CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

After discussing theoretical foundation of this study in the previous chapter, this chapter will elaborate the research methodology of this study, including research design of the study, data resource (population and sample), data collection techniques (questionnaire, interview, and document analysis), and data analysis (including research procedures).

3.1 Research Design

In this study, the descriptive method was applied to answer the research questions which were raised and elaborated in the first chapter. In the case of this study, describing and investigating vocabulary learning strategies which are used by the eighth graders in the school under investigation as they are in natural situation became the main concern. As Arikunto (2005: 310) asserts that descriptive research is intended to describe a variable, a symptom, and a situation as they are. This means that neither the students nor the vocabulary learning strategies were studied with interference of the researcher in the form of treatment or control. Thus, this descriptive study proves suitable to be used to achieve the goals of this study.

3.2 Data Resource

This study was conducted at one of the state-owned Junior High Schools in Indramayu. The school is well-known as one of the favorite schools in Indramayu. The

participants of this study were the eighth grade students. The research involved the eighth graders since they were considered to be the most accessible sites at the school. Considering seventh grade students were less proficient and ninth grade students were facing National Examination, so that eighth grade students were the most accessible site for this study.

Initially, 36 students from four classes participated in this study. Each class was represented by nine students covering three high achievers, three average achievers, and three low achievers. Thus, the students from four classes were grouped as the following: 12 students as high achievers, 12 students categorized as Average achievers, and 12 students categorized as low achievers. The selection of participants from different categories is basically to obtain the data from the whole levels of students' category on the purpose of having representative data from each level of students. So that the data from each level can be compared one and another to answer the fourth research question (see page 5). This is in accordance with McMillan and Schumacer (1989: 182) statement that selecting certain samples purposefully can collect varied data. The categorization is based on the students' achievement in learning English in their class, as shown in table 3.1.

Table 3.1

The students' score

Student respondent	Range of score
High achievers	71.00 – 90.00
Average achievers	61.00 – 70.00
Low achievers	0.00 – 60.00

3.3   Data Collection

This study used theory of triangulation, in which three different instruments were used – questionnaire, interview and document analysis – to collect the intended data. This theory was employed to make the data more reliable and more valid and to reduce bias that possibly occurs during the research (Alwasilah, 2000).

3.3.1   Questionnaire

The questionnaire was used as the main instrument to collect the data. It was administered to the students in order to collect information about their strategies in learning vocabulary and information about the most helpful strategies in learning vocabulary according to the students' opinion. The questionnaire was administered to the students in the class in the 3rd week of May. It comprises 44 closed-ended items and an opened-ended item comprising three sections. The first section contained demographic questions in order to gain information about the students' name, level, gender, and age. The second section (items 1-44) was adapted from Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies. Actually, Schmitt's taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies consist of 58 strategies, but in this study there are 14 strategies which are not used (strategies related to cognate, flash card, semantic map, native speaker, peg method and loci method). The omission was taken because those strategies were considered too difficult for the students. In transforming Schmitt's taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies into questionnaire, it was paraphrased and translated into Bahasa Indonesia. This section

was designed to identify the students' strategies in learning vocabulary. It consists of determination strategies (7 items), social strategies (6 items), memory strategies (19 items), cognitive strategies (8 items), and metacognitive strategies (4 items). The other section consists of an opened-ended item asking about the most helpful strategies in learning vocabulary according to the students' personal judgment. The questionnaire is presented in appendix A.

The data were described in the form of percentage which came from its intensity of use. Therefore, the likert-scale was used with the criteria exemplified as followed: Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Often, and Always. Based on the criteria, Never was considered to be a negative answer (it indicated that the students didn't use the strategies), meanwhile, Seldom, Sometimes, Often, and Always were considered to be a positive answer (it indicated that the students used the strategies).

3.3.2 Interview

There were two sessions of interview conducted in the study. The first session was the informal interview addressed to the two teachers of English teaching at the research site. The interview was conducted on 3rd week of May. The aim of the interview was to determine the strategies for gathering the information about students' level of proficiency. The other is the interview addressed to the student. This individual interview was used to obtain more detailed information about student's vocabulary learning strategies and crosscheck the information obtained from the questionnaire.

The 18 participants were involved in the interview. They constituted 50% of all students. From those 18 participants, six were high achievers, six were average achievers, and the other six were low achievers. The interview was conducted in the 4th week of May, after the questionnaire had been returned by the students. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, coded, and categorized to identify the patterns of the responses. The questions and the samples of the interview can be seen in appendix B.

3.3.3 Document Analysis

It was used to collect information about students' English ability which was taken from their last semester examination scores. Then it was analyzed to make a classification of higher, average, lower achievers; this classification was made to answer the fourth research question. After making the classification then it was compared with the data obtained from questionnaire to find out what strategies tend to be used by those three levels. The categorization was shown in table 3.1 above (see page 30).

3.4 Data Analysis

After collecting the data through the techniques mentioned, then the obtained data were analyzed and interpreted based on the following steps.

Firstly, to identify the strategies used by the students in learning vocabulary, the data from the questionnaires were analyzed using the descriptive computation. The data

were displayed in the form of percentage which was taken based on the frequency of use of vocabulary learning strategies. In addition, to discover strategies which tend to be used by higher, average and lower achievers, the data gathered were compared. Meanwhile, the data obtained from the open-ended item were analyzed qualitatively to explore the student's opinions of the most helpful strategies and their reasons.

Secondly, the data from interview were analyzed by the following steps which were proposed by (Klave, 1996:187): (1) transcribing the interview data, (2) categorizing the data based on the responses, (3) condensing the data of interview, and (4) interpreting the condensed data by relating them to the central theme of research questions.

Finally, the data from document analysis were analyzed to make the classification of students' English ability, in this case the students were classified into high, average and low achievers based on their last semester score.