A Corpus-Based Study of Attitudes towards Children in Hilary Mantel's *Every Day Is Mother's Day* and *Vacant Possession*

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Abstract

This paper applies corpus-based methods to a stylistic analysis of the first two novels of one of Britain's foremost contemporary writers, Hilary Mantel. The hypothesis tested is that the two novels, *Every Day Is Mother's Day* (1985) and its sequel, *Vacant Possession* (1986), express a particularly negative attitude towards children. The concordance program *Antconc* is used to calculate frequencies, plot distributions, and identify collocations, and the British National Corpus (BNC) is used as a reference corpus. The results show that the lemmas MOTHER, MUM, FATHER, DAD, CHILD, BOY and BABY occur more frequently in the two novels than in the BNC or, with the exception of FATHER and BOY, in the BNC fiction subcorpus, and that they are distributed evenly throughout the texts. The study also shows that most adjective collocates pre-modifying CHILD in the novels are either neutral or have negative connotations, while most of the top 50 pre-modifying adjective collocates in the BNC fiction subcorpus are neutral or positive.

Keywords: Mantel, Hilary; corpus stylistics; children; connotation

Introduction

British writer Hilary Mantel is the author of eleven novels and a substantial body of

essays, articles, and autobiographical writings. Her work has been well-received by

critics and readers alike (her Man Booker prize-winning novel *Wolf Hall* was also that

year's popular favourite at the bookmakers), and she is the only woman ever to have

received the prestigious Man Booker prize twice (in 2009 and 2012). In spite of this

success, very little critical work has been done on her novels. Her autobiographical

writing and her writings on illness have garnered some attention (see for example

Gilmore 2012), as has her historical novel *Wolf Hall* and its sequel *Bring Up the Bodies*

(Mosely 2010 and 2013), but the remainder of her work has been largely ignored by

literary scholars. While this may not be unusual for a contemporary writer, it is peculiar

that more than three decades of literary production should have received so little

attention when it is generally acknowledged to be so good. In a 1996 review in *The New*

York Times of Mantel's *An Experiment in Love*, for example, Margaret Atwood

described her as "an exceptionally good writer" and the novel as "haunting" due to "its

brilliance, its sharpness, and its clear-eyed wit". In another review in the same paper,

Francine Prose referred to Mantel's writing as "smart, astringent and marvellously

upsetting". However, the paucity of scholarly discussion is one of the reasons why other

analytical approaches are particularly useful in a study of Mantel's work.

The use of electronic corpora is a comparatively new concept in linguistics and an even newer one in stylistics, a field which links linguistics and literary studies. Although pre-electronic corpora go back centuries,[1] few literary texts outside of Shakespeare were considered important enough for the painstaking work of compiling concordances by hand. With the advent of computers the creation and analysis of corpora has been facilitated, and the field of corpus linguistics has grown rapidly over the past few decades. However, computer-aided corpus methods have been slow to catch on among literary critics who, as Miall (1995) put it, rarely use computers for anything beyond word processing. Nevertheless, as Fischer-Starcke (2010) has pointed out, one of the main advantages of corpus stylistics is the fact that it can help identify "language patterns which are objectively in the data" which can, and this is significant in the case of Mantel, provide insights that are not only "neutral", but "independent of . . . previous knowledge of the reception of the work or of genre conventions" (p. 6). Since little research has been done on Mantel, corpus-based methods thus provide much needed data to support and supplement the interpretation and analysis provided by close reading. These circumstances also satisfactorily answer what Fischer-Starcke (2010) has

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[1] The first Bible concordance, for example, was completed in 1230 and Samuel Ayscough's *Index to the Remarkable Passages and Words Made Use of by Shakespeare* was published in 1790.

described as a fundamental issue in corpus stylistics: "the question whether the effort to analyse a text in its electronic form is necessary and useful, or whether the analyses are mainly interesting because they use modern technologies" (24). Computer technology has been known to cause exaggerated enthusiasm and unrealistic expectations, and corpus methods are sometimes used simply because they can be. In Mantel's case, however, the electronic approach is justified, at least in part, by the absence of more traditional commentary.

