

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of Study

Changes in education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have had a major impact on learning methods, particularly in the teaching of English as a foreign language. The learning process is no longer solely focused on the teacher as the sole source of information, but rather emphasizes student involvement as active participant in the learning process. In reality, English teacher often faces diverse classroom situations, with students who have various characteristics, ranging from language abilities, learning styles, motivation, to cultural backgrounds and levels of understanding of the material. This variation requires teacher to implement flexible and inclusive teaching methods in order to achieve maximum educational goals (Hadiyanto, 2024).

However, in many English as a foreign language learning situation, the methods applied are still dominated by traditional rules that rely solely on texts and verbal explanations. This approach is often ineffective in reaching all students, especially those who prefer visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learning methods. This causes a number of students to have difficulty understanding the lessons, participate less in learning activities, and show low motivation in learning. This condition shows that the use of one type of learning method is not sufficient to meet the diverse characteristics of students in English teaching (Nazarova, 2024).

As technology and research in applied linguistics develop, multimodality has emerged as an important approach in language teaching. Multimodality involves the use of various semiotic forms, including spoken and written language, images, colors, body movements, facial expressions, sounds, videos, and digital platforms to convey meaning during the learning process (Kress,2009). In English language teaching, multimodality provides

Teacher with the opportunity to integrate various teaching resources and media so that students can more easily understand English language material that is presented in a realistic and contextual manner. This method is believed to address differences in student characteristics by offering a variety of ways to understand the material.

A recent study indicates that English language teacher who use a multimodal approach in teaching observe an increase in student participation and mastery of the subject matter. For example, research by (Septianing Putri *et al.*, 2024) states that the use of multimodal learning resources, such as text, visuals, audio, and interactive digital materials, supports students in digesting lessons and increases their engagement during learning sessions. The results of this study show that multimodality has the ability to enrich the learning experience for students from diverse backgrounds.

However, the success of multimodality is largely determined by the role and tactics of teacher in selecting and applying various learning methods. This means that the application of multimodality involves more than just the use of technology or tools, but also how teacher are able to combine these various resources to meet the diverse needs of students, both pedagogically and contextually. This point is crucial because without an appropriate pedagogical approach, multimodality can only function as a variation of tools without having a significant impact on student understanding (Fadillah *et al.*, 2023).

Most studies still focus on teacher' general understanding of the concept of multimodality and their experiences in applying several learning methods in the classroom. A significant gap exists in study conducted by (Bukhari & Yunus, 2024) revealed that teacher of English as a Second Language had positive views on the application of multimodality and recognized that the use of various types of resources, such as visual, audio,

and other elements, could increase student participation and language skills. However, this study focuses more on broad perceptions and the application of multimodality only in the context of general learning preferences without linking it deeply to responses to differences in individual student characteristics (such as variations in language skills, learning styles, special needs, or student motivation).

The majority of current scientific works have not yet conducted in-depth exploration of the concrete practices of teacher in adjusting their multimodal approaches according to various student characteristics, such as variations in abilities, cognitive needs, learning styles, and different learning motivation dynamics. On the one hand, the research shows that teacher understand the concept of multimodality and apply it in general; on the other hand, analysis of how differences in student characteristics influence the choice, combination, or adjustment of modes used by teacher in the context of teaching English as a foreign language is still very limited.

From an Islamic perspective, diversity is part of Sunnat Ullah that must be accepted and appreciated. This is reflected in Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ۝ ١٣

Which states that Allah SWT created humans with various differences so that they would know and respect one another. This verse emphasizes that differences should not be used as a reason for different treatment, but rather as a basis for being fair and trying to understand one another. This value is highly relevant in the context of education, where teacher are expected to treat each student fairly according to their individual needs and characteristics.

In the process of learning English, the values of fairness and appreciation for diversity can be realized by implementing inclusive learning methods, one of which is through multimodality. By offering a variety of learning modes, teacher provide equal opportunities for each student to access and understand the material according to their individual learning styles and abilities. Therefore, the application of multimodality not only functions as a teaching technique, but also reflects Islamic values that promote fairness, diversity, and humanity in education.

Although research on multimodality in English language teaching is advancing, there are still limitations to studies that specifically explore how teacher apply multimodality to support the diversity of student characteristics in English language learning in the classroom. Most studies focus more on the effectiveness of certain media or technology, while aspects of teacher teaching strategies and attention to student characteristics still receive less attention. Therefore, this study is very important to investigate in depth the practice of using multimodality by teacher in English teaching and its role in supporting students with diverse characteristics.

## **B. Definition of Key Terms**

To provide a clearer understanding of this study, the researcher defines key terms related to the research title as follows:

### **1. Multimodality:**

Multimodality in this research refers to the teacher's use of various communication modes in teaching English, such us verbal mode, visual mode, gestural mode, audio mode and spatial mode, to help students understand the lesson more effectively(Bateman *et al.*, 2017)

The concept of multimodality in this research is based on social semiotics theory, which considers that each method of communication holds different potential meanings. In English language learning, teachers use a combination of these various means of communication to build multiple “entry points” for understanding for students (Lian, 2025).

