

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides the methodology that used in conducting the research in order to find out the answers for a research question of this research. This chapter establishes five main parts of investigation, they are research design, site and respondents, data collection, research procedures and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

This study was conducted by employing qualitative approach. According to Creswell (2007), conducting a study qualitatively means that the researchers conduct the studies in the field in order to get close to participants being studied. This method focuses on gaining a rich and complex understanding of a specific phenomenon rather than making generalization about other populations or areas (Hamied & Malik, 2014). This is in line with what Creswell (2007) says that qualitative is best used to obtain a detail understanding of the issue in which only can be established by talking directly with participants, going to their homes or workplaces and allowing them to tell the stories about a certain context. In addition, it focuses on reports of experience or data which cannot be presented numerically (Hancock, et. al, 2009). The result of this method is a form of inquiry which expresses what researchers see, hear and understand (Creswell, 2007).

Furthermore, the method used in this study is practitioner research. This method is suitable to use when someone acts both as researcher and teacher. Practitioner research means the person who undertaking the research which are researching and practicing or called as ‘teacher researchers’ (Menter, et.al, 2011). In other words, teachers are researching their own practice (Hoong, et. al, 2007). Menter, et.al (2011) further explains that practitioner research in education setting is systematic enquiry that the results are beneficial for others. So, this method was chosen because it is suitable to sustain this study.

3.2 Site and Respondents

This study was conducted in one of junior high school in Bandung, West Java. It engaged the first graders of junior high school. In detail, one class consists of 34 students. The students were divided into 4 groups based on readiness level. The groups were happy group (lower achiever), cheerful group and glad group (middle achiever), and joy group (higher achiever). The reason why the researcher chose the first graders because this study examined descriptive text. While, descriptive text is given in the first grade of junior high school based on the National Education Curriculum. In addition, the researcher chose this school because the researcher had ever taught there as a pre-service teacher. So, at least, the researcher has known the characteristics of the students and the condition of that school.

3.3 Data Collection

This study employed multiple data collection techniques such as classroom observation and documents. Each technique will be explained obviously below.

3.3.1 Observation

To answer the research question stated in Chapter I, observation was employed to collect the data. In observation, the data were gathered through video transcription, observation sheet, and teacher field notes.

Observing is the best technique when an activity or situation which are being studied can be observed directly or when the participants are not willing to discuss the phenomenon about the study (Merriam, 2002). Considering that issue, observing is more valid because the researchers can see how they actually behave (Hancock, et. al, p. 18). Creswell (2014) states that qualitative observation is used when the researcher takes field notes on the behavior and activities of each participant at the field. In this study, the researcher was an active participant that will involve in the action. The researcher acted both as a researcher and a teacher.

According to Hancock, et. al (2009), the researcher could use three techniques to collect data through observation. They are written description, video recording, and artefacts. In this study, the researcher used written description and

video recording only. In written description, the researcher makes notes during the observation to collect the data about situation or environment of what has been observed (Hancock, et. al, 2009). To make easier when observing, the researcher used an observation sheet in the form of guidelines checklist. In addition, video recording can be used in order to simplify when the researcher is collecting the data (Hancock, et. al, 2009). The researcher should not take notes intensely. The video recorded can be seen later for many times. However, this technique has one disadvantage. The use of camera in the field would distract the participant behavior. Probably, the participant will act unnaturally.

3.3.2 Documents

In conducting a qualitative study, documents can be another source of data gathering. This study employed all the documents that supported the data collection of this study. They are students' pre-assessment result, students' writing samples, and students' reflective journal.



















Before the first meeting, students were asked to answer some questions that belonged to pre-assessment. Pre-assessment was used merely to classify them into different group based on readiness level which are lower achiever, middle achiever and higher achiever.

While students' writing samples in this study includes students' final descriptive text and students' pre-assessment result. The students were asked to write a descriptive text in the end of the lesson. The students' writings of the learning steps became additional source of data gathering. The researcher collected some of students' writings through photographs. According to Hancock, et. al (2009), photographs are a good way of collecting information which can be captured in shots that can be used for analyzing the data.

To know the classroom situation from students' side, this study used students' reflective journal. Students' reflective journals used to explore students' opinions about the implementation of Differentiated Instruction in writing a descriptive text. In this study, students were asked to fill the reflective journal at the

end of the meeting. Among three meetings, the content of the reflective journal were not similar. It is appropriated with the needs of the study. Below is the example of student's reflective journal.

Table 3.1

Student's Reflective Journal			
STUDENT'S REFLECTIVE JOURNAL			
Name:	Date:		
	Very well	OK	Not so well
I clearly know that I'm going to learn about describing places around us.			
My teacher responded to my comments and/or questions.			
I like working in groups.			
My teacher helped me when I didn't understand to the material.			
I enjoyed the learning activities.			
I understand the material.			
What I have learned today.			
My impression of today's learning activities.			
My impression of today's learning activities.			

Adapted from Ioannou-Georgiou, S. & Pavlou, P. (2003). *Assessing Young Learners*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

3.4 Research Procedures

The procedures of this study are gathered by several steps which are described in the following points.

