

## Instruction And Assessment For Vocabulary Development In Bright: An English Course Seventh Graders

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### Abstract

This study examines the efficacy of "Bright: An English Course for SMP/MTs Grade VII" in Indonesia's Kurikulum Merdeka. The research uses a descriptive qualitative document analysis to evaluate vocabulary growth, presentation, and evaluation for seventh-grade students. The analytical approach makes use of Alan Cunningsworth's checklist and a cognitive audit based on the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy. The findings show strong curricular alignment (90.62%) and methodological quality (94.57%). However, there is a considerable cognitive imbalance, with 81% of tasks focusing on Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS), particularly in the "Remembering" (48%) and "Understanding" (33%) categories. Cultural representation research demonstrates a strong preference for Indonesian source culture (72.48%) over target (4.79%) and worldwide cultures (22.73%). Pedagogical implications suggest that, while the textbook is an excellent foundational tool, educators should supplement it with Higher Order Thinking Skill (HOTS) activities and more diverse intercultural content to promote global communicative agency. This guarantees that students acquire both the linguistic proficiency and critical cultural understanding required for 21st-century global citizenship.

**Keywords:** Bright Textbook, Vocabulary Instruction, Kurikulum Merdeka, EFL, Bloom's Taxonomy.

### INTRODUCTION

The teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia is currently undergoing significant changes. This is because the 2013 Curriculum (K-13) is being replaced by the more adaptable, student-centered Kurikulum Merdeka. In the junior high school ecosystem, textbooks are not just extras; they are the main curriculum that sets the

language, grammar, and cultural exposure limits for millions of pupils across the archipelago (Fatimah et al., 2025). For Grade VII students, who frequently experience official English instruction for the first time in a structured academic environment, the quality and methodologies employed by their textbook are essential in shaping their long-term language learning trajectory (Dharma et al., 2018).

In this situation, "Bright: An English Course for SMP/MTs Grade VII" by Nur Zaida, published by Erlangga, is one of the most popular and widely utilized educational materials. The fact that this book is available in Indonesian schools shows that the publishing business is trying to keep up with changes in national curriculum requirements (Dinata, 2022a).

This analysis exists at the convergence of applied linguistics, curriculum studies, and textbook review, seeking to dismantle the mechanisms of vocabulary growth within this framework. This inquiry is highly pertinent, as vocabulary is the fundamental basis of language proficiency; without an adequate lexical repertoire, learners cannot effectively engage in the four primary language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. (Dharma et al., 2018).

The switch to Kurikulum Merdeka means additional requirements for "Learning Outcomes" (Capaian Pembelajaran) and the strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile (Profil Pelajar Pancasila). This curriculum puts a lot of emphasis on a Genre-Based Approach (GBA) together with character education. This means that textbooks should teach language not just as a formal system, but also as a useful instrument for social interactions (Oktavy et al., 2024). Initial study suggests that the 2022 edition of "Bright" has significant curricular alignment, achieving 90.62% in relation to aims and methodologies (Lestari et al., 2025). But beyond these numbers, we need to really look about whether the instructional framework really helps students develop the lexical richness and critical thinking abilities they need in the 21st century (Herlina & Arfanti, 2023).

Challenges in vocabulary education frequently pertain to the equilibrium between immediate communicative utility and the cultivation of autonomous learning. Evaluation utilizing Alan Cunningsworth's checklist indicates that the textbook's technique achieves a score of 94.57%; yet, deficiencies persist in extensive vocabulary coverage and targeted suggestions for enhancing self-study skills (Noor et al., 2023). The discrepancy between a high methodology score and a comparatively lower vocabulary coverage score indicates that although the learning framework is sound, the lexical inventory supporting it may be inadequate for achieving high-level proficiency or may lack explicit strategy training for independent enhancement (Damayanti & Mukarto, 2024a)

Moreover, the multimodal dimension in contemporary textbooks has become an indispensable element. The incorporation of digital technology, including QR codes that connect printed text to audio, animations, and videos, addresses the necessity for digital literacy in contemporary EFL instruction (Herlina & Arfanti, 2023). This is essential for vocabulary acquisition as it guarantees that the "sound shape" of a word is presented alongside its written form, so strengthening the phonological loop in the learner's working memory. Three This research contends that although "Bright" has exceptional methodological structure and visual scaffolding, it emphasizes communicative immediacy

at the expense of depth, prioritizing local Indonesian cultural representation, Which has significant consequences for worldwide intercultural literacy. (Theresia Nova et al., 2025)

## METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, focusing on a systematic document analysis of the textbook "Bright: An English Course for SMP/MTs Grade VII" (2022 edition). This approach was chosen to permit an in-depth assessment of textual content, exercise frameworks, and instructional strategies used to support lexical growth. (Dinata, 2022b). The data set includes all learning units, with selective sampling applied to chapters that exhibit multiple functional themes – ranging from social introductions and time allusions to animal descriptions and culinary elements – to capture the full range of vocabulary training (Damayanti & Mukarto, 2024a).

