Conference Paper

"It is Expected ..." between Religiosity and Evidentiality

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Abstract

The present study is focused on analyzing the uses of some expressions showing expectations in academic texts. A corpus-based study specifically dealing with the uses of the verbs "expect" and "hope", this project seeks to understand the phenomenon as reflected in C-SMILE (Corpus of State University of Malang Indonesian Learners' English). Analyzing the corpus of about 6 million words composed of texts of undergraduate theses written in English by Indonesian EFL learners, this study has arrived at an interpretive point that Indonesian cultural norms are influential to the manifestation of the expressions. The expressions reflect some degree of the writers' religiosity. This unfortunately also suggests a lacking point of evidentiality in academic written works.

Keywords: C-SMILE, corpus linguistics, EFL

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1. Introduction

Recent research into academic texts has been dealing with various foci. Some understanding of the properties of the genre of academic writing in the Indonesian context has been sought for, e.g., [4–6, 8, 24, 27, 34]. Despite the handful studies on academic genre in the Indonesian context and many others outside of Indonesia, e.g., [1, 10, 16, 21, 23, 25, 26, 33], to our knowledge, little attention, if any, has been given to the typical uses of the expressions showing expectations.

It is true that some studies in the Indonesian context have been devoted to analysing expressions pertinent to religiosity [17, 28]. While Susanto was concerned with the use of *insha allah* in spoken communications, Kadarisman touched into, *inter alia*, the use of divine expressions in texts of thesis acknowledgements. Both resort to the idea of the interdependence between language and culture: the linguistic expressions are influenced by the cultural norms governing communications in the Indonesian context.

Anecdotal observations as both thesis supervisors and examiners in the Indonesian educational context of English as a foreign language have allowed us to have an understanding that Indonesian learners of English tend to frequently express: "it is expected that ...", "it is hoped that..." or the equivalents in their theses. As native Indonesians, we readily understand that these expressions are typically Indonesian.

However, this understanding has not been substantiated through a more methodical observation and analysis. This situation therefore warrants a research project geared towards the provision of empirical data to support the understanding.

As noted above, the observations of communications in academic contexts in Indonesia have shown some uniqueness of the influence of Indonesian cultural norms to the linguistic expressions in written forms, including those written in English. This point is of a particular import in the realm of pedagogy. The possible tensions whether we should uphold the cultural norms of the Indonesian people or submit to the norms carried over by the language we are learning, in this case English, may come to the fore. From the Indonesian vantage point of view, we believe that in addition to having the Indonesian uniqueness, Indonesian students need to also have some kind of comparative outlook for the purpose of smooth international communications, including those in written forms which on many occasions take the forms of English texts. Pedagogically, this means that mentors need to be aware of the bridging role that they need to play, for the cultural norms practiced in Indonesia might be to some extent different from those practiced in the international arena. In other words, the mentors need to be clear as to how to see and work about these possible differences in their attempts to situate the new members of the academic discourse community, i.e., the students, in the existing academic discourse community, for norms or conventions constitutive of genres are produced by and circulated among the discourse community members and academics as members of a discourse community tend to create ways to allow themselves and their new members to come to terms with the genres [31].

However, no matter what the possible tension is between norms in Indonesia and those outside of Indonesia, some knowledge of the actual uses of the expressions need constructing; therefore, analysis of some academic texts with a focus on the specific issue as indicated in the title needs conducting in order to provide some understanding of the issue substantiated with some empirics. This suggests that some collection of texts of academic genre is needed. The collection of the texts of the genre is needed because the genre can provide us with the needed understanding of the phenomenon in question. This is because genre can be referred to as the arena which 1) requires the balance between constraint and choice, b) bears the role of local contextual coloring in the realization of genre exemplars, c) evolves in response to various exigencies, and d) potentially provides ground for genre awareness-raising and genre acquisition ([29]: 5). We also need the collection of the genre because, as ([9]: 431-432) puts it,

> it regulates the interactions among actors and between actors and knowledge … genres constitute themselves as structural elements of key didactic functions through the relationships they have with practices. Genres are regulators in the learning process, organizing the work of didactic subjects, influencing teaching and evaluation … school genres do not exist independently of extra-scholastic genres, in the scientific, private, or professional

Features	C-SMILE
Number of words	6.836.257
Number of texts	426
Kinds of text	Theses and research articles
Disciplines	English Education, English Language and Literature, English Linguistics
Students' language background	Non Native Speakers of English

TABLE 1: Features of C-SMILE.

domains. In addition, he emphasizes the importance of characterizing genre in terms of its place in the didactic system, its disciplinary status, and its stability and history in relation to other genres.

