

A CORPUS-BASED EXPLORATION OF INDONESIAN EFL TEXTBOOKS: CULTURAL AND COLLOCATIONAL INPUT

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Abstract

Foreign language learners are considered to have achieved Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) when they are able to communicate fluently in the socially and culturally appropriate correct form. Thus, there is a need to acquire both cultural and linguistic knowledge. In the context of formal language teaching and learning, a textbook is often used to carry out the English lesson, and therefore its quality should be given considerable attention. One way to provide cultural and linguistic comprehension in a textbook is by exposing learners to the variety of cultural-lexical items and English collocations. In the present study, a corpus analysis is being used to examine three Indonesian EFL (English as a Foreign Language) textbooks. The main objectives of this study are to analyse the distribution and frequency of lexical input that occurs in these textbooks in term of cultural and collocation knowledge. Moreover, this study is also used comparative analysis to analyse the different of lexical inputs variations between global English textbooks and Indonesian EFL textbooks using American New Headway textbooks. The results show that, in general, the Indonesian EFL textbooks analysed in this study are dominated by the presentation of local culture, which is Indonesian cultural knowledge. Furthermore, it shows that there is a limitation in terms of frequency and input variations on the target culture and international culture. The problem of variation was also found in collocation analysis. In comparison to the New Headway textbooks, there are many English collocations that are under-represented in the Indonesian EFL textbooks. The lack of exposure to culture and collocation input may influence learners' development in ICC, and therefore improvements of lexical input in these textbooks are suggested.

Keywords: *Collocation, Corpus analysis, EFL Textbooks, Intercultural knowledge*

Introduction

Background of the study

As an international language and a global lingua franca, being competent in speaking English is a skill that needs to be mastered to help people communicate with either native or non-native English speakers. Good competence in English deals with fluency in linguistic aspects and knowledge towards the different cultures in which English is spoken.

Moreover, with the global use of English, the knowledge of culture no longer focuses on the English inner-circle countries (America, England, Canada, Australia, New Zealand), instead foreign language learners should also have a cross-cultural understanding of other cultures from the outer-circle countries (India, Singapore), and the expanding-circle countries (China, Vietnam, Spain) (McKay, 2002). Having a cross-cultural understanding will help learners to use English in acceptable and appropriate norms based on the context of where, when, and to whom English is being spoken (Ali et al., 2013, p. 3).

In terms of linguistic competence to promote fluency in English, the term 'collocation' can often be found in English communication. Qader (2018, p. 52) argues that "collocation constitutes a great part of English language... collocations make English output natural and native-like". Collocation can be defined as a natural combination of word sequences that are often used together (McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005, p. 6). In other words, collocation is a systematic pattern of word combinations that might sound 'wrong' if replaced by another word. Therefore, foreign language learners need to have a good understanding of this area to be able to produce natural and accurate utterances and sentences (Qader, 2018, p. 51).

In non-English speaking countries such as Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language (EFL) rather than a second language, and is a compulsory subject to be taken by students. Moreover, as a foreign language that is not spoken in daily conversations, learning and practicing English is mostly done at school and mostly based on a textbook. As the main resource to deliver the learning material in the school, the English textbook in Indonesia has been receiving consideration in terms of its quality. Through the development of the current

education curriculum, which is called 2013 Curriculum (K13), the Ministry of Education and Culture had also increased the standard of teaching English with the aim of developing learners' competence in communication and to increase the awareness of global English. The government published a set of EFL textbooks that contained the standard of English language teaching and learning that was recommended to be used in all schools. As the primary resource in ELT practice, a textbook is expected to provide adequate material which covers both linguistic and intercultural knowledge to promote ICC in language acquisition (Weninger & Kiss, 2015, p. 50).