The Mantel Corpus

This paper will focus on an analysis of Mantel's first two published novels, *Every Day Is Mother's Day* (1985)[2], and its sequel *Vacant Possession* (1986). The first is set in 1974, the second approximately ten years later, and both focus on three families: the Sidneys, the Axons, and the Fields. Colin and Sylvia Sidney and their three (later four) children are linked to the Axons via Colin's spinster sister Florence who lives in their childhood home, where she has been caring for their elderly and ailing mother. Next door live Evelyn Axon, a widowed medium, and her grown-up daughter Muriel who is either "half mad or half-witted" (Mantel, 1985, p. 119). The third family becomes

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[2] Hereafter referred to as *Mother's Day.*

involved when social worker Isabel Fields is assigned a new client (Muriel) and starts

an affair with a married man (Colin), while her father impregnates a woman after a brief

liaison in a park (Muriel again). The first novel ends with the deaths of Muriel's

new-born child and her mother, Muriel's admission to a mental institution, and the

Sidneys' move into the house vacated by the Axons. In *Vacant Possession* matters are

complicated further when Colin and Sylvia's eldest daughter Suzanne, now an

undergraduate, returns home pregnant after an affair with Isabel Field's husband, and

Muriel is released from the institution where she has been kept for the past ten years,

intent on revenge.

While the two novels are at times hilarious, they are pervaded by a sense of

gloom and despair. Hauntings, madness, abuse, murder and malice abound. These

themes are by no means limited to *Mother's Day* and *Vacant Possession*; in fact they

recur throughout Mantel's work. Prose (1997) has described two of Mantel's later

novels as "witty" and "disturbing", and that would in fact be a fairly accurate

description of most of her writing; in the words of another reviewer, "Mantel manages

to make us laugh even as our hair stands on end" (O'Conner, 2000). This is true also of

Mother's Day and *Vacant Possession*, and in the brilliant confusion of comedy, tragedy

and horror which ensues, one important aspect of the two novels is in danger of being

overlooked: an extremely negative view of children.

Many of the relationships described in the two novels occur between parents

and children. Colin, for example, is both the disillusioned father of his own noisy brood

and the rather neglectful son of a hospitalized elderly mother. Similarly, Isabel's father

is a constant worry to her, and Muriel murders both her mother and her own new-born

child. However, most of these relationships are between adults and their parents. The

only children in the novels are the Sidneys', and they do not play any major part as

individuals in the novels until, as in Suzanne's case, they are grown. While they are

young, they are simply a nuisance. This is made particularly clear through Mantel's use

of free indirect discourse, a narrative technique which allows the reader access to the

interiority of a wide range of characters. Mantel skips effortlessly from husband to wife

to sister-in-law to neighbour to social worker, and the reader sympathises with, or is

horrified by, the thoughts of each in turn. Not so with the Sydney children, however,

who remain flat, undeveloped characters, available to the reader only through the eyes

of the other characters: Suzanne, who as a child is no more than an occasional obstacle

to her father's infidelities; Alistair, the juvenile Satanist and delinquent in the making;

Karen, clever and pimply; and Claire, the annoying Brownie.

These claims are, however, based entirely on subjective intuition and

interpretation. The aim of this paper is thus to discover whether, in the absence of a body of literary scholarship, a corpus-based analysis of the two novels can provide evidence for the claim that children, although superficially not the main focus of the two novels, are in fact central to them, and that children, as well as adult attitudes towards them, are portrayed in an over-whelmingly negative manner.

Material and Methods

The sources used in this study were ebook versions of the two Mantel novels, converted into .txt files. All paratext such as blurbs, publishing details and biographical information was deleted, as were repetitions of the titles. The texts were then analysed using *Antconc*, a freeware concordance program that can be used, for example, to calculate word frequencies, show keywords in context (KWIC), generate keyword lists, plot the distribution of words in texts, and identify clusters of words (N-Grams). Since "individual texts can be explained only against a background of what is normal and expected in general language use" (Stubbs, 2005, p. 5) the results were then compared to a reference corpus. *The British National Corpus* (BNC) was chosen for this purpose as Mantel is a British writer and the two novels under consideration were written during the time period covered by the BNC (1980s to 1993). The BNC contains approximately

100 million words, 90% from written texts and 10% from speech transcripts, and aims to be as representative of modern British English as possible. The written section includes samples from newspapers, popular and academic periodicals and journals, fiction and non-fiction books, as well as letters, memoranda and essays, while the speech samples cover a range of genres, contexts and demographical groups (McEnery, Xiao & Tono, 2006).

