A Linguistic Study of Metaphorical Collocations in Alcott's "Little Women"

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Abstract:
The present study analyzes the metaphorical collocations used by Louisa May Alcott in the first ten chapters of her well-known novel "Little Women" (1868-1869). These chapters represent the childhood phase of the four March sisters, Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy. This research identifies the metaphorical collocations using the Oxford Collocations Dictionary (OCD) and Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) and following the lexical and grammatical types suggested by Benson et al. (2010). The study also aims at examining the significance and contribution of the frequent metaphorical collocations to the narrative. The study attempts to detect many metaphorical collocations that are frequent, restricted, and transparent and finds numerous metaphorical collocations that consist of a collocate used metaphorically and a base used literally which vividly portray the March sisters' childhood experiences. Metaphorical collocations appear to spread largely across verb + noun and adjective + noun patterns. The analysis reveals many conceptual metaphors that motivate many of the extracted metaphorical collocations.
Keywords: metaphorical collocation (MC), conceptual metaphor (CM), base (B), collocate (C)

Introduction

Within the realm of metaphor and collocation, a specific linguistic phenomenon known as metaphorical collocation has emerged as a new aspect of research. Both collocations and metaphors belong to applied linguistics and they have been an area of great interest unlike metaphorical collocations (Patekar, 2022). The current study is conducted in the light of the fields of lexicology, semantics, pragmatics and stylistics.

Collocations as a Firthian's concept refers to "a type of syntagmatic relation", that is "the habitual co-occurrence of individual lexical items" (Crystal,2008,p.86). On the

other hand, metaphor is the "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff & Johnsen,2003,p.6). In between these two concepts, there are metaphorical collocations which are defined either as a type of lexical collocations, consisting of a base used literally and a collocate used metaphorically such as "slim chance" (e.g. Reder, 2006), or as a similar term to idiom or metaphorical expression, that both components of a collocation are used metaphorically or just one component such as "political suicide" (e.g. Philip, 2011; Hori, 2004; Onal, 2020).

This study undertakes an analysis of the first ten chapters that represent the childhood stage of the four March sisters in Louisa May Alcott's "Little Women" (1868-69). The current study attempts to achieve the following objectives:

1) Extracting metaphorical collocations from the childhood phase of "Little Women."
2) Identifying the syntactic patterns and the metaphor placement of metaphorical collocations in the childhood phase of "Little Women."
3) Identifying the conceptual metaphors that motivate the extracted metaphorical collocations.
4) Investigating metaphorical collocations of a structural composition that exceed two components.
5) Shedding light on the frequent metaphorical collocations in the childhood phase and their contribution to the narrative.
6) Foregrounding the way of differentiating between metaphorical collocations and idioms.

The Concept of Collocation

Collocation as a term acquires its linguistic sense in 1930s in the writings of H. E. Palmer, but it was mostly shaped in J. R. Firth's well-known paper "Modes of Meaning" (1957). Linguists have varying opinions regarding the definition of collocations and this eventually results in having no universally acceptable definition to collocations. Despite that, the common characteristic is that they all regard collocations as some sort of syntagmatic relationship between words (Nesselhauf, 2005). The many definitions can be categorized into two main approaches: the frequency-based approach and the phraseological approach.

In the frequency-based approach, a collocation refers to the co-occurrence of words at a specific distance, often classified as frequent or infrequent. The approach's main representatives are J. R. Firth and his successors (Neo-Firthians), M.A.K. Halliday and J. Sinclair (Nesselhauf, 2005). Firth describes collocations as "the company words keep" (1968:11), "the habitual collocations in which words under study appear are quite simply the word accompaniment, the other word-material in which they are most commonly or most characteristically embedded" (1968, pp.11-12). Halliday and Hasan (1976) introduce the term "collocational cohesion," defining it as "a cover term for the cohesion that results from the co-occurrence of lexical items that are in some way or other typically associated with one another, because they tend to occur in similar environments" (p.287). Sinclair defines collocations as "the occurrence of two or more words within a short space of each other in a text" (1991, p.171). In this approach, a collocation is considered as "lexical co-occurrence, more or less independent of grammatical pattern or positional relationship" by Sinclair (1991, p.170).

In the phraseological approach, collocations are described as "associations of two or more lexemes (or roots) recognized in and defined by their occurrence in a specific range of grammatical constructions" (Cowie,1994, p.3169). Nesselhauf (2005) points out that collocations here are recognized as a particular category of word combination, one that is somewhat fixed but not entirely. She adds that this approach has its roots in the work of H. Palmer and has been impacted by Russian phraseology and its most prominent examples are A. P. Cowie, I. Mel'čuk, and F. J. Hausmann. More importantly, this approach constantly demands that the components of collocations should be syntactically connected, in contrast to the frequency-based approach. Nesselhauf (2005) further discusses the relationship between the elements of a collocation according to some scholars. Cowie, for instance, considers both elements to be of the same nature, with one element being restricted. While Mel'čuk's definition posits that collocations consist of two elements, one freely chosen based on its meaning, called the 'keyword,' and the other element(s) selected to express a specific meaning, referred to as the 'value.' Similarly, Hausmann makes a similar distinction, using terms like "base" and "collocator," where the base is semantically autonomous and selected first in production, while the collocator's selection depends on the base.

Collocations, Idioms and Free Combinations: Criteria for Distinction

In the realm of collocations, idioms, and free combinations, scholars employ various criteria to distinguish these linguistic phenomena, primarily transparency and combinability. Transparency is whether the combination's components and the combination as a whole have literal or figurative meaning, and substitutability is the question of whether and to what extent the substitution of the components is constrained (Nesselhauf,2005).

Cowie (1988) classifies word combinations into two main categories: 'composites' and 'formulae.' Composites, including collocations and idioms, are fixed word combinations with syntactic function. Cowie (1981) uses transparency and combinability criteria to distinguish composites and categorizes them into four types: free collocations, allow open collocability and both elements have literal sense; restricted collocations with severe limitations on collocability and one of the elements carries a figurative sense; figurative idioms, show contextual determination and allow both a figurative and a literal interpretation; and pure idioms, with meanings not deducible from constituent words, being semantically opaque and immutable.

Aisenstadt (1979) classifies word combinations into idioms and non-idiomatic phrases, specifically distinguishing between free phrases and restricted collocations within the latter category. Restricted collocations involve regular, non-idiomatic meanings with structural patterns, limited commutability, and flexibility. Aisenstadt highlights two key differences from idioms: the derivation of meaning from individual constituents and greater commutability with interchangeable elements. She contrasts restricted collocations like "face the fact" with idioms like "face the music." Aisenstadt also outlines distinctions between restricted collocations and free combinations based on word order and usage limitations. For instance, the verb "carry" forms free combinations ("carry a book") with flexible nouns but becomes a restricted collocation when expressing winning an argument.

