

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the study. The elaboration focuses on the background of the research, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, definitions of key terms, the limitations and the paper's organization.

1.1. Background of The Study

Language learning and teaching have always been at the forefront of education, with the role of textbooks being a crucial aspect of the pedagogical process. Textbooks serve as valuable resources, guiding both educators and learners in achieving language proficiency goals and they are also the most frequently used resources in the teaching and learning process, playing a significant role as instructional materials in the curriculum and making a valuable contribution to the overall quality of education. (Besser, Stone, Luan, 1999). They become the primary source that is the most easily obtained and directly aid students in getting clear conceptions of the topic matter. In Indonesia's educational system, moreover, textbooks are regarded as the primary component of the curriculum, reflecting the curriculum's requirements in a single package encompassing the material, methods, and processes for teaching and learning in the classroom. They also give teachers a methodical syllabus to follow when teaching a specific subject. Furthermore, approved publishers create textbooks based on the most recent curriculum. It has been observed that once the Educational Ministry of Indonesia has announced a newly developed curriculum, numerous competitive publishers, including experts in instructional material, will design and build new textbooks that comply with the curriculum.

As a developing nation with a growing demand for English proficiency, Indonesia faces unique challenges in the field of EFL education. Alwasilah (2013) identified several challenges in EFL teaching and learning in Indonesia. These include inconsistency in regulations leading to confusion among teachers, difficulty enforcing education standards uniformly across districts, the need for prioritizing conversational skills at the elementary level, and a perceived lack of government support for humanities education. Moreover, Poedjiastuti (2016) identified challenges faced in English teaching learning in Indonesian educational contexts. These challenges encompassed the need for a communication-focused approach, learner-centered instruction, collaborative teaching methods, and the materials issue, which must be practical and authentic.

One of the interesting challenges raised in Indonesia is the material development issue. The challenge of developing materials is one of the concerns in the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education to make effective teaching-learning. Tomlinson (2016) underscored that instructional materials serve as a fundamental source of language input and practice in lessons. He further stated that despite the widespread use of coursebooks, it is acknowledged that no single coursebook can cater to the diverse needs of every class. Consequently, teachers become materials developers, continuously evaluating, adapting, and implementing available resources to suit their classrooms. Kusumarasyati (2017) found challenges encountered during the development of materials for beginner-level coursebooks in Indonesia. These challenges encompassed the writing materials for the book's content, where issues emerged regarding the lack of integration of language skills and components, as well as the identification of potential biases within the material.

Over the decades, linguistic complexity gained more attention in many diverse disciplines such as language typology, language evolution, second language acquisition (SLA), computational linguistics, neurolinguistics, and the educational field (Ehret, Berdicevskis, Bentz, 2022; To, 2017). Understanding the complexity of texts within EFL textbooks is important in fostering effective language learning. Text complexity refers to how difficult or intricate the

language appeared in a text. In education, especially, in English as a Foreign Language (EFL), it is believed as one of the components that determine the improved quality of reading comprehension and writing skills among students. It is supported and confirmed by several studies (Brown and Keppes, 2012; Dahl; 2021; Niazifar and Shakibaei, 2019) that show the role of text complexity levels in language skills development. Students who can read complex texts will contribute to success in college and the workplace in the future because working with complex texts is the way to gain mature language skills. In addition, when they are administered to read complex texts, the students will explicitly improve their skills, and concentration (Brown and Keppes, 2012). Dahl (2021) further stated the complexity of a text affects how students read and understand it. When students read a text that has complex sentence structures, abstract words, and different ways of connecting ideas, it encourages them to give their opinions, rephrase information, and think about their own thinking, called metacognitive. Niazifar and Shakibaei (2019) also explored the effects of different text complexity levels on EFL learners' reading comprehension and motivation. The findings indicated that the complexity of text could help the EFL learners increase their reading comprehension and this study also proved that the more difficult materials could increase the EFL learners' motivation towards English reading. However, Waterford (2018) claimed that the nature of text complexity should be an optimal blend of comfort and challenge. Waterford further argued that the reading text should be difficult enough for students to enhance their skills but not so difficult that they become discouraged during the reading process. It is in line with the notable Krashen's theory in language acquisition, comprehensible input which posited that when students are exposed to new material, it is important to put $i+1$ into practice. It means that a process of understanding the language either by hearing or reading is a level above the previous learner's ability. It is formulated by i , which is defined as the current ability or competence of students, and $+1$ is defined as one level above their competence (Krashen, 1987). Moreover, understanding text complexity helps teachers become better at their teaching practice. They can use specific teaching methods based on the complexity of the texts. This makes it easier for students to understand and learn.

