

Lexical Load of Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board's English 1 and English 2

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Abstract

The study evaluated the lexical utility of English 1 and English 2, English language textbooks, which are supervised, produced, and distributed by Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board. These are officially recommended (compulsory) textbooks for all public sector schools. The study calculated total number of words used (tokens) in the books along with different words (types) and headwords (families). It calculated the distribution of words introduced in the books in BNC-COCA levels of most frequently used words. The analysis was done using Compleat Lexical Tutor v.8.3 vocabulary profiler and its special advanced software VP-Compleat with criteria BNC-COCA-25. In addition, 'AntProfiler' software was used. Some manual calculations were also done. The analysis suggested the corpus of 993 words introduced in two books. These words mostly belonged to level 1 (69.68 percent), level 2 (14.9 percent) and level 3 (2.2 percent). Rest of the words belonged to levels from 4 to 14. The books need to increase number of words that fall under the first three levels of BNC-COCA 25 and reduce the number of words from higher levels.

Keywords: Vocabulary, Lexical Analysis, Corpus, Token, Types, Word Families, BNC-COCA, Textbook Analysis

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Introduction

The study in hand lexically analyzed the English textbooks, English 1 and English 2, produced and distributed under the supervision of Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board. The lexical analysis focused on the important factor 'Introduction of Vocabulary' in two books. The detail of this factor is discussed in coming sections.

Introduction of Vocabulary Items

This aspect covers the kind of vocabulary introduced in the English language textbooks. To answer the question, the analysis of the textbooks is done against the agreed British National Corpus (BNC) and Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). Most frequently used words criterion was considered. The corpus researchers of BNC-COCA-25 have divided the corpus in 25 levels of 1000 words each according to their frequency level i.e., BNC-COCA 1 to BNC-COCA 25. Learning 3000 most frequently used words can make a learner understand 89% of the texts produced in English as concluded by Nation & Waring (2004) and Schmitt & Schmitt (2014).

These BNC-COCA's levels are used by most of the researchers because it includes most of the words from General Service List (GSL) of most useful English words compiled by Michael West (1953). The BNC's levels also encompassed most of the 570 words enlisted in Academic Word List (AWL) by Coxhead (2000). To discuss numerically GSL consisted of 1986 word families and AWL had 570 words and this made the total of 2556 word families out of which 88% word families are part of BNC-COCA 3000. Only 12% word families are not part of BNC-COCA 3000. This makes BNC-COCA 3000 a good measure or benchmark to be used in the language teaching books designed for young learners of English as Second or Foreign language. This corpus of BNC-COCA 25 is based on a huge scale research carried out by prominent researchers in the field of vocabulary like Nation, Maera, Schmitt, Waring and Cobb. They developed a vocabulary profiling software using this corpus which is comprehensive and user friendly, which is used in multiple researches involving vocabulary profiling (Laufer & Nation, 1995; Meara, 1993; Meara, Lightbown, & Halter, 1997; Meara & Fitzpatrick, 2000; Cobb & Horst, 2001). So, the vocabulary introduced in the textbooks was analyzed against these 3000 most frequently used words suggested by BNC-COCA. It was evaluated that how many words are introduced in the books that were from these 3000 words and how many words belonged to other BNC-COCA levels.

After evaluating the introduced vocabulary, the issue of how many words were introduced in the books was also calculated to evaluate the lexical load of the individual books, which is an important aspect of any English textbook. The words are usually divided into two classes: functional words known as 'closed-class' words and content

words known as ‘open-class’ words. Functional words include items like prepositions, articles, conjunctions, demonstratives, quantifiers, auxiliaries, and pronouns. Content words include major parts of speech: nouns, verbs, adjective, and adverb. In this research, number of ‘Functional’ and ‘Content’ words was also calculated to see the balance of vocabulary. It also evaluated the growth of vocabulary from Book 1 to Book 2. It calculated the unique and similar words of both the books. This aspect was important for any series of books because it suggests the overall plan of development on one hand and growth of lexical load according to years of exposure on the other.

Objectives of Study

The objectives of the study were:

- a) To calculate the number of words introduced in English 1 and 2.
- b) To find the level of words introduced in English 1 and 2, against the levels of BNC-COCA 25.