All the characteristics of the genre provide us with ground for our understanding and knowledge allowing us to construct some outlook for pedagogical purposes. This means that for the purpose of providing some evidence to see if the hypothetical point purported above has some accuracy, the current study can be said to be commendable.

1.1. Method

Considering the purpose of this study and the limited number of available corpus in Indonesia, we used Corpus of State University of Malang Indonesian Learners' English (C-SMILE) to investigate authors' evidence-based expectations. The corpus is suitable to meet the purpose of the study as it satisfies the following criteria. First, the corpus contains undergraduate students' advanced academic writings, thus it can be assumed that the texts are products of advanced English learners with minimal grammatical errors. Second, the size of the corpus is presumably the largest of its kind in Indonesia to date, making it a high quality data source for the present study. The details regarding the corpus are provided in Table 1.

Our data analysis involved a series of rules incorporating the use of a software tool. Firstly, we specifically focused to search only the passive forms of expect (verb), considering the tendency of EFL learners, particularly in Indonesia, to use passive (Shitadevi et al., 2013; Yannuar et al., 2014). Hence, the keywords consist of nine items comprising *is expected*, *are expected*, *was expected*, *is also expected*, *are also expected*, *was also expected*, *were also expected*, *also expected*, and *be expected*. The same forms were also applied to the verb *hope*. In order to conduct keyword search and concordance analysis, we used a concordancing software: AntConc 3.4.4, see [2]. During the analysis, the raw data were classified into three: evidence-based expectation, unsupported expectation, and non-data. The non-data category includes expectations which do not represent authors' opinions such as citations, excerpts and examples. Excerpt 1 illustrates some data taken from the corpus:

1.2. Excerpt 1

1. Barron (1991) states that peer editors are expected to know good writing and be specific on editing the work (264CSML)

2. Toulmin, Rieke, and Janik (1984) state that an argument through cause-and-effect requires a causal generalization asserting that if "such-and-such a caused is observed, its effect can be expected to follow." (6CSML)

The data was considered to show evidentiality if supported by previous studies, legal document, the finding of their own studies, expert validation, and rationale. On the other hand, the data in the unsupported expectation category was that with no evidence as listed in the evidence-based category. Both the evidence-based expectation and the unsupported expectation categories become the main concern for our further analysis.

Our analysis required more than concordance line analysis since the supporting evidence was frequently unavailable in the same sentence as the related verb; the writers often put it in the preceding or subsequent sentences. Therefore, it is crucial to pay attention to the full context of each sentence captured in the concordance lines.

Further, we also compared the results with two available academic corpora: MICUSP and BAWE. MICUSP, which stands for Michigan Corpus of Upper-Level Student Papers, contains around 830 A grade papers which reaches about 2.8 million words (Römer & Swales, 2010). On the other hand, BAWE or British Academic Written English Corpus, compiled by University of Warwick, consists of 2897 academic texts or around 6.5 million words. Both corpora also cover academic texts from various disciplines and a variety of English speakers of different backgrounds. Therefore, the present study utilized each of the corpora as a sub-corpus. In the sub corpus, we eliminated the data based on a number of criteria, such as discipline and language background. The main purpose of building each sub-corpus was to get the most comparable corpora as possible. The comparative features of each corpus are available in Table 2.

In order to compare those three different sized corpora, we used the formula of normalized frequency (McEnery & Wilson, 1996). Hence, the frequency was counted by calculating per million words instead of percentage. The comparison across the corpora was conducted after the analysis of C-SMILE.

2. Findings

The analysis of the data on both categories, evidence-based expectation and unsupported expectation, results in a number of worth-noting phenomena which can be reviewed in Table 3.

Features	C-SMILE	MICUSP (Sub-Corpus)	BAWE (Sub Corpus)
Number of Word	6.836.257	562.919	359.816
Number of text	426	167	151
Discipline	• English Education • English Language and Literature • English Linguistics	• Education • English • Linguistics	• English • Linguistics
Students' Language Background	Non Native Speakers	English Native Speakers	English Native Speakers
University	State University of Malang	University of Michigan	Warwick University

TABLE 2: Features of Each Corpus.

