

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to present five sections including: the discussion of research background, research question, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of key terms, and a brief discussion about the organization of the paper. In detail, the discussion of the points above is explained in the following parts.

### 1.1 Background

The advancing use of multimedia technology in education and the increasing importance of multimodal communication especially in English as a Foreign Language teaching and learning process, has provided many opportunities in the educational field (Jauhara et al., 2021). In order to cater to students' different learning styles effectively, the teacher should be able to interpret a wide range of multiple representations of content such as images, video, text, and audio (Sankey et al, 2010) as well as teach various types of materials including diagrams, textbooks, and photographs (Ajavi, 2012). Moreover, as a way to develop high-quality English textbooks, the exploration of multimodality in existing EFL textbooks is needed (Liu & Qu, 2014).

The basic assumption of multimodality is that meanings are created through many semiotic resources. Relating to the educational context, specifically the learning materials, Leander (2007) stated that the structure of textbooks is organized by the domination of visual images. In educational materials, the relationship between image and writing has been considered as important especially regarding the role and quality of visual images in a text (Jewitt, 2002, 2006; Kress & Bezemer, 2007). Moreover, it is required to have an ability to understand the combination of various modes for making meaning in understanding as well as constructing texts. As it is argued by Royce (2002) that in order to foster students' multimodal communicative competence, teachers should be able to gain a deep understanding of multimodal communicative competence

through analyzing the role of the visual images in the language including in the learning materials such as textbook.

In language teaching, textbooks are considered as the essential learning materials that are typically filled with combinations of visual images and other visual representations (Weninger, 2018). The inclusion value of visual images in textbooks globally receives considerable attention and has been recognized by some researchers. To begin with, it is found by several studies that visual images and graphs in science textbooks indeed offered the advantage over language as a modal affordance (O'Halloran, 2005; Lemke, 1998; Guo, 2004). This finding also applies in the subject English classroom in which the language becomes the communicative means of domination, there are significant multimodal ensembles both in speech and written form (Jewitt, 2008). The significance is that the realization of meanings through visual representations and even through other modes such as image, gesture, proxemics, and so forth (Kress et al., 2005). In a similar vein, Chan et al (2012) explained that textbooks incorporating both functional pedagogical purposes and decoration features can be used as a learning media to foster students' learning motivation, to promote better learning and aesthetic experiences.

In addition, Kress (2010) argues that most often there is subordination between written language and visual images that play a role as the primary mode for the readers to construct meaning. Nisak and Rukmini (2021) also state that visual images enable students to gain a better understanding of meaning making. Thus it is accepted that the use of visual images in textbooks, especially EFL textbooks, show the positive impacts on pedagogical implications. Therefore, in order to take advantage of those affordances, textbook writers and teachers must understand how to read multimodal texts so they will be able to offer some guidance to the learners such as how the visual modes work together with other modes to create meaning (Nisa & Rukmini, 2021).

Conversely, although the use of visual images in EFL textbooks has an essential role, there are some studies inferred that not all visual images are pedagogically effective to help learners in understanding the content since students are not always

properly interpret the visual images with the intended meaning of the text (Boling et al, 2004; Elkins, 1998; Thomas, 1978). According to all these reasons, the depth exploration of visual images in terms of characteristics and functions are needed to be undertaken.

To date, the analysis of visual images or image-text relations in the textbook through Systemic Functional Multimodal perspective has been largely conducted. Some of the researchers have applied multimodal analysis by focusing on analyzing a representational meaning (Fitriana & Wirza, 2020; Purwaningtyas, 2020; Royce, 2015), or a representational meaning and an interpersonal meaning (Hermawan & Rahyono, 2019), representational meaning and interactive meaning (Torres, 2015), while others analyze three of the metafunctions; representational, interactive, and compositional meaning (Elmiana, 2019; Lestari, 2022). In addition, some of the researchers have applied multimodal analysis to analyze various EFL textbook in Indonesia: three Indonesian senior high school EFL textbooks based on the Curriculum 2013 (Elmiana, 2019), “Bahasa Inggris” textbook for 10th grade students and “Pathway to English” textbook for 10th grade students (Lestari, 2022), and “Bahasa Inggris: When English Rings a Bell” textbook for 7th grade students (Jauhara, Emilia, Lukmana, 2021).

Referring to the previous studies mentioned above, it is found that none of them have analyzed the latest EFL textbook which was published in 2022 based on the new curriculum, Emancipated curriculum, entitled “English for Nusantara” specifically in terms of pedagogical representation of visual images. Accordingly, in the light of these issues, the present research attempts to analyze representational meaning of the visual images in Indonesian junior secondary school EFL textbook through the framework proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). The research question was formulated as follows:

## **1.2 Research Question**

In light of the background of this research, thus the research was conducted to answer the following research question:

How are the representational meanings of the visual images realized in the 7th grade of junior high school EFL textbook?

