



Can students learn what the textbook says? A Cognitive outlook into an Indonesian EFL textbook

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ABSTRACT

Findings from Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research, which offer critical insights into how learners acquire and process language, are often overlooked in the development of curricula and textbooks for early English Language Teaching (ELT). This raises questions about the feasibility of the learning objectives promoted in these materials. To address this gap, this study analyzes a junior high school EFL textbook within the framework of Processability Theory (PT) to examine whether the sequencing of grammatical structures aligns with the teachability hierarchy predicted by PT. The analysis focuses on the grading of grammatical structures and compares their distribution with the stages of acquisition prescribed by PT. The findings reveal only a partial alignment with the PT hierarchy, highlighting a disconnect between textbook design and learners' developmental stages. This misalignment is largely due to the theme-based approach being adopted by the textbook and therefore highlights the need for textbook writers, curriculum developers, and English teachers to better integrate SLA research into developing textbooks, particularly in the context of the Kurikulum Merdeka, which emphasizes learner-centered education and learners' cognitive liberation.

Keywords: English textbooks, processability theory, SLA, teachability

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INTRODUCTION

English as a compulsory subject is initially embraced for junior high school level, embedded with its centralized curriculum designed by the Minister of Education via the Centre for Curriculum and Book (Kartika-Ningsih & Gunawan, 2019; Santi & Endarto, 2024). Over the past 60 years of this English education tradition, the curriculum has changed from focusing on grammar and translation to a more literacy-based approach, mainly through the introduction of a genre-based approach (GBA) (Basthomi, 2020; Emilia, 2005, 2011). GBA refers to a teaching approach that fosters learners' English language development by engaging them in the negotiation of meaning, particularly through learning about different genres such as narrative and procedural texts (Damayanti, 2019). The prescribed curriculum generally outlines specific learning objectives at each level of education, which are an essential reference for English teachers. To operationalise the curriculum at the practical level, the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (MoECRT), through the Centre for Curriculum and Books, published textbooks which are normally written by leading academics in the field in collaboration with the in-service seasonal teachers (Kemendibud, 2016). These textbooks serve as the guideline for both the teacher and the students in the classroom.

English textbooks play a vital role for the students and the teachers in all levels of education, including junior high school (year 7 to 9). This pedagogical landscape is designed following the general objective of the curriculum and provides immediate access to linguistics

and non-linguistic knowledge (Luo, 2024). Indonesian students regard English textbooks as immediate learning references and essential resources for accessing all the competencies designed in the curriculum (Siregar et al., 2024). These competencies constitute the development of English literacy and non-linguistic competencies, such as social and spiritual skills, leading to fostering their character building (Damayanti, 2019). For the teachers, English textbooks generally contain methods and teaching materials along with their syllabus, providing a framework and instructional material to plan and deliver the lessons in the classroom effectively (e.g., Putra & Lukmana, 2017; Syairofi et al., 2023). Thus, English textbooks have an inevitably important role in contributing to the success of English language teaching and learning in Indonesian English education.

With its central status on the success of the teaching and learning process in the classroom, studies scrutinizing the quality of textbooks from diverse tenets have proliferated in Indonesia (Siregar et al., 2024). However, studies that systematically examine textbooks through the lens of second language acquisition (SLA) theory still require more attention. Added to this, Lenzing (2008a) argued that there seems to be a gap between theory and practice, in this case between second language acquisition (henceforth, SLA) research and language pedagogy. This substantial claim is endorsed by other SLA researchers whose studies are concerned with the textbook (cf. Atar, 2021; Mattsson, 2022). Furthermore, the claim is still relevant and generally applies in the Indonesian textbook context. The substantial findings from the research of SLA, which primarily explores “the mechanism of grammar acquisition in learners’ minds” (Keßler, 2022) have empirically proven could inform language pedagogy in providing insight into the successful language teaching and learning, yet they tend to be generally overlooked. In other words, the significant findings from the SLA field have not been predominantly considered in English language teaching (ELT) for junior high schools in Indonesia, especially in composing textbooks.

