + of + sth  <i>notify</i> + adv.  <i>notify</i> + sb/sth + v./v. infinitive  <i>notify</i> + sb + conj. + v./gerund  <i>notify</i> + sb + for + sb/sth</p> <p><b><i>notify</i> + sth + that</b></p> <p><i>notify</i> + prep. + sb  <i>notify</i> + sb + adj. clause  <i>notify</i> + sb + v.  <i>notify</i> + sth + gerund  <i>notify</i> + sb (omission of that) + s. + v.  <i>notify</i> + sth + from + sb  <i>notify</i> + sb + on + sth</p>	<p><b><i>announce</i> + sth</b>  <i>announce</i> + sth + prep. phrase  <i>announce</i> + sth + v./gerund  <i>announce</i> + sth + prep. (with/for/of/to/on) + sth  <i>announce</i> + prep. phrase  <i>announce</i> + for + sth  <i>announce</i> + (omission of that) + s. + v.  <i>announce</i> + adv.  <i>announce</i> + sb + prep. phrase  <i>announce</i> + for + sb  <i>announce</i> + sth + adv.</p> <p><b><i>announce</i> + sth + that</b></p> <p><b><i>announce</i> + sb</b>  <i>announce</i> + n. clause  <i>announce</i> + sth + conj. + s. + v.  <i>announce</i> + v./gerund  <i>announce</i> + for + sb  <i>announce</i> + prep. + sth  <i>announce</i> + sb + for + sb  <i>announce</i> + sb + from + sth  <i>announce</i> + v. + adv.  <i>announce</i> + sth + adj. clause</p>

As can be seen in Table 7, after three verbs were carefully inspected, most of their possible grammatical patterns occurred differently. However, there were some shared grammatical structures that co-occurred among the three target verbs, while some were shared between two verbs only, as shown in Table 8 below.

**Table 8** The shared grammatical patterns of three verb synonyms from COCA

No.	Synonyms	Shared Grammatical Patterns
1	inform, notify	<i>inform, notify</i> + sb + prep. (about/of) + sth
		<i>inform, notify</i> + sb + that
		<i>inform, notify</i> + sb + n. clause
		<i>inform, notify</i> + sb + adv. clause
		<i>inform, notify</i> + sb + adv.
		<i>inform, notify</i> + sb (omission of that) + s. + v.
		<i>inform, notify</i> + sth + v./v. infinitive
2	inform, announce	<i>inform, announce</i> + sth + prep. + sth
		<i>inform, announce</i> + sth + that
		<i>inform, announce</i> + sth + prep. phrase
3	notify, announce	<i>notify, announce</i> + adv.
		<i>notify, announce</i> + phrase
		<i>notify, announce</i> + sth + gerund
		<i>notify, announce</i> + prep. phrase
		<i>notify, announce</i> + adv.
		<i>notify, announce</i> + sb + for + sb/sth
4	inform, notify, announce	<i>inform, notify, announce</i> + sth
		<i>inform, notify, announce</i> + sb
		<i>inform, notify, announce</i> + sth + that

Table 8 indicates that three verb synonyms (*inform*, *notify*, and *announce*) shared only three grammatical structures, which were: *inform, notify, announce* + *sth*, *inform, notify, announce* + *sb*, and *inform, notify, announce* + *sth* + *that*. In addition, the verb pairs

of *inform* & *notify* appeared to share a number of grammatical structures, which appeared to be seven structures, followed by six patterns of the verb pairs *notify* & *announce*, and the verb pairs of *notify* & *announce* shared three patterns of grammatical structures. As a result, it can be concluded that these three verb synonyms investigated in this study were significantly different in terms of grammatical patterns as they shared only three structural elements. However, the possibility is that there might be more grammatical patterns beyond the results of the present study in terms of more concordance lines were investigated.

