



Collocation Analysis in Kompas Digital Short Stories and Its Relevance to Indonesian Language Learning: A Semantic Study

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses the use of collocation in digital short stories published in Kompas.com (edition 1–31 October 2025) and its relevance to Indonesian language learning in vocational high schools. Collocation as a linguistic phenomenon that shows the tendency of two or more words to appear together naturally has an important role in building meaning, atmosphere, and aesthetic effects in literary texts. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with documentation, reading, and note-taking techniques. Data analysis was carried out through the interactive model of Miles and Huberman and interpreted using cognitive semantic theory, especially conceptual metaphors from Lakoff and Johnson. The results show that of the 565 collocation data found, lexical collocations dominate (430 data) with the most common patterns being noun + adjective, noun + noun, and verb + noun. Meanwhile, grammatical collocations (135 data) are dominated by the pattern of verb + preposition + noun. A total of 57 collocations have metaphorical meanings, such as anger subsides, mountain in my chest, harsh criticism, and demanding life, which reflect a conceptual mapping from the concrete source domain to the abstract target domain. The results of a questionnaire to four Indonesian language teachers indicate that Kompas.com's digital short stories are considered high-quality teaching materials and relevant to the digital literacy-based curriculum, and collocation is considered important for developing students' literary text analysis skills, implicit interpretation of meaning, and creative writing skills. Thus, this study provides a theoretical contribution to the development of cognitive semantics and a practical contribution as an alternative innovative teaching material in the digital era.

Keywords: collocation, kompas digital, short stories, semantic study

Analisis Kolokasi pada Cerpen Digital Kompas dan Relevansinya terhadap Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia: Kajian Semantik

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini membahas penggunaan kolokasi dalam cerpen digital yang dipublikasikan di Kompas.com (edisi 1–31 Oktober 2025) serta relevansinya terhadap pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia di sekolah menengah kejuruan. Kolokasi sebagai fenomena kebahasaan yang menunjukkan kecenderungan dua kata atau lebih muncul bersama secara alami memiliki peran penting dalam membangun makna, suasana, dan efek estetis dalam teks sastra. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik dokumentasi, baca, dan catat. Analisis data dilakukan melalui model interaktif Miles dan Huberman serta ditafsirkan menggunakan teori semantik kognitif, khususnya metafora konseptual dari Lakoff dan Johnson. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dari 565 data kolokasi yang ditemukan, kolokasi leksikal mendominasi (430 data) dengan pola terbanyak nomina + adjektiva, nomina + nomina, dan verba + nomina. Sementara itu, kolokasi gramatikal (135 data) didominasi pola verba + preposisi + nomina. Sebanyak 57 kolokasi bermakna metaforis, seperti amarah mereda, gunung dalam dadaku, kritik pedas, dan menuntut nyawa, yang mencerminkan pemetaan konseptual dari domain sumber konkret ke domain sasaran abstrak. Hasil angket kepada empat guru Bahasa Indonesia menunjukkan bahwa cerpen digital Kompas.com dinilai sebagai bahan ajar yang berkualitas dan relevan dengan kurikulum berbasis literasi digital, serta kolokasi dipandang penting untuk mengembangkan kemampuan analisis teks sastra, interpretasi makna implisit, dan keterampilan menulis kreatif siswa. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi teoretis bagi pengembangan semantik kognitif dan kontribusi praktis sebagai alternatif bahan ajar inovatif di era digital.

Kata kunci: kolokasi, cerpen digital, semantik kognitif, pembelajaran bahasa Indonesia

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INTRODUCTION

Research on collocation in digital short stories is still relatively rare. Most literary studies focus more on intrinsic and extrinsic elements, such as theme, characters, plot, setting, and moral (Pertiwi, 2025). However, collocation—the tendency of two or more words to appear together naturally in a context—plays a crucial role in constructing meaning, atmosphere, and aesthetic effects in literary texts. In a digital short story published in Kompas.com on October 1–30, 2025, for example, phrases such as "anger subsides," "mountain in my chest," "criticism is sharp," and "demanding life" were found. These phrases function not only as word combinations but also as cognitive tools for understanding abstract experiences such as emotion, death, and knowledge. Collocation is a linguistic phenomenon that shows the relationship between words that often appear naturally together (Zhang, 2022). Collocation differs from idioms because its meaning can still be traced from its constituent elements (Chaer, 2022). In linguistics, the branch that specifically studies meaning is semantics. Chaer (2022) defines semantics as the study of meaning in language. Along with the development of the cognitive approach, cognitive semantics emerged, which views meaning as a mental phenomenon born from human interaction with the environment and cultural experiences (Agustin et al., 2023). According to Lakoff, G., & Johnson (1980), conceptual metaphor is not just a style of language, but a cognitive mechanism that allows humans to understand abstract concepts through more concrete concepts. Thus, analyzing collocations in digital short stories can open a deeper understanding of how digital literary language represents abstract concepts. This is important because digital technology has shifted patterns of literary consumption, and digital short stories on Kompas.com have characteristics of reflective, sensory, and metaphorical language, while still paying attention to journalistic rules and readability. Universally, the study of collocations in digital short stories is not only theoretically significant for the development of cognitive

