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Conceptual Metaphors of Time in Malaysian English Textbooks: A Comparative Cognitive Linguistic Study

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ABSTRACT

Traditional vocabulary research often overlooks the crucial role of metaphorical language, essential for comprehensive lexical understanding. The presence of conceptual metaphors in English language textbooks for non-native speakers remains under-examined, despite their pervasive nature. This study addresses this gap, investigating conceptual metaphors of time in selected Malaysian English language textbooks to highlight their importance for second language learning. A qualitative, corpus-driven study analysed conceptual metaphors of time in two intermediate and upper-intermediate secondary English language textbooks: Healan et al.'s (2018) Close-Up and Mitchell and Malkogianni's Full Blast Plus 4 (2019). Using Sketch Engine's Word Sketch and Concordance tools, the research identified verb + time collocations, cross-referencing them with the British National Corpus (BNC). For comparative analysis, the Malaysian Web Corpus in Sketch Engine was used to investigate verb + waktu (Malay for time) collocations. Linguistic metaphors in both corpora were manually analysed to identify incongruous vehicle terms and their target domain (time). Analysis of verb + time collocations in Close-Up and Full Blast Plus 4 revealed nine distinct verbs: have, take, spend, and leave. All identified collocations were metaphorical, predominantly conceptualising TIME as MONEY, VALUABLE COMMODITY, or LIMITED RESOURCE. A comparative analysis with the Malaysian Web Corpus showed striking similarities, with Malay waktu + verb collocations also conceptualising time as MONEY, VALUABLE COMMODITY, and LIMITED RESOURCE. The conceptual metaphor TIME IS MONEY emerged as a pervasive underlying system characterising all time-related collocations in both languages, reflecting cultural conceptualisation tied to time's quantification. The results of the current study have substantial theoretical and practical implications for integrating conceptual metaphor understanding in second language teaching.

Keywords: metaphor; time; corpus; textbook; Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Studies on vocabulary education have generally concentrated on high-frequency words, given that frequency information provides a practical foundation for optimising students' vocabulary learning efforts by ensuring that the words they learn are encountered often (P. Nation & Waring, 1997). In a language classroom, high-frequency words are more useful than less-frequent ones because students come across them more often and are more likely to memorise them (Vilkaitė-Lozdienė & Schmitt, 2020). Nonetheless, measuring the breadth of a learner's vocabulary knowledge, that is, the number of form-meaning pairings learnt, constitutes one of the simplest ways to evaluate lexical proficiency.

Vocabulary knowledge covers a more profound understanding of vocabulary than vocabulary size, as it evaluates knowledge of synonymy, multiple meanings, hypernymic relations, collocational knowledge, and so on, rather than merely the meanings of target words (Crossley & Skalicky, 2019; I. S. P. Nation, 2001; Qian, 2002; Schmitt, 2008, 2014). According to Qian (2002), the current language testing setting emphasises question types that positively influence language teaching and learning, making the depth of vocabulary knowledge more crucial than its breadth.

The focus on frequency analysis of words only, despite its benefits, deprives learners of understanding, as well as producing, non-literal and metaphorical language and the cognitive processes behind its production, namely image schema transformation, metaphor, and metonymy (Johnson, 2013; Lakoff, 2008). This limitation may impede students' ability to fully immerse themselves in the depth of language. An integrated method that combines frequency analysis with the exploration of metaphorical language is crucial for enhancing understanding and appreciation of language. Metaphor and metonymy are two conceptual mappings that help one understand and remember polysemous words, idioms and collocations (Pérez, 2017; Piquer-Píriz, 2011). It is also much easier for students to understand abstract ideas if they know how source domains and target domains interact in metaphorical mappings and how domains interact with subdomains in metonymic mappings. Therefore, it is imperative to recognise figurative language, which is significant, conventional, and pervasive in everyday language (Pérez, 2017), and the cognitive mechanisms that motivate it. Metaphors are common in everyday life (Lakoff & Johnson, 2008) and are purposive (Charteris-Black, 2004).

The previous practice was that students tended to be taught to memorise lists of meanings of words, including idioms and phrasal verbs, resulting in challenges for long-term retention. This approach generally caused a shallow understanding of language, because learners failed to use these words in context. Incorporating more contextualised and engaging learning strategies which support important use and understanding will help solve this problem. The modern perspective on metaphor may significantly enhance foreign language education, particularly vocabulary acquisition (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2008), as recognising common metaphorical patterns can facilitate learning. Contemporary English language textbooks based on everyday language are expected to feature metaphors, which are common in everyday language (Lakoff & Johnson, 2008). However, material designers often overlook applied cognitive linguistics research in textbook design (Piquer-Píriz, 2011). This may cause a gap between the cognitive processes underlying language use and language instruction. Combining insights from cognitive linguistics will help teachers produce better sources that not only improve understanding but also encourage deeper engagement with the language.

Despite substantial studies on conceptual metaphors across languages and cultures, research on the use of conceptual metaphors in textbooks for non-native students is limited. The present study investigates the usage of conceptual metaphors, particularly conceptual metaphors of time, in selected non-native English textbooks used in Malaysia. This analysis examines the use of these metaphors to express temporal concepts and their possible influence on students' comprehension of the English language. Through the analysis of these metaphors, we seek to underscore their significance in improving comprehension and assisting in vocabulary learning for non-native learners. Thus, the objectives of the current study are to identify the conceptual metaphors of time in selected English language textbooks and compare them to those used in Malay. While the metaphor identification reveals the extent to which conceptual metaphors are present in the textbooks, the comparison reveals how the two different languages conceptualise their experiences of time (Wei, 2011).