#### 4.2 Noun collocations

According to Carter (1987) and Howarth (1998), noun + noun, adjective + noun, verb + noun, verb + prepositional phrase, adverb + adjective, verb + adverb pairs, both in spoken or written, can be viewed as collocations. The collocations are classified as grammatical collocations and lexical collocations (Sinclair, 1991; Lewis, 2000). After exploring two hundred concordance lines from COCA, it was clearly found that nouns or nouns in prepositional phrases were used more frequently with these verbs than other collocations. Besides, these three verbs: *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*, are verbs relevant to *telling* someone or something, *saying* something, and also *giving* information, which is always associated with written contexts, such as e-mail, announcements, memorandums, notices, letters and so on. For these reasons, the researcher in this study therefore focusses on studying noun collocations so as to answer question number two regarding: *what are the most frequent noun collocations used with these verb synonyms: inform, notify, and announce?*

This section presented data on the target words' noun collocations that frequently appeared in the top twenty rankings. The following table illustrated the list of nouns in COCA which frequently appeared together with the verbs *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*.

**Table 9** Noun collocates of *inform*, *notify* and *announce* from COCA

Inform			Notify			Announce		
Rank	Noun Collocate	Frequency	Rank	Noun Collocate	Frequency	Rank	Noun Collocate	Frequency
1	decision	715	1	e-mail	822	1	plan	3,036
2	public	692	2	comment	555	2	resident	2,331
3	parent	466	3	police	331	3	week	2,061
4	policy	412	4	number	327	4	company	1,503
5	research	410	5	parent	275	5	month	1,051
6	reader	327	6	family	265	6	decision	873
7	patient	323	7	authority	257	7	news	802
8	practice	302	8	department	192	8	winner	764
9	consent	244	9	advance	173	9	conference	688
10	participant	223	10	office	164	10	intension	685
11	letter	215	11	<b>official</b>	162	11	deal	673
12	<b>official</b>	193	12	agency	139	12	department	671
13	consumer	182	13	user	105	13	<b>official</b>	654
14	understanding	175	14	post	102	14	administration	644
15	citizen	144	15	customer	88	15	press	613
16	committee	143	16	security	85	16	retirement	576
17	staff	143	17	kin	84	17	candidacy	515
18	user	141	18	winner	81	18	release	418
19	authority	134	19	owner	78	19	minister	380
20	audience	133	20	employee	75	20	resignation	379

According to the above table, it was seen that the three synonymous verbs (*inform*, *notify* and *announce*) occurred with different types of nouns or nouns in prepositional phrases. The findings of the top twenty frequent noun collocate of each verb were selected based on frequency from COCA and showed that *decision* was the most frequent noun collocate with the verb of *inform* at 715 times. For the most frequent noun collocate with verb of *notify*, the first ranked fell into the word *e-mail* at 822 times. And for the verb of *announce*, the most frequent noun collocate was *plan*. As previously mentioned regarding the first-ranked noun collocate for each verb, it was unquestionably that these verb

synonyms had totally different types of nouns or nouns in prepositional phrases concerning collocation. Furthermore, the data from the top twenty frequent noun collocates in Table 9 clearly indicated that the word "*official*" frequently co-occurred with three verbs: *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*. The word "*official*" was the most frequently used after the verb *announce*, with a frequency at 644 times, followed by the verb '*inform*' at 193 times and 162 times with the verb of *notify*. The other co-occurrences were firstly '*decisions*', which appeared with two verbs, *inform* & *announce*, with frequency at 873 and 715 times, respectively. Secondly, *parent* was found in the verbs *inform* & *notify* with their frequencies at 466 and 275 times. Thirdly, *authority* was also co-occurring after the verbs *inform* & *notify*, with frequencies at 257 and 134 times. Fourthly, the noun *user* was often found after the verbs both *inform* & *notify*, with their frequencies at 141 and 105 times, respectively. Lastly, *winner* was often used after the verbs *notify* & *announce*, with their frequencies showed up at 81 and 764 times.

For the similarities and differences among noun collocates of these three verbs: *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*, the top twenty noun collocates of each target word were classified into the theme of semantic preference according to semantic features and meanings. The results were provided in Tables 11, 13, and 15 below.