semantics but also practically relevant for learning Indonesian in the digital era.

Based on this background, the research questions are as follows: (1) What are the lexical and grammatical collocation patterns in Kompas.com's digital short stories published on October 1–30, 2025? (2) What is the meaning of metaphorical collocations in Kompas.com's digital short stories when analyzed using a cognitive semantics approach? (3) To what extent are the results of this collocation analysis relevant to Indonesian language learning in vocational high schools?

In line with the research questions, the objectives of this research are: (1) to describe the lexical and grammatical collocation patterns in Kompas.com's digital short stories published on October 1–30, 2025; (2) to analyze the meaning of metaphorical collocations using a cognitive semantics approach; and (3) to explain the relevance of the collocation analysis results to Indonesian language learning in schools.

This research is expected to provide the following benefits. From the perspective of developing linguistics, the theoretical benefit of this research is its contribution to the development of cognitive semantics studies, particularly in explaining the mechanisms of conceptual metaphor through collocation phenomena in digital literary texts. As for practical benefits, for Indonesian language teachers, the results of this study can be used as an alternative, innovative teaching material contextual to the digital era, as well as a strategy to improve students' abilities in analyzing literary texts, interpreting implicit meanings, and creative writing. For other researchers, this research can serve as a foundation for examining collocation in other digital genres.

The theoretical review in this study covers four main concepts. Semantics is defined as a branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of language at various levels, from morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, to discourse (Chaer, 2022). Cognitive semantics views meaning as a mental phenomenon that arises from human interactions



with their environment and cultural experiences (Agustin et al., 2023). According to Lakoff, G., & Johnson (1980), conceptual metaphor is a systematic mapping from a concrete source domain to an abstract target domain, and this mechanism is an integral part of human thinking, not simply a style of language. Collocation is a group of words that are fixed, identifiable, and non-idiomatic (Benson, M., Benson, E., & Ilson, 2010). Benson, M., Benson, E., & Ilson (2010) divide collocation into two types: (a) lexical collocation, which is a combination between open word classes (e.g. noun + adjective, n. noun + noun, verb + noun); and (b) grammatical collocation, which is a combination between lexical words with prepositions, clauses, or infinitives (e.g. verb + preposition + noun).

There are three scientific articles relevant to this research. First, Ardiansyah et al. (2020) analyzed conceptual metaphors in novels and found that conceptual metaphors operate through mapping from concrete to abstract domains, strengthening the theoretical framework used in their research on metaphorical collocations in digital short stories. Second, Rahmatillah et al. (2025) showed that lexical collocations dominate students' narrative texts, with the noun+adjective pattern being the most common, consistent with findings in Kompas.com's digital short stories. Third, Simanjuntak et al. (2025) discussed collocations in online news texts and their relevance to Indonesian language learning, thus sharing similar independent variables (collocations) and pedagogical orientations with this research.

METHOD

This research employed qualitative methods with a descriptive approach. Razak (2017), Afifuddin & Saebani (2002) stated that qualitative research is commonly used in social research.

The research data consisted of phrases or sentences containing collocations in digital short stories published by Kompas.com from October 1–30, 2025. These were collected through documentation techniques (downloading the short story texts), reading techniques (repeated close reading), note-taking techniques (noting collocations in a classification table), and a questionnaire administered to four Indonesian language teachers to measure learning relevance. Data validity was tested using source triangulation, theoretical triangulation, and technical triangulation.

Data analysis employed the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which encompasses data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Metaphorical collocations were analyzed using the Lakoff and Johnson conceptual metaphor framework by identifying the mapping between the source and target domains.