There are a number of different ways to electronically analyse literary texts. Wynne (2005) mentions two common techniques used in electronic stylistics: "corpus annotation" and "analysis of collocation" (p. 1). Corpus annotation usually entails the tagging of a corpus for parts of speech, i.e. assigning each word a grammatical tag, but semantic, prosodic and other types of annotation are also carried out. However, due to the limited scope of this paper, the two Mantel texts were neither tagged nor annotated. Instead, the focus was on studying "literary effects . . . by using the evidence of language norms in a reference corpus" (Wynne, 2005, p. 3), and especially by analysing and comparing the use of collocations, multi-word items that frequently co-occur.

First, a simple frequency search was carried out to examine whether the parent-child relationship could be shown empirically to be of major concern in *Mother's Day* and *Vacant Possession*. The text files of the two novels were searched for specific

words from this lexical field using *Antconc*. The words chosen were the lemmas

MOTHER, FATHER, BABY, and CHILD, as well as the more colloquial MUM, DAD and KID,

and the gender-specific BOY and GIRL.[3] For comparison, a similar search was made

both in the whole of the BNC and the BNC fiction subcorpus. The interface chosen to

search the BNC was the Brigham Young University version of the corpus created by

Mark Davies.

    Secondly, a distribution analysis was carried out. As Stubbs (2005) has pointed

out, "textual frequency is not the same as salience", and one problem with counting

words is that they may not be evenly distributed throughout the text (p. 11-12). High

frequency words may for instance be used exclusively by one character, or in only one

section of the text. The *Antconc* Concordance Plot tool was therefore used to assess the

distribution of the four lemmas most frequent in *Mother's Day* and *Vacant Possession*,

MOTHER, FATHER, CHILD and BABY.

    As the main hypothesis to be tested was that Mantel's novels demonstrate

particularly negative attitudes towards children, an additional search was made for

adjective collocations with the node words *child* and *children*, again using *Antconc*.

Since the text files of the two novels are not POS-tagged, a search was made for

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[3] In this paper, *lemma* refers to the singular and plural forms of nouns.

adjective collocates functioning both as premodifiers and predicatives. The list

produced was manually examined, and all irrelevant concordance lines discarded. Due

to the very low frequency of predicative adjective collocates, the focus in this study was

on premodifying adjectives. Moreover, as "collocations create connotations" (Stubbs,

2005, p.14), a semantic analysis of the adjective collocates and their contexts was then

performed to determine whether they had negative or positive connotations, or were

used as neutral descriptors. Negative connotations were defined as those reflecting a

negative attitude towards children, and vice versa. This type of categorization is

inevitably subjective. Therefore, I was conservative in my evaluation, and adjectives of

only vaguely negative or positive connotation were placed in the neutral category.

Finally, the BNC fiction subcorpus was searched for adjective collocates with the

lemma CHILD in order to compare the findings from the novels with a larger corpus of

texts within the same genre.

Results and Discussion

Frequency

The results of the first frequency search are presented in Table 1. Although singular and

plural forms of nouns often occur in different contexts (Lindquist, 2009), they have

been grouped together here as the objective of the comparison is simply to establish whether the search terms occur more frequently in the novels than in other texts.

GIRL occurred quite frequently in the Mantel texts (116 tokens), but a closer look at the context revealed that it was used predominantly to refer to young women, as in: "Let's have a kitty, girls,' she called. The girls fumbled in their bags, tossed five-pound notes into the centre of the table." *(Mantel, 1986,* p. 63). In fact, only 18 occurrences of *girl* referred to children. The BNC concordance lines showed similar results: *Janet's a lovely girl. We get on well together.* (tabloid); *it does not become a girl to live with a master who has no lady for her to wait upon* (drama); *in her parents-in-law's home a girl is completely vulnerable* (non-academic social science). Since GIRL is thus not generally a part of the semantic field examined here, it has been excluded from the table below.