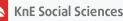| Verbs	Evidentiality	Unsupported Expectation	Total
Expect	119	649	762
Hope	9	22	31
Total	128	671	793

TABLE 3: Number of the Verbs' Occurrences.

Table 3 shows that there is a striking difference between the total number of occurrences of the two verbs in the corpus which marks the forms of the word *expect* (762 tokens), while the word *hope* occurs only 31 times, or only 4.06% of the word *expect*. Looking further at the type of forms used by the writers, we also found an interesting difference between that of *expect* and *hope*. In the *expect* search list, all the forms were found in the corpus; *is expected* appears to be the most frequently occurring form within the 304 tokens. Meanwhile, there were only three forms of *hope* which appear in the data comprising *is hoped, are hoped,* and *was hoped*.

Moreover, related to the main investigation on the frequency of the verbs concerning evidentiality and unsupported expectation, the finding shows that religiosity nuance dominates the occurrences of both verbs. Excerpts 2a and 2b illustrate how the occurrences of the word *expect* is evidentially supported by various sources. As can be seen, the verb in (2a) is supported by the previous study stated in the previous sentence, while (2b) is supported by a legal government document, that is, KTSP which stands for *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan* (School-based Curriculum).

2.1. Excerpt 2 (Evidentiality)

1. Therefore, the findings of this study did not support the theory from both Hamada [10] and Kuramoto et al. [28]. The teacher **was expected** to include the steps

of reading and shadowing the passage loudly in the beginning of the listening session to make the students shadow the written script once. (1CSML)

2. According to KTSP, the purpose of teaching English in Senior High School focuses on developing student\x92s ability to communicate in oral communication. Based on the objectives of the education especially English which has been stated above, speaking as one of the productive skill has an important place in teaching and learning English. Successful language learners **are expected** to have good fluency in speaking of the target language. (143CSML)

3. By adding explanation about the checklist, it **is hoped** that students can use it properly. (2CSML)

4. As the pioneer of advanced education, Laboratory Primary School of UM **was hoped** to be a good model to the other primary school in the teaching of English. (2CSML)

On the other hand, Excerpts 3c and 3d exemplify the occurrences of the verbs without any kind of supporting detail. This weakens the expectation stated in the sentence in terms of its validity. The category, unfortunately, appears to be the most prominent compared to that supported with evidence. Hence, the phenomenon warrants further discussion since the tendency of overusing the unsupported expectatios contradicts the notion that academic texts are mainly concerned with empirics, validity, and thus trustability of their sources.

Excerpt 3 (Unsupported Expectation)

1. This study **is expected** to be beneficial for the textbook writers to write better quality textbook. (5CSML)

2. For English teachers, it **is expected** that the study will give the teachers an instructional medium that can be used for teaching in the class. (324CSML)

3. After revision, it **is hoped** that understanding the explanation and instruction will be easier. (1CSML)

4. This research **is hoped** to be able to make English literature teachers reconsider Shakespeare's sonnets. (10CSML)

In order to have a better understanding of the data, we also compared the above results to corpora that contain academic texts written by native speakers of English. In this study we use MICUSP and BAWE to represent academic texts written by university students (see Table 2). The results of the same search in both corpora have yielded a number of worth noting phenomena. Table 4 summarizes the findings as we compared the keywords search results of C-SMILE to MICUSP and BAWE corpus.

The Corpora	Expect		Hope	
	Evidentiality	Religiosity	Evidentiality	Religiosity
C-SMILE	17.4	94.1	1.3	3.2
MICUSP	58.6	8.9	5.3	1.8
BAWE	77.8	2.8	0	0

TABLE 4: The Frequency of Expect and Hope across the Corpora (per million).

While C-SMILE shows the highest frequency in unsupported expectation, the two corpora of native speakers also notably show high tendency of evidentiality function. Despite the difference, all corpora indicate their highest preference on using *expect* rather than *hope*. Particularly, there is no sign of occurrence of the *hope* forms in BAWE corpus. Excerpt 4 illustrates the tokens found in the L1 corpora (MICUSP and BAWE).