### Instruments and Framework for Analysis.

The primary assessment tool is Alan Cunningsworth's textbook checklist, specifically adapted for vocabulary-focused criteria such as lexical presentation, contextual application, and the incorporation of long-term retention activities. This is paired with a cognitive audit based on the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy to get both quantitative and qualitative data about how Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) and Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) are spread out (Herlina & Arfanti, 2023).

### The Process for Coding LOTS and HOTS

The 139 vocabulary exercises were grouped into five steps:

1. **Tabulation:** All instructional tasks were recorded in a master table. This table was organized by chapter and page number. This was done to ensure every item was accounted for in the cognitive domain analysis (*Intercultural Communicative Competence in the EFL Classroom – Aleph*, n.d.).
2. **Action Verb Identification:** The instructions for each task were closely looked at to find "action verbs" (for example, "list," "define," "match" for C1; "summarize," "compare" for C2; "create," "design" for C6) (Oktarini et al., 2022).
3. **Quantification and Labeling:** The exercises were divided into six levels, with each level having a certain number of exercises. Remembering (C1), understanding (C2), and applying (C3) as LOTS; and analyzing (C4), evaluating (C5), and creating (C6) as HOTS. Then, we calculated the frequencies and percentages (Oktarini et al., 2022).
4. **Scaffolding Progression Check:** The analysis evaluated the transition from foundational knowledge (C1–C2) to more abstract reasoning (C4–C6). This was done to determine if the textbook effectively supported students' cognitive development across chapters (Oktarini et al., 2022).
5. **Improving the quality of the product:** The research team reviewed "deviant cases" or overlapping instructions to make sure the most important cognitive demand of each task was accurately represented in the final data set. Multidimensional Vocabulary and Cultural Analysis (Oktarini et al., 2022).

### Analysis of Multidimensional Vocabulary and Culture

The data processing continued through four specific levels after cognitive auditing:

1. **Semantic Progression:** Finding and sorting groups of words to see how language is organized by subject (such identity, school, or food).
2. **Instructional Technique Assessment:** Evaluating the implementation of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) and Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) by analyzing the progression of activity phases (modeling, collaborative creation, autonomous production) (Widiastuti & Mbato, 2025).
3. **Multimodal Evaluation:** Evaluating the effectiveness of QR codes and audio-visual integration in facilitating the phonological acquisition of the target language (Lee et al., 2023).
4. **Cultural Representation Ratio:** This looks at both the visual and written content to see how well Indonesian, English-speaking, and foreign cultures are represented. We then compared these ratios to Michael Byram's concept of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) to see how well the textbook worked around the world (Hoff, 2020).

### **The role of expert validators and ways to make things trustworthy**

To reduce personal bias and improve the accuracy of the interpretation, the study used a multi-layered validation team:

1. Mrs. Jumatul Hidayah, M.Pd. and Mrs. Meli Fauziah, M.Pd. were the main Structural Consultants. They were in charge of improving the analytical framework, making structural changes, and making sure that the research ideas were in line with curriculum requirements.
2. Independent Raters and Expert Validators: Mrs. Meli Kusmaningrum, M.Pd., and Mr. Sarwo Edy, M.Pd., served as independent validators. They used structured evaluation sheets with a 4-point Likert scale to check the coding results, looking at content validity and whether it was appropriate for the Grade VII level.

The analytical processes' reliability was thought of as how consistent they were. Cohen's Kappa ( $\kappa$ ) was the main way to make sure that the coders agreed with each other. It was a statistical way to quantify agreement between the raters while taking into account random chance agreement. Furthermore, validity was augmented through data triangulation, juxtaposing these findings with prior pertinent studies on the Kurikulum Merdeka and Cunningsworth-based assessments (Dharma et al., 2018)

### **FINDINGS**

The analysis of "Bright" shows that there is a complicated relationship between a strong methodological structure and problems with cognitive depth.

### **Methodology and Alignment of the Curriculum**

The evaluation demonstrates that the Indonesian curricular standards are being followed quite well. Empirical data shows that scores in all evaluation categories are very high.

**Table 1. Evaluation of Indonesian curricular**

Evaluation Category	Percentage Score	Interpretation
Curricular Alignment (Objectives & Approach)	90.62%	Very Good
Instructional Methodology	94.57%	Very Good
Language Content	90.00%	Good
Topic and Relevance	90.52%	Good

The good methodology score means that the learning flow is logical and well-organized. But vocabulary coverage ratings are lower, which suggests that the "way" of teaching is systematic but the lexical "material" may not be deep enough for high-level performance (Damayanti & Mukarto, 2024b).

### Thematic Progression and Lexical Structure

"Bright" organizes vocabulary through thematic progression centered on the student's immediate environment.