Research Questions

1. How many words are included in English 1 and 2?
 - a. How many functional words are introduced in English 1 and 2?
 - b. How many content words are introduced in English 1 and 2?
 - c. How many words are same in English 1 and 2?
 - d. How many words are different in English 1 and 2?
2. Which BNC-COCA level vocabulary is introduced in English 1 and English 2?
 - a. Which levels of BNC-COCA 25 are represented in English 1?
 - b. Which levels of BNC-COCA 25 are represented in English 2?

Background/Literature Review

English language learning and teaching is very important in the context of Pakistan. English language has definite effect on Pakistan’s education, economics, literature, and culture (Channa, 2014 & 2015; Manan, David, & Dumanig, 2015 & 2016; Azim, et al., 2017). In this respect English language teaching becomes extremely important. Although government of Punjab has started teaching English language from grade 1 even then an overwhelming majority remained lacking in communicating successfully in English. Research in assessing the causes of this ‘lack’ is limited in Pakistan. Researchers till now attributed this lack of English language proficiency to the lack of motivation or complex phenomenon of motivation (Shams, 2008; Shahbaz et al., 2011), language policies (Mansoor, 2004 & 2005), English language teaching practices (Shamim, 2000 & 2011; Malik, 1996), etc.

The success of English language teaching-learning process is dependent on multiple factors: teacher training, teacher qualification, teaching facilities, textbooks, assessment procedures, motivation, teacher attitude, social acceptance, teaching methods, learning strategies and so on (Iqbal & Rafi, 2018; Iqbal, 2019; Azim, et al., 2018 & 2020; Bhatti, et al., 2017) If we consider the resources of English language teaching and learning, the public schools are most unfortunate. The teacher and the textbook are the only resource for almost all the classrooms of public sector schools. Public sector schools are those schools that are run by the government/state. All the staff of the school is paid by the government and expenses to run the school are also provided by the government. Very nominal fee is taken from the students which can cover only the 10% to 20% of the total expenses. These are not commercial institutes. Free textbooks are also provided to the students.

These free textbooks are the object of this research study. These textbooks are designed, produced and distributed under the supervision of Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board (PCTB). These textbooks are the only resource of English for students studying in the public-sector schools. So, they occupy a very important and defining role in the teaching and learning process of the learners. Punjab has maximum users of these textbooks as it is the biggest province of Pakistan and that is why its analysis and evaluation becomes even more important.

The recent interest in vocabulary teaching brought it to the centre stage of the language teaching process. The researchers declare vocabulary acquisition as synonymous to language acquisition (Hazenberg & Hulstijn, 1996; Hu & Nation, 2000; Lessard, 2013). The success of the language learner depends upon the ability to learn vocabulary items of the target language. An important goal of English language teaching at school is to help learners acquire appropriate amount of vocabulary that can be beneficial and effective for successful communication. For achieving this goal, the most common rather the only tool used in the context of public sector schools of Punjab is the textbook. But the question is how much help and support for building up a set of vocabulary do learners of English get from a textbook (Nordlund, 2016). Unfortunately, the research in the field of vocabulary analysis of the English textbooks for primary and middle sections is scarce internationally and almost non-existent in the context of Pakistan. The few studies found, are aimed at adult learners. In the Pakistani context, there has been no comprehensive study of the vocabulary component in textbooks. There is thus a research gap to be filled and the focus of the present research is to analyze the issue of vocabulary in textbooks from the viewpoint of above-mentioned factors in detail.

The language teaching books should be well planned and systematic to help learners to learn the vocabulary of target language effectively. But this is not achieved by the textbooks because there is no common core decided by the textbook authors and mostly their selection of vocabulary is not systematic rather haphazard and dependent on the personal choices (Gouverneur, 2008; Koprowski, 2005; Nation, 2001; Abello-Contesse & Lo'pezJime'nez, 2010; Meara & Sua'rez Garcí'a, 2010). Keeping in view the development in the vocabulary teaching and learning, the present researcher decided to do lexical analysis of the English language textbooks to see if the claims made by the researchers are true for the textbooks of PCTB. Did authors of PCTB's English textbooks follow some sound theoretical base while dealing with the vocabulary component of the textbooks?