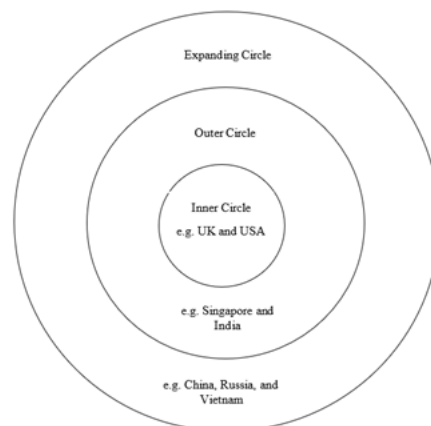
Theoretical Background

The Goal of Learning English

Second or foreign language learners are considered able to achieve successful ICC when they can communicate fluently by using their linguistic knowledge, including correct grammar and word choices in appropriate norms and contexts (Lim & Griffith, 2013, p. 1030). This condition emphasizes that both linguistic and cultural knowledge are having the same degree of importance in acquiring the English language.

Furthermore, since the widespread use of English is global, it therefore no longer refers to one particular origin and culture, such as the "inner-circle countries" where English is spoken as the first language (McKay, 2002, p. 81).

Figure 1. The three circles of English, based on Kachru (1992)



Kachru's (1992, p. 3) circle above illustrates the vast expansion of the English language. The inner-circle countries refer to the countries where English is spoken as the first language

such as the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The outer-circle countries consist of the countries that received the earlier phases of English expansion such as India, Singapore, Malaysia, South Africa, etc. Whereas, the expanding-circle countries refer to the countries that do not have historical or governmental importance towards English and use it as a foreign language rather than a second language, such as Indonesia, China, Japan, Russia, etc. Therefore, in terms of the ICC goal in learning English, and in the context where English is learned as a foreign language (EFL), the learners should be exposed to multicultural knowledge besides enhancing their linguistic knowledge.

Intercultural Communicative Competence in a Pedagogical Context

According to Hinkel (2012, p. 882), the term “culture” could be defined as a behaviour, custom, tradition, values, artefact, product of literature, and any concept in particular place within a group of people. Whereas cultural learning is “the process of acquiring the culture-specific and culture-general knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective communication and interaction with individuals from other cultures” (Paige et al., 1999, p. 7).

A study conducted by Ping (2015) in China revealed that as an adaptation of American published textbook material, the textbook used in one of the schools in China seems to be dominated by American culture through the representation of the products, characters, and concepts relate to American culture. It was believed to be a limitation view of other cultures and the degradation of nationalistic orientation since it ignores the Chinese’s and other’s culture.

The need to present the local culture also comes from Wutun, Arafah, and Yassi’s (2018) study. They analysed their approach in teaching English through the integration of the local culture as the topic or theme for speaking practice. The result revealed that the learners were motivated to speak English more when they spoke about a topic that was close to their daily life and own culture. In reflecting on the importance of ICC, some studies agree that there should be a balance of the target culture, local culture, and international culture (Yonata et al., 2016; Bahrami, 2015).

With regard to the importance of cultural input in a textbook, Yuen (2011) make a categorisation of the common cultural aspect in the textbook as follow:

- Person:* Individuals, can be fictitious or unknown, famous individuals (*Stephen Hawking, name of people, etc.*)
- Product:* Food, merchandise, tourism places, movie, a song produced by particular countries (e.g. *Tom Yum, Pyramid in Giza, Harry Potter movie, etc.*)
- Practice:* Customs, daily life, program related to certain countries (e.g., *recycling program in New Zealand, Snow festival, or baseball as America’s national program, etc.*)
- Perspective:* Inspiration (e.g., *equality*), myths believed in a specific culture, and values applied in a particular place

Furthermore, according to Yuen’s (2011) analysis of the reading text and figures in the textbook used in a Hong Kong junior high school, it was found that the cultural inputs were frequently found in the *product* input and less frequently in the *perspective* input. It shows that there is still imbalance of the cultural input in the textbook.

Collocation knowledge

In terms of the linguistic aspect, Thornbury’s (2002, p. 13) reported that the difficulties that learners often face when learning English are relate to vocabulary knowledge rather than grammar knowledge. It mostly happens in conversation, such as they either do not know the word, or they overuse the same words. But it also happens in learners’ receptive skills, such as in understanding the reading text. Therefore, increasing vocabulary knowledge is a necessary in learning a language (Zu, 2009; Schmidt, 2001). Thornbury (2002, p. 39) further argues that rather than presenting vocabulary in groups of single words, they could be presented in compound forms, affixation, and collocation.