METAPHORS OF TIME

Metaphor is a linguistic representation where meaning changes from its expected domain to an unexpected one, causing semantic tension (Charteris-Black, 2004). In this process, a source domain is mapped onto a target domain (Lakoff & Johnson, 2008). For example, the metaphors *of a situation on the ground*, an *uphill battle to win seats*, and a *winnable candidates* map the source domain of war onto the target domain of elections. In these metaphors, words and phrases normally employed in the domain of war are applied to the domain of elections. These metaphors may appear unrelated, but in fact, they share the same conceptual metaphor. A conceptual metaphor is a grouping of metaphors that shows their ontological relationship, resolving the semantic tension among them (Charteris-Black, 2004). For example, the metaphors above belong to the conceptual metaphor ELECTION IS WAR.

Time is often conceptualised using metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). It is one of the most essential and mysterious components of human experience; while it cannot be seen, heard, or touched, it is present in our everyday life (Duffy & Feist, 2023). It is not the sole concept conveyed metaphorically; however, it is one of the rare concepts that can be articulated only using metaphors and imagery (Rigotti, 1986). Examining the etymology of the words used to describe time phenomena reveals only spatial or, at most, time-space origins. The evidence suggests that people have always attempted to conceptualise time, yet they have only been able to communicate it via metaphors. One realises that they are dealing with a metaphor, but they cannot help but use it (Rigotti, 1986).

A particularly dominant and culturally significant metaphor in English is TIME IS MONEY (Lakoff & Johnson, 2008). It frames time as a valuable and limited resource that can be saved, spent, wasted, invested, and budgeted. Expressions like "you're wasting my time," "this will save you hours," and "he's living on borrowed time" are pervasive, reflecting a cultural emphasis on efficiency, productivity, and the commodification of time. This metaphor not only structures language but also influences behaviour and societal norms.

The conceptual metaphor TIME IS MONEY, a particularly dominant and culturally significant metaphor in English (Lakoff & Johnson, 2008), for example, shows how the abstract concept of time (target domain) is understood in terms of the concrete concept of money (source domain). We comprehend abstract concepts by mapping them onto more concrete, experiential domains. The conceptual metaphor TIME IS MONEY frames time as a valuable and limited resource that can be saved, spent, wasted, invested, and budgeted. This is reflected in several expressions, such as "You're wasting my time," "How do you spend your time these days?" and "That flat tire cost me an hour," to use Lakoff and Johnson's (2008) examples. These linguistic metaphors are pervasive, reflecting a cultural emphasis on efficiency, productivity, and the commodification of time. This metaphor not only structures language but also influences behaviour and societal norms.

Time is also predominantly conceptualised through the conceptual metaphors of TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT and TIME IS A STATIONARY LANDSCAPE through which we move (Lakoff & Johnson, 2008). The former is evident in expressions like "the time will come," "the hours flew by," and "I'm looking forward to it," where time is an active entity moving towards or away from a stationary observer. The latter, ego-moving metaphor, is seen in phrases such as "we're approaching the deadline" and "we've passed the halfway point," positioning the individual as the one in motion through a static temporal landscape (Gentner et al., 2002).

Prayogi et al. (2022) examined the collocations of verbs with the predominant lexical item for the concept of time to compare English collocations with their Indonesian counterparts, specifically verb + waktu (time in Indonesia). The study used Mutual Information (MI) to determine the verb collocates in the Corpus of Contemporary American English for English and the Leipzig Corpus Collection for Indonesian. The study found that both English and Indonesian use the same metaphorical mappings: TIME IS MONEY, TIME IS A RESOURCE, TIME IS A COMMODITY, and TIME IS MOTION. However, there are considerable dissimilarities between the two languages, as English uses the conceptual metaphor TIME IS A BEING. On the other hand, Indonesian metaphors of time encompass TIME IS A FLEXIBLE OBJECT, TIME IS A CONTAINER, and TIME IS A VICTIM. The study's findings have implications for language learning, education, and cross-cultural communication.

Vocabulary learning used to be considered an overlooked component of language learning, but interest in it has surged since the 1990s (Meara, 1996; Schmitt, 1998). Most studies on vocabulary teaching have focused on the breadth of a learner's vocabulary knowledge or the quantity of form-meaning pairings they learn, often overlooking the depth of vocabulary, which necessitates a more profound understanding beyond mere form-meaning relations (Qian, 2002). Language consists not only of literal language and concrete meanings, but also of non-literal or metaphorical language and abstract meanings. Learning a second language presents many challenges for L2 learners, particularly in comprehending complex and abstract concepts expressed metaphorically. Metaphor helps them to understand and remember polysemous terms, idioms, collocations, and so on (Pérez, 2017; Piquer-Píriz, 2011). Understanding the link between source and target domains in metaphorical mappings facilitates students' learning and memory of these words, as well as their comprehension of abstract concepts. Furthermore, highlighting the source domain or origin of unfamiliar figurative expressions enhances learners' metaphoric awareness (Boers, 2000; Zhao et al., 2018a).

Being aware of conceptual metaphors can assist L2 learners in recognising the inference patterns related to figurative expressions and in remembering unfamiliar figurative expressions (Boers, 2000). This, in turn, can help L2 learners expand and retain vocabulary (Boers, 2000, 2004). There is a consensus in the literature that conceptual metaphors are useful for vocabulary education, particularly from a cognitive linguistic perspective (e.g., Beréndi et al., 2008; Boers & Lindstromberg, 2008; Csábi, 2004; Littlemore, 2009; Pérez, 2017; Piquer-Píriz, 2011). However, despite this recognition, textbook authors and material developers often overlook applied cognitive linguistic research (Lahlou & Abdul Rahim, 2023; Piquer-Píriz, 2011). While several studies have examined metaphors of time (e.g., Duffy & Feist, 2023; Evans, 2005; Khatin-Zadeh et al., 2023; Lakoff & Johnson, 2008; Prayogi et al., 2022), research on conceptual metaphors of time in English language textbooks, akin to other conceptual metaphors, remains limited.