The results show that all the lemmas occur more frequently in the BNC fiction subcorpus than in the whole of the BNC. Moreover, with the exception of FATHER and BOY which, interestingly, are far less common in Mantel's novels than in the fiction subcorpus, all the lemmas are more frequent in *Mother's Day* and *Vacant Possession* than in the subcorpus, and much more frequent in the novels than in the BNC as a whole. It thus seems reasonable to conclude that, from a lexical point of view, the two

Mantel novels deal more explicitly with issues involving parents, especially mothers,

and children, than non-fiction texts, or even other texts within the same genre.

Table 1 Comparison of absolute and normalised frequencies in *Mother's Day* and *Vacant Possession*, the fiction subcorpus of the BNC, and the BNC.

	Mantel's novels total tokens: 154,694		BNC fiction sub-corpus total tokens: 15,909,312		BNC total tokens: ~100 million	
LEMMA	absolute frequency	tokens per 1,000 words	absolute frequency	tokens per 1,000 words	absolute frequency	tokens per 1,000 words
MOTHER	243	1.57	10,925	0.68	27,326	0.28
MUM	37	0.24	1,697	0.11	8,391	0.08
FATHER	56	0.36	10,269	0.64	23,689	0.23
DAD	29	0.30	1,981	0.12	6,576	0.06
CHILD	175	1.13	9,207	0.87	68,820	0.71
BABY	122	0.78	2,835	0.17	10,845	0.11
KID	17	0.10	1,529	0.09	5,713	0.05
BOY	10	0.06	7,507	0.47	20,227	0,21

Distribution

The *Antconc* Concordance Plot Tool was then used to determine the position of the four

most frequent keywords in the novels. As the figures below illustrate, MOTHER, FATHER

and CHILD are fairly evenly distributed throughout the novels, although the use of

MOTHER is particularly frequent in the beginning of *Vacant Possession*, a part of the

novel in which Muriel reminisces about her earlier life with her mother. BABY is less

evenly distributed. Especially in *Mother's Day*, BABY is concentrated towards the end of

the novel, involving the birth and murder of Muriel's baby. Nevertheless, the overall

distribution patterns indicate that the higher than normal frequency of the keywords

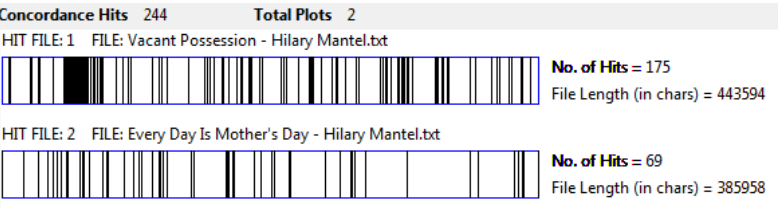compared with the BNC is not coincidental, but an integral part of the novels.

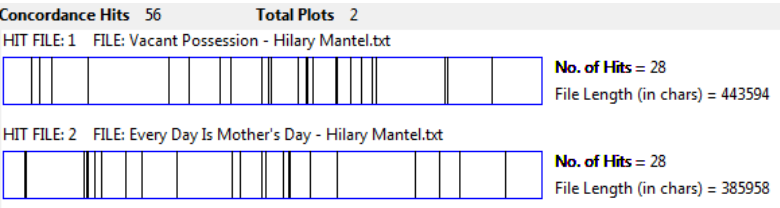*Figure 1* The distribution of MOTHER in *Mother's Day* and *Vacant Possession*

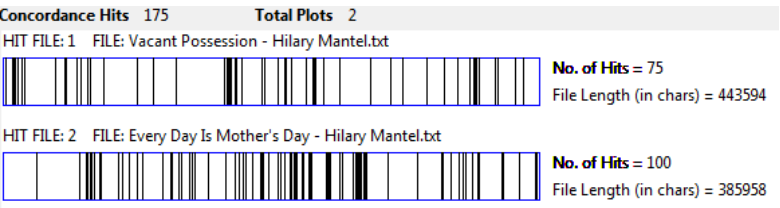*Figure 2* The distribution of FATHER in *Mother's Day* and *Vacant Possession*

