

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter explains the method of this research including research questions, research design, research site and participants, data collection and data analysis.

3.1 Research Questions

This study addresses two questions which are formulated as follows:

- 1) To what extent can picture books help young learners develop their literacy?
- 2) What are the students' responses to the use of picture books in developing literacy?

3.2 Research Design

This study used a case study because this study attempted to gain deep a understanding of the use of picture books to young learners in the process of learning literacy. This is in line with Sturman (1994, as cited in Bassey, 1999), who defines the case study as a study which intends to understand a case, to clarify the reasons why things happen and to simplify something through a depth investigation.

Since the case study is one of the qualitative methods which specifies in investigating a contextualized contemporary event within particular limitations; a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution, or a social group (Merriam, 1988: 13); Hatch, 2002). Furthermore, the present study applied case study approach/framework which limits the respondents and the

learning process. Moreover, in conducting the study, the researcher was also the observer who engaged in the activities which were set out to observe (Cohen, 2005).

Meanwhile, in planning the research, the study used four main stages as proposed by Morrison, 1993; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2005; which are:

1) Orienting Decisions

Before conducting the study, the researcher made decisions by setting the border line or focus of the study. The researcher focused on teaching method for children by using attractive media and it was entitled “The Use of Picture Books in Teaching Literacy to Young Learners”. After that, the researcher determined the general aims and purposes of the study which were to investigate the use of picture books as media in teaching process and to reveal the students’ responses about that. Next, the researcher generated the research questions based on aims and purposes of the study. Meanwhile, the researcher needed to read and learn some literatures related to the study through journals, books, articles and research papers of picture books, literacy and young learners. By reading many related theories, it would support the researcher in conducting the study. After having clear purposes, research questions and related theories, the researcher made decision on what kind of suitable research design for the study.

2) Designing Research Method

After case study as the research design had been chosen, the researcher decided the research instruments used in this study. Since the research design was a case study, triangulation from multiple data instruments such as observation, written document analysis and interview, was required to ensure and enhance the accuracy of data. Then, the researcher decided and found participants of the research. Next, the researcher needed to permit and

contact the children who wanted to be the respondents. In addition, the researcher also planned the learning activities which were based on the aims of the research. Afterward, the study was conducted by using picture books in learning literacy, and then administered reading comprehension and writing tests and administered the interview.

3) Analyzing Data

After the data were collected, they were categorized and analyzed according to the literacy framework as theoretical background of the study. Then, the researcher evaluated the validity and reliability of the data by connecting the triangulation data (observation, written document analysis and interview) which aimed to get the actual result of the study.

4) Presenting and Reporting the Results

Finally, the researcher reported and wrote the result of the data analysis. In presenting and reporting the results, the researcher kept the report shortly, clearly and completely as possible.

3.3 Research Site and Participants

The site of the present study was conducted in an English private course. The course took place in the respondents' house in Bandung. The respondents were three students which consisted of two 5th grade and one 3rd grade of elementary students.

3.4 Data Collection Techniques

At the beginning stage of data collection, there were procedures which were applied in this study such as: organizing teaching procedures (preparing the teaching materials), making research instruments (observation sheet, reading comprehension and writing tests, and interview)

and conducting the study (the teaching stages). Before conducting the study, researcher chose four picture books which would be read in the learning process. After that, the researcher arranged the learning schedule, time allocation, students' condition and the availability of the facility. In addition, this study employed multiple data collections such as observation, interview, and written document analysis, as has been suggested by Creswell (1994) that the triangulations of those multiple data enhance the validity of the study.

The first data collection technique was observation. It was used to identify to what extent the use of picture books help young learners learn literacy and to investigate how the children respond to the picture books. Then, the second data collection technique was written document analysis (students' written document: reading comprehension and writing tests). It aimed to evaluate young learners' literacy skill. The last was interview, which aimed to gain deep information on the use of picture books in teaching literacy and the responses of young learners toward picture books.