### **1.3 Aim of the Research**

As formulated in the research question, the purpose of this research is to investigate the representational meanings of the visual images in one of EFL textbooks. One of the primary theoretical frameworks used in this research is the theory of visual images known as KvL which was proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) in their book *Reading images: grammar of visual design*. Therefore, in order to answer the research question above, the representational meanings of visual image were applied in the analysis. An in depth explanation of this theoretical framework will be further discussed in chapters II and III.

### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

Based on the research question as well as the aims, this research limits the area of the research by focusing on investigating the realization of representational meaning of visual images in the Indonesian EFL textbook. As the theoretical framework proposed, the Visual Grammar Design by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), the investigation focuses on the grammar of visual design specifically on representational meaning of the visual images in the EFL textbook. Additionally, the textbook analyzed is one of widely used junior high school EFL textbooks in Indonesia: “English for Nusantara” which is a textbook for 7th grade junior high school students published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture in 2022 based on the Emancipated curriculum as the latest curriculum in Indonesia education system.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study has some significance in terms of theoretical advancement and practical implication. Theoretically, this research provides empirical evidence as further knowledge about discourse analysis, especially in multimodality relating to the EFL textbook in order to contribute to the development of these theories. Specifically,

it enhances the theoretical basis of how the representational meaning of images is realized in the EFL textbook in Indonesia.

In a practical account, the analysis of representational meaning of visual images in the EFL textbook supports the teacher to maximize the use of visual images and other multimodal resources to provide an appropriate multimodal learning. Therefore, it enables the students to achieve communicative competence by empowering visual images as well as verbal text in the textbook.

In addition, this research also may be used for other researchers or readers who are interested in a similar study as this research.

## **1.6 Clarification of key terms**

Several important terms that are used in this study include multimodality, multimodal analysis, grammar of visual design, and textbook. In order to prevent misunderstanding, it will be explained in the following paragraphs:

### **1.6.1 Multimodality**

According to Kress (2010) describes multimodality as the human state of communication. In which proposed the diverse ways of both co-deployed and co-contextualized in the making of specific meaning that was realized through multiple semiotic resources for instance visual, image, sound, etc (Thibault, 2001). In this study, the term multimodality can be understood as the method that combines with systemic functional linguistics (SFL) in order to understand the multimodal text such as verbal and visual (Hermawan, 2013).

### **1.6.2 Multimodal Analysis**

In order to proceed from a multimodal perspective to study communication or interactions, researchers have developed a variety of ways of analysis (Pirini et al., 2018). In this study, the approach to multimodal data analysis refers to the theory of visual images or KvL which was proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) in their

book *Reading images: grammar of visual design*. This framework enables the researcher to more detailed analyze the visual communication (Ledin & Machin, 2020).

### 1.6.3 Visual Grammar

In this study, the researcher focused on analyzing the textbook based on the theory of Visual Grammar by Kress and Leeuwen (2006). The theory used to analyze the images or the combination of image and text. One meaning that will be the focus of this study was the representational meaning, visual social semiotic additionally.

### 1.6.4 Representational Meaning

Representational meaning explores the relationship between the represented participants and things, the action that they perform, and the setting of the circumstances (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

## 1.7 Organization of the Paper

The paper is organized into five chapters and each chapter consists of its own sub chapters. The organization of the paper is described in more detail as the following:

**Chapter I** is an Introduction section of the paper. This chapter explains the background of the research. Furthermore, this chapter also provides the research question, aims of the research, scope of the research, significance of the research, clarification of key terms, and organization of the paper.

**Chapter II** is a Literature Review. This chapter contains a range of theoretical framework that underlining the issue presented in chapter I. Moreover, this chapter also functions as the foundation of data analysis to be referred to in chapter IV.

**Chapter III** explains the Research Methodology that used in the research. It covers several sub chapters such as research design, data and source of data, data collection, data analysis, data condensation, data display, and data conclusions.

**Chapter IV** presents the description of the Findings and the Discussions of visual analysis with a multimodal approach of an EFL textbook for seventh graders junior high school students by focusing on the representational meaning. This chapter

supplies the answer to the research question. In addition, the discussions elaborate the findings according to the theories that explained in chapter II.

**Chapter V** provides the Conclusion and Recommendations. This chapter offers a summary of all the prominent discussions that have been presented previously in chapter I to chapter IV. Additionally, the relevant recommendations regarding the issue for further research are proposed.