



**A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF NEAR SYNONYMS:
RUIN, DESTROY, AND DAMAGE**

BY

PIYAKAMON BOONRODYOO

**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 2022**

**A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF NEAR SYNONYMS:
RUIN, DESTROY, AND DAMAGE**

BY

PIYAKAMON BOONRODYOO

**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 2022**

THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY

LANGUAGE INSTITUTE

AN INDEPENDENT STUDY

BY

PIYAKAMON BOONRODYOO

ENTITLED

A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF NEAR SYNONYMS: RUIN, DESTROY, AND
DAMAGE

was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts in English Language Teaching

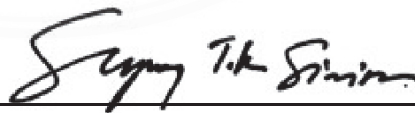
on July 12, 2023

Chairman



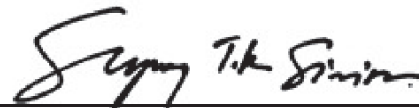
(Associate Professor Supakorn Phoocharoensil, Ph.D.)

Member and Advisor



(Associate Professor Supong Tangkiengsirisin, Ph.D.)

Director



(Associate Professor Supong Tangkiengsirisin, Ph.D.)

Independent Study Title	A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF NEAR SYNONYMS: RUIN, DESTROY, AND DAMAGE
Author	Piyakamon Boonrodyoo
Degree	Master of Art
Major Field/Faculty/University	English Language Teaching Language Institute Thammasat University
Independent Study Advisor	Associate Professor Supong Tangkiengsirisin, Ph.D.
Academic Year	2022

ABSTRACT

This study examines three synonymous verbs destroy, ruin, and damage, focusing on the similarities and the differences in their meaning, degree of formality across genres, and noun collocation in relation to semantic preference. The research instruments used in this study were the online version of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). The results indicate that these synonyms have the same core meaning; however, their definitions differ slightly. In terms of formality, these synonyms have the same degrees of formality and are frequently employed in informal contexts. Regarding noun collocates, the top thirty noun collocates of the target synonymous verbs with the highest frequency and a significant MI score level of 3 were classified according to their semantic preference. It was discovered that these synonyms share some overlapping noun collocations and themes. Nonetheless, these synonyms also occur in specific nouns. The difference in collocational patterns among the near-synonyms suggests that the three synonymous verbs cannot be used interchangeably in all contexts.

Keywords: collocations, semantic preference, near-synonyms, COCA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Initially, I would like to extend my sincere and deep gratitude to Associate Professor Supong Tangkiengsirisin, Ph.D., my advisor, for his valuable help and constant encouragement throughout this research.

Furthermore, I sincerely thank Associate Professor Supakorn Phoocharoensil, Ph.D. my corpus linguistics teacher and the independent study committee chairperson, for providing me with an in-depth knowledge of corpus linguistics.

Also, I am very thankful to all my friends from the Master of Arts Programme in English Language Teaching, especially Patter, Nana, Tintin, Airy, Jane, and Tarn.

Finally, I would like to thank my beloved family and my best friends for life, Sine and Friend, for all their support and encouragement throughout the hard time of my studying and this research.

Piyakamon Boonrodyoo

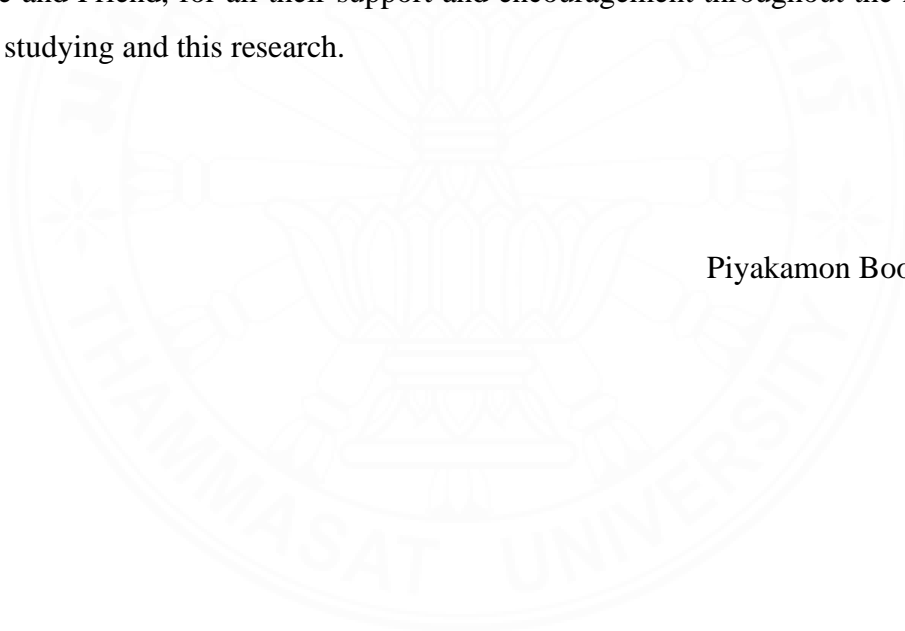


TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	(1)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	(2)
LIST OF TABLES	(6)
LIST OF FIGURES	(7)
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Research Objectives	2
1.3 Research Questions	3
1.4 Definition of Terms	3
1.4.1 Corpus or Corpora (Plural)	3
1.4.2 The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)	3
1.4.3 Synonym	3
1.4.4 Collocation	3
1.5 Scope of the Study	4
1.7 Significance of the Study	4
1.6 Organization of the Study	4
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.1 Definition of Synonym	6
2.2 Types of Synonyms	6
2.2.1 Perfect Synonyms	6
2.2.2 Near-Synonyms	6
2.3 Criteria for Distinguishing Synonyms	6

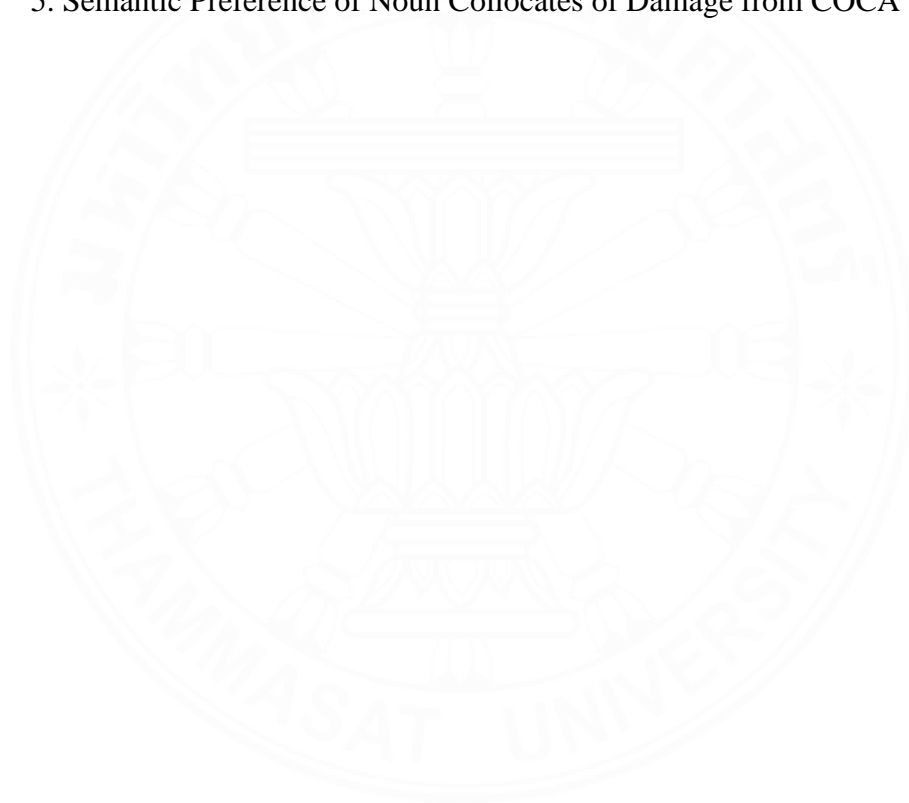
	(4)
2.3.1 Collocation	6
2.3.2 Degree of Formality	7
2.3.3 Semantic Preference	7
2.3.4 Grammatical Patterns	8
2.4 Corpus Linguistics	9
2.5 Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)	9
2.6 Previous Related Studies	10
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY	13
3.1 Target Words	13
3.2 Instruments	13
3.3 Data Collection and Procedures	13
3.4 Data Analysis	14
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS	15
4.1 Definition	15
4.2 Degree of Formality	16
4.3 Collocation	20
4.4 Semantic Preference	22
CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	26
5.1 Summary of the Results	26
5.2 Summary of the Findings	26
5.3 Discussion	27
5.3.1 Definitions	27
5.3.2 Degree of Formality	27
5.3.3 Collocations in Relation to Semantic Preference	28