For the purpose of producing a language (speaking or writing), Nation (2016, p. 23) also asserts that the concern of language production would be in word types or lemma,

as it will require the forming of different collocates and grammar, which are higher than in receptive purposes. According to this, Foster (2009, p. 91) claims that “the question of how speakers get to know which combinations of words are allowed and which are not, must, therefore, be concerned not just with what is grammatical, but also what is natural.” As similar to this view, Sinclair (1991) also found that based on the corpus analysis of authentic language samples, one of the characteristics of authentic language was the frequency of using word combinations or collocation and a variety of vocabulary. Thus, second or foreign language learners need to know the natural word combination in English to be able to produce a natural language to enhance their fluency in English, either in receptive or productive skills.

Moreover, it is believed that collocation provides “chunks” of English words that can only be used with its combination, and the knowledge of these chunks helps the fluency of the speaker to convey meaning (Farrokh, 2012, p. 56). Hill (2000, p. 53) noted that “collocations are found in up to 70% of everything we say, hear, read, or write.” Hence, the more learners encounter patterns of collocation, the more they will remember word combinations that will help the development of their fluency. A study by Abedi and Mobaraki (2014) found that when more attention was given to collocation in the classroom, it proved that it gave learners a better understanding when reading texts.

There are two types of collocation: *lexical collocation*, and *grammatical collocation*. Lexical collocation consists of combinations of nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs. On the other hand, grammatical collocation is made up of combinations between a noun/adjective/verb plus a particle of a preposition, an adverb, a gerund, or a clause, such as: *at night*, *good at*, *fall for* (Abedi & Mobaraki, 2014, p. 632). Moreover, McCarthy and O’Dell (2005, p. 12) classify collocation combinations as: adjectives and nouns (e.g. *major problem*), nouns and verbs (e.g. *economy boomed*), nouns plus nouns (e.g. *a sense of pride*), verbs and prepositions (e.g. *burst into tears*), verbs and adverbs (e.g. *smiled proudly*), and adverbs and adjectives (e.g. *fully aware*). One of the study of collocation presentation in a textbook was reported by Molavi, Koosha, and

Hosseini (2014) who found that the common collocations in the textbooks analysed were *verb + noun*, and *adjective + noun*.

These lexical combinations are often found, however, learners are usually not aware of the collocation, since their focus is to look at ‘word by word’. Their lack of awareness of a collocation could also be because it has not been generally integrated and given consideration in language teaching (AyashEzzi, 2018, p. 54). In this case, a teacher’s focus is usually on correcting grammatical mistakes rather than helping learners to produce more effective expressions in English. Hill (2000, p. 49) believes that the lack of collocation competence may influence a learner’s fluency, and instead of expressing utterance precisely they would miscollocate some words or create longer utterances.

This was proved by Taniharjo (2017), who investigated collocation errors by Indonesian college students, and reported some of the common problems as being those from a literal translation from the first language (L1), the inability to distinguish intentional and non-intentional verbs (e.g. see movie vs watch movie), and the similarities of meaning in some words. Accordingly, Thornbury (2002, p. 34) believes that a textbook could be the source for vocabulary learning in ELT practice. He argues that vocabulary input can be found in the whole content of the textbook through the presentation of vocabulary activities, text-based activities, grammar explanations, and task instructions.

Learning input in textbooks

Brown (2011, p. 87) found that learning activities in textbooks are mainly presented through any activities focusing on the form, meaning, and use of an item that is clearly presented. However, learners may develop their learning not only through the explicit learning material, but also incidentally through other input presented in the textbook while learning explicitly about different things.

In terms of cultural and collocation learning, the textbook may contain the implicit input, where it does not present explicitly. For example, according to Yuen’s (2011) study, the word *Tom Yum* is represented in the cultural element of food from Thailand. Although the material in the textbook does not mention it explicitly as a “cultural product”, however, learners could develop the understanding that *Tom Yum* is a famous food in Thailand and

may differ from the typical food in their origin or in other countries. As well as cultural knowledge, collocation knowledge could also be achieved through the exposure of collocations used in the textbook. This may not necessarily be from the reading text, it can also be through textbook instructions, questions, and exercises, which are also seen as learning input (Hill, 2000, p. 53).