The detailed explanation of each data collection can be seen below:

3.4.1 Observation

In this study, observation was conducted in eight meetings, starting on 9th to 19th February 2013. The type of observation of this study was participant observation, because the researcher took a part as the teacher which can have the opportunity to engage and observe the students in the learning process. To follow Cohen (2005) describes that the researcher acted as the teacher and took notes about ongoing behavior which occurred and related to the context during the recording of the activities and playing a role as the teacher in that situation.

The observation took 60 minutes of every meeting. The observer used an observation sheet for reading activities which were adapted from McKay (2007) (See Appendix A) and wrote field

notes immediately after the observation. The field notes included six literacy aspects which were adapted from Frey & Fisher (2007) and NSW Department of Education and Training Learning Development (2009).

The researcher observed the activities such as reading the picture book, practicing reading aloud, reading and writing tests. Meanwhile, the observer investigated the students in learning literacy through four picture books. The picture books were used in each four meetings and the rest of four meetings were used to test their reading comprehension of the story, read aloud the story, identify some vocabularies and write sentences and a paragraph.

3.4.2 Written Documents

Since this study aimed to investigate students' literacy skill through picture books, it required written documents as useful information, to corroborate evidence gathered from other resources (Tellis, 1997). The analysis of written documents in this study was conducted after reading sessions. The students were asked to write the answers of some questions which related to the story. Then, they write another story text with their own words based on the pictures in the book. Both reading and writing tests were conducted in every two meetings (on 11th, 13th, 16th and 19th February 2013). These reading and writing tests were aimed at checking students' understanding of the story in picture books through writing.

3.4.3 Interview

Third step in collecting the data was interview. In this study, the interview was conducted by doing a semi structured interview, open-ended questions; which is principally useful for getting the story behind students' experiences as the participants. The interviewer can get deep information around the topic and investigate the participants' responses by using semi-structured interview with open-ended questions (McNamara, 1999). This study was intended to elicit

students' responses about the use picture books in learning literacy through asking some questions in the interview.

In conducting the interview, this study used five stages proposed by Woods (2011):

- a. Beginning process: the researcher introduced herself and asked the participant's details information (name, class, school).
- b. Introducing the research: the researcher explained the purpose of the interview, the reasons of the participant has been chosen and length of the interview. The researcher also asked the readiness of the participant to start the interview.
- c. During the interview: the researcher asked gradually, unhurried, relaxing while giving open-ended questions. The list of questions were based on three themes which included the student's reading interest, student's responses toward picture books and the effects of picture books in literacy. The researcher asked the students as flow as naturally and as well as the order of the questions.
- d. Keeping focused: the researcher focused on asking open-ended questions, not close-ended to the students. In addition, the researcher asked factual questions before an opinion question by using probing questions as needed (e.g. can you give an example? , would you explain further?)
- e. Closing the interview: The researcher finished on time as well as possible, but attempted to make sure that the questions everything has been covered sufficiently and gave a thank the participant for giving the valuable time.

The teacher was interviewed by using *Bahasa Indonesia* to avoid misconception and misunderstanding for the students and to obtain a comprehensive data from the students.

3.4.4 The Teaching Program

The study was conducted eight times, started on 9th to 19th February 2013. The teacher focused on teaching literacy which included six essential literacy aspects: reading, comprehension, vocabulary, knowledge, concepts about print, phonemic awareness and writing. Every meeting took for approximately 20 minutes of reading picture books, 10 minutes of reading aloud, 10 minutes of vocabulary knowledge and 20 minutes of reading and writing practices. During teaching processes, the teacher encouraged the children to participate actively. In addition, the four picture books which were used in this study, such as *Never Lonely Again* (Hans Wilhelm, 1988), *Flik the Inventor* (Victoria Saxon, 1998), *Picking Apples and Pumpkins: Clifford the Big Red Dog* (Liz Mills & Tom LaPadula, 2007) and *Bad, Bad Bunny Trouble* (Hans Wilhelm, 1994).

The researcher arranged the research schedule which intended to facilitate the teaching stages. The first stage of the teaching process of the study was pre activity which included identifying and predicting the story through the cover illustration and the title and seeing the pictures in the picture book without reading the text. These two activities aimed to stimulate the students' prior knowledge of the story through the pictures and title on the cover. The teacher showed the cover of the picture book to the students. They identified the cover illustration and the title and then they predicted the story. Afterward, they opened the picture book page by page which purposed only to see the picture without any reading the text. In this process, their ideas were stimulated about the story. They imagined what the story would be.