Processability Theory (PT) has been recognized for its contribution to language pedagogy (Dyson & Håkansson, 2017; Keßler, 2022). Particularly, its insights into the predictable order of acquiring linguistic features and how learners’ processing stage can inform L2 teachers to provide more effective language teaching and learning. As L2 teachers adopt approaches to diverse learner needs, integrating PT into L2 teaching practices emerges as a promising strategy. This section aims to highlight PT research on textbooks from Johnston (1985), Lenzing (2008b), Tang (2019) and Atar (2021) which share similar findings about the textbooks’ learnability.

Despite the important contribution of PT to L2 pedagogy, very few studies have investigated this theory in L2 English textbooks. The first cornerstone of textbook research within PT is placed by Johnston (1985) who investigated the implicational order of acquisition based on his previous SAMPLE study. The author examined the lessons from two ESL textbooks, namely English 1 and side-by-side textbooks. He concluded that the sequential lessons from the first ten lessons did not align with the developmental stages of L2 learners. These lessons are cognitively unlearnable. Following the same path, Lenzing (2008b) examined the teachability and learnability of PT’s phases in two English language textbooks used in early English language training in Germany. The author discovered that the textbooks did not account for PT’s developmental sequences and recommended that instructors needed to be taught about the underlying mechanisms of language learning. The recent studies demonstrated similar findings.

Recently, Tang (2019) performed a quite similar analysis of four L2 English textbooks for primary schools widely used in China. The author identified that the targeted structures in the four textbooks initially followed PT’s stage; however, the grammatical structures in the latter chapter did not align with the PT stage due to the nature of the thematic approach adopted by the textbooks. Atar (2021) found a similar tendency in which 5 different English textbooks being used in Turkey primary schools are partially following PT stages; lower stages are taught much earlier than the higher stages structure. It is, however, except for one textbook, which introduced higher developmental features at the initial stages of learning. In short, all four textbook studies lead to one general conclusion that textbooks for English language education are not fully learnable for the learners. Notwithstanding the role of PT, none of the textbook’s studies were conducted within the Indonesian context. Therefore, this article adopts the PT framework that has been empirically proven, shedding light on how grammatical structure should be incorporated into textbooks (Lenzing, 2008b; Mattsson, 2022). The question of whether the lessons embedded

in the English textbook in Indonesia can effectively facilitate language acquisition merits further investigation. This article addresses this major niche in literature. It examines whether the grammatical features in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook for junior high schools in Indonesia facilitate acquisition and are arranged by the stages of PT by proposing the following research question: Are the grammatical structures embedded in an English textbook for Indonesian junior high schools as the learning objectives followed PT stages?

It is the question this article manages to answer. To achieve this goal, the article will analyze one textbook that is the most recently published as the instructional approach for the 7th grade of junior high schools. PT serves as the framework to identify the grammatical structures present in the textbook. Finally, the findings of this analysis will be discussed, and potential guidelines for creating textbooks aligned with learnability principles will be presented. Having the background in place, it turns to the methodology section.

METHOD

This research employs a quantitative approach to analyze grammatical structures in the latest EFL textbooks for grade 7 junior high school students in Indonesia, applying Processability Theory (PT) as a framework. This textbook was chosen because it is the latest instructional material published by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology and is used in class according to the latest curriculum, namely *Kurikulum Merdeka* (or emancipated curriculum).

The main data of this research are the grammatical structures and exercises in the textbook identified through reviewing each chapter. Firstly, the grammatical structures embedded as the learning objective in the textbook are identified. Following the preceded studies, the process of identification is completed by first looking at the table of contents in this book, known as the scope and sequences, and then followed by looking through each chapter accordingly. Only targeted structures can be considered and counted as learning objectives. Targeted structures mean contexts that are supposed to be produced by the learners orally and in written production and are thus regarded as learning goals, not written instruction.

The identification process between morphology and syntax structures is separated for thorough analysis. It should be noted that this study excludes the analysis for copula subject verb agreement (e.g., You are our best friend) as the targeted structure, as it belongs to variational aspects, not developmental features. This exclusion does not necessarily ignore the fact that the feature is essential be taught as it is an important context for question formation to emerge. EFL Teachers are highly encouraged to correct students' errors on this feature to avoid as Keßler (2022) argued "acquisition of simplified structures at an early stage of development might hinder target-like acquisition of later stages and might, in the long run, lead to stabilization in L2 acquisition".

