

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter elaborates the research methodology employed in the present study as a systematic attempt to answer the research questions; namely, 1. What are the sources of students' reading anxiety in EFL learning? 2. What kind of strategies students used for their EFL reading to overcome their anxiety? There are three major parts in this chapter. The first part relates to the research design in the study. The second part describes the procedures of the data collection methods. The last part elaborates the data analysis.

#### **3.1. Research Design**

This research employed qualitative descriptive method by distributing questionnaires and taking a transcript of interview of which this research highlighted explicitly about the potential sources of students' reading anxiety and the use of reading strategies which occurred naturally to the students who learned EFL reading in an English dormitory. As identified by Dörnyei (2007) saying that qualitative method described clearly about social phenomena as they took place in the natural setting without any attempt to manipulate the situation under study. The data of this study then was quantified in order to make the description clearer, as suggested by Nunan and Bailey (2009), which was shown by the number, percentages, and distribution of students reading anxiety.

Based on the classification of research design from Yin (2008), this study was considered as a case study, because the case was the reading anxiety experience by EFL students and the use of reading strategies, but the case could not be considered without the context, an English dormitory of State University in Bandung, and more specifically the classroom settings. It was in these settings that the source of reading anxiety and the use of reading strategies were developed and utilized. It would be impossible for the researcher to have a true picture of the sources of reading anxiety and the use of reading strategies without considering the context within which it occurred. This is also in line with Merriam (1998), Nunan (1992), and Freebody (2003) suggestions that a case study should focus on

one particular instance of educational experience. Besides, this case study design also used multiple data gatherings and analytic procedures to increase the validity of study; taking a transcript of interview and giving EFLRAI (English as a Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Inventory) and RSQ (Reading strategies Questionnaire), Merriam (1998) and Freebody (2003).

Yin (2008) and Stake (1995) used different terms to describe a variety of case studies. Yin (2008) categorized case studies as explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive. Stake (1995) identified case studies as intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. This study followed the categorization of Yin (2008) and belonged to the descriptive case study because this study was used to describe an intervention or phenomenon (reading anxiety and reading strategies) and the real-life context (an English class of a language dormitory) in which it occurred.

The role of the researcher in this study had dual roles, since the researcher was also known as one of the teachers in the dormitory who also taught in the class where this study was conducted. In other words, the role of the researcher in this study was a teacher-researcher. However, all the data were fully collected and analyzed by the researcher objectively without any attempt to manipulate the situation under study to increase the feasibility of this study. During the teaching and learning process, the researcher taught in the classroom from the teacher's point of view. While the class ended, the researcher perspective was used to investigate the phenomenon undertaken. The process of investigation started by collecting relevant data to answer the research question, it was distributing questionnaires and conducting a semi-structured interview, which would be explained more in the procedures of data collection.

This study was motivated by a need to better understand of the phenomenon students revealed when they were learning in the classroom. From the teacher's perspective, they tended to show the low interest in reading a foreign language text which resulted the initial signs of anxiety. As a teacher in that class, the researcher had an easily access to the research site, besides, the researcher was fully supported and permitted by the director since this research was expected to give beneficial information for the dormitory on how to teach students and overcome their difficulties in EFL learning particularly in reading.

### 3.2. Data Collection

This section answers who were taken as the subject of this research and where, when and how the data were collected:

