

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter contains the background, the research questions, the research purposes, the research significance, the scope of the research, the conceptual framework, and previous studies.

#### **A. Research Background**

In the era of globalization where the development of technology and digitalization is growing so rapidly as it is today, it has also had a significant impact on almost all fields in human life, as well as education which has not escaped the influence of globalization. With the existence of technology in the field of education, it is very easy for both teachers and students to access various sources of knowledge. In addition, the increasing number of types of technology created also has an impact in teaching methods, one of which is the presence of one of the learning methods that is now a concern, multimodal teaching. Multimodal teaching is an approach that not only focuses on one way of learning, but uses and utilizes various categories of media or modalities in the learning process, such as audio, visual, kinesthetic, games, and others. The application of multimodal teaching is expected to create learning activities that are more interactive, contextual, and able to increase student involvement when teaching and learning activities in the classroom, especially in the context of this research is English language learning (Fauziyah, 2024, p. 333-335).

In Indonesian education, student engagement in class is an important factor that certainly affects the quality of learning, including EFL learning (Hasdina et al., 2024, p. 23). MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta is an educational institution committed to providing quality education. However, in practice, English language learning still faces several challenges, one related to low student engagement in the classroom. One of the aspects to focus on is student engagement when reading learning, which

is one of the important skills in language learning. Student classroom engagement is how students actively participate in learning activities, also have good emotional engagement with teachers, peers, and the environment where the learning process is carried out (Fredricks et al., 2024, p. 59-60). Based on initial observations, many students feel less interested in English and show passive engagement in the reading classroom, especially since the material is still delivered using traditional methods using only textbooks and lectures. This will certainly have a less-than-optimal impact on student learning outcomes.

According to Salamun et, al. (2022, p. 82-83), the factors that influence students' lack of interest in English are divided into internal factors which include student interest, difficulty in learning English, or lack of student confidence when learning English. Then external factors include the lack of teacher interaction with students, learning styles that are not innovative, and coupled with learning activities that only rely on one traditional media that is less effective in increasing the involvement of students who have a variety of different learning styles. This is to the theory proposed by Gardner (1983, p.74) that each individual has multiple intelligences which include linguistic, visual-spatial, kinesthetic, and other intelligences.

Student engagement is not only understood as being active in class or asking a lot of questions, but furthermore, student engagement also includes emotional engagement and behavioral engagement. So, with the application of multimodal teaching, the intended aspects can be further improved, so that the ethics of the learning process students are not only physically active but also emotionally active, especially when following EFL learning. Indonesia, which is now implementing the Merdeka curriculum, emphasizes the implementation of technology in learning activities. This policy certainly strongly encourages teachers to be more creative and innovative in conducting learning by utilizing technology to help and support teachers create more interesting and dynamic learning. In line with this policy, the application of multimodal teaching is certainly expected to help teachers in creating more effective learning. Based on all the explanations above, this research is

focused on examining how multimodal teaching approaches can increase student engagement in the classroom, especially in EFL reading learning at MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta. It is hoped that this research can contribute to the development of more effective and interesting English learning methods, as well as provide an overview of the benefits of implementing multimodal teaching in schools.

Firdausya, Dewi, and Saefullah (2023, p. 433-434) explained that a multimodal approach by utilizing Digital Story Telling when EFL learners can help students be more participative during the learning process and more motivated in learning English so that they can improve students' language skills. In another study conducted by Lian (2023, p. 752-753), multimodal teaching can increase student engagement and comprehension, help increase student motivation in learning English, and invite teachers to practice multimodal teaching in language classes to further arouse student interest. However, despite many studies showing the effectiveness of multimodal teaching in improving students' language skills or student engagement during learning activities, the application of this method is still not widely practiced in Indonesia due to the limitations that must be faced by teachers in the implementation process. These studies have shown that multimodal teaching has significant benefits and positive impacts in increasing student engagement in learning English as a foreign language (EFL). However, there are still several gaps that open up space for further research. Some of these are the lack of research that specifically examines the impact of multimodal teaching on behavioral engagement in reading learning. Previous studies have focused more on student engagement in general. In addition, the participants or research subjects are also one of the gaps in previous studies. Finally, the research methods used also have gaps because there is no direct observation to see student behavioral engagement in the classroom. Therefore, this study was conducted to address these gaps by identifying how multimodal teaching can increase student behavioral engagement in EFL reading learning, using a case study approach in class 8 of MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta, with data collection methods in the form of classroom observation and interview.

