

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of the study

The nouns related to the adjective beautiful may have changed over time. The changes may happen because of the changes in the social condition. In addition, different cultures may also have different perception of what is considered beautiful that in another country. Consequently, what is considered beautiful in a particular country can be different from another country. For the example, in Asia especially in China, in the end of the Tang's dynasty (618-907) there was a unique tradition which was called Chinese Foot Binding. This was because the Chinese considered small feet as beautiful. On the other hand, in Europe, in 1840s until 1850s, there was a tradition which was called Tight Lacing. It was a procedure which used a very tight corset to make an hourglass body, because an hourglass body was considered beautiful.

The different concept on what is considered beautiful is not only related to the different countries, but also to the different period of time. In the United States, according to the People's magazine ([www.people.com](http://www.people.com)), in 1990, the woman chosen as the most beautiful one is Michelle Pfeiffer. In that year, she was described as a blonde American talented actress and singer. In 2006, the woman chosen as the most beautiful one is Angelina Jolie. She was described as a brunnete American actress, film, director, screenwriter, and author. In this case we can see that in 1990 blonde is considered beautiful, while in 2006, brunnete is considered beautiful.

The unique concept of being beautiful encourages the writer to conduct a research on the changes in the nouns that become the head of the adjective 'beautiful'. Since the concept is related to a particular culture or country, the writer focuses on one particular country, that is the

United States of America. This particular country is chosen because it is the only country that has a diachronic corpus that spans for more than a hundred years. The corpus is called COHA (The Corpus of Historical American English).

COHA is the largest diachronic corpus of American English from 1810 to 2009. The major sources of the words included in COHA are fiction, magazines, newspapers, and non-fiction. COHA allows you to search more than 400 million words of text of American English. According to Davies (2008), COHA make us see how words, phrase and grammatical constructions have increased or decreased in frequency, how words have changed meaning over time, and how stylistic changes have taken place in the language.

Since the latest data from COHA is in 2009 , the writer also needs to get the recent corpus. Therefore, the writer also uses COCA (The Corpus of Contemporary American English), which is the largest freely-available corpus of English, and the only large and balanced corpus of American English. According to Davies (2008), the texts in COCA come from a variety of sources, they are spoken, fiction, popular magazine, newspapers, and academic journals. The corpus contains more than 410 million words of texts. The data in COCA are taken from 1990 until 2012.

In this study, the writer analyzes the concept of beauty by using corpus linguistics. According to Nesselhauf (2005), corpus linguistics is a method of doing linguistics analysis, and corpus can be defined as a collection of naturally systematic texts (written and spoken) taken from real life, such as newspaper, magazines, television shows, etc. In this case, COHA and COCA become the source of data for the writer to analyze the nouns that are related to the adjective 'beautiful'.

In analyzing the data, the writer focuses on collocations. The term collocation was initially used by Firth (1968), who stated that the word meaning is not contained within the word itself, but alongside other words or structures with which it frequently co-occurs. This means that we can analyze what is considered beautiful by analyzing the words with which the word 'beautiful' frequently co-occurs with, or the collocation of the adjective 'beautiful'. In the English language, an adjective is the modifier a noun. Therefore, to find the collocates of the adjective 'beautiful', the writer focuses on the nouns or the nominal collocates of the adjective 'beautiful'.

In a recent book by Lindquist, he mentioned there are two types of collocations, collocations in a window and adjacent collocations. Lindquist (2009: 73) explains that collocations in a window is the words collocates which occur in the left or in the right of the keyword, and the term 'window' stands for the space to the left and the right of the keyword. Lindquist (2009: 78) also explains that adjacent collocations are not only looked at in the collocations occur on the right or on the left of the keyword (or sometimes with an empty slot in between). Adjacent collocations are closer to real linguistic structure. That is why the writer uses adjacent collocations to analyze the nouns collocates in the adjective 'beautiful'.

At the beginning of this chapter, the writer explains the adjective 'beautiful' in connection with women. This is because according to COCA, in the period of 2001-2010, the most frequent noun collocate of the adjective 'beautiful' is [woman]. Actually, the adjective 'beautiful' can also be used to modify other nouns. Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary (2003) provides the following entry for 'beautiful': (1) having qualities of beauty: exciting aesthetic pleasure, (2) generally pleasing: EXCELLENT.

Considering that the adjective ‘beautiful’ does not only modify the noun women, the writer analyses all the nouns that frequently collocate with the adjective ‘beautiful’. The period of time for the analysis is set from 1911-2010, in order to cover a total of one hundred years. In addition, the corpus also is available for that period of time. It is expected that we will be able to see the changes in the nouns that are modified by the adjective ‘beautiful’ over time in the United States of America.

