

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the method that was used by the writer in this study. It covers the collection of data, the informants that involve in the study, the instruments to collect the data, and finally the steps to analyze the obtained data.

In the area of speech acts research, the present study attempts to find out the strategies used in uttering request by children and the influence of sociopragmatic factors, such as power, social distance, and ranking of imposition, toward the realization of requesting speech acts.

3.1 Research Design

This study is a qualitative research that analyzes the social phenomena that occur in everyday life. In this study, the writer emphasizes the use of request strategies by school-age children and how sociopragmatic factors influence the realization of request.

Denzin and Lincoln (2000:8 cited in Silverman 2005:10) reveals in *Handbook of Qualitative Research* that qualitative research has some criteria, such as emphasize the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry.

In addition, the data were analyzed descriptively. This descriptive method is conducted through several steps: collecting, classifying, computing data, making conclusion, and reporting them.

3.2 Informants of the Study

Since this study investigates the pragmatics realization, the writer had to consider the appropriate informants so that the aims of this study will be fulfilled. Milroy (1987 cited in Ismanto 2008) gives lack of limitation in selecting the sampling methods regardless whether the account is technically representative or not. It is influenced by the maturity of sociolinguistics as a field of study. By using purposive sampling method, it allows the researcher to select the research subjects based on criteria that have been determined. As Denzin and Lincoln put it:

Many qualitative researchers employ ... purposive, and not random, sampling methods. They seek out groups, settings, and individuals where... the processes being studied are most likely to occur. (2000: 370 cited in Silverman 2005:129)

However, the informants of this study are required to have linguistic and communicative competence. These competences enable informants to produce grammatically correct sentences and can perform the sentences or expressions in a particular context. Hence, elementary students whose ages range from 10 to 12 years old were chosen to be the appropriate informants for this study. They were selected in the assumption that they have adequate competences. They had acquired their first language since they were babies and according to language development by Owens (2005), their vocabularies have increased rapidly and they

can construct adult-like definitions. They also have a good comprehension in language structure and in identifying social variables.

Further, the next step was to determine the number of the informants that appropriate for this study. There is no rule about the amount of a sample should be. However, the acceptable number of informants depends on the research involved. As Milroy (1987: 27 cited in Adhi 2006:27) points out, "... relatively small samples (too small to be considered technically representative) appear to be sufficient for useful accounts of language variation in large cities". By the appropriate number of informants, "the data analysis would be simpler, more focus, and more convenient" (Patton 1990 cited in Muniroh 2004:28).

Therefore in this study, 30 informants are considered to be the appropriate number to reveal the realization of requesting speech acts. They were chosen to represent each age category.

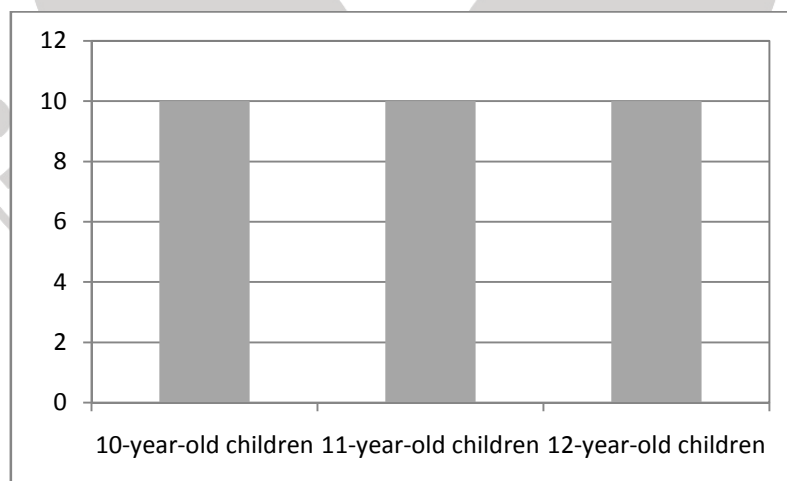


Figure 3.1 Number of informants classified based on their ages

3.3 Data Collection Procedures

One important thing in doing research is data collection that affects the data for analysis. In doing this research, the writer used pragmatic elicitation techniques. By using the pragmatic elicitation techniques, “data are generated in situations in which researchers can manipulate variables in the testing hypothesis and speakers can talk freely and spontaneously without awareness that their talk is the object of study” (Turnbull 2001:31). According to Turnbull (2001:33), a good pragmatic elicitation technique should meet the following criteria: it must generate data that are representative of structures of natural talk, it should allow researcher control and the possibility of manipulating variables of theoretical interest, it should be efficient in that many instances of the phenomena at issue can be generated easily, and it must be ethical. Cohen (Sahragard 2006 cited in Adhi 2006:28) pointed out the advantages and disadvantages of natural data.

Table 3.1

Advantages and Disadvantages of Gathering Natural Data

Advantages and Disadvantages of Gathering Natural Data	
Advantages	Disadvantages
1. The data are spontaneous.	1. The speech act being studied may not occur naturally very often.
2. The data reflect what the speakers say rather than what they think they would say.	2. Proficiency and gender may be difficult to control.
3. The speakers are reacting to a natural situation rather than to a contrived and possibly unfamiliar situation.	3. Collecting and analyzing the data are time-consuming.
4. The communicative event has real-world consequences.	4. The data may not yield enough or any examples of target items.
5. The event may be a source of rich pragmatic structures.	5. The use of recording equipment may be intrusive.
	6. The use of note taking as a complement to or in lieu of taping relies on memory.