Similarly, research findings on second language acquisition, motivation and other aspects of language learning and teaching should be incorporated in the textbooks and teacher's guides by the textbooks authors which is not currently happening (Harwood 2014). This aspect was also not evaluated by the researchers in PCTB English textbooks. This shortcoming will also be addressed in this research but from the lexical or vocabulary viewpoint.

Researchers (Burton, 2012; Matsuoka, 2012; Schmitt, 2000& 2008, Nordlund, 2016) suggest that English textbooks writers should take benefit from the corpus data in word frequencies and introduce the high frequency words with controlled frequency and dispersion. This can help the learners learning meaningful and purposeful language. This aspect of high frequency words and word frequencies within the textbook and across different textbooks (introduction, practice, and recycling) was also not explored in PCTB's English textbooks previously. This research focused this aspect to fill this existing research gap also.

The research in the field of in-depth analysis of textbooks from the lexical viewpoint is very limited even in the international circles and it is extremely limited in the context of Pakistan and almost nil in the context of Punjab; this research is supposed to fill this big gap. The researcher analyzed English textbooks produced and distributed by PCTB, English 1 and English 2. These English Language Textbooks cater the linguistic (English Language) needs of the first two levels. These levels (Grades) cater to specific age group; Grade 1 (6-7 years) and Grade 2 (7-8 years). Because textbooks are the only source of input in these public sector schools, they need to be produced according to the lexical standards. This research is very important and its success will benefit multiple stake holders.

Methodology

The books selected for analysis are English 1 and English 2. These books are produced and distributed under the supervision of Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board and are used by most learners of English. Punjab is the biggest province of Pakistan according to its population. It has population of 110 million which is more than half of the total population of Pakistan, which is around 208 million according to the census done in 2017 (https://pwd.punjab.gov.pk/population_profile), (<http://www.pbs.gov.pk>). The users of these books are great in number. Furthermore, all other provinces follow the guidelines of the curriculum and textbooks prescribed by Punjab province. There are 44,417 primary and middle schools in Punjab which have enrolment of 6,627,969 students. Therefore, these books are creating a definite effect on more than 6.6 million students which made these books worth analysing.

English 1 and English 2 are the first books through which these learners get exposure to second/foreign language. More than 2.7 million students are using this book, according to the official stats of (<https://sis.punjab.gov.pk/stats>) the Punjab Province's official website which was updated on 30th of July 2019. This makes these books appropriate choice for analysis.

The research is quantitative in nature because this mode is the most appropriate for vocabulary profiling of the textbooks. It is also appropriate for calculating the vocabulary load which matches the objectives of the current study. The text of books, English 1 and English 2, was analyzed through different vocabulary profiling software to know the vocabulary load, functional and content words and number of words at different BNC-COCA levels.

The data was analyzed using online vocabulary profiling software, available on lextutor.ca. Compleat Lexical Tutor having different vocabulary profilers and the current analysis is done on the vocabulary profiler named VP-Compleat with criteria BNC-COCA-25. In addition, 'AntProfiler' software was used to know the quantitative difference of 'functional' and 'content' words because it can be manually adjusted and downloadable. Some manual calculations were also done. 'Web VP Classic' and 'BNC-COCA 25' are used to calculate the distribution of introduced vocabulary in different BNC-COCA levels. The vocabulary profiling software is comprehensive and user friendly. These software are used in multiple researches involving vocabulary profiling: Laufer & Nation, 1995; Meara, 1993; Meara, Lightbown, & Halter, 1997; Meara & Fitzpatrick, 2000; Cobb & Horst, 2001.