Nesselhauf (2005) mentions several authors like Nation, Herbst, and Benson et al. who consider a combination must be "restricted, transparent, and frequent" in order to be deemed a collocation. Overall, most scholars generally tend to place collocations in between idioms and free combinations.

The Concept of Metaphor

In the conceptual metaphor theory, metaphor is defined as the "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff & Johnsen, 2003, p.6). they argue that metaphor is not solely a linguistic phenomenon, but it influences our thought processes. They propose that human conceptual system is predominantly metaphorical, and linguistic expressions of metaphors are possible because metaphors exist in our conceptual system. "The metaphor is not just a matter of language, but of thought and reason. The language is secondary" (Lakoff, 1993, p.208).

Kovecses (2010) explains that instances of metaphor are abundant in our language and thought. For instance, we often use metaphors to conceptualize life as a journey, arguments as wars, and love as a journey as well. He goes on to state that this perspective on metaphor can be summarized as: conceptual domain (a) is conceptual domain (b), forming what we refer to as a **conceptual metaphor**. Such metaphors involve two conceptual domains, where one domain is called **the source domain** which comprises concepts such as journeys, war, buildings, food, plants, and more, provides the metaphorical expressions used to comprehend another conceptual domain, that is **the target domain** which includes aspects like life, arguments, love, theory, ideas, social organizations, and others, which are understood through the application of the source domain.

Kovecses (2010) also distinguishes between conceptual metaphors and metaphorical linguistic expressions. Linguistic expressions, or ways of talking, are explicit manifestations of conceptual metaphors, which are ways of thinking. For example, the metaphorical expression like "He was breathing fire" is analyzed as instantiating the metaphor ANGER IS FIRE. In addition, he explains that conceptual metaphors often involve a more abstract concept as the target and a more concrete or physical concept as the source.

Lastly, to answer the question of how the target domain (a) is understood in terms of the target domain (b)? Lakoff (1993) argues that understanding conceptual metaphors involves systematic correspondences between the two domains. These correspondences, often referred to as **mappings**. He demonstrates mappings with the metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY. In this metaphor, there are systematic correspondences between the source domain (journey) and the target domain (love). For instance, travelers represent lovers, a

moving vehicle represents the relationship, destinations represent the lovers' goals, roadblocks represent the relationship issues, and so on.

Metaphorical Collocations

In his theoretical survey, J. Patekar (2022) states that most writers consider metaphorical collocations to be self-explanatory, typically without offering a formal definition. He argues that the main challenge in defining metaphorical collocations arises from the inherent difficulty in defining a collocation itself. Patekar defines metaphorical collocations as a specific subset of collocations wherein one element, the collocate, assumes a figurative usage, thereby conferring a metaphorical significance upon the entire collocation. Reder (2006) describes collocations with metaphorical meanings as "metaphorical collocations" and the collocator in such collocations is polysemous with at least two meanings, allowing it to be used either literally or figuratively based on the context. Volungevičienė (2008) defines metaphorical collocation as a fixed, partially idiomatic, at least two-part word combination with a polysemous collocator. He adds that metaphorical collocations differ from metaphors because collocations consist of at least two words, while metaphors can be single words. They also differ from idioms in terms of translatability and their degree of fixedness.

Philip (2011) looks at metaphorical collocations like idioms in that, once learned, the importance of the collocation is as noticeable as the individual words when considered separately. They often become part of idiomatic expressions, forming the unchanging or slightly changing cores around which specific phrases develop (e.g., black sheep, blue moon, green light). Metaphorical collocations are further similar to idioms in that their surroundings can be adjusted to bring back the important meanings of the individual words. The original meaning remains, but it gets enhanced and enriched in different contexts. However, Philip differentiates between idiom and polysemous or metaphorical collocation, pointing out that the latter is more flexible and can be analyzed better than idiom.

Hori (2004) refers to metaphorical collocations as the first type of creative collocations, stating that metaphor can be seen as a matter of lexical collocation, where the extent of the metaphorical effect depends on the unexpectedness or unusual combination of two or more co-occurring words within the collocation. Hori considers that either one of the components, or both can be metaphorical. Onal's study (2020) shares the same ideas of Hori's distribution of the metaphor. She explores metaphorical political collocations in

English and Turkish in which she identifies four types: partial metaphorization (M+L or L+M), entire collocations used metaphorically (M = L1 + L2 and M2 <= M1), collocations with both components as metaphors, and collocations with a metonymic component. Examples include "banana republic" (partial), "cattle call" (entire).

McCarthy and O'Dell (2008) explore the connection between metaphor and collocation, noting that metaphors involve using words in a non-literal sense related to their basic meaning. They categorize metaphorical collocations into three types: body-based (e.g., face the facts), weight-based (e.g., heavy burden), and movement-based (e.g., run into difficulties). Deignan and Potter (2004) distinguish idioms from metaphorical collocations based on transparency and dictionary treatment. Idioms are pure expressions with fixed meanings not directly interpretable from individual words, extensively listed in dictionaries. Metaphorical collocations, like "break someone's heart," are more transparent, formed from metaphorical use of both components, but are not as extensively featured in dictionaries. Collocations of "heart", for instance are considered frequent, non-literal, and semi-fixed collocations. Lastly, Dai et al. (2019) notes that most collocations, especially the metaphorical ones, are motivated by conceptual metaphors, such as "keen understanding" related to INTELLIGENCE IS A KNIFE.

Methodology

The data of this study is taken from the first ten chapters of "Little Women" by Louisa May Alcott (1868-1869). To extract and identify the metaphorical collocations in the selected data, a literature review is conducted. Reviewing previous studies, definition of collocations, criteria of distinction between collocations, free combinations, and idioms, explaining metaphors, and metaphorical collocations, drawing on the works of some scholars such as Volungevičienė, Hori, Onal, and Deignan and Potter. The Oxford Collocations Dictionary (OCD) is employed to ascertain the status of specific word pairings as collocations in English. The Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP), proposed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007), is adopted to determine whether the collocations that have been identified via the dictionary exhibit transparent metaphorical meanings or literal ones. All in all, the concept of metaphorical collocations that has been adopted in this study is the one that has the following three criteria: frequent, restricted, and transparent.

The study identifies the metaphorical collocations' syntactic patterns according to Benson et al.'s (2010) model of collocations and (OCD). The analysis also involves the

context in which the metaphorical collocations have been found, besides their metaphorical meanings, frequency, the metaphor placement in base-collocate components, and the conceptual metaphors. The base-collocate analysis distinguishes between collocations with both components having figurative meanings (M+M), one component being figurative while the other is literal (L+M or M+L), aligning with the ideas of Hori and Onal. The metaphorical meanings of the identified metaphorical collocations are referenced from the Oxford Collocations Dictionary (OCD), Merriam-Webster Dictionary (MWD), Macmillan Dictionary (MD), and The Free Dictionary by Farlex (FD).