2.2. Excerpt 4

1. In each of the cases in (3), stress is assigned from the right in all word-internal prosodic words. However, as **is expected**, only the rightmost accent in each grammatical word get main stress, even though right edges are always marked by a foot when possible. (10MSCP-B) data

2. Because of the large number of independent variables, it **is expected** that there will be interactions between variables, which can also be identified through analysis of variance. (13MSCP-B) rationale

3. The use of Putonghua, which is spoken by mainland Chinese, **was expected** to rise following the handover to Chinese sovereignty in 1997 and according to Melchers and Shaw (2003: 164) it has grown, citing that it is 'becoming more and more important in administration and for interaction with people from the rest of China.' (13BAWE-B)

The findings above show that Indonesian learners of EFL have the highest tendency of using expressions containing the verm *expect* to project expectations, with 94.1 words per million.

3. Discussion

The phenomenon as presented in the findings above raises a question as to why Indonesian EFL students use a considerable number of unsupported expectations in their academic texts which are, by nature, supposed to be based on factual, empirical phenomena. In order to understand the phenomenon, this section will explore some possible points of understanding. The findings above seem to share some affinity with ([32]: xiii) observation, that is, pedagogically a speaker of a foreign language

has to master the foreign language, literacy, and cultural skills and concomitantly are to uphold their native language, literacy, and culture in order to maintain their heritage roots. This suggests that balancing the two tasks is a charging experience of some issues and challenges. Therefore, the phenomenon of the English texts with a considerable uses of unsupported expressions like those by the Indonesian learners of English as a foreign language is probably the manifestation of this balancing process.

However, balancing process indicates that the writers are aware of the situation and they make use of the expressions of unsupported expectations on purpose. Unfortunately, as we did not have direct access to the writers of the texts, this study did not come up with the evidence if the uses of the expressions of unsupported expectations have been really done on purpose. Taking into account the fact that the writing of the theses has been through processes of advisement which means validation to some degree, involuntariness seems to have been the mode: both the students and the thesis advisors have simply overlooked the phenomenon or deemed it as normal or unproblematic.

Supposing that the phenomenon is normal, it might show the manifestation of the transfer from the native language norms. Since the academic texts analyzed above have been produced within the academic setting of Java, let's try to relate the word meaning of the expressions to Indonesian and Javanese as follows.

- This study **is expected** to be beneficial for the textbook writers to write better quality textbook. (5CSML)
- Translation: Penelitian ini **diharapkan** dapat bermanfaat untuk penulisan buku cetak agar menjadi buku yang memiliki kualitas lebih bagus

The word expected and hope can be translated into the Indonesian word *harapan* (noun). If we look at its verb form, *berharap*, it is closely related to the word *mugo-mugo* (verb) in Javanese. The word *mugo-mugo* is closely related to a pray, an expectation that something happens irrespective of the fact if there is any immediate/explicit basis/data/factor/cause or not. In the Indonesian context, the following fabricated expressions are not strange among those uttered by public figures, including artists in TV interviews:

TV reporter : *Kapan hubungan kalian* (Ihsan and Denada) *dibawa ke pelaminan?*

Ihsan : *Yaaaa...doakan aja yang terbaik untuk kami ya*

In the Indonesia context, such an expression like *doakan aja yang terbaik untuk kami* (pray the best for us) is quite common or normal. A prayer like this does not require any explicit mention of the plan or evidence as the ground for the "best" to come true, for this prayer can be based on a belief in the Supreme Almighty as *prima facie* controlling everything happening irrespective of any plan and tangible data as the normal prerequisite of the event to happen. From a codeswitching point of view

imbricated in the religious context of Indonesia, this situation is linked to the frequent use of *insha' Allah* (if God wishes) [28].

4. Conclusions and Suggestions

The present study examining the corpus of about 6 million words composed of texts of undergraduate theses written in English by Indonesian EFL learners has demonstrated that Indonesian cultural norms are influential to the manifestation of the expressions showing expectations without necessarily demonstrating the necessary ground for the expectations to come true. Since the majority of the expressions are not based on due empirics or evidence, they are likely to reflect some degree of the writers' belief in the Supreme Power. This phenomenon seems to show the writers' religiosity which seems to be in contradiction with the need for evidentiality in the academia. This situation suggests that an attempt needs taking in order to defray the potential contradictory tensions between religiosity and evidentiality.

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