CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains five main parts which are related to the research methodology: Research Design, Research Site and Participant, Data Collection Procedures, Conducting Pilot Study, and Data Analysis.

3.1. Research Design

This study is designed as a case study research to explore the teacher's practice in integrating a blog into an EFL writing class based on the scientific approach in the actual classroom experiences. As stated by Yin (2014), a case study could be arrised out from a desire to understand complex social phenomena. On the other hand, as stated by Shahrokni and Sadeqjoola (2015), the spirit of incorporating technology in language learning has some inadequacy in the teachers' practice or performance for adopting such tools. In this case, a teacher's performance of integrating blogs into an EFL writing class based on the scientific approach in Indonesian 2013 Curriculum is the desire why this study is conducted.

> "The distinctive need for case study research arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena. In brief, a case study allows investigators to focus on a "case" and retain a holistic and real-world perspective—such as in studying individual life cycles, small group behavior, organizational and managerial processes, neighborhood change, school performance, international relations, and the maturation of industries." (Yin, 2014, p. 4)

This study explores the actual teacher's practice in implementing blogs into the EFL writing class. It also tries to figure out the teacher's perceptions and experiences of using blogs into the EFL writing class. It also identifies challenges and benefits the teacher faces during the teaching and learning processes. Apart from that, the students' writing results on blogs are analyzed to know their performance in writing through blogs. All the data are collected and recorded

from the focus group. After that, the data are analyzed qualitatively in an exploratory case study (Yin, 2014).

The present study investigates the use of blogs in teaching English, especially in an EFL writing class which applies scientific approach based on Indonesian 2013 Curriculum. It focuses on a phenomenon within the real-life context in a classroom. This study tries to obtain information of the phenomena in a writing class and explores how the blog is integrated in natural settings without giving treatments to the research sites and participants. However, this study's results are not intended to represent or generalize the whole integration of blogs into language learning. Different regions, places, situations, or circumstances might affect the results.

3.2. Research Site and Participant

This study was conducted in a public senior high school located in Sragen, Central Java. The research site was chosen for the following reasons. First, it was a class of English as a Foreign Language which was relevant to the context in which this study was conducted. Second, the site had facilities which were needed in this study. Each class was supported by ICT tools such as a monitor, CPU, sound systems, and Internet access throughout the schools' corridors. Third, the research site was chosen for the reason of the accessibility of the researcher to conduct the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001).

The school is located in countryside. It is considered as the most favorite senior high school in that small town. The school has participated in the Adiwiyata program which focuses on environmentally friendly school. Therefore, the school has gazebos, parks, and ponds. Although it is not an Islamic school, the school has program for reading Qur'an every morning before the teaching and learning processes start. Apart from that, the school offers many facilities that support both teachers and students in learning. One of those facilities is a language laboratory where the teachers and students can learn in more soundproof room. Usually, the language laboratory is used for listening class. They also have installed Wi-Fi areas in ten spots around the school.

The participant of this study was Mr. Suma (pseudonym), one of the English teachers in that school. The teacher was chosen because he had experienced the Web 2.0 tools in teaching English. Furthermore, the teacher has taught English for more than twenty years so that he could provide information related to the language teaching during his long period of time in teaching. He also has participated in training for using ICT-based materials in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. Apart from that, he has willingness and commitment to participate in this study. He agrees to provide information and being cooperative. Selecting the participant was guided by purposive sampling (Hamied, 2017). The goal of choosing the purposive sampling is because the teacher is considered sufficient to provide information to answer the research questions (Maxwell, 2013).

3.3. Data Collection Procedures

The data were collected through three sources: classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with the teacher, and students' writing results on blogs.

3.3.1   Classroom Observations

The classroom observations were intended to get the data in natural settings. Therefore, the role of the researcher was as a non-participant observer (Creswell, 2009). A class was observed during four meeting in completing one basic competency of 2013 Curriculum, especially in writing skills. All meetings were recorded into videos by using a smartphone and field notes as the observation guidelines adapted from Merriam and Tisdell (2015). The purpose of using field notes is to notice events which cannot be recorded by the videos. The goal of the observation is to complete the data collection dealing with the teacher's practice, attitudes, and behavior during the teaching and learning processes in the classroom (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). The smartphone was put behind the students so that the teacher's action could be captured. Due to the limitation of the camera's angle, the video might not capture all spots in the classroom. These classroom observations were employed to answer the first research question. The observations focused on the activities in each stage of scientific approach. It also

figured out the blogs integration in each process of the scientific approach which are *observing*, *questioning*, *experimenting*, *associating*, and *communicating*.

