CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design, research context and participants, data collection, and data analysis used to answer the research question in this paper; how can online group discussion improve students' speaking skills? This study investigates how online group discussion improves students' speaking skills after implementing it using classroom action research methodology.

3.1 Research Design

This study utilized classroom action research as the qualitative approach. According to Mertler (2006), those who apply the classroom action research approach are practitioners who want to upgrade the comprehension of their practice. Zeicher and Noffke (2001) also state that action research has improved student accomplishment, provided possibility for professional growth, and assist teachers construct their practice more explicit. Classroom action research is the most suitable methodology for this study as this kind of research centered on improving students' achievement in the classroom and help teachers to improve their practice. With classroom action research, teachers could examine and reflect on their practice systematically and carefully.

This study implemented two cycles of classroom action research; three lessons in the first cycle and five lessons in the second cycle. In conducting the classroom action research methodology, there are four steps that this study used from Kemmis and Taggart's (1992) action research planner. The steps are planning, action, observation, and reflection.
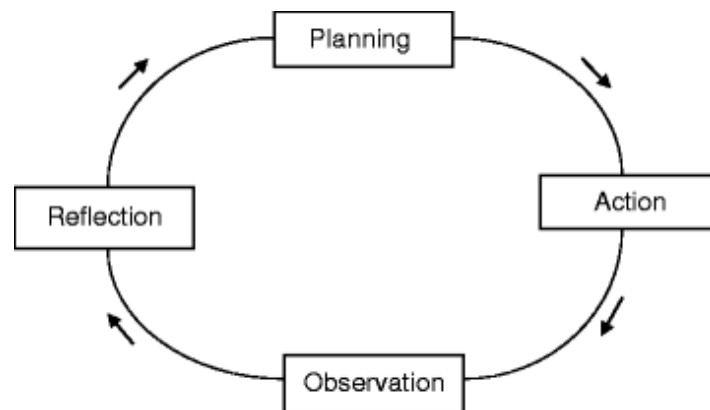
Figure 1 Kemmis and Taggart action research model

- Planning

The observation administered before the implementation of online group discussion reported that most students in the classroom have low speaking skills, especially in these aspects: grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and pronunciation. This study planned a specific activity to increase students' speaking skills: online group discussion. For the second cycle, the researcher or teacher also considered the problems found in the first cycle and plan the activities or solutions for solving that problem. Before implementing online group discussion, this study prepared several things: a lesson plan that includes online group discussion in every meeting, research instruments such as observation sheet (checklist and free column), interview questions, and speaking task rubric. Another important thing this study planned and prepared before implementing the online group discussion in the classroom is classifying the students in the group of four after knowing students speaking achievements beforehand based on the observation before the online group discussion being applied in the classroom.

- Action

The teacher implemented the plan from the previous stage (lesson plan) in the classroom. The teacher implemented online group discussion activity with clear instruction on what to be discussed. In this study, the lesson was about procedure text. In the classroom, the students or participants were given the task to present their procedure text orally after the discussion in the respective group (with different

activities, questions, and themes regarding procedure text). The lesson's objective was for students to be able to produce their oral procedure text after six times online group discussion activities. Another objective was for students to improve their speaking skills after every meeting, graded using the adaptation of Brown's (2004) oral proficiency scoring categories. The focus of this research was to know how the implementation of online group discussions can improve students' speaking skills. This study also took some observation sheets (checklist and blank column) to observe the online group discussion or other external aspects that might affect students' speaking skills improvement.

- Observation

    The researcher collected three types of data; interview, observation, and speaking task result to answer the problem identified at the start. The observation sheet checklist was filled in every lesson involving online group discussion to investigate the aspects that might improve students' speaking skills. For the interview, this study interviewed the participants after the lesson ended. The speaking task to score students' speaking skills was administered before and after implementing online group discussions in the classroom. For speaking task results, the focus is on identifying the improving aspects of students' speaking skills (grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and pronunciation). After collecting the data, this study analyzed the data into several themes regarding how online group discussion improving students' speaking skills that were evident in the observation sheet and interview transcript after aligned it with the speaking task result.

