

A corpus-driven collocation analysis of degree adverb *very*, *really*, *quite*, and *pretty*

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ABSTRACT

Degree adverb is an element of intensifiers as a means for speakers to make their utterances more expressive. It provides information about *how much*, *how many*, and *to what extent*. It seems that every degree has their preferences in terms of collocations and the semantic prosody that arise. This paper examines the collocational pattern and semantic prosody of degree adverbials *very*, *really*, *quite*, and *pretty* in Blog Authorship Corpus. A qualitative approach thus was employed to conduct this research while a corpus method was used in collecting and analyzing the data with the help of corpus software WordSmith 4.0. The data source came from Blog Authorship Corpus, a non-annotated corpus, which can be easily accessed through its website. The result of the analysis has shown that all degree adverbials collocate with words from adjective, verb, and adverb word classes. In this case, *really* and *quite* are seen to collocate with verbs, while at the same time *really* also co-occurs with a preposition in a particular case. They mostly occur in the medial position, differed only by their collocations, forming several different patterns. Pleasant semantic prosody favored both *very* and *quite*, while neutral and unpleasant semantic prosody surrounded *pretty* and *really*, respectively.

Keywords Degree adverb, Collocation, Corpus-driven approach, Semantic prosody

ABSTRAK

Degree adverb merupakan elemen *intensifiers* sebagai sarana bagi penutur bahasa untuk membuat ucapannya lebih ekspresif. Elemen ini memberikan informasi tentang berapa banyak dan sejauh mana. Setiap adverbial memiliki preferensi sendiri dalam hal kolokasi dan prosodi semantik yang muncul. Penelitian berikut ini membahas pola kolokasional dan prosodi semantik adverbial *very*, *really*, *quite*, dan *pretty* di Blog Authorship Corpus. Dengan demikian pendekatan kualitatif digunakan dalam penelitian ini dengan dibantu metode korpus dalam mengumpulkan dan menganalisis data, serta perangkat lunak korpus WordSmith 4.0. Sumber data berasal dari Blog Authorship Corpus, suatu korpus yang belum mengalami proses anotasi, yang dapat dengan mudah diakses melalui situs web. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa semua adverbial bersatu dengan kata-kata dari kelas kata sifat, kata kerja dan kata keterangan. Dalam hal ini, *really* dan *quite* terlihat bersebelahan dengan kata kerja, dan pada saat yang sama *really* juga berkolokasi dengan preposisi dalam kasus tertentu. Kedua jenis adverbial tersebut sebagian besar terjadi pada posisi medial, dibedakan dari kolokasi yang membentuk beberapa pola berbeda. Prosodi semantik yang positif meliputi adverbial *very* dan *quite*, sementara prosodi semantik yang netral dan negatif meliputi adverbial *pretty* dan *really*.



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Kata Kunci Degree adverb, Kolokasi, Pendekatan korpus, Prosodi semantik

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INTRODUCTION

An intensifier may enhance the influence of a word's emotional meaning by using adverbs, such as *very*, *really*, *quite*, and *pretty*. An adverb is used to make the meaning stronger as well as plays roles as discourse markers (Carter et al., 2011; Reicheld & Durham, 2014). The adverbs may add more information to a verb, an adjective, another adverb and a clause to indicate the time, manner, place, degree, and frequency of something. It is noted also that the use of the adverbs is on the rise across time (Barnfield and Buchstaller, 2010). It is due to constant change and thus raises some intriguing lexical and semantic

puzzles for linguistics theory that have attracted interest in research. [Gonzales-Diaz \(2014\)](#) scrutinized socio-stylistic mappings between characters and functions of degree adverb *quite* in Austen's novels through a corpus-based analysis. It is indicated that gender is the main factor determining the socio-stylistic variation in the novel and female language for the stylistic stratification of *quite* in the novels have been drawn on 18th-century stereotypes. Furthermore, [Zhiber and Korotina \(2019\)](#) looked into the renewal and boundedness of intensifying adverbs in spoken discourse and newspaper language by using the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and British National Corpus (BNC). The study which was restricted to the analysis of intensifier + adjective assumes that less intensification is used in written discourse whereas more intensification is employed in spoken discourse and the decline of intensification is higher as the formality of the register increases.

Additionally, [Watcher \(2012\)](#) conducted a study to analyze variation of adverbial intensifiers *very* and *really* in academic speech by using Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE). It is assumed that there are factors affecting the use of those adverbials, such as formality. Meanwhile, [Zhang \(2013\)](#); [Simpson & Mendis \(2003\)](#); [Nakatani & Hirschberg \(1994\)](#); [Deroey & Taverniers \(2011\)](#); [Charles \(2006\)](#); [Bolton, Nelson, & Hung \(2002\)](#) examined adverbial intensifiers *terribly*, *awfully*, *horribly*, and *dreadfully* due to their negative tendencies. The data were obtained from a synchronic and diachronic corpus of contemporary written and spoken texts retrieved from bank of English and Corpus of Late Modern English Texts. It is indicated that negative meanings dominate the four adverbials and their percentage of positive meanings eventually increase after going through historical processes. [Yilmaz and Dikilitas \(2017\)](#) are other researchers who highlighted that the appropriate use of adverbs remains a problem for advanced learners of English. In the study, a group of students having taken an academic writing course were selected and a guided writing activity was applied. It is known that the overused adverb of degree in the students' academic writing suggests a need for systematic explicit instruction of English adverb.

Considering all previous studies, adverbials are prominent lexical and semantic aspect in indicating the strength of meaning of utterances in which scrutinizing the collocation in the context enables the structural description and semantic categorization. It is thus in the present study which draws upon the inventories of earlier ones, the analyses of the distribution of the lexemes and their prosody to indicate subtle functional variations in the use of English is conducted.

In this research, *very*, *really*, *quite*, and *pretty* were analyzed. As the most common degree adverbials out of others, English writer often uses the four of them interchangeably. Therefore, their common occurrences make one hard to notice whether there is any specific tendency behind their usage or not. In addition, they do not bear a specific sense or meaning behind themselves to support their collocational tendencies as degree adverbials.