The second stage was the main activity. The activities were reading the story, mind mapping the vocabulary and reading aloud. During reading the story, the teacher gave the students many chances to develop their skills of literacy such as reading aloud, vocabulary knowledge,

comprehension and phonemic awareness. The students also engaged to take a part in reading the direct speech of the story. They practiced their phonemic awareness and reading fluency includes the expression and accuracy of reading ability. In addition, in the middle of reading, the teacher might ask some questions about the story and the vocabulary.

Afterward, the teacher stopped reading when the story finished and the students were examined whether they understand or not about the story orally. They sometimes a bit confused what the story was about. Then, the teacher reread once again. While the teacher reread the story, the students also participated by reading aloud the story. It took 3-5 minutes for each child to read the story with proper pronunciation and expression. As stated by Blochowicz & Ogle (2008), reading aloud is aimed to give a chance to read aloud and think aloud what the text is about.

Moreover, as mentioned in Chapter II, the study applied the steps of reading picture books which adapted from Manteo (2011) and Mc Creary (2012). The reading activities would be described in the following table:

Table 3.1
Teaching Reading Activities

Reading Phases	The Teacher	The Students	Notes
Before Reading (Pre-Reading Activities)	Showed the picture book's cover, and then pointed out the various features of the cover; the title, cover illustration and author.	Looked at the cover carefully.	This activity stimulated the children's interest and curiosity to read the book and learnt concepts of print aspects such as pictures and print, title and cover illustration.
	Allowed the students to make inference about what the story is about.	Guessed what the story is about through the title and the cover illustrations.	It activated the students' prior knowledge.
	Guided the students through each page of the book and asked about the illustrations on each page.	Focused only on the pictures without reading the text first.	It gave the students an opportunity to observe the sequence of events that are shown in each picture
During Reading	Read out the story and checked the students whether they focused on and understood the story.	Listened to the teacher and looked at to the pictures carefully.	The teacher may keep the eye contact with the students which aimed to maintain students' interest and understanding
	Provided facial expression or miming, intonation, gesture and pointing to relevant details in some of pictures during reading the story.	Paid attention to the body language of the teacher while reading the story.	The teacher's body language; intonation, gesture, miming and facial expression, helped the students to get the meaning of the story.
	Engaged the students to read aloud, asked their prediction about the story in the next page, the word meaning and their comprehension about the story.	Showed and answered the questions based on their comprehension. They also may ask some questions which hardly to understand about the story.	The engagement practiced the students' reading skills involve fluency, comprehension, phonemic awareness and vocabulary knowledge.
After Reading (Post Reading Activities)	Built mind mapping or story mapping	Wrote some related words of the story that can make the students remember the story easily.	Mind mapping was applied to assist the students' vocabulary knowledge and comprehension.
	Discussed, reread and summarized the story with the students.	Discussed, reread and responded the story briefly.	It practiced the students' reading performance and comprehension of the story. It also built their confidence.

(Adapted from Manteo, 2011 & McCreary, 2012)

After reading the story, the teacher and children concluded the story and anything that has been learned simultaneously. From this activity, the students' ability to express their ideas about

the story by using their own language can be seen. In addition, there are some figures in the activities of reading picture books:

The Reading Process



Figure 3.2

Figure 3.3

Furthermore, the last stage was post activity which involved assessing children's reading and writing skills. The students were usually given reading and writing tasks which aimed to assess the students' understanding through reading and writing skills. The students were asked some questions about the story and the teacher would know their students' understanding through their answers. Those previous teaching stages were usually used in every meeting.