#### 4.2.1 Inform

**Table 10** Top 20 noun collocates of *inform* from COCA

Inform					
Rank	Noun Collocate	Frequency	Rank	Noun Collocate	Frequency
1	decision	715	11	letter	215
2	public	692	12	official	193
3	parent	466	13	consumer	182
4	policy	412	14	understanding	175
5	research	410	15	citizen	144
6	reader	327	16	committee	143

7	patient	323	17	staff	143
8	practice	302	18	user	141
9	consent	244	19	authority	134
10	participant	223	20	audience	133

According to the information from COCA, the frequency of *inform* occurred 12,635 times. From the above table, it can be seen undoubtedly that *decision* was the most frequently used at 715 times as a noun collocate with this verb, *public* occurred 692 times as the second rank, *parents* appeared as the third rank at 466 times, the fourth rank was *policy* at 412 times, the fifth rank was *research* at 412 times, followed by *research* (410 times), *reader* (327 times), *patient* (323 times), *practice* (302 times), *consent* (244 times), *participant* (223 times), *letter* (215 times), *official* (193 times), *consumer* (182 times), *understanding* (175 times), *citizen* (144 times), *committee* (143 times), *staff*, (143 times) *user* (141 times), *authority* (134 times), and *audience* (133 times).

In terms of distinguishing similarities and differences among noun collocates of *inform* by categorizing them based on their semantic features and meaning, the following results were ranked from most frequent to least frequent semantic categories of the verb *inform*.

**Table 11** Semantic Preference of noun collocates of *inform* from COCA

Inform		
No.	Semantic Categories	Noun Collocates
1	People	parent, audience, committee, consumer, user, staff, patient, reader, citizen, participants
2	Agreement	understanding, policy
3	Position	official, authority
4	Others: • Ability/skill • Community	practice public

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document</li> <li>• Law</li> <li>• Analysis</li> <li>• Possibility</li> </ul>	<p>letter</p> <p>consent</p> <p>research</p> <p>decision</p>
--	--	--

From the analysis of the semantic preference of the verb *inform*, four themes are displayed in Table 11. The largest theme, which consisted of words engaging with noun collocates of *inform* included words in relation to *people* contexts, for example, *parent, audience, committee, consumer, user, staff, patient, reader, official, authority, citizen* and *participant*. The second theme was related to the *ability/skills* context including *decision* and *practice*. The third set of nouns collocates of *inform* included words referring to *agreement*, for instance, *understanding* and *policy*, and the last group of the semantic preference was miscellaneous which included *ability/skill (practice), community (public), document (letter), law (consent), analysis, (research), and possibility (decision)*.

In conclusion, the verb *inform* is likely to be utilized frequently with the set of nouns regarding *people*, and followed by *agreement, position, and others* respectively. The following are some examples of noun collocates of the verb *inform* from the corpus.

(1) *And beyond that, we need parent education to **inform parents** about the development of their young children.*

(2) *Perhaps music teachers can enable students to creatively **inform audiences** about these aims at performances. One purpose of the*

(3) *The A.C.A. forbids insurers to **inform consumers** about their abortion coverage except as part of the long list of benefits*

(4) *that practitioners rely on scientific research to **inform decisions** about services. However, it has been argued that*

(5) *other people. This other evidence is offered to **inform** our **understanding** of his credibility.*

(6) *education, there are insufficient data available to **inform policy** decision making. Evaluating the Effectiveness of*

(7) *33 Both citation data and usage data can be used to **inform decisions***

*related to the retention of expensive journal*

(8) *Posted newspaper headlines **inform participants** that they are utilizing  
A facility that will be*

(9) # *"Why didn't she call the police, or **inform an authority** figure, or...anyone?  
"# And tell*

(10) *One of the reasons I updated this review is to **inform readers** about the speed  
with which people swarmed in and marked my review UNHELPFUL.*

#### 4.2.2 Notify

**Table 12** Top 20 noun collocates of *notify* from COCA

Notify					
Rank	Noun Collocate	Frequency	Rank	Noun Collocate	Frequency
1	e-mail	822	11	official	162
2	comment	555	12	agency	139
3	police	331	13	user	105
4	number	327	14	post	102
5	parent	275	15	customer	88
6	family	265	16	security	85
7	authority	257	17	kin	84
8	department	192	18	winner	81
9	advance	173	19	owner	78
10	office	164	20	employee	75

The frequency of *notify* occurred 4,102 times in the COCA. From the above, it can be evidently illustrated that *e-mail* was the most frequently used at 822 times as a noun collocate with this verb, *comment* occurred at 555 times as the second rank, *police* appeared as the third rank at 331 times, the fourth rank was *number* at 327 times, the fifth rank was *parent* at 275 times, followed by *family* (265 times), *authority* (257 times), *department* (192 times), *advance* (173 times), *office* (164 times), *official* (162 times), *agency* (139

times), *user* (105 times), *post* (102 times), *customer* (88 times), *security* (85 times), *kin* (84 times), *winner* (81 times), *owner* (78 times), and *employee* (175 times).