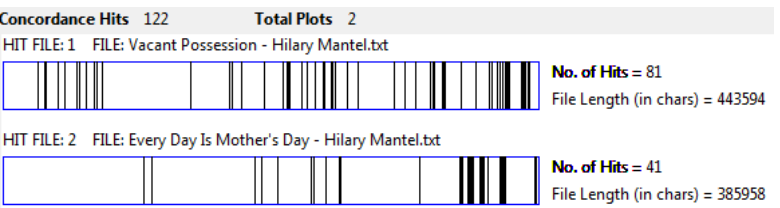*Figure 3* The distribution of CHILD in *Mother's Day* and *Vacant Possession*

Figure 4 The distribution of BABY in *Mother's Day* and *Vacant Possession*

Collocation

In order to determine whether the novels present particularly negative attitudes towards children, a search was made for premodifying adjective collocations with the node words *child* and *children*. The results are presented in Table 2. Since the Mantel corpus is very small, all the collocates (a total of 31) are listed (see Appendix A for the concordance lines). Again, the co-occurrences are presented with the singular and the plural form of the lemma grouped together as the main point of interest is not specific collocates, but their connotation. Raw frequencies are given in diamond brackets and percentages are presented in parentheses. Since it is difficult to determine the significance of raw frequency data there is also a column presenting the Mutual Information (MI) score which is a measure of collocational strength. A high MI score indicates a strong link between the node word and its collocate, while a collocation with a low score is likely to be coincidental. A score of three or higher is considered evidence that two items are really collocates (McEnery, Xiao & Tono, 2006). One drawback to the MI score is the fact that low frequency words with restricted collocations tend to get high MI scores; on the other hand it is not dependent on the size of the corpus and can thus be used to compare corpora of varying sizes (Hunston, 2002).

Table 2 Premodifying adjective collocates with CHILD in *Mother's Day* and *Vacant Possession*

Total number of pre-modifying adjective collocates with CHILD <31>					
Negative connotations <9> (29%)		Neutral <19> (61%)		Positive connotations <3> (10%)	
Raw frequency	MI score	Raw frequency	MI score	Raw frequency	MI score
half-witted <2>	10.10	small <2>	6.43	gifted <1>	11.10
screaming <2>	8.78	human <2>	6.75	good <1>	4.01
bad <1>	6.15	younger <2>	9.10	studious <1>	11.10
delinquent <1>	10.10	young <1>	5.22		
convulsing <1>	11.10	youngest <1>	10.10		
skeletal <1>	9.52	skinny <1>	11.10		
spiteful <1>	11.10	teenage <1>	11.10		
		brown <1>	6.58		
		chubby <1>	11.10		
		other <1>	3.77		
		schizophrenic<1>	9.52		
		half-born <1>	6.71		
		illegitimate <1>	11.10		
		untended <1>	11.10		
		half-emerged <1>	8.78		
		unbaptized <1>	11.10		

Most of the adjectives used by Mantel to modify CHILD were deemed to be neutral. In order to avoid bias in favour of my hypothesis, several words that may arguably be considered to have negative connotations in their specific contexts were included in the neutral category (they are found towards the bottom of the 'Neutral' column). Nevertheless, even judged conservatively, adjectives with negative connotations are almost three times more frequent than ones with positive connotations. Moreover, one of the positive adjectives, *gifted*, is in fact used in a negative context: "Why can't I have gifted children?" (Mantel, 1985, p. 42). Thus, one of only three positive descriptions of

children in the novels indirectly reveals a father's negative attitude towards his

offspring.

As mentioned earlier, predicative adjectives are rarely used with CHILD in the

two novels. For this reason, no comparison was made with the BNC. However, the fact

that the few predicatives that are used to describe CHILD in the two novels are almost

exclusively negative or used in a negative context (for details see Appendix B) further

supports the hypothesis that attitudes towards children in the two novels are decidedly

negative.

Table 3 shows the top 50 hits for premodifying adjectives that co-occur with

CHILD in the BNC fiction subcorpus. As in the previous table, the adjectives have been

divided into three groups, based on the connotations of each word. Raw frequencies are

given in diamond brackets and percentages are presented in parentheses. There is also a

column representing the MI score of each of the collocates.