	(5)
5.4 Conclusion	29
5.5 Instructional Implications	29
5.6 Limitation of the Study	29
5.7 Recommendations for Further Study	30
REFERENCES	31



LIST OF TABLES

Tables	Page
1. Distribution of Ruin, Destroy, and Damage across Eight Genres according to Frequency	16
2. Noun Collocates of Ruin, Destroy, and Damage from COCA	20
3. Semantic Preference of Noun Collocates of Ruin from COCA	22
4. Semantic Preference of Noun Collocates of Destroy from COCA	23
5. Semantic Preference of Noun Collocates of Damage from COCA	24



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Percentage of Distribution of Ruin in Different Genres	18
2. Percentage of Distribution of Destroy in Different Genres	19
3. Percentage of Distribution of Damage in Different Genres	20



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English is generally accepted as one of the most valuable languages people worldwide use as a lingua franca. People from different countries who speak different native languages can communicate using English as an international language (Kirkpatrick, 2007). The four English skills are vital, but vocabulary is crucial for efficient communication (Gass & Selinker, 2008). English language learners must comprehend the proper usage of synonyms to master vocabulary.

Nevertheless, one of the most challenging aspects of acquiring English vocabulary is comprehending the similarities and differences between synonym meanings and usage. Biber and Conrad (1999) said that similar words could usually be told apart by the collocations with which they are most often used. This shows how important it is for speakers to know how to use collocations well if they want to communicate clearly and without ambiguity. Generally, English language learners will use dictionaries to comprehend and use words correctly. Synonymous words indeed have the same core meaning. Each word, though, may signify something different. Additionally, although the synonymous words co-occur with specific speech parts, they share overlapping topics and collocations. Nevertheless, a dictionary does not describe how synonyms differ. On the other hand, in the corpus field, learners can distinguish synonyms by frequency, phraseology, and collocation (Hunston, 2002).

Synonymous words certainly have the same core meaning. On the other hand, a word can be understood in various ways. Furthermore, while the synonymous words share some common themes and collocations, they only occur with specific parts of speech. A corpus-based study of synonyms could help with the apparent issue. A corpus was created using computer science to store samples of natural language use. Correct data has proven to be one of the most effective methods for distinguishing synonyms.

Ruin, *destroy*, and *damage* were chosen as target synonyms because of their frequency and importance for learners. According to the Longman Dictionary of

Contemporary English, the verb *destroy* is included in the list of the top 2,000 most frequent spoken and written English words. In addition, *ruin* and *damage* are among the top 3,000 most frequent words in spoken English. Additionally, all three of these verbs are usually translated as 'ทำลาย' in Thai. For Thai learners, these three synonyms of verbs can confuse them. They often substitute these words and use them without recognizing the similarities and differences in core and detailed meanings and collocations. Therefore, when the group of synonyms shares similar core meanings, learners frequently choose inappropriate or unnatural words without realizing that the synonyms are not interchangeable.

Particularly, Ruenrong (2014) examined how the synonymous verbs *ruin*, *demolish*, and *destroy* differed in terms of grammatical patterns, sense of meaning, and formality of context. Additionally, Song (2021) compared the frequency, genre distribution, collocation and collation patterns, and differences in meanings and uses of the nearly synonymous pairs *damage* and *destroy* that are frequently misused by Chinese-speaking English learners. The source data was gathered from the British National Corpus (BNC).

However, according to the two previous studies, collocations in relation to semantic preference need to be investigated. Therefore, this study aims to investigate two synonymous verbs: *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage*, to examine differences between the two verbs according to their definition, degree of formality, and noun collocations in relation to semantic preference.

1.2 Research Objectives

- 1) To compare and contrast the definitions of the synonymous verbs: *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage*.
- 2) To examine the degree of formality of the synonymous verbs : *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* across genres.
- 3) To examine noun collocations in relation to semantic preference of the synonymous verbs: *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage*.

1.3 Research Questions

- 1) What are the similarities and differences in meanings among the synonymous verbs: *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage*?
- 2) What is the degree of formality of the synonymous verbs: *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage*?
- 3) What are noun collocations in relation to semantic preference of the synonymous verbs: *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage*?

1.4 Definition of Terms

The following are specific key terms used in this study.

1.4.1 Corpus or Corpora (Plural)

A corpus is a group of real texts, both written and spoken, that are kept on a computer with a lot of other text. Corpus analysis software can be used to find and study the texts in a systematic way.

1.4.2 The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)

COCA is the most extensive collection of English text that can be used for free and accurately represents American English. The corpus has more than 520 million words of updated text from 1990 to 2015, divided equally between spoken language, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and academic writings.

1.4.3 Synonym

A synonym is a word or phrase in one language that is synonymous with another word or phrase in that language in terms of its meaning.

1.4.4 Collocation

Collocation is a method of separating synonyms that considers terms that statistically occur together or pop up more frequently than by chance, such as hate mail instead of *hate letter.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This research aimed to examine the similarities and differences between the verbs *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage*. *Damage* can be a noun or a verb; however, only the verb form was chosen for evaluation. The online version of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English was used to compare the definitions of synonymous verbs. COCA was used as well to investigate the degree of formality and collocation. The top thirty noun collocations of the target synonyms were examined with the highest frequency and the greater than ≥ 3 MI score level to investigate their collocations.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The following are some of the significant aspects of the study that was based on a corpus of three verbs that are synonyms: *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage*.

Within a variety of genres, learners can see the varying degrees of formality that are associated with the words *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage*.

Learners can understand the differences between the definitions of *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage*. They can also see how these words are used in collocations.

The findings of this study may help English language learners become more conscious of the choices of words they make and improve their capacity to comprehend synonyms and the meanings of their corresponding terms.

The way in which the research was conducted could persuade language instructors to make use of the COCA as a resource for teaching vocabulary and other synonyms based on real-world language.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The study consists of five chapters as follows:

1) The first chapter is an introduction that provides the study's background, research questions, research objectives, the definition of words, the significance of the study, and study organization.

2) Chapter two includes an overview of related literature, such as corpus linguistics, synonymy theories, and previous research.

3) Chapter three explains the methodology, data collection, and data analysis of the research.

- 4) Chapter four discusses the study's findings.
- 5) Chapter five includes a summary of the findings, discussion, conclusion, implications, and recommendations for further research.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Definition of Synonym

The word "synonym" is derived from the Greek words *syn* (meaning "similar") and *onym* (meaning "name"), and it is used to describe two or more words that mean the same thing (Murphy, 2010). Perfect synonyms and near-synonyms are the two categories into which synonyms are typically classified.

2.2 Types of Synonyms

2.2.1 Perfect Synonyms

Lyon (1995) defined perfect synonyms as a pair of words that have the same meaning, are synonymous in all situations, and are semantically the same in every aspect of meaning. On the other hand, Taylor (1995) found that perfect synonyms that are completely interchangeable in meaning are extremely uncommon. Perfect synonyms could be completely interchangeable in any situation with no meaning differences. According to Edmonds and Hirst (2002), this present study does not focus on absolute synonyms because they are very rare.