3.3.2   Semi-Structured Interview

The interview was conducted after all classroom observations were done. The participant was the main source of the data who gave information to answer the second research question. To get comfortable atmosphere and avoid unwanted interruptions, the interview was done outside the class. The location of the interview was chosen by the participant who suggested his home as the right place to avoid noise and interruptions.

The questions were formulated in semi-structured interview to find the intended information (Bell, 2005). In order to make the interview understandable and reduce misinterpretation, giving questions and answers were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia. The reason for using Indonesian is because the participant can respond with his native language. The interview was recorded by audio tapes.

The interview questions are mainly formulated to explore four main topics. First, it is to figure out the teacher's perceptions in teaching writing. Second, it is to explore the teacher's experiences in using blogs. Third, it is to identify challenges in using blogs in EFL writing class. Fourth, it is to find the benefits of using blogs in EFL writing class.

3.3.3   Students' Writing Results Posted on the Class Blog

The documents used to gather the data are in the form of students' writing results posted on the class blogs. It is used to answer the third research questions. In this study, the documents are used because it is based on the context of the document that portrays the intended information (Creswell, 2009). The students' writing results were collected to find information about five themes: identifying topics students chose, texts organization, kinds of vocabulary students used, students' language use, and students' mechanics in their writing.

3.4. Conducting the Pilot Study

The pilot study took place at a public senior high school in Sragen, Central Java, Indonesia. During three weeks of the research, the teacher agreed to evaluate the blog implementation and to give comments. There were three instruments used in this study. First, the classroom observation sheet adapted from Merriam and Tisdell (2015) was used to observe the teacher's practice and performance. Second, the interview guideline (Jannah, 2017) was used to get intended information from the teachers. Then, a rubric adapted from Jacobs, Zinkgraf, Wormuth, Hearfiel, and Hughey (1981) was used to evaluate and to assess students' writing results on blogs. Before the research was conducted, the researcher observed the school and classroom condition, participants, technology tools, facilities, teaching methods, and materials. Then, the field notes were prepared.

The classroom observations were done in three meetings to find out the teacher's practice in implementing blogs in writing classes. In the first meeting, the teacher informed the students that they should prepare the learning activities by showing the class blogs, its features, and what students needed to do during the writing classes using blogs. The teacher introduced the blogs from its basic model and demonstrated how to create a blog, to operate it, and to post a comment. The students were told that they could try to have a blog for a group that was consisted of five to six students. Apart from that, the teacher also told students about the assessment after the lessons were done. At the end of the meeting, the students tried to post a picture on their group blogs and a comment on the class blog. The teacher explained that they would discuss news items for the next meeting.

In the second meeting, the teacher gave materials of news items to students through blogs and discussed it. After that, the students tried to create a text by finding sources around the school. In other words, they had to go out of the class and started to look for topics around them that could be made into news items. After approximately twenty minutes, they came back to the class. The teacher asked them to create a news item text based on what they got. Later, they would discuss it for the next meeting.

In the third meeting, the teacher asked students about the previous meeting and recalling the knowledge. They discussed what they got from the previous meeting. Some students wrote their topics in front of the class. Then, they discuss the difficulties during writing a news item text. After that, the teacher asked students to revise their draft and to post it on the class's blog through comments.

There were twenty questions for the teacher's interview which were classified into three themes: a) how the teacher taught writing; b) how the use of blogs was; and c) how the teacher formulated materials and goals. The interview was conducted in a meeting and took place at the teacher's house after the last meeting. Moreover, in analyzing students' writing, the rubric was adapted from Jacobs et al. (1981) that focused on content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics.

3.4.1. Results of Pilot Study

During the first meeting, the students were introduced to the class blog. They seemed so calm and pay attention to the teacher's instruction. Many of them had already known about blogs. For some students, they had had projects using blogs in their previous junior high school. Some of them also had their private blogs.

In the second meeting, they started to be more active by asking and participating. In this meeting, the researcher observed the teaching and learning process through the observation sheets focusing on the physical settings, participants, activities and interactions, subtle factors, and additional notes. Since the class was conducted in the school language laboratory, the situation and atmosphere supported the whole teaching and learning processes. During the activity where students should find sources outside the class, many students did it seriously by interviewing the security guards, teachers, canteen keepers, and so on. Some of them did not give interests in completing the task. In the last meeting, the study was conducted on their class. Students focused on the teacher's explanation and they share their difficulties in writing the texts. After revising their draft, the students completed their texts and posted it on blogs.