To sum up, according to semantic features and meaning of *notify*, the analysis result was shown as follows.

**Table 13** Semantic preference of noun collocates of *notify* from COCA

Notify		
No.	Semantic categories	Noun Collocates
1	People	employee, user, customer, owner, winner, parent
2	Web	e-mail, comment, user, post
3	Organization	office, department, agency
4	Occupation	police, security
5	Position	official, authority
6	A group member	family, kin
7	Improvement/Development	advance

From Table 7, seven themes emerged from the analysis of semantic preference of the verb *notify*. The first group contained words wrapped up with noun collocates of *notify* including words referring to *people* contexts, namely *employee*, *user*, *customer*, *owner*, *winner* and *parent*. The second set was related to the *web* context including *e-mail*, *comment*, *user*, and *customer*. The third set of nouns collocates with *notify* included words referring to *organization*, for instance *office*, *department*, and *agency*. The fourth set of semantic preference of *notify* was *occupation* which referred to *police* and *security*. And the fifth set appeared as words associated with *a group member*, for example *family* and *kin*. And the last set were words relevant to *improvement* or *development*, which included *advance*.

In conclusion, the verb of *notify* tended to be used frequently with the set of nouns related to *people* the most, followed by the set of *web, organization, occupation, position, a group member, and improvement/development* as presented in Table 13. The examples of nouns collocate with the verb *notify* which were selected from COCA's concordance lines were shown below.

(1) *with shop rights for their company should that company decide to build it and **notify the employee** of such in a timely manner. But if the employee decides to*

(2) *itself to audits for the next 20 years) ASUS also had to promise to **notify users** of the latest updates and to send them instructions on how they can protect*

(3) *enforce federal law. "It would be a crime to **notify a consumer** that his credit report had been accessed.*

(4) *expired. # His department also has drafted a letter to **notify officials** about the tighter rules. # The letter reinforces*

(5) *August 17th. Once they confirm the posting, they'll August 17th. Once They confirm the posting, they'll **notify the winner!** Enter as often as you like,*

(6) *#ETS reserves the right to take appropriate action and/or **notify appropriate authorities** including, but not limited to,*

(7) *with the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, which is supposed to **notify The agency** employing them of any arrest. In separate errors*

(8) *person inside the perimeter. Over. Received, we'll **notify security** immediately. I'm still looking. I think he's*

(9) *Account Information? #Yes. Twitter's policy is to **notify users** of requests for their information prior to disclosure*

(10) *depend on how many entries I receive. # If you win, I'll **notify** you by **e-mail**, and we'll set up a time to chat on the*

### 4.2.3 Announce

**Table 14** Noun collocates of *announce* from COCA

<i>Announce</i>					
Rank	Noun Collocate	Frequency	Rank	Noun Collocate	Frequency
1	plan	3,036	11	deal	673
2	president	2,331	12	department	671
3	week	2,061	13	official	654
4	company	1,503	14	administration	644
5	month	1,051	15	press	613
6	decision	873	16	retirement	576
7	news	802	17	candidacy	515
8	winner	764	18	release	418
9	conference	688	19	minister	380
10	intention	685	20	resignation	673

For the frequency of the verb *announce* according to the information from Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), it occurred 11,152 times. From the above table of the top twenty ranks of *announce*, it clearly demonstrated that *plan* was the most frequently used at 3,036 times as a noun collocate with this verb, *resident* occurred 2,331 times as the second rank, *week* appeared as the third rank at 2,061 times, the fourth rank was *company* at 1,503 times, the fifth rank was *month* at 1,051 times, followed by *decision* (873 times), *news* (802 times), *winner* (764 times), *conference* (688 times), *intention* (685 times), *deal* (673 times), *department* (671 times), *official* (654 times), *administration* (644 times), *press* (613 times), *retirement* (576 times), *candidacy* (515 times), *release* (418 times), *minister* (380 times), and *deal* (673 times).

The similarities and differences among noun collocates of *announce* according to semantic features and meaning are shown in Table 9.

