# CHAPTER IINTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces basic information regarding the study. It starts with an elaboration of the background to the study followed by identification of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study and the definition of key terms.

## Background of the Study

Reading is one of the most crucial skills in language learning. Reading allows students to speak more communicatively, which is the main goal of language development. In essence, reading is a physical and psychological process, where we visually observe the writing and think to process the information contained in the reading. This is in line with (Satriani, 2018) states that reading is one of the abilities that students must learn since the goal of teaching reading comprehension is to help students understand the meaning of the text. By reading, students can expand knowledge, add information, increase knowledge and add ideas. There are several benefits of reading according to (Zaif, 2011): first, reading can improve students' self-development, and students can increase their knowledge so that their reasoning power develops and has broad insights that will be useful for themselves and others. Second, reading can fulfil intellectual demands, by reading books and other reading sources such as newspapers and news and articles on the internet, knowledge increases and vocabulary increases as well as trains imagination and thinking power so that intellectual satisfaction is fulfilled. Third, the fulfilment of the interests in life. Fourth, reading can increase students' interest in a field.

In this recent era, teachers are encouraged to use various types of modes to teach reading text in more innovative ways, called multimodality. Multimodal literacy is defined as the use of several modalities (visuals, videos, graphics, animations, sounds, music, gestures, and facial expressions) to convey meaning (Kress, 2010). The use of multimodality in teaching reading assists students to participate in different reading tasks; in other words, switching modes from visual to verbal or simultaneously can help students learn, appreciate, and interpret complicated concepts in English (Early, 2008).

Nevertheless, the use of multimodality represents a complicated set of obstacles for certain English teachers from various schools. This is because the teachers only depend on textbooks. Some EFL teachers, especially in ASEAN, seem to apply flat literacy by only focusing on paper-based resources which encourages the creation of a monotonous atmosphere (Jaksik, 2017). Besides, today's teachers tend to integrate form-focused instruction, particularly error correction without paying attention to the effectiveness of the way or mode of communicating material to students (Vasilopoulos, 2008).

Some preliminary studies related to this matter. First, most of them focused on the teacher's perspective on multimodality in the learning process (Fajriah, 2017); (Denton, Sewell, & Shawn, 2011); (Rakhmawati, 2016) ; (Ekúi & YakÕúÕka, 2015) ; (Jiang, 2016) ; (Sefarini, 2010); (Stowe, 2012). The results showed that the study indicates that presenting and receiving information in a multimodal format helps teachers present the material more attractively. The multimodal text expands the resulting interpretation, allowing the reader to capture the message presented in a visual image. Second, some teachers have obstacles and challenges in implementing multimodality (Ajayi, 2012); (Adoniou, 2015); (Jaksik, 2017) it showed that there are obstacles in integrating complex multimodal resources combining and designing meaning in the textbooks they teach. Then the teacher does not focus on the use of gestures in teaching reading. Third, (Tomsett, 2013), (Jewit, 2015) and (Walsh, 2015) focused on multimodal pedagogy and showed that multimodal engagement is considered to be substantially more challenging than the delivery methods of traditional written assessment methodologies, so learning outcomes are achieved in innovative and meaningful ways at a depth and breadth not captured through traditional assessment approaches. Fourth, (Jacobs, 2016) , (Bearne, 2006), (Jewitt c. , 2005) (Unsworth & Chan, 2009) and (Synder, 2010) focused on multimodal academic literacies, showed that the involvement of academic literacy in multimodal helps students gain a better understanding of how academic arguments are constructed. In addition, the use of this methodology will help improve understanding of communication. And the last, (Yusuf, Widiati, & Sulistyo, 2017) the results showed that multimodal feedback provision could improve pre-service teachers’ pedagogical competence.

Based on some of these studies, it can be concluded that most of the previous studies only focused on the multimodal analysis itself. Therefore, an analysis of its application is needed from the perspective of the teacher's understanding. The researcher wants to know how the concept of multimodality is understood by an EFL teacher who has an important position in the teaching of reading in the EFL class. It is necessary to conduct research in describing how an EFL teacher understands multimodal as suggested by the curriculum. Hence, this research is expected to provide several ways that will assist teacher in applying multimodality in teaching reading.

## Reasons for Choosing the Topic

As one of the supports in teaching English in the classroom, it is important to implement multimodality in teaching reading. Therefore, the reasons for choosing this topic are:

1. Multimodal literacy with its basic characteristics is considered important to be applied in a pedagogical context.
2. Students should be multimodal literate because, in their future workplaces, they will be required to be proficient in ICT skills.

## Research Question

This study attempts to examine teachers' understanding on multimodality in teaching reading to young learners. To this end, the following question is posed:

1. What is the teacher’s understanding on multimodality in teaching reading to young learners?
2. What types of modes do teacher believes effective to teach reading?

## Research Objectives

Based on the research questions mentions before, thus the purpose of this research is to investigate an EFL teacher’s understanding on multimodality in teaching reading to young learners in Garut.

## The Scope and Limitation of the Study

This research is intended to investigate how an EFL teacher understands multimodality and its application in teaching reading in junior high schools involving an English teacher in a suburban school. To simplify this research, the researcher limited the research only about teacher’s understanding. The participant of this study were chosen by using sampling. The participant is an English teacher. This research started in May 2022, it takes two to three meetings to collect specific data on how multimodality is applied by the teacher in teaching reading in EFL classes.

## The Significance of the Study

This research is expected to provide the following contributions:

1. Theoretically, the results of this study are expected to verify previous findings in the application of multimodality.
2. Practically, this research is expected to provide information for teachers about their knowledge about the application of Multimodal in the teaching of reading.

In addition, both theoretically and practically, this research is expected to be useful for other researchers as a reference for conducting other research related to this topic.

## Definition of Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, the following is an explanation of some of the key terms used in this study.

1. Multimodality

In this case, multimodality concern the representational and meaning-making potential of communicative modes such as language, writing, image, movement, gesture, and sound which are "socially- shaped resources for making meaning" (Kress G. , 2003).

1. Mode

Mode is a socially shaped and culture has given semiotic resources for making meaning. Image, writing, layout, music, gesture, speech, moving image, soundtrack and 3D objects are examples of modes used in representation and communication. (Kress G. , 2010)

1. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is a reading activity that seeks to understand the contents of the reading/text as a whole (Somadayo, 2011).

1. Young Learners

In this case, (Slatterly & Willis, 2003) classify young learners into two, namely children who are 7–12 years old (when they move from primary to secondary school) and those who are under 7 years old.