

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the theoretical foundation used in the study. The discussion includes theories related to films in English language learning, learning values, characterization through dialogue and action, character education in EFL contexts, previous studies, conceptual framework, and theoretical assumptions. These theories are important because they provide the conceptual basis for answering the research questions of this study, namely identifying the learning values reflected in the main characters of *Avatar: The Way of Water*, examining how these values are expressed through dialogues and actions, and exploring how these values can be applied in English language learning.

In qualitative research, theoretical frameworks function not only as references but also as analytical lenses that guide researchers in interpreting data. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), qualitative studies require strong conceptual grounding to ensure that data interpretation remains systematic and academically relevant. Therefore, this chapter connects contemporary theories and previous findings to support the analysis conducted in this study.

1.1 Film in English Language Learning

A. Definition of Film

Film is one of the most influential audiovisual media in modern society because it combines moving images, sound, dialogue, music, gesture, and emotion

into a meaningful narrative experience. Films do not merely entertain audiences but also communicate ideas, beliefs, cultures, and social values. Richards and Rodgers (2014) argue that authentic learning materials are important in language learning because learners need exposure to real communication contexts rather than isolated grammatical structures. In line with this idea, films provide authentic examples of language use through natural conversations, emotional interaction, and contextual communication. Furthermore, Harmer (2015) explains that audiovisual media increase students' engagement because learners process information through visual and auditory channels simultaneously. In educational contexts, films are considered effective media because they present information in both visual and auditory forms, allowing learners to understand meaning more comprehensively.

According to Bordwell and Thompson (2019), films represent human experiences through visual storytelling and cinematic techniques that create emotional and social engagement. In the context of language learning, films become particularly valuable because learners are exposed to authentic language use in realistic situations. Unlike textbooks, which often present simplified and artificial dialogues, films provide natural conversations that include real pronunciation, expressions, pauses, slang, and contextual interaction.

Recent studies also emphasize the importance of films as educational resources in EFL learning. Purnomo (2025) explains that films provide contextualized communication that helps students connect language with social meaning and cultural understanding. Similarly, Sánchez-Auñón and Férez-Mora (2023) state that films create multimodal learning environments where learners process language through sound, visual context, facial expression, and situational cues simultaneously. This combination supports deeper comprehension because students do not rely solely on linguistic knowledge to understand communication.

Furthermore, films are closely related to students' daily lives and popular culture. Modern learners, especially younger generations, are highly familiar with audiovisual media. Therefore, integrating films into classroom learning can make English learning more relatable and engaging. In this study, films are viewed not only as entertainment products but also as educational texts that contain meaningful learning values reflected through characters and narratives.

B. Film as a Medium in English Language Learning

The use of films in English language learning has gained significant attention because films provide authentic linguistic input that cannot always be found in traditional learning materials. In many EFL classrooms, students experience limited exposure to natural English communication due to the dominance of textbook-oriented learning. As a result, learners may understand grammar rules

theoretically but still struggle to interpret authentic spoken English in real situations.

Films help solve this issue by exposing students to real-life communication patterns. Tomlinson (2016) states that meaningful language learning occurs when students emotionally connect with learning materials. Films create this emotional engagement through stories, conflicts, and character experiences that make language input more memorable. Similarly, Mayer (2021), through the cognitive theory of Multimedia Learning, explains that students understand information more effectively when verbal explanations are combined with visual representation. This theory supports the effectiveness of films as multimodal learning media in EFL classrooms. According to Seferoğlu (2008), films allow learners to experience language naturally because they present pronunciation, intonation, idiomatic expressions, gestures, and emotions in contextual situations. Similarly, Sherman (2020) argues that films increase students' exposure to communicative language functions such as requesting, apologizing, persuading, and expressing emotions.

Recent studies continue to support the effectiveness of films in EFL learning. Albiladi, Abdeen, and Lincoln (2018) found that English movies significantly improve learners' listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition because students repeatedly hear words and expressions in meaningful contexts. Likewise,

Maulida and Warni (2024) explain that students who frequently watch English films become more familiar with pronunciation patterns and conversational structures.

Another important aspect of film-based learning is motivation. Motivation is considered one of the most influential factors in successful language learning. Kalra (2017) found that students tend to participate more actively during film-based learning activities because films create enjoyable and less stressful classroom environments. This finding is supported by Gronemeyer and Chinokul (2024), who state that audiovisual learning media increase learner engagement and emotional involvement.

Moreover, films support contextual learning. Learners are able to observe how language is used depending on social situations, relationships, emotions, and cultural settings. This contextual understanding is essential because communication involves more than vocabulary and grammar. It also includes social appropriateness and cultural interpretation.