**Table 15** Semantic preference of noun collocates of *announce* from COCA

<b>Announce</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Semantic Categories</b>	<b>Noun Collocates</b>
1	Management	company, administration, department, deal, conference
2	Politician/politics	president, candidacy, winner, minister
3	Possibility	decision, plan, intention
4	Period	week, month, retirement
5	Movement	release, resignation
6	Publishing	press, news
7	Position	official

From Table 15, the analysis of the semantic preference of the verb *announce* revealed seven themes. The largest group contained words wrapped up with noun collocates of *announce*, and included words referring to *management* contexts, namely *company, administration, department, deal, and conference*. The second set was related to the *politician or politics* context including *president, candidacy, winner, and minister*. The third set of nouns collocates with *notify* included words referring to *possibility*, which included *decision, plan, and intention*. The fourth set of semantic preference of *announce* was *period*. The words involved in this group were *week, month* and *retirement*. The fifth group was *movement*, which contained the words *release* and *resignation*. The sixth set was *publishing*, including *press* and *news* and *release* and the last set was *position*, which consisted of the noun *official*.

In closing, the verb *announce* seemed to be employed frequently with the set of nouns related to *management* the most, followed by *politician or politics, possibility, period, movement, publishing* and *position*. The examples of nouns collocate with the verb *announce* which were selected from concordance lines were shown below.

(1) *We now know why Nokia (NOK) didn't **announce** any **release** dates for its first Windows Phone 8 devices*

(2) *us this week-that Mario Cuomo was going to **announce** for **President** this week, this past week. He did not*

(3) *#Military Academy, became the first high school player to **announce** his **decision** to make himself available for the NBA draft this*

(4) *Paris Ouest Nanterre and University Sorbonne Nouvelle-Paris **announce a conference** on Women and Curiosity in Early Modern England*

(5) *predictions for 1992. Mr. RUSSEL: Pat Buchanan will **announce** his **candidacy** at Lindbergh's grave for America First.*

(6) *When the International Thriller Writers **announce the winners** of the short story award this Saturday night,*

(7) *The Prime Minister will **announce this week** that sophisticated airguns which are being adapted to*

(8) *#today's result giving the U.K. until April 12 to **announce** a new **plan**, fears of a no-deal Brexit are likely to*

(9) *#an early lame duck. The president felt compelled to **announce** at a **press conference** that he was still relevant. (n34)*

(10) *#With lessons from my favorite god in mind, I **announce** my **retirement** as an editor of African Arts. It's been*

According to the findings of this study, in terms of the grammatical patterns, some of them were slightly similar, while most were significantly different. At the same time, noun collocates showed a different sense of meaning. Regarding the results of semantic preferences, the verbs of *inform* and *notify* were frequently used with 'people', whereas the verb *announce* seemed to occur with 'management' the most. In addition, the results from this chapter were interpreted for further perspectives in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is divided into five sections: (1) summary of the study, (2) summary of the findings, (3) pedagogical implications, (4) limitations of the study, and (5) recommendations for further research.

#### 5.1 Summary of the Study

In this section, the researcher summarizes the similarities and differences of the synonymous verbs: *inform*, *notify* and *announce*, and investigate them by the criteria of synonyms relevant to grammatical patterns and noun collocations.

The objective of the study is to find the similarities and differences of the three synonymous verbs regarding their grammatical patterns and noun collocations.

The three verb synonyms: *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*, were the subjects of this study. LDOCE was employed to find out their referential meanings and grammatical patterns, whereas the 200 hundred concordance lines were retrieved from COCA to examine the synonymous verbs in the real language used and obtain in-depth data on grammatical patterns. Furthermore, due to time constraints, two hundred concordance lines were analyzed. To focus on the results of noun collocations, the top 20 noun collocates with these verbs were investigated in terms of finding out the most frequent nouns and also nouns in prepositional phrases, as well as gain the semantic references among these target words.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Findings

This present study is a corpus-based investigation of grammatical patterns and collocations of three verb synonyms: *inform*, *notify* and *announce*. The findings suggested the number of possible nouns collocate of these three verbs, which were collected from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA).

