

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

In language learning, vocabulary acquisition is a highly important component, especially for young learners in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Schmitt (2008) argues that vocabulary learning is a crucial part of second language acquisition because learners need a strong vocabulary foundation to communicate fluently in English. More specifically, Liu & B. Reynolds (2024), note that, for elementary school EFL learners, early acquisition of English vocabulary is crucial for English language proficiency. In the early stages of learning, children need vocabulary not only to recognize meanings but also to begin participating in classroom interactions and understanding English input. Therefore, vocabulary development must be placed at the center of English instruction for young learners, as it provides the foundation for further language growth.

Vocabulary is the basis of communication, comprehension, and expression because words are the primary carriers of meaning in both spoken and written language. Schmitt (2000) explains that a broad vocabulary is necessary for learners to function effectively in English, particularly in reading

and oral conversation. Similarly, Miralpeix & Muñoz (2018) found that the extent of acceptable vocabulary is related to the reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills of EFL learners. This indicates that vocabulary knowledge not only supports the ability to comprehend language input but also the ability to express ideas accurately and confidently. vocabulary retention is a primary goal in language education, as students are expected not only to encounter new words but also to remember and use them appropriately over time this focus is also reflected in Aedo et al. (2022) emphasis on vocabulary acquisition and delayed retention among young EFL learners.

However, traditional teaching methods are often unable to meet the diverse learning needs of EFL primary-level students. Lin et al. (2022) point out that traditional vocabulary instruction in EFL classrooms is still often dominated by rote learning and knowledge transmission, which can lead to learning that is disconnected from context, limited language practice, and a loss of student interest. In a study of elementary EFL learners, Atay & Kurt (2006) also found that reading alone was not sufficient to foster vocabulary growth effectively, students achieved better vocabulary gains when written tasks were combined with interactive activities. In addition, Liu & B. Reynolds (2024) show that primary-school vocabulary learning involves a range of intentional and incidental activities, suggesting that young learners benefit from age-appropriate and varied instructional designs rather than a single routine method.

Taken together, these studies indicate that vocabulary instruction for primary EFL learners should be more meaningful, interactive, and responsive to learner diversity. This is why multimodal approaches become relevant, especially when Aedo et al. (2022) demonstrate that multimodal texts can support vocabulary acquisition and retention among young EFL learners.

Multimodal approaches have emerged as an attractive solution in vocabulary instruction. This approach engages multiple senses in the delivery of material, allowing students to participate more actively in the learning process. With this approach, students learn English vocabulary not only through reading textbooks, memorizing word lists, and listening to teacher explanations, all of which often make vocabulary learning monotonous and less motivating, but also through visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements that make learning more dynamic and effective. Lin et al. (2022) explain that traditional EFL vocabulary instruction often relies on rote, knowledge-transmission practices, which can lead to learning that is disconnected from context, limited language practice, and a loss of interest for students. As a result, students may become passive learners and have fewer opportunities to process and use new vocabulary meaningfully. In contrast, Kaminski (2018) argues that multimodal texts provide different access points for comprehension, invite participation, and motivate repeated practice. Supporting this view, Aedo et al. (2022) found that multimodal texts increased vocabulary acquisition and retention among

young EFL learners and were perceived as an innovative and enjoyable way to learn. Likewise, Lin et al. (2022) reported improvement in EFL children's oral vocabulary production after the use of multimodal cues, indicating that this approach can create a more engaging and effective vocabulary learning environment.

Several studies have demonstrated the positive effects of multimodal instruction on students' vocabulary knowledge Zarei & Khazaie, (2011). For instance, Zarei & Khazaie, (2011) discovered that using laptops to deliver multimodal content led to improved vocabulary acquisition. Furthermore, researchers such as Bansong, (2023), and Ganaphaty Malini, (2016) have found that multimodal teaching methods promote cognitive engagement, social interactions, reading comprehension, vocabulary retention, and positive learning outcomes.

Maintaining learners' attention and motivation remains a practical challenge in primary EFL classrooms. Young learners tend to learn more effectively when lessons are concrete, interactive, and supported by varied sensory experiences rather than relying on a single mode of instruction. Therefore, integrating multimodal resources may help sustain engagement and support vocabulary retention by providing richer meaning cues through visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modes Pinter, A. (2017). Limited vocabulary also contributes to difficulties in understanding reading texts and applying

appropriate vocabulary in their sentences or paragraphs. Multimodality can help student for retention vocabulary. Students can also learn not only from textbooks, but also from materials that include static or dynamic visuals, movement, audio, spoken language, and written language Helmi (2023)

The combination of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modalities allows students to learn vocabulary through multiple complementary channels rather than through a single source of input. By seeing images, hearing pronunciation, and engaging in physical or contextualized activities, learners experience vocabulary learning in a more varied, interactive, and meaningful way. This enriches their learning experience because the words are not presented as isolated items to be memorized, but are connected to actions, situations, sounds, and visual representations. As a consequence, students are better able to relate new vocabulary to a broader context, which helps them understand word meaning, pronunciation, and use more clearly. In addition, learning through multiple modalities strengthens memory by providing more than one cue for recall, so students are more likely to retain and remember vocabulary over time.

Adopting a multimodal approach can help students improve their English vocabulary acquisition. Zahra (2024) found that the implementation of a multimodal approach improved students' vocabulary knowledge as well as their classroom activity, enthusiasm, and motivation. This is because multimodal resources provide a variety of sensory inputs, such as images,

sounds, spoken language, gestures, movement, and contextualized activities, which allow students to process new vocabulary through more than one channel at the same time. Drawing on the cognitive theory of multimedia learning, Clark (2024) explains learning from words and graphics as a meaningful multimedia process, while Paivio (2006) describe learning in terms of verbal and nonverbal representations. In vocabulary learning, this means that when students see a word, hear its pronunciation, and connect it with images or actions, they can understand its meaning more clearly, relate it to context more easily, and remember it for a longer period.