RESULTS

1. Lexical and Grammatical Collocation Patterns

A total of 565 collocations were found, consisting of 430 lexical collocations (76.1%) and 135 grammatical collocations (23.9%). The distribution of collocation patterns is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Distribution of Lexical and Grammatical Collocation Patterns

Types of Collocation	Collocation	N	Example
Lexical	Nomina + Adjektiva (N+Adj) <i>Noun + Adjective</i>	187	rumah kosong (<i>empty house</i>), harapan baru (<i>new hope</i>), wajah pucat (<i>pale face</i>)
Lexical	Nomina + Nomina (N+N) <i>Noun + Noun</i>	112	bangku kayu (<i>wooden bench</i>), emas batangan (<i>gold bar</i>), banjir informasi (<i>information overload</i>)

Lexical	Verba + Nomina (V+N) <i>Verb + Noun</i>	89	membuka wawasan (<i>broaden horizons</i>), menuntut nyawa (<i>claim lives</i>), menghela napas (<i>take a breath</i>)
Lexical	Nomina + Verba (N+V) <i>Noun + Verb</i>	42	mata menyipit (<i>eyes narrowed</i>), kabar menyebar (<i>news spread</i>), hatinya mengeras (<i>his/her heart hardened</i>)
Lexical	Lainnya (V+Adv, Adv+Adj, dll.) <i>Others (Verb + Adverb, Adverb + Adjective, etc.)</i>	10	mengambang pelan (<i>float slowly</i>), sangat sunyi (<i>very quiet</i>)
Grammatical	Verba + Preposisi + Nomina (V+Prep+N) <i>Verb + Preposition + Noun</i>	78	duduk di bangku kayu (<i>sit on a wooden bench</i>), masuk ke ruang satpam (<i>enter the security guard room</i>)
Grammatical	Preposisi + Nomina (Prep+N) <i>Preposition + Noun</i>	32	dalam tekanan (<i>under pressure</i>), tanpa saudara (<i>without relatives</i>), di atas podium (<i>on the podium</i>)
Grammatical	Nomina + Preposisi + Klausa (N+Prep+Klausa) <i>Noun + Preposition + Clause</i>	15	keyakinan bahwa emas tertanam (<i>belief that gold is buried</i>)
Grammatical	Lainnya (Adj+Prep+N, Prep+Adj, V+Prep+V+N) <i>Others (Adjective + Preposition + Noun, Preposition + Adjective, Verb + Preposition + Verb + Noun)</i>	10	sibuk dengan ponsel (<i>busy with a cellphone</i>), tanpa dikunci (<i>without being locked</i>)
Total		565	

Based on Table 1, lexical collocations dominate, with the most common pattern being noun+adjective (187 items), followed by noun+noun (112 items), and verb+noun (89 items). The most common grammatical collocation pattern is verb+preposition+noun (78 items).

2. Metaphorical Collocation Meaning

Of the 565 collocations found, 57 (10.1%) contain metaphorical meaning. Table 2 presents representative examples of metaphorical collocations along with their conceptual metaphors.

Table 2
Examples of Metaphorical Collocations and Their Conceptual Mapping

No.	Collocation	Source Domain (Concrete)	Target Domain (Abstract)	Types of Conceptual Metaphors
1	amarah mereda (<i>anger subsides</i>)	Kekuatan alam (hujan reda) (<i>natural force — rain subsiding</i>)	Emosi marah berkurang intensitas (<i>the intensity of anger decreases</i>)	Kemarahan adalah kekuatan alam (<i>anger is a natural force</i>)
2	gunung dalam dadaku (<i>a mountain in my chest</i>)	Gunung berapi, tekanan magma (<i>volcano, magma pressure</i>)	Emosi terpendam, kemarahan (<i>suppressed emotions, anger</i>)	Emosi adalah gunung berapi (<i>emotion is a volcano</i>)

