

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter provides the explanation of the procedure of the research in order to find the answers of the two questions formulated. It includes the statement of problems, research method, site and respondent, data collection, data analysis and also additional information related to the research.

#### **3.1 Statements of the Problem**

This research is projected to discover the answer of the following questions:

1. In what ways do the reading activities presented through Theme-Based Teaching help students to improve their reading skill?
2. What are the students' responses toward learning activities presented through Theme-Based Teaching?

#### **3.2 Research Design**

According to the intention of the research which endeavors to find out the effectiveness of reading activities that are applied to improve reading skill of students who are categorized as young learners through Theme-Based Teaching, qualitative research was conducted. In this particular, classroom action research was taken as the main method to conduct the study.

Young *et.al.* (2010) describe action research as follows:

Action research is not about hypothesis testing and producing empirically generalizable results; however, it is consistent with the definition of the scholarship of teaching and learning defined as “systematic reflection on teaching and learning made public”. (p. 2)

Action research is considered as the most appropriate method to be used since it facilitates evaluation and reflection in order to implement necessary changes in practice (Alwasilah, 2011). As described by Alwasilah (2011), classroom action research as a type of study which is aimed to identify the

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problem faced in the learning process and thenceforth to find out the resolution with the intention of enhancing the quality of the teaching process. By implementing action research, teachers are able to do the reflection of how the teaching and learning process is conducted and then find the resolution if the problems arose in order to improve their teaching quality.

Along the line with the previous description, Hitchcock & Hughes as cited in Hatch (2002) also explain the definition of action research as follows:

Action research is usually organized in a cycle of identifying a problem through careful observation, reflecting on the dimensions of the problem, designing a change that addresses the problem, implementing the change, and assessing its effectiveness through careful observation. (p. 31)

Furthermore, Ferrance (2000) stated that *“action research is a process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully”* (p. 1). In addition, Kemmis and McTaggart (1990) state that action research is a self-reflective inquiry that is done by a person which aims to improve his or her social or educational practices by evaluating his or her own practices. On the other word, in action research, the researcher is also playing the role as the planner, doer and the one who does the reflection of the action as well.

The main characteristic of action research study is the involvement of spiral of self-reflective cycles which include the process of planning, acting and observing, reflecting, replanning, acting and observing, reflection, and so on (Kemmis and McTaggart as cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). It is supported by Norton (2001) who states that *“one of the fundamental characteristics of action research is its ongoing nature”* (p. 21).

In line with the previous explanations, Winter and Munn-Giddings as cited in Young, et. al (2010) describe the reiteration of action research cycle as follows:

The iterative action research cycle starts with faculty (and possibly students) deciding on the focus of the inquiry and creating a plan to observe and record their classroom activities (Plan). The classroom activities are then implemented (Action) and pertinent observations are recorded (Observe) which are then individually and collaboratively critically reflected upon (Reflect) leading to revising classroom activities based on what has been learned (Revised Plan).

The following scheme is the illustration of the cycle in action research.

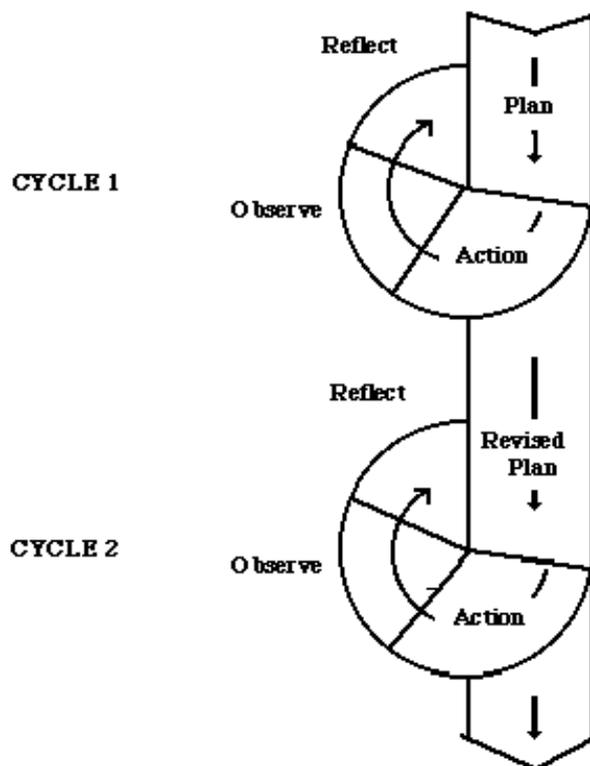


Figure 3.1

**The Action Research Cycle  
(Hopkin, 1985)**

The following is the description of the steps illustrated in Figure 3.1. and its implementation in this research.