Empirical evidence also shows that multimodal input with additional nonverbal information is more beneficial than verbal-only input for productive vocabulary gains, and multimodal texts can improve both vocabulary acquisition and retention among young EFL learners. However, this approach has a great potential, there is still a research gap in understanding the specific role of multimodal resources in vocabulary instruction and retention, particularly in identifying how different modalities help young EFL learners understand and remember new vocabulary over time.

Multimodal approaches are believed to improve students' vocabulary retention ,but there is still a gap in research that specifically examines the role of multimodal resources in vocabulary learning at the primary level. J. E. Liu & Lim, (2024) notes that there is limited research that integrates an exploration

of teachers' conceptualizations of vocabulary teaching and learning in a multimodal approach, particularly in relation to teachers' views, understandings and beliefs about how vocabulary should be taught through various modes (such as visual, audio and kinesthetic).

Apriani et al. (2021) identified twelve types of multimodal resources used by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in Indonesia, including speech, body language, auditory elements, verbal expressions, facial expressions, music, text, layout, graphics, images, animations, and videos. However, their study focused on multimodal resources in English language teaching in general, rather than on teachers' perceptions of which resources are most effective for supporting vocabulary retention among elementary-level EFL learners. Similarly, Dwi Jayanti & Damayanti (2023) examined teachers' perceptions of multimodal literacy in elementary and secondary education in Indonesia, specific attention to vocabulary retention in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning at the elementary school level remains limited.

The 'Role' of multimodal resources refers to the functional mechanisms they perform in supporting vocabulary retention. This includes their ability to increase student engagement, facilitate the process of meaning comprehension, and strengthen memory through the provision of diverse sensory cues visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. Therefore, the focus of this study is not only on

identifying the types of resources used in the classroom, but also on explaining how these resources work in practice to help young learners internalize and remember vocabulary over time.

This research is conducted to explore the contribution of multimodal resources to vocabulary retention and identify the effective types of resources from English teacher perceive . The results of this study will provide valuable insights for educators, helping them to design more effective vocabulary teaching strategies that suit the needs of young learners .In addition, this study is in line with the principles of education emphasized in the Qur'an. The concept of diverse learning methods reflects the Qur'an recommendation to seek knowledge through observation, listening and reflection, as mentioned in Surah Al-'Alaq (96:1-5) and Surah An-Nahl (16:78).

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ﴿٢﴾ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ﴿٣﴾ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ﴿٤﴾ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ﴿٥﴾

Surah Al-'Alaq (96:1-5): The importance of reading and learning as a process that begins with the name of Allah, the Creator. This process involves the ability to think and reflect, which can be linked by means of a multimodal approach activating various aspects of the senses and thinking to deepen understanding.

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا ۖ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَرَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ ۚ

لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ٧٨

Surah An-Nahl (16:78): Allah says that He created human beings with the ability to hear, see, and heart so that they may be grateful and understand. This verse shows how using all the senses in learning can be part of a comprehensive approach that is in line with Islamic teachings.

B. Definition of Key Terms

To help ensure clarity and avoid misinterpretation, the following key terms are defined in the context of this research:

1. The Role

Role refers to the function, part, or contribution that something has within a particular process. It describes how something contributes to or influences the outcome of that process

2. Multimodal Resources

Multimodal resources refer to teaching materials and strategies that integrate different sensory modalities, such as visual, auditory and kinesthetic elements, to enhance the learning process. Examples are videos, images, animations, physical activities and audio recordings. In this study, multimodal resources are explored to determine their effectiveness in vocabulary instruction and retention among primary level EFL learners.

3.Vocabulary Retention

Vocabulary retention is the learner's ability to store and remember vocabulary over time. It refers to how well and for how long students can remember and use the words they have learned. This study investigates how multimodal resources can improve vocabulary retention in primary level EFL learners.

4. Elementary EFL students

Elementary EFL students are fifth-grade students in elementary school who are learning English as a foreign language. These students typically have limited exposure to English outside the classroom and rely heavily on structured teaching methods and learning resources to develop their language skills.

C. Research Questions

Based on the background above, the question of this study that will be discussed are follows:

1. What roles do multimodal resources play in supporting g vocabulary retention among EFL learners?
- 2.What types of multimodal resources does English teacher use in enhancing vocabulary retention among EFL learners?

D. Objectives of Study

Based on the research questions, the objective of this study are:

1. To identify the types of multimodal resources used by English teachers to enhance vocabulary retention among EFL learners.
2. To explore how multimodal resources contribute to vocabulary retention among elementary EFL learners (through engagement, comprehension, support, and recall).

E. Significance of Study

1. Theoretical Significance

This study contributes to the development of knowledge about multimodal approaches in language teaching, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) for young learners.

The findings of this study provide insights into how sensory-based learning materials can improve vocabulary retention, as well as bridging the gap in existing research regarding the role of multimodal resources in primary education.

2. Practical Significance

- a. For educators, this study provides evidence-based strategies and recommendations for integrating multimodal resources in their teaching practices, enabling them to create more engaging and effective vocabulary lessons.
- b. For curriculum developers, this study identifies the most effective types of multimodal resources, which can serve as a guide in designing teaching materials that suit the diverse learning styles among primary level EFL students.
- c. For policy makers, this study emphasizes the importance of integrating innovative teaching methods, such as multimodal approaches, in language education programs to improve learning outcomes.