Adverbials serve three specific functions. As [Biber et al \(2002\)](#) identify, they are to tell about the circumstances of the clause, to express the speaker's feeling on said clause, and to link the clause or some part of the clause with another clause. Consequently, three main classes of adverbial can be distinguished based on those functions, i.e. circumstance adverbial, stance adverbial, and linking adverbial.

Those adverbial classes are then divided into some categories and subcategories, which function to answer several questions regarding its sentence. According to [Biber et al \(2002\)](#), the most common adverbial class, circumstance adverbials, have seven categories under its wing. One of them is degree adverbial category. Degree adverbial is used in purpose to answer questions like 'how far/much/many?' and 'to what extent?' or simply to intensify a certain point in the clause. These degree adverbials seem to have the same functions and features as to what [Quirk et al \(1985\)](#) previously illustrated as intensifiers. [Quirk et al \(1985\)](#) elaborate that intensifiers function to indicate a point on the intensity scale, which can be either high or low.

The category of degree adverbials is divided into more subcategories in accordance to their specific function. [Biber et al \(2002\)](#) state that the subcategories in question are amplifier and diminisher. Amplifier functions in purpose to strengthen the message in the clause or expresses a higher even an



extreme scale of a certain point. On the other hand, diminisher is supposed to do the opposite, which is to reduce the strength of a claim in the clause or lowering the force of an item. These functions also applied for *very*, *really*, *quite*, and *pretty*, since the four of them are also included as degree adverbial. For example, in Blog Authorship Corpus, *very* is used as an amplifier in a context like 'I have a *very* good friend standing by my side'. In that context, the writer strengthens the quality of good. Whilst in the context, 'he is *quite* popular these days you know' diminisher *quite* is used to help the writer in lowering the quality of popular.

Based on those functions and illustrations of degree adverbials, there are many amplifiers and diminishers that can be used and often used interchangeably, making one assume that they are the same thing. However, several previous researches conducted by linguists actually suggested that every word has their own preferences in terms of collocation and semantic prosody. Begagic (2013) conducts a study which analyzed semantic preference and semantic prosody of collocation *make sense*. He investigated the classification of the collocation environments into negative, positive, possible, difficult, and neutral environment. Although a very clear description of semantic preference and prosody is presented in Begagic's research, the environments are not distinguished properly as some environments such as *possible* and *difficult* are neither negative nor positive. The present study thus is focused on negative, positive, and neutral environments only. In one research, Partington (2004) analyzed degree adverbials *utterly*, *totally*, *completely*, and *entirely*. The result shows that those degree adverbials are constantly followed by words like *oblivious*, *without*, *forgotten*, *different*, etc, which all describe the absence of a quality or a change of state. However, in this very same research, a different result comes up for the case of another degree adverbial, *thoroughly*. Despite being on the same page with the previous degree adverbials, *thoroughly* is mostly followed by adjectives describing emotions or state of mind like *annoyed*, *enjoyed*, *happy*, *confused*, and so on.

Interestingly, another research suggests that some amplifiers and diminishers often associated with either positive or negative preference. It is illustrated in the case of degree adverbial *utterly*. In his research, Louw (1993) found that *utterly* has a great negative preference or bad prosody as shown in the concordance drawn from 18 million words corpus at Cobuild. Displayed in their concordance lists, some words collocating with 'utterly' are *demolished*, *meaningless*, *stupid*, and *unreasonable*. These researches implied that the analysis of degree adverbial could be based on its collocational preferences, motivating the researcher to conduct this research in order to identify its preferences, specifically its collocations and semantic prosody.

Collocation was first proposed by Firth (1957) decades ago before developing years after years by many other linguists. Sinclair (2003) defines it as 'a general term for two or more words occurring near each other in a text'. While semantic prosody is defined by Louw (1993) as "the consistent aura of meaning with which the form is imbued by its collocations". Later on, Stubbs (1995) then expands the notion of semantic prosody by claiming that words also can collocate with semantic sets, as well as with positive or negative grouping words. In other words, some certain seemingly neutral words may have either positive or negative association through frequent co-occurrences with particular collocates. That being said, the collocates of degree adverbials *very*, *really*, *quite*, and *pretty* in the chosen corpus may reveal the tendencies of their collocational preferences.

On this basis, this study is to provide an overview outlining the lexical and semantic issues involving adverbials and link the knowledge of the adverbials within the context of blog and English interaction. It is in line with Long & Christensen (2008) and Zhiber & Korotina (2019) arguing that incorrect usage of the adverbs may lead to an unexpected pragmatic outcome. Furthermore, English collocations with adverbs have been considered the most difficult pattern because collocations are often unpredictable to recall (Huo, 2014). In the light of the background, the present study investigate how the degree adverbials *very*, *really*, *quite*, and *pretty* collocate and how the collocates indicate the semantic prosody.

METHOD

Qualitative approach was employed in this research combined with corpus-driven approach which was also performed by utilizing the corpus as the data source to uncover linguistic phenomena that might be overlooked without any prior assumption regarding the phenomena. In it, Jones and Waller (2015) separate corpus types into open-access corpus and make-up corpus. An open-access corpus is the online corpus available on the internet so that it can be freely accessed, namely BNC, COCA, or MICASSE, whereas a make-up corpus is a collection of data which is compiled and created by using corpus analysis software such as AntConc or WordSmith.

The data of this study are sentences containing either *very*, *really*, *quite*, and *pretty* as their respective function as adverbial intensifiers with adjectives as its collocation in Blog Authorship Corpus. The data was taken from Blog Authorship Corpus which consists of collected posts of 19,320 bloggers from blogger.com in August 2004. The corpus compiles a total of 681,288 posts and over 140 million words which can be easily accessed and downloaded through its website (<http://u.cs.biu.ac.il/~koppel/BlogCorpus.htm>). It has to be understood that Blog Authorship Corpus is a non-annotated corpus, hence the corpus is not provided with either prosodic, semantic, or historical information as additional linguistic information.