- Reflection

    This study concluded what aspects of online group discussion help students improve their speaking skills, as the improvement is evident in the first and last speaking task results. This study also concluded how and to what extent online group discussion can help students improve their speaking skills. This step allowed the teacher or researcher to reflect on the practice and come up with the better planning in the second cycle or give some suggestions for future researchers and teachers.

3.2 Research Context and Participants

This study participants were fifteen students in one classroom, and five students from that fifteen were interviewed. The study was conducted in one eleventh grade class of senior high school. This particular class was chosen because of students' willingness to participate and collaborate in implementing online group discussions. Another reason came from the observation before implementing online group discussion; the result reported that despite having previous experience learning English, most students have low speaking skills that become students' problems in this particular class. Low speaking skills problem solved by implementing online group discussion fitted this study aim to know how online group discussion improves students' speaking skills.

The participants of this study were active and passive high school students present in online group discussions. Participants were willing to participate in this research after being asked by the researcher orally in one of the lessons. Participants also filled the online form of their willingness to participate in this study. After implementing online group discussion in the participants' classroom, this study aimed to know how online group discussion improving students' speaking skills.

3.3 Data Collection

This study collected three types of data; observation, interview, and speaking task result. The observation sheet was filled through the observation in every lesson that applied online group discussion. According to Cohen et al. (2000) and Marczyk et al. (2005), observation is a versatile method of data collection as it can assist the researcher in gaining deeper comprehension into the circumstances. It allows the researcher to study and analyze from a close range and forces the researcher aware of principal factors related to this study. The observation sheet was gathered through the classroom observation.

The steps for observing that researcher used are as following: 1.Selected an observation sheet, 2. Identified who and what to observe and how long the observation takes times, 3. Uses a recorder to record the activity in the classroom, 4. Took notes based on the observation sheet checklist, 5. Analyzed the activity through the recorder

(Creswell, 2012). The observation sheet was obtained from observation in the classroom to observe the students' response towards implementing online group discussion in the classroom and online group discussion aspects that might contribute to students speaking skills improvement.

The in-depth or unstructured interviews as one of the prime methods in data collection used in qualitative research (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003) were also collected in this study. This kind of interview has a flexible structure and can trigger follow-up questions that help the researcher gain a deeper understanding. The interview would take place after the learning process has been done, after the online group discussion activity being held. The researcher used the following steps for the interview: 1. Choose the interviewees, 2. Locate a quiet place for the audio to be heard more clearly, 3. Record the interview, 4. Take notes for the important things (apart from the interview answers) (Creswell, 2012). The interview was conducted to investigate student's perception regarding the online group discussion activity to their speaking skills improvement in depth. The focus of the interview was to know how or what aspects online group discussion has that improve students' speaking skills.

Testing, as a powerful method of data collection (Cohen et al., 2000; Marczyk et al., 2005), is the last data collected in this study. The speaking task result reflected students' speaking skills improvement after implementing the online group discussion. The speaking task result was collected through students' speaking task results at first and at the end of the whole lesson with the teacher (two results). This study used Brown's (2004) oral proficiency scoring categories and descriptions of oral proficiency scores to classify students' tasks. This study focused on the improvement in oral proficiency scoring categories descriptions from these speaking task results. The targeted level of proficiency is level 2 in the scoring rubric.

3.4 Data Analysis

The instruments to be analyzed are the observation sheet, interview transcript, and speaking task result. These instruments reported how online group discussion improving students' speaking skills. This study used the stages of data reduction, data display, and concluding (Miles & Huberman, 1994) as a data analysis tool. Data

reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming the data in observation sheets, interview transcripts, and speaking task results. Then, the next step is data display. Generally, data display is organized, compressed information that displays the conclusion of online group discussion activity in the research. And the final step is concluding, concludes the result and discussion by answering the research question: how can online group discussion improve students' speaking skills?

The data of this study were observation sheets, interview transcripts, and speaking task results. The result of the interview would be the transcription in the form of words. Meanwhile, speaking task results will be in the form of words based on the description of each level in Brown (2004). The observation sheet would be in the form of statements checklists. In analyzing the data, the researcher used observation sheets, participants' interview transcripts, and speaking task results to answer the research question. This study simplified and analyzed the observation sheet, interview transcript, and speaking task result with the theories in the literature review. Then, this study displayed organized information after the analysis. Finally, this study concluded the result in the form of a research question's answer.