In conclusion, analyzing text complexity is a way for teachers alongside textbook developers to develop better materials and teach English more effectively. This ensures that the materials match the students' abilities which are not too easy and not too hard. Therefore, it highlighted that it is important to explore the concept of text complexity within Indonesian EFL textbooks. This exploration offers one of the ways to improve EFL material and also has the potential to enhance the way English is taught.

In general, assessing EFL textbooks, particularly in terms of linguistic complexity, is required to verify that the textbooks utilized properly facilitate teachers' instructional objectives. Moreover, text complexity measurement is needed to determine how linguistic aspects contributed to the higher or lower difficulty of the text. As a result, it will be easier to catch what aspects of the text tend to be key factors making the text complex, such as the sophistication of vocabulary, the sentences and syntax aspect, and the measurements of the coherence as a whole text, etc. (Brown and Kappes, 2012).

Analyzing the complexity of a text can be measured by several frameworks. A common framework taken by researchers is the framework made by the Common Core State Standard, widely known as the CCSS framework. The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) is a new set of educational goals aiming to reform reading instruction from grade Kindergarten to grade 12 (K-12). The CCSS guideline described text complexity as "the inherent difficulty of reading and comprehending a text combined with reader and task variable considerations" (NGA and CCSSO, 2010, p. 43).

The CSSS used multiple dimensions to determine the complexity of the text analyzed. The first dimension is quantitative dimensions, providing the numerical features of text analysis, including some aspects of investigations, including word length, word frequency, sentence length, and text cohesion. The second dimension is qualitative dimensions. It measures a text from a qualitative view, including several aspects of analysis, including structure, knowledge demands, language clarity/conventionality, and the levels of meaning. The third is

the reader-task dimension focuses on the readers' considerations, including several aspects of exploration such as motivation, knowledge, and experience.

Although this framework offers a good measurement of text complexity, it has been criticized by a functional linguistic expert due to its drawbacks. Fang (2016) stated that the CCSS approach has several weaknesses in measuring the complexity of a text which consists of several aspects. Firstly, the quantitative measurement, including Fry, Flesh-Kincaid, Lexile, and other quantitative instruments, tends to measure the text only at the surface level like word frequency (the number of times a word appears), word length (the number of syllables per word), and sentence length (the number of words per sentence). In fact, shorter words can sometimes be more challenging to read than longer words and shorter sentences sometimes tend to be more difficult to comprehend than longer sentences because of the use of synonyms, ellipses, wording differences, and other features.

Secondly, Fang (2016) also stated that the reader-task measurement proposed by CCSS does not represent the complexity of the text itself. In other words, CCSS frameworks incorporated the terms of text complexity and text difficulty. In fact, the text difficulty is not a feature of text complexity. In simple words, text complexity refers to an intrinsic property of the text, and it can be classified in terms of its lexical, syntactic, discursive, and visual features, but text difficulty refers to the degree of obstacles or challenges that the readers view after reading a particular text.

Thirdly, the qualitative measurement of text complexity, including the assessment aspects like levels of meaning or purpose, structure, language conventionality and clarity, and knowledge demands, are not described with the same specificity or sophistication as the quantitative measurement. Otherwise, the rubrics measurement only provides dichotomous terms of analysis such as simple versus complex, clear versus ambiguous, explicit versus implicit, conventional versus unconventional, literal versus figurative, single-level versus multiple levels, and low intertextuality versus high intertextuality. As a result, these kinds of dichotomies tend to fail to pinpoint the complexity of the text. Consequently, it

might pose new challenges when interpreting the result of the analysis (Fang, 2016).

Therefore, it is believed that the SFL can give comprehensive views of text complexity. Martin and Rose (2003, p. 3) argued that “despite the complexity of language in social contexts, the basic principles developed in SFL for managing it are relatively simple”. He added that Systemic functional linguistics offers a good model to investigate linguistic complexity. The SFL perspective recognizes the complexity of a language at three levels of language, such as grammar, discourse, and context. Moreover, he also stated that the SFL perspectives also help understand the complexity of a text at three social metafunctions, including ideational, interpersonal, and textual.

Several studies have shown the analysis of text complexity using SFL perspectives. For instance, the study of To and Mahboob (2017) examined the complexity of textbooks used in TEFL using the SFL approach. After analyzing 24 readings, the result showed that the more complex the language feature, the more advanced the levels of the books. Moreover, compared to science and non-science-oriented texts, the linguistic features of both texts did not significantly show complexity differences. In another study, To (2018) discovered that as students' levels rose, the overall complexity of textbook materials increased. Specifically, the mean scores of nominalization and grammatical metaphor increased as the level of the textbooks climbed. Using SFL perspectives, Putra and Lukmana (2017) investigated the complexity of reading text in English textbooks. They discovered that the complexity of the three textbooks, consisting of several aspects of analysis, namely, lexical density, lexical diversity, and grammatical intricacy, grew consistently from one grade level to the next level. It signifies that the text complexity corresponds to the grade level of the textbooks. Mulyanti and Soeharto (2019) also investigated the complexity of reading text in the case of English junior-high-school textbooks. In contrast with other studies, they found out that the textbooks have an inconsistent development from lower to higher grades. Specifically, the reading materials in secondary grade textbooks are more complex than others in this case. Besides textbook analysis, Zein, Sinar, and

Nurlela (2020) explored complexity in the introduction part of Bachelor students' theses using the SFL Framework. The results showed that the students' theses introductions were complex and more intricate because the lexical density score and grammatical intricacy score were high.