The language which is used in a blog is obviously different from other genre such as an academic one, either in terms of degree of formality or the use of slangs. It is as what Nilsson (2003, cited in Nowson 2006) noted before as she found that the posts in a community of weblogs employs informal, non-standard contractions, and slangs.

In collecting the data, the steps taken were downloading the corpus from the website. Since the corpus itself is a non-annotated corpus, the data was obtained from the website in the form of .rar (Roshal Archive) file. Next is extracting the data .rar file into a folder so that each data can be accessed using corpus software in the form of .xml (eXtensible Markup Language). Then the corpus software named WordSmith 4.0 was operated to analyze the blog post compilation by selecting Concord tab and typing the keyword in Search Word Tab. The result appeared in Concordance window as shown in Figure 1. Eventually, the result which is the concordance line is saved in the form of sentences containing Key Word in Context (KWIC).

N	Concordance
1	that this post is fair and balanced, I should do a very honest and self-effacing haiku about myself.
2	up late definitely took its toll. Paul and I had a VERY low key Monday and then on Tuesday I went
3	faggots! Get over here!" Two blocks later, I was very upset to see that the scumbags screaming at us
4	this weekend was beautiful beyond belief. It was very intensive as I met so many of the different family
5	? Answer: they do challenges which keep them very busy. You don't have to watch a half an hour of
6	burner sit quietly in the corner of my bedroom. It's very pretty when it sits quietly. 6) I love TV. Here is

Figure 1
Concordance Lines of Adverbial Intensifier 'Very'

Once the data were collected, the collocation and semantic prosody of the adverbials are examined based on the collocates tab. In this tab, the words on the first left column are those which collocate with the degree adverbials as obtained from the concordance (see Figure 2).



Word	With	Total Left	Total Right	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	Centre	R1	R2
GOOD	very	1,065	9,615	255	239	219	217	135	0	8,503	466
MUCH	very	465	7,493	158	134	112	47	14	0	6,876	194
VERY	very	10,713	10,714	834	893	1,303	1,536	6,147	71,781	6,147	1,536
WELL	very	1,273	6,563	320	380	355	170	48	0	5,650	213
NICE	very	557	5,369	116	110	110	123	98	0	4,848	202
LONG	very	401	3,317	104	98	92	73	34	0	2,859	192
INTERESTING	very	202	3,077	28	39	32	77	26	0	2,830	82
HAPPY	very	229	3,269	58	60	42	43	26	0	2,788	203

Figure 2
Collocates of Adverbial Intensifier 'Very'

Partington's (2004) classification of semantic prosody was used to categorize the adverbials semantic prosody by selecting adjective collocates. In this case, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English 5th edition provided guidance to define the meaning of each collocate. In addition, each collocation in their expanded context was carefully examined to find out whether the collocation has pleasant or unpleasant meaning (see Figure 3).

```
</post>
<date>16,June,2004</date>
<post>
Plays and Naps I am here to say that the play we are writing for the theatre company is just a
understand. After the meeting was over, I wrote the ending of the play. It was so much fun to do.
I am very happy with how it all turned out. This week, Kelly and Megan, will spend time filling in so
of the month and we will use their feedback and comments to fine tune any last minute problems.
```

Figure 3
The Expanded Context of KWIC 'Very' in Source Text Tab

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In presenting the finding, it should be noted that prior to data analysis, the data were limited based on two conditions. The first condition is that the number of collocates for each degree adverbial was reduced to the point deemed enough to be representative and differed based on their total tokens. The second condition is that collocates in which degree adverbials to modify them as anything were excluded. Additionally, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (henceforth LDOCE) was used while the expanded context of said tokens was carefully checked in defining the meaning of each collocation.

The Collocations of Degree Adverbial 'Very, Really, Quite, and Pretty'

Collocation refers to the way a pair of words which often used or appeared together in the same context. Thus, the researcher conducted an analysis on Blog Authorship Corpus to see the collocations of degree adverbial *very, really, quite, and pretty*.

The Collocations of Degree Adverbial 'Very'

A total number of 171.782 tokens of *very* were found in the Blog Authorship Corpus. The collocates are put in a table as follows (the following collocates have the co-occurring frequency of 100 or above and are listed in descending order of said frequency):

Table I
The Collocates of Degree Adverbial 'Very'

	Collocates
Degree adverbial 'very'	good, much, well, nice, long, interesting, happy, little, cool, hard, important, funny, first, excited, few, bad, sad, different, tired, close, soon, high, difficult, fun, small, busy, strange, often, exciting, special, proud, easy, low, cute, short, strong, large, big, similar, quickly, sweet, early, simple, best, boring, far, fast, hot, pretty, odd, weird, beautiful, late, same, old, real, last, young, lucky, clear, upset, angry, glad, quiet, impressed, interested, sorry, serious, true, smart, entertaining, cold, popular, bored, pleased, slowly, easily, sick, helpful, loud, expensive, powerful, slow, friendly, scary, attractive, useful, comfortable, rare, likely, badly, pleasant, kind, annoying, disappointed, stupid, poor, near, confused, enjoyable, amusing, relaxing, nervous, rarely, wrong, dark, impressive, seriously, sexy, personal, talented, dangerous, nicely, careful, successful, frustrating, uncomfortable, grateful, deep, intelligent, warm, productive, confusing, surprised, drunk, emotional, painful, tiring, disturbing, hungry, thankful, great, scared, carefully, open, bright, creative, sensitive, active, limited, sure, heavy, strongly, specific, clean, lazy, quick, tasty, thin, worried, common, lonely, clever, concerned, complicated, effective, light, positive, obvious, afraid, loudly, sleepy, tough, tight, depressing, tall, healthy, pissed, familiar, basic, clearly, depressed, unique, mad, cheap, weak, frustrated, curious, full, dear, fond, fine, informative, stressful, rich, unhappy, supportive, awesome, generous, new, intense, moving, nearly, polite, handsome, patient, fortunate, lovely, calm, ill, unusual, closely, romantic, brief, possible, shy, famous, rude, random, silly, wise, eventful, sore, confident, encouraging, realistic, rough complex, neat

Table I derived from the corpus shows that degree adverbial *very* co-occurs with various words as its collocates. In its occurrences, it is noted that the collocations were found either at the end of the clause or in the middle of the clause. To ease the elaboration, illustration of the patterns is given based on the types of collocates as it is observed that the collocates of degree adverbial *very* consists of words coming from either adjective or adverb word class. The first pattern to be identified is when the collocations of degree adverbial *very* and adjective collocates are placed at the end of the clause with either noun complimented by linking verb or noun complimented with verb and pronoun precede the collocations. See the following examples:

- (1) The directors' notes are *very* good.
- (2) This realization makes me *very* sad.