In the context of Malaysia, many comparative linguistic studies have examined metaphors used in Malay and other languages, including English. Most of this research has focused on metaphors in newspapers, particularly in economics and finance (Awab & Norazit, 2013; Rajandran, 2013), illness (Lendik et al., 2017), body parts (Charteris-Black, 2003), and natural disasters (Chonga et al., 2020). Building on these studies, the present article extends the focus to metaphors of time in English language textbooks and compares their equivalents in the Malay language.

METHODOLOGY

Though textbooks are not the sole resource used in language teaching and learning, they are a critical secondary teaching source. For example, they provide challenging-to-take materials that may be more effective than teacher explanations. They also guarantee the teaching of English as a second or foreign language in schools using standard English (González, 2006; Lahlou & Abdul Rahim, 2023). Although English language educators may not rely solely on textbooks, they usually depend on the writers of textbooks to incorporate contemporary research into English language teaching. Moreover, the textbooks used by teachers of English as a second language in the classroom may impact their approach to vocabulary teaching. Thus, textbooks constitute a significant source of data for researchers who study vocabulary education.

The present article investigates the use of verb + time collocations and conceptual metaphors that underlie collocations with metaphorical meanings in the intermediate and upper-intermediate secondary English language textbooks used in Malaysian public secondary schools. The textbooks are *Close-Up* by Healan et al. (2018), which was published by National Geographic Learning, and *Full Blast Plus* four by Mitchell and Malkogianni (2019), which was published by MM Publications. The *Close-up* textbook is intended for students at the English Intermediate Level (B1). It has twelve units. The *Full Blast Plus* four textbook, in contrast, is designed for students at the English Upper Intermediate Level (B2) and includes eight units. Both selected English textbooks align with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), an international standard that facilitates the enhancement as well as assessment of learners' English language proficiency (e.g., Don et al., 2015).

Metaphor is a fundamental cognitive process that underlies a wide range of linguistic phenomena, such as polysemy, idioms, and proverbs, and it is likely pertinent to all proficiency levels (Boers, 2004). The current study, however, examines only intermediate and upper-intermediate secondary textbooks. This is because research suggests that students at the intermediate level, more than others, benefit most from teaching metaphors. According to Boers (2004), beginners lack sufficient lexical knowledge, while advanced students may be the most reluctant to take risks and avoid using metaphorical language because of uncertainty over its accuracy in the target language.

The current study employed *Sketch Engine*, a web-based Corpus Query System (CQS), because it is a rigorous tool for analysing language corpora and discerning common and uncommon language usage, used by linguists, educators, students, lexicographers, and translators. Moreover, publishers and universities choose it for its reliability and effectiveness in language analysis. We utilised the Word Sketch and Concordance tools in *Sketch Engine* to identify the conceptual metaphors of time employed in *Close-Up* and *Full Blast Plus 4*. The PDF versions of *Close-Up* and *Full Blast Plus* four were uploaded to the *Sketch Engine.* The word *time* was then searched using the Word Sketch tool, which displays all the collocates of the node word (the noun *time*, in this article), categorised into grammatical relations, as shown in Figure 1. Next, the column for verb-object collocations was selected (see Figure 2).

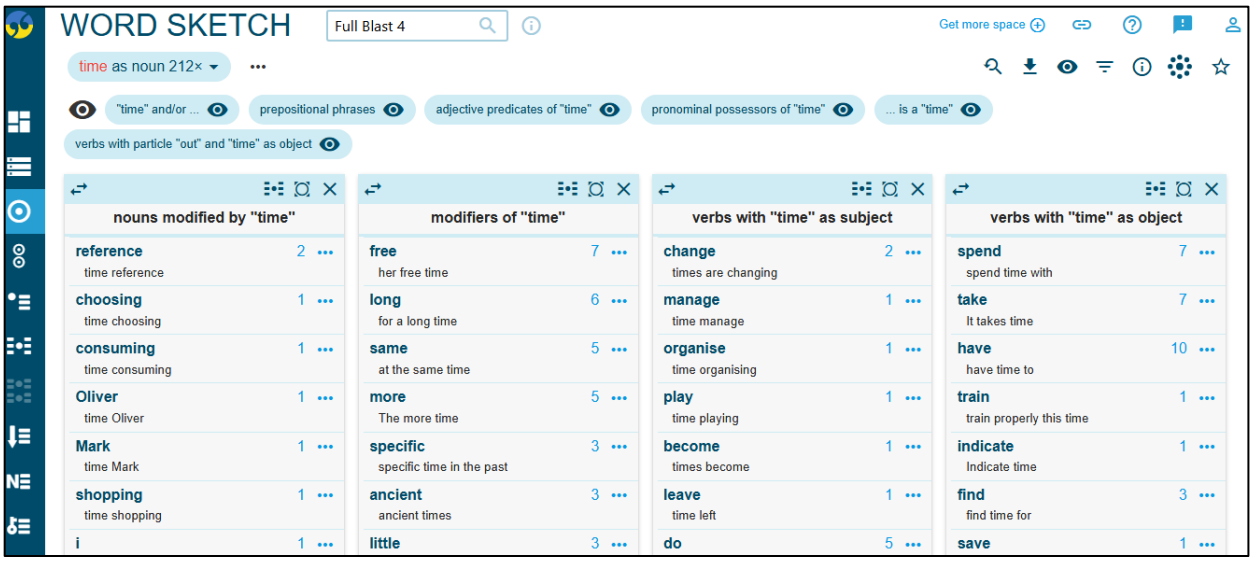


FIGURE 1. Word Sketch for 'time'