Webb, Nation, and Chang's (2013) study about incidental learning of collocations suggests that acquiring collocations could best be done through the incidental learning of being exposed to repetitive encounters. In the same way, the repeated encounter of culturally specific elements in textbooks would increase learners' awareness of cultural knowledge and help them notice culturally particular words. Therefore, the more exposure is presented, the more learners will develop their understanding (Ellis, 2005, p. 217).

According to the goal of learning English in achieving ICC, and the role of the textbook as the commonly used material in ELT, there are few studies that investigate the exposure of cultural and collocational input in the textbook. Some of the cultural studies (Ping, 2015; Bahrami, 2015; and Yuen, 2011) focused on the content and figures presented. However, the opportunity to learn cultural knowledge may come from the lexical input in the textbook, in the same way as collocational knowledge as have been discussed earlier. Specifically, in Indonesia, there are few studies that look at the frequency of collocational input in the textbook. In fact, the learner's collocation competency was shown to be low in Taniharjo's (2017) study. Therefore, the present study attempts to analyse the frequency of cultural and collocational input distribution in the EFL textbook used in high schools to support the development of ICC.

Methodology

The research questions underlying this study are as follows:

- 1) How does the frequency of distribution of local, target, and international culture in the

Indonesian EFL textbooks for high schools compare to the New Headway textbooks?

- 2) How does the frequency of distribution of collocations in the Indonesian EFL textbooks for high schools compare to the New Headway textbooks?

The Indonesian EFL textbooks in the present study are analysed on their lexical input in terms of intercultural and collocational knowledge. They were analysed using corpus software – MonoConc. To compare the intercultural and collocational input in the Indonesian EFL textbooks and global textbooks, three New Headway textbooks were used as comparison data. The comparison aimed to investigate the local and foreign publisher in presenting the material relate to intercultural and collocational knowledge.

The analysis was conducted in three parts: 1) keyword analysis of words related to culture; 2) collocation formula analysis; and 3) comparison intercultural and collocational input in Indonesian textbooks and Headway textbooks.

Although corpus analysis tends to have quantitative results, however, according to the analysis in this study, it gradually tends to be more qualitative. Once the frequency of the keywords has been identified and grouped based on their categories (both cultural and collocation), the data will then be interpreted based on the context surrounding the keywords. During this stage, corpus software was used as the aid for data interpretation (Baker & McEnery, 2015, p. 2). Therefore, this mixed-method allows a deep analysis of the data.

Data Collection

The three Indonesian EFL textbooks for senior high schools were used as the primary sources of this study, and three New Headway textbooks were used as comparison data. A textbook corpus was built based on three Indonesian EFL textbooks and three New Headway textbooks. The frequency of the words counted for each textbook are listed below.

Table 1. Words size of Indonesian EFL textbooks and New Headway textbooks

Indonesian EFL Textbooks		New Headway Textbooks	
Textbook level	Corpus size	Textbook level	Corpus size
Grade 10	40,951	Pre-intermediate	28,706
Grade 11	11,561	Intermediate	49,590
Grade 12	26,457	Upper-intermediate	50,882

Since the corpora have a different number of running words (corpus size), normalisation was done to create a standard size. For example, the frequency of the target word in corpus A is 250, and the corpus size is 3,500. However, the same word in corpus B occurs 350 times in the total corpus size of 4,000. Therefore, the normalisation of the corpus size will help to make a standard comparison of the frequency of occurrence of the target word in both corpora.

Example:

Frequency in Corpus A = $250 \times 3,000 / 3,500 = 214.3$ (per 3,000)

Frequency in Corpus B = $350 \times 3,000 / 4,000 = 262.5$ (per 3,000)

For the corpora in this study, frequencies were normalised to 25,000 words.