## **B. Research Questions**

Based on the explanation above, the current study may discuss several things, namely:

- 1) How is multimodal teaching implemented in EFL reading learning at MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta?
- 2) How does multimodal teaching enhance student behavioral engagement in learning English as a foreign language (EFL) at MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta?
- 3) How do students respond to the implementation of multimodal teaching in EFL reading learning at MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta?

## **C. Research Purposes**

The objectives of this study are related to the research questions, namely:

- 1) To identify the types of multimodal modes (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, etc.) utilized in the classroom during EFL reading learning at MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta.
- 2) To analyze multimodal teaching in enhancing student behavioral engagement in English as a foreign language (EFL) reading instruction at MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta.
- 3) To explore students' responses and perceptions toward the implementation of multimodal teaching in EFL reading learning at MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta.

## **D. Research Significance**

This research was conducted to support efforts to improve students' behavioral engagement in learning English reading through a multimodal teaching approach. The results of this study are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically

in the world of education, especially in the context of creating more interesting and innovative learning. The following are the significances of this research, namely:

**a. Theoretical Significance**

This research contributes to providing comprehensive knowledge and understanding of multimodal teaching and how it is implemented in the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) learning. By discussing multimodal teaching, this research aims to improve teachers' understanding of how different modes - such as visual, auditory, digital, and text - are implemented in learning activities. In addition, it can also help identify the benefits of multimodal teaching in encouraging and enhancing student engagement in the classroom.

**b. Practical Significance**

Practically, this study will provide insights for teachers, including in this study teachers at MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta to increase student engagement in the EFL classroom. By implementing multimodal teaching, teachers can create more interactive learning fulfill the diversity of students' learning styles, and provide different learning experiences for students. This research provides an example of integrating multimodal teaching into learning activities. In other words, this research aims to encourage educators to adapt to technological developments and innovate by incorporating technology into education.

**E. Research Scope**

This study aims to analyze the effect of multimodal teaching on student engagement during EFL reading learning at MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta. In this study, the media that will be used are video, text, and digital, while the student engagement that is the focus of this study is the behavioral engagement of students when participating in English learning activities.

MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta was chosen to be the research location because of the facilities that support the implementation of multimodal teaching and 8<sup>th</sup>-grade

students who were taken as subjects for research. The research period is set for the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year, with data collection activities conducted over three meetings from July to August. In this study, the scope is limited to English language learning and does not involve other subjects. In addition, this study also only focuses on student engagement and does not include student academic outcomes.

## **F. Conceptual Framework**

The success of a teacher in delivering instruction to students can be observed from several factors, one of which is students' engagement during classroom activities. Fredricks, Blumfield, and Paris (2004, p. 62-65) define engagement into three categories, which consist of:

- 1) Behavioral Engagement. This category of student engagement relates to student participation in academic and social activities while at school. Some examples of students' behavioral engagement are attending class regularly, not being late for learning activities, obeying the rules at school, not doing things that can disturb others, not skipping class, also actively participating in discussions, working on assignments, or projects both independently and in groups.
- 2) Emotional Engagement. In the second category, the engagement in question is related to students' emotional reactions to the school environment, teachers, peers, and the learning process. Emotional engagement can be seen through students' affective reactions in class, such as boredom, happiness, anxiety, sadness, having an interest in learning, comfort, or enthusiasm when following student learning.
- 3) Cognitive Engagement. This category relates to how students attempt to understand complex material and solve it by using learning strategies that students are more familiar with. Cognitively engaged students usually have a critical mind towards the knowledge they learn.

