

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter elaborates the research methodology which has been introduced in chapter I. It also describes the procedures and sequences involved in this research. In detail, this chapter explains research problems, research design, participants, research instruments, data collecting procedures, and data analysis.

3.1 Research Questions

The study is conducted to investigate the teachers' difficulties in teaching writing descriptive texts at a senior high school in Pangkal Pinang, Bangka Belitung. The problem to be investigated is formulated into two research questions as follows.

1. What are the difficulties faced by the 10th grade teachers in teaching writing descriptive texts?
2. What are the strategies used by the teachers to overcome the difficulties in teaching writing descriptive texts?

3.2. Research Methodology

The research design and the site and participant of this study are outlined as follows.

3.2.1 Research Design

This research attempts to investigate the kind of difficulties in teaching writing descriptive texts faced by the 10th grade teachers. The approach used in this research belongs to the qualitative approach because it fits perfectly with the following description and explanation. According to Creswell (2007), in qualitative approach, a case is for a specific period of time using a detailed and in-depth data collection, and produces the final result of a case description.

In this research, descriptive case study is used as the research design. Yin (2003:13) defined case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.” This research discussed one case (teachers’ difficulties) and displayed a brief description of the phenomenon based on the data collected.

3.2.2 Research Site and Participants

3.2.2.1 Research Site

This study was conducted in a senior high school in Pangkal Pinang, Bangka Belitung. The school was chosen mainly because of its accessibility to the researcher. Although Pangkal Pinang was the capital of Bangka Belitung Province, the city itself was not as big and advanced as metropolitan cities like Bandung or Jakarta, yet it was not too small or isolated. It was assumed that this condition would provide a unique circumstance to the schools, which was another consideration to conduct the study

there. The school chosen for this study was not as advanced as other big cities in Indonesia, in terms of school facilities, other supporting facilities, and its social environment. It meant that the students and teachers in the school might have a more difficult situation, in terms of supporting facilities, resources, and social context of schooling, compared to other schools in big cities.

3.2.2.2 Participants of the Study

The participants in this study were two English teachers in a senior high school in Pangkal Pinang who taught the tenth grade students. Tenth grade students in Indonesia typically face a new learning environment, which is more demanding and more complex than what they encounter in junior high school. Furthermore, the students were supposed to have had some experiences and knowledge about English from their study in junior high school, which might affect the teachers' level of expectation, and thus the teachers' strategies, in teaching them. The teachers were chosen for this study for several reasons: first, they had experience as English teacher for several years; second, they were of different group age, which might provide different views on the matter being studied; and finally, they were willing to fully participate as respondents in this study.

In order to keep the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents, a coding method was used to describe the teachers involved in this study. Table 3.1 contained the profile of the teachers.

Table 3.1**English Teachers' Profile in a Senior High School in Pangkal Pinang**

Teacher's ID	Age	Gender	Certified/ Not Certified	Years of Teaching Experience
T1	26	Female	Not certified	5
T2	55	Female	Not certified	20

a. T1

T1 has been working as an English teacher in the school chosen as the site of the study for 5 years. T1 has three years experience of teaching English to the tenth graders of this school.

b. T2

T2 has been teaching English for about 20 years, the last three of which were in the school chosen as site of the study. T2 has experience of teaching English in elementary school, junior high school, and, mostly and for the longest time, to senior high school students.

3.3 Research Instruments

There are two instruments used for collecting data in this research; observation and interview.

Observation is used to understand the perspective of the conducted as a way to understand the perspective held by study populations, to understand the relevant contexts in which the study participants live, and to check the participants' subjective

reporting of what they believe and do (Mack, et.al. 2005). Kothari (2004) stated that to become a scientific tool and a method of data collecting, observation must serve ‘a formulated research purpose and is systematically planned and recorded.’ In this method, the researcher gathers information through ‘direct observation without asking from the respondents’ (Kothari, 2004). The observation is conducted in classrooms where, and when, the respondents teach writing descriptive texts. It is aimed to gain information on the difficulties the 10th grade teachers have when teaching writing descriptive text in the classrooms.

To gain further information to complete and to compare the data from the observation, interviews are conducted. Mack, et. al. (2005) stated that the interview is used to obtain a vivid picture of participant’s perspective on the research topic. Meanwhile, Kothari (2004) defined interview as a method of collecting data involving ‘presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses.’ In an interview the researcher is a student who is eager to learn everything the participant can share about the research topic and who collect information personally from the sources concerned (Mack, et. al., 2005; Kothari, 2004). It means that the questions of the interview must be formulated to elicit information from the participants in such a way that the information gained is complete and thorough to be able to address the research questions.

In this study, the respondents are interviewed separately. The interview is designed as a semi-structured interview, which means that an interview script is

prepared as guidance in conducting the interview, but will be adjusted and modified according to the need during the actual implementation of the interview.