Table 1. The distribution of morphological structures

Stage	Structures	Chapter 0	Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5
4	3 rd person singular	-	35	4	13	40	-
3	Tense agreement	-	-	-	-	-	-
	NP agreement	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Aux+ing	-	7	-	-	2	1
2	Past-ed	-	-	-	-	-	-
	V+ing	-	24	-	-	-	-
	Lexical Plural	3	3	7	7	-	-
	Possessive-s	1	-	1	1	-	-
	Possessive pronoun	-	22	-	-	-	-

As can be seen from Table 1. The number of grammatical structures has been well-documented and supported by widely empirical studies within PT is still limited. Other important structures, such as passive sentences and question tags, are excluded from the analysis due to the

fact that there is not yet a single consensus to firmly include them within PT stages (Bettoni & Di Biase, 2015).

After the identification process is in place, they are then categorized based on PT stages, which describe the natural sequence in language acquisition from simply being represented by words or formulae at stage 1 to complex forms shown by intercausal at stage 5. These stages are compared with the grammatical sequence in the textbook. To ensure valid and trustworthy results, this design follows the previous textbook research within PT frameworks such as Lenzing (2008b) and Tang (2019). The study has also followed ethical standards because the textbook was publicly accessible and did not involve human subjects. However, it is important to note that this study was limitedly focused on one textbook for grade 7. Therefore, future research could include textbooks from other grades and other aspects of language learning.

Textbook analysis design

In this textbook analysis, PT is initially applied to textbooks for 7th-grade English in junior high schools, specifically the *'English for Nusantara'* textbook (Damayanti et al., 2022). The first step in this process involves identifying the grammatical structures introduced in the textbook. These structures are taken from the tables of contents in both the students' and teachers' books, which are referred to as the 'scope and sequence.' In this textbook, the authors use the term 'language features' to represent grammatical structures. An excerpt from the table of contents of *'English for Nusantara'* is provided below. It illustrates the difference between the language features and the target for each language skill, ranging from listening to writing (Figure 1).

Functions	Language Features	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Chapter 0. The Beginning					
Learn alphabets, numbers, time, family members, colors, and simple instructions to use in context.	Preposition: in, on with dates	Listen to alphabets, numbers, time, family members, colors, and simple instructions in context	Say alphabets, numbers, time, family members, colors, and simple instructions in context	Read and spell alphabets, numbers, time, family members, colors, and simple instructions in context	Write alphabets, numbers, time, family members, colors, and simple instructions in context

Figure 1. 'Scope and Sequence' Taken from Textbook's Table of Contents

After getting a general overview of the targeted structure of the book, the next step is to place each grammatical structure based on PT (Pienemann, 1998, 2005) which consists of 5 processing procedures. In the context of L2 English, it is important to note that there is a two-stage version; one adopts the 5 stages following the processing procedure (e.g., Dyson, 2019), the other adopts the 6 stages, dividing phrasal stages into nominal and verbal stages (e.g., Yamaguchi & Kawaguchi, 2014). The latter is mainly followed in the context of textbook studies Lenzing (2008b) and Tang (2019) with some different grammatical features. This current study, however, follows the 5-stage version as it arguably more aligns with the processing stages followed by quite recent PT scholars (cf. Dyson, 2019; Dyson & Håkansson, 2017).

Table 2 illustrates the PT stage concerning English grammatical structures, namely, Morphology and Syntax. These stages are in implicational order, meaning the lower stages serve as the prerequisite for the higher ones to emerge productively (Eguchi & Sugiura, 2015). Due to this hierarchy, learners gradually develop more complex word order (Syntax) and word endings (Morphology) naturally. For example, Stage 1 for both morphology and syntax is called the non-category procedure, where L2 learners primarily access lemmas, the meaningful components within a word's lexical entry. These lemmas are often observed in their unaltered forms, appearing as unanalyzed chunks, words, and formulaic expressions that learners simply store in their memory (e.g., How are you? What's your name?). Moving to Stage 2, syntax follows a standard

word order like Subject-Verb-Object (e.g., I make a breakfast), while morphology adds word endings like '-ed' for past tense (e.g., 'walked') and '-s' for plural nouns (e.g., 'books'). In Stage 3 syntax, learners can use Wh-fronting, moving wh-words to the front without changing the subject-verb order (e.g., When the train is going?), while in morphology, learners are predicted to be able to process information matching between words in a phrase, matching information in English noun phrases such as several books, and two girls.