3	kritik pedas (<i>sharp criticism</i>)	Rasa pedas pada makanan (<i>spicy taste in food</i>)	Kritik yang tajam dan menyakitkan (<i>criticism that is harsh and hurtful</i>)	Perkataan adalah rasa (<i>words are taste</i>)
4	dunia baru (<i>new world</i>)	Ruang geografis (<i>geographical space</i>)	Pengetahuan atau pengalaman baru (<i>new knowledge or experience</i>)	Pengetahuan adalah ruang (<i>knowledge is space</i>)
5	menuntut nyawa (<i>claim lives</i>)	Tindakan menagih utang (<i>the act of collecting debt</i>)	Kematian sebagai korban wajib (<i>death as an inevitable victim</i>)	Kematian adalah pengambilan (<i>death is taking</i>)
6	hati mengeras (<i>heart hardens</i>)	Benda fisik yang mengeras (<i>a physical object becoming hard</i>)	Sikap batin menjadi kaku (<i>inner attitude becoming rigid</i>)	Emosi adalah keadaan benda (<i>emotion is a state of matter</i>)
7	membuka wawasan (<i>broaden horizons</i>)	Membuka pintu/ruang (<i>opening a door/space</i>)	Memperoleh pengetahuan baru (<i>gaining new knowledge</i>)	Pengetahuan adalah ruang (<i>knowledge is space</i>)
8	banjir informasi (<i>information flood</i>)	Banjir air yang melimpah (<i>overflowing floodwater</i>)	Informasi yang sangat banyak (<i>an excessive amount of information</i>)	Informasi adalah arus (<i>information is a flow</i>)
9	kenyang pengalaman (<i>full of experience</i>)	Kenyang setelah makan (<i>feeling full after eating</i>)	Banyak memiliki pengalaman (<i>having a lot of experience</i>)	Pengalaman adalah makanan (<i>experience is food</i>)
10	tumbal arus (<i>sacrifice to the current</i>)	Korban persembahan (<i>sacrificial victim</i>)	Kematian akibat arus sungai (<i>death caused by river currents</i>)	Kematian adalah pengorbanan (<i>death is sacrifice</i>)

In addition to the ten examples above, 47 other metaphorical collocations were found scattered throughout the short stories, such as "whispering wind," "changing perspective," "bursting with laughter," "time slows down," "my heart is light," and "sweet smile."

3. Relevance to Indonesian Language Learning

The results of a questionnaire administered to four Indonesian language teachers showed a positive response to all ten statements.

Table 3
Teacher Questionnaire Summary (N=4)

No.	Statement	Agree	Not Agree
1	Students tend to understand short stories generally without deeply understanding the meaning of words.	4	0
2	Digital short stories from Kompas.com have good language quality as teaching materials.	4	0
3	Collocation is an important linguistic element to be taught to students	4	0
4	Digital short stories are suitable for literacy- and digital-based curriculum learning.	4	0
5	Learning collocations helps students choose appropriate diction	4	0
6	Digital short stories help develop students' digital literacy.	4	0
7	Understanding collocations is very important for students in analyzing literary texts	4	0
8	Understanding collocations helps students interpret implicit meanings in literary texts.	4	0
9	Learning collocations through digital short stories can improve students' creative writing skills.	4	0
10	Teachers focus more on intrinsic elements than on the study of word meanings in short stories.	4	0

Table 3 shows that nine statements received full agreement from all teachers (100%), while statement number 10 received 75% agreement and 25% disagreement. This indicates that the majority of teachers acknowledged that short story teaching has focused more on intrinsic elements.

DISCUSSANT

The dominance of lexical collocation (76.1%) in Kompas.com's digital short stories indicates that the formation of meaning in digital literary texts relies more on conventional, fixed, and easily recognized word relationships by readers. This finding is in line with the research of Rahmatillah, Helmanto, & Effane (2025) which reported that lexical collocation dominates student narrative texts with the noun+adjective pattern being the most common. The most productive noun+adjective pattern (187 data) reflects the need for description in short stories to build atmosphere,

describe character traits, and convey emotional states economically yet meaningfully. From a pragmatic perspective, this pattern is effective because adjectives are directly attached to nouns so that readers do not need to interpret complex grammatical relationships; they immediately grasp the quality or nature of the object being described, such as an empty house implying loneliness or new hope implying optimism. Meanwhile, grammatical collocations (23.9%), dominated by the verb+preposition+noun pattern (78 items), play a role in constructing complex sentence structures,



particularly in providing information about place, time, and direction in the narrative. This pattern is important because Kompas.com's digital short stories are characterized by reflective and sensory language, requiring prepositions to clarify spatial and temporal relationships between events, such as sitting on a wooden bench or standing on a bridge. Therefore, from a structural perspective, lexical collocations serve to reinforce denotative and connotative meanings, while grammatical collocations serve as the glue of syntactic structures, strengthening text coherence. However, this study only analyzed ten short stories in one month, so the patterns found may not fully represent the collocation variation in Kompas.com's digital short stories as a whole. Further research over a longer period is needed to verify the stability of these patterns.