The following is the table of the lesson summary during conducting the study:

Table 3.2

Lesson Summary

Picture Books	Meeting	Lesson Objective
“Never Lonely Again” by Hans Wilhelm.	1 (Feb 09, 2013)	a) Introduction to the picture books and literacy; reading and writing. b) To read a story.
	2 (Feb 11, 2013)	a) To read aloud a story; practiced the students’ reading fluency (accuracy, speed and expression) b) To develop vocabulary knowledge related words of the story through writing a mind mapping c) To write sentences based on the picture in the book; practiced the aspects of writing (spelling, sentence structure, grammar and punctuation)
“Flik the Inventors” by Victoria Saxon.	3 (Feb 12, 2013)	a) To read a story. b) To read aloud a story; practiced the students’ reading fluency (accuracy, speed and expression) c) To read and write new vocabularies through mind mapping.
	4 (Feb 13, 2013)	a) To draw the picture b) To write the sentence by their own words; practiced the aspects of writing (spelling, sentence structure, grammar and punctuation) c) To evaluate reading comprehension through five questions of multiple-choice vocabulary item)
“Clifford The Big Red Dog: Picking Apples and Pumpkins” by Scholastic	5 (Feb 15, 2013)	a) To read a story b) To develop vocabulary knowledge related words of the story through writing a mind mapping c) To write sentences based on the picture in the book; practiced the aspects of writing (spelling, sentence structure, grammar and punctuation).
	6 (Feb 16, 2013)	a) To read aloud a story; practiced the students’ reading fluency (accuracy, speed and expression). b) To evaluate reading comprehension by giving oral quiz.
“Bad, Bad Bunny Trouble” by Hans Wilhelm.	7 (Feb 18, 2013)	a) To read a story b) To develop vocabulary knowledge related words of the story through writing a mind mapping c) To write sentences based on the picture in the book; practiced the aspects of writing (spelling, sentence structure, grammar and punctuation).
	8 (Feb 19, 2013)	a) To evaluate reading comprehension through multiple choice test b) To write the story in a paragraph of the students’ favorite story from four picture books which have been read before.

3.5 Data Analysis

After the data were collected, they were examined to reveal the answer of the research questions. In addition, the data were categorized and analyzed based on the aspects of literacy as theoretical background of the study which have been mentioned in Chapter II.

3.5.1 Analysis of the Observation Data

Observation in this study was aimed at understanding the context of the program, to see things that might unconsciously disappear, to move beyond perception-based data, and to access personal knowledge (Cohen, 2005: 305). The first was to see what happened in the field. Then, the data were interpreted into some categories which used the theory of literacy aspects from Frey & Fisher (2007) and NSW Department of Education and Training Learning Development (2009).

The researcher took part as the participant observer. Each study took 60 minutes per meeting. During the observation, the researcher focused on the literacy aspects include reading; fluency and comprehension, vocabulary knowledge, phonemic awareness, concept of print, and aspects of writing which adapted from Frey & Fisher (2007) and NSW Department of Education and Training Learning Development (2009).

Moreover, the data from observation showed that the students' literacy skills gradually increasing, however, there were some aspects which did not develop well. For instance, the students were good at reading especially in comprehending the text through pictures. On the contrary, the students were not good at writing skills: spelling, grammar, sentence structure and punctuation. For more detail information of the data of the observation will be discussed in the following chapter.

3.5.2 Analysis of Written Document

Written documents in this study were reading tasks and students' texts which involved writing sentences and one paragraph. The data were analyzed based on the writing aspects which have been mentioned in chapter II; accurate spelling, punctuation, sentence structure and grammar.

3.5.3 Analysis of the Interview Data

The interview was administered to gain more information from the students about the use of picture books in teaching literacy and the students' responses to picture books. In general, data from interview aim to support data from observation and written documents. The interview was recorded by using a tape recorder.

Moreover, to analyze the data, the researcher used some steps such as transcribing, interpreting, and linking to the related theories. First, the data from interview were transcribed, and then interpreted them into the major concern of the research questions: to what extent of the use of picture books in teaching literacy and students' responses to picture books. Finally, the data were linked to the related theories which are presented in Chapter IV.

3.6 Concluding Remarks

This chapter elaborated the methodology of the study to investigate the two main issues in this study: to what extent picture books do picture books help young learners develop literacy skills and students' responses to the use of picture books in developing literacy. It also described the research design, site and participants, data collection, research procedures and data analysis techniques. Findings and discussion of data analysis would be explained in the next chapter.