After the phrasal procedure has emerged, learners move to stage 4, where the sentence procedure becomes available. This enables learners to match information between noun and verb phrases.

Table 2. Processing procedures applied to English (modified and adapted from Tang, Dyson, 2021, p.22)

Processing Procedures	Morphology	Examples	Syntax	Examples
5: Subordinate clause procedure	-		Cancel Inversion	<i>I wonder what he was wearing.</i>
4: Sentence procedure	3sg-s (SV agreement)	<i>She asks her father</i>	Do2nd Aux2nd Y/N Inv Copula Inv	<i>What does he wear?</i> <i>What was he wearing?</i> <i>Can we have another paper?</i> <i>Where are the children?</i>
3: Phrasal Procedure	Tense agreement NP agreement Aux + ing	<i>Has stolen</i> <i>Some clothes</i> <i>Is going</i>	ADV fronting Do-Fronting Neg + V	<i>Next day we go to Bandung.</i> <i>Do you have this girl?</i> <i>I don't have the ball.</i>
2: Category procedure	Past-ed V-ing Plural -s Possessive -s Possessive pronoun	<i>watched</i> <i>going</i> <i>flowers</i> <i>lady's watch</i> <i>his father</i>	Canonical order SVO	<i>I like teacher.</i>
1: Word/formulae	Single word	<i>I don't know. How are you?</i>	Single word	<i>I don't know.</i>

For example, in L2 English morphology, learners can associate a third-person subject with the addition of an "-s" to the verb, as in *Rudi sees a cat*. For syntax in stage 4, learners can acquire Do/Aux2nd, referring to inversion on WH-Questions (e.g., *What is she doing?*). The final PT stage, stage 5, involves a sub-clause procedure. At this point, learners merge information across clauses and allow entry into the procedure for subordinate clauses. In the context of L2 English, learners possess the ability to distinguish between main clauses and subordinate clauses and produce the structure productively. For instance, in a direct question, there is a subject-verb inversion (e.g., *What can you do?*), while this inversion must be removed in an indirect question within the subordinate clause (e.g., *I wonder what you can do*). For further steps, the occurrences of the grammatical form described above can be found in each chapter/unit, which is then mapped and counted accordingly.

Textbook learning objective

Recently, the Indonesian EFL curriculum recognized a learning stage called "fase" or phase. Seven phases are introduced hierarchically, spanning from the foundation phase for kindergarten to phase F for senior and vocational high schools (Clifton, 2023; Kamal, 2023). The English language education for junior high schools corresponds to phase D.

By the end of this phase, EFL learners are expected to be able to use spoken, written, and visual texts in English to interact and communicate in diverse contexts, both formal and informal. They are expected to study various texts such as narratives, descriptions, procedures, specialized texts (short messages, advertisements), and original texts. For 7th grade, the focus is on descriptive, procedural, and short message texts. Additionally, learners are encouraged to use English to discuss and express their desires/feelings. They should also understand written texts

better and develop inference skills for comprehending implied information. They are expected to create structured written, and visual texts in English, utilizing a more diverse vocabulary and understanding of the purpose and intended audience.

The grammatical features that are the focus of this textbook predominantly include auxiliary and copula verbs in negative, positive, and interrogative forms, and the simple present tense (stage 5 of morphology). These features are essential to align with the genres being learned throughout the textbook, namely descriptive, procedural, and short functional texts.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This section discusses the grammatical structures found in the English textbook, which are considered the learning objectives. These grammatical structures are divided into morphology and syntax, stretching out in 5 different and sequenced chapters. Apart from the 5 chapters, it should be noted that the authors add chapter 0 (zero) or the beginning chapter as an initial section, accounting for basic vocabulary such as numbers, colours, family-related vocabulary, and some useful expressions. The latter is mostly categorized as formulaic expression, being defined as invariant or “monomorphemic chunks of language” which tend “to occur with only one or two crucial lexical items” and “are often produced in semantically or syntactically inappropriate environments” (Pienemann et al., 1988). In this context, formulaic expression is classified as “fixed expression in the textbook.” (Lenzing, 2013). These expressions, such as “How are you?” “Where do you live?” “Why do you like it?” “How much does it cost?” are provided to cater to students’ communicative needs.