Result and Discussion

Analysis of cultural input

Throughout the corpus analysis of the Indonesian EFL textbooks, it turns out that the dominant culture presented is the local culture. The local culture is represented through the massive use of local names of persons and places in the books' contents. There is a wide gap between the representation of the local culture and other cultures. The target culture presentations are no more than half of the local culture, while the international culture shows a few shreds of evidence. In terms of the cultural element, *person* and *place* are the common elements used to represent the culture.

In comparison to the New Headway textbooks, which only cover the target and international cultures, the Indonesian EFL textbooks provide more cultural input, and the international cultures in Indonesian EFL textbooks are higher than in the New Headway textbooks. It is due to the fact that the New Headway textbooks are dominated by the target culture through the presentation of the names of the person, place, and product elements.

Although the Indonesian EFL textbooks provided all the cultural categories and were found in greater number than the New Headway textbooks, in terms of the variety of input, the New Headway textbooks had much more variety. For example, in the *product-food and beverage (f & b)* category, it mentioned words such as *cookies* and *sandwich*, while, the New Headway textbooks go further to the more culturally-related products such as *pizza*, *parmesan*, *whiskey*, and *wine*.

Other examples come from the variety of the persons and places, which dominate the

culture category, and the Indonesian EFL textbooks present the common name in target cultures such as *John* and *Caroline*. The *place* element mainly mentions well-known cities such as *Kuala Lumpur*, *London*, and *California*. On the other hand, these categories were presented differently in the New Headway textbooks. In the *person* element they present various names such as *Jamie*, *Bob*, *Peter*, etc. They also mentioned professions such as *balloonist*, *beachcomber*, and *monks* (referring to Thailand's culture), and for the *place* element they mentioned cities such as *Scotland*, *Bristol*, *Ohio*, etc. The richness of variety in the New Headway textbooks could provide more opportunity for learners to gain wider knowledge.

Moreover, Wutun, Arafah, and Yassi's (2018) study in Indonesia reported that familiarity with the topic/theme from the learners' own culture was found to increase their motivation to speak English. According to this finding, the results found in the present study could provide evidence that the high input of local culture may reflect the common approach used to teach English in Indonesia. However, it has been critically discussed by Ping (2015) that students should be exposed to the outer and expanding cultures, not only to the inner and local cultures. It is believed that the lack of intercultural knowledge is seen to be an obstacle in achieving an intercultural understanding.

In the example of the *product f & b* element, the New Headway textbooks show the culture and behaviour of the Target people by mentioning *wine* and *whiskey*, which are not presented in Indonesian EFL textbooks. This might be due to the fact that the Indonesian society is dominated by the Muslim religion, which forbids people to drink alcohol. However, the absence of a cross-cultural understanding in Indonesian EFL textbooks may result in the learners' false perception and less-tolerant behaviour when they find this in real life. Therefore, although some products may not be familiar to learners, or are inappropriate in the local culture, as believed by Wen (2016, p. 173), cross-cultural input is necessary to develop learners' sensitivity and awareness of different cultures.

In reflection, one of the participants in Wutun, Arafah, and Yassi's (2018) study argued that they preferred to talk about local food rather than target food such as *hamburger*,

since they did not know how to pronounce it correctly, not familiar and had little understanding about it, therefore refrained from talking about it. This would not be a problem if the students had been exposed to the ‘foreign’ words, which were not from their culture. Therefore, the lack of the presentation of product, practice, and perspective elements in the textbook could have limited the cultural knowledge of the students to the other cultures. The quality of these cultural inputs should also be given consideration, as it is believed that the input in a textbook plays an essential role in delivering knowledge (Weninger & Kiss, 2015; Matsuda, 2002; Hill, 2000).

Furthermore, due to the global use of English in the outer and expanding countries such as Singapore, Africa, India, etc., the learners should prepare to not only have fluency in speaking about their own culture but also to understand other’s cultures. Therefore, achieving intercultural and communicative competence in English may not be enough by knowing common English names and places abroad, the learners should also have a greater understanding of cross-cultural variety.