**Table 2. Thematic Progression and Lexical Structure of the Textbook "Bright"**

Chapter Theme	Primary Functional Goal	Key Lexical Clusters	Pedagogical Note
<b>1. Greetings &amp; Introductions</b>	Establishing social contact	<i>Greetings (Formal/Informal), Leave-taking, Identity (Name, Age, Address)</i>	Focus on register (politeness) and formulaic expressions.
<b>2. Gratitude &amp; Apology</b>	Social maintenance	<i>Thanking, Apologizing, Forgiving, Responses (You're welcome, Never mind)</i>	High emphasis on pragmatic competence and social etiquette.
<b>3. Identity &amp; Family</b>	Describing self and kin	<i>Family members (Uncle, Aunt, Sibling), Pronouns (Subject/Object/Possessive)</i>	Introduction of grammatical vocabulary (pronouns) alongside semantic vocabulary.

<b>4. Time, Days, &amp; Numbers</b>	Temporal orientation	<i>Cardinal/Ordinal numbers, Days, Months, Time prepositions (past, to, o'clock)</i>	Conceptually difficult for L1 Indonesian speakers due to differing time-telling systems.
<b>5. Things at School</b>	Environmental labeling	<i>Classroom objects (Whiteboard, Ruler, Canteen), School personnel (Teacher, Janitor)</i>	Concrete nouns heavily supported by visual matching exercises.
<b>6. Animals &amp; Things</b>	Description & Classification	<i>Adjectives (Big, Small, Cute, Fierce), Animal names, Habitats</i>	Shift from concrete nouns to descriptive adjectives.
<b>7. My House</b>	Spatial description	<i>Rooms (Kitchen, Bedroom), Furniture, Prepositions of place (In, On, Under)</i>	Integration of spatial vocabulary with descriptive text structures.
<b>8. Food &amp; Delicious</b>	Sensory description	<i>Taste (Spicy, Sweet, Salty), Food items (Sate, Pizza), Texture</i>	Cultural bridging through local food vocabulary.

### Cognitive Audit: LOTS Dominance

A major critique of "Bright" involves the cognitive depth of its exercises. Based on Revised Bloom's Taxonomy, there is a clear imbalance.

**Table 3. Distribution of Exercise Tasks Based on Revised Bloom's Taxonomy in the Textbook "Bright"**

Cognitive Level	Bloom's Category	Percentage (Approx.)	Description of Task
<b>Remembering (C1)</b>	LOTS	~48%	Recall specific details, match word to picture.
<b>Understanding (C2)</b>	LOTS	~33%	Explain a sentence, translate, true/false.
<b>Applying (C3)</b>	LOTS	~7%	Use a word in a new sentence.

<b>Analyzing (C4)</b>	HOTS	~7%	Deconstruct a text, infer meaning from context.
<b>Evaluating (C5)</b>	HOTS	~3%	Judge the suitability of a word or text.
<b>Creating (C6)</b>	HOTS	~2%	Write a new text using target vocabulary.

Over 80% of vocabulary instructions focus on Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS). While foundational mastery is necessary for Grade VII, the lack of emphasis on HOTS may hinder students' critical thinking development.

### Cultural Representation: Local vs. Global (ICC Theory Linkage)

"Bright" explicitly prioritizes "Source Culture" (Indonesian). This includes terms like "Batik," "Sate," and locations like "Prambanan Temple". While this lowers the "affective filter" by using familiar concepts, the lack of exposure to "Target Culture" may limit students' global intercultural communicative competence (Luo, 2023).

**Table 4. Cultural Dimension Distribution in "Bright" Viewed Through Byram's ICC Model**

Cultural Dimension	Ratio	Elements in "Bright"	ICC Function (Byram)
Source Culture	72.48%	Batik, Sate, Prambanan Temple	Knowledge of self/identity
Target Culture	4.79%	Western names, American foods	Knowledge of other/socialization
International Culture	22.73%	Global landmarks, diverse figures	Discovery skills/global agency

Linking these findings to Michael Byram's Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) theory reveals critical gaps. Byram's model emphasizes five "savoirs": attitudes, knowledge, interpreting skills, discovery skills, and critical cultural awareness. The dominance of Source Culture (72.48%) strengthens "Savoir" (knowledge of self) but provides insufficient "Savoir Être" (curiosity about otherness) and "Savoir Apprendre" (skills to interact in real-time international contexts). Furthermore, the lack of HOTS (Evaluating and Creating) directly hinders "Savoir S'Engager" (critical cultural awareness), as evaluating cultural products requires higher-order cognitive processing (Elisabeth Hoff, 2020).

### CONCLUSION

"Bright: An English Course for SMP/MTs Grade VII" is a methodologically advanced resource that is closely matched with Indonesia's national curriculum requirements. Its merits reside in its coherent theme structure, ample visual support, and multimodal

integration. The 81% predominance of LOTS and the absence of specific self-study method training are critical areas for enhancement. To enhance this textbook, educators should incorporate assignments focused on higher-order thinking skills, specific vocabulary acquisition methodologies, and genuine international cultural resources to adequately prepare students for a globalized environment.

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