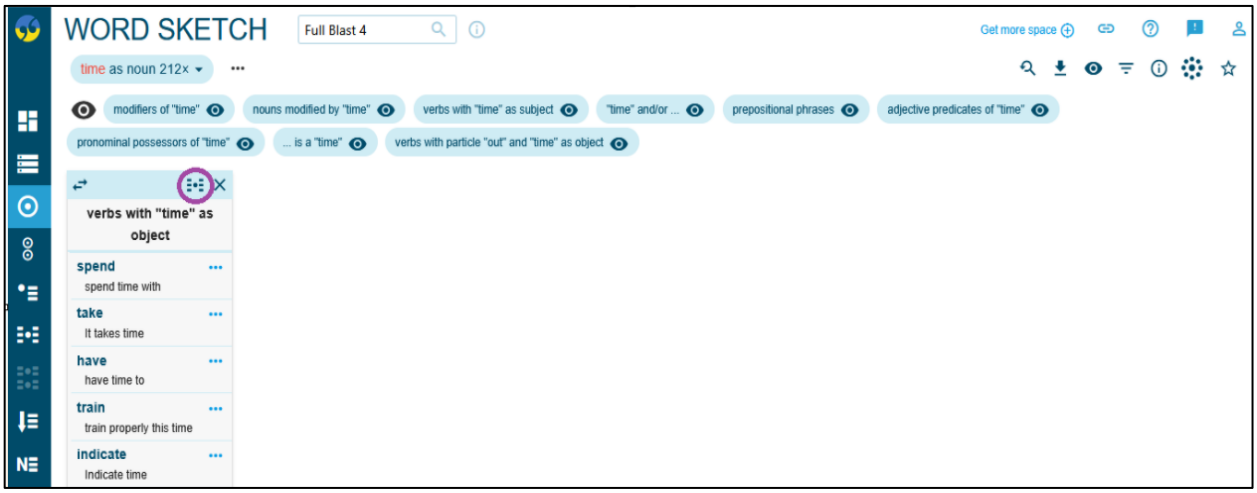


FIGURE 2. Word Sketch for 'time' verb-object collocations

Switching between the Word Sketch and Concordance tools made it straightforward to examine the node word in its context, as shown in Figure 3.

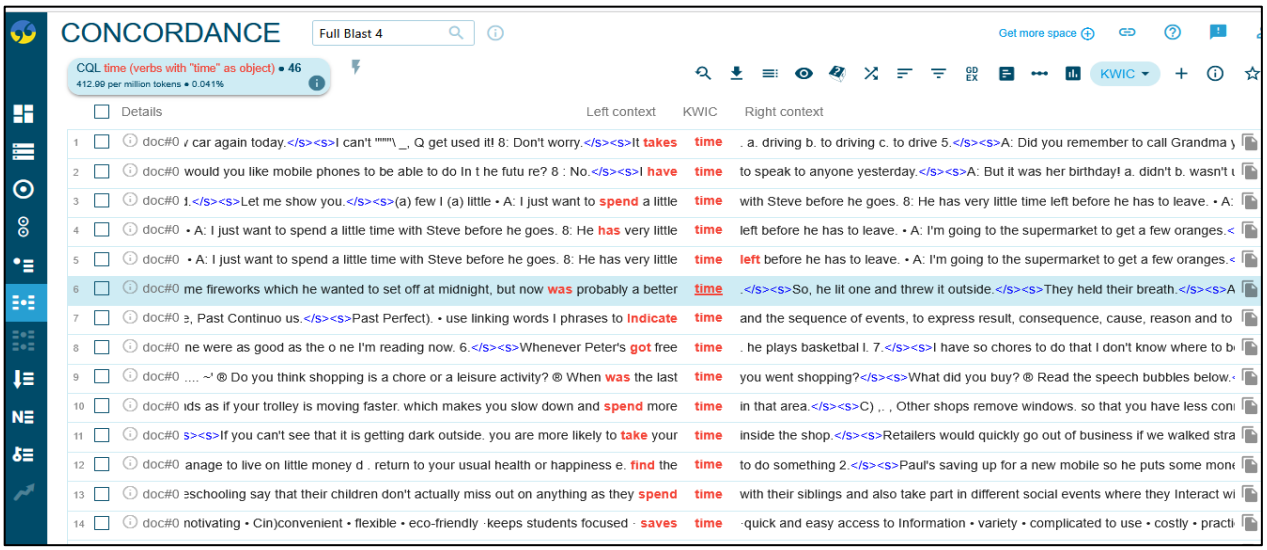


FIGURE 3. Concordance for 'time'

Nouns are important not just when they stand alone but also when they contribute to the expression of other meanings when used in distinct collocations (Tran & Waluyo, 2021). The current study examines the noun *time* that serves as an object of the verb, that is, verb + time, because verb-object collocations have garnered increasing interest due to their prevalence, complexity and flexibility of use (Zhao et al., 2018b). Furthermore, contemporary EFL textbooks predominantly include verb + noun collocations as the primary focus for collocation learning (Boers et al., 2014).