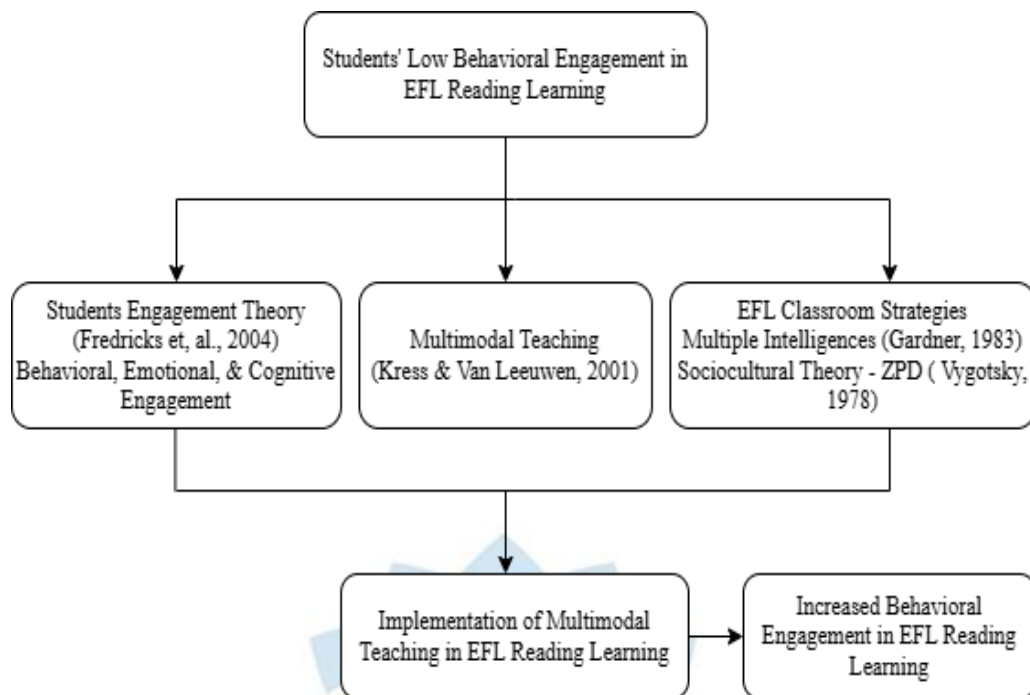
However, students sometimes exhibit low levels of engagement during the learning process due to less varied teaching methods and lack of relevance to their needs. To address this issue, multimodal teaching is implemented. Kress and Van Leeuwen, as cited in Noviani (2018, p. 111-112), explain that multimodal teaching is a method that utilizes various media to support learning activities. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, the media used can include visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and digital elements.

Both theories are related to EFL classroom strategies by Howard Gardner's (1983, p. 74) multiple intelligences theory. Gardner argues that every individual has different types of intelligence, such as linguistic, visual, spatial, verbal, kinesthetic, and others. In the context of EFL reading learning, multimodal teaching is applied as an approach that allows students to learn according to their preferences. By providing a wide variety of learning media, teachers can create a more innovative and interesting learning environment that can encourage students to be actively involved in learning activities.

In addition to integrating various modes in learning activities, things related to the learning environment and also students' social interaction have an important role in learning. Vygotsky (2019, p. 84) through sociocultural theory with his main concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) states that teachers are not just presenting material when multimodal-based learning. However, teachers should provide guidance and collaborative activities to students. With guidance from the teacher collaboration between students can help students better understand the material and make students who are less actively involved more active, so that it can increase students' behavioral engagement when in class.

In this study, the multimodal teaching method is applied to mitigate students' low engagement during EFL reading learning at MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta. This research aims to contribute to improving the quality of EFL learning at MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta while also providing insights into the effectiveness of implementing multimodal teaching in enhancing student behavioral engagement.