In total, there are 911 occurrences of the top 50 adjective collocates in the BNC

fiction subcorpus. Out of these 84% were deemed neutral, 12% positive, and 4%

negative. However, closer analysis reveals that a number of these collocates have an MI

score below three which means that they may be co-occurring by chance (in the table

these adjectives are preceded by an asterisk). If these collocates are disregarded, the

number of instances of the top 50 adjectives premodifying CHILD falls to a total of 531,

82% of which were deemed neutral, 12% positive, and 6% negative. While the total

number of adjective collocates is affected by the MI score, the proportion of them that

are deemed neutral, negative or positive remains more or less the same. We may thus

conclude that adjective collocates with negative connotations are markedly more

frequent in Mantel's two novels than in fiction in general.

Table 3   Top 50 hits for pre-modifying adjective collocates with CHILD in the fiction
subcorpus of the BNC

| Total number of instances of the top 50 adjectives premodifying CHILD: <911> | | | | | | | |
| Negative connotations <38>   (4%) | | Neutral <767>   (84%) | | | | Positive connotations <106>   (12%) | |
Raw frequency	MI score	Raw frequency	MI score	Raw frequency	MI score	Raw frequency	MI score
naughty <14>	7.02	*only <115>	2.99	tiny <10>	3.18	dear <37>	4.16
bad <7>	*1.69	small <104>	4.34	unborn <10>	8.99	*good <14>	0.56
spoiled <7>	6.25	*other <84>	2.95	*strange <9>	2.48	innocent <13>	4.84
recalcitrant <5>	8.17	*little <68>	2.64	*human <8>	2.83	*beautiful <12>	2.82
spoilt <5>	6.27	poor <66>	5.08	handicapped <7>	8.35	*pretty <9>	2.54
		young <61>	3.74	*happy <7>	1.94	sweet <8>	3.28
		sleeping <19>	5.16	smaller <7>	4.26	*bright <5>	2.00
		frightened <15>	4.31	terrified <7>	4.70	beloved <4>	4.72
		older <15>	4.15	*thin <6>	2.34	clever <4>	3.03
		*dead <14>	2.30	*alone <5>	0.98		
		illegitimate <13>	8.60	dirty <5>	3.18		
		*lost <13>	2.16	fatherless<5>	9.62		
		younger <13>	4.40	gipsy <5>	6.12		
		youngest <13>	6.64	grown-up <5>	6.18		
		eldest <10>	6.51	lonely <5>	3.57		
		local <10>	3.40	neglected <5>	5.75		
		ragged <10>	5.70	*black <4>	0.06		
		sick <10>	3.61	curious <4>	3.19		

Conclusion

Fischer-Starke (2010) has argued that identifying linguistic patterns through electronic text analysis may help explain "intuitive reactions from readers" (p. 25). This is certainly the case with Hilary Mantel's *Mother's Day* and *Vacant Possession*. The two novels, which on one level deal almost exclusively with the fraught relationships between adults — husbands and wives, lovers, colleagues and neighbours — also leave the reader with a vague but uncomfortable feeling that children are central. A simple search of the Mantel corpus showed that lemmas belonging to the lexical field of the parent-child relationship are indeed more frequent in Mantel's novels than in the fiction represented in the BNC or in the BNC in general. Furthermore, although interpretation of the adjective collocates co-occurring with the lemma CHILD may vary, the overall evidence showed that the attitudes towards children expressed in the novel are largely very negative.

According to Kenny (cited in Stubbs, 2005) a computational approach to literature should yield results available only through the use of computers, as well as make a genuine contribution to literary scholarship. While parts of this study could certainly have been carried out by hand, a comparison with a reference corpus the size of the BNC would have been impossible. Furthermore, while the present study is

limited in scope it might easily be expanded, for instance by including an analysis of

verb collocates used to describe both what children do and what is done to them; this

would enhance its value to literary studies.

A study of this kind can be accused of circularity, a term used by Fish to

describe the risk stylistics runs of selecting features we "already know are important,

describ[ing] them, and then claim[ing] that they are important" (cited in Stubbs, 2005, p.

6). However, it is hoped that the corpus approach offers a valid complement to more

traditional methods. While close reading of *Every Day Is Mother's Day* and *Vacant*

Possession must form the basis of any interpretation of the two novels, electronic text

analysis does offer empirical proof that the words *child* and *children* co-occur with

adjective collocates that have negative connotations more frequently in these novels

than in other contemporary literary texts.

