

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methods of the research which covers five sections: (3.1) research questions, (3.2) research design of the study, (3.3) data collection method which includes procedure of data collection, (3.4) data analysis, and (3.5) chapter summary.

3.1 Research Questions

This research was conducted to answer three research questions. These questions are formulated as follows:

1. How do the students maintain the structure of background section in the thesis as can be seen from the Move structure and theme system?
2. What kind of cohesive ties are dominantly applied in the background section of the thesis?
3. To what extent both systems contribute to the coherence and cohesion of in the background section of the thesis?

3.2 Research Design

In order to answer the research questions, this study employed a qualitative research design. A qualitative research design is appropriate to examine a phenomenon of a single case study (Alwasilah, 2007). Besides, this design also provides an opportunity to get a “complex, holistic picture” of the addressed phenomenon (Silverman, 2005: 15).

In terms of analysis, SFG textual analysis method is appropriate in this study particularly to examine students' writing. SFG textual analysis can be used to examine a small scale and single case phenomenon, generate a qualitative data, and provide an interpretive analysis of that data (Emilia, 2008).

Furthermore, regarding the characteristics of this method, qualitative case study research design allows the researcher to conduct naturalistic observation of students' original text which is based on concepts, models, and theories (Merriam, 1998; Gilham, 2000; Travers 2001 in Emilia 2005). Thus, this research design was considered suitable for this study.

3.2 Research Site

This study was conducted at one state university in Bandung, Indonesia and the data used in this study were taken from theses written by undergraduate students of English Education program in 2010, 2011, and 2012 academic years.

The research site was selected based on its relevancy to the researchers' current educational background. As a graduate student of the university, the setting supported to research's accessibility and feasibility.

3.3 Data Collection Method

In collecting data, documentation method was applied since the data were taken from printed media (Arikunto, 1998: 158). With documentation method, 12 background section texts were selected as the samples used in this study. The background section texts were chosen from the second half of 2010, 2011, and 2012 academic years and were submitted in the end of each academic year which means the theses selected in this study are relatively recent.

Furthermore, the background sections selected for the study were taken from introduction section of the theses with 300 - 500 words count. This criterion was considered to be suitable for the analysis on academic writing because commonly the requirement for formal academic writing or introduction for undergraduate thesis contained, at least, two to three pages or about 300 to 500 characters (Evans and Gruba, 2002; Glatthorn and Joyner; 2003; Murray, 2002: 98 in Paltridge and Starfield 2007). Thus, the data collection method was conducted based on this criterion.

3.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using textual analysis. Textual analysis concentrates on the formal features (such as vocabularies, grammar, syntax, and sentence coherence) from which discourse and genre are realized linguistically (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002: 69).

Furthermore, in relation to identify, describe, and analyze the coherence and cohesion in the introduction chapter of the study, textual analysis using systemic functional grammar was the analysis method in this study. SFG textual analysis is to do with an attempt to show “how and why the text meant what it did” (Halliday, 1994 in Webster 2002: 6).

SFG textual is designed to scrutinize on “how the language is used in particular context and function” (Halliday, 1985; Emilia, 2005). This means SFG analysis was primarily meant to explain the role and functions of grammatical and linguistic features in the text. With that reason, qualitative case study using SFG textual analysis was appropriate to describe and interpret the data in this study. Besides, the data were analyzed in terms of Move elements, Theme system, and cohesive device.

Furthermore, the data were analyzed using the following procedures. First, 12 samples of background section from the selected theses were scrutinized using

textual analysis of Systemic Functional Grammar. Textual analysis using functional grammar is a kind of linguistic approach that has been well developed in language education field and is used as a foundation to study coherence and cohesiveness in students' text (Freebody, 2003 in Emilia, 2005). This first procedure was used to answer the first question in this study and to reveal the Theme system and prominent thematic progression used in the background section of a thesis.

Second, the samples of background section text were analyzed based on Create a Research Space theory (Swales and Feak, 1994; Paltridge and Starfield, 2007) to find out the schematic structure of background section in the theses. In this step, the identification of schematic structure was conducted through underlining the typical features (words, statement, or phrase) of Move elements. Furthermore, to find out the prominent Move elements in the schematic structure of background section, each paragraph and clause in the text was analyzed in detail to find out the position and the feature of Move elements.

The two procedures of data analysis mentioned above were used to answer the first question and was to do with students' ability to control the schematic structure, Theme system, and thematic patterns appear in the background section of a thesis. Thus, if all background section texts fulfilled "the demands of schematic structure of background section in a research thesis and its social purposes", it means the students have completed "the first and foremost task of a writer" (Kress, 1985: 46 in Emilia, 2012).

Next, the third step, the samples from students' background text were analyzed using cohesive terminology to find out the most prominent device that occurred in this study which perform the cohesive ties in the text. This step was conducted to find out how students make use the cohesive devices to create a cohesive writing. In term of cohesion analysis, the analysis was conducted by underlining the words which indicate the occurrences of cohesive devices.

Underlining a word was needed particularly to highlight the data. This phase was significant to answer the second questions of this study.

Practically, in the process of data analysis, the researcher employed categorization. A categorization was conducted to give information on Move elements, types of Theme, Theme-Rheme pattern, and Cohesive Devices used in the samples of background section. This was the important step in the data analysis since in this phase the researcher was required to classify the clauses, sentences, and paragraphs carefully. In addition, the categorization of the grammatical and lexical features was conducted to reveal the types of Theme, prominent Theme-Rheme pattern, and cohesive devices used in the background of the study.

The last step was interpreting the data and giving the result. The interpretation came up with evidences from the categorization. The interpretation was conducted to find out students' ability to maintain generic Move structure, dominant thematic progression pattern, and prominent cohesive item in the background section of their thesis.

The interpretation from the three systems was used to answer the third research question that is the contribution of the systems to the texts' coherence and cohesiveness. Then, all data interpretation was used to frame concluding remark and suggestion for thesis writing, thesis supervision, and further study.

3.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides the information on research methodology used in this study. There are four important points reviewed in this chapter. First, this study was designed based on qualitative case study. This design was selected in order to clearly explain the single and small scale phenomenon in particular context. Second, the data were collected using documentation of background section texts. Third, the data analysis was conducted based on SFG textual

analysis in order to gain information on grammatical and linguistic features of the investigated phenomenon. Fourth, the data were analyzed using three procedures and were classified and underlined based on its category. Further, the data analysis and interpretation will be presented in the next chapter.