The discussion section of the study delves into the analysis of the most frequently occurring metaphorical collocations within the childhood phase. The most frequent metaphorical collocations are organized into thematic groups from the highest frequent into the lowest. This analysis serves to establish connections between these collocations and the childhood phase of the March sisters as well as the overarching themes in the novel.

A- Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP)

The Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007) offers a systematic approach for recognizing metaphorically employed words in both spoken and written language. The procedure involves several key steps. First, read the entire text to grasp its overall meaning and context. Next, identify individual words or combinations within the text as lexical units. Then, determine the contextual meaning of each unit by understanding its significance in the given context and considering surrounding words. If the contextual meaning deviates from its basic, everyday interpretation, mark it as metaphorical. Finally, affirm metaphorical use by identifying instances where the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic interpretation. These steps help unveil metaphorical expressions within the text.

B- Benson et al.'s Model of Collocations

Benson et al.'s (2010, pp. xix–xxxiv) model of collocations distinguishes between two categories: lexical collocations and grammatical collocations.

Grammatical Collocations; these include:

1. **G1:** Nouns + Prepositions (e.g., blockade against)
2. **G2:** Nouns + To infinitive (e.g., a pleasure to do it)
3. **G3:** Nouns + That clause (e.g., He took an oath that he would do his duty)
4. **G4:** Prepositions + Nouns combinations (e.g., By accident)

5. **G5:** Adjective + preposition combinations (e.g., hungry for news)
6. **G6:** Predicate adjectives + to infinitive (e.g., It was necessary to work)
7. **G7:** Adjective + That clause (e.g., She was afraid that she would fail the examination)
8. **G8:** English Verb patterns + Prepositions (e.g., She bought a shirt for her husband)

For saving time and space, the researcher sees that there is no need to mention the English verb patterns and includes them in this study. Thus the study only includes verbs + prepositions in general.

Lexical Collocations; these include:

1. **L1:** Verb (usually transitive) + Noun/Pronoun (e.g., make an impression)
2. **L2:** Verb (meaning eradication/nullification) + Noun (e.g., reject an appeal)
3. **L3:** Adjective + Noun (e.g., strong tea, weak tea)
4. **L4:** Noun + Verb (e.g., alarms go off, bees buzz)
5. **L5:** $Noun_1$ of $Noun_2$ (e.g., a colony of bees, an act of violence)
6. **L6:** Adverb + Adjective (e.g., deeply absorbed, strictly accurate)
7. **L7:** Verb + Adverb (e.g., affect deeply, amuse thoroughly)

Additionally, the researcher adopts Benson's (1989) division of lexical and grammatical collocations, following Hausmann's approach, breaking down lexical collocations into "base" and "collocator." The placement of collocations in learner dictionaries such as (OCD) follows the principle of placing them at the entries for bases to aid users in generating texts. Benson (1989) further divides grammatical collocations where the content word is the base and the preposition is the collocate. The study adds metaphorical collocations with verb + adjective and those of more complex structures, including short collocational phrases found in dictionaries such as (OCD), (MD), (MWD), and (FD).

Results and Discussion

This section is divided into two subsections where the first is devoted for presenting the lexical and grammatical metaphorical collocations that have been identified in the first ten chapters and the second is for the analysis of the frequent metaphorical collocations with general interpretation.

Results

1- Lexical Metaphorical Collocations in the Childhood Phase

In table (1) are the metaphorical collocations (MC) of the first type of lexical collocations named as L1. These L1 collocations are typically comprised of a verb, often transitive, coupled with a noun/pronoun or occasionally a prepositional phrase. A common characteristic of L1 collocations is the use of a verb indicating either the creation or activation of an action, alongside a noun/pronoun. The verb is the collocate (C) and the noun is the base (B). In addition, we present the sentences (S) in which these metaphorical collocations are found and the metaphorical meanings (MM), the frequency (F), the metaphor placement in base-collocate components (metaphorical (M), literal (L), or both metaphorical M+M), and conceptual metaphors (CM) (general (G) and/or specific (S)).

Table 1

Metaphorical Collocations of Verb + Noun (L1)

MC.	S.	MM.	F.	C.+B.	CM. (G./S.)	
Keep temper	"Said Jo, thinking that **keeping her temper** at home was a much harder task than facing a rebel or two down South"	Under control	1	M+L	ANGER IS A CONTAINED FORCE	
Lose temper	"There never was such a cross family!" cried Jo, **losing her temper** when she had upset an inkstand"	"To fail to keep control of or allegiance"	1	M+L		
Have time	"She **had** not much **time** for repining"	To possess a certain amount of time	1	M+L	TIME IS MONEY	
Lose time	"Beth said nothing, but wiped away her tears with the blue army sock and began to knit with all her might, **losing** no **time** in doing the duty that lay nearest her"	"To cause or permit to elapse: pass"	1			
Spend hour	"It was excellent drill for their memories … and employed many **hours** which otherwise would have been idle, lonely, or **spent** in less profitable society"		1			
Spend week	"Sallie's friend, Annie Moffat, took a fancy to me, and asked me to come and **spend a week** with her when Sallie does"		1			
Spend day	"Long, quiet **days** she **spent**, not lonely nor idle, for her little world was peopled with imaginary friends, and she was by nature a busy bee"		1			
Save time	"But I've stopped up the door and made the roof open, so it will hold all sorts of things, and **save** our valuable **time**."	"To make unnecessary: avoid"	1			
Hurt feelings	"Beth's bundle was such a funny one that everybody wanted to laugh, but nobody did, for it would have **hurt** her **feelings** very much."	"To cause someone emotional pain"	3	M+L	EMOTIONAL PAIN IS A PHYSICAL PAIN	
Put sth. into head	"What in the world **put such a thing into his head**?"	"To plant an idea or thought in one's head"	3	M+M	MIND IS IN THE HEAD	MIND IS A CONTAINER
Turn head	"The pianny has **turned** her **head**! She'd never have gone in her right mind"	"To cause one to suddenly become fixated or infatuated"	1	M+M		ATTENTION IS A MOVEMENT OF THE HEAD
Have heart	"She **had** not **heart** enough even to make herself pretty as usual by putting on a blue neck ribbon and dressing her hair in the most	"Courage or enthusiasm especially when maintained during a difficult situation"	1	L+ M	COURAGE IS HAVING A HEART	

