CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the necessary background information for the research topic and includes the following sections: background of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitations, organization of the thesis, and definition of terms.

1.1. Background of the Study

The current digital age has led to the integration of technology into our daily lives, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic (Adami et al., 2020; Lim, Toh, et al., 2022). This has resulted in an increase in multimodal practices, such as using social media for communication and information sharing, which have the potential to improve students' multiliteracy skills (Vinogradova, Linvillle, & Bickel 2011) and foster critical thinking about socio-political issues (Ajayi, 2008). It is therefore imperative that teachers incorporate digital and multimodal practices into their instruction in order to prepare students for their future academic and career endeavors (Yi & Angay-Crowder, 2016).

In line with this, the recently revised Indonesian curriculum, Kurikulum Merdeka, highlights multimodal competence as one of the goals of the English subject (Agency for Education Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, 2022).To achieve this goal, language instruction should incorporate multimodal learning resources, such as texts with visual images and verbal modes. To understand and teach these resources, teachers require a systematic metalanguage, which refers to a language used to describe language, images, and other meaning-making resources and their interactions (Lim, Cope, & Kalantzis, 2022; Unsworth, 2006). In the educational context, a pedagogic metalanguage is necessary, as it is both theoretically grounded and practically useful in the classroom (Lim et al., 2022).

Several studies on metalanguage have explored the meanings conveyed by visual images in various subjects and have focused on ideational and interpersonal meanings as well as intersemiotic complementarity in both verbal and visual contexts (Hermawan & Rahyono, 2019; Koutsikou, Christidou, Papadopoulou, and Bonoti, 2021; Nur'graha & Hermawan, 2020; Sugianto, Andriyani, & Prasetyo,

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2021). However, there is a lack of research on how teachers use multimodal texts in their teaching practices (Hermawan & Rahyono, 2019; Koutsikou et al., 2021). Similarly, studies on metalanguage in English textbooks have primarily examined interpersonal, ideational, textual, and intersemiotic meanings (Damayanti, 2014; Dewi, Rukmini, & Saleh, 2020; Jauhara, Emilia, & Lukmana, 2021; Liu & Qu, 2014; Sugianto, Prasetyo, and Asti, 2022). Nonetheless, the exploration of how teachers employ multimodal texts in English classrooms, particularly regarding the types of metalanguage used, is still lacking (Dewi et al., 2020; Elmiana, 2019; Haiyan Kelly, 2018; Jauhara et al., 2021; Liu & Qu, 2014).

While studies have analyzed the use of visual images in science and English textbooks, there is a need for research on the pedagogical application of visual metalanguage (Galloway, Dobbs, Olivo, & Madigan, 2019; Gebhard, Chen, & Britton, 2014; Moore & Schleppegrell, 2014; Salbego, Heberle, & Balen, 2015; Symons, Palincsar, & Schleppegrell, 2017). Studies have examined how teachers can utilize systemic functional linguistics (SFL) metalanguage to enhance students' understanding of historical, scientific, and literary explanations (Gebhard et al., 2014; Symons et al., 2017). These studies highlight the potential of metalanguage as an instructional tool to guide students' comprehension and development of academic language (Galloway et al., 2019; Moore & Schleppegrell, 2014). However, there is a gap in research regarding the application of metalanguage to teach multimodal texts (Brown, 2022; Callow, 2006, 2020; Papademetriou & Makri, 2015).

A few studies have explored the integration of visual metalanguage in teaching multimodal texts. For example, Callow (2006) focused on visual literacy and critical viewing skills in a literacy program, while Papademetriou and Makri (2015) examined the implications of visual grammar metalanguage for teaching literacy, finding that students consciously incorporated visual elements using principles of visual metalanguage. Another study by Brown (2022) aimed to enhance students' critical visual literacy through the redesign of multimodal advertisements. These studies underscore the significance of metalanguage, explicit teaching, and scaffolding in developing visual and multimodal literacy skills.

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Despite the existing research, the integration of linguistic metalanguage with visual metalanguage in multimodal teaching requires further exploration (Brown, 2022; Papademetriou & Makri, 2015). Given the limited research on teachers' application of visual metalanguage, particularly in the Indonesian context, this study aims to fill the gap by investigating the visual and verbal metalanguage used by a teacher to teach multimodal texts in an Islamic private school in West Java, Indonesia.

1.2.　　Formulation of Research Questions

In line with the background of the study, the formulation of the research questions is as follows:

1. How did the visual images and the verbal text work together to construct the ideational, interpersonal, and textual meaning of learning resources utilized by an English teacher in a junior high school?
2. How did the teacher utilize the visual and verbal metalanguage in teaching English with multimodal resources?
3. How did the teacher verbal instruction in teaching with multimodal resources differ following the instructional coaching?

1.3　　Purposes of the Study

With regards to the research questions posed, this study aims to:

1. Investigate the ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings of visual images and verbal text and their intersemiotic relations of learning resources used English teacher in a Junior High School located in West Java.
2. Investigate the utilization of visual and verbal metalanguage by the English teacher in the instructional process, specifically focusing on how these linguistic contribute to the instruction of English using multimodal resources.
3. Compare and contrast the variations in the teacher's verbal instructional strategies when employing multimodal resources before and after undergoing instructional coaching.

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1.4   The Significance of the Study

This study endeavors to examine the nature of multimodal texts used by an English teacher and the metalanguage employed in teaching with such resources. It is believed that the findings of this study will have implications for three key areas:

1. Theoretically, the study will provide valuable insights to EFL teachers, language researchers and those interested in expanding research in SFL metalanguage and multimodality.

2. Practically, the study can offer practical insights for educators on leveraging visual and verbal elements in language instruction through multimodal resources and on designing more engaging and comprehensive learning experiences for students.

3. For policy maker and curriculum developer, the insights gained from this study can guide the selection and creation of learning materials that effectively utilize visual-verbal modes, enhancing students' learning experiences and promoting their multimodal literacy skills.

4. For teacher development program, the study can help teacher development equip the teachers to use metalanguage to scaffold multimodal texts, thereby improving their instructional practices.

1.5   Limitations of the Study

This present study aimed to explore the nature of learning materials used by an English teacher in a junior high school located in West Java, Indonesia. The focus of the investigation was limited to only four multimodal texts and only one teacher participant.

1.6   Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is organized into five distinct chapters. Chapter One serves as an introduction and provides a comprehensive overview of the background of the study, research questions, objectives, significance, limitations, and organization of the proposal. Additionally, key terms used throughout the study are defined in this section. Chapter Two reviews relevant literature and theories related to the study, including Multimodality, Systemic Functional Linguistics, and the Grammar of Visual Design. Chapter Three outlines the methodology of the study, including the

research design, selection of the research site, participants, methods for data collection, and strategies for data analysis. Chapter Four presents the findings and discussion of the study. Chapter Five provides the conclusion, implications, limitations, and further research.

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