Considering the time consuming in gaining the data, the efficiency to get a large amount of data quickly, and the advantages and disadvantages of gathering natural data as shown in table 3.1, the present study used elicitation technique by the way of oral Discourse Completion Task (oral DCT) and role play activities. To evolve situations in oral DCT and role play activities, the matrix was constructed (see table 3.2). After all, the informants were stimulated to produce speech act, in this study is requesting speech acts, through oral Discourse Completion Task (oral DCT) and role play activities. Both procedures will be presented in detail in the section that follows.

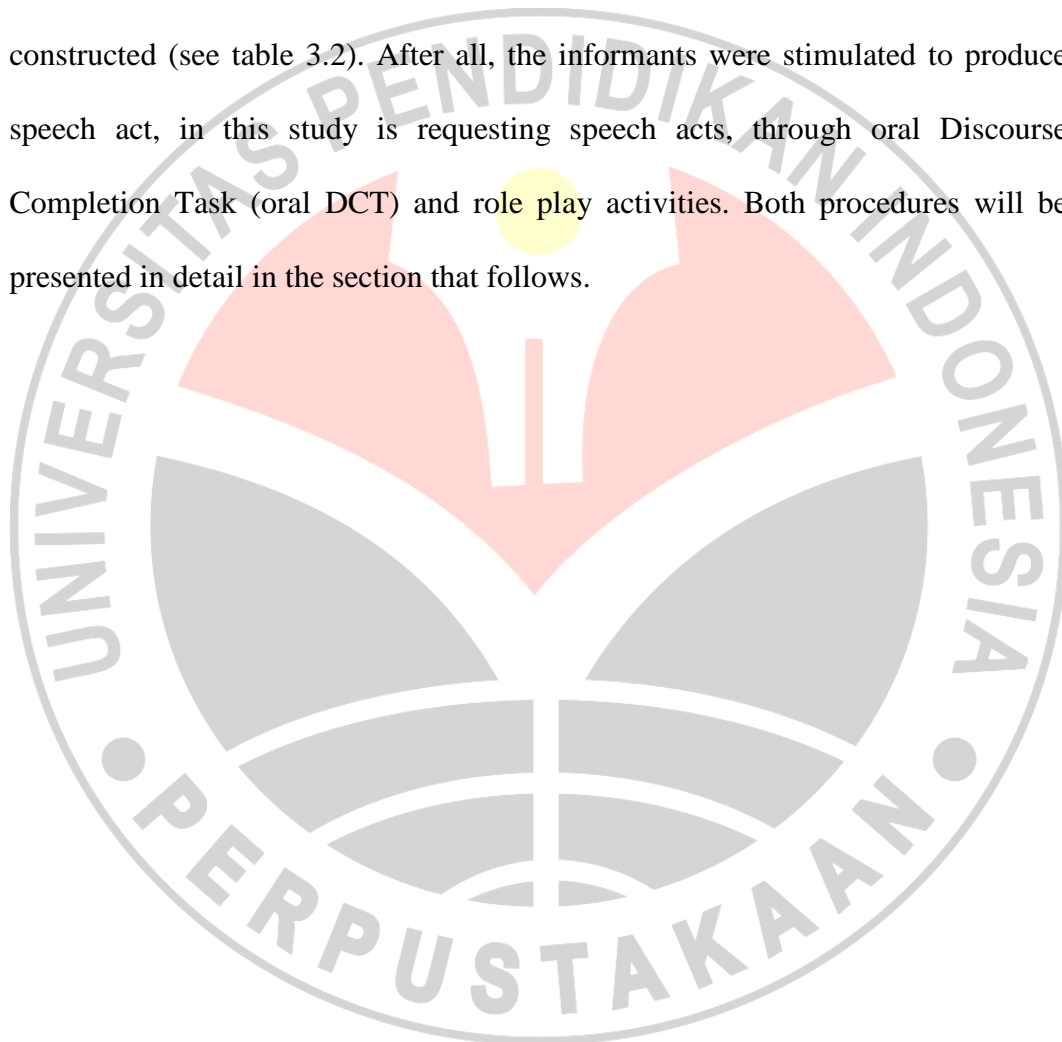


Table 3.2
A Description of Situations along the Dimensions of
Speaker, Hearer, Social Distance, Power, and Ranking of Imposition

Situations		Informants		Sociopragmatic Factors		
		<i>Requester</i> (Speaker)	<i>Requestee</i> (Hearer)	Social Distance (D)	Power (P)	Ranking of Imposition (R)
1.	asking to take an English course	a child	a parent	close	low	low
2.	borrowing a pencil	a student	a classmate	close	equal	low
3.	bringing bandage	a child	a younger brother/sister	close	high	low
4.	borrowing a tape	a student	a teacher	casual	low	mid
5.	asking to be silent	a student	a student from another class	casual	equal	low
6.	bringing to school	a child	a servant	casual	high	low
7.	explaining about traffic sign	a student	a police	distant	low	low
8.	asking to change the game	a child	a child	distant	equal	low
9.	finding a book	a student	a shopkeeper	distant	high	low