MC.	S.	MM.	F.	C.+B.	CM. (G./S.)
	becoming way."				
Touch heart	"If anyone had known the care lavished on that dolly, I think it would have **touched their hearts**"	"To make somebody feel sympathy"	1	M+M	COMPASSION IS A PHYSICAL TOUCH
Fall to work	"There was a good deal of laughing and kissing and explaining … and then all **fell to work**"	To set about heartily or actively"	2	M+L	SUDDEN CHANGE IS A PHYSICAL FALL; INITIATION IS A DESCENT INTO ACTIVITY
Tickle fancy	""I'm sure Aunt March is a regular Old Man of the Sea to me, but I suppose when I've learned to carry her without complaining … This idea **tickled Jo's fancy** and put her in good spirits"	"To interest or attract someone"	1	M+L	PREFERENCES ARE SENSITIVE SPOTS
Catch glimpse	"At the Kings' she daily saw all she wanted … and Meg **caught** frequent **glimpses** of dainty ball dresses and bouquets"	"To take or get usually momentarily or quickly"	2	M+L	SEEING IS TOUCHING
Steal a look	"Here the listeners **stole** sly **look**s at one another, and began to sew diligently."	"To take a quick look often in a secret way"	1	M+L	QUICK LOOK IS A POSSESSION
Resist temptation	"Next day Amy was rather late at school, but could not **resist the temptation** of displaying … a moist brown-paper parcel"	"To exert oneself so as to counteract or defeat"	1	M+L	SELF-CONTROL IS A PHYSICAL FORCE
Bury hatchet	"And Jenny Snow … who had basely twitted Amy upon her limeless state, promptly **buried** the **hatchet** and offered to furnish answers to certain appalling sums"	"To make peace with someone"	1	M+L	RECONCILIATION IS BURYING A WEAPON
Burst into tears	"All flashed indignant or appealing glances at the inexorable Davis, and one passionate lime lover **burst into tears**."	"To give vent suddenly to a repressed emotion"	1	M+L	EMOTIONAL RELEASE IS A PHYSICAL EXPLOSION
Burst into room	"Meg, Beth, and Amy were sitting together, late in the afternoon, when Jo **burst into the room**"	"To emerge or spring suddenly"	1	M+L	SUDDEN ENTRY IS A PHYSICAL EXPLOSION
Seal fate	"That hiss, faint as it was, irritated the irascible gentleman, and **sealed** the culprit's **fate**"	"To determine irrevocably or indisputably"	1	M+ L	ACTION IS A CLOSING ACT
Hold tongue	"Amy **held** her **tongue**, but used her eyes,"	"To keep silent"	1	M+M	SPEECH IS TONGUE; SPEECH CONTROL IS A PHYSICAL RESTRAINT
Heal breach	"For all had learned by experience that when Jo was in that mood words were wasted, and the wisest course was to wait till some little accident, or her own generous nature, softened Jo's resentment and **healed the breach**"	"To patch up or correct (a breach or division)"	1	M+L	RECONCILIATION IS A PHYSICAL HEALING
Lose patience	"Your father, Jo. He never **loses patience**"	To fail to gain	1	M+L	PATIENCE IS A FINITE RESOURCE

Table (2) displays the metaphorical collocations of the second type of lexical collocations referred to as L2. These L2 collocations typically involve a verb that fundamentally signifies eradication and/or nullification and function as the collocate, in conjunction with a noun that functions as the base of the collocation.

Table 2

Metaphorical Collocations of Verb + Noun (L2)

MC.	S.	MM.	F.	C.+B.	CM. (G./S.)

Break the silence	"Mrs. March **broke** the **silence** that followed Jo's words, by saying in her cheery voice"	To make a comment when it is silent.	1	M + L	SILENCE IS A FRAGILE OBJECT	
Break the law	"Now Mr. Davis had declared limes a contraband article, and solemnly vowed to publicly ferrule the first person who was found **breaking the law**."		1	M + L	NORMS ARE FRAGILE OBJECTS	LAW IS A FRAGILE OBJECT
Break the rule	"I am not sorry you lost them, for you **broke the rules**,"	Violate the law/rule	1			
Break word	"But I never allow my rules to be infringed, and I never **break** my **word**"	Violate a promise	2	M + M		PROMISE IS A FRAGILE OBJECT
Break heart	"But to face the whole school, with that shame fresh upon her … and **break her heart** with crying"	"To crush emotionally with sorrow"	1	M + M	PAINFUL EMOTIONS ARE FRAGILE OBJECTS	

Table (3) below illustrates the metaphorical collocations of the third type of lexical collocations, denoted as L3, where a descriptive adjective is collocated with a corresponding noun that functions as the base.

Table 3

Metaphorical Collocations of Adjective + Noun (L3)

MC.	S.	MM.	F.	C.+B.	CM. (G./S.)
Sharp eye	"She had a decided mouth … and **sharp**, gray **eyes**, which appeared to see everything"	"Keenly perceptive or observant; alert"	1	M+L	INTENSE PERCEPTION IS A CUTTING INSTRUMENT
Sharp look	"Gave me a **sharp look** through her specs, and said, in her short way, 'Finish the chapter, and don't be impertinent, miss'"	"A penetrating or intense gaze that convey disapproval or scrutiny"	1	M+L	INTENSE GAZE IS A CUTTING INSTRUMENT
Sharp voice	"With such a funny face that both **sharp voices** softened to a laugh"	A tone of criticism	2	M+L	HARCH SPEECH IS A CUTTING INSTRUMENT
Sharp tongue[1]	"A quick temper, **sharp tongue**, and restless spirit were always getting her into scrapes,"	"A tendency to say very critical things to people"	1	M+M	
Sharp word	"How did you learn to keep still? That is what troubles me, for the **sharp words** fly out before I know what I'm about"	Critical comments	2	M+ L	
Cutting remarks	"But Amy had not forgotten Miss Snow's **cutting remarks** about 'some persons whose noses were not too flat to smell other people's limes'"	Cruel remark and intend to upset someone	1	M+L	
Bright smile	"A quick, **bright smile** went round like a streak of sunshine."	"Radiant with happiness"	1	M+L	HAPPINESS IS LIGHT
Broken English	"The girls meantime spread the table, set the children round the fire, and fed them like so many hungry birds … and trying to understand the funny **broken English**"	"English that is slow, halting, and filled with errors, as of someone learning to speak it"	1	M+L	LANGUAGE IS A WHOLE OBJECT
Heavy burden	"But Meg didn't brighten, for her **burden** … seemed **heavier** than ever."	"duty difficult to bear"	1	M+L	RESPONSIBILITY IS A HEAVY LOAD

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[1] This particular metaphorical collocation also traces back to the general conceptual metaphor "SPEECH IS TONGUE."