2.2.2 Near-Synonyms

Near-synonyms are terms that are nearly interchangeable but have different meanings, attitudes, or implications that researchers seek to analyze, making one word more appropriate for a specific situation than another. This definition comes from Nordquist (2019). The expression "lie" can relate to a variety of concepts, including untruth, falsity, fabrication, and misrepresentation. Each term that is very close to being a synonym has a unique nuance of meaning that it can arise depending on a particular set of situations.

2.3 Criteria for Distinguishing Synonyms

2.3.1 Collocation

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2011) describes a collocation as

"a combination of words in a language that happens very often and more frequently than would happen by chance" (page 279). The English Oxford Living Dictionaries Online (2018) describes collocation as "the frequent juxtaposition of a certain word with another word or words with a frequency greater than chance: 'strong tea' and 'heavy drinker' are common examples of English collocations. Furthermore, Timmis (2015) highlighted the fact that the term is a mixture of two lexical items that regularly appear together in close proximity to one another.

2.3.2 Degree of Formality

According to Kummerdchard (2013), the English language can be placed into one of the following categories: whether in a formal or informal setting. One of the criteria that can be used to distinguish the difference between words that are simply synonyms is the degree of formality of the context in which the words appear. COCA provides a number of different texts that can be used as references to classify the terms that are used in formal or informal language in order to distinguish between near-synonyms based on the degree of formality across genres. While formal English is primarily used in written texts like webpages, blogs, magazines, and newspapers, informal English can be found in fiction, subtitles for movies and television subtitles and spoken language.

It is expected that learners of the target language will be able to distinguish context-dependent gradations of formality. According to the findings of Phoocharoensil (2021), the word "persist" is used more frequently in academic journals, whereas the word "persevere" is used more frequently on webpages. This suggests that the word "persist" relates to a greater level of formality than the word "persevere." In the meantime, the findings demonstrated that the two synonyms in question, such as "persist" and "persevere," do not predominate in casual English. This is because they are used less frequently in informal styles or contexts, such as spoken language, fiction, and the subtitles of television shows and movies.

2.3.3 Semantic Preference

Semantic preference, as described by Cheng (2012), is the tendency of lexical items to be constrained under specific semantic conditions. Despite the fact that

collocational patterns are concerned with lexical constraint, the semantic contexts of the words govern their occurrences (Flowerdew, 2012). Also known as "the frequent co-occurrence of a lexical item with items expressing a specific evaluative meaning" (Hunston, 2007, p. 266). Furthermore, Begagi (2013) noted that semantic preference was just given a thorough examination in corpus linguistics. The association between a word form and a collection of terms with similar meanings is what is meant by the concept of semantic preference.

For instance, according to Edmonds and Hirst's (2002) investigation of the synonyms die and pass away, pass away is used only with humans and not with animals or plants. An additional example of the findings on the semantic preference of the word cause is provided by Partington (2004). When a cause is followed by a single object, like cancer or heart issues, it is commonly associated with a disease. However, when a cause is followed by two objects, as the word "comfort" causes them discomfort, the second object frequently suggests an unpleasant emotion.

2.3.4 Grammatical Patterns

According to Clark (2003), synonyms (strict/perfect/absolute synonyms) must have identical grammatical structures. Despite strong semantic similarities, the majority of English synonyms are near (loose) synonyms because they do not have the same grammatical patterns. One of the criteria for distinguishing synonyms is hence the observation of grammatical patterns.

Phoocharoensil (2010) notes that *ask* and *beg* share the following structural similarities:

Ask/Beg + (somebody) + for + something Ask/Beg + somebody + to-V.inf

Ask/Beg + to-V.inf

Ask/Beg + that + Subject + V.inf

In addition to that, they may be used as well in many kinds of patterns such as the following:

Ask + (somebody) + if/whether

Beg + (something) + (from + somebody)

2.4 Corpus Linguistics

The term "corpus" describes a large amount of linguistic information, such as written texts and voice recordings. According to Crystal (1995), this information can be used to support or provide an explanation for linguistic phenomena.

Dash (2018) states that corpus linguistics is a crucial component of computational linguistics. It contains a huge number of recordings of real-world language usage that were deliberately acquired from various contexts in order to analyze and extract linguistic information, examples, and other data.

2.5 Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)

The Corpus of Contemporary American English, also known as COCA is the most extensive English corpus currently accessible for this study. Mark Davies, a professor of corpus linguistics at Brigham Young University, is the organization's creator (Henry, 2011). This corpus is the only one that contains the most widespread use of American English and the numerous associations of other English corpora as a wide range of data. According to Davies (2020), the COCA includes texts in the following categories: spoken (20%), fiction (20%), popular magazines (20%), newspapers (20%), and academic journals (20%). This composition builds trustworthiness for the corpus, allowing researchers to compare data diachronically and correctly illustrate language changes. According to the new version of COCA released in March 2020, each COCA composite text is equally divided into eight categories.

Spoken: Conversations that were not pre-recorded and transcribed from more than 150 different radio and television broadcasts.

Fiction: Stories and plays taken from literary journals, children's magazines, popular magazines, the first chapters of novels published in their initial editions between 1990 and the current day, and fan fiction.

Magazines: About one hundred magazines cover various topics, including news, health, home and gardening, women's issues, financial issues, religious topics, sports, and more.

Newspapers: Various newspapers from different cities and states in the United States, such as USA Today, the New York Times, the Atlanta Journal Constitution, and the San Francisco Chronicle, among others. A proper balance is maintained between

the many sections of the newspaper, such as the opinion, sports, financial, and local news sections.

Academic: More than 200 distinct journals are being subjected to peer review. These include various academic fields and maintain an appropriate balance between humanities, history, education, law, medicine, social sciences, business, philosophy/religion, and science/technology. They also cover the full range of academic disciplines.

Web (Genl): Academic, argumentative, fictional, informational, instructional, legal, news, personal, promotional, and review websites have been categorized (by Serge Sharoff) and taken from the GloWbE corpus' US section.

Web (Blog): Google's interpretation of certain types of text as belonging to the category of blogs. Further divided down into several web page categories of academic, argumentative, fictional, informational, instructional, legal, personal, promotional, and review websites. The extract was taken from the United States section of the GloWbE corpus.

TV/Movies: subtitles from the TV and movie corpora, then from OpenSubtitles.org. According to studies, the language used in these media is even more basic and colloquial than the information found in "spoken corpora." This study compares the similarities and differences between the synonymous verbs ruin, destroy, and damage while considering the degree of formality and noun collocations into account. The COCA stated above is the core that is primarily used in the comparison.

2.6 Previous Related Studies

In a recent study, Supanfai (2022) looked at the similarities and differences between the nouns *people* and *persons*, focusing on how they are used together and how their meanings vary. The data came from the original British National Corpus and the online form of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. The study found that the two words share five statistically significant collocations and five semantic preferences. These include health, age, job status, socioeconomic status, and thoughts and feelings. Also, they had different tastes when it came to meaning. *People* had semantic preferences for words about bad behavior, numbers, and race but often used words from the semantic set of laws. As the dictionary said, a high level of formality

was found when *people's* collocations and semantic tastes were examined. However, corpus data showed that *people* could be used in informal settings, like fiction, even when they are used in a very formal way.

Sittironnarit, Khunasathitchai, Kosashunhanan, and Kumdee (2022) used the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) to examine how the verbs *acquire* and *obtain* are used in different areas with other words. The data showed that they seemed very formal and were used more in writing than in speech. *Obtain* happens to appear more often than *acquire*. In terms of pairing, we can tell them apart by which word they operate together with. They share some noun collocations but cannot always be used in place of each other.