## **2. Multimodal Literacy:**

Multimodal literacy in this research refers to student’s ability to understand and interpret information presented through different forms of communication, including text, images, video and gestures in English learning activities. This literacy supports students in understanding meaning through multiple modes of communication. (Bateman, n.d.)

This idea broadens the understanding of “literacy” not only as the skill of reading written texts, but also as the ability to interpret meaning from various forms of communication.

For example, when students watch the news via video on YouTube, they are not only required to understand the spoken words (audio), but also to be able to read the subtitles (text), understand the images that appear (visual), and recognize the body language of the presenter (gestural). The ability to understand all these elements simultaneously is multimodal literacy.

## **3. Diverse Student Characteristics**

The diverse characteristics of the students in this study refer to differences among them in terms of language skills, learning styles, motivation, and social and cultural contexts that influence their learning experiences in English class. These variations affect how students participate in and comprehend the content of

English language instruction.(Griffiths & Soruç, 2021)

The diverse characteristics of students refer to a number of differences that exist in English class at Islamic boarding schools, in this research which affect how students understand and apply English. Understanding these various aspects of diversity is crucial for formulating a fair and efficient teaching approach for all students.

#### **4. English Language Teaching (ELT):**

English Language Teaching (ELT), as discussed in this study, refers to the teaching of English to students with the aim of improving their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills through appropriate teaching approaches and classroom activities. In this study, ELT also involves the application of multimodal strategies to meet student's learning needs (Kessler & Marino, 2023).

In this research, English Language Teaching is understood as a pedagogical field that aims to develop students' communication skills in English including speaking, listening, reading, and writing while paying attention to socio-cultural aspects and critical thinking in language use. Contemporary English language teaching increasingly integrates multimodal methods to reflect real-world communication.

### **C. Research Questions**

The main questions to be addressed in this research are:

1. How do teacher implement multimodal strategies in English language classrooms to address the diverse learning needs and characteristics of their students?

2. What challenges do teachers face when implementing multimodal strategies to address student diversity in English language teaching?

#### **D. Objectives of Study**

According to the research questions, the research aims to investigate:

1. To investigate how teachers implement multimodal strategies in English language classrooms to meet the diverse learning needs and characteristics of their students.
2. To identify the challenges faced by teachers in implementing multimodal strategies in English language teaching to address student diversity and explore potential solutions.

#### **E. Significance of Study**

##### **A. Theoretical Significance**

1. Advancing the Theory of Multimodality in ELT:

This research broadens the knowledge of multimodal methods in ELT by examining how multimodal strategies can be organized in different classrooms. While earlier studies have looked at the theoretical basis of multimodality and its advantages in learning, this study offers tangible insights into how these strategies are used in practice and their effects on meeting the diverse needs of students.

2. Contributing to Multiliteracies Framework:

Building on the idea of multiliteracies, this study emphasizes how using various semiotic resources (visual, auditory, gestural, etc.) can promote more inclusive learning experiences. It reinforces the point that literacy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century extends beyond conventional reading and writing

to include digital and multimodal literacies, which are crucial for navigating modern communication settings.

3. Expanding Knowledge of Diverse Student Characteristics:

The research adds to the increasing number of studies that highlight the need to recognize student diversity regarding language skills, thinking styles, or cultural differences. It looks into how multimodal strategies can be adapted to address these various needs, improving our theoretical grasp of successful teaching methods in diverse and multilingual classrooms.

## **B. Practical Significance**

1. Improving Teacher Practices in Diverse Classroom:

One of the main practical contributions of this research is its ability to give useful insights for teacher. By examining how teacher use multimodal strategies based on different student traits, the study will present clear examples of effective practices and classroom techniques that can be used to boost student engagement, understanding, and overall learning results. These findings will be helpful for teacher aiming to vary their teaching approaches and include multimodal resources in their lessons.

2. Identifying Challenges and Solutions for Teacher:

This study aims to find the usual difficulties teacher encounter when using multimodal strategies in varied classrooms, such as problems with time limits, insufficient resources, or inadequate training. By examining these difficulties and suggesting practical answers, the research provides useful advice on how teacher can get past obstacles to effective implementation, ultimately enhancing the quality of teaching.

3. Shaping Teacher Professional Development:

The results of this study have significant effects for teacher training. By pinpointing the skills and knowledge gaps that teacher encounter when using multimodal teaching, the research will guide the creation of training programs that can better equip teacher to effectively apply

multimodal strategies. This can result in the creation of more thorough and available professional development options in ELT.

4. Creating Inclusive and Equitable Learning Environments:

On a larger level, the study adds to the current efforts to support inclusive education. By employing various methods, teacher can provide fairer learning chances that address the different strengths and needs of students. This research emphasizes the significance of tailoring instruction, making sure that all students, no matter their background, learning style, or ability, can access meaningful learning experiences.