Analysis and Results

Research Questions

1. How many words are included in English 1 and 2?

Table 1

Words introduced in English 1

Words in text (tokens)	1557
Different words (types)	(402) 401

Table 2

On list words introduced in English 1

Tokens	1552
Types	(397) 396
Families	354+5

In English 1 on list (BNC-COCA 25 wordlists) words are 1552 and 396 word types which belong to 354 word families. There are 5 words which are not on these 25 wordlists of 1000 word families. These are given below:

Blackboard [1], brinjal [1], eid [1], toothbrush [1], woodcutter [1]

These are common words in Pakistani English but not found on BNC-COCA 25 wordlists. 'Eid' is the only cultural word here which is difficult to find in a standardized English corpus of UK and USA. 'Brinjal' is the proper name of a vegetable that is why not included. Rest of the three words are compound words 'blackboard', 'toothbrush', 'woodcutter' that is why not included in the lists. Another explanation is there scarcity of presence in routine conversations and writings. Because of their extremely low frequency, these words are not found in most frequently used 25000 word families.

There is a manual adjustment because software showed 402 word types but manual calculation of the individual values in the same table suggested that there are 401 token types and on list word types are actually 396 not 397, originally presented by the software. 354 word families for 397 word types are calculated; this number does not include 5 words or word families that are not included in the word lists.

Beck, McKeown & Kucan explained that introducing 401 words in the first year of exposure to the foreign language is a good start (2002). So, at the moment English 1 is providing a good number of vocabulary items for its learners.

Table 3

Words introduced in English 2

Words in text (tokens)	4541
Different words (types)	(847) 846

Table 4

On list words introduced in English 2

Tokens	4528
Types	(839) 838
Families	671+8

In this book on list (BNC-COCA 25 wordlists) words are 4528 and 838 word types which belong to 671+8 word families. There are 8 words which are not on these 25 wordlists of 1000 word families. These are given below:

airport_[1] baba_[1] blackboard_[1] classroom_[3] digraphs_[1] motorcycle_[2]
nitcomb_[1] tubewell_[3]

This explains the difference of total tokens in the book (4541) and total number of on list words in the book (4528). The difference of 13 is because of these 13 tokens. And the difference of word types (8) is also because of these 8 words which are not listed in the referenced 25 lists of BNC-COCA corpus. It is because all except one are compound words and they are not taken as separate words by the current software because of its reference list. The word 'baba' is used in a popular nursery rhyme 'Baba Black Sheep'. It might be taken as a sound or not listed in 25000 most frequently used words.

The difference of 1 word type is manually adjusted because software and manual calculation has this difference in addition to that when individual values of the table provided by the software were calculated, they suggested the same difference.

In the second year of exposure introducing 846 words types through 4541 word tokens with general estimation of 5.36 tokens per type looks good. The growth of words introduced from 402 in English 1 to 846 in English 2 is also commendable. Later analysis of 'similar' and 'different' words in both the books will further shed light on added words and the effectiveness of these two books.

- a. How many functional words are introduced in English 1 and 2?

Table 5

Number of Functional Words Introduced in English 1 and English 2

S.No.	Books	Functional Words Introduced	Total Words Introduced	Percentage of Functional Words
1	English 1	63	401	15.71
2	English 2	119	846	14.06

The number of functional words introduced in both books is 63 and 119 which constitute around 15 percent of the total words introduced in the two books. This is usual percentage of functional words in any text. The number of functional words seemed necessary at this beginning stage, to make new language meaningful for the learners. In first two years maximum number of functional words can be introduced because they are a close category. They will be repeated and recycled in the new books which can increase their learning and use.

- b. How many content words are introduced in English 1 and 2?

Table 6

Number of Content Words Introduced in English 1 and English 2

S.No.	Books	Content Words Introduced	Total Words Introduced	Percentage of Content Words
1	English 1	338	401	84.29
2	English 2	728	846	85.95

Three hundred and thirty eight content words in English 1 is a good beginning. Eight hundred and forty seven words out of which seven hundred and twenty eight are content words are introduced in English 2.

- c. How many words are same in English 1 and 2?