Heavy punishment	"And Jo dropped down beside the bed in a passion of penitent tears … and sobbing out her gratitude for being spared the **heavy punishment** which might have come upon her"	Very severe punishment	1	M+L	PUNISHMENT IS A HEAVY WEIGHT
Heavy heart	"But in their kindness Meg saw only pity for her poverty, and her **heart** felt very **heavy** as she stood by herself,"	"Feeling sad"	1	M+M	SADNESS IS A HEAVY WEIGHT
Strong word	"I like good **strong word**s that mean something,"	"Having moral or intellectual power"	1	M + L	INTELLECTUAL POWER IS A PHYSICAL STRENGTH
Busy bee	"And she was by nature a **busy bee**."	"One who is very busy and active"	1	L+ M	DILIGENCE IS A BEE
Sweet face	"Her **face** is right opposite, and it looks so **sweet** behind the flowers"	"Pleasing to the mind or feelings"	1	M+L	FACIAL EXPRESSIONS ARE TASTES
Hot temper	"Amy got no farther, for Jo's **hot temper** mastered her"	"Marked by violence or fierceness"	1	M + L	ANGER IS FIRE
Great promise	"Jo's book was the pride of her heart, and was regarded by her family as a literary sprout of **great promise**."	"Ground for expectation of success, improvement, or excellence"	1	L + M	FUTURE SUCCESS IS A VALUABLE OBJECT
Hungry look		"Wanting something, or wanting to do something very much"	1	M + L	INTENSE DESIRE IS HUNGER
Warm heart	"The solitary, **hungry look** in his eyes went straight to Jo's **warm heart**"	Kind and friendly in dealing with others	1	M+ M	PERSON'S NATURE IS HEART QUALITY; KINDNESS IS WARMTH
Little gust	"There was a simultaneous sigh, which created quite a **little gust**, as the last hope fled"	A sudden outburst of emotions	1	L + M	STRONG EMOTIONS ARE GUSTS
First taste	"And the daughter went to take her **first taste** of fashionable life."	"A short experience of something that you are not used to"	1	L + M	EXPERIENCE IS A FLAVOR

Table (4) presents the metaphorical collocations of the fourth type of lexical collocations, categorized as L4, characterized by a noun that functions as the base and is paired with a verb that occupies the place of the collocate. In this case, the selected verb typically describes an action associated with the entity or concept represented by the noun.

Table 4

Metaphorical Collocations of Noun + Verb (L4)

MC.	S.	MM.	F.	B.+C.	CM. (G./S.)
Face darken	"The four young **face**s on which the firelight shone **brightened** at the cheerful words, but **darkened** again as Jo said sadly, "We haven't got Father, and shall not have him for a long time.""	"To suddenly become less hopeful"	1	L +M	SADNESS IS DARK
Face brighten		"Look happy/excited"	1	L +M	HAPPINESS IS LIGHT
Eyes shine	""How is your cat, Miss March?" asked the boy, trying to look sober		1		

	while his black **eyes shone** with fun"					
Eye dance	"""Thought Jo … while her **eyes danced** with fun as she imagined herself telling the story at home."		1	L +M	HAPPINESS IS A DANCE	
Time come	"Do the best you can when the **time comes**"	Time when something will happen	6	L +M	TIME IS A MOBILE OBJECT	
Opportunity come	"I like his manners, and he looks like a little gentleman, so I've no objection to your knowing him, if a proper **opportunity comes**"	Opportunity is approaching	1	L+M	OPPORTUNITY IS A MOBILE OBJECT	
Anger grow	"She had cherished her **anger** till it **grew** strong and took possession of her"	Increase or expand	1	L+M	ANGER IS A LIVING ENTITY	
Head turn	"Everyone petted her, and 'Daisey', as they called her, was in a fair way to have her **head turned**"	"To cause one to become arrogant, conceited, or self-important"	1	M+M	MIND IS IN THE HEAD; ATTENTION IS A MOVEMENT OF THE HEAD	
Word fall	"For **words** of wisdom from him **fall**"	To speak effortlessly and fluently	1	L +M	SUDDEN CHANGE IS A PHYSICAL FALL	SPEECH IS A PHYSICAL FALL
Silence fall	"Instant **silence fell** on the gay throng, and not a sound"	"A group of people suddenly become quiet"	1	L +M		SILENCE IS A PHYSICAL FALL
Cheek burn	"Meg saw the girls glance at it and then at one another, and her **cheeks** began to **burn**,"	The cheeks are red because the person is embarrassed	1	L +M	EMBARRASSMENT IS HEAT	

Table (5) showcases the metaphorical collocations of the fifth type of lexical collocations, referred to as L5, which entail a noun functions as the collocate linked to another noun considered as the base. These lexical collocations are frequently structured as "N$_1$ of N$_2$ collocations."

Table 5

Metaphorical Collocations of Noun + Noun (L5)

MC.	S.	MM.	F.	C.+B.	CM. (G./S.)
Explosion of laughter	"While Laurie went through a series of comic evolutions behind their backs, which nearly produced an **explosion of laughter** from Jo."	Sudden release of strong emotion	1	M + L	EMTIONAL RELEASE IS A PHYSICAL EXPLOSION
Burst of laughter	"That little goose means a centaur, and she called him a Cyclops," exclaimed Jo, with a **burst of laughter**"		2		
Sea of faces	"She fixed her eyes on the stove funnel above what now seemed a **sea of faces**"	"A large crowd of faces"	1	M + L	ABUNDANCE IS A SEA

Table (6) presents a type of lexical collocations that is not suggested by Benson et al. (2010). However, this structure is suggested by (OCD). The verb is the collocate and the adjective is the base of the collocation.

Table 6

Metaphorical Collocations of Verb + Adjective

MC.	S.	MM.	F.	C.+B.	CM. (G./S.)
Feel rich	"I **felt** so **rich**, so happy thinking of my blessings"	A sense of wealth beyond money or possessions	2	L + M	CONTENTMENT IS MONEY
Fall asleep	"Shivering, dripping, and crying, they got Amy home … she **fell asleep**, rolled in blankets before a hot fire"	"To pass suddenly and passively into a state of body or mind or a new state or condition"	1	M + L	SUDDEN CHANGE IS A PHYSICAL FALL; UNCONSCIOUS IS DOWN

Table (7) below, exhibits the metaphorical collocations of the short phrases which consist of more than two components and have complex structures, but they show the criteria of transparency and commutability.