3.4.1 Selecting the text

There were some consideration in selecting the right text as a model for students in learning to write a descriptive text. First, the text contained the exact elements of descriptive text, starting from text structure, social function, and language features. Second, the topic of the text was appropriate with the curriculum used in the school which was curriculum 2013. At that time, the students learned how to describe a thing or a place. So, the text with topic places was chosen. Third, the level of complexity of grammar, vocabularies, structure, and the length of the text were considered to be used as a material teaching for all students (lower achiever, middle achiever, and higher achiever). In conclusion, a text entitled “My Garden” which was written by a seventh grade student in book “Factual Genres in English: Learning to write, read and talk about factual information” (2013) by Emilia & Christie, was chosen.

3.4.2 Pre-assessment

Pre-assessment was held before the first meeting. This was intended to assess the students’ prior knowledge about describing a place. Because this study focused on readiness level, so pre-assessment should be held to group the students. As Paholta (2015) said that diagnostic or pre-assessment is to know who your students are in terms of their readiness level, interests, and or learning preferences. The results from pre-assessment produced four groups. The first group is named happy group or lower achiever group. The second group is cheerful group or middle achiever group. The third group is glad group which still from middle achiever group. There were too much members in middle achiever group so it was divided into two groups. The last group is joy group or higher achiever group. The groups were given the name to avoid students’ jealousy.

3.4.3 Preparing lesson plan

Three lesson plans were designed for three meetings to be implemented for conducting this study. Those three lesson plans were aimed to help the students in writing a descriptive text by employing Differentiated Instruction approach. To have it clearer, the table below are the summary of three lesson plans, the detail description can be seen in the Appendix A.

Table 3.2
Summary of Lesson Plans

No	Lesson Plan	Objective(s)	Activities
1	Lesson Plan 1	Brainstorming a descriptive text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher showed a video of describing rooms and let the students responded to the video. 2. Students, in groups, did a worksheet about arranging the jumble words and sentences and completing the missing words. This step was using tiering assignments strategy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worksheet Happy Group (see Figure 4.1) - Worksheet Cheerful and Glad Group (see Figure 4.2) - Worksheet Joy Group (see Figure 4.3) 3. Teacher and students discussed the result of each worksheet. 4. Teacher explained the elements of descriptive text in text “My Garden” and how to write a descriptive text. 5. Teacher asked the students to choose the right title for their own text.
2	Lesson Plan 2	Drafting a descriptive text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher reviewed the material especially about how to write a descriptive text. 2. Students, in group, drafting their own text using different structure template. This strategy was tiering assignments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structure template of happy group (see Figure 4.4) - Structure template of cheerful and glad group (see Figure 4.5) - Structure template of joy group (see Figure 4.6) 3. Teacher monitored the students and responded well to their questions.
3	Lesson Plan 3	Revising and editing the final descriptive text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher asked the students to ask for a comment or feedback to their partner from another group. This strategy belonged to flexible grouping. 2. Teacher revised every student’s text. 3. Students edited their own text. 4. Students wrote their final text on a piece of paper and collected it to the teacher.

In the first meeting, mostly, teacher explained the elements of descriptive text and how to write a descriptive text. The students in group of readiness level were given a worksheet. The worksheet they got were different based on their readiness level. The detail explanation is stated in chapter IV. Although each group received a different worksheet, the teacher discussed the result of their works in front of the class. So, every student received the same material.

In the second meeting, the students were starting to write their own text. They sat in group but they did it individually. Each group got a different structure template. See chapter IV to have it clearer elaboration. In addition, the teacher monitored the students and helped the students while drafting a text.

In the last meeting, the teacher revised the student's text one by one. The students directly edited their text. They had two chances to revise and edit their own text. Before the students asked for revise, they asked for comments or feedback to their partner from another group. It was intended to have a communication or share their understanding to a member of another group. After the students edited their own text, they wrote the final text on a piece of paper and collected it to the teacher to be evaluated.

3.5 Data Analysis

After collecting the data through observation and documents, the researcher analyzed those data descriptively. These below are the elaboration of the data analysis.

3.5.1 Analysis of Data from Observation

The researcher observed how DI helps students in teaching writing descriptive text in English language learning especially in the learning activities of using Differentiated Instruction approach. In observation stage, the researcher used observation sheets, video-taping, and teacher field notes.

The researcher acted as a teacher in this study. It is aimed to give the students more understanding about the implementation of DI in writing a descriptive text. Also, to observe directly so that can interpret what the researcher see, hear, and feel. In addition, the researcher observed all of the activities during the lesson. Then, the result will be elaborated descriptively from observation sheets, video-taping, and teacher field notes.

Observation sheet was used to monitor what is happening in the classroom. It was analyzed from first meeting to third meeting. Also, it can be a prior data source to be analyzed. While, video is used to gain more specific and detail interaction between teacher and students. In addition, video assisted the researcher to strengthen the data because it can be seen many times. Video recording was transcribed and all of the data were coded and categorized to elaborate descriptively. In addition, the teacher field notes were used to strengthen the result.

