

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter elaborates the research procedures taken to find out the pre-service teachers' perceptions and practices of EFL learning strategies. The research design, site and participants of the study, data collection, and data analysis are also provided.

3.1 Research Design

This present study adopted a qualitative research approach using multiple case study method. In conjunction with case study method, Malik & Hamied (2014, cited in Wijirahayu, 2015) postulate that “the central purpose of a case study investigation is to explore the uniqueness of a case or organization”. In the same vein, the method requires the writer to provide his/her viewpoint referring to the participants' perceptions in an informal writing style (Alwasilah, 2000, cited in Wijirahayu, 2015).

There were three pre-service teachers participating voluntarily in this research. The participants were taking teaching practicum program at two different junior high schools. They got selected because they are such best friends whom the researcher still connect with.

The first step undertaken was to identify the three pre-service teachers' perceptions of EFL learning strategies particularly what strategies they often apply in their learning process by handing out Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) questionnaire.

Another data gathering instrument used was semi-structured interview which studied the participants' EFL learning strategies in depth. In addition to this interview, the researcher asked the participants to answer four questions relating to their experiences of employing EFL learning strategies and the reflection of the learning strategies in their teaching practices.

Moreover, the next instrument was classroom observation. This classroom observation aimed to examine how the learning strategies were shared with the students in the pre-service teachers' teaching practices. The classroom observation

was video-taped. The results of the classroom practices were transcribed, and were coded and analyzed by using Oxford (1990) language learning strategies (LLS) framework.

3.2 Site and Participants of the Study

This research involved three students of English Education Department who were taking teaching practicum program at two different junior high schools in Bandung. The two teacher candidates taught grade 7 and the rest taught eighth-graders. The participants carried out their teaching practicum program for four months under the supervision of school teachers and teacher educators.

The subjects of the study were coded as PST1 to PST3. The learning backgrounds of each participant were presented briefly in this sub-chapter: PST1 and PST2 took one-year-teaching English to young learners (TEYL) program in their study. Meanwhile, another teacher took a part in English for specific purposes (ESP) program for about two semesters. From the background above, it is obvious that all of them must have different EFL learning strategies used in their learning process, which impact their strategy practices. The details of the three pre-service teachers are presented in the following table.

Table 3.1
Background Information of Pre-service Teachers

Teachers	Gender	Field of Study	Teaching Practicum Practices	
			School	Grade
1	Female	Teaching English to Young Learners	Junior High School	7
2	Female	Teaching English to Young Learners	Junior High School	7

3	Male	English for Specific Purposes	Junior High School	8
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3.3 Data Collection

To obtain the data about the perceptions and practices of EFL learning strategies, this research adopted three main research instruments: Study inventory for language learning (SILL) questionnaire, semi-structured interview, and classroom observation. For more details, the followings are the explanation about the aforementioned instruments.

3.3.1 SILL Questionnaire

The first concern of this study is to identify the pre-service teachers' perceptions of EFL learning strategies. To cope with the issue above, the questionnaire developed by Oxford (1990) was adopted. This questionnaire is named the Study Inventory Language Learning Strategies (SILLS) version 7.0.

In Oxford's (1990) language learning strategy classification, the strategies commonly used by EFL/ESL learners can be grouped into direct and indirect strategies. For clarity purpose, the strategies which influence directly the enhancement of learners' language proficiency are direct strategies, like memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies. Meanwhile, the second group gives indirect impact to students' better learning outcomes, such as metacognitive, affective, and social strategies.

There are 50 statements in the questionnaire. The following is the details of strategy classification and the items signifying the learning strategies.

Table 3.2

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) Items

No	Strategy Classification	Items
1.	Memory Strategy	1-9
2.	Cognitive Strategy	10-23
3.	Compensation Strategy	24-29

4.	Metacognitive Strategy	30-38
5.	Affective Strategy	39-44
6.	Social Strategy	45-50

SILL questionnaire is extensively used as a reliable measure of examining the perceptions of language learning strategies in the world (Green & Oxford, 1995; Hsiao & Oxford, 2002; Rao, 2012; Platsidou, Kantaridou & Papadopoulou, 2016). The level of validity and reliability of SILL questionnaire is reported high in many studies: reliability score (.87 - .96) and validity score (.95) (Oxford & Burry, 1993, cited in Rao, 2012).

3.3.2 Semi-Structured Interview

In this semi-structured interview, the questions which cover all relevant areas (research questions) were prepared by the interviewer. Thus, the process of such interview goes in line with the aims of the study (Alshenqeeti, 2014, p. 40). Moreover, the interview allows the interviewer to probe and explore the interviewee's responses for more detailed information, as stated by Rubin and Rubin (2005, cited in Alshenqeeti, 2014, p. 40).

Before conducting this semi-structured interview, the explanation of the research topic and purpose of the study were discussed very clearly. In this concern, the purpose of the interview was to explore more about the pre-service teachers' perceptions of EFL learning strategies. The interview lasted for about 30 minutes for each individual participant. Before the actual interview, the questions were piloted with several English students taking the same teaching practicum program, and consulted with some experts. Consequently, some of the questions were reworded and decreased from 7 to 4, and there was a change in the order of some items. The details of the questions were listed below.