Table 7

Metaphorical Collocations of Phrases

MC.	S.	MM.	F.	CM.(G./S.)
In a world of one's own	"For she seemed to live **in a** happy **world of her own**, only venturing out to meet the few whom she trusted and loved."	"The particular type of place or situation in which someone lives or works"	1	INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE IS A PERSONAL WORLD
One's nose in the air	"Said Jo, marching up and down, with her hands behind her back, and **her nose in the air**"	"Be haughty or disdainful"	1	PRIDE IS UP
Take sb.'s breath away	"It quite **took their breath away**, and they stared first at the table and then at their mother,"	"To make someone feel surprised and excited"	2	ASTONISHMENT IS A BREATHLESSNESS
Be on the tip of one's tongue	"It **was on the tip of Jo's tongue** to ask, but she checked herself in time and,"	"About to be uttered"	1	SPEECH IS TONGUE
Take (sth.) into one's (own) hands	"Hannah scolded, Meg cried, and Jo was at her wits' end, till she decided to **take things into her own hands**."	"To take control of something"	1	CONTROL IS A PHYSICAL GRASPING
Sit in the lap of luxury	"Quite used up with her fortnight's fun and feeling that she had **'sat in the lap of luxury'** long enough."	"In very comfortable and expensive conditions"	2	COMFORT IS A LAP
Be an angel	"Beth had her troubles as well as the others, and not **being an angel** but a very human little girl"	"To be sweet and perfect, incapable of doing wrong"	1	INNOCENCE AND GOODNESS ARE

				ANGELIC QUALITIES
Keep an eye on sth./sb.	"I think I am a little bit afraid of him. but I don't know why I should be … though she **kept her eyes on** the door"	"An attentive look"	1	KNOWING IS SEEING
One eye on sb./sth.	"I whipped the Vicar of Wakefield out of my pocket, and read away, with **one eye on** him and one on Aunt"	"Partial or intermittent attention given to something or someone"	1	
A twinkle in sb.'s eye	""Going out for exercise," answered Jo with a mischievous **twinkle in her eyes**"	To convey a spark or glint of mischief or humor in one's gaze	2	HAPPINESS IS LIGHT
Take sth. To heart	""We needed that lesson, and we won't forget it… though she **took it to heart** as much as any of them."	"To be deeply affected or hurt by something"	1	
Put one's heart into sth.	"**Putting her whole heart into** her work, hoping to make something good enough to print."	"To do something with one's maximum effort and passion"	1	
With all one's heart	"And I'm sure she'll be friends again **with all her heart**."	"In a very sincere and deeply felt way"	3	
Heart and soul	"Remember it, and try with **heart and soul** to master this quick temper,"	"Without reservations: completely, wholly"	1	COMMITMENT IS HEART-RELATED ACTION
Set one's heart on sth.	"For the time has come when a word may **set** this romantic little head and **heart of yours** right, **on a very serious subject**"	To determine to do something	1	
Heart stand still	"Just in time to see Amy throw up her hands and go down, with a sudden crash of rotten ice … and a cry that made Jo's **heart stand still** with fear"	Feeling a momentary pause in one's heartbeat due to strong emotions like excitement, nervousness, or fear	1	FEAR IS A MOMENTARY STOP OF THE HEART'S FUNCTIONING

2- Grammatical Metaphorical Collocations in the Childhood Phase

In the analysis of grammatical collocations, there is no tabular representation of the metaphor placement in the base-collocate components. This is mainly because of they consist of a content word designated as a base, which carries the metaphorical weight, and a collocate, typically a preposition, that contributes minimal or ambiguous meaning. However, without this prepositional element, the base's metaphorical essence disappear. In table (8) below, we see the metaphorical collocations of the first type of grammatical collocations (G1), that is noun + preposition combinations.

Table 8

Metaphorical Collocations of Noun + Preposition (G1)

MC.	S.	MM.	F.	CM.(G./S.)
Cry for	""Ach, mein Gott! It is good angels come to us!" said the poor woman, **crying for** joy."	"To need or require (something) very much"	1	DESPERATE NEED IS A CRY
Heart of	"For as sure as she had just reached the **heart of** the story,"	"Important/central part"	1	CENTREL PART IS HEART

Within table (9) below, we have the metaphorical collocations of the five type of grammatical collocations (G5) which are adjective + preposition combinations that occur in the predicate or as set-off attributives (verbless clauses).

Table 9

Metaphorical Collocations of Adjective + Preposition (G5)

MC.	S.	MM.	F.	CM.(G./S.)
Rich in	"Poor Meg seldom complained … for she had not yet learned to know how **rich** she was **in** the blessings which alone can make life happy"	Feeling abundant beyond material possessions	2	CONTENTMENT IS MONEY
Sick of	"Replied Meg from the depths of the veil in which she had shrouded herself like a nun **sick of** the world."	Disgusted/annoyed/boring	2	NAGATIVE EMOTIONS ARE DISEASE

Table (10) introduces the metaphorical collocations of the final and eighth type of grammatical collocations, referred to as G8, which encompasses nineteen distinct English verb patterns, each identified by capital letters A to S, followed by a preposition.

Table 10

Metaphorical Collocations of Verb + Preposition (G8)

MC.	S.	MM.	F.	CM. (G./S.)
dying to/for (do sth.)	"And it's worse than ever now, for **I'm dying to** go and fight with Papa."	"Wanting to have/do something so much that you do not want to wait"	5	INTENSE DESIRE IS A PHYSICAL PAIN
Glow with	"Jo quite **glowed with** pleasure at this boyish praise of her sister,"		1	
Shine with	"Taking his face out of the sofa cushion, red and **shining with** merriment."	"To show strong and happy emotions"	1	HAPPINESS IS LIGHT
Break down	"They felt this most when singing time came … Jo stood dumb as a stone, and Amy **broke down**, so Meg and Mother sang alone"	To cry	1	PAINFUL EMOTIONS ARE FRAGILE OBJECTS

Table 11

The Total Number of Syntactic Patterns

The Syntactic Patterns	Number of Metaphorical Collocations
Lexical Collocations	
Verb + Noun (L1)	27
Adjective + Noun (L3)	19
Noun + Verb (L4)	12

Verb + Noun (L2)	5
Noun + Noun (L5)	3
Verb + Adjective	2
Total Lexical Collocations	**68**
Grammatical Collocations	
Noun + Preposition (G1)	2
Adjective + Preposition (G5)	2
Verb + Preposition (G8)	4
Total Grammatical Collocations	**8**
Short Phrase	**16**

Regarding the metaphor placement in the base-collocate components of the lexical collocations, the tables shows **50** metaphorical collocations which consist of a collocate used metaphorically and a base used literally. Whereas the metaphorical collocations which consist of a base used metaphorically and a collocate used literally are only **5** in number and the lexical metaphorical collocations with two components both used metaphorically are **10** in number.

In terms of conceptual metaphors, there are **70** metaphors in this phase. The metaphors "HAPPINESS IS LIGHT" and "TIME IS MONEY" are the most frequent metaphors each with **6** metaphorical collocations, indicating that the March sisters' had a happy childhood and value their time. These metaphors are followed by "COMMITMENT IS HEART-RELATED ACTION" with **5** metaphorical collocations, symbolizing the dominant sincere feeling of the characters in their actions. This metaphor is further followed by "SUDDEN CHANGE IS A PHYSICAL FALL" and "HARSH SPEECH IS A CUTTING INSTRUMENT," each motivates **4** metaphorical collocations.