Phoocharoensil (2020) studied the similarities and differences in the frequency of three synonymous nouns, *consequence*, *result*, and *outcome*, across genres and collocational patterns. The information came from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). This group of synonyms appears most frequently in academic literature, but it seems least often in spoken contexts, including fiction and TV and movie subtitles. The findings in the collocations were found by analyzing their COCA frequency with the higher ≥ 3 MI score. The study revealed that *consequences* frequently co-occurred with negative verbs and adjectives. Meanwhile, *result* is typically associated with a research-oriented contexts. Furthermore, *outcome's* collocates exhibit the most diverse semantic properties, despite being unconnected to specific contexts. This list of synonyms demonstrates that these three synonymous words cannot be interchanged entirely in every case.

Panyapayatjati (2016) investigated three synonyms: *grieve*, *mourn*, and *regret*, emphasizing referential meaning, grammatical structure, and noun collocations. The data was collected using the online versions of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). The meanings, grammatical structures, and noun collocations of the words were discovered to be slightly different. Nevertheless, they cannot be used interchangeably in some contexts.

Punyasuth (2014) investigated the similarities and differences in grammatical pattern, collocations, and degree of formality between the two synonymous verbs, *adjourn* and *postpone*, using the COCA. She noticed that *adjourn* and *postpone*

appeared in different contexts: *adjourn* appeared in more formal situations than *postpone* since it collocates with highly formal nouns including *congress*, *session*, and *senate*. As a result, they are near synonyms rather than perfect synonyms.

Additionally, two corpus-based studies investigated near-synonymous verbs *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* in different aspects.

According to Ruenrong (2014), the three synonyms *ruin*, *demolish*, and *destroy* are the focus to investigate for this corpus-based analysis. It was found that the definitions of the three synonyms are different, their grammatical patterns are not entirely identical, and they are usually used together with an object noun. The degrees of formality among these synonyms differ, with *ruin* and *destroy* rarely used in formal situations, while *demolish* is frequently employed. Although *ruin*, *demolish*, and *destroy* are near synonyms, they are not perfect or absolute synonyms due to differences in formality, grammatical patterns, and collocations.

Furthermore, Song (2021) compared the frequency, genre distribution, collocation and collation patterns, and differences in meanings and uses of the virtually synonymous words, *damage* and *destroy* that Chinese-speaking English learners often use inappropriately. The British National Corpus (BNC) was used as the primary source for the data.

Although the verbs chosen as the target synonyms in this study are similar to those used in the previous two studies, it is still possible to get further insights into the three synonyms by using different methods and exploring other goals. Collocation analysis can contribute to semantic preference by defining the relationship between a word form and a group of semantically related words. The concept of distribution pattern can provide information about the behavior of three synonyms across the eight genres in the COCA and identify their degree of formality.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Target Words

This study examined three near-synonymous verbs: *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage*. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2014) was used to determine the fundamental meanings of the target words. According to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, the verb *destroy* is one of the top 2,000 most frequently used words in spoken and written English. In addition, *ruin* and *damage* are among the top 3,000 most frequently spoken words.

3.2 Instruments

Since it is a well-known dictionary, the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English online version was employed as a tool in this study. It offers accurate information, such as definitions and sentence structures. Moreover, it offers an integrated thesaurus, examples of collocations, and essential information regarding the grammar of the target synonyms. Additionally, the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (Davies, 2020) was employed as a major source to investigate the information connected to three verbs, with a particular emphasis on the degree of formality across genres and collocations in relation to semantic preference. COCA is easy to use because it has more than 100 million written and spoken English words from many areas. It also has concordance lines that show how keywords are used in context.

3.3 Data Collection and Procedures

This study investigated the verbs *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage*, which are near synonyms. The definitions of the synonymous verbs *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* were contrasted and compared in the online version of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English to provide the first research answer. The second and third research questions were further investigated on the target words utilizing corpus-based data from COCA. COCA determined how often the words *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage*

appeared in eight genres: blogs, webpages, TV and movie subtitles, spoken language, fiction, magazines, newspapers, and academic works. Analyzing the various genre distributions can also help determine the formality of each word. The top thirty noun collocates of *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* were listed in the following steps based on the collocational strength assessed by the Mutual Information (MI Score). The top thirty noun collocates were chosen because the target words were verbs. Based on the frequency and the ≥ 3 MI score, these collocations were chosen. The co-occurrence strength of the target word and the collocation was reflected by the MI score, according to Gablasova, Brezina, and McEnery (2017). However, as the MI score often has a high value for low-frequency combinations, more is needed to determine collocational strength than only the MI score (Cheng, 2012). Schmitt (2010) advocates utilizing the MI score carefully and checking it along with frequency to confirm the co-occurrence strength between the target word and the collocation. The nouns that co-occur with *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* was classified according to their semantic preference or similarity in meaning after extracting noun collocations.

3.4 Data Analysis

The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) were the primary sources of information for this study. To begin, the definitions of the verbs *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* were checked using the online version of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE, 2014). The distributions of the eight genres were obtained using COCA: TV and movie subtitles, blogs, webpages, spoken, fiction, magazine, newspaper, and academic writings. After identifying the common noun collocates of each target word using frequency and MI score (≥ 3), the top thirty most frequent noun collocates were illustrated. Noun collocates with similar semantic preferences were identified and grouped under the same theme, allowing the target near-synonyms to be easily divided.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Definition

All three synonyms have been derived from the online version of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE) in terms of their meanings. The information for each verb is given below.

Ruin

The definitions of *ruin* from online LDOCE (2014) are as follows:

- a) to spoil or destroy something completely
e.g. This illness has ruined my life.
- b) to make someone lose all their money
e.g. Jefferson was ruined by the lawsuit.

Destroy

The definitions of *destroy* from online LDOCE (2014) are as follows:

- a) to damage something so badly that it no longer exists or cannot be used or repaired
e.g. The school was completely destroyed by fire.
- b) if something destroys someone, it ruins their life completely
e.g. The scandal destroyed Simmons and ended his political career.
- c) informal to defeat an opponent easily
e.g. The Bears destroyed the Detroit Lions 35–3.
- d) to kill an animal, especially because it is ill or dangerous
e.g. One of the bulls had to be destroyed.

Damage

The definitions of *damage* from online LDOCE (2014) are as follows:

- a) to cause physical harm to something or to part of someone's body
e.g. Smoking can severely damage your health.
- b) to have a bad effect on something or someone in a way that makes them weaker or less successful
e.g. The changes in share values have damaged investor confidence.

The result showed that the word *ruin* is commonly used in the sense that to be ruined, something still exists but is no longer valid or valuable. On the other hand, the meaning of *destroy* is that something has vanished or does not exist. *Damage* is commonly used to harm, break, or somewhat destroy something. Something damaged might be able to be repaired.

4.2 Degree of Formality

This section presents and discusses the frequency and frequency of the synonyms *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* across genres in COCA to determine the degree of formality related to the second research question. The results are summarized in the table below.

Table 1

Distribution of Ruin, Destroy, and Damage Across Eight Genres according to Frequency

Rank	<i>Ruin</i>			<i>Destroy</i>			<i>Damage</i>		
	Genres	Frequency	Per Million	Genres	Frequency	Per Million	Genres	Frequency	Per Million
1	TV and movies subtitles	3,826	29.87	TV and movies subtitles	7,517	58.69	Magazines	10,015	79.43
2	Fiction	2,055	17.37	Webpages	5,760	46.36	Webpages	9,349	75.24
3	Webpages	1,976	15.90	Blogs	4,883	37.97	Blogs	9,056	70.41
4	Blogs	1,782	13.86	Spoken	3,392	26.89	Spoken	7,845	62.19
5	Magazines	1,268	10.06	Magazines	3,092	24.52	Newspaper	7,406	60.83

6	Newspaper	949	7.80	Fiction	2,840	24.00	Academic texts	6,752	56.37
7	Spoken	911	7.22	Newspaper	2,294	18.84	TV and movies subtitles	5,059	39.50
8	Academic texts	579	4.83	Academic texts	2,091	17.76	Fiction	3,914	33.08
	Total	13,346		Total	31,869		Total	59,396	

Table 1 shows the results of normalizing the frequency and distribution of three verbs. According to COCA, *damage* has the highest frequency (59,396 tokens) among the three synonyms, followed by *destroy* (13,346 tokens) and *ruin* (13,346 tokens).