Another pattern emerges when the collocations are placed in the middle of the clause. The said collocations are followed by a noun phrase with a determiner being placed before the collocations, as in:

- (3) He's a *very* intelligent guy.
- (4) We have a *very* nice discussion.
- (5) I got to meet some *very* interesting people.

Or the collocations can be followed by either infinitive or prepositional phrase as illustrated in the following examples:

- (6) It was *very* hard to leave.
- (7) I am *very* open with my feelings.
- (8) That was *very* nice of you.
- (9) She is *very* good at gymnastics.

The next patterns are those consisting of the collocations of degree adverbial *very* and adverb collocates. Consider the following examples:



- (10) Time goes by *very* quickly.
- (11) The blood *very* slowly dripped out.
- (12) Tennessee is *very* much different from Kentucky.

Those examples illustrate how the collocation can be positioned either after or before the modified verb, while it can only be positioned before the modified adjective. In all these mentioned patterns, the function of degree adverbial *very* does not change. Here it is noted that a slightly different function will arise when a different pattern of co-occurrence is formed, when the collocations co-occur with a negative value. Take a look at the following example:

- (13) My mom was not *very* happy with me.

In example 13, the collocation is preceded by negative value *not* resulting in the function of the degree adverbial *very* to be altered. Degree adverbial *very* which is supposed to intensify the degree of the adjective is turned into having the function of lessening it, while the adjective *happy* can be referred as *mad* as in, 'My mom was rather mad at me'.

The Collocations of Degree Adverbial Really

Move to the second degree adverbial, 329.338 occurrences of *really* in Blog Authorship Corpus were found. It is almost as twice as the total occurrence number of *very*. The following table displays said collocates (the following collocates have the co-occurring frequency of 300 or above and are listed in descending order of said frequency):

Table 2
The Collocates of Degree Adverbial 'Really'

	Collocates
Degree adverbial 'really'	good, really, want, like, need, nice, cool, bad, know, hard, think, wanted, care, well, funny, great, fun, hope, liked, tired, love, happy, excited, long, hate, enjoyed, weird, sad, wish, cute, sure, interesting, miss, hot, sucks, matter, enjoy, wanna, big, boring, pissed, mean, thought, bored, stupid, close, fast, needed, quite, wants, felt, sick, busy, remember, sorry, say, into, awesome, important, understand, glad, believe, appreciate, very, annoying, sweet, pretty, hurt, mad, late, upset, loud, old, easy, fucking, so, needs, likes, cares, knows, interested, early, worth, enjoying, matters, short, scared, strange, suck, done, amazing, scary, neat, loved, cold, hurts, worried, angry, hoping, sucked, there, drunk, exciting, high

Despite being on the same page with degree adverbial *very* as amplifiers, a different result for degree adverbial *really* emerges from the corpus as shown in Table 2. However, similar to *very*, it is noted that in its occurrences, the collocations were found either at the end of the clause or in the middle of the clause. From the corpus, the collocates of degree adverbial *really* consists of words coming from either verb, adjective, adverb or preposition word class. The pattern of co-occurrence is known when the collocations of degree adverbial *really* and verb collocates are placed in the middle of the clause and followed by either a noun, infinitive or prepositional phrase. Take a look at the following examples:

- (14) We *really* know our stuff.
- (15) They *really* want to come.
- (16) I *really* care for you.

Additionally, a further investigation shows that in a significant number of tokens in the corpus, the collocations are also often to be accompanied by either auxiliary or modal verb resulting in the another pattern as in:

- (17) They do *really* hate me.
(18) We would *really* appreciate some extra our way.

In these two mentioned tokens, *do* and *would* are seen to precede the collocation in each token respectively. With *really* has the meaning of 'to a great extent' or 'very much', *really* expresses a function as degree adverbial in both tokens. The next pattern is where the collocation co-occurs with a negative value. In a similar manner to that of *very*, the function of degree adverbial *really* will be slightly altered as in the example below.

- (19) I don't *really* feel like writing today.

In example 19, negative value *not* exists accompanying *do* to co-occur with the collocation. If we look at it, the meaning of the sentence in the example more or less is 'I am not in the mood for writing today'. This illustrates that the function of degree adverbial *really* is altered because instead of intensifying the verb phrase *feel like*, *really* lessens or even opposes it. Interestingly, what is stated in LDOCE is that the phrase 'feel like (doing) something' is often used in spoken English and the same thing goes to *wanna* which also one of the verb collocates that *really* has. *Wanna* is a short form of 'want to' or 'want a' which is more of spoken language. Move to the next pattern, in which the collocations of degree adverbial *really* and adjective collocates occurring at the end of the clause. Either noun complimented by linking verb or noun complimented with verb and pronoun is found to precede the collocation. Consider the following examples:

- (20) Teenagers get *really* excited.
(21) Sometimes I found them *really* funny.

Furthermore, from the tokens, *really* can be rather tricky. It is because while the collocation occurs in the middle of the clause and co-occurs with a noun phrase, a determiner was found to be positioned either before or in-between the collocation, like in the examples below:

- (22) It is a *really* well-maintained school.
(23) I'm *really* a bad person.

It is tricky because, in the two mentioned examples, two different functions of *really* are illustrated. The former example illustrates the function of *really* as adjective modifying degree adverbial. Whereas the latter illustrates the function of *really* as a manner adverb by having the same sense to 'truly' to emphasize the statement or the opinion of the writer. Consequently, in the majority of occurrences where any verbs or auxiliary verbs exist in the sentence, a determiner is positioned before the collocation, as in:

- (24) She did a *really* good job.
(25) We got a *really* cool robot vacuum cleaner.