The school Internet connection was excellent to stream online video during the classroom activities. A problem happened to the teacher's laptop so that it

could not play the audio of the video. However, the sound system facilities from the school's language laboratory can solve it.

For interview, the researcher informed the teacher about number of questions that should be answered and explained that the interview would be audio-recorded. The teacher determined the date, time, and place of the interview. The interview took place at the teacher's house. There was minimum interruption during the interview. Most of the interruption came from the sound of motorbikes on a noisy road near his house. However, it was not disturbing the interview process. In the midst of the interview, the call for worship reverberated. The teacher postponed the interview to pray and continued later. Another problem was found when the teacher answered two questions with the same answers. Those questions should be revised.

3.4.2. Evaluation of Pilot Study

Since the study intended to observe the teacher's practice in using blogs based on the scientific approach in Indonesian 2013 Curriculum, the observation sheet should cover the processes of scientific approach to ease the observer in putting data from the field. Another point that should be considered was the use of audio equipment in case the teacher's laptop audio did not work properly. The teacher might also use different laptop for the actual research to avoid audio problems.

There were two questions that had the same answers from the teacher. The question "what do you think of the use of blogs in the classroom?" and "according to you, what is the function of the blog?" could be merged into one question, that was "what do you think of the functional usage of blogs in the classroom? (*menurut Bapak, bagaimana fungsi penggunaan blog di dalam kelas?*)". Apart from that, the teacher's expectation towards students' skills was also important to be questioned. Two questions were added, that are "what should students achieve in writing skills?" and "what abilities should students have to operate a blog?". Then, there were no difficulties found in the rubric for assessing students' writing results.

In conclusion, the above explanation reports that two points should be revised from the research instruments. First, the observation sheets should cover

processes of scientific approach in 2013 Curriculum. Second, two questions for the interview should be merged into one question. There are also two additional questions dealing with the teacher's expectation towards the students' skills. In conclusion, the instruments in this study could be used for the next research with minor revision.

3.5. Data Analysis

The data obtained in this study were analyzed qualitatively. After the data from classroom observations, interview, and students' writing results were analyzed, those data were triangulated based on the three main components of qualitative data analysis proposed by Miles and Huberman in Hamied (2017). The three procedures are *data reduction*, *data display*, and *drawing and verifying conclusion*. In *data reduction*, the researcher edited, segmented, and summarized the data to look for the intended information. Themes, clusters, and patterns were concerned without reducing the significant loss of information. In *data display*, the researcher organized and compared the information with the other sources. In *drawing and verifying conclusion*, the researcher verified the gathered data and made conclusion about the information. For further information, the data analyses for each data collection procedure were explained below.

3.4.1. Analyzing Classroom Observations

The data from classroom observations were analyzed to answer the first research question. It explore the teacher's practice in integrating blogs into EFL writing class based on the scientific approach in 2013 Curriculum. There are three stages in analyzing the data from classroom observations. First, the recorded videos are transcribed into texts and the field notes were read. The field notes are in the form of observation guidelines adapted from Merriam and Tisdell (2015). Second, the data from recorded videos are identified to find these main topics: the messages that the teacher is targeting, the learning materials and resources provided by the teacher, and activities or utterances indicating blogs integration. Later, those activities and utterances are categorized into scientific approach processes:

observing, *questioning*, *experimenting*, *associating*, and *communicating*. Third, the data is interpreted, presented, and discussed.

3.4.2. Analyzing Interview

The data from interview were analyzed into three steps. First, the audio tapes were transcribed into texts to verify data from observations. Second, the transcribed interview was sent back to the teacher to confirm what had been said. Third, the answers from the interview were categorized into four themes: the teacher's perceptions in teaching writing, the teacher's experiences in using blogs, challenges in using blogs in EFL writing class, and benefits of using blogs in EFL writing class. All the data from the interview were analyzed based on Miles and Huberman in Hamied (2017) by using three procedures: *data reduction*, *data display*, and *drawing and verifying conclusion*.

3.4.3. Analyzing Students' Writing Results

The documents are in the form of students' writing results posted on the class blog. The data from documents were analyzed into three steps. First, the students' writing results posted on the class blog were captured into pictures. Instead of copying the texts, capturing the pictures of students' works makes it more realistic. Second, the documents are analyzed based on Jacobs et al. (1981) that cover five themes: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Third, the researcher presented the analyzed data by showing the captured images of students' writing results posted on the class blog.