According to Table 1, *ruin* and *destroy* differ in ranking of the eight genres. The word *ruin* is used the least in academic texts (579 tokens), appearing most commonly in TV and movie subtitles (3,826 tokens), fiction (2,055 tokens), webpages (1,976 tokens), blogs (1,782 tokens), magazines (1,268 tokens), newspapers (949 tokens), and spoken (911 tokens).

The word *destroy* appears most frequently in TV and movies subtitles (7,517 tokens), followed by webpages (5,760 tokens), blogs (4,883 tokens), spoken (3,392), magazines (3,092 tokens), fiction (2,840 tokens), newspapers (2,294 tokens), and this word is least used in academic texts (2,091 tokens).

The word *damage* is found most frequently in magazines (10,015 tokens), followed by webpages (9,349 tokens), blogs (9,056 tokens), spoken (7,845 tokens), newspaper (7,406 tokens), academic texts (6,752 tokens), television and movie subtitles (5,059 tokens), and fiction (3,914 tokens).

Table 1 shows that the distribution of *ruin* and *destroy* tends to have similar occurrences across genres. *Ruin* and *destroy* are associated with informal English as both are found most frequently in TV and Movie subtitles and low frequently in Academic texts. On the other hand, *damage* is found differently. *Damage* is most frequent in magazines and least frequent in TV and movie subtitles.

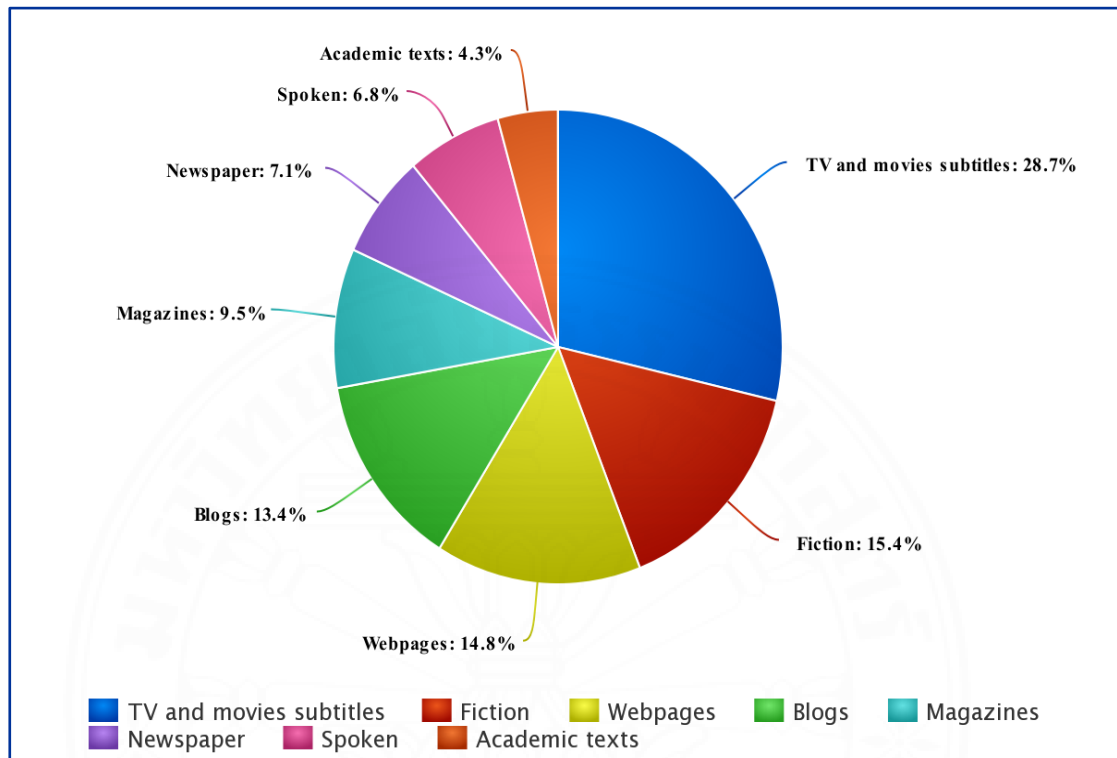
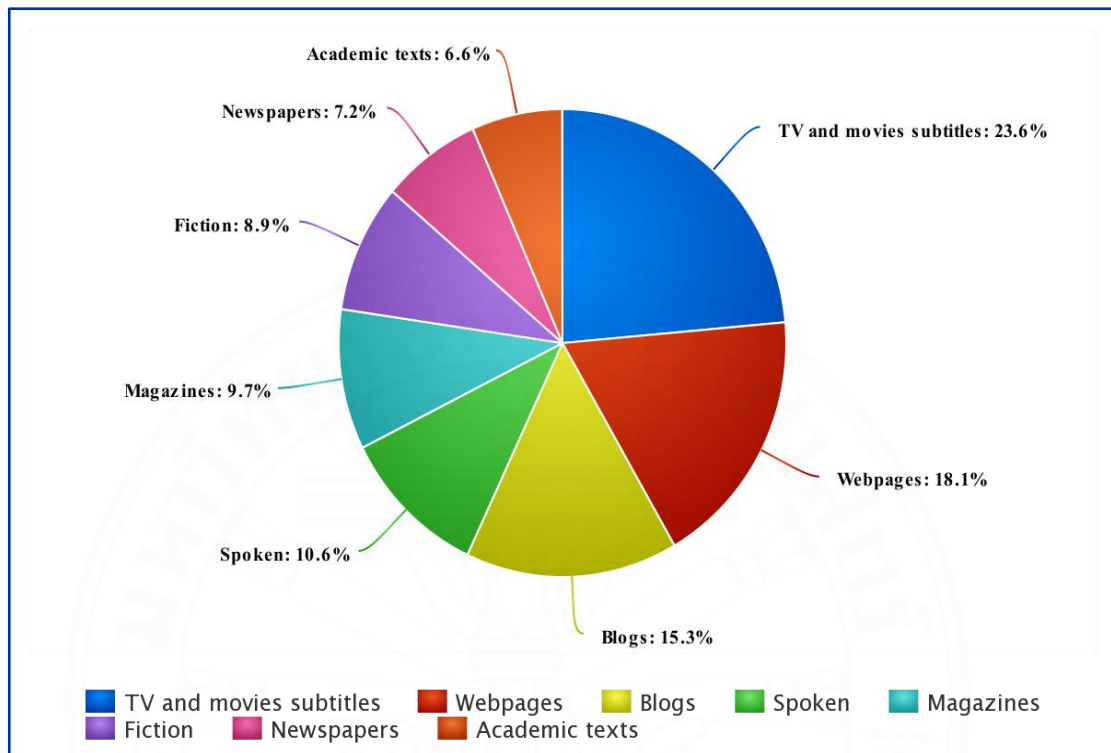
Figure 1*Percentage of Distribution of Ruin in Different Genres*

Figure 4.1 illustrates the percentage distribution of *ruin* across genres. The word *ruin* appears the most frequently in TV and movie subtitles (28.7%), fiction (15.4%), webpages (14.8%), blogs (13.4%), magazines (9.5%), newspaper (7.1%), spoken (6.8%), and academic texts (4.3%).

Figure 2

Percentage of Distribution of Destroy in Different Genres



The percentage distribution of *destroy* across genres is shown in Figure 4.2. The word *destroy* appears most frequently in TV and movies subtitles (23.6%), webpages (18.1%), blogs (15.3%), spoken (10.6%), magazines (9.7%), fiction (8.9%), newspaper (7.2%), and academic texts (6.0%).