The results of the studies above indicated many consistent analyses that the higher the text level, the more complex the text is. However, it is important to know that the complexity of English reading materials in Indonesian EFL textbooks, especially in the 2013 curriculum between different publishers, focusing on the same grade, which is class X, is still less explored and therefore, a thorough investigation is needed as the different textbooks and different publishers tend to represent the complexity level variously even at the same grade level and even at the same mandated genres taught at this level such as descriptive, narrative, and recount. Moreover, the teacher-related issue, like the teacher's awareness level of text complexity, is also less explored yet and therefore, a thorough investigation is also necessary to determine the current level of EFL Indonesian teachers regarding their understanding of text complexity. Hence, English reading materials in two EFL textbooks and EFL teachers will be taken as the object study of this research.

Hence, specifically, this recent study addressed Systemic Functional Linguistics as the main theoretical framework of analysis. It investigated the language complexity in the English Reading materials in the two EFL textbooks and focused on investigating two aspects of measurement such as lexical density (lexical density score, lexical items distributions) and grammatical intricacy (grammatical intricacy score, taxis, logicosemantics). These two concepts are chosen as focused analyses because of several considerations. Firstly, many functional linguists have argued that these concepts are mainly used to determine the text complexity level of written language from an SFL perspective. Secondly, many studies, have explored text complexity analysis using these two concepts, but in the case of English reading materials in the Indonesian EFL textbooks on different publishers targeted at the same grade level and teachers' awareness level of this issue is still under-investigated.

1.2. Research Questions

To fulfil the objective of the research, the researcher set up a research question as stated below:

1. What is the lexical density and grammatical intricacy level as well as the proportion of types of lexical items, taxis, and logicosemantics of the *Bahasa Inggris Year X* textbook and the *Pathway to English X* textbook?
2. What is the EFL teachers' awareness level of lexical density aspect and grammatical intricacy aspect?

1.3. The Aims of The Study

Based on the research question, the aim of the research can be stated as stated below.

1. To investigate and compare the lexical density and grammatical intricacy level as well as the proportion of types of lexical items, taxis, and logicosemantics between *Bahasa Inggris Year X* textbook and *Pathway to English X* textbook.
2. To find out EFL teachers' awareness level of lexical density aspect and grammatical intricacy aspect.

1.4. Significance of The Study

The significance of this research lies in both its theoretical and practical benefits. The significance of this research in terms of theoretical implications significantly impacts the field of language learning and teaching. The study makes theoretical contributions by enriching the existing literature on text complexity and its role in language learning. Through a comprehensive investigation of lexical density and grammatical intricacy, this research also sheds light on the contribution of analyzing text complexity to material development, deepening our understanding of how text complexity affects the teaching-learning process.

From a practical perspective, this study holds substantial value for multiple stakeholders in the EFL education domain. Firstly, for EFL textbook developers, the findings offer valuable insights into the level of text complexity present in various textbooks. By understanding how lexical density and

grammatical intricacy contribute to text complexity, textbook developers can use these study results as a consideration when designing EFL materials. This, in turn, can lead to the production of more effective and engaging EFL textbooks. Secondly, for EFL teachers, this research serves as a vital resource that elevates their awareness of text complexity's significance in language teaching. By having this knowledge, educators can get alternatives when selecting and adapting instructional materials, thus fostering a more effective learning environment for their students. It also enables teachers to better scaffold their students' learning experiences, ensuring that the materials used align with the learners' proficiency levels. Furthermore, students get the benefit from this research as well. By considering the aspects of text complexity in EFL textbooks, students are exposed to more diverse language patterns and structures, which can aid in their language development and comprehension skills.

In essence, this research has the potential to improve the overall quality of EFL education in Indonesia. By exploring text complexity in Indonesian EFL textbooks and raising awareness among educators, the study makes a contribution to material development and generally to the effective EFL teaching-learning practices in the Indonesian context.

1.5. Clarification of Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation of some key terms, the terms will be defined as follows.