The next patterns are those where the collocations can be followed by either prepositional or infinitive phrase. Take a look at the following examples:

- (26) The rehearsal was *really* fun for some reason.
(27) I'm *really* sick of all this bullshit.
(28) It was *really* hard to concentrate.



The next patterns to be identified consists of the collocations of degree adverbial *really* and adverb collocates. It is noted that different from that of degree adverbial *very*, the adverb collocates of degree adverbial *really* are mostly emphasizer. Consider these examples:

- (29) Friday night was *really* very fun.
 (30) It's *really* fucking hard to type.

In those examples, the writers use *very* and *fucking* respectively to emphasize his/her statement to a certain degree. The collocations were found to precede the modified adjectives. Move to the last pattern, the collocations of degree adverbial *really* and preposition collocate *into* were found to be followed by a noun, as in:

- (31) I am *really* into politics.

The Collocations of Degree Adverbial 'Quite'

The finding from WordSmith 4.0 shows 57.382 tokens of *quite* from Blog Authorship Corpus. The collocates for *quite* are presented below (the following collocates have the co-occurring frequency of 100 or above and are listed in descending order of said frequency):

Table 3
The Collocates of Degree Adverbial 'Quite'

	Collocates
Degree Adverbial 'quite'	sure, good, well, fun, nice, interesting, frankly, funny, possibly, like, happy, often, right, sad, different, boring, amusing, nicely, awhile, excited, simple, easy, cool, know, proud, late, long, busy, tired, hard, ok, entertaining, understand, literally, surprised, simply, get, honestly, impressed, difficult, pleased, early, ready, true, enough, clear, remember, enjoyable, make, scary, possible, easily, obvious, bad, annoying, close, amazing, strange, cute, upset, impressive, exciting, bored, fit

Table 3 shows that slightly similar to those of degree adverbial *really*, the collocates of degree adverbial *quite* are noted to be more various than *very*. In its occurrences, it is noted that the collocations were found mostly either at the end of the clause or in the middle of the clause. It is observed that the collocates of degree adverbial *quite* consists of words coming from either adjective, adverb or verb word class. The first pattern to be identified is when the collocations of degree adverbial *quite* and adjective collocates are placed at the end of the clause with either noun complimented by linking verb or noun complimented with verb and pronoun precedes the collocation. See the following example:

- (32) The story is *quite* good.
 (33) I find that *quite* rude.

Following this, the next patterns emerge when the collocations were found to be in the middle of the clause. The collocations are followed by a noun phrase, in which a determiner is placed either before or after the collocation slightly similar to the previous case of degree adverbial *really*. Consider examples:

- (34) It's a *quite* funny thing.
 (35) We had *quite* a long chat to catch up.

However, it is noted that different from the case of degree adverbial *really*, one of the patterns is still considered as something grammatically acceptable while illustrating a different function of *really*. In the case of degree adverbial *quite*, one of the patterns is considered to be grammatically incorrect. Said

pattern is the one from Example (34), the pattern is considered as grammatically incorrect. It is because according what LDOCE noted, the correct grammar is that we have to put *quite* before a determiner, not after the determiner. Hence, the existence of occurrences with this pattern in the corpus indicates that the language in blog does not always abide by the grammar rules. Next, although the number of occurrences is rare, it is also found that the collocations are able to be followed by either prepositional or infinitive phrase. Take a look at the following examples:

- (36) Basically, they are *quite* easy to do.
(37) This is *quite* true in the case of Pakistan and India.

Before going further, in example (36), *quite* is supposed to lessen or weaken the quality of easy, it is just as noted in Paradis (1997, p.86) patterns of combination, since the adjective used in the sentences is the scalar one, then the function of degree adverbial *quite* is to lessen or weaken the strength of a node. Hence, in the example, the writer expresses a slight quality of easy. While on some occasions, *quite* could mean the opposite. Consider the latter example (37), the tokens contain a limit adjective, in which according to Paradis (1997, p.78) contributes in affecting the function of *quite*. Therefore, with *true* counted as a limit adjective, *quite* in example 37 is used to amplify the word *true*. Move to the next pattern, which is formed when degree adverbial *quite* co-occurs with adverb collocates. In their occurrences, the collocation can be positioned after the modified verb, as in,

- (38) It fits *quite* nicely.

or before the modified verb, like in the example:

- (39) This *quite* often happens.

It is asserted previously that the collocations of degree adverbial *quite* mostly occurs in medial position. It is because in a number of occurrences, the collocations of degree adverbial *quite* and adverb collocates were found to also occur in initial position. Consider examples:

- (40) *Quite* frankly, I feel sorry for the kids.
(41) *Quite* literally, the more the merrier!

The next pattern consists of the collocations of degree adverbial *quite* and verb collocates. Similar to *really*, in co-occurring with these verbs, either auxiliary or modal verb was often found to accompany the collocation. However, in degree adverbial *quite*, said auxiliary and modal verbs are all in their negative form. Take a look at these examples:

- (42) I don't *quite* like Liverpool.
(43) I don't *quite* know the whole story.
(44) I can't *quite* get it sometimes.

In all of these tokens, negative value *not* is seen to accompany the auxiliary and modal verbs and the existence of this negative value can alter the function of degree adverbial *quite*. In examples 42, 43, and 44 one cannot simply interpret the function of *quite* in said token as something to weaken or lessen because the context would not fit in. Therefore, based on the context, *quite* should be interpreted to have the function as to how *very* or *really* does.