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Appendix A

Concordance lines showing premodifying adjective collocates with *child|children* in

Mantel's *Every Day Is Mother's Day* and *Vacant Possession*

1. Karen had colonised the living room. A **studious child**, she did her homework with a green felt-tipped pen,

2. sis. Deep Trance. Tell me," he says, "why couldn't I have **gifted children**? It would have been an interest for me.

3. d and grows fat. The bad child you put in the canal and the **good child** you get out are the same one, but the Devil

4. Who was it?" "It was some **half-witted child** called Tracey who it seems you've engaged as babysitter. Sh

5. babysitter, because you make arrangements with some **half-witted child** that doesn't turn up. Do you really think

6. banging at the front door. The screams and laughter of **spiteful children** rang in Evelyn's ears. She went down the

7. e neck. It was not circumstantial, not related to the **delinquent children** or the size of the mortgage. He had

8. s the Devil out; the child gets contented and grows fat. The **bad child** you put in the canal and the good child you

9. ld get fond of it. Slowly, trailing green weed, her own **skeletal child** swam to the bank. "Resurrection is a fact,"

10. isfied needs that doubled and raged inside him like a **convulsing child**; and there would be one word, and she

11. . said. The estate was shutting down for the night. The **screaming children** were tranquillised and the tipsy

wives 12-13. n gate, the front door flew open and a gang of **screaming teenage children** swarmed down the path and

14. he hands of her two **younger children**. "Thank you very much, Florence. Say thank you to you're a

15. lin went down, twitching his tie. Behind him, the three **younger children** were preparing for their day. He heard

16. ple's business would satisfy. Before the birth of their **youngest child** Claire, when they had lived on a large

17. ink that if I could contemplate leaving a woman with three **young children**, then I could leave her with four; but

18. ouse, a city house with many staircases. Half a mile away **skinny children** played in the streets. On certain days a

19-20. hed her attention back to the road. She slowed down. **Small brown children** played by the kerb, barelegged in

21. hild in the house. She was energetic enough to cope with a **small child** while Suzanne went off to finish her

22. take a firm line, stand no nonsense, and arrange to get a **human child** back. How? You find some water, a river;

23. oated her off one day in the hope of getting in exchange a **human child**. She brushed the thought away, rubbing

24. es into their chairs. "Brownies tonight," Claire said: a **chubby child,** putting out her paws for everything edible

25. to belong to you." "I'd like to think I have **other children** somewhere. Ones that aren't so particular."

26. hen I was a student I spent some time working with **schizophrenic children**. They frightened me. I used to

27. rom her musty undersea dreams to find the girl and her **half-born child** scraping at the bedroom door. What if

28. well, I don't know, some sort of responsibility, an **illegitimate child** I think, some woman he met in a park. Now

29. Flo would be found out in some lewdness, and Suzanne's **untended child** would wail from the back garden,

30. hat composite creature that would be Muriel and the **half-emerged child**; no, she could not stomach it. They

31. ed to, before they took him back to Fulmers Moor. The **unbaptised child** is the lodge of the devil; and wasn't it

Appendix B

Concordance lines showing predicative adjective collocates with *child|children* in *Every Day Is Mother's Day* and *Vacant Possession*

1-2. of her swollen body. It was as if, Evelyn thought, the **child was** *withdrawn* **and** *inert* as its mother. A thing. A

3. s a new approach, small numbers, a good staffing ratio. It's for **children who are** *mentally ill***.**" Colin noticed the

4. e Welfare visitors used. Talk loudly; keeps matters at bay. The **child was not** *deformed*, but she did not take to it.

5. ne of my colleagues returned to its parents a **child that is now** *dead*, a snivelling and unappealing brat with im

6. her people's children than your own." "Oh, teachers' **children are always** *worse* than others. Their parents know

7. ant to give my child a better life. Well, it's natural." "Your **child's** *dead***,**" Mr. Field said in alarm. "That's what

8. ering at them down the stairs? Baptism drives the Devil out; the **child gets** *contented and grows fat*. The bad child

9. esurrection is a fact," she whispered. She drew the **child from the water;** *rigid*, but not with cold. With damp and