We also used Sketch Engine to access the British National Corpus (BNC), which consists of 96,132,981 words, including spoken, fiction, magazines, newspapers, academic works, and so forth. The BNC was used to further explore the collocational patterns and conceptual metaphors identified. The aim was to confirm the prevalence and patterns of time metaphors identified in the chosen textbooks, as well as check if they match those used in everyday life, i.e., whether they are conventional or novel.

To compare the conceptual metaphors in English and Malay, the Malaysian Web Corpus in Sketch Engine was investigated. It has 230 million words and is compiled using blogs, news websites, Wikipedia and other online texts. It gives a representative overview of contemporary Malay in Malaysia. Mirroring the earlier steps, the Word Sketch for *time* in Malay, *waktu*, was generated. It was refined to focus on verb + waktu, and the concordance lines were examined for time metaphors.

We manually analysed the concordance lines in the English and Malay corpora to identify linguistic metaphors for accuracy (Sardinha, 2008). A linguistic metaphor must include a vehicle term (source domain) that is incongruous with the surrounding context or the meaning derived from the co-text. A 'transfer of meaning' from the vehicle term (source domain) to the topic (target domain) can resolve this congruity. The meaning of the vehicle must differ from its basic meaning (Cameron, 2003, 2008). Examining the verb that co-occurs with the node word time in English verb + time collocations and the Malay node word waktu in verb + waktu collocations within their concordance lines will reveal their possible metaphoricity in the two languages. The findings will show the similarities and differences between the two languages' viewpoints of the concept of TIME. They will demonstrate how each language views time using verb + time/waktu collocations,

potentially expressing cultural attitudes and perceptions. The comparative analysis of the metaphorical uses of these words will help us understand how time is perceived and represented across diverse language contexts. We will compare the metaphorical mappings identified with the Master Metaphor List (Lakoff et al., 1991), which provides a framework for categorising conceptual metaphors in English (Mason, 2004). An expert in cognitive linguistics will also cross-check the results.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The data on verb + time collocations collected from *Close-Up* and *Full Blast Plus 4* via *Sketch Engine* showed a total of 9 verbs co-occurring with time (as an object) after meticulous filtration, excluding false tokens and inaccuracies. Of the nine verbs, four are used in both textbooks: *have*, *take*, *spend*, and *leave*. While the left verb collocates of *time*: *find* and *save* are used only in *Close-Up*, *manage*, *want*, and *waste* are used only in *Full Blast Plus 4*. It is worthy of note here that although the verb *manage* was not used with the node word *time* in *Close-Up*, its counterpart, *time management*, was frequently employed. An example is *that I therefore decided to investigate my time management before and after the implementation of the DMR scheme within my school*. These findings show that the difference between *Close-Up* and *Full Blast Plus 4* in terms of verb + time collocations is minimal. For instance, only *time* collocates *want* and *waste* are introduced in *Full Blast Plus 4*, despite the level difference between the intermediate and upper-intermediate levels, that is, *Close-Up* and *Full Blast Plus 4,* respectively.

This implies that between the two levels, the development in vocabulary related to verb + time collocations between the two levels is not as clear-cut as one might believe. Learners, therefore, may not see a notable improvement in their knowledge of these collocations while transitioning from the intermediate to the upper-intermediate. This finding further proves that collocational knowledge, which is an essential assessment criterion that is more important than the vocabulary size measure for vocabulary knowledge (Crossley & Skalicky, 2019; I. S. P. Nation, 2001; Qian, 2002; Schmitt, 2008, 2014), is neglected. The overall findings on the use, as well as frequency, of verb + time collocations in *Close-Up* and *Full Blast Plus 4* are reported in Figure 3.

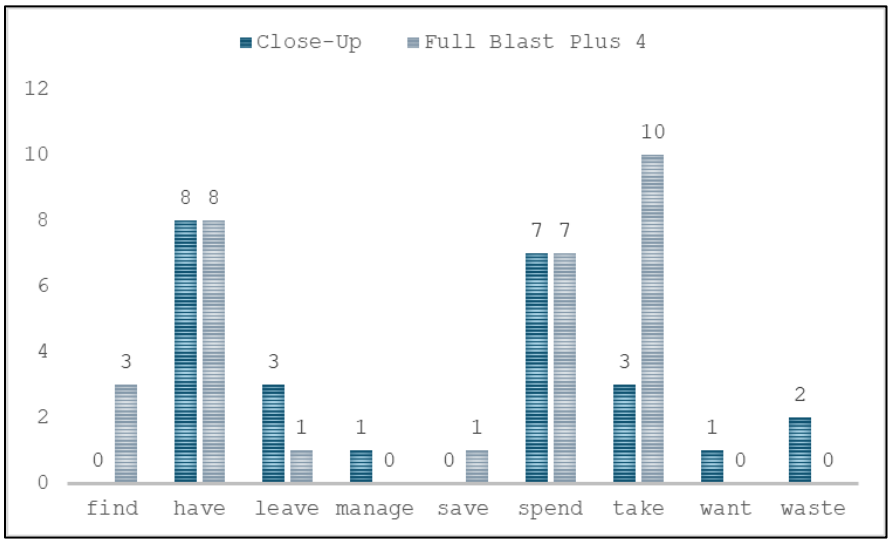


FIGURE 3. Time Collocates in Close-Up & Full Blast Plus 4

According to the BNC database, the nine verb + time collocations identified in the textbooks under investigation are among the most common verb + time collocations in English, ranking from the 2nd to the 46th, as seen in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Time collocates frequency and ranking in the BNC

Collocate	Freq.	Rank
find	417	8
have	4249	2
leave	143	28
manage	-	-
save	278	12
spend	2286	4
take	2697	3
want	67	46
waste	871	6

However, such data does not provide new information, as modern textbooks, particularly CEFR-based English textbooks for non-English-speaking students, typically use the 3000 most frequent word list. For example, the Oxford word lists, which contain high-frequency words that form the foundation of English vocabulary mastery, are categorised into CEFR levels ranging from A1 (beginning) to C1 (advanced) (Oxford learners' dictionaries; Cambridge English). This finding further proves that the vocabulary size measure is taken into account in designing these textbooks, which constitutes only one basic step in a learner's lexical proficiency. Exposing students to only the number and frequency of words, i.e., the breadth of vocabulary knowledge, should go hand in hand with their usage in a variety of contexts, gradually progressing from a language proficiency level to the next. Such an approach will encourage a deeper engagement with language and, therefore, enhance the overall communicative competency.

