CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter focuses on the methodological aspects of this study. It covers four main aspects: research design, research site and samples, data collection, and data analysis. Research design elaborates the method employed in this study and the method of analyzing the data. The research site and the samples emphasize on the place where the study takes place and the samples involved. The data collection section presents the data types and data collection technique. The data analysis elaborates the procedure of analyzing the data.

3.1 Research Design

This section presents some discussion regarding research method, framework of data analysis, and tool of data analysis. First, regarding research method, the present study was guided by a descriptive qualitative research design. Since the primary purpose of this study is to analyze, describe, and interpret data to recognize how textual organization of undergraduate student's thesis in a small scale, a descriptive qualitative research design was an ideal guiding design as it is committed to discover meaningful description of certain phenomenon through texts analysis and interpretation (Creswell, 2004). Additionally, this study also has similar characteristics to a case study. First, the same as a case study, it was conducted in a single case (Creswell, 2004, Fraenkel et al. 2004). The second characteristic is that this study used text analysis, which is another method of qualitative case study (Freebody, 2003).

Second, in terms of data analysis framework used, Systemic Functional Linguistics framework developed by Halliday (1994) and Eggins (1994, 2004) was used in the present study. The SFG framework was adopted because it was constructed for the purpose of text analysis (Fang, 2005; Crossley et al. 2011) in order to make it possible to say sensible and useful things about any text (Halliday, 1994).

Third, with regard to tool of analysis, the present study used systemic functional grammar textual analysis method. It was particularly employed to examine students' writing. The Systemic Textual Analysis (STA) is a text-based approach to teaching writing based on a combination of the genre-based theory and systemic functional linguistics (Ho, 2009). This tool of analysis is considered to be appropriate for two reasons. First, systemic functional grammar textual analysis method provides a powerful analytical tool, and constitutes one of a variety of linguistic approaches that have been well developed in the area of education (Freebody, 2003, Emilia, 2005). Second, Systemic functional grammar textual analysis can be used to examine a small scale and single case phenomenon (Freebody, 2003).

3.2 Research Site and Sample of the Study

This study was conducted at one private university in Aceh, Jabal Ghafur University. The research site was selected by considering that the result of the study will give impact to Jabal Ghafur University students, especially in the process of writing academic texts cohesively.

The sample of the study is a thesis taken from an undergraduate student of Jabal Ghafur University. The sample was purposively selected with two considerations. The first consideration is that the student was a cumlauder and obtained 'A' for her thesis. She could be categorized as a cumlauder since her cumulative grade point average is 3.81. Instead of a cumlauder, she also could be categorized into high achiever student because she obtained a lot of achievements in her life time. Some of the achievements are being the first winner of English debate competition, being the first winner of speech competition, having been a successful student to be a part of Syiah Kuala University student for a semester. The second consideration is that the thesis is relatively recent; in this case in academic year 2013.

3.3 Data Collection Method

Some steps were conducted in collecting the data. First, eight soft files of students' theses of year 2013 marked A were taken from the university librarian. From the eight theses, one thesis was taken purposively by considering that the thesis was written by a cumlauder/the best student.

The second step is the thesis was read carefully and then analyzed through Systemic Functional Linguistics framework developed by Halliday (1994) and Eggins (1994, 2004). The SFL framework is an ideal analysis tool in the present study since it is constructed for the purpose of text analysis in order to make it possible to say sensible and useful things about any text (Halliday, 1994; Fang, 2005; Crossley et al. 2011).

3.4 Data Analysis

After gathering the data, theme and thematic progression theories proposed by Halliday (1994) and Eggins (1994, 2004) are employed to analyze the data. In analyzing the data in this study, several steps adapted from Rahmawati and Kurniawan (2015) were conducted. These steps were adapted because the unit analysis of Rahmawati and Kurniawan's (2015) study is the same as the unit analysis of the present study. Here are some steps of analyzing the data:

1. Close-reading the printed thesis.
2. Breaking down the thesis into clauses.
3. Placing the clauses into table format to make the process of the analysis easier and clearer.
4. Determining the theme and rheme.
5. Classifying the thematic progression pattern, whether it is reiteration, zig-zag, or multiple theme patterns.
6. Calculating the occurrence of each type of theme and thematic progression patterns found in the thesis.
7. Interpreting the findings to draw a conclusion of what types of theme and thematic progression patterns employed in the thesis and how the thematic

development constructed by the student contributes to the textual cohesion of the thesis.

3.5 Concluding Remark

This chapter has presented the methodological aspects applied in this study covering the research design, research site and sample of the study, data collection method, and data analysis.