3.5.2 Analysis of Data from Documents

The data analysis of documents were gathered from students' pre-assessment result, students' writings, and students' reflective journal. At the end of the lesson, the students were asked to write a descriptive text. Students' writings could be a main resource of data to recognize the development of students writing skill by using DI approach.

At very first, students had a pre-assessment to classify them into different groups based on readiness level which are lower achiever, middle achiever, and higher achiever. There was no further explanation about pre-assessment. It was merely to know the students' readiness level in writing a descriptive text so that the researcher was easier to give DI's activities to each groups. Pre-assessment result was analyzed in terms of communication, cultural conventions, and linguistic structures and features according to scoring system by Tool of English as Additional Language (TEAL) (2015).

The second data of document analysis comes from students' descriptive text that had done at the end of the lesson. Students wrote a descriptive text individually.

But before they started to write a descriptive text, they encountered various activities to strengthen their understanding about writing descriptive text. This analysis showed that DI assisted junior high school students in writing a descriptive text. The students' descriptive text was analyzed in terms of communication, cultural conventions, linguistic structures and features, and strategies according to scoring system by Tool of English as Additional Language (TEAL) (2015) as figure below.

Table 3.3
Descriptive Text Scoring Rubric

Aspects		Score			
		1	2	3	4
Communication		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meaning often unclear • few or no reasons given for place preference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meaning sometimes unclear • limited reasons for place preference provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meaning mostly clear • reasons given for place preference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meaning consistently clear • a good range of relevant ideas • clear reasons given for place preference
Cultural Conventions		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates an understanding of the task • some identifiable place description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates some understanding of the context, purpose and audience of the text • place described • discrete but relevant ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates an understanding of the context, purpose and audience of the text • relevant place description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates a clear understanding of the context, purpose and audience of the text • detailed place description
Linguistic Structures and Features	Text Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing shows little or no control of text structure elements • name as heading • short text • some identifiable sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing shows some control of key text structure elements • text made up of short, repetitive sentences – Dogs like ... Dogs eat ... • simple description • varying use of complete sentences • paragraphs do not always relate to the text structure and information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing shows varying control of key text structure elements • extended description • consistently uses complete sentences • consistent use of paragraphs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing shows consistent control of text structure elements • extended cohesive description • appropriate paragraphing, paragraphs relate to the text structure
	Grammatical Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflects basic oral speech patterns – subject-verb-object patterns • some use of present tense • inconsistent subject-verb agreement • run-on sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present tense verb forms to refer to general truths about the place • variable use of plural and singular forms to refer to the chosen place • variable subject-verb agreement • simple and compound sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistent use of present tense to express general truths about the chosen place • mostly consistent subject-verb agreement • simple and compound sentences • relative clauses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mostly accurate use of present tense to talk about general truths • consistent subject-verb agreement • accurate use of personal, possessive and relative pronouns and pronoun reference

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IMPLEMENTING DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION IN TEACHING WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frequent grammatical errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • variable pronoun reference • basic connectives – and then 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some modals • pronoun reference • more complex connectives – because, • use of connectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurate use of common comparatives and superlatives • appropriate use of a variety of connectives • simple, compound and complex sentences • extended noun groups • coordinating and subordinating connectives • appropriate conditional and modal forms • articles used consistently • accurate use of negation
	Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some relevant and appropriate topic vocab to describe a few characteristics of place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant topic vocab to describe some more complex characteristics of place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quite a wide range of topic specific vocabulary including nouns and adjectives to describe • colloquial language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wide range of topic specific vocab including nouns and adjectives to describe • colloquial language
	Writing Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • variable spelling of high frequency words • correct letter forms • little punctuation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • variable spelling of high frequency words • correct letter forms • consistent upper and lower case • inconsistent punctuation • evidence of some planning in placing text on the page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • correct spelling of high frequency words • some attempts at more complex spelling • consistent basic punctuation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • correct spelling of high frequency and recently studied words • frequent attempts at complex spelling • appropriate use of punctuation
	Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extensive use of text model/ framework to plan and scaffold writing • extensive use of teacher support to complete writing • accurate copying of words, phrases, sentences • use of words from the first language • attempted phonetic spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of text model/framework to plan and scaffold writing • use of teacher support and feedback to complete and improve writing • repetition of sentence patterns/ formulas • uses print environment to write familiar words • phonetic or assisted spelling of unfamiliar words • assisted use of dictionary to check spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of text framework to plan and communicate own ideas • selective use of teacher support • uses modelled grammatical patterns • independent use of dictionaries to check spelling • makes use of peer and teacher feedback to improve writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flexible use of framework to plan and elaborate ideas • little or no use of teacher support to complete writing • uses word attack skills for spelling • use of references to extend vocabulary range in writing makes use of self, peer and teacher feedback to improve writing

Adapted from Tool of English as Additional Language (TEAL) (2015) from (<https://teal.global2.vic.edu.au/>)

The last data came from student's reflective journal. The data was used to support the result form observation sheet. The data was analyzed descriptively. The students filled the reflective journal after all the learning activities had done. So, they filled three reflective journals in total.