Therefore, films can function as comprehensive educational media that improve linguistic competence, communicative understanding, and cultural awareness simultaneously.

C. Benefits of Films in EFL Learning

Films provide numerous benefits in English language learning because they integrate linguistic, cultural, emotional, and visual dimensions into one learning experience. According to King (2002), films improve learners' listening comprehension because students are exposed to authentic spoken English in natural communication contexts. Learners become familiar with accents, stress patterns, connected speech, and conversational speed that are commonly used by native speakers.

In addition, films contribute significantly to vocabulary development. Albiladi et al. (2018) explain that vocabulary learned through contextual situations tends to be remembered more effectively because students associate words with scenes, emotions, and actions. This contextual learning process strengthens memory retention compared to isolated vocabulary memorization.

Films also improve speaking ability and pronunciation. Ismaili (2013) argues that students often imitate pronunciation, expressions, and communication styles from films unconsciously. Through repeated exposure, learners gradually develop better pronunciation awareness and speaking confidence.

Another important benefit is cultural understanding. Language and culture are inseparable because communication reflects social norms, traditions, beliefs,

and behaviors. Chao (2013) states that films expose learners to intercultural experiences that help them understand perspectives from different societies. This cultural awareness is particularly important in EFL contexts where learners rarely interact directly with native speakers.

Furthermore, films support critical thinking and reflective learning. Students can analyze characters' decisions, conflicts, emotions, and values presented in films. According to Rohiyatussakinah and Ardiani (2022), film discussions encourage learners to express opinions, interpret meanings, and evaluate behaviors critically. Widodo (2022) also emphasizes that film based-learning encourages communicative interaction because students actively interpret meaning from contextual and visual clues.

As result, films not only improve language competence but also develop learners' confidence and communicative awareness. Thus, films are beneficial not only for linguistic development but also for cognitive, emotional, and social learning processes.

1.2 Learning values

A. Definition of Learning Values

Learning values refer to positive principles, attitudes, and behaviors that individuals can learn and apply in educational and social life. These values guide human behavior and influence how individuals interact with others, make

decisions, and solve problems. In educational contexts, learning values are essential because education is not only aimed at improving academic competence but also at developing students' character and moral awareness.

According to Linda and Eyre (2019), values function as guiding principles that shape personal behavior and social interaction. Similarly, Lickona (2018) explains that values are fundamental components of character education because they influence ethical understanding and responsible behavior.

In literary and film studies, learning values are reflected through narratives, conflicts, and character interactions. Films often portray human experiences that involve sacrifice, cooperation, empathy, courage, and leadership. These values become meaningful because audiences can observe how characters demonstrate them through dialogue and action.

Recent studies also highlight the educational significance of values in films. Fuad, Anakotta, and Wardani (2024) explain that films contain moral and educational messages that influence viewers' perspectives and emotional understanding. Likewise, Simanjuntak (2020) found that films can become effective media for introducing educational values because learners tend to relate emotionally to film characters.

In this study, learning values refer to positive educational and moral values reflected in the main characters of *Avatar: The Way of Water* through dialogues and actions. Berkowitz and Bier (2017) explain that educational values influence students' emotional development, social interaction, and ethical decision-making. Likewise, Schwartz (2017) states that values function as guiding principles that shape human behavior across different situations. Therefore, learning values become important aspects in education because they influence how students think, behave, and interact socially.

B. Types of Learning Values

1. Responsibility

Responsibility refers to awareness of duties, obligations, and consequences of actions. Responsible individuals are willing to protect others, fulfill commitments, and face the results of their decisions. According to Lickona (2018), responsibility is one of the core values in character education because it develops discipline, maturity, and accountability.

In films, responsibility is often reflected through characters who prioritize collective well-being over personal interests. Characters who protect family members, make sacrifices, or lead others during difficult situations demonstrate responsible behavior.

2. Cooperation

Cooperation refers to the ability to work together with others to achieve shared goals. Johnson and Johnson (2017) explain that cooperation

encourages positive social interaction, mutual support, and collective problem-solving.

In educational settings, cooperation is important because learning often involves communication and teamwork. Through films, students can observe how characters collaborate, trust one another, and overcome challenges together.

3. Courage

Courage is the willingness to face fear, danger, uncertainty, or challenges. Peterson and Seligman (2021) describe courage as an important character strength that allows individuals to take action despite risks and difficulties. Films frequently portray courage through characters who defend others, confront threats, or persist during hardship. These portrayals inspire audiences and encourage emotional reflection.

4. Empathy

Empathy refers to the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. Goleman (2020) explains that empathy is essential for emotional intelligence because it supports social understanding and compassionate behavior. In films, empathy is reflected when characters show care, understanding, and emotional support toward others.