There are several studies which are related to my study. The first is the thesis entitled “Komplek Industri Kecantikan: Sebuah Kritik Sosio Filosofis”, written by Dian Paramita Sastrowardoyo (2007). She explained that beauty is a part of social construction which is built by some political needs which played in industrial system, mass media and patriarcha society. She analyzed the beauty concept in the philosophy side, while my study uses a corpus as the source to analyze the noun collocates of the word “beautiful”.

The second thesis is “A Diachronic Corpus Based Analysis of The Adjectival Collocates of [man] and [woman] in American English from 1861 to 2010”, written by Arum (2012). This thesis analyzed the adjective collocates in the word [man] and [woman] in American English from the Civil War Period (1861) to Obama’s presidency (2010) using COCA and COHA. Arum’s thesis and my study are the same to use American Corpus as the source of the data. The difference is Arum’s thesis compared two generic nouns, while my study analyzes a specific concept.

Then, the third related study is from the journal of Pragmatics entitled “Ain’t it beautiful? The conceptualization of beauty from an ethnopragmatic perspective”, written by Anna Gladkova and Jesus Romero-Trillo (2013). The similarity of Gladkova and Romero-Trillo’s article and my study is we talk about the conceptualization of word ‘beautiful’ based on a Corpus

by analyzing the collocation words in the adjective 'beautiful'. The difference is my study talk about a diachronic corpus in the specific concept while their article talks about the synchronic corpus by comparing three languages, Russian, English, and Spain.

This study aims at analyzing the differences of the concept of beauty in 1911 to 2010 by finding the noun collocations in the adjective 'beautiful'. The writer wants to cover a total of a hundred years by divided into 10 years spans. Therefore, the time spans are as follows: 1911-1920, 1921-1930, 1931-1940, 1941-1950, 1951-1960, 1961-1970, 1971-1980, 1981-1990, 1991-2000, 2001-2010, and the writer also wants to know the most frequent nouns collocates in the adjective 'beautiful' across genres in 2001-2010 in spoken, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and academic journals.

By knowing the concept of beauty over time and genres, we can see the changes in the society's perception on what was and is considered as beautiful. The changing of the concept of the beauty can be interesting to be analyzed because there is no specific standard in the beauty itself. It depends on the changes in the social condition and the influence of culture. And, these changes can be observed by using a big and balanced corpus.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problems**

Based on the background of the study, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What are the most frequent noun collocates of the adjective 'beautiful' in 1911-1920, 1921-1930, 1931-1940, 1941-1950, 1951-1960, 1961-1970, 1971-1980, 1981-1990, 1991-2000, 2001-2010?

2. What are the similarities and the differences of the noun collocates of the adjective ‘beautiful’ in 1911-1920, 1921-1930, 1931-1940, 1941-1950, 1951-1960, 1961-1970, 1971-1980, 1981-1990, 1991-2000, 2001-2010?
3. What is the trend in the frequency of the use of the adjective ‘beautiful’ across the following genres: fiction, magazines, and newspapers from 1911 to 2010?

### 1.3 Objectives of the study

Based on the statement of the problems, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To determine the most frequent noun collocates of the adjective ‘beautiful’ in 1911-1920, 1921-1930, 1931-1940, 1941-1950, 1951-1960, 1961-1970, 1971-1980, 1981-1990, 1991-2000, 2001-2010.
2. To determine the most frequent noun collocates of the adjective ‘beautiful’ across the following genres: fiction, magazines, and newspapers
3. To explain the similarities and the differences of the noun collocates of the adjective ‘beautiful’ in 1911-1920, 1921-1930, 1931-1940, 1941-1950, 1951-1960, 1961-1970, 1971-1980, 1981-1990, 1991-2000, 2001-2010.

### 1.4 Significance of the study

This study is expected to give both theoretical and practical contributions. For both theoretical and practical contributions. For the theoretical contributions, the writer hopes that the study can help other linguists to comprehend the changes in the collocates of a word. In particular, corpus linguists may find this thesis beneficial for a reference and a comparison when conducting other similar studies.

For the practical contributions, this thesis may draw the interest of people who work in beauty industry, including advertising agencies, and beauty product companies. People from the advertising agencies will be able to know the associations of the adjective beautiful, in order to create advertisings which are suitable for the society, especially American society. Beauty product companies will receive some inputs when they want to create beauty products.

### 1.5 Definitions of Key Terms

Adjective : Member of a word class that describes nouns (Jackson 2007: 20).

Adjacent collocations : The kind of collocation which is closer to real linguistic structures and a practical phenomenon (Linguist 2009: 77)

Beautiful : (1) Having qualities of beauty: exciting aesthetic pleasure  
(2) Generally pleasing: EXCELLENT (Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 2003)

Collocation : The words which occur on the left or on the right of the keyword (Linguist 2009:73)

Noun : Member of a large word class containing words that refers to people, things, ideas, etc. Nouns are often accompanied by a determiner (e.g. a, the) and sometimes by an adjective (Jackson 2007: 44).