

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents the introduction of this study which consists of (a) background of the study; (b) formulation of the problem; (c) objective of the study; (d) focus of the study; (e) significance of the study; and (f) operational definition

A. Background of the Study

Language is used by people to communicate with one another. People can express ideas, thoughts, and feelings to others as well as offer and receive information through language. People have to use language effectively and efficiently to make others understand what they mean. Hence, the purpose of communication can be achieved.

English has been widely used as an international language. It is spoken in almost every country in the world either as a first language (L1) or as a second language (L2) in some official or institutional capacity. However, the status of English in Indonesia is as a foreign language (EFL). It is not widely used as a medium of communication in our daily social life (Lauder, 2008). Even though English plays a role as a foreign language, it is necessary to be taught in schools. Being able to speak English can open up many opportunities in our personal and professional life.

To support the successful English teaching and learning process, good teaching material is needed. McGrath (2013) stated that teaching materials are

an essential component of language programs. One of the most commonly used teaching materials is a textbook. It brings easiness to the classroom due to its comprehensiveness, completeness, and adjustment based on the learning objectives of the syllabus (Nunan, 1991). The use of textbooks is essential in the teaching and learning process, especially in Indonesia where English stays as a foreign language. Most students have a limited amount of exposure to English outside the classroom and few opportunities to practice it in daily life. Therefore, teachers and textbook writers should pay great attention to the language input so that the textbooks can help students to communicate effectively in using the language.

As the main source of students' language input, textbooks must provide good models that are suitable for the teaching and learning process. Unfortunately, some researchers have discovered significant mismatches between the language presented in textbooks and the real use of English (Nguyen & Ishitobi, 2012; Oktavianti & Fajria, 2021; Oktavianti & Sarage, 2021; Phoocharoensil, 2017). To put it in another way, the language used in the textbooks does not accurately reflect how English is actually used.

In the investigation, some researchers mainly rely on the comparison with corpus to identify the mismatches. Numerous corpus-based studies on textbooks have been conducted. For instance, Cheng and Warren (2007) examined the expression of monitoring and understanding in textbooks and compare it to a corpus of spoken English in Hong Kong. Cullen and Kuo (2007) investigate 24 general EFL textbooks at all levels (from beginner to advanced) published from

2000-2006. Their study highlighted that there are limited features of spoken grammar presented in textbooks. Choi and Chon (2012) analyzed the collocation in 10th-grade high school textbooks from 16 different publishers and compare it to a 2k-graded reader corpus. Oktavianti et al. (2020) investigated Indonesian EFL textbooks in comparison with corpus-based English textbooks. Oktavianti & Prayogi (2020) examine the use of future tense markers in Indonesian EFL textbooks and comparing to one of the biggest English corpora, COCA. All of these studies show the mismatches between the language presented in textbooks and the language in the corpora.

In Indonesia, there are English textbooks published by the Ministry of Education and Culture, and they are widely used in many schools. The researcher wants to know whether the textbooks published and distributed by the government guarantee that the books are suitable for the teaching and learning process and represent real language use.

This study examines the use of conversational features in three *Bahasa Inggris* textbooks for junior high schools (grade 7, 8, and 9) in Indonesia. Therefore, this study will focus on the conversation sections in the textbooks because, in some studies, the example of the conversation is unnatural (Cheng & Warren, 2007; Cullen & Kuo, 2007; Gilmore, 2004; Oktavianti et al., 2020).

B. Formulation of the Problems

The problems that will be discussed in this study are formulated as follows:

1. What are the conversational features found in *Bahasa Inggris* textbooks for junior high schools?

2. What are the most frequent conversational features used and distributed in *Bahasa Inggris* textbooks for junior high schools?

C. Objectives of the Study

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

1. To describe the conversational features used in *Bahasa Inggris* textbooks for junior high schools.
2. To identify the most frequent conversational features used and distributed in *Bahasa Inggris* textbooks for junior high schools.

D. Focus of the Study

There are several conversational features that tend to be used by speakers in spoken contexts. One of them is non-clausal units include inserts, such as interjections, discourse markers, greetings and farewells, response forms, response elicitors, attention signals, hesitators, various polite speech-acts formulas, and expletives. These features are described in the Grammar of Spoken and Written English (GSWE). The GSWE is designed and developed based on corpus investigation using the Longman Spoken and Written English Corpus (the LGSWE corpus) which contains over 40 million words. This study will focus on the four most common inserts in conversations, such as interjections, discourse markers, response forms, and hesitators.

E. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to contribute to English teaching and learning. The two major significances are as follows:

1. Theoretically

This study will provide some insight regarding the conversational features, especially inserts in order to investigate the conversation examples that represent naturally occurring conversation.

2. Practically

The result of this study will be an example of analyzing the conversation texts in school textbooks, especially the features which reflect the real life-situation. Moreover, as students of the English Education Department, we will become English teachers. It is expected that this study enables us to provide or choose conversation texts as materials that represent the naturalness of real-life communication.

F. Operational Definition

1. Conversation

Conversation is the most common kind of spoken text. It happened when people communicate by speaking to one another.

2. Inserts

Inserts are stand-alone words. Inserts are divided into interjections, discourse markers, greetings and farewells, response forms, response elicitors, attention signals, hesitators, various polite speech-acts formulas, and expletives.

3. Textbook

Textbook is one of the most widely used teaching material. Teachers and students are expected to use the books for the basic teaching and learning process in the classroom.

4. Corpus

A Corpus (pl. corpora) is a large collection of written/spoken texts stored digitally.