The Collocations of Degree Adverbial Pretty

From the collection of the data, a total of 89.294 tokens of occurrences were found in Blog Authorship Corpus. It can be seen in the following table (the collocates have the co-occurring frequency of 100 or above and are listed in descending order of the said frequency):

Table 4
The Collocates of Degree Adverbial 'Pretty'

	Collocates
Degree adverbial 'pretty'	much, good, cool, sure, well, funny, damn, fun, bad, boring, soon, nice, interesting, hard, easy, darn, busy, big, happy, close, decent, awesome, excited, sweet, tired, fast, quickly, sad, late, hot, amazing, neat, great, long, crazy, early, cute, obvious, weird, stupid, lame, high, fucking, uneventful, exciting, simple, normal, quick, scary, pissed, quiet, far, clear, crappy, little, impressive, sick, bored, low, small, tough, ok, slow, proud, badly, shitty, short, smart, confident, entertaining, rough, accurate, pathetic, nifty, strong, ugly, tight, nasty, serious, cheap, upset, intense, new, damned, dumb, solid, young, easily, old, dull, heavy

The list above illustrates a clear summary of the collocating words of degree adverbial *pretty*. Similar to the previous degree adverbials, it is found that in its occurrences, the collocations are placed at the end of the clause or in the middle of the clause. From the corpus, it is noted that the collocates of degree adverbial *very* consists of words coming from either adjective or adverb word class. The first pattern to be identified is when the collocations of degree adverbial *pretty* and adjective collocates are placed at the end of the clause with either linking verb or transitive verb complimented by pronoun or noun is positioned before the collocation, as in:

- (45) My new bathroom floor looks *pretty* good.
- (46) I got home *pretty* early.

The second pattern then emerges when the collocations are placed in the middle of the clause. The said collocations can be followed by a noun phrase, in which a determiner is found to be positioned before the collocation, as in,

- (47) I had a *pretty* good weekend.

or it may be followed by either infinitive or prepositional phrase. Consider these examples:

- (48) They were all *pretty* happy to see me back.
- (49) I have considered myself *pretty* resistant to change.
- (50) She's also *pretty* nifty with screwdrivers.

The next pattern are that consisting of the collocations of degree adverbial *pretty* adverb collocates. It is noted that the collocates in this pattern can be divided into those which describe a manner and those which used to emphasize something. For the former category, take a look at the following examples:

- (51) I consumed them *pretty* quickly.
- (52) I am *pretty* easily swayed.

These examples illustrate that the collocation can be positioned either before or after the modified verb. Whereas for the latter category, adverbs of emphasis which usually used in spoken informal context mostly appeared. In this pattern, the collocation is positioned before the modified adjective. Consider the following examples taken from the corpus:

- (53) He's also *pretty* damn attractive.
(54) This weekend was *pretty* fucking intense.

If we look at these two examples, the presence of these adverbs in the sentences affects how degree adverbial *pretty* work. In both examples, degree adverbial *pretty* is no longer used to weaken or lessen because the context would not fit.

The Semantic Prosody of Degree Adverbial 'Very, Really, Quite, and Pretty'

Due to the enormous size of the corpus and the high frequency of each degree adverbial, only tokens of top 100 collocates of each degree adverbial were investigated. The top 100 collocates were chosen because they have a major part in percentage which can lead to the result. Furthermore, it is because the semantic prosody itself is determined based on the total frequency of the meaning of collocation dominate the occurrences.

A number of collocates which co-occur with each degree adverbial have been discussed that show us a rather undefined prosody through co-occurring with pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral words. However, a more specific result was found after their expanded context was explored. Here, a table presents the specific number between each pleasant, unpleasant and neutral meaning collocates.

Table 5
The Frequency of Semantic Prosody of 'Very, Really, Quite, and Pretty'

KWIC	Pleasant	Neutral	Unpleasant	Total
<i>very</i>	39%	36%	25%	100 out of 4533 possible collocates
<i>really</i>	30%	24%	46%	100 out of 6337 possible collocates
<i>quite</i>	44%	31%	25%	100 out of 2131 possible collocates
<i>pretty</i>	33%	37%	30%	100 out of 2527 possible collocates

The table tells us that each degree adverbial has different percentages on their pleasant, neutral, and unpleasant collocations. Out of their top 100 collocates, pleasant meaning dominates the most on degree adverbial *very* and *quite*, meaning that both of them have a favourable semantic prosody. As degree adverbial *really* is favored by unpleasant meaning collocations, they lead degree adverbial *really* to an unfavourable semantic prosody. On the other hand, degree adverbial *pretty* tends to have neutral meaning collocates in most of its occurrences. The following discussion is related to what collocates fill each pleasant, neutral, and unpleasant column and a detailed list of their categorization are attached to the appendices. However, it has to be noted that the categorization of each collocate is based on their context in collocating with each degree adverbial, hence the difference in the categorization of overlapping collocates in each degree adverbial is not impossible.

In the second column of Table 5, all degree adverbials collocate with pleasant meaning collocates, in which several of them are noted to be the same. Gathered from the pleasant column on four appendices, the said collocates for each degree adverbial are words like *good, nice, cool, well, interesting, sure* etc. By looking at these words themselves, all of them can be easily identified to have a pleasant meaning which leads to a favourable semantic prosody. It is shown in the concordance lists that each degree adverbial is collocating with these words to intensify the pleasant or favourable quality of something. For example, in



degree adverbial *very*, the collocates *good* and *nice* are found to occur in phrases like *good*, advice, *good* guy, *good* terms, *good* mood, *good* (at doing something), *nice* day, *nice* food, *nice* place, etc. are found.

The word *cool* in the corpus is found to describe the appearance of something or the personality of someone rather than referring to temperature. The said word is used in the same way as *good* and *nice* in which they are meant to be something pleasant. Hence why phrases like *cool* movie and *cool* guy are found in the concordance list. On the other hand, *well* which have a pleasant meaning by itself, is making those collocating with the said word to have a pleasant meaning. It can be seen from the corpus, where phrases as in *well* aware, *well* behaved, *well*-constructed, *well* deserved, *well* done, *well* mannered, *well* organized, *well* researched, *well* written, etc. are found.