Figure 3

Percentage of Distribution of Damage in Different Genres

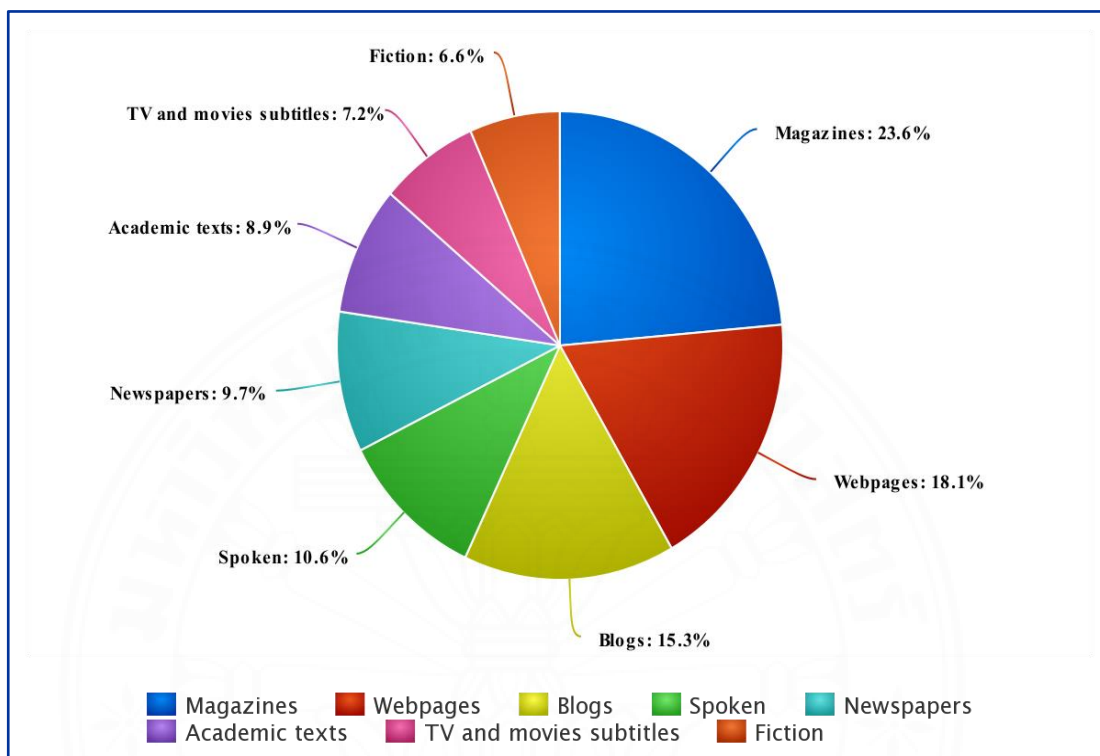


Figure 4.3 represents the percentage distribution of damage across genres. *Damage* is most frequently seen in magazines (23.6%), webpages (18.1%), blogs (15.3%), spoken (10.6%), newspapers (9.7%), academic texts (8.9%), TV and movie subtitles (7.2%), and fiction (6.6%).

4.3 Collocation

Table 2

Noun Collocates of Ruin, Destroy, and Damage from COCA

Rank	<i>Ruin</i>			<i>Destroy</i>			<i>Damage</i>		
	Noun collocate	Frequency	MI Value	Noun collocate	Frequency	MI Value	Noun collocate	Frequency	MI Value
1	Life	3,381	4.32	fire	1,027	3.51	brain	552	4.79
2	career	631	4.73	enemy	578	3.94	reputation	421	6.14
3	reputation	406	3.37	weapon	548	3.16	building	343	3.39

4	chance	348	3.37	planet	471	3.44	property	281	3.73
5	marriage	171	3.20	ship	464	3.23	cell	260	3.35
6	friendship	140	4.89	village	345	3.33	economy	232	3.07
7	surprise	136	3.64	missile	322	4.21	credibility	215	6.17
8	wedding	131	3.80	reputation	293	3.98	good	203	4.93
9	Fun	118	3.27	temple	248	4.37	environment	164	3.02
10	vacation	83	3.87	habitat	241	4.50	tissue	163	4.95
11	Mood	80	3.76	civilization	238	4.27	storm	160	3.73
12	appetite	57	4.95	crop	220	3.66	hurricane	160	4.69
13	Crop	53	3.29	hurricane	210	3.44	ship	142	3.16
14	credibility	51	4.13	infrastructure	209	3.73	nerve	136	4.94
15	ending	37	3.67	credibility	208	4.49	repair	128	5.35
16	enjoyment	24	4.34	embryo	186	5.55	brand	119	3.91
17	picnic	22	3.83	explosion	160	3.55	earthquake	114	5.15
18	livelihood	20	4.56	monster	158	3.11	relation	113	3.14
19	Greed	18	3.44	flood	156	3.80	crop	105	4.23
20	Prom	15	3.80	ozone	145	5.17	lung	84	4.25
21	honeymoon	12	3.62	earthquake	141	3.82	vessel	82	4.16
22	complexion	11	4.35	acre	134	3.20	organ	81	4.44
23	vibe	9	3.19	fleet	104	3.69	flood	78	4.44
24	hairdo	9	5.59	bacteria	101	3.18	liver	78	4.87
25	suspense	8	3.80	tornado	90	4.13	kidney	75	5.07
26	spill	7	3.04	capitalism	89	3.38	explosion	73	4.06
27	mascara	7	4.30	livelihood	85	4.98	radiation	70	4.10
28	upholstery	7	4.75	ecosystem	80	3.18	tornado	61	5.21
29	spoiler	6	3.19	wetland	78	4.41	infrastructure	60	3.57
30	esteem	6	3.36	mosque	65	3.48	prospect	57	3.23

Based on the frequency and MI scores (≥ 3), the first thirty frequent noun collocates of the target words from Table 2 were chosen for the findings.

Life, *career*, and *reputation* are the top three ranking collocates of *ruin*, according to Table 2. At the same time, *fire*, *enemy*, and *weapons* are the top three ranked collocates of *destroy*. *Brain*, *reputation*, and *building* are the top three ranking collocates of *damage*.

Additionally, Table 2 shows that only a few noun collocates are shared among the three synonyms, compared to the total number of noun collocates presented in Table 2. The noun collocate shared by all three synonyms are *credibility*, *crop*, and *reputation*. *Destroy* and *damage*, however, share five of the same noun collocates: *hurricane*, *ship*, *earthquake*, *flood*, and *tornado*. However, no noun collocates other than *credibility*, *crop*, and *reputation* occur between *ruin* and *destroy* and *ruin* and *damage*.

4.4 Semantic Preference

By classifying *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* into a similar semantic theme based on semantic features and meaning, each word's top thirty noun collocates are evaluated to determine whether they are similar to or different from each other in terms of collocations. The results are shown below.

Table 3

Semantic Preference of Noun Collocates of Ruin from COCA

Semantic Categories	Noun Collocates of <i>Ruin</i>
1. Life	<i>career, chance, credibility, ending, life, livelihood, reputation, vibe</i>
2. Feeling	<i>appetite, enjoyment, esteem, fun, greed, mood, surprise, suspense</i>
3. Event	<i>honeymoon, picnic, prom, vacation, wedding</i>
4. Life status	<i>friendship, marriage, spoiler</i>
5. Environment	<i>crop, spill</i>
6. Appearance	<i>complexion, hairdo</i>
7. Cosmetic	<i>mascara</i>
8. Material	<i>uphoistery</i>

From Table 3, it was determined that the number of noun collocates accompanying *ruin* were classified into the same categories based on their semantic preference or similarity of meaning. The noun collocates of *ruin* consist of eight semantic themes. The first semantic theme, which has the most significant number of noun collocates, includes nouns referring to *life* contexts: *career, chance, credibility, ending, life, livelihood, reputation, and vibe*. The second group corresponds to *feelings*, including *appetite, enjoyment, esteem, fun, greed, mood, surprise, and suspense*. The third set of nouns collocates to *ruin* associated *events* such as the *honeymoon, picnic, prom* and *vacation*. The fourth semantic preference of *ruin* is *life status*, such as *friendship, marriage, and spoiler*. The fifth semantic theme refers to *environments*, such as *crop* and *spill*. Following the sixth semantic preference, *appearance, complexion* and *hairdo* are included. Another theme is *cosmetic*, and the word *mascara*

is included. Additionally, the word *upholstery* is included in the final semantic theme, *material*.