5. Leadership

Leadership refers to the ability to influence, guide, and protect others toward achieving common goals. According to Northouse (2022), leadership involves responsibility, communication, and decision-making abilities.

Film characters often demonstrate leadership through sacrifice, courage, and problem-solving during critical situations.

1.3 The Characterization in Film

A. Definition of Characterization

Characterization is the process through which characters' personalities, attitudes, motivations, and values are presented in literary and cinematic works. According to Abrams and Harpham (2018), characterization involves the methods used by authors or filmmakers to reveal characters' identities and psychological traits.

In films, characterization is constructed not only through narration but also through dialogue, gesture, facial expression, costume, action, and interaction with other characters. Therefore, audiences understand characters through both verbal and visual representation.

Characterization is important in this study because learning values are reflected through how characters speak, behave, and respond to conflicts throughout the film.

B. Characterization Through Dialogue

Dialogue is one of the main elements used to reveal characters' personalities, emotions, beliefs, and values. According to Boggs and Petrie (2018), dialogue helps audiences understand characters' internal thoughts and motivations.

Through dialogue, characters express responsibility, empathy, courage, leadership, and cooperation verbally. Dialogues also reveal emotional relationships and moral perspectives between characters.

In this study, dialogues from the main characters are analyzed to identify learning values reflected verbally.

C. Characterization Through Action

Besides dialogue, actions are essential indicators of characterization because actions represent actual behavior. Abrams and Harpham (2018) state that actions often reveal deeper meanings than spoken language because they demonstrate real responses to situations. Similarly, Monaco (2022) states that cinematic characterization is multimodal, combining speech, movement, and visual representation to construct meaning.

Film characters may express values through sacrifice, protection, teamwork, or decision-making actions. Therefore, analyzing actions allows researchers to understand values represented nonverbally.

This study analyzes both dialogue and action because learning values are reflected through verbal and behavioral representation simultaneously.

1.4 The Characteristic Education in English Language Learning

A. Definition of Character Education

Character education refers to educational efforts aimed at developing positive moral and social values in learners. According to Lickona (2018), character education involves helping students understand, internalize, and practice ethical values in daily life. Berkowitz (2017) explains that character education aims to develop ethical awareness, social responsibility, and positive interpersonal behavior among students.

In this modern education era emphasizes that academic achievement alone is insufficient. Students are also expected to develop responsibility, empathy, cooperation, discipline, and respect. Character education therefore becomes an essential component of holistic education.

B. Character Education in EFL Context

Character education can be integrated into EFL learning through texts, discussions, classroom interaction, and audiovisual media such as films. Qoyyimah (2016) explains that language learning naturally contains cultural and moral dimensions because communication reflects attitudes, beliefs, and social behavior. Byram (2021) states that language learning always involves cultural and moral dimensions because communication reflects values, beliefs, and identities. Similarly, Kumaravadivelu (2018) argues that language classrooms should become spaces where learners develop intercultural understanding and human values alongside linguistic competence.

Recent studies by Puspitasari et al. (2025) found that integrating moral values into EFL learning encourages reflective thinking and meaningful classroom interaction. Students not only practice language skills but also discuss ethical issues and social experiences.

Films become effective media for character education because students observe characters facing conflicts and making decisions in realistic situations. Through discussion and reflection, learners connect film values with real-life experiences.

Safitri (2023) found that film-based learning encourages reflective discussion because students analyze ethical conflicts and emotional experiences represented in films. Therefore, film-based learning supports both linguistic development and character formation.

1.5 Previous Studies

Creswell and Poth (2018) explain that reviewing previous studies is important to identify research gaps and establish the originality of current research. Similarly, Boote and Beile (2021) state that literature reviews strengthen research credibility by demonstrating how studies contribute to unresolved academic discussions.

Previous studies are important in research because they provide references, comparisons, and theoretical support related to the topic being investigated. Through reviewing previous studies, researchers can identify research gaps, understand how earlier scholars approached similar topics, and determine the

originality of the current study. In this research, the previous studies discussed focus on films in English language learning, moral and educational values in films, characterization, and the integration of values into EFL contexts.

The first study was conducted by Albiladi, Abdeen, and Lincoln (2018) entitled *Learning English through Movies: Adult English Language Learners' Perceptions*. The study investigated how English movies contribute to language learning among EFL learners. Using qualitative methods, the researchers found that films improve listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, and speaking confidence. The study also revealed that learners perceive movies as enjoyable and motivating learning media because they provide authentic language exposure. However, the research mainly focused on linguistic improvement and did not analyze educational or learning values reflected in film characters. This study is relevant because it supports the idea that films are effective media for English language learning.