The sequence of morphology as targeted structures

This section discusses the morphological structures that appear in *English for Nusantara*, distributed from chapter 0 to chapter 5. From a thorough analysis, the findings show that the *third-person singular (3Sg-s)*, which is located at stage 4, dominates with 92 occurrences (54%), indicating this form is highly emphasized in the textbook. Interestingly, the second most occurrences forms are located at stage 2 verb-*ing* (24 occurrences, 14%), followed by possessive pronouns (22 occurrences, 13%), and lexical plurals (20 occurrences, 11.8%) respectively. auxiliary + *ing* (10 occurrences, 5.4%), which are located at stage 3 appear less frequently in conjunction with possessive -s (3 occurrences, 1.8%), suggesting that possessive markers may not be the focus of the lesson. Added to this, some structures which are located at stage 2 and 3, such as past-*ed*, tense agreement, noun phrase (NP) agreement, are not found as the learning objective. This indicates that most features that are required to be learned by the learners are predominantly located at stages 2 and 4, skipping the essential forms located at stage 3 of Morphology (Figure 2).

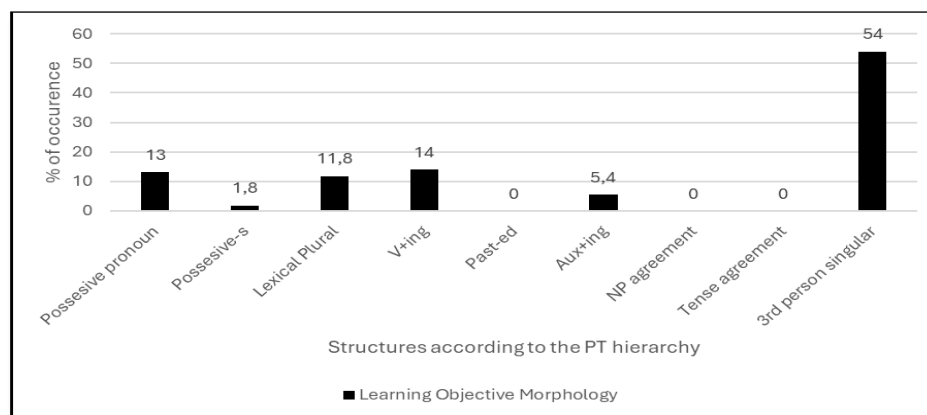


Figure 2. Learning Objective Morphology

From the distributional percentages of the structures, it shows that the third person singular (3rd singular), which is categorized as the highest stage of morphological form, is introduced relatively early, appearing 35 (thirty-five times) in chapter 1. These occurrences indicate either in the form of sentence samples that students should reproduce (example (1) and (2)) or the task that the students need to complete (example (3)) in written form.

(1) *Monita likes playing Badminton.* (P34)

(2) *He always wears a cap.* (P43)

(3) Write 5 sentences to describe someone's common activity
e.g., *he plays for the basketball team.* (P50)

Although some lower-stage morphological forms, such as possessive -s and lexical plural, are introduced relatively early in Chapter 0 and Chapter 1, the textbook analysis reveals a notable absence of Stage 3 forms as learning objectives. Instead, the morphological sequence appears to skip directly from Stage 2 to Stage 4, bypassing Stage 3. In contrast, the syntactic sequencing in the textbook demonstrates a more consistent alignment with the stages predicted by Processability Theory (PT) as shown in the following section.

The sequence of syntax as targeted structures

To compare with the targeted structures of morphology, this section examines the syntax learning objectives found in the same textbook. In contrast to its morphology counterpart, the syntax structures appeared as a learning objective that is relatively aligned with PT stages. As Figure 3 shows, the data reveal the emphasis on syntactic form located at lower stages. Stage 1 (word/formulae) comprises the vast majority of instances (84.8%), indicating this typical form is highly emphasized. Stage 2(SVO) accounts for 10.4%, showing the importance of sentence structure. Stage 3 introduces fronting structures, such as *Adverb-fronting* (1.2%) and *Neg+V* (1.6%), demonstrating quite similar sequence development as PT proposes.