Table 4

Semantic Preference of Noun Collocates of Destroy from COCA

Semantic Categories	Noun Collocates of <i>Destroy</i>
1. War	<i>enemy, explosion, fire, fleet, missile, monster, weapon</i>
2. Environment	<i>crop, habitat, infrastructure, planet, ozone, ecosystem, wetland</i>
3. Life	<i>civilization, credibility, livelihood, reputation, capitalism</i>
4. Natural disaster	<i>earthquake, flood, hurricane, tornado</i>
5. Place	<i>temple, village, mosque</i>
6. Biological term	<i>embryo, bacteria</i>
7. Transportation	<i>ship</i>
8. Area	<i>acre</i>

From Table 4, eight semantic themes cover the noun collocates of *destroy*. The first and second semantic themes have equally the highest numbers of noun collocates and include words referring to information related to *war* contexts which are *enemy, explosion, fire, fleet, missile, monster, and weapon*; meanwhile, *environment* context includes *crop, habitat, infrastructure, planet, ozone, ecosystem, and wetland*. The third set is restricted to *life*, including *civilization, credibility, livelihood, reputation, and capitalism*. The fourth set associates with *natural disasters*, including *earthquake, flood, hurricane, and tornado*. The fifth semantic theme of *destroy* associates with *place*, including *temple, village, and mosque*. The sixth theme refers to *biological term*, including *embryo and bacteria*. Finally, the last two semantic theme associate with *transportation: ship* and *area: acre*.

Table 5*Semantic Preference of Noun Collocates of Damage from COCA*

Semantic Categories	Noun Collocates of Damage
1. Body	<i>brain, cell, kidney, liver, lung, nerve, organ, tissue</i>
2. Environment	<i>building, crop, environment, habitat, infrastructure, ozone, planet</i>
3. Commerce and finance	<i>brand, economy, good, property</i>
4. Life	<i>reputation, relation, prospect</i>
5. Natural disaster	<i>flood, hurricane, strom</i>
6. Transportation	<i>vessel, ship</i>
7. Physics term	<i>explosion, radiation</i>
8. Maintenance	<i>repair</i>

According to Table 5, semantic preference of noun collocates of *damage* are categorized into eight themes. Most noun collocates belong to the first theme, *body*, which includes nouns related to body composition, such as *brain, cell, kidney, liver, lung, nerve, organ, and tissue*. The second theme is *environment* which consists of nouns that refer to the living and nonliving components surrounding us, such as *crop, environment, habitat, infrastructure, ozone, and planet*. The third one is the set of *commerce and finance* which includes *brand, economy, good, and property*. *Life* is the fourth theme including *reputation, relation, and prospect*. The fifth theme is *natural disaster*, namely *flood, hurricane, and strom*. However, the seventh theme comprises *physics terms* related to *explosion and radiation*. The final theme is *maintenance*, which includes *repair*.

In summary, the meaning of the three target words can be determined from one another based on the analysis of the noun collocates and semantic preference. The word *ruin* has noun collocates representing the themes of *life, feeling, event, life status, environment, appearance, cosmetic, and material*. The word *destroy* expresses the themes including *war, environment, life, natural disaster, place, biological term, transportation and area*. Additionally, the word *damage* displays the themes including

body, environment, life, commerce and finance, natural disaster, transportation, physics term, and maintenance.

It is clear that there are overlaps in the categories used to classify the semantic preferences for the three synonyms. The words *ruin, damage, and destroy* share the same themes: *life and environment*. The pair of *ruin and destroy* and *ruin and damage* share the themes of *life and environment*. Meanwhile, *destroy and damage* share several themes, such as *environment, life, natural disaster, and transportation*.



CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter illustrates (1) summary of the study, (2) summary of the findings, (3) discussion, (4) conclusion, (5) instructional implications, (6) limitations of the study, and (7) recommendations for further study.

5.1 Summary of the Study

This corpus-based study investigated the similarities and differences between three synonymous verbs: ruin, destroy, and damage. The three research objectives were investigated in this study: similarities and differences in definition, distribution across genres regarding the frequency of occurrence, and noun collocations in relation to semantic preference. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE) was used to examine their definitions. The degree of formality in relation to semantic preference across genres and noun collocations was examined using COCA. Thirty noun collocations for each targeted synonym were chosen based on their highest frequency and MI score of more than three to categorize semantic preferences of the noun collocations into the same themes.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The findings to answer the research questions are summarized below;

1) Even though *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* share the same core meaning, their definitions are not exactly alike.

2) *Ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* have the same degrees of formality. They are often used in informal contexts. However, *damage* is more slightly formal than *ruin* and *destroy*.

3) *Ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* share some overlapping collocations and themes. However, they co-occur with specific nouns. Therefore, the difference of noun collocations *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* cannot substitute in all contexts.

5.3 Discussion

5.3.1 Definition

Ruin, *destroy*, and *damage* refer to the same core meaning: breaking or attacking something. However, according to further investigation, there are some slight variations in their meanings. According to LDOCE (2014), the word *ruin* means “to spoil or destroy something completely” or “to make someone lose all their money”. Obviously, *ruin* is commonly used in the sense that if we ruin something, it still exists, but it is no longer valid or valuable.

On the other hand, the meaning of *destroy* includes “to damage something so badly that it no longer exists or cannot be used or repaired”, “if something destroys someone, it ruins their life completely”, “informal to defeat an opponent easily”, or “to kill an animal, especially because it is ill or dangerous” (LDOCE, 2014). It can be seen that *destroy* has several meanings; however, its core meaning refers to the fact that if we destroy something, it has vanished or does not exist.

Meanwhile, the definitions of *damage* include “to cause physical harm to something or to part of someone’s body” and “to have a bad effect on something or someone in a way that makes them weaker or less successful” (LDOCE, 2014). *Damage* is commonly used to harm, break, or somewhat destroy something. When something is damaged, it can be repaired.

The findings of this study support the studies of Phoocharoensil (2010) and Chung (2011) that the three synonymous verbs could not be used interchangeably in all contexts or situations, although they share the same core meaning.

5.3.2 Degree of Formality

According to the analysis of the frequency of the target synonyms across different genres, the distribution of *ruin* and *destroy* tends to have similar occurrences across genres. It is evident that *ruin* and *destroy* are common in informal English as they share the same highest frequency associated with informal genres as their highest frequency is noticed in TV and Movie subtitles. Additionally, they share the same lowest frequency as they appear in academic texts. Therefore, *ruin* and *destroy* are considered to be used in informal contexts.

Interestingly, the occurrences of the word *damage* are highest between formal and informal texts, namely, magazines. However, the second and third most frequent genres in which *damage* occurs are informal, including webpages and blogs. Therefore, *damage* is also associated with informal genres, but more slightly formal than *ruin* and *destroy*. It is possible to conclude that the three synonymous verbs have a similar degree of formality, appearing to be in informal contexts.

5.3.3 Collocations in Relation to Semantic Preference

The noun collocates shared by *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* are *credibility*, *crop*, and *reputation*. It implies that the three target words are not strongly synonymous. However, the corpus data showed that *destroy* and *damage* are near synonyms because they share five overlapping noun collocates, including *hurricane*, *ship*, *earthquake*, *flood*, and *tornado*. On the other hand, no noun collocates other than *credibility*, *crop*, and *reputation* occur between *ruin* and *destroy* and *ruin* and *damage*. The result indicated a closer relationship between *destroy* and *damage* since, according to Szudarski (2018), words with similar meanings commonly share collocates.