The second study was conducted by Sánchez-Auñón and Pérez-Mora (2023), who examined the role of films in English language teaching. Their study emphasized that films provide multimodal learning experiences because students process language through visual, auditory, emotional, and contextual information simultaneously. The researchers concluded that films help students understand communication more naturally compared to conventional classroom materials. Moreover, the study highlighted that films support intercultural awareness and learner engagement. Nevertheless, the research focused more on pedagogical

effectiveness rather than value analysis in film narratives. This current study differs because it specifically examines learning values reflected in characters and connects them to EFL learning.

The third study was conducted by Fuad, Anakotta, and Wardani (2024) regarding moral values reflected in movies. The study analyzed several film characters and identified values such as honesty, responsibility, bravery, and cooperation. The findings showed that films can become meaningful educational resources because audiences learn moral lessons indirectly through stories and characters. However, the study focused only on moral value identification and did not discuss how these values can be integrated into English language learning contexts. Therefore, the present research extends the discussion by exploring the educational application of learning values in EFL classrooms.

The fourth study was conducted by Simanjuntak (2020), who analyzed educational values in films using qualitative descriptive methods. The study found that movie characters reflect various educational values including discipline, respect, cooperation, and perseverance. Simanjuntak emphasized that films can support character development because viewers emotionally connect with the characters and narratives presented in films. However, the study did not specifically examine dialogue and action as separate analytical categories. In contrast, the current study focuses specifically on how learning values are reflected through both dialogue and action simultaneously.

The fifth study was conducted by Maulida and Warni (2024) concerning students' perceptions toward English movies in EFL classrooms. The findings showed that students responded positively to film-based learning because films increased motivation, reduced boredom, and improved understanding of authentic English communication. Students also reported that films helped them understand cultural aspects and communication styles used by native speakers. However, the study concentrated mainly on students' perceptions and language learning experiences rather than analyzing values reflected in film characters.

The sixth study was conducted by Rohiyatussakinah and Ardiani (2022), who explored moral values in movies and their implementation in English teaching. Their study found that films encourage reflective learning because students discuss ethical issues, character decisions, and social conflicts presented in stories. The researchers argued that film discussions can enhance critical thinking and classroom interaction. Although the study connected moral values with EFL learning, it did not focus specifically on characterization through dialogue and action. Therefore, the present study contributes additional perspectives by analyzing how learning values are represented verbally and behaviorally.

The seventh study was conducted by Agustini and Winarta (2023), who analyzed moral values reflected in movie characters. Their findings showed that actions often reveal values more strongly than dialogue because actions represent direct responses to conflicts and situations. This finding is important because it

supports the analytical framework used in the current research, which focuses on both dialogue and action as representations of learning values.

The eighth study was conducted by Puspitasari et al. (2025), who examined the integration of moral values into EFL learning. Their study emphasized that language learning should not only focus on linguistic competence but also on character development and social awareness. The researchers concluded that students become more engaged when learning materials involve meaningful themes and moral reflection. This study is relevant because it supports the integration of value analysis into English language learning contexts.

Based on the previous studies above, it can be concluded that films have significant potential in supporting English language learning, improving motivation, and introducing educational values. However, several gaps remain insufficiently explored. First, many studies focus mainly on linguistic benefits without examining learning values reflected in characters. Second, studies discussing moral values often analyze films generally without connecting them directly to EFL learning. Third, only a limited number of studies examine characterization through both dialogue and action simultaneously. Finally, there is still limited research using contemporary films such as *Avatar: The Way of Water* as the object of analysis.

Therefore, this study attempts to fill these gaps by analyzing the learning values reflected in the main characters of *Avatar: The Way of Water*, examining

how these values are expressed through dialogue and action, and exploring their application in English language learning.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is an analytical structure used to explain the relationship between concepts in a study. According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), a conceptual framework helps researchers organize ideas systematically and guides the interpretation of research findings. In qualitative studies, conceptual frameworks function as maps that connect theories, research questions, and analytical processes.

This study is based on the assumption that films contain educational and learning values reflected through characters' dialogues and actions. These values can become meaningful resources in English language learning because students not only learn language structures but also understand social interaction, moral perspectives, and character development.

The film *Avatar: The Way of Water* is selected as the object of analysis because it presents complex characters, emotional conflicts, family relationships, leadership struggles, and survival experiences. Through these elements, the film reflects various learning values such as responsibility, cooperation, courage, empathy, respect, and leadership.

In this study, the main characters become the primary focus of analysis. Their dialogues and actions are analyzed qualitatively to identify the learning values reflected throughout the story. The identified values are then connected to English language learning contexts, particularly in relation to character education and meaningful language learning activities.

The conceptual framework of this study can be described as follows:

Table 2. 1 Conceptual Framework



