

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a comprehensive description of the research. It includes the background, formulation of the problem, operational definitions, the aim of the study and significance of the study.

1.1 Background

Book cover design has undergone significant evolution over the years. These changes reflect shifts in reader preferences, technological advancements, cultural dynamics, and market trends (Iwana et al., 2016). Over time, this evolution has transformed book cover designs from simplicity to a realm marked by creative and diverse expressions. In today's contemporary landscape, a book cover transcends its role as a mere visual adornment. A book cover has evolved into a profound representation of a book's genre, theme, writing style, and underlying values.

The role of a book cover in conveying a book's content or theme is undeniably pivotal. It serves as the reader's initial introduction to the book's content, capturing their attention and acting as the gateway to their engagement with the material. A well-crafted book cover not only indicates the quality of the content but also communicates the essence that lies within, encompassing both content and stylistic attributes (Gudinavičius & Šuminas, 2018). Recognizing this central role, book cover designers carefully create diverse covers tailored to distinct target audiences, aligning them with cultural norms and local preferences. These covers are thoughtfully designed to encapsulate multifaceted meanings that reflect the book's content or theme while conveying specific dimensions.

In today's contemporary landscape, book cover designers approach their work with a blend of creativity and a dedication to diversity. They harness a range of semiotic modes, such as images, colors, and text, to communicate the

messages, content, and values encapsulated within a book (Oktafiani & Sari, 2020). The combination of these elements on a book cover acts as a conduit for conveying the essence of the book to its prospective readers. Consequently, the skill of interpreting these elements becomes crucial for comprehending the book cover's message. In this context, the application of multimodal discourse analysis emerges as a crucial tool, enhancing the process of deciphering the book cover's meaning.

In the scope of this present study, the focal point is a coursebook cover from the book titled "English for International Tourism." This book offers a multi-level series tailored for learners seeking proficient communication skills within the tourism industries. It was published by Pearson Education in 2003, with Iwonna Dubicka and Margaret O'Keeffe as the authors. Both authors possess expertise in the domains of English and Business (Pearson, 2021). This book is conveniently accessible both in physical form and as an ebook. This book served as supplementary material for the English for Tourism course at University of Siliwangi. The cover design of this book intricately incorporates various combinations of semiotic modes, necessitating a comprehensive multimodal discourse analysis to unveil the conveyed meanings.

Previous research has effectively employed multimodal discourse analysis across diverse communication mediums. For instance, Muhassin et al. (2022) conducted a thorough investigation into the representational meaning of visual elements found on English textbook covers. This study illuminated how verbal and visual elements collaboratively reinforced each other's significance. However, despite these insightful inquiries into representational meaning, a noticeable research gap remains concerning the intricate interactive and compositional meanings intricately woven into the design of English coursebook covers.

The present research aims to address this existing research gap by delving deeply into the representational, interactive, and compositional meanings intricately woven into the design of English coursebook cover. Utilizing a robust multimodal discourse analysis approach, this research seeks

to dissect the visual elements thoughtfully integrated into coursebook cover design. It subjects these elements to scrutiny to discern their role in conveying the meaningful messages of the book. Diverging from prior research, this study adopts a descriptive qualitative method rooted in a comprehensive Grammar of Visual Design framework, as conceptualized by Kress & van Leeuwen. This holistic approach promises to provide a nuanced understanding of how semiotic modes collaboratively contribute to the overall meaning conveyed within English coursebook cover. By placing emphasis on the intricacies of visual grammar, this research aims to offer novel insights and valuable perspectives, thus making a substantial academic contribution to our understanding of the intricate messages encapsulated within English coursebook cover.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

The background provided in the previous section lays the foundation for the present study, which addresses the following research question: "How do the semiotic modes on the 'English for International Tourism' coursebook cover function to convey the intended content and theme of the coursebook?"

1.3 Operational Definitions

To avoid misunderstanding the terms set out in this study, the researcher provides the definitions related to this study, such as:

- 1.3.1 **Multimodal Discourse Analysis** : A research approach that examines how various modes of communication interact and contribute to the meaning-making process within a communicative context. In this study, it will be used to investigate the interplay of semiotic modes on 'English for International Tourism'

- coursebook cover to understand their collective meaning.
- 1.3.2 Grammar of Visual Design : Systematic rules and conventions governing the visual elements and their arrangement in a visual communication context. In this study, it will be used to analyze the visual elements' structure, composition, and design choices on 'English for International Tourism' coursebook cover to explore their communicative significance.
- 1.3.3 English Coursebook Cover : The English coursebook cover signifies the front-facing and back design and presentation of educational materials specifically intended for the English for Tourism course. This includes the visual and textual elements, layout and overall aesthetics of the cover, all of which collectively communicate information about the content and purpose of the coursebook. In this

study, it will serve as the primary subject of analysis to understand how its visual elements contribute to its intended content or theme.

1.4 Aim of the Study

This study aims to investigate how the semiotic modes within the cover are employed to convey the intended content and theme of the ‘English for International Tourism’ coursebook.

1.5 Significances of the Study

1.5.1 Theoretical Contribution

This study contributes to the growing body of references on applying multimodal discourse analysis to analyze the representational, interactive, and compositional meanings in English coursebook cover.

1.5.2 Practical Contribution

The study aims to offer practical guidance and serve as a valuable resource for English education students taking the Grammar in Multimodal Discourse course, providing a real example of how to conduct multimodal discourse analysis in English coursebook cover. Additionally, it will give benefit to lecturers, especially in the analysis of English coursebook cover.

1.5.3 Empirical Contribution

This study provides the researcher with valuable insights into the analysis of representational, interactive, and compositional meanings in English coursebook cover.