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SCHOOL IN THE GUARDIAN'S 2020-2021 ARTICLES: A CORPUS-BASED ANALYSIS

The paper is devoted to the study of collocations with SCHOOL in the Guardian's articles published in the years 2020-2021 concentrating mostly on collocations “modifier+SCHOOL” and “SCHOOL+noun”.

Key words: Corpus analysis, collocations, SCHOOL, media discourse, The Guardian.

The corpus comprises 70 newspaper articles dated late 2020 and the beginning of 2021. The Sketch Engine has been used to compile and process the corpus. Sketch Engine [2] is a tool which allows easy analysis and visualization of corpus data. Corpus analysis has been used to study passages with the lemma SCHOOL in order to outline social aspects connected with school and other urgent issues raised in the newspaper articles. The discourse analysis has been applied in order to single out discourse categories and to interpret the passages in which the mentioned above collocations are used. Collocations are useful because they show us important meaning connections between words and help us identify multi-word units as basic ‘building blocks’ of language [3].

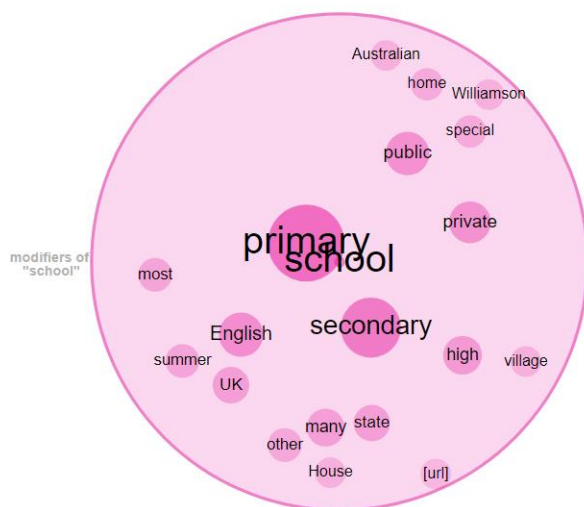


Figure 1. The n-gram of collocations “modifier+SCHOOL”

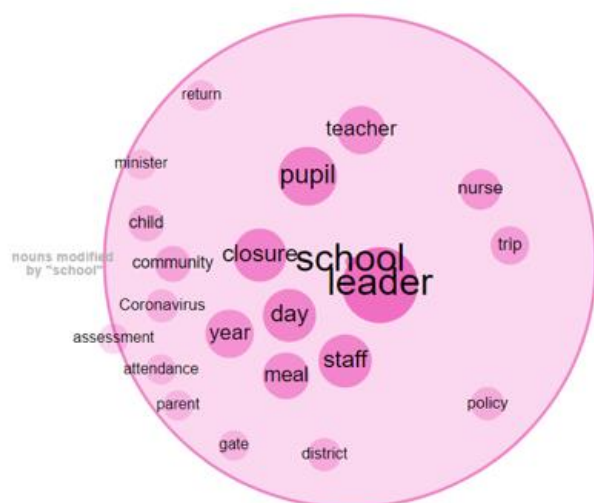


Figure 2. The n-gram of collocations “SCHOOL+noun”

The discourse categories with the corresponding collocations have been singled out and they are presented in the following table:

Discourse Categories	Collocations
Ownership	public school, private school, state school
Types of schools	primary school, secondary school, high school
Participants of education	school leader, school teacher, school nurse
Urgent issues	school attendance, school return, school community, school policy

Table 1. Discourse categories of SCHOOL in the 2020-2021 Guardian’s articles

Public and private schools are opposed in the discourse: *Public schools have been denied billions of needed funding over four years as the federal Coalition government systematically entrenched the underfunding of public schools. At the same time, it rubs salt into the wounds with a variety of special deals, complex compensation mechanisms and long-term grant programs to push unprecedented amounts of public money into private schools.*

The funding of public and private school is a burning issue in many articles: *It is in effect a capital depreciation tax applied only to public schools. No such capital depreciation tax is applied to the private sector. Nor are the private schools held responsible for their share of the costs associated with authorities responsible for education standards and curriculum.*

Explorations of well-being and mental health are of a great interest and are widely discussed in society together with steps how to prevent possible negative consequences, all these aspects being reflected in the media discourse: *Medicine believes physical, mental and social health needs to be the focus of all schools. This can only be done with a full-time nurse in every school and on every governing board. "There is currently only about one nurse for every 10 of England's 21,000 state schools.*

The discourse category “types of schools” includes the collocations *primary school, secondary school, high school*. The concordance of the collocation *primary school* is used most frequently. Primary schools face a lot of problems in the education process: *The government is expecting primary schools in England to reopen in two days, with the exception of schools in London and local authorities in the south where Covid-19 transmission rates are high, after another U-turn on Friday.*

The discourse category “participants of education” comprises the collocates *school leader, school teacher, school nurse*: *School leaders and teaching unions have been meeting over the new year period to discuss a response to the demand, with many secondary heads arguing that the testing regime is impractical and unworkable / More than one in six school leaders said they had had a confirmed case of Covid-19 infection among their pupils since the start of term this month / With one in six children and young people experiencing mental health issues, the role of the school nurses has never been more important in assisting them / I am a private nursery practitioner with many years' experience as a primary school teacher.*

Current situation with Coronavirus in the whole world influences the appearance of the discourse category of urgent issues. The collocations *school attendance, school return, school policy* form this category: *Primary school attendance in England rising in latest Covid lockdown. Ministers have said that the school return will be managed in stages / The pandemic schools policy has been made at the heart of government.*

The collocations with SCHOOL in current newspaper articles reflect the variety of urgent education issues in society. They concentrate more on teachers and pupils as the main figures in education process, health and safety, remote learning, school reopening, well-being and other important issues.

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