**Figure 1. 1 Conceptual Framework**

## G. Previous Studies

In the past few years, there have been several studies that discuss multimodal teaching. The first is a study conducted by Firdausya et al. (2023) entitled “EFL Students' Engagement in Multimodal Literacy Through Digital Storytelling”. In this study, the researchers focused on seeing students' engagement in multimodal literacy by using digital storytelling to help students learn English. The aspect of engagement in this study focuses on student engagement in general which includes interest, motivation, and also emotion. In addition, the study, which was conducted with interviews via WhatsApp with a total of 3 junior high school students, focused on several student language skills, including speaking, writing, and creative thinking. Overall, the study mentioned that the use of digital storytelling media in multimodal literacy is proven to be effective in increasing students' engagement in English learning and can help students improve their English skills by creating a more innovative and interactive learning atmosphere.



Second, Lian (2023) in his research entitled “The Effect of Multimodal Teaching for Primary Students in L2 Primary School Classroom” states that students respond positively to the integration of multimodal teaching when learning English. With the use of various media when learning such as written text, video, audio, and others, it is very helpful for students to be more motivated and more interested in learning English, as well as effective for increasing student engagement in the classroom. The participants in this study had an average age of 8.5 years old or can be said to be young learners. As for the aspects studied, this study focused on language development in general, rather than specific skills such as reading, speaking or writing. However, it can be concluded that the implementation of multimodal teaching in English classrooms has a positive impact on students' learning motivation and engagement in the classroom.

Third, a study entitled “Multimodal Teaching in EFL Context: A Literature Review” by Marantika et, al. (2021) defines multimodal teaching as a learning approach that utilizes a combination of various modes, both verbal and nonverbal. This research is a literature review and does not focus on student engagement as the aspect under study. This literature review discusses the impact of multimodal teaching on various skills but does not provide specifications on a particular level of education. In this study, multimodal teaching increasing students' motivation to learn, students' interest in learning, and increasing students' learning achievement. Therefore, this study suggests EFL teachers implement multimodal teaching into their lessons.

Fourth, Krongyut & Srijongjai (2024) in their study entitled “Unlocking Student Behavioral Engagement in Thai EFL Writing Class with a Multimodal Project Approach: Students' Perspectives” discussed the impact of implementing multimodal projects on students' behavioral engagement in EFL writing classes in Thailand. In this study, 35 11<sup>th</sup>-grade students were involved as participants and made a project in the form of making digital posters. The results of the research conducted by observation and filling out questionnaires by students show that the multimodal approach provides a significant increase in student behavioral

engagement, namely increasing students' active participation in class, creativity, collaboration and students' confidence.

The last, a study entitled “The Integration of Multimodality in English Teaching in Indonesian Junior High School” by Sidik (2022) examines how multimodality which includes various learning media such as visual, audio, and spatial is applied in English learning in junior high schools in Indonesia. This study was conducted in three public junior high schools in Banten with participants focusing more on teachers, and more likely to discuss the implementation of the SLM policy. Even so, the role of students in this study is still important to see what kind of student engagement with multimodal, although there are no specifications related to student engagement and the skills studied. From this study, the application of multimodal teaching to student engagement is not significantly visible. This is due to teachers' lack of understanding of the concept of multimodality and how to implement it. Therefore, this study recommends professional training for teachers on integrating multimodality into the curriculum on an ongoing basis.

These studies have shown that multimodal teaching has significant benefits and positive impacts in increasing students' engagement in learning English as a foreign language (EFL). However, there are still some limitations that create room for further research. Some of them are the absence of research that specifically examines the impact of multimodal teaching on behavioral engagement in reading learning. Some previous studies, more focused on student engagement in general. In addition, the participants or research objects are also one of the limitations of previous studies. Lastly, the research method used also has limitations in the absence of direct observation of students' behavioral engagement in the classroom.

Therefore, this study was conducted to fill these limitations by finding out how multimodal teaching can help improve students' behavioral engagement in EFL reading learning, using a case study approach in grade 8 of MTs Negeri 3 Purwakarta, with data collection methods in the form of classroom observation and interview.