1. How did you start learning English?
2. What English skills or aspects do you think the students at Junior High School level should learn?
3. Please, do self-reflection. What kinds of language learning strategies do you think could help you improve your English ability in that moment?

4. Do you share the strategies to your students in your teaching practicum practices? In what ways?

During the interview, the interviewees were allowed to give responses in *bahasa Indonesia* as their vernacular language, in order to tackle a hindrance of delivering complete ideas. It was also inevitable that they switched their codes.

The results of interview were used to verify the data gained from SILL questionnaire and classroom observation. The responses of participants in the interview session were recorded and then transcribed. The data gained from interview were not fully presented in this research. Instead, the researcher merely selected meaningful and more relevant ones to support the facts as found from either SILL questionnaire or observation.

3.3.3 Classroom Observation

Classroom observation was undertaken to examine how the pre-service teachers taught EFL learning strategies. In line with this, the observation put an emphasis on various language tasks, strategy instruction, modelling of strategy use, evaluation of the preferred strategies.

All of the participants were observed respectively over a period of 3 weeks. The observation was video-taped, transcribed, coded, and analyzed by using Oxford's (1990) language learning strategy system.

3.4 Research Procedures

In an endeavor to study the cases, namely pre-service teachers' perceptions and practices of EFL learning strategies, this research carried out several procedures in reference to qualitative approach with case study method.

3.4.1 Preparation

In prior to collecting the data, the author managed to prepare various instruments to be used in this study by adapting Oxford's (1990) SILL questionnaire, designing and validating the questions for interview.

1.4.1.1 Adapting SILL Questionnaire

The decision of this adaptation began with looking into an abundance of preliminary researches. Nearly all of the studies employed SILL questionnaire to find out either teachers or learners' awareness and perceptions of EFL/ESL learning strategies. From the facts above, it can be concluded that many researchers acknowledge SILL questionnaire is the instrument for identifying the perceptions of strategies use with its high level of validity and reliability (Green & Oxford, 1995; Hsiao & Oxford, 2002; Rao, 2012; Platsidou, Kantaridou & Papadopoulou, 2016).

1.4.1.2 Designing and Validating Interview Questions

The formulation of questions for interview was based on relevant literatures and Oxford's (1990) LLS categorization. To convince the questions could gain more meaningful information about the perceptions of EFL learning strategies, they were piloted with some students similar to the actual participants of this study, and were consulted with the experts about the appropriateness of the questions, especially their construct and content validity, and language.

1.4.2 Implementation

The processes of data collection were narrated in the following sections.

1.4.2.1 Distributing SILL Questionnaire

The primary goal of distributing SILL questionnaire and the procedures of which were clearly elaborated before the researcher let the participants fill it. The participants were asked to give score for each item representing EFL learning strategies use. The score ranged from 1 (never) to 3 (almost always).

1.4.2.2 Conducting Semi-structured Interview

The interview was undertaken in the next two days after distributing SILL questionnaire. The interviewees took turn to be interviewed, and were pleased to use *bahasa Indonesia* or change the codes when they did not know how to state the ideas in English. The interview was audio-recorded in order that it could be transcribed more easily.

1.4.2.3 Doing classroom observation

Classroom observation was conducted for over three-week periods. In line with this, the author observed three-meeting English classrooms of each

participant. The three pre-service teachers generally taught descriptive texts. In the first meeting, they discussed the things in the kitchen and dining room. Things in the bedroom and bathroom were studied later. At last, they taught the things in the yard and garage. Meanwhile, PST3 firstly taught the things in kitchen and dining room. Secondly, the teacher discussed how to describe animals. After that, describing people was learned in week 3.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data collected were then analyzed respectively. The explanation of data analysis procedures was divided into three phases.

In relation to the data about the pre-service teachers' perceptions of EFL learning strategies gained from SILL questionnaire, the data were calculated based on the system of three-point Likert scale: 1 (never used), 2 (usually used), 3 (always used). The Likert scale system would help the participants from confusion and fatigue. Thereafter, the pre-service teachers' responses to SILL questionnaire were visualized into figures. The data were also used to document the most commonly preferred strategies as identified from the items the participants have responded.

Moreover, this semi-structured interview were intended to obtain the more detailed information about the participants' perceptions of EFL learning strategy. Afterwards, the results were utilized to triangulate the data from SILL questionnaire and classroom observation.

Furthermore, the data from classroom observation were transcribed, coded, and analyzed based on Oxford's (1990) taxonomy of LLS, in order to help the researcher in elaborating the facts of EFL learning strategy instructional practices as found from the observation. The results of the analysis were depicted later in the form of figures to be explained more comprehensively, and matched to the data analysis of SILL questionnaire in order to find if there was any correlation between perceptions of EFL learning strategies and the strategy teaching practices.