The CEFR-based English textbooks under investigation focus only on the breadth of a learner's lexical knowledge and do not consider metaphorical language in their learning objectives or overall learning. This aligns with Nacey (2013), who asserts that the CEFR neglects the modern linguistic concept of metaphor, minimising its significance for language users and viewing it only as a rhetorical device or figure of speech. In the same vein, Chen (2020) states that a 2001 CEFR document on reference-level descriptions did not mention the phrases *figure of speech*, *figurative language*, or *figurative expression*. It mentioned the word *metaphor* only three times: twice as metalanguage on pages 35 and 186, and once as a kind of fixed expression—frozen metaphor—along with phrasal idioms on page 110. However, as shown in Table 2, this study's findings show that metaphor is very common in temporal collocations; in other words, all the verb + time collocations are metaphorical expressions. This illustrates that metaphor is present in the textbooks under study, although it does not form part of the instructional design. This agrees with Lakoff and Johnson's (2008) postulation that metaphor is ubiquitous in everyday language.

Disregarding metaphor means disregarding the conceptual system underpinning native-speaker communication. According to Danesi (1992), the ability to metaphorise in the new language is the ultimate indicator of mastery. Therefore, language curricula must include metaphorical understanding as a necessary component of language learning; in other words, appreciating the ubiquitous character of metaphor in daily communication helps improve learners' comprehension and use of the language. This is because mastery of metaphorical language improves cultural integration and communication effectiveness and mirrors a deep understanding

of the new language. As a result, students who adopt metaphorical language are more adept at navigating social interactions and articulating nuanced meanings.

As indicated in Table 2, the analysis of verb + time collocations in the chosen textbooks showed that TIME is mostly conceptualised in terms of MONEY, VALUABLE COMMODITY, and LIMITED RESOURCE.

TABLE 2. Verb + time collocations and metaphor in Close-Up & Full Blast Plus 4

Textbook	Verb + Time Collocations	Source Domain	Examples
Full Blast Plus 4	find time	VALUABLE COMMODITY	(1) Trying to **find time** for your homework and hobbies can make you feel anxious and exhausted.
Close-Up	have time	VALUABLE COMMODITY	(2)(a) You will **have time** to read your notes.
Full Blast Plus 4			(2)(b) I **had the time** of my life.
Close-Up	have free time	LIMITED RESOURCE	(3)(a) Do you normally **have free time** during the week?
Full Blast Plus 4			(3)(b) Whenever Peter**'s got free time**, he plays basketball.
Close-Up	leave time	LIMITED RESOURCE	(4)(a) In the exam, remember to **leave** yourself enough **time** to write the story.
Full Blast Plus 4			(4)(b) He has **very little time** left before he has to leave.
Close-Up	manage time	MONEY	(5)(a) You need to **manage** your **time** well.
Full Blast Plus 4	save time		(5)(b) This way users can **save a lot of time**.
Close-Up	spend time	MONEY	(6)(a) She wants to **spend time** exploring the countryside around her village.
Full Blast Plus 4			(6)(b) Do you like **spending time** in nature?
Close-Up	take time	VALUABLE COMMODITY	(7)(a) Kelly **takes** less **time** to solve maths problems than the rest of the class.
Full Blast Plus 4			(7)(b) Roger **takes some time** off work and creates chaos at home.
Close-Up	want time	LIMITED RESOURCE	(8) Anna loved Paris, but **wanted more time** to visit it.
Close-Up	waste time	MONEY	(9) Try not to **waste time** trying to remember it.

Examples 5, 6, and 9 use verbs that collocate with time, that is, *manage*, *save*, *spend*, and *waste*, to refer directly to money. Examples 1, 2, 7, and 8 employ the left verb collocates of time: *find*, *have*, and *take*, to refer to valuable commodities that are treasured and used wisely. Examples 3 and 4 use the verb collocates of time, as in *have* (+ free time), *leave*, and *want,* to refer to limited resources that are finite and run out.

Overall, despite the neglect of metaphor in the design of the textbooks *Close-Up* and *Full Blast Plus 4*, the results showed that time metaphors are common in time + verb collocations. The conceptual metaphor TIME IS MONEY underlies all the time-related collocations and metaphorical expressions that have been identified. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2020), the conceptual metaphors TIME IS MONEY, TIME IS A RESOURCE, and TIME IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY constitute a system of subcategorisation relationships referred to as "entailment relationships" among these conceptual metaphors. In other words, TIME IS MONEY entails that TIME IS A LIMITED RESOURCE, which in turn entails that TIME IS A VALUABLE

COMMODITY. This subcategorisation system shows how our perspective of time is related to economic concepts, which shape our everyday schedule management.

The findings from *MalaysiaWac* revealed that the prevalent verb + waktu collocations in Malay are also understood in terms of the source domains: MONEY, VALUABLE COMMODITY, and LIMITED RESOURCE. Table 3 displays some examples of the predominant verb + waktu collocates, illustrating how these expressions embody Malaysian cultural conceptions of time as something valuable, a finite resource, and even money.