#### 3.2.1 Research Site

The study was carried out in an English Dormitory of State University in Bandung. English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Learning is the preeminent program of the dormitory. Since its early beginning, the dormitory has tried to create a language learning environment where it is expected to be an effective place for students in the first year of study from a variety of majors to stay and study altogether with other students who also have the same intention to learn English as a foreign language. The dormitory tries to teach English to students and attempts to carry out and overcome the difficulties in EFL learning. Some of the efforts are not only giving much time allotted for learning in the classroom, but also designing English conversation, vocabulary enrichment, public speaking, and language day programs. Based on the background above, the dormitory was chosen as the research site of this study in consideration that this dormitory was designed to teach English to the students in the first year of study from a variety of majors and attempt to carry out and overcome their difficulties in EFL learning. This condition is very fit with this study because according to Horwitz et al. (1986) university students commonly experience anxiety, at least, in the beginning of their study. Besides, Students at university level are mostly considered reading as a sophisticated skill rather than students at high school since university-level students may be force to read more literature sources than they have ever had before which is consequently beneficial to support their success in college. Therefore, the participants of this study were selected from students of a language dormitory at the first semester of academic year 2017-2018. Another consideration is that English classes are held twice a week in the dormitory and reading is one of the skills taught. Consequently, the behavior of those involved in the study cannot be

manipulated since the focus of this research is about reading anxiety and reading strategies. Thus, it is relevant to the phenomenon under study.

### **3.2.2 Participants of the Research**

There were seven classes (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and H), the students were placed based on the placement test result. Class H was chosen as the subject of this research using purposive sampling technique. It is the technique of selecting data because of some principled decisions; at which point to add additional sample and when to stop gathering more data, as acknowledge by Dörnyei (2007). The class was chosen in reason that it was representative of students who got the lowest score on the placement test result conducted by the dormitory. The placement test was performed before the teaching and learning process began to place students based on their language ability levels. The test was in accordance with the purpose of this research since one of the forms of the questions given in the placement test was about reading. However, the placement test result was used by the researcher to select to students who were involved in this study.

The class lasted 100 minutes. It consisted of 41 non-English students who were from different majors. They were given EFLRAI and RSQ questionnaires to see whether reading anxiety was encountered by them or not and how they solved the anxiety itself. On the other hands, the focus of this study, in the interview sessions, only on the students who experienced a high level of reading anxiety based on the selection of EFLRAI result. Since they were classified into students who were very anxious in reading a foreign language text, they were expected to give a true picture of reading anxiety sources sought by this research.

### **3.2.3 Instrumentations and Materials**

Two instruments were employed to collect the data in this study. Questionnaires and a semi-structured interview. The two instruments were used to corroborate the findings to answer the research questions. By

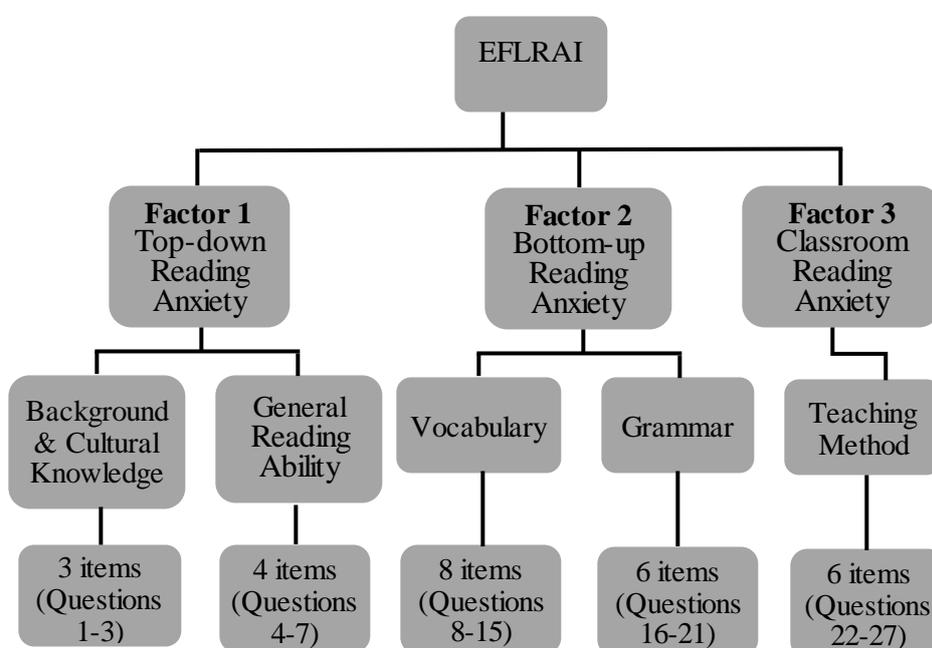
employing two different instruments, this study is expected to provide triangulated findings and analysis on students' reading anxiety and reading strategies in EFL classroom.