Table 7

Shared Vocabulary of English 1 and English 2

S.No.	Words Introduced in English 1 and 2	Same Words in English 1 and 2	Percentage	Total Words Introduced in English 1 and 2 (Corpus)
1	(401+847) 1248	256	25.8	993

Table 8

Unique Vocabulary of English 1 and English 2

S.No	Words Introduced in English 1 and 2	Unique Words in English 1	Percentage	Unique Words in English 2	Percentage	English 1 and 2 (Corpus)
1	(401+847) 1248	145	14.6	592	59.6	993

Table number 7 and 8 mentioned the number of shared and unique words in English 1 and English 2. As mentioned earlier four hundred words introduced in first year is a good beginning and then introducing eight hundred and forty seven words is a big increment but out of these two hundred and fifty six are recycled words. This made the introduction of five hundred and ninety two words the actual addition. One hundred and forty five words are not recycled. Introduction of around six hundred words in second year of language exposure can make learning a bit of a challenge. The total corpus of introduced words in these two years is nine hundred and ninety three words. Out of these 25.8 percent words are shared between the two books while 14.6 percent words are unique English 1 and 59.6 percent words are unique to English 2. This also suggests a good growth of vocabulary from year 1 to year 2.

Table 9

Functional Words Introduced in English 1 and English 2

S.No.	Funct. Words Introduced in English 1 and 2	Unique Words in English 1	Shared Words	Unique Words in English 2	English 1 and 2 (Corpus)
1	(63+119) 172	08	55	64	127

Table 10

Content Words Introduced in English 1 and English 2

S.No.	Content Words Introduced in English 1 and 2	Unique Words in English 1	Shared Words	Unique Words in English 2	English 1 and 2 (Corpus)
1	(338+728) 1166	137	201	527	865

Table number 9 and 10 mention the distinction of Functional and Content words. Sixty three functional words are introduced in English 1 and sixty four new Functional words are introduced in English 2. Fifty five functional words are recycled. This suggests good recycling and increment in the vocabulary of functional words. The growth is also good. Three hundred and thirty eight content words are introduced in English 1 out of which two hundred and one words are recycled in English 2. There is addition of five hundred and twenty seven words in the second year. That is a good addition. The total content words in English 2 are seven hundred and twenty eight. The corpus of both the books is nine hundred and ninety three words.

2. Which BNC-COCA levels vocabulary is introduced in English 1 and English 2?

Table 11
BNC-COCA Levels in English 1

Freq. Level	Families	Types	Tokens
K-1	261	297	1391
K-2	46	49	95
K-3	5	6	6
K-4	14	15	17
K-5	12	13	22
K-6	2	2	2
K-7	4	4	6
K-8	4	4	7
K-9	2	2	2
K-10	1	1	1
K-11	1	1	1
K-12	1	1	1
K-14	1	1	1
Off-List	??	5	5
Total (unrounded)	354+?	402	1557

In BNC there are 25 lists of 1000 words in each list, in which K is a constant representing 1000 words hence K-1 means 1st 1000 words list, K-2 second 1000 word list and it goes on. The table reveals that two hundred and ninety seven words out of four hundred and two words belong to BNC-COCA level 1. This is a good number to teach to first year of students. Forty nine words are beyond BNC-COCA level 3 words. These can be tolerated because some words are necessary for language learning but their overall frequency in productive corpus is low. The words included are from BNC-COCA level 1 to 14 with the exception of level 13. There are no words from levels 15 to 25. Complete list of words with levels are in annexure A.

Table 12
BNC-COCA Levels in English 2

Freq. Level	Families	Types	Tokens
K-1	464	606	4069
K-2	106	125	263
K-3	14	15	31
K-4	31	32	62
K-5	20	21	39
K-6	15	16	32
K-7	6	6	11

K-8	6	7	9
K-9	4	5	6
K-11	2	2	2
K-13	1	1	1
K-14	2	2	2
Off-List	??	8	13
Total (unrounded)	671+?	847	4540

English 2 has seven hundred and forty six words (88%) from BNC-COCA levels 1 to 3. It has hundred and one words (12 %) from the rest of the levels including off-list words. The words in BNC-COCA level 4 (32), Level 5 (21) and Level 6 (16) are more the words introduced in level 3 (15). Number of level 3 words need to be more than following levels. English 2 has the words from BNC-COCA levels 1 to 14 with exception of level 10 and 12.