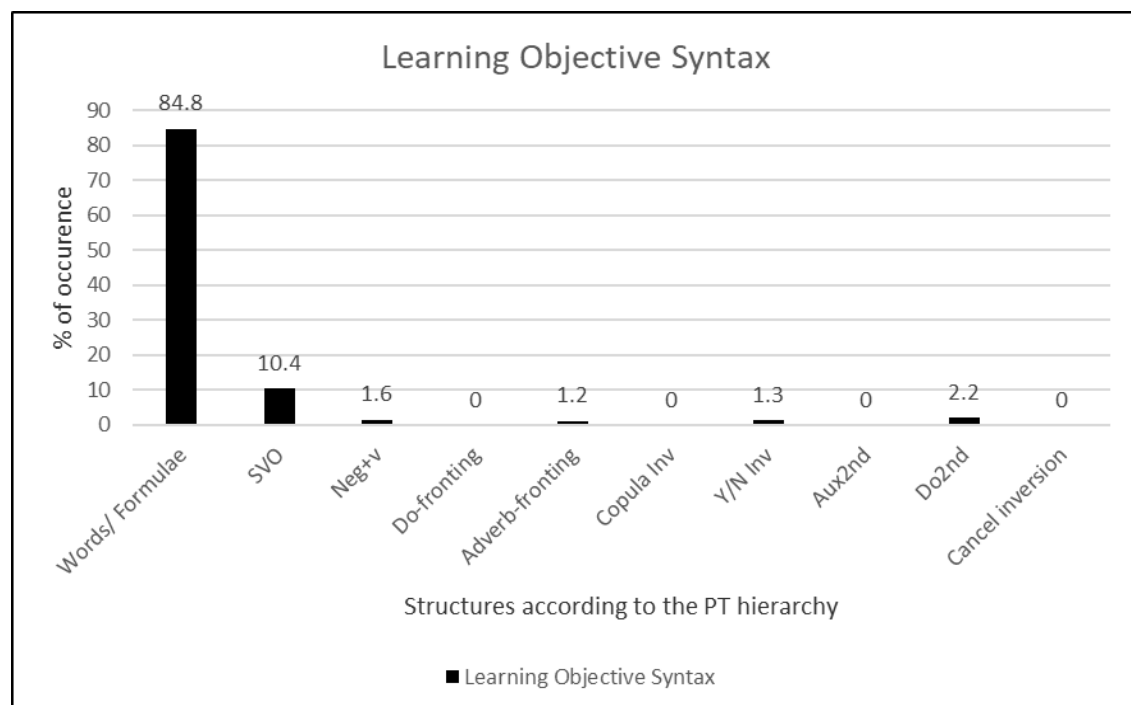


Figure 3. Learning Objective Syntax

Higher syntactic forms appear less frequently, highlighting their complexity and gradual introduction. In Stage 4, question formation strategies like *Do2nd* (2.2%) and *Y/N Inv* (1.3%) are less frequent yet still relevant, indicating the need for these interrogative structures. Stage 5, Cancel Inversion structures are not found, suggesting it may be beyond the typical learning scope

for Year 7. The general finding reflects a portion of English syntax based on PT, emphasizing a larger portion for structures at early stages (i.e., stage 1 and 2) and a smaller portion for more advanced syntax. This distribution is likely depicted in sequenced chapters.

Table 3. The distribution of syntactic structures

Stage	Structures	Chapter 0	Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5
5	Cancel inversion	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	Do2nd	8	-	5	1	11	-
	Aux2nd	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Y/N Inv	-	-	-	-	11	4
	Copula Inv	2	-	-	-	-	-
3	Adverb-fronting	-	-	11	-	3	-
	Do-fronting	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Neg+v	-	-	7	4	7	-
2	SVO	-	17	7	5	61	12
1	Words/ Formulae	94	178	217	232	112	151

As Table 3 shows, the distribution of syntactic structures across Chapters 0 to 5 closely follows the natural progression of language acquisition proposed by PT, with few exceptions. There is a clear development in syntactic complexity in which stage 1 word/formulae appear more frequently in the earlier chapters and structures at higher stages being taught gradually. These occurrences consistently present across all chapters. This indicates a strong emphasis on essential vocabulary building and formulaic expressions before stepping into more complex sentence structures. Stage 2 (SVO) emerges in Chapter 1 (17 instances) and gradually increases, reaching its peak in Chapter 4 (61 instances), before having a lower number in Chapter 5 (12 instances). This suggests that basic sentences (i.e., canonical order) are a primary focus in the middle chapters, helping students transition from isolated words to full sentences.