However, as they are closely related, collocations and semantic preferences are frequently examined together to distinguish between synonymous words (Selmistraitis, 2020; Szudarski, 2018). The word *ruin* has noun collocates representing the themes of *life*, *feeling*, *event*, *life status*, *environment*, *appearance*, *cosmetic*, and *material*. The word *destroy* expresses the themes including *war*, *environment*, *life*, *natural disaster*, *place*, *biological term*, *transportation* and *area*. Additionally, the word *damage* displays the themes including *body*, *environment*, *commerce and finance*, *life*, *natural disaster*, *transportation*, *physics term*, and *maintenance*.

It is clear that there are overlaps in the categories used to classify the semantic preferences for the three synonyms. The words *ruin*, *damage*, and *destroy* share the same themes, including *life* and *environment*. The pair of *ruin* and *destroy* and *ruin* and *damage* share the themes of *life* and *environment*. Meanwhile, *destroy* and *damage* share several themes, such as *environment*, *life*, *natural disaster*, and *transportation*.

From the analysis of semantic preference, *ruin* is more collocated with life contexts that consist of abstract nouns associated with a sensation, quality, or state. *Destroy*, on the other hand, is more associated with war contexts, whereas *damage* is

more dependent on body compositions. The differences in collocational patterns of near synonyms suggest that they are not interchangeable in all situations (Bailey, 2007; Webb, 2007).

5.4 Conclusion

This study examined the three synonymous verbs *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* based on their meanings, degree of formality across different genres, and noun collocations in relation to semantic preference. First, for the definition, even though the target words share similar core meanings, they cannot be used interchangeably in all contexts. Secondly, in terms of their degree of formality, *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* are found in informal contexts. Lastly, the words *ruin*, *damage*, and *destroy* share a few overlapping themes, including *life* and *environment*. Additionally, *ruin* is more associated with life contexts. *Destroy* is more closely related with war contexts, meanwhile, *damage* is more associated with body compositions.

Based on the definitions from the dictionary and the corpus analysis, the findings of the study related with the previous studies that near synonyms are not absolutely interchangeable in all contexts.

5.5 Instructional Implications

This study indicates that the three near-synonyms can be distinguished by some criteria, such as the degree of formality, collocations, and semantic preference, by emphasizing how these three synonymous verbs differ and how they should be used in the appropriate contexts. This study will benefit both English language learners and English language teachers. A Corpus can provide learners with examples of how a word is used in authentic contexts. In addition, learners of English can use a corpus as an instrument that assists them in comprehending how synonyms are utilized in specific ways. Therefore, the use of a corpus in language teaching and learning should be promoted to become more widespread so that more people can benefit from it.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

The following are the research limitations:

1) The instruments used in this study were the online version of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). The findings of the research cannot be generalized to other Englishes, such as British English, because both COCA and LDOCE represent American English.

2) The findings of the study may not be a strong confirmation of the collocations of the synonymous verbs *ruin*, *destroy*, and *damage* because the collocations of the targeted synonyms were only derived from the noun collocates.

3) This study employed only two criteria to distinguish the target synonyms: degree of formality based on distribution across genres and collocations in relation to semantic preference. Other criteria, such as grammatical patterns (Phoocharoensil, 2010), should be utilized to distinguish the target synonyms.

5.7 Recommendations for Further Study

1) The difference between synonyms should be determined by applying other criteria, such as grammatical patterns and other parts of speech collocations, such as adverb and adjective collocations.

2) This research generates and analyzes data only from COCA. To broaden the scope, other instruments from other corpora such as the British National Corpus (BNC) can be used to compare.

REFERENCES

- Bailey, A. L. (2007). *The language demands of school: Putting academic English to the test*. Yale University Press.
- Begagić, M. (2013). Semantic preference and semantic prosody of the collocation make sense. *Jezikoslovlje*, 14(2-3), 403-416.
- Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Reppen, R. (1998). *Corpus linguistics: Investigating language structure and use*. Cambridge University Press.
- Biber, D., & Conrad, S. (2009). Register, genre, and style. Cambridge University Press
- Cheng, W. (2012). *Exploring corpus linguistic: Language in action*. Routledge.
- Crystal, D. (1995). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of the English language*. Cambridge university press.
- Dash, N. S., & Arulmozi, S. (2018). *History, features, and typology of language corpora*. Springer Singapore.
- Davies, M. (2010). The Corpus of Contemporary American English as the first reliable monitor corpus of English. *Literary and linguistic computing*, 25(4), 447-464
- Edmonds, P., & Hirst, G. (2002). Near-synonymy and lexical choice. *Computational linguistics*, 28(2), 105-144.
- Flowerdew, L. (2011). *Corpora and language education*. Springer.
- Gablasova, D., Brezina, V., & McEnery, T. (2017). Collocations in corpus-based language learning research: Identifying, comparing, and interpreting the evidence. *Language learning*, 67(S1), 155-179.
- Hunston, S. (2002). Pattern grammar, language teaching, and linguistic variation. *Using corpora to explore linguistic variation*, 167-183.

- Hunston, S. (2007). Semantic prosody revisited. *International journal of corpus linguistics*, 12(2), 249-268.
- Kirkpatrick, A. (2007). *World Englishes hardback with audio CD: Implications for international communication and English language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kumnerdchart, T., & Pimsan, P. (2013). *A corpus-based study of English synonyms: Defend, protect, safeguard*. Thammasat University.
- Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2014). Pearson Education.
- Lyons, J. (1995). *Linguistic semantics: An introduction*. Cambridge University Press.
- Murphy, M. L. (2010). *Lexical meaning*. Cambridge University Press.
- Nordquist, R. (2019, January 04). *What are synonyms?* Retrieved from <https://www.thoughtco.com/synonym-definition-1692177>
- Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2011). Oxford University Press.
- Panyapayatjati, C., & Somphong, M. (2016). *A corpus-based study of English verbs synonyms: grieve, mourn, and regret* [Master's thesis, Thammasat University].
- Partington, A. (2004). "Utterly content in each other's company": Semantic prosody and semantic preference. *International journal of corpus linguistics*, 9(1), 131-156.
- Phoocharoensil, S. (2010). A corpus-based study of English synonyms. *International Journal of Arts and Sciences*, 3(10), 227-245.
- Phoocharoensil, S. (2020a). A genre and collocational analysis of consequence, result, and outcome. *3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature. The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, 26(3), 1–16.

- Phoocharoensil, S. (2021). Semantic prosody and collocation: A corpus study of the near-synonyms persist and persevere. *Eurasian journal of applied linguistics*, 7(1), 240-258.
- Punyasuth, K., & Phoocharoensil, S. (2014). *A corpus-based analysis of the synonyms: adjourn and postpone*. Thammasat University.
- Ruenrong, C. (2014). *A corpus-based analysis of English synonyms: Ruin, demolish, destroy* [Master's independent Study, Thammasat University].
- Schmitt, N. (2010). *Researching vocabulary: A vocabulary research manual*. Springer.
- Selinker, L., & Gass, S. M. (2008). *Second language acquisition*. Lawrence Erlbaum Ass.
- Selmistratis, L. (2020). Semantic Preference, prosody and distribution of synonymous adjectives in COCA. *GEMA Online® Journal of Language Studies*, 20(3), 1–18.
- Sittironnarit, S., Khunasathitchai, K., Kosashunhanan, K., & Kumdee, S. (2022). A corpus-based analysis of English synonyms: acquire and obtain. *Journal of Roi Kaensarn Academi*, 7(9), 242-252.
- Song, Q. (2021). Effectiveness of corpus in distinguishing two near-synonymous verbs: "Damage" and "Destroy". *English Language Teaching*, 14(7), 8-20.
- Supanfai, P. (2022). People or persons?: A Corpus-based study. *rEFLECTIONS*, 29(3), 603-620.
- Szudarski, P. (2018). *Corpus linguistics for vocabulary: A guide for research*. Routledge.
- Taylor, J. R. (1995). *Linguistic categorization: Prototypes in linguistic theory*. Oxford University Press.
- Timmis, I. (2015). *Corpus linguistics for ELT: Research and practice*. Routledge.
- Webb, S. & Nation, P. (2017). *How vocabulary is learned*. Oxford University Press.