### 3.2.3.1 Questionnaires

This study used two questionnaires which were distributed to the participant in meeting 1 and 2. The first questionnaire was adopted from MasoudZoghi (2012), it was EFLRAI (English as a Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Inventory) which reflected three sources of reading anxiety, namely: top down reading anxiety which was divided into background and cultural knowledge (items 1-3) and general reading ability (items 3-7), bottom-up reading anxiety which was related to vocabulary (items 8-15) and grammar (items 16-21), and classroom reading anxiety which was associated with teaching method (items 22-27). For the sake of clarity, figure 1 highlighted the detail of EFLRAI.

Figure 3.1

Graphic Representation of EFLRAI



Top-down reading anxiety (TRA) is related to the readers in interacting with the text such as readers' background and cultural

knowledge of the text. It can be seen when students are able to guess the meaning of the words in the text and decode them in a meaningful way but on the other sides, they have no knowledge of the text culture as it has no relation to their background of life. Bottom-up reading anxiety (BRA) refer to the text itself such as its vocabularies and grammar. It is revealed when students fail to understand the texts which are not familiar to them including unfamiliarity of the vocabularies and the grammar of the text. If they are more familiar, they will have the less experience in reading anxiety. Classroom reading anxiety (CRA) is an anxiety which has no relation to the readers and the text. It is relevant to the context in which the readers, text, and teachers interact. It is occurred in the classroom settings.

The second questionnaire was RSQ adopted from Oxford et al. (2004) which consisted of 35 statements. The RSQ measured two types of reading strategies: top-down and bottom-up reading strategies. Top-down reading strategies are strategies related to the text-level or strategies students used to comprehend a whole text such as using background knowledge and the title to predict the content, skimming, and scanning. Bottom-up reading strategies are associated with strategies applied to interpret the text starting from the small thing such as word level to sentence level. When students try to understand the meaning of words or references as the parts of text, it is included to bottom-up reading strategies. In RSQ, the top-down reading strategies are reflected in 30 items, while 15 items focus on bottom-up reading strategies. Table 3.2 classified the items in Reading Strategies Questionnaire in more detail.

Table 3.1

The Classification of the Items in Reading Strategies Questionnaire

| No | Strategies                            | B/T |
|----|---------------------------------------|-----|
| 1  | Predicting the content from the title | T   |
| 2  | Considering the text type             | T   |
| 3  | Skimming                              | T   |

|    |                                                                  |   |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| 4  | Focusing on the phrases and clauses in sentences                 | B |
| 5  | Focusing on the beginning and end of each paragraph              | T |
| 6  | Paying attention to the tense of the sentences                   | B |
| 7  | Trying to understand the meaning of each word in the text        | B |
| 8  | Translating every sentence into Indonesia                        | B |
| 9  | Reading the whole text from the beginning to the end             | B |
| 10 | Focusing on the sentence structures                              | B |
| 11 | Continuing reading even if difficulties occur                    | T |
| 12 | Adjusting the rate of reading depending on the text difficulty   | B |
| 13 | Reading the difficult sections aloud                             | B |
| 14 | Skipping unknown words                                           | T |
| 15 | Relating the background knowledge to the textual information     | T |
| 16 | Trying to understand the meaning of words by dividing into parts | B |
| 17 | Guessing the meaning of unknown words by using the context       | T |
| 18 | Guessing words meanings by using the prior knowledge             | T |
| 19 | Understanding what each pronoun refers to                        | B |
| 20 | Underlining important parts                                      | T |
| 21 | Marking important parts                                          | T |
| 22 | Rereading the difficult sections of the text                     | B |
| 23 | Reading the whole text loudly                                    | B |
| 24 | Visualizing the text                                             | T |
| 25 | Trying to comprehend the text with translation                   | T |
| 26 | Referring back to the previous sentences                         | T |
| 27 | Following the line in the text by pen or finger                  | B |
| 28 | Dividing the sentence into parts by using slashes                | B |
| 29 | Skipping sentences that are not understood                       | T |
| 30 | Predicting the subsequent information in the text                | T |
| 31 | Focusing on the connectors                                       | B |
| 32 | Writing key words                                                | T |
| 33 | Finding the main idea of each single paragraph                   | T |
| 34 | Focusing on comprehension questions before reading the text      | T |
| 35 | Summarizing the text                                             | T |