TABLE 3. Verb + waktu collocations and metaphor in Malaysia Web (MalaysiaWac)

Verb + Waktu Collocations	Source Domain	Examples
menghabiskan waktu	MONEY	"Jika Anda **menghabiskan waktu** mencari wang, Anda akan menghentikan kesenangan ragawi ini sementara waktu." (If you spend time looking for money, you will stop this physical pleasure for a while.)
membuang waktu		"Dan bagi orang yang mahukan hak, mereka tidak akan **membuang waktu** untuk membuktikan kebenaran diri mereka." (And for those who want rights, they won't **waste time** proving themselves right.)
memerlukan waktu	LIMITED RESOURCE	"apabila dalam akusisi tersebut mengalami overpay karena "" misvaluation "" maka proses penciptaan nilai memerlukan **waktu lebih lama lagi** bahkan gagal sama sekali." (if the acquisition experiences overpay due to ""misvaluation"" then the value creation process requires **more time** and may even fail completely.)
gunakan waktu		"Mari kita **gunakan waktu** yang bersisa di bulan Sya'ban ini untuk betul-betul menyiapkan diri memasuki bulan Ramadhan." (Let's **use the remaining time** in this month of Sha'ban to really prepare ourselves to enter the month of Ramadan.)
memerlukan waktu	VALUABLE COMMODITY	"Penonton **diberikan waktu** untuk berehat" (The audience **was given time** to rest)
memakan waktu		"Proses pembikinan karipap juga **memakan waktu**" (The process of making curry puffs also **takes time**.)

The conceptualisation of *waktu* (time) in Malay frequently employs verbs typically associated with financial transactions, a linguistic phenomenon that underscores its perceived value and fungibility. Expressions such as "menghabiskan waktu" (to spend time) and "membuang waktu" (to waste time) directly parallel the acts of expending or squandering monetary resources. This is evident in examples like "Jika Anda menghabiskan waktu mencari wang, Anda akan menghentikan kesenangan ragawi ini sementara waktu" (If you spend time looking for money, you will stop this physical pleasure for a while), where the temporal expenditure is explicitly linked to an economic pursuit, and "Dan bagi orang yang mahukan hak, mereka tidak akan membuang waktu untuk membuktikan kebenaran diri mereka" (And for those who want rights, they won't waste time proving themselves right), which frames the unproductive use of time as a loss.

This pervasive economic metaphor effectively reifies the abstract concept of time, transforming it into a quantifiable and manageable entity. The application of verbs like *menghabiskan* and *membuang* to *waktu* not only highlights its scarcity and inherent worth but also implicitly encourages a productive and efficient mindset. Such linguistic patterns suggest a cultural emphasis on time as a valuable resource to be carefully allocated and utilised, rather than

an infinitely flowing or passively experienced dimension, thereby shaping societal attitudes towards productivity, planning, and the consequences of temporal misallocation.

The Malay noun *waktu* (time) is further conceptualised as a finite and instrumental resource, essential for the attainment of objectives. This understanding is clearly reflected in common collocations such as "memerlukan waktu" (to need time) and "gunakan waktu" (to use time). For instance, the phrase "apabila dalam akusisi tersebut mengalami overpay karena 'misvaluation' maka proses penciptaan nilai memerlukan waktu lebih lama lagi bahkan gagal sama sekali" (if the acquisition experiences overpay due to "misvaluation" then the value creation process requires more time and may even fail completely) illustrates time as a necessary input, the insufficiency of which can lead to project failure.

Similarly, the exhortation "Mari kita gunakan waktu yang bersisa di bulan Sya'ban ini untuk betul-betul menyiapkan diri memasuki bulan Ramadhan" (Let's use the remaining time in this month of Sha'ban to really prepare ourselves to enter the month of Ramadan) highlights time as a tool or an allocation to be strategically deployed for a specific purpose, in this case, spiritual preparation. These linguistic patterns underscore a pragmatic perspective on time, where its availability dictates the feasibility and success of endeavours, reinforcing its role as a valuable and indispensable asset for achieving desired outcomes.

The conceptual metaphor TIME IS A COMMODITY is realised in Malay through linguistic constructions that portray time as a tangible entity capable of being possessed, transferred, and consumed. This is prominently demonstrated by the common collocations "memberikan waktu" (to give time) and "memakan waktu" (to take time). For instance, the phrase "Penonton diberikan waktu untuk berehat" (The audience was given time to rest) explicitly frames time as something that can be bestowed, akin to an allowance or a grant.

Similarly, the expression "Proses pembikinan karipap juga memakan waktu" (The process of making curry puffs also takes time) treats time as a consumable resource, absorbed or utilised by an activity. These examples collectively illustrate a strong conceptualisation of time as a finite and manageable commodity. This metaphor serves to concretise the abstract notion of time, enabling discourse around its control, purposeful allocation, and quantifiable duration, thereby rendering it more relatable to individuals' everyday experiences with material goods and resources.

From the analysis, the most specific conceptual metaphor, TIME IS MONEY, which characterises the entire system – TIME IS MONEY, TIME IS A LIMITED RESOURCE, and TIME IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY – is prevalent in both time + verb collocations and waktu + verb collocations. This suggests that both languages share a fundamental understanding of time as money, a commodity, and a finite resource. This time, conceptualisation can be traced back to deeply rooted historical influences and modern socioeconomic and industrial norms. In contrast to traditional societies, contemporary industrialised countries, including Malaysia, have implemented standardised and quantifiable practices that have significantly affected basic daily activities. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2020), a major reason time is considered a valuable commodity and a limited resource in our culture is the development of a work concept in contemporary Western society, where it is precisely quantified, leading to the customary practice of paying people on an hourly, weekly, or annual basis. Practices such as hourly wages, telephone message units, hotel room prices, and annual budgeting are very recent in human history.