The 57 metaphorical collocations (10.1%) found reinforce Lakoff & Johnson's (1980) theory that conceptual metaphors are not merely poetic figures of speech, but rather cognitive mechanisms underlying how humans think, act, and understand the world. Mapping from concrete source domains (nature, objects, food, space, actions) to abstract target domains (emotions, death, knowledge) shows that collocations in digital short stories function not only as common word combinations, but also as cognitive tools to conceptualize abstract experiences into something that can be sensed and imagined. For example, the collocation "anger subsides" maps a natural phenomenon (the rain has stopped) to the emotion of anger, so that readers understand that anger, like a storm, has an intensity that can increase and decrease. Similarly, "mountain in my chest" maps the pressure of volcanic magma to pent-up emotions, creating a powerful image of an overflow of suppressed emotions. These results are consistent with the findings of Ardiansyah et al. (2020) in the novel *Garis Waktu*, where conceptual metaphors such as *PERJALANAN ADALAH KEHIDUPAN* and *CINTA ADALAH KEHATAN ALAM* dominate the

literary text and serve to strengthen the emotional impact on readers. From another perspective, Simanjuntak et al.'s (2025) research on online news texts also found that metaphorical collocations help readers understand complex information in a more digestible way, although in news, metaphors tend to be more limited and functional (e.g., information flow) compared to short stories which are more expressive and imaginative (e.g., harsh criticism, demanding life). The advantage of this study compared to these studies lies in the use of a cognitive semantic approach that not only describes collocation patterns but also systematically reveals the mechanisms of conceptual mapping and connects them to the context of digital literature which is still rarely researched. However, this study is limited by its relatively small sample size (only ten short stories and four teacher respondents), so generalization of the results needs to be done carefully. Furthermore, the analysis of conceptual metaphors in this study is still interpretative and highly dependent on the context of the sentence; two different researchers may produce slightly different mappings. Further research with a larger corpus and corpus-based quantitative methods, and involving more raters (inter-rater reliability), is recommended to strengthen the validity of the findings.

The questionnaire results presented in Table 3 show that Kompas.com's digital short stories are considered high-quality teaching materials, and collocation is considered important for Indonesian language learning. All teachers (100%) agreed that digital short stories are in line with the literacy-based and digital curriculum and help develop students' digital literacy. This aligns with the demands of the Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes the ability to navigate the digital world, sort information, and utilize technology for learning. From a pedagogical perspective, integrating collocation analysis into short story learning can be a strategy to bridge the gap between

the dominant teaching of intrinsic elements (as acknowledged by 75% of teachers) and the teaching of deeper word meanings. Simanjuntak et al. (2025) also reported that collocation analysis in online news texts has high learning relevance because it helps students understand contextual and implicit meanings. However, unlike more factual news texts, digital short stories offer a wealth of metaphorical collocations that can train students to think critically and imaginatively at the same time. In practice, teachers can utilize metaphorical collocations such as "anger subsides" or "heart hardens" to train students to identify conceptual mappings, compare literal and figurative meanings, and apply them in creative writing. For example, students could be asked to find collocations in digital short stories, explain their source and target domains, and then create new sentences with similar collocation patterns. This approach not only improves comprehension of literary texts but also enriches students' vocabulary and writing skills. Thus, this research provides a practical contribution as an alternative, innovative teaching material in the digital era, while also opening up opportunities for the development of cognitive semantics-based literary learning models. For future research, it is recommended to test the effectiveness of collocation teaching through quasi-experiments in the classroom, for example by comparing groups taught using the collocation approach with groups taught using the conventional approach (intrinsic elements only).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, this study concludes that the collocation patterns in Kompas.com digital short stories from 1–30 October 2025 consist of lexical collocations and grammatical collocations. Lexical collocations dominate (76.1%) with the most common patterns being noun+adjective, noun+noun, and verb+noun, while grammatical collocations (23.9%) are dominated by verb+preposition+noun patterns. Of the 565

collocations found, 57 collocations (10.1%) have metaphorical meanings that can be explained through a cognitive semantic approach. These metaphorical collocations, such as anger subsides, mountains in my chest, and harsh criticism, reflect conceptual mapping from concrete source domains (nature, objects, food) to abstract target domains (emotions, death, knowledge), so that collocations not only function as word combinations, but also as cognitive tools to understand abstract experiences imaginatively. The results of the collocation analysis in Kompas.com digital short stories are also relevant to Indonesian language learning in schools. Based on a questionnaire to four teachers, digital short stories were assessed as quality teaching materials and collocation was seen as important to help students analyze literary texts, interpret implicit meanings, choose appropriate diction, and improve creative writing skills. The majority of teachers admitted that so far short story learning has focused more on intrinsic elements than on the study of word meanings, so this study provides a theoretical contribution to the development of cognitive semantics and a practical contribution as an alternative innovative teaching material in the digital era.

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