3.4 Data Collecting Procedures

In collecting the data, there are some procedures employed. The first step is preparing the instrument. The second step is making appointments with the respondents. The third step is conducting classroom observation, and the final step is interviewing the respondents.

The instrument prepared before conducting research in the school is the interview script. The interview script is used to assist in conducting the interview. It contains some questions pertaining to the topic of teachers' difficulties in teaching writing descriptive text. These questions serve as a guideline to interview the respondents, and when needed, there may be some questions removed from or added to this script.

The second step that needs to follow is making an appointment with teachers. In the meeting with the respondent, the nature and purpose of this study were explained and the respondents' genuine participation in this study was asked. Both teachers agreed to participate as respondents in this study. The teachers' permission was also asked so that the respondents could be observed while they were teaching the subject of descriptive text to the tenth grade students; particularly the writing of descriptive text. With their agreement, it was decided when and where the observation could be conducted.

On the agreed time and date, the respondents were observed in their classes, separately. Both respondents had two meetings to teach and discuss the topic of descriptive text in their respective classrooms. In total, five (5) classroom observations were conducted on separate dates and times. In each session or meeting, the observation technique used was an outsider-observer technique, which meant that the ongoing classroom activities were observed without any kind of intervention from the observer. The focus of the observation was the teachers' activity in the class when teaching writing descriptive text. It was expected that, by doing so, a picture of the difficulties the teachers faced in the classroom and an understanding concerning the context of the classroom and teaching-learning activities there could be gained. The observation was recorded as a field note.

The purpose of interviewing the respondents is to find out the difficulties, if any, the teachers face in teaching writing descriptive text to tenth graders and to obtain information concerning what the teachers do to overcome those difficulties. In this study, the respondents were interviewed separately on the agreed date and time. The questions asked in the interview were those that pertained to the research topic, e.g. the purpose of teaching writing descriptive text in the class, the difficulties faced by the teacher as a foreign language speaker teaching writing descriptive text, and the strategies the teacher used to address or overcome the difficulties. Appendix 2 contains the complete list of interview questions.

Besides the questions above, there were some questions added based on the situation and the responses provided by the respondents to gain further information.

3.5 Data Analysis

Both the data from classroom observation and the interview are analyzed using the Miles-Huberman Analysis. Following the three steps from Miles and Huberman (1984 in Ekawati 2011) (Figure 3.1), the data are reduced and displayed before the conclusions are drawn.

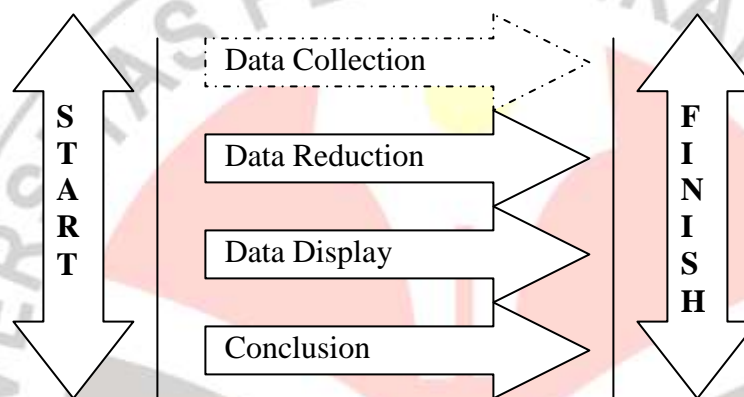


Figure 3.1 Data Analysis Steps (Miles and Huberman, 1984)

a. Data Reduction

The information obtained is reduced to classify the data that are really appropriate to the purposes of the research so that the research questions could be answered. In data reduction step, the data from classroom observation is selectively analyzed to find the important points related to the study. Meanwhile, the data from the interview is transcribed to interpret the source of the difficulties and to find out the description of the implementation of the efforts they use to overcome those difficulties.

After the data are reduced, the *main data* that will help to answer research questions, namely the difficulties faced by the teachers and the efforts to minimize them, are obtained. This data is then displayed for analysis.

b. Data Display and Analysis

The data from observation and interview are displayed in the form of narrative text and tables. As Miles and Huberman (1984, in Sugiyono, 2009) stated, narrative text is the most common form to be used in displaying data in qualitative studies. This data are displayed and analyzed at the same time to facilitate an easier reading of the data and analysis.

c. Conclusion Drawing

In the next step, by summing up the main data, a brief picture of the difficulties in teaching writing descriptive texts and teachers' efforts to minimize the difficulties will be provided as the findings. The research questions will be answered through the conclusion drawn from the data display and will be presented in the next chapter.

3.6 Validity

The data gained from the observation and interview is analyzed and cross-checked by using triangulation in order to: (1) minimize the risk of limited or insufficient conclusion under the certain methods and data sources; and (2) increase the validity in order to broaden the domain analysis (Alwasilah, 2002). The triangulation is important to avoid biased data. To triangulate the data in this research, the data will be crosschecked with the theory of teaching strategies as outlined in the theoretical framework.