RSQ was grouped into three sections, namely: before, during, and after reading. Three items (items 1, 2, and 3) are strategies students used before reading, 31 items (items 4 to 34) refer to during reading strategies, while item 35 is related to strategies used after reading.

### 3.2.3.2 Semi-Structured Interview

Interview is the most commonly used data collection approach in qualitative research. Silverman (2000) described it as a gold standard of qualitative research. However, Malik & Hamied (2016) defined it as a purposeful interaction where a researcher tries to obtain information from the subjects who agree to participate in research. This research focused on 5 students who have been selected from the result of EFLRAI; those were students who experienced a high level of reading anxiety, in order to get information about the source of reading anxiety experienced by them and the use of reading strategies to minimize the anxiety of the text being read. Since they were classified into students who were very anxious in reading a foreign language text, they were expected to give a true picture of reading anxiety sources sought in this research. The interview also aimed to seek an important source of information to help researchers identify the underlying reasons, example: the motives, for participants' behaviors (Nardi, 2005).

A semi-structured interview was attempted to find out the answer to the questions mentioned above. This kind of interview was chosen in consideration that it allowed a great deal of flexibility in the kind of information that interviewees choose to give, as suggested by Patton (1990). To develop this instrument, the researcher referred to the statements revealed in the questionnaire. The first questionnaire was EFLRAI developed by MasoudZoghi (2012) which consisted of 27 statements and the second was 35 statements of RSQ developed by Oxford et al. (2004). The statements of both questionnaires were not all used in the interview session, they were selected based on the need of information sought in the interview session. From 27 statements of

EFLRAI, there were only 9 statements selected, 3 statements were related to top-down reading anxiety, 3 statements referred to bottom-up reading anxiety, and 3 statements were associated with classroom reading anxiety. While in the 35 statements of RSQ, 7 statements were considered important to be involved in the interview sessions; 4 statements were related to top-down reading anxiety and the others referred to bottom-up reading strategies. All of the selected statements were transformed into the forms of questions. For example: statement no 1 in EFLRAI was “I do not feel at ease when the title of the text is unfamiliar to me”, it was then transformed into “what do you feel when you are asked to read unfamiliar text?”.

All of those selected statements covered the analysis of the students’ reading anxiety sources following the categorization of reading anxiety source from MasoudZoghi (2012) which reflected three sources of reading anxiety, namely top down reading anxiety which is divided into background and cultural knowledge and general reading ability, bottom-up reading anxiety which is related to vocabulary and grammar, and classroom reading anxiety which is associated with teaching method. It also explored the students’ self-reports of anxiety involving their perceptions of reading difficulties in their target language, and their perceptions of the relative difficulty of reading as compared to the difficulty of other language skills. Another analysis of semi-structured interview focus was the use of reading strategies by Oxford et al. (2004) which measured two types of reading strategies: top-down reading strategies or text-level strategies and bottom-up reading strategies or word-level strategies.

### **3.2.4 Procedures**

Data collection was conducted in four weeks; the following table is the schedule of data collection for this study:

Table 3.2  
The Schedule of Data Collection

|           |                                                 |            |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Meeting 1 | Distributing EFLRAI                             | 30 minutes |
| Meeting 2 | Distributing RSQ                                | 30 minutes |
| Meeting 3 | Taking a semi-structured interview (3 students) | 45 minutes |
| Meeting 4 | Taking a semi-structured interview (2 students) | 30 minutes |

The time allocated for distributing questionnaire lasted two meetings. Those two meetings covered distributing EFLRAI which was a questionnaire to examine the students' reading anxiety and RSQ to analyze the strategies students used to overcome the anxiety in EFL reading. While the interview session was also conducted two meeting, first meeting for 3 students and the two students were interviewed in the second meeting. The interview was attempted to confirm and corroborate the data gained from questionnaires.