Discussion

In the ten chapters that represent the childhood years of the four March sisters, the metaphorical collocations are mostly related to the sisters' childhood experiences with their inner enemies[2] as the focus of this phase and as they try to fight them. Most of metaphorical collocations convey the feelings of the sisters' sincerity to defeat their inner enemies, happiness of childhood and domesticity, and introduce the characters' personalities as children. These metaphorical collocations are discussed in more details in the subsequent pages.

1. The Metaphorical Collocations of "Heart"

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[2] Meg's battle with vanity, Jo's fiery temper, Beth's shyness, and Amy's selfishness

In the childhood phase, the concept of "heart" is frequently employed with a total of **12** metaphorical collocations spread across four structures, primarily, the structure of metaphorical collocational phrases. The collocations of "heart" can be traced back to nine conceptual metaphors, but only four of them used "heart" as their source domain. Among these, "COMMITMENT IS HEART-RELATED ACTION" is the dominant.

In the structure of verb + noun, three metaphorical collocations are identified. "Have/touch heart" as shown in table (1), are associated with the March sisters, Meg and Beth. "Had no heart" highlights Meg's lack of enthusiasm and aversion to her work, while "touch heart" signifies Beth's caring nature. "Break heart" as presented in table (2), is associated with Amy and reflects her emotional distress due to her teacher's punishment, revealing her vanity. The type (L3), consisting of adjective + noun, includes "warm/heavy heart" as illustrated in table (3). These collocations describe the personal qualities of Meg and Jo, respectively. "Heavy heart" signifies Meg's deep grief due to her family's poverty, while "warm heart" represents Jo's kind nature.

Six metaphorical collocations fall under the category of short phrases. These include "with all one's heart," "take sth. to heart," "put one's heart into sth.," "with heart and soul," "set one's heart on sth.," and "heart stand still" as exhibited in table (7), primarily reflect Jo's sincerity in her pursuits, especially to defeat her inner enemy "temper" and be a good writer. "With all one's heart" is the most frequently used phrase and conveys the sincerity of various characters in their actions and decisions. Additionally, "set one's heart on sth." symbolizes Meg's transition into adulthood soon and her mother's efforts to prepare her for a family and marriage. Lastly, one collocational form of the grammatical type (G1), that is "heart of" as displayed in table (8). This collocation highlights Jo's strong dedication to writing.

2. The Metaphorical Collocations of "Break, Time"

Metaphorical collocations involving the concepts "break" and "time" exhibit the same frequency after heart-related metaphorical collocations, with each group having a total of **7** collocations. Among the seven metaphorical collocations associated with "break," five belong to the type (L2), which is verb + noun. In these cases, the verb "break" metaphorically represents violation or emotional pain. These collocations like "break heart/law/rule/word" as illustrated in table (4) reflect Amy's tendency to break rules in her school and reveal her selfishness and vanity, especially as the youngest sister who is spoiled and frequently crosses boundaries. The sixth metaphorical collocation

"broken English" in table (3) implies the sisters' attempt to help the poor children despite their poor language. Lastly, "break down" as exhibited in table (10), falls under the type (G8) and stands for Amy's violation of school rules as well. These collocations are grounded in the conceptual metaphors that view abstract concepts like emotions or norms as fragile objects that can be broken.

The metaphorical collocations relevant to "time" are divided between two opposing structures and two metaphors. The majority of them are in the type (L1) – "have/lose/save time, spend hour/week/day" as shown in table (1) with "TIME IS MONEY" motivate them. Therefore, they represent how characters value and utilize their childhood time efficiently, reflecting their energetic and non-lazy nature, particularly Beth, who makes use of every second as seen in "**losing no time** in doing the duty that lay nearest her" (pp. 10-11).The remaining one is in the type (L4) – "time come" as presented in table (4) which has the highest frequency of six occurrences, largely refers to the point in the future when Meg and eventually Jo will be ready for and open to understanding and discussing serious matters related to love, marriage, and the aspirations their mother has for them. Mrs. March is preparing to share her thoughts and plans concerning the qualities she wishes her daughters to possess in order to lead fulfilling lives.

3. The Metaphorical Collocations of "Light"

The light-related metaphorical collocations reach a frequency of **6** collocations, they are distributed across four structures or lexical types. One collocation of the type (L3) – "bright smile" is seen in table (3). Two collocations of the type (4) include "face brighten, eyes shine" are presented in table (4). One metaphorical phrase "a twinkle in sb.'s eye" is shown in table (7). Another two collocations of the grammatical type (G8) "glow/shine with" are manifested in table (10). These metaphorical collocations convey the pleasant home environment of the four March sisters and their love for family, which aligns with the domesticity theme of the novel. Furthermore, they signify the happy and close friendship of Jo and Laurie as children.

4. The Metaphorical Collocations of "Sharp"

Subsequent to the above collocations, there come **5** metaphorical collocations related to the concept "sharp" and describe personal qualities, primarily Jo. They convey the notion of possessing an edge capable of cutting, similar to a knife. These metaphorical collocations include "sharp tongue/ word/eyes/voice/look" as shown in table (3). The first

four of these collocations depict Jo's character as being critical, harsh, and severe in her expressions and perceptions. The last one, "sharp look," refers to Aunt March and indicates her intense disapproval.

5. The Metaphorical Collocations of "Burst, Fall"

The metaphorical collocations involving the concepts "burst," and "fall" follow the "sharp" metaphorical collocations, each group with **4** collocations. First, the metaphorical collocations that denote some form of burst or explosion are distributed between two structures. Two collocations belong to the type (L1) – "burst into tears/room" as manifested in table (1), while the other two forms are in the type (L5) – "burst/explosion of laughter" as demonstrated in table (5). They represent sudden entries or strong repressed emotions like crying and laughter. Most of these describe not only Jo's character as vibrant, lively, and full of energy, reflecting her spirited nature, but also her fiery temper. The use of collocation like "burst into the room" can indicate moments of strong emotional expression, including anger or exuberance, which align with Jo's character, known for her fiery and passionate personality.

Second, the four metaphorical collocations of "fall" are distributed in three structures, two of them are in the type (L4), these are "word/silence fall" as seen in table (4) and both stand for the girls' club meeting. The other two collocations are first, "fall to work" in table (1) with two occurrences that symbolize the girls' enthusiastic and determined engagement in their tasks, highlighting the importance of work and helping their poor father and their early cultivation of independence. The second "fall asleep" as manifested in table (6) comes in the context of Amy getting home after the stormy incident of Jo and Amy signifies the resolution of a challenging or intense situation, bringing a sense of calm and rest after the emotional or physical turmoil of Jo.