1. Text Complexity

Text complexity is a term used to describe how difficult a piece of text is to read and understand. It includes different types of linguistic aspects, such as the vocabulary used, the sentence structure, and the overall organization of the text. Specifically, text complexity in this research refers to the complexity of EFL textbooks proposed by Halliday's SFL, including several sub-analysis such as lexical density and grammatical intricacy.

2. EFL Textbooks

EFL textbook is the primary source used to guide learners/students in learning English as a foreign language. EFL textbooks taken in this study consist of two textbooks in total derived from the 2013 curriculum (K13), namely *Bahasa Inggris Year X*, published by Kemdikbud and *Pathway to English X*, Published by Erlangga.

3. Teacher's Awareness

Teacher Awareness refers to teachers' comprehension and knowledge of many aspects of their teaching practice. In this study, it is specific to teachers' understanding and knowledge of how complex or less complex a text is from their teaching experience.

1.6. Organization of The Paper

This thesis involved five chapters. The first chapter explored the introductory chapter. Chapter 2 presented a comprehensive literature review, while the third chapter informed the research methodology. The fourth revealed the results and discussions and the last chapter was the conclusion and suggestions. This well-organized structure ensured the readers easier to navigate the content of the thesis in this study.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Research

The chapter highlighted and emphasized the need for a text complexity analysis due to the specific challenges in EFL education in Indonesia, like issues in material development. Moreover, the specific focus of this study is exploring text complexity from different publishers at the grade level by using the SFL approach.

1.2 Research Questions and Objectives

This chapter outlined the research questions and objectives that were used in this investigation. The research aimed to explore the LD and GI levels and the specific analysis like the distribution of lexical items, taxis, and logicosemantics types found in these two Indonesian EFL textbooks and also to find out EFL

teachers' awareness level of these aspects of text complexity. By delving into these specific aspects, the study seeks to deeply understand the lexical density aspect and grammatical intricacy aspect in this case.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The significance section elaborated on the theoretical and practical contributions of this research. The study enriched the existing literature on text complexity in language learning, providing insights into the role of LD and GI. On a practical level, the findings can inform textbook developers, students, and teachers enabling them to improve EFL teaching-learning.

1.4 Definition of Research Terms

This section clarified key terms used throughout the research variables such as Text complexity, Teachers' Awareness, and EFL textbooks. Establishing clear definitions ensured a common understanding among readers.

1.6 Organization of the Study

The final section of this chapter outlined the organization of the research. It included brief explanations of subheadings.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Text Complexity

This section explored the concept of text complexity, exploring its definition and its specific aspects of analysis. It establishes the theoretical framework guiding the researcher to understand deeply the variables of the study such as lexical density, grammatical intricacy, parataxis, hypotaxis, logicosemantics; expansion (extension, elaboration, enhancement), and projection (locution, idea).

2.2 EFL Textbooks

In this part, the focus was on EFL (English as a Foreign Language) textbooks. The section discussed their role in language learning and EFL textbooks used in Indonesia.

2.3 Teachers' Awareness

This section discussed teachers' awareness of text complexity. It highlighted the importance of educators being aware as they have implications for their teaching practice.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This section outlined the chosen research design that guides the study's investigation.

2.2 Data Collection

The methods and techniques used to gather relevant data for the research were described in this part.

2.3 Data Analysis and Procedures

This section explained how the collected data will be analyzed and the specific steps taken to draw meaningful conclusions from the gathered information.

Chapter 4: Results and Discussion

4.1 Findings; Text Complexity Levels in Indonesian EFL Textbooks and EFL Teachers' Awareness Level of Text Complexity

This section presented the results of the analysis, including the LD and GI values of the EFL textbooks under investigation, the distribution of lexical items, taxis, and logicosemantics among genres. The results of the teachers' responses are also presented, shedding light on the awareness levels of EFL teachers regarding text complexity.

4.3 Discussion of Results

This sub-chapter provided an in-depth discussion and interpretation of the research findings like finding the factors, causes, and solutions behind the issues that emerged from the findings.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Suggestion

5.1 Conclusions

The conclusion section summarized the key findings of the research and presented a comprehensive overview of the study's findings and discussions.

5.3 Implications

This section discussed the practical implications of the research findings for EFL teachers, students, and textbook developers. It explored how the study can positively impact EFL education in Indonesia.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

This section outlined limitations related to the text complexity aspects used in the analysis, potential biases, and the methodology used which can affect the interpretation of this study. By recognizing these limitations, readers can interpret the findings with a balanced perspective.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The final section provided suggestions for future research directions and potential areas for further exploration within the domain of text complexity and EFL teaching-learning.

To summarize, by organizing the content into specific chapters with relevant subheadings, this organizational structure allows the readers to easily navigate through the study's various chapters and sub-chapters to get a comprehensive understanding of the study.