

CHAPTER III

METHODS OF THE STUDY

This chapter discusses several points related to the way this study was conducted, which consists of five sections. The first section presents the two research questions formulated in this study. The second section explains the design of the present study. The third section explains how the data were collected. The fourth section presents the data analysis. The last section elaborates research validity.

3.1. Research questions

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How is the process of classroom speaking activities within a conversation class?
2. What are the students' responses toward those classroom speaking activities?

3.2. Site and Respondents

3.2.1. The Research Site

This study was conducted in one of Islamic Junior High School in Bandung. There are two reasons why this school was chosen. First, the school authorities allowed the researcher to conduct this study in their school; hence, this

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enhances the feasibility of this study. Second, the school has run a program of English conversation class which focuses on speaking skill separated from general English program. This provides more opportunities to conduct an investigation of speaking since the main purpose of classroom lesson is on the teaching of speaking. This also enhances the feasibility of the present study which focuses on investigating speaking skills. In the program of Conversation Class the students are classified into three levels: Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced. The researcher focused his investigation only on advanced class. Also, the researcher focused only on the main activities.

3.2.2. The Research Respondents

Two categories of participants were involved in this study. The first participant was an English teacher who taught English conversation focusing on speaking. At the time this study was conducted, the teacher had been teaching English for a couple years. He comes from Somalia and he is continuing his study for master degree at a University in Bandung. The first respondent was a resource to address validate the obtained data from lesson plans and classroom observations. The second participants in this study were students of advanced class. There were ten students in the classroom; five are female and five are male. Unlike the first respondent, the second group of participants was a resource to figure out students' responses toward classroom speaking activities in which they are involved. Those ten students were selected based on their participation and achievement in conversation class, wherein five of them got the highest

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achievement and participated actively in a conversation class, while the rest got the lowest level and rarely participated in a conversation class.

3.3. Research Design

This study employs qualitative explanatory case study design “to discover and understand a phenomenon” (Merriam, 1998: 11) classroom speaking activities “in its natural setting” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994: 2) and the students’ responses towards those activities. In addition it employs qualitative explanatory case study design since “how” question is mainly posed as a research question, the writer has no control over observed events, and since it focuses on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context (Robert K. Yin, 2003).

3.4. Data Collection

This section describes how the data were gathered in this study, which involves techniques of data collection. Each will be discussed in the following sections.

3.4.1. Techniques of Data Collection

This research employed three techniques of data collection. The first technique used is classroom observation. This technique was intended to find the answer of the first research question posed in this study. More precisely, the observation aimed at discovering the process of teaching performed by the observed teacher as well as how the students are involved in speaking activities.

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Classroom observations were done for 8 meetings to understand deeply the phenomenon. The second technique used is interviews. The interviews were addressed both to the teacher and the students involved in this study. For teacher, the interview was intended to enrich researcher's understanding about the data obtained from classroom observation and to make clarification of what remained 'blur' related to classroom speaking activities. For students, the interview was intended to identify the students' response towards the aforementioned classroom speaking activities in teaching speaking. The third technique used in this study is lesson plan analysis. It was aimed at validating the data from classroom observation and teacher's interview dealing with classroom speaking activities. Those three techniques address triangulation principle which will be explained in the subsequent part.

3.4.1.1. Lesson Plan

In this research, 8 lesson plans were gathered and analyzed to see what the teacher planned to do in conversation class. This analysis focused on the main activity in which the teacher planned to conduct classroom speaking activity and its process.

3.4.1.2. Observation

By conducting observation technique, it means that the teaching speaking skill is observed and videotaped. In this case the steps or level of observation will be referred to Richards' idea (2003: 104). The levels deal with learning to see,

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participant observation, and structure observation. This technique also relates to Merriam (1998) who describes that observation is one of the techniques used when activity, event, or situation can be observed firsthand, when a fresh perspective is desired or when participants are not willing to discuss the topic under the study. The observation was done in 8 meetings carried out from 12th of September 2011 until 28th of October 2011. It employed an open-ended observation to see the process of each classroom speaking activity.

3.4.1.3. Interview

In this research, interview was addressed to both the teacher and the students. For the teacher, it was used to get information about the way he taught speaking. This data was expected to support the data gained from observation. This instrument was also employed to validate the relevance between data gained from lesson plans and data observed in classroom observation. Hence it employed a close-ended interview in which the researcher possessed the interview schedule which is based on the data from earlier classroom observation. The interview was made based on principles introduced by Gall, Meredith, Gall Joyce P and Borg Walter R (2003: 239), which involves (1) the informal conversational interview, (2) the general interview guide approach, and (3) the standardized open-ended interview. For the students, it was used to get information about their responses towards classroom speaking activities. It was carried out by the end of classroom

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observation. It employed a semi close-ended interview which was done in group, i.e. group interview.

3.5. Data Analysis

After the data had been collected, the researcher analyzed them based on common procedures in qualitative research. The data from observation used to identify the classroom speaking activities within a conversation class were classified based on types of activities.

Meanwhile, the interview data is used to verify classroom speaking activities within the conversation class as well as identify the students' response towards the classroom speaking activities within a conversation class were transcribed, coded, and re-read to make sure that the transcription had matched the data. After that, the data were classified based on types of activities employed by the teacher. In this way, the data had been condensed for the intended purpose of the research. In conclusion, the collaboration of arranging data from classroom observation, teacher's and students' interviews, and lesson plan analysis were to enhance the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon. Moreover, data analysis intended to separate the data into manageable unit of its analysis,

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discovered what is prominent to be learned, which in turn led the researcher to decide what are going to be told to others.

3.6. The Validity of the Data

Validity is one of the important issues in conducting both quantitative and qualitative research. In quantitative method, validity refers to the extent that a particular test (instrument) really measures what is intended to be measured (see Alwasilah, 2000). In qualitative method, validity refers to the “trustworthiness” (Erlandson et al, 1993 in Creswell, 1994: 157) of a study, or “how research findings match reality” (Merriam, 1998: 201), and “can be applied to other situations” (Merriam, 1998: 207).

Since the design of the present study is qualitative, the discussion focuses only on how to meet validity in qualitative research. There are several strategies that can be used to meet the research validity in qualitative research, i.e. *triangulation, member checks, long-term observation, peer examination, participatory or collaborative modes of research, and researcher’s biases, thick description, typicality or modal category, and multisite designs* (Merriam, 1998 see also Alwasilah, 2000: 170-185).

To validate the data, the present study employed a *thick description* by which it attempts to provide detail description of where the study was conducted, who were involved in the study, and how the study was conducted. Hence, the

readers may be able to see how far the findings of the present study can be applied in their own situations (see Merriam, 1998; 211).



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