6. The Metaphorical Collocations of "Tongue, Heavy, Head, Temper"

The metaphorical collocations involving the concepts "tongue," "heavy," "head," and "temper" all have the frequency of **3** collocations for each group. Beginning with the three metaphorical collocations of the base "tongue" that represent the way the characters speak. Each of these metaphorical collocations distributed equally in three types, the type (L1) with "hold tongue" as displayed in table (1), pertains to Amy's tendency to withhold her words during her fight with Jo. Other metaphorical collocations are "sharp tongue" in table (3) of the type (L3), and "be on the tip of one's tongue" in table (7), these express

Jo's critical, harsh ways of speaking to people and how words are ready to be spoken at the tip of her tongue, but she tries to check herself in time.

The metaphorical collocations associated with the adjective "heavy" are spread within the type (L3). They include "heavy heart/burden/ punishment" as illustrated in table (3). The first two metaphorical collocations serve as reflections of the family's poverty, with a particular focus on Meg's constant complains. This arises directly from their financial constraints, forcing her into the labor force at a tender age and depriving her of a more luxurious life. During this phase, these metaphorical collocations serve as vivid representations of Meg's internal struggle with her own vanity, her longing for a life of greater abundance, and the shame she feels regarding her family's limited means. Lastly, "heavy punishment" signifies Jo's stern punishment, which, in turn, sheds light on Jo's fiery temper—her tendency to react strongly to people wrongs and her stubbornness to accept forgiveness readily.

The three metaphorical collocations feature the base "head" and symbolize the human mind, are distributed across two structures: two of them follow the type (L1): "turn head" and "put sth. into head," as exhibited in table (1). The former illustrates Beth's transformation of mindset as she bravely confronts her inner foe, "timidity," driven by her dream to acquire a piano. The latter collocation, "put sth. into head," with three occurrences clarifies Laurie's influence upon his grandfather. Conversely, the third metaphorical collocation employs the reverse structure (L4 type), "head turn," as presented in table (4). This particular collocation is linked to Meg's shift in mindset, driven by her newfound desires for a more luxurious lifestyle. Wherever she goes, she attracts flirtations, reinforcing her tendency toward greater vanity.

Lastly, the metaphorical collocations of the base "temper" spread across the type (L1) with "keep/lose temper" are viewed in table (1) and the type (L3) with "hot temper" are exposed in table (3). Despite the different structures, they all stand for Jo's uncontrollable temper, linking her anger to fire and an object that she can't keep.

7. The Metaphorical Collocations of "Rich"

The metaphorical collocations that involve the adjective "rich" and convey a sense of abundance that extends beyond mere material wealth are two metaphorical collocations, each exhibits two occurrences and distributed across two distinct structures: lexical and grammatical. The first form, "feel rich," is situated within the structure verb + adjective, as exemplified in table (6). Conversely, the second form, "rich in," finds its place in the

grammatical type (G5), as demonstrated in table (9). Despite the common conceptual metaphor of "CONTENTMENT IS MONEY", these collocations present contrasting notions. "Rich in" in the example from table (9), depicts Meg's discontentment with her blessings, such as her loving family. On the other hand, Jo and her mother, in opposition to Meg, embrace their possessions, home, and family, thus experiencing abundance in happiness. Again such metaphorical collocations stand for the domestic theme of the novel and reveal Alcott's appreciation for her own family.

8. The Metaphorical Collocations of Specific Structure

Some metaphorical collocations have more than one occurrence in specific structure. First, there is the grammatical metaphorical collocation "dying to/for" as exemplified in table (11) with five occurrences. This particular collocation convey an intense desire or longing for something, drawing upon a metaphorical representation of this desire as a vivid physical sensation, akin to the experiences of dying. In the context provided in table (11), the metaphorical collocation "dying to" sheds light on Jo's boyish appearance and behaviors. It mirrors Jo's profound yearning to assume the role of a boy and step into her father's shoes during his absence, driven by the privileges that men enjoyed in the 19th century, in contrast to the limited opportunities available to women.

Second, as shown in table (1), there are three occurrences of the metaphorical collocation "hurt feelings." This metaphorical collocation reveals the depth of emotional turmoil experienced by various characters. Firstly, it pertains to Beth's feelings, revealing her sensitivity to any remarks. Secondly, it captures the emotional pain inflicted upon individuals by Jo's sharp and thoughtless words, underlining Jo's temper. Lastly, it extends to the feelings of the sisters' mother, Marmee, who seeks to enhance Meg's appearance, but Meg remains dissatisfied.

Lastly, there are five metaphorical collocations with a frequency of two occurrences. "Catch glimpse" in table (1), for instance, embodies the moments of yearning and fascination for the sisters, particularly Meg, as they observe glimpses of wealth, luxury, and lively social activities that contrast with their own modest circumstances. In addition, the metaphorical collocational phrase "sit in the lap of luxury," as presented in table (7) personifies Meg's vanity and her strong desire for wealth, elegance, and a

luxurious life without the need for labor. Also the phrase "take one's breath away," in table (7) captures the intense impact of happy experiences such as Beth when Mr. Laurence gifted her a piano and their father's letter which metaphorically made them momentarily breathless. There is the collocation "sick of" found in table (9) which conveys a sense of being disgusted, annoyed, or bored with something. In the two occurrences of "sick of," one reflects Meg's disgust with her work and impoverished circumstances, while the other depicts Jo's simple boredom with reading.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of metaphorical collocations in the childhood phase of Louisa May Alcott's "Little Women" reveals a considerable amount of linguistic expressions that depict the March sisters' experiences and emotions. The examination of syntactic patterns demonstrates the prevalence of the lexical collocations over the grammatical ones, with specific focus on verb-noun and adjective-noun patterns. These collocations play a significant role in shaping the sisters' development, especially those emphasizing sincerity and inner conflicts.

The metaphor placement in base-collocate components assure the heavy use of metaphorical collocations of the type that contain collocates used metaphorically and bases used literally. The study identifies the conceptual metaphors that motivate all the extracted metaphorical collocations with main emphasis on metaphors, such as "HAPPINESS IS LIGHT" and "TIME IS MONEY," that shed light on the overarching themes of joy, innocence, and the sisters' mindful use of time. While most metaphorical collocations were two-component, the analysis highlights the frequent occurrence of metaphorical collocational phrases and their significance in portraying sincerity, commitment, and the characters' emotional journeys.

The detailed discussion of metaphorical collocations, categorized by thematic elements like "Heart," "Break," "Time," "Light," "Sharp," "Burst," "Tongue," "Heavy," "Head," "Temper," and "Rich," provides a comprehensive understanding of how language shapes the narrative. These collocations reveal the characters' personalities, inner conflicts, and the challenges they face as they navigate the complexities of childhood. The use of

(MIP) in identifying the metaphorical collocations emphasize that the criteria of transparency that differentiate collocations from idioms is the same in differentiating metaphorical collocations from idioms where the meaning of the combinations cannot be retrievable from each constituent. Further, many of the extracted metaphorical collocations allow substitution while maintaining their metaphorical meanings and this has seen in the light-related metaphorical collocations.

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