More advanced structures, *Y/N Inversion*, and *Do2nd* are mainly introduced in Chapter 3 and 4 and yet are also introduced relatively early. For example, *copula inversion* (example (4) and (5)), *Do2nd* (6) are already included in chapter 0, in which the students are expected to produce ESL question formations such as below.

(4) *What's your school's name?* (p. 9)

(5) *Who's that woman?* (p. 9)

(6) *Why do you like it?* (p. 9)

Discussion

The results of the analysis have demonstrated that the sample of English textbooks for year 7 is not entirely designed following the PT stages, especially for morphological aspects. The misalignment between the two grammatical components, morphology and syntax, may stem from the thematic organization of the textbook, which prioritizes lesson content aligned with specific themes rather than the developmental stages of language acquisition. As Tang (2019) argues, this theme-based approach is common in EFL textbooks, often leading to a misalignment between grammatical sequencing and learners' developmental readiness. The lack of Stage 3 forms of morphology, such as tense agreement or noun phrase agreement, suggests that the textbook design may not fully account for learners' developmental readiness.

Secondly, this misalignment could arguably be related to the main objective of the book, which is to foster students' communicative competencies and promote literacy, shown by genre-teaching focus and theme-based guidelines (cf. Damayanti et al., 2022). It is, however, that fostering literacy and communicative competence per se, without considering learners' universal developmental trajectory, can hinder students in achieving productive skills in the long run (e.g., Lenzing et al., 2019; Mattsson, 2022). These findings underscore the need for a more balanced approach in textbook design, one that integrates both thematic content and the developmental stages of language acquisition to better support learners' cognitive and linguistic needs.

At a glance, introducing a variety of language features may boost students' communicativeness and expressiveness (Belda-Medina, 2021; Yunus et al., 2024). This tenet has been well accommodated by adding Chapter 0 (the beginning chapter) to the textbook; a brilliant endeavor to accommodate these needs. In this chapter, students are systematically introduced to not only some essential vocabulary but also important and useful phrases/questions that are essential for communicative context. In addition, the 3rd person singular structure, which are located at stage 4 Morphology, is introduced repeatedly and intensively from chapters 1 to 4, which might increase the intake process of this form (Ellis, 2015, 2016; Ellis et al., 2020). However, this does not guarantee that the students can pick up the form and transform it productively. This is due to the complex processing procedure (interphasal procedure) that learners' minds need to handle. In addition, 3sg-s has less saliency compared to other morphological forms. Within the PT lens, students who get exposed to the grammatical structures which they are not currently ready (i.e., located at high stages) will likely lead to developmental problems, referring to "a learning conflict experienced by learners who do not have the processing capacity to acquire structures from stages more advanced than their own, but do have the capacity to acquire related structures, which create a linguistic context for the more advanced structure" (Dyson, 2021). In other words, the absence of a processing procedure will influence learners' English language development when dealing with developmental problems. Learners will further demonstrate omission, violation, or error avoidance toward it (Dyson, 2021), as shown below:

- I. Omission, e.g., *What Ø he *need?*
- II. Violation, e.g., *When the ceremony is happening?*
- III. Error avoidance, e.g., *We have what things?*

If these developmental problems are not addressed properly, learners, predictably, will use the unlearnable grammatical structures as a fixed formula, leading to the non-existence of the required grammar in other contexts (Keßler, 2022). Therefore, when dealing with the students' developmental problems, EFL teachers should handle and respond to them proactively and accordingly. This can be initially done by considering the lesson being brought to the class that aligns with students' current developmental readiness. It is, otherwise, as Pienemann and Kessler (2011) argued, that students cannot reach the full potential of their language learners, leading to language fossilization or stabilization at early stages.