In sum, the current study found that all cases of verb + time collocations in *Close-Up* and *Full Blast Plus 4* are metaphorical expressions despite some minor differences in terms of verbs. All these collocations are motivated by the conceptual metaphor TIME IS MONEY, as the entire system characterising TIME IS MONEY, VALUABLE COMMODITY, and LIMITED

RESOURCE. Comparing conceptual metaphors of time in English language textbooks for Malaysian students and in Malay offers significant insights into cross-linguistic conceptualisation and pedagogical implications. The study reveals a striking similarity: both English and Malay predominantly employ metaphors categorising "time" as MONEY, a VALUABLE COMMODITY, or a LIMITED RESOURCE. This shared underlying conceptual system, particularly the pervasive TIME IS MONEY metaphor, suggests a universal cognitive framework for understanding time as something quantifiable and manageable, likely influenced by modern industrialised societal norms where time is intrinsically linked to productivity and economic value (Lakoff & Johnson, 2020).

Despite this conceptual commonality, current English language textbooks often overlook explicit instruction on metaphorical language, viewing it merely as a rhetorical device rather than a fundamental aspect of linguistic competence (Nacey, 2013). By determining the conceptual metaphors of time and the extent to which they are present in the selected English language textbooks and contrasting the textbook content with real-world Malay usage, the analysis highlights a missed opportunity. Integrating the teaching of these conceptual metaphors can significantly enhance learners' lexical proficiency and deeper comprehension of abstract concepts, fostering not just linguistic accuracy but also a more nuanced understanding of cultural conceptualisations of time. Deeper interaction with metaphorical language improves students' vocabulary and helps them successfully negotiate cultural narratives and expressions about time. In addition, being aware of conceptual metaphor can help L2 students develop and retain vocabulary (Boers, 2000, 2004). Language proficiency relies on vocabulary retention. Therefore, learning the underpinning conceptual metaphors enables students to grasp the meanings and uses of lexical units. Knowing these metaphors allows students to draw more meaningful connections between new vocabulary and their background knowledge, improving both their understanding and memory.

CONCLUSION

This study has shed light on the pervasive yet often unacknowledged presence of conceptual metaphors of time within the English language textbooks used by Malaysian students. Despite curriculum objectives that may not explicitly address metaphorical language, our analysis of *Close-Up and Full Blast Plus 4* revealed that verb + time/waktu collocations frequently embody the conceptual metaphors of TIME IS MONEY, TIME IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY, and TIME IS A LIMITED RESOURCE. This finding underscores the ubiquitous nature of metaphor in everyday language, extending even to the seemingly straightforward concept of time. The comparative analysis with Malay demonstrated similar underlying conceptualisations of time, suggesting a potential cognitive commonality in how abstract concepts are understood across different linguistic contexts.

These findings can translate into English Language Teaching (ELT) pedagogy. Given that conceptual metaphors facilitate the understanding and retention of polysemous words, idioms, and collocations, explicitly incorporating cognitive linguistic approaches into material design could greatly benefit learners. Awareness of these metaphorical patterns can enhance learners' lexical proficiency and aid in comprehending complex, abstract concepts. Textbook authors and educators can consider integrating activities that highlight these conceptual mappings, moving beyond mere memorisation of word meanings.

Pedagogical activities could include structured tasks such as metaphor matching, where students are required to link time expressions (e.g., spend time, save time) with their foundational conceptual metaphors (e.g., TIME IS MONEY). Furthermore, engaging students in conceptual mapping discussions could encourage them to articulate how concrete source domains (such as money or resources) inform their understanding of abstract target domains (such as time), thereby fostering the identification of novel metaphorical expressions. Practical application could be facilitated through contextualised usage tasks, prompting students to employ various time metaphors appropriately within given scenarios and to articulate their conceptual underpinnings. Cross-linguistic comparison activities, which encourage students to analyse how time is metaphorically expressed in English and Malay, would further cultivate deeper conceptual understanding and cross-cultural linguistic awareness. Moreover, creative writing tasks that mandate the deliberate incorporation of diverse time metaphors could enable students to explore the nuanced expressive potential of these linguistic structures. These activities, by making the invisible cognitive scaffolding of language visible, can empower students to move beyond rote memorisation towards a more profound and intuitive grasp of English vocabulary and its expressive capabilities.

Building on the findings of the current study, future research could investigate the other collocations and functions of the word *time* beyond the verb + time collocations, including time (subject) + verb collocations, adjective + time collocations, and preposition + time (complement) collocations. Such exploration would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how time is conceptualised in different linguistic contexts. Research can expand the data set to cover more textbooks at all proficiency levels, from beginner to advanced. This will map the introduction and complexity of time metaphors comprehensively. It can also include other languages used in Malaysia, such as Mandarin, Tamil, and Punjabi, for comparison with English conceptual metaphors. Investigations could also move beyond the concept of time to analyse how other abstract concepts are metaphorically represented in educational materials. A crucial next step involves shifting from analysis to application by conducting empirical studies that assess the effectiveness of the proposed pedagogical interventions. Such research could measure the impact of explicit instruction on learners' metaphorical awareness and their ability to comprehend and retain new vocabulary. Additionally, exploring learners' cross-linguistic and cultural understanding of these metaphors would provide deeper insights for creating more effective and culturally sensitive teaching materials.

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