In the corpus, *interesting* is counted to have pleasant meaning because the word *interesting* is used in complement to describe something pleasant as in *interesting* and cleverly done, *interesting* and informative specifying the meaning of *interesting* to be something pleasant in its occurrences. A special case, however, occurs with the word *sure*, the said word means something pleasant in one way and unpleasant in another. As depicted in the corpus, when *sure* collocates with degree adverbials *very* and *pretty*, it refer to 'no doubt'. However, when it co-occurs with degree adverbial *quite*, it mostly refers to the opposite by frequent co-occurrence with a negative value *not* in the phrase '*not quite sure*'.

In the third column of the table, each degree adverbial co-occurs with neutral meaning collocates. Derived from all neutral column on four appendices, this particular column is filled with words like *long*, *important*, *close*, *strange*, etc. to collocate with each degree adverbial. These words can be referred to as "neutral" because they are either mostly undefinable in their co-occurrence or they tend to collocates with other words resulting in both pleasant and unpleasant meaning. For example, the word *long* is considered to be neutral because unless it co-occurs with other words in a particular context like how phrases *long* and tiring or *long* and boring, the word *long* does not indicate any specific meanings. This case also applied to other words in the column. Another example is the word *close*. In the corpus, the meaning of the word *close* can be undefinable due to both pleasant and unpleasant co-occurrence. Take for example:

(55) I'm *very close* with my brother.

(56) I'm tired, frustrated, and *very close* to depression.

In the former example, the meaning of *close* is pleasant because it depicts the good relationship between the writer and his/her brother. Whereas in the latter, it can be seen that the meaning of *close* is unpleasant because it refers to how close the writer to experience depression, a mental illness.

On the other hand, rather than co-occurring in contexts with both pleasant and unpleasant meaning, the word *important* is shown to have no particular tendency of meaning in any context. It is used merely to describe the priority level of something. Hence why the researcher found no implication whether the meaning of the word is pleasant or unpleasant and settled with neutral instead. It is illustrated by phrases like *important* lesson, *important* information, *important* issues, etc. which are found in the concordance list. The word *strange* and its synonyms *odd* and *weird* also has the same case. As they are found in phrases like *strange* dream, *strange* feeling, and *strange* thing, they do not imply any meaning whatsoever and are used only to point something unusual and out of ordinary.

Clearly defined unpleasant meaning words like *hard*, *bad*, *sad*, *tired*, etc. are noted to occupy the fourth column of table 5. It can be seen in the unpleasant column of all four appendices. Just like how pleasant words are, these words clearly have unpleasant meaning by themselves in which *bad* is used to describe the quality of something, it was found in phrases like *bad* attitude, *bad* day, *bad* mood, etc. As seen in the concordance list, all these tokens mostly have unpleasant meaning regardless of the lexical items which followed the word *bad*. The same goes for the words *sad* and *tired* because it is obvious that both words refer to an unpleasant or negative emotion of human being.

Different from the previous words which are obviously found to have unpleasant meaning, the word *hard* is sometimes found to co-occur in contexts where the meaning *hard* is pleasant. As derived

from the corpus, phrases like *hard* working, *hard* worker, work *hard* all have pleasant meaning. However, the word *hard* was categorized as unpleasant because the number of the pleasant co-occurrence are not as comparable as the unpleasant one where *hard* is found in phrases like *hard* time, *hard* thing, *hard* to (do), *hard* for (me), etc.

Discussion

From hundred thousand of tokens derived from the corpus, the various collocates and patterns for each degree adverbial have been found. The patterns are all based on each of their collocate groups. It is different from the previous studies which analyzed only the adjective collocates of degree adverbials without their pattern of co-occurrence, this study covers all collocates of the degree adverbials which correspond to this research limitation as well as their collocations' pattern of co-occurrence.

Based on the finding, several differences were found regarding each degree adverbial. The first one is regarding the variety of their collocates. All degree adverbials are found to share a large number of same words to collocate with coming from the same word classes, adjectives and adverbs. However, the researcher noted that only degree adverbials *really* and *quite* were found to also collocate with words from the word class of verb. The researcher assumed this happens because degree adverbials are primarily used in modifying adjectives and adverbs. Additionally, only three out of four degree-adverbials were found to also collocate with negative value, namely *very*, *really*, and *quite*, in which, when this collocation happened, the function of said degree adverbials will be slightly altered.

The second one is regarding their collocations' patterns of co-occurrence. Different types of collocations resulting in different pattern of collocations' co-occurrence. However, in a further investigation, it is noted that in several cases, different patterns of co-occurrence emerge even from the same type of collocations which owned by the four degree adverbials. For example, in collocating with adjective collocates, all degree adverbials were found to be either at the end of the clause or in the middle of the clause followed by noun, infinitive or prepositional phrase. Yet, in a specific occurrence where their collocations co-occur with a noun phrase, their patterns of co-occurrence are slightly different.

The former aspect happened in the case of degree adverbial *quite* because of the different grammatical structure the said degree adverbial has as the researcher observed that occurrences with the first pattern are considered to be ungrammatical. On the other hand, the latter aspect happened in the case of degree adverbial *really*, in which its second collocations' pattern of co-occurrence is that a determiner was found exist in between the collocations. Different from the case of *quite*, this pattern is not considered to be ungrammatical but rather it illustrates the flexibility of function for degree adverbial *really*. It is acceptable to write 'I'm *really* a bad person' with *really* functions to emphasize the statement, but it is unacceptable to write 'It is *very* an interesting album'. Moreover, in co-occurring with either infinitive or prepositional phrases, degree adverbial *quite* is shown to be slightly restricted in this respect as their amount of total occurrences is the least among the four.

Following the previously mentioned difference of pattern, in co-occurring with adverb collocates it is found that all four degree adverbials are mostly found to occur in medial position. In a number of occurrences, however, one degree adverbial were found to be different as it also able to occur in frontal position, resulting the collocations to be also in the same position aside from being at the end or in the middle of the clause. The said degree adverbial is *quite*. Furthermore, it is found that their collocations can be placed either before or after the modified verbs, while if the collocation co-occurs with adjectives, it was placed to precede the modified adjectives. As for the pattern of co-occurrence, the researcher found only one pattern of said collocation in degree adverbial *really* whereas those of other degree adverbials are more vary. The researcher assumed that this depends on the types of adverb collocates that each degree adverbial has.