The findings of the study showed that these target synonyms were considered as near-synonyms since they shared some grammatical patterns and noun collocates or nouns in prepositional phrases. However, most pairs of grammatical patterns and noun collocations or nouns in prepositional phrases were unable to be used interchangeably in all contexts of use. In terms of grammatical patterns, the results showed that most of the grammatical patterns among these verb synonyms appeared differently. There were only three structures shared among all of them. For example, *inform, notify, announce + sth*, *inform, notify, announce + sb* and *inform, notify, announce + sth + that*. Taking the first rank of grammatical pattern for each verb into account, it is interesting that the structure of the verb of *inform* and *announce* tended to be used with “something”, while the verb of *notify* seemed to focus on “someone”. In regard to the analysis of noun collocations, the study indicated that *inform, notify* and *announce* shared a very small number of nouns collocates, and they appeared to share only one noun: *official*, which co-occurred among these verbs. Despite having similar meanings, the verbs *inform, notify*, and *announce* cannot be substituted in all contexts since they have their own specific traits on the basis of the criteria used to differentiate synonyms.

In order to find in-depth data information regarding grammatical patterns and noun collocations of these target words, the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online (2022) was used to provide a referential of meaning and preliminary grammatical structures, whereas The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) was employed to find the frequency of noun collocations, exhaustive information on grammatical structures, and also research the results of semantic preference. The findings are presented below.

### 5.2.1 Grammatical patterns

According to the data from collecting two hundred concordance lines from the COCA corpus, there were three grammatical patterns shared among these three verbs, which consisted of *inform, notify, announce + sth*, *inform, notify, announce + sb* and *inform, notify, announce + sth + that*. As a result, it can be concluded that these verbs obviously tended to be associated with "somebody" or "something". When considering the

verb pairs, the results illustrated that the verbs of *inform* & *notify* appeared with the highest number of grammatical patterns, with seven patterns, followed by the verbs of *notify* & *announce*, which occurred with six patterns, and the verbs of *inform* & *announce* appeared with three patterns, respectively. These findings are shown below.

### **Inform & Notify**

*inform, notify + sb + prep. (about/of) + sth*

*inform, notify + sb + that*

*inform, notify + sb + n. clause*

*inform, notify + sb + adv. clause*

*inform, notify + sb + adv.*

*inform, notify + sb (omission of that) + s. + v.*

*inform, notify + notify + sth + v./v. infinitive*

### **Inform & Announce**

*inform, announce + sth + prep. + sth*

*inform, announce + sth + that*

*inform, announce + sth + prep. phrase*

### **Notify & Announce**

*notify, announce + adv.*

*notify, announce + phrase*

*notify, announce + sth + gerund*

*notify, announce + prep. phrase*

*notify, announce + adv.*

*notify, announce + sb +for + sb/sth*

### **Inform, Notify and Announce**

*inform, notify, announce + sth*

*inform, notify, announce + sb*

*inform, notify, announce + sth + that*

To sum up, the grammatical patterns associated with the verbs *inform*, *notify*, and *announce* indicated that these verbs were near-synonyms because they shared some grammatical structures. Though they appeared to have three grammatical patterns in common, the majority of them were totally different, therefore can be concluded that these three verb synonyms: *inform*, *notify* and *announce*, cannot be used interchangeably in all grammatical contexts of use. However, as the two hundred concordance lines in COCA were employed to examine the grammatical patterns, there might be some other grammatical structures which are non-existent among these numbers of concordance lines in this study.

### 5.2.2 Noun Collocations

After the data was analyzed completely, the three synonymous verbs occurred with different types of nouns or nouns in prepositional phrases, as well, the frequencies of the noun collocates were also divergent. The findings revealed that the three synonymous verbs shared only one noun collocate, namely *official*. As the COCA was applied as the major instrument to examine the data in this study, it presented that *inform* tended to be more similar to *notify* than to *announce* since *inform* shared more common noun collocates with *notify* than it does with *announce*.

To classify the theme of the semantic preference among these verbs, the results revealed that *inform* was the most relevant to the nouns regarding *people*, for example, *parent, audience, committee, consumer, user, staff, patient, reader, official, authority* and *citizen*. For example, *The A.C.A. forbids insurers to **inform consumers** about their abortion coverage except as part of the long list of benefits*. Similarly, the results of the semantic preference of verb *notify* frequently appeared to be associated with the nouns regarding *people* as well which included *employee, user, customer, owner, winner, and parent*, for instance, *the court clerks and notify them about Grayson so they could **notify his clients**. I called the first clerk. But I could*. In contrast, the verb of *announce* mostly co-occurred with the noun related to *management*, which consisted of company,

administration, department, deal, conference. Table 16 summaries the theme of semantic preference for target verb synonyms.