Analysis of collocation input

The finding of the collocation analysis shows that Indonesian EFL textbooks have provided a sufficient number of collocations throughout their content. The highest number of collocation patterns found in the textbooks were the combinations of *verb + preposition* such as *find out, come back, go out, etc.*; *adjective + noun* such as *main idea, good luck, etc.*; and *noun + noun* such as *pen pals, point of view, pocket money, etc.* These collocations also seem to be closely related to the learners’ life as a student. This could be a positive feature of the book to help learners familiarise themselves with the collocation combinations. These results agreed with the study done by Molavi, Koosha, and Hosseini (2014) of the most frequent collocation patterns they found in the global textbooks.

The great presentation of collocations in a textbook, although not explicitly taught, may incidentally increase learners’ awareness of the pattern combinations (Hulstjin, 2013, p. 1). However, in comparison to the New Headway textbooks, the results of the frequent occurrence of collocations show that Indonesian EFL textbooks are slightly lower. The analysis of different grade levels also did not show a significant improvement in terms of

the collocations presented, on the other hand, the New Headway textbooks showed an increased number of collocations at the higher level.

In reference to the five components of communicative competence by Gilmore (2011), collocation knowledge could be a useful resource for learners to develop their linguistics skill. However, the analysis of collocation distribution in Indonesian EFL textbooks shows a relative low frequency of occurrence. For example, the collocation *pocket money* in Indonesian EFL textbooks only showed two presentations, it occurred in grades 10 and 12. Whereas in New Headway textbooks it occurred seven times. In fact, the collocation *pocket money* is closely related to their daily life as learners, therefore, they should have sufficient exposure to the kind of collocation combination (AyashEzzi, 2018, p. 57).

Pedagogical Implication

The results in the present study indicate that improvements need to be done in the cultural and collocational input in the textbooks. The input of these two areas are considered to be critical in developing learners’ intercultural, communicative competence in the English language, as proposed by Gilmore (2011) and include both linguistic and cultural knowledge. The lack in these areas could deter foreign language learners to obtain fluency and appropriateness in communication. Therefore, the prevailing teaching and learning material used in Indonesia should receive careful consideration of the content that is being presented. Richard & Schmidt (2002) believe that students may learn one thing but acquire another skill at the same time. Therefore, exposure to words related to culture and presentation of collocation in textbooks may contribute to learners’ incidental learning.

The findings of the present study could be beneficial for the development of Indonesian EFL textbooks, especially for the developer of the materials. The improvement of the textbook’s content will assist in developing English learning in Indonesia. Moreover, the variety of comparisons in the New Headway textbook could be used as a recommendation for the cultural and collocational input in Indonesian EFL textbooks in the future. Since the current Indonesian EFL textbooks were found to be lacking in cultural and collocational input, the school and the teacher could also

benefit from the study's results to prepare for the additional materials in regards to increase learners' ICC.

Conclusion

By reflecting on the results of the present study, it suggests that the cultural and collocation knowledge that is presented in the three Indonesian EFL textbooks show a limited variety of input. In terms of the cultural input, the local culture is over-presented, and the presentation of other cultures also remains focused on the inner-circle countries rather than the outer- and expanding-circle countries. This is seen to be less useful for enhancing intercultural communicative competence. Therefore, exposing learners to the different cultures of the target and the variety of international cultures will help them to broaden their intercultural knowledge, and readies them to face the real use of English, which would not be sufficient in only knowing people's names and places.

Moreover, since communicative competence also deals with fluency and accuracy in the use of the language, collocation was seen as the area where foreign language learners had a problem. Therefore, material textbooks should also provide sufficient input explicitly or implicitly. Unfortunately, the result of the analysis shows a lack of collocation variety in the three textbooks analysed. In comparison to the New Headway textbooks, the Indonesian EFL textbooks do not seem to pay enough attention to the input presented, which is seen through the lack of variety, low frequency of collocation occurrence, and no increase of collocation input at each level.

According to these findings, it can be concluded that the Indonesian EFL textbooks need some improvements in the cultural and collocational input to make the best use of the book as a teaching and learning resource. The availability of adequate input of cultural and collocation knowledge would support the English language learning incidentally and with learning other skills explicitly.

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