Regarding the aforementioned of variational options, some would argue that, within the era of English as a lingua France and communicativeness, getting the message across is more important than its accuracy (Luo, 2024; Zein et al., 2020). This is indicated by the era of non-grammar in which the objective of learning a foreign language has shifted from (grammatical) accuracy toward fluency (communicativeness). This is partially true, recent research shows; however, grammatical accuracy gradually regains its supremacy. In addition, several studies have backed up the idea of bringing explicit grammar teaching into the classroom (Mattsson, 2022; Ortega, 2005; Spada & Tomita, 2010). Some scholars argue that the tradeoff between the two needs, communicative function and grammatical learnability, should be the main endeavor (Kessler, 2008; Keßler, 2022). This means that while communicativeness is at play, grammar still plays its critical roles, aiming to gain not only what the EFL learners can do with the English language but also what they can do productively. Evermore, when it deals with high academic contexts, Students need to be equipped with the grammar intricacy, such as taking exams, writing in an academic context, presenting at a conference etc. Therefore, students' needs to be prepared accordingly in balancing between the need for communicativeness and grammatical accuracy, which can be started from considering the learning objectives in the textbooks.

Although the idea of acquisition stages cannot be thoroughly embraced within the communicativeness and literacy paradigm, it is important for a textbook, regardless of the underlying curriculum, to consider the development of learners' procedural skills, as it brings benefit for students' language skills productively (Syairofi et al., 2023). It is therefore important to integrate the concept of teachable lessons into textbooks, particularly in the English as a foreign language (EFL) context, including Indonesia. Textbook, as argued by Tang (2019), is one

important pedagogical landscape that can help both teachers and learners to achieve the teaching and learning goal.

It should be advised that teachability as PT's pedagogical component is not a fixed concept of telling teachers on what lessons should come first and how that lesson should be taught (Arntzen et al., 2019; Roos, 2019). This means the teaching approach is fully reliant on the teachers themselves. It is, however, that getting informed with this teachable concept could fine-tune grammar teaching to learners' communicative and grammar needs. This can also help teachers prepare and teach more effectively to learners, and in the case of textbooks, teachers can decide which chapter should be taught early and which chapter should be taught relatively late, judging from its grammatical complexity and trajectory proposed by PT. Furthermore, Tang (2019) and Mattsson (2022) argue that teachers can even make a wise choice not to include certain grammatical features from the textbooks if they are beyond learners' current developmental readiness.

In summary, the gap between SLA findings and language pedagogy needs to be bridged. Within this research context, this can be done by making use of the textbook wisely. In the future, since the provision of English textbooks in the Indonesian language education remains essential, English teachers and textbook writers should work closely to ensure that the targeted language is at the learners' side, judging from how they are arranged and sequenced according to the universal language trajectory.

CONCLUSION

This study has critically explored the English language textbook for junior high schools in Indonesia through the lens of processability theory (PT) and argued that, despite the importance of the textbook for English learners, it still requires full accommodation of the developmental stage specified by PT. It has been found that the textbook promotes fluency and non-linguistic aspects, as can be depicted from the productive skills exercise, and the syntax aspect has partially followed PT sequences. However, the textbook has yet to fully promote language acquisition, an important milestone for nurturing language skills. Some lessons in the early chapters show that the targeted structures can only be acquired at a higher PT stage, theoretically making it difficult for the students to learn and eventually acquire and retain the intended forms productively. Thus, aligning with previous research, overlooking the natural order of acquisition may lead to learners' developmental problems (omission, violation, and error avoidance) and end up using a fixed formula because of fossilization in the learners' interlanguage. Apart from that, it is important to note that textbook writing should also acknowledge and incorporate the learnability aspect while maintaining the communicative goals when writing textbooks.

Apart from the findings that are worth consideration, this study has some limitations. Firstly, it was only one textbook being analyzed; future study can accommodate more textbooks to do comparative and contrastive analysis, which can elicit more comprehensive findings and implications. Added to this, this study mainly concerns the limited number of grammatical structures of morphology (word inflection) and syntax (word order). Thus, future research is advisable to include more diverse features and how they link to meaning-based pedagogy, along with the importance of the frequency aspects in helping learners recognize and produce a structure that matches their current level of processing ability.

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