**Table 16** Semantic preference of noun collocates of three verbs from COCA

No.	Inform		Notify		Announce	
	Semantic categories	Noun Collocates	Semantic categories	Noun Collocates	Semantic categories	Noun Collocates
1	People	parent, audience, committee, consumer, user, staff, patient, reader, citizen, participants	People	employee, user, customer, owner, winner, parent	Management	company, administration, department, deal, conference
2	Agreement	understanding, policy	Web	e-mail, comment, user, post	Politician/ Politics	president, candidacy, winner, minister
3	Position	official, authority	Organization	office, department, agency	Possibility	decision, plan, intention
4	Others: • Ability/skill • Community • Document • Law • Analysis • Possibility	practice, public letter consent research decision	Occupation	police, security	Period	week, month, retirement
5	-	-	Position	official, authority	Movement	release, resignation
6	-	-	A group member	family, kin	Publishing	press, news
7	-	-	Others (Improvement/ Development)	advance	Others (Position)	official

From the above data, it can be summarized that three verb synonyms: *inform*, *notify*, and *announce* seemed to have only one co-occurrence of noun collocate; *official*, while others appeared differently. In addition, the theme of semantic preference among these verbs tended to be miscellaneous. The first set of both verbs *inform* and *notify* were similarly related to the nouns regarding *people*, while the verb *announce* was associated with the nouns of *management*. The findings of the noun collocations previously stated were in line with the studies of Walter (1992), Butler (2008), Phoocharoensil (2010),

Kiatthanakul (2010), Hu (2015), and Yang (2016) in that collocations can be one way of discriminating near-synonyms as they share some common meanings and collocations.

### 5.3 Pedagogical Implications

The results demonstrated that the verb synonyms of *inform*, *notify*, and *announce* were considered as near-synonyms since the findings indicated that their grammatical patterns and noun collocations or nouns in prepositional phrases could not be used interchangeably in all contexts of use. Using corpora is very beneficial to support L2 or EFL learners or students to convey English vocabulary appropriately in a manner similar to native speakers. In terms of pedagogy, knowing how to distinguish synonyms can help students or learners improve their English proficiency. Besides, the results provided important information for English teachers to provide students with authentic examples of how to use English synonyms so that they are able to deliver English lessons more comprehensively and naturally. Furthermore, when teaching English, a teacher should not only teach grammar but also need to add collocations and synonyms, which are frequently used in daily life, thus this process might assist L2 or EFL learners to overcome the obstacle of learning English as a second or foreign language.

### 5.4 Limitations of the Study

In this study, the form of the target words only focused on the base form. Hence, the results might be different in the case where the study provides more possible verb forms, namely, the *-ed* and *-ing* forms. Due to the time limitations, two hundred concordance lines were collected when investigating the grammatical patterns. In the case of more concordance lines, their patterns could be explored extensively. Besides, the collocations of the target verbs *inform*, *notify*, and *announce*, were studied from only the noun collocates. For this reason, this may not provide adequate collocations as well as semantic preference of these verb synonyms.

### **5.5 Recommendations for Future Research**

For further studies, other criteria in terms of investigating to see the similarities and differences might be used instead of grammatical patterns and noun collocation. For instance, the degree of formality, lexical information, referential meanings, and so on. Apart from using the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online (2022), other dictionaries, namely, MacMillan Dictionary Online, Merriam-Webster Dictionary, or Cambridge English Dictionary, etc., should be utilized as instruments of the study in terms of comparing the meaning, grammatical patterns, and collocations.

In order to find out more grammatical patterns beyond the results of the present study, it is recommended that more concordance lines should be collected from the corpus to see more possible grammatical patterns in order to increase the validity of the data. Furthermore, as the data were gathered from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), which represent American English, the results may not be generalized to other variations of English, therefore other corpora should be studied in order to see the results in different English-speaking areas, namely, the British National Corpus (BNC).



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