Table 13
BNC-COCA Levels in English 1 and English 2

Freq.	Families (%)	Types (%)	Tokens (%)
Level			
K-1	545 (69.6)	713 (71.88)	5509 (90.4)
K-2	117 (14.9)	138 (13.91)	328 (5.4)
K-3	17 (2.2)	20 (2.02)	37 (0.6)
K-4	35 (4.5)	37 (3.73)	79 (1.3)
K-5	25 (3.2)	28 (2.82)	53 (0.9)
K-6	16 (2.0)	16 (1.61)	29 (0.5)
K-7	8 (1.0)	8 (0.81)	16 (0.3)
K-8	7 (0.9)	8 (0.81)	16 (0.3)
K-9	5 (0.6)	6 (0.60)	8 (0.1)
K-10	1 (0.1)	1 (0.10)	1 (0.0)
K-11	3 (0.4)	3 (0.30)	3 (0.0)
K-12	1 (0.1)	1 (0.10)	1 (0.0)
K-13	1 (0.1)	1 (0.10)	1 (0.0)
K-14	2 (0.3)	2 (0.20)	3 (0.0)
Off-List	??	9 (0.91)	13 (0.21)
Total (unrounded)	783+?	992 (100)	6097 (100)

Both English 1 and English 2 have good representation of BNC-COCA level 1 and 2. More than eighty five percent of the words belong to first two levels. That is a good beginning.

Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction of vocabulary is good in English 1. It introduced 402 words which is a good number to start with for foreign/second language first year learner as suggested by Beck, Mckeown and Kucan (2002). English 2 also introduced 848 words in the second year in which 592 words were unique to English 2 and 256 words were recycled from English 1. There was a good mix of content and functional words which are necessary for the balanced growth of language skills. The corpus is of 993 words which is good considering the addition of 500 new words each year as a reasonable growth of vocabulary (Schmitt & Meara, 1997; Cobb & Horst, 2000; Richards et. al., 2009; Milton, 2009; Ozturk, 2016). This number is also considered good because normally to fully comprehend English novels or English newspapers 8000 to 9000 words are required (Nation, 2006); whereas, for Academic reading normally a learner needs 10000 words vocabulary (Hazenberg & Hulstijn, 1996). That means increase of 500 words per year is good to proceed in 2nd language.

BNC-COCA levels covered in books are also average. The focus of these books was BNC-COCA level 1 because 69.6 percent of the vocabulary introduced in the books belonged to this level. 14.9 percent belong to BNC-COCA Level 2 and 2.2 percent to Level 3. But next three levels; level 4 (4.5 percent), level 5 (3.2 percent) and level 6 (2 percent) should be reduced and more words from level 2 and 3 should be included. There was diversity almost 14 levels were touched which was reasonable and need based. But conscious efforts can lead to improve the number of words from first 3000 words and words from higher levels can be reduced.

Recommendations and Suggestions

Book authors and supervisors need to take into account the latest research in the field of second language acquisition, applied linguistics, vocabulary teaching and learning, and textbook analysis. If we consider the need of 2000 to 3000 most frequently used word families' receptive and productive knowledge as a requirement for Pakistani foreign language learner then we have at least 6 years to achieve it. We have 8 years of pure language teaching from grade 1 to grade 8. We can plan to teach these 3000 word families within 6 years. First year we start with 400 words and we can increase 100 words every year recycling the previous words too. This can be achieved by teaching 400 words at grade 1, 500 words at grade 2, 600 words in grade 3, 600 words in grade 4 (a lot of recycling at this level to strengthen the learnt vocabulary), 700 words in grade 5 and 800 words in grade 6. This will make around 3600 words. This will make the learners proficient in both productive and receptive skills of English language irrespective of their future specific field of study. It becomes even more important because their exposure to

English language outside the classroom is extremely limited. Teachers need to be trained to take maximum benefit of the textbook. Special activities based on modern research-based techniques of introduction, practice and recycling of vocabulary need to be introduced in the book. There is a dire need to develop a national corpus of vocabulary for the development of English textbooks. Researchers should analyze the rest of eight books to evaluate on the same criterion to check their effectiveness too. Researchers can also look for techniques of introduction, practice, recycling and assessment of vocabulary in textbooks.

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