The researcher who was a teacher in that class gave the questionnaires to the students after the class was ended. Before giving the first questionnaire, EFLRAI, the researcher introduced all the students to the text that was harder than the text that they usually got in the classroom setting which consisted of questions that must be answered. This aimed to give students a foreshadowing or an illustration on how to work with such text and to see their responses to the text. The text given was actually about an agriculture, the title of the text was "What Methods Do Andean Farmers Use" (see appendix). While the text they usually received during learning based on the syllabus made by the teacher was about daily activities, free time activities, describing someone, and describing something. It clearly showed that there is a significant difference between the two kinds of text, one relates to their daily life which they can easily find everyday around them and another refers to one particular subject of agriculture which they have no experience and knowledge of the context of the text.

The researcher gave the students 10 minutes to read the text and answer the questions contained in the text. After the time was ended, the researcher then asked the student whether they had already done their work or not. At the end, all of them could not finish the task even they could not get the point of text. This kind of activity gave the researcher a new insight of the students' responses which clearly showed the initial signs of anxiety in reading which was revealed during the process of doing the task. Most of the students tended to show a confusion even some of them stopped working on it before the time was ended since they had no idea what to do to complete the task. After that, the researcher then distributed the first questionnaire to examine the sources of reading anxiety, it was EFLRAI. The time allocated for completing questionnaire was 30 minutes. While the second questionnaire, RSQ, was distributed a day after it. The students were asked to recall their minds on how the way they worked with such previously given text especially on what kind of strategies they used to overcome the anxiety when they were reading a foreign language text. The two questionnaires were translated into the Indonesian language to make participants easier in understanding the meaning of each statement of the questionnaires.

The next 2 meetings covered interview sessions with 5 students which were selected based on the result from EFLRAI, those were students who experienced a high level of reading anxiety. Since they were classified into students who were very anxious in reading a foreign language text, they were expected to give a true picture of reading anxiety sources sought in this research. In this session, the researcher chose to conduct the interview by herself in order to have an access to add additional data when it was not covered and to stop more gathering when it was fully obtained since the researcher was one who did know what was expected by this research.

To seek information about the sources of foreign language reading anxiety and the use of reading strategies to overcome the anxiety, while interviewed, students were not provided with a text to be read, they rather

were asked to recall their minds on how they felt when they were reading a foreign language text, learning in classroom setting in interacting with a text and the teacher, applying strategies in handling anxiety to comprehend a text. To conduct a semi-structured interview, a set of questions was prepared in advance. The questions were flexible, they allowed the participants moved naturally and expressed their feelings or opinions freely. It aimed to make the interview like a guided conversation. The interview was conducted in the Indonesian language to avoid the participants' difficulties in expressing their feelings or opinions and responding to the questions proposed clearly.

### **3.3. Data Analysis**

Data analysis in this study focused on EFLRAI adopted from MasoudZoghi (2012), RSQ adopted from Oxford et al. (2004), and a semi-structured interview. The data from questionnaires were counted, displayed, and analyzed. Then the data from the interview were transcribed, coded, scored, analyzed and interpreted. They were also used to support and confirm the data from questionnaire in order to get more comprehensive information and triangulated findings. The last, the analysis of each data collection was synthesized and discussed to answer the research questions.

#### **3.3.1 Analyzing Data from Questionnaires**

There were two questionnaires in this study, namely: EFLRAI EFLRAI adopted from MasoudZoghi (2012) which reflected three sources of reading anxiety, namely top down reading anxiety which is divided into background and cultural knowledge and general reading ability, bottom-up reading anxiety which is related to vocabulary and grammar, and classroom reading anxiety which is associated with teaching method. It also explored the students' self-reports of anxiety involving their perceptions of reading difficulties in their target language, and their perceptions of the relative difficulty of reading as compared to the difficulty of other language skills.