The next example coming from occurrences where two out of four degree adverbials were found to frequently collocate with verbs. The only degree adverbial to collocate with verb collocates are *really* and *quite*. Still, even if the both of them share the same verb collocates, in their occurrences, they are



notably different. The patterns of said collocations in degree adverbial *really* are more vary than that of degree adverbial *quite* as they were formed either in the presence of auxiliary verbs or in the absence of them. It is illustrated in the corpus by example (14) and (17), as it is written 'We *really* know our stuff' and 'They do *really* hate me'. On the other hand, the pattern of said collocation of degree adverbial *quite* is more restricted than that of degree adverbial *really* as the pattern was formed in the presence of auxiliary verbs and negative value. It can be seen from the example (42), 'I don't *quite* like Liverpool'.

Aside from the patterns of co-occurrence, all degree adverbials were found to have a wide semantic preferences for their adjective collocates. It varies from general evaluation (*good, well, nice, bad, cute, etc*), emotion or state of mind (*happy, interested, sad, tired, confused, etc*), quality (*long, big, fast, slow, short, etc*). However, it is noted that there is one degree adverbial to have an even wider semantic preferences by also collocating with quantity adjectives (*few and little*), that is degree adverbial *very*. It is different from Zhang (2013); Simpson & Mendis (2003); Nakatani & Hirschberg (1994); Deroey & Taverniers (2011); Charles (2006); Bolton, Nelson, & Hung (2002), in which only degree adverbial *awfully* has the wide semantic preferences while degree adverbials *terribly, horribly, and dreadfully* all typically co-occur with adjectives describing emotions or state of mind. Those adjectives are *sorry, miss, upset, worried, bored, disappointed, embarrassed, suffer, afraid, aware, and dull*.

In addition, each degree adverbial was found to have their own semantic preferences for their adverb collocates. Degree adverbials *very* and *quite* were mostly found to co-occur with adverbs of manner. The former collocates with *quickly, slowly, easily, badly, nicely, etc*, while the latter collocates with *possibly, frankly, honestly, simply, etc*. On the other hand, degree adverbial *really* shows a clear tendency to only co-occur with adverbs of emphazier like *really, just, very, fucking, etc*. Whilst degree adverbial *pretty* was found to collocate with both types of adverbs, emphazier and manner such as *damn, darn, fucking, quickly, badly, etc*.

Correspondingly, Watcher (2012) shows that *very* is favored by lecture type environment which is mostly formal. In a similar manner, the finding of this study supports and complements the statement as the researcher found that rather than *very* and *quite, really* as well as degree adverbial *pretty* is often used in informal context, seeing the total number of occurrences found in Blog Authorship Corpus, a corpus of blog posts compilation.

In addition, degree adverbials *really* and *pretty* are noted to have similar collocates. It is interesting because *really* and *pretty* are supposed to have a different function, in which *really* functions to strengthen while *pretty* functions to do the otherwise. As illustrated in the corpus, *really* was found to co-occur with a verb like *wanna* and adverb like *fucking*, whereas *pretty* collocates with adverbs like *fucking, damn* as well as *darn*. In which, this indicates that *really* and *pretty* are often used in the same genre. The researcher supposed that it is in accordance to what is written in LDOCE, in which *really* and *pretty* are especially frequent used in spoken English because people usually go for *very* or *extremely* instead of *really* and *fairly* instead of *pretty* for written English. Hence, it also indicates that the users of the internet (or blog) prefer to use spoken language even in a supposedly written platform. The researcher also found other collocates which indicate informal language co-occurring with degree adverbials *really* and *pretty*. They are included in the class of adjective and are usually impolite or even categorized as taboo. Those words are *sucks* (refer to something lousy), *crappy, shitty, fucked, and messed up*.

As for the semantic prosody of each degree adverbial, it is found that *very* and *quite* are favored with pleasant semantic prosody. The finding shows that both of them are mostly dominated by adjectives with pleasant meaning as their collocates. Whereas unpleasant for degree adverbial *really*. It is slightly different from the result of the previous study conducted by Watcher (2012) which states that degree adverbial *really* was more leaning towards both favourable and unfavourable semantic prosody. As for the last degree adverbial, *pretty* has neutral semantic prosody because of the domination of neutral words.

CONCLUSION

It is known in the analysis that all degree adverbials collocate with various words from both adjective and adverb word classes. Whereas only two out of four degree adverbials collocate with other words from different word class. In their occurrences, all degree adverbials were found mostly to be in medial position and their collocations can happen mostly either at the end of the clause or in the middle of the class. Only their collocations differ, resulting in several different patterns of co-occurrence in accordance to their collocations.

Furthermore, two out of four degree adverbials are seen to have pleasant semantic prosody, and the other two have unpleasant and neutral for each of them. With a total 39% pleasant meaning collocates, the biggest percentage of all, degree adverbial *very* is clearly illustrated to have pleasant semantic prosody. The same goes for degree adverbial *quite* which has 44% of pleasant meaning collocates out of 100. Degree adverbial *really*, however, has a rather significant number for unpleasant meaning collocates, 47%. It is almost like the half of the total number, notably being the biggest compared to its pleasant and neutral meaning collocates which only have 29% and 24% respectively. As for the last degree adverbial, *pretty*, neutral meaning collocates are seen to dominate the chart with 37% in total.

Since this corpus is non-annotated, the collocates are highlighted and categorized, hence there may be some possibilities for error. To conduct a more thorough and clear research can be expected by using an annotated corpus or another corpus with a more considerable size. Also, as a reminder for the future researcher, it has to be noted that corpus is not only can be used as a way to investigate the semantic prosody of a node. More than that, from the collocation, it is always possible to investigate any patterns of co-occurrences like one the researcher had done with *very*, *really*, *quite*, and *pretty*. It is also possible to further the research by investigating the factors which may affect the use of these degree adverbials in the future while there are also numerous other parts of speech that can be investigated by using corpus.

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