Table 3.3  
Score of each item for EFLRAI

| Value                  | Score |
|------------------------|-------|
| Strongly Agree (SA)    | 5     |
| Agree (A)              | 4     |
| Neutral (N)            | 3     |
| Disagree (D)           | 2     |
| Strongly disagree (SD) | 1     |

After the result from EFLRAI gained, it was then categorized into three level of reading anxiety started from high, moderate and low. The result from EFLRAI then were used to select students who were involved in the interview session; those were students who categorized into a high level of reading anxiety. Not only was considered important to investigate the level of students' reading anxiety but also the level of anxiety in each item of questionnaire, since it gave a clear information about to whose each item belonged.

To determine students' reading anxiety level and the level of anxiety in each item of questionnaire, the categorization of anxiety level from Horwitz (2008) was used. It was identified that students with mean scores around 3 were considered as moderate anxious students, while students with averages below 3 were recognized as not anxious students, whether students whose mean score near and above four are probably students who experience a high level of anxiety. The students' reading anxiety level is portrayed in the table below:

Table. 3.4  
Distribution of the level of reading anxiety

| Mean Score   | Level of Reading Anxiety |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| 4.00 – 5: 00 | High level               |
| 3.00 – 3.99  | Moderate level           |
| 1:00 – 2.99  | Low level                |

After determining the students' level of reading anxiety and the level of anxiety in each item of questionnaire, the next step is recognizing the sources of reading anxiety which is considered as the main investigation for the research question number one following the categorization of reading anxiety sources from MasoudZoghi (2012).

The second questionnaire was RSQ adopted from Oxford et al. (2004) which consisted of 35 statements. It measured two types of reading strategies: top-down reading strategies or text-level strategies and bottom-up reading strategies or word-level strategies. The student's responses (n=41) to the survey items (n=35) that were scored by the given values:

Table 3.5

Score of each item for RSQ

| Value | Meaning                           |
|-------|-----------------------------------|
| 1     | I never or almost never do this   |
| 2     | I do this only occasionally       |
| 3     | I sometimes do this               |
| 4     | I often do this                   |
| 5     | I always or almost always do this |

After the data from RSQ obtained, it was categorized into two types of reading strategies and divided them based on the most and least strategies used by students. Additionally, all the data from EFLRAI and RSQ were analyzed qualitatively by calculating manually the percentages and mean scores of the student responses to infer the data findings.

### 3.3.2 Analyzing Data from Semi-Structured Interview

First of all, the data from the interview was transcribed word for word. The transcribed text then became the data that was analyzed qualitatively. It was coded by categorizing the data based on the categorization of reading anxiety source by MasoudZoghi (2012) which is reflected three sources of reading anxiety, namely top down reading anxiety which is divided into background and cultural knowledge and

general reading ability, bottom-up reading anxiety which is related to vocabulary and grammar, and classroom reading anxiety which is associated with teaching method. It also explored the students' self-reports of anxiety involving their perceptions of reading difficulties in their target language, and their perceptions of the relative difficulty of reading as compared to the difficulty of other language skills and the use of reading strategies by Oxford et al. (2004) which measured two types of reading strategies: top-down reading strategies or text-level strategies and bottom-up reading strategies or word-level strategies.

The interview data were analyzed to corroborate and confirm the data from questionnaires. In supporting the finding questionnaires, the data from the interview was cited in the analysis following Creswell (2013) suggestion to use the wording from participant to give a detailed descriptive portrait.

### **3.4. Concluding Remarks**

This chapter had described the qualitative study in a case study design as a methodology of this study. However, questionnaire analysis and semi-structured interview were used to collect the data. Consequently, all the data gained were analyzed qualitatively to be compared, contrasted, and triangulated to enhance validity.