1. Planning

Planning stage is the first step in conducting the research through action research method. In this research, planning stage was begun with conducting classroom observation which intended to find out the situation of the site and also the respondents. There are two findings that can be resulted from the observation, they were about students' basic knowledge and classroom atmosphere in teaching and learning process.

The following step was designing the lesson plan which was started studying the Standard Competence and Basic Competence (SKKD) given from

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the school. Ultimately, it was decided to use the theme about “Classroom”. The reason behind selecting “Classroom” as the main theme was based on the Standard Competence and Basic Competence of English subject which had been decided by the school that was in grade 3 the material should be in the context of classroom.

Next, the step was followed by designing the activities for delivering the lesson through Theme-Based Teaching. The theme implemented in each cycle was “Classroom” with different sub theme and language feature in each Action. In Cycle 1, the sub theme was *Things in the classroom* while in Cycle 2, the sub theme was *Activities in the classroom*. Detail lesson plan can be accessed in Appendix A.

## 2. Action

Action stage is the step to implement the plans that have been designed previously. In this research, the action stage was conducted by applying the lesson plan into teaching and learning process. There are two actions in each cycle. In Action 1, students were provided with some activities including the introduction to the vocabularies related to the text that will be learned and also some drilling of how to pronounce it. While in Action 2, students were given the guidance to read and comprehend the text.

As the implementation, in Cycle 1 - Action 1, students were firstly introduced with some objects that they could find in the classroom such as whiteboard, chair and bag. After being familiar with the new vocabularies related to the text they will learn, they were also taught about the language focus for Cycle 1 that is about “*There is ...*” and “*There are...*”.

Meanwhile in Cycle 1 - Action 2, students were further taught about *There is ...* or *There isn't ...* and *There are...* or *There aren't*. In addition, in this action, students also completed the test to measure their reading ability and also their comprehension of the text given.

In Cycle 2, the sub theme was about the activities in the classroom. In the first action, students were introduced to some verbs related to the activities in the classroom, such as *write*, *read*, *discuss* and so on. Next, In Cycle 2 - Action 2,

students were taught about ordinal number. In the same way as the first cycle, in this action, students were also assessed to measure their reading ability and also their comprehension of the text given.

### 3. Observation

Observation stage is the step where the implementation of the plans was examined. The purpose of this stage is to evaluate whether or not the plans that had been designed were applied accurately or there were the improvement needed to maximize the result. At this stage, observation sheet was used to record both positive and negative point in every activity presented in the classroom. The observation sheet used in this research is aimed to verify the implementation of Theme-Based Teaching in teaching reading to young learner was truthfully executed.

### 4. Reflecting

In reflecting stage, the data gathered from the observation stage were analyzed. The purpose of this stage is to evaluate the process of the cycle and then arrange the revision in order make an improvement for the next cycle. Based on the result of observation sheet from the observation stage in Action 1, it was found that respondents showed positive response toward attractive activities such as game. Furthermore, the use of game also gave the beneficial influence in helping students to understand the lesson. In addition, it also disclosed that respondents did like to interact with other and they could stay still in their chair. Therefore, in Action 2 the activities provided were also including group work to accommodate their activeness in moving and talking.

The action research was conducted within 5 weeks starting in the third week of August up to the second week of September. The following table presents the schedule of the research including the process of collecting the data.

**Table 3.1**  
**The Schedule of the Research**

No	Activities	Time
1	Classroom Observation	August 20, 2013

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2	Cycle 1	Action 1	August 27, 2013 Theme: Classroom Sub Theme: Things in The Classroom
		Action 2	September 3, 2013 Theme: Classroom Sub Theme: Things in The Classroom
3	Cycle 2	Action1	September 7, 2013 Theme: Classroom Sub Theme: Activities in The Classroom
		Action 2	September 10. 2013 Theme: Classroom Sub Theme: Activities in The Classroom
4	Interview		September 17, 2013

### 3.3 Site and Respondents

The research was conducted in one elementary school in Bandung. This school was chosen because of two reasons. Firstly, this school has a good partnership with Indonesia University of Education, and secondly, the school agreed that the implementation of Theme-Based Teaching was important at this time due to the newest curriculum applied Indonesian Education system.

In this research, the observations were conducted in Class-3A which consisted of 35 students. The class was chosen because, in regard to their ages (8 to 9 years old), they were categorized into the second sub-group mentioned by Scott and Ytreberg (1990) or older learners suggested by Pinter (2006). Further explanation has been explained in Chapter 2.

### 3.4 Data Collection

There are four instruments used in this research to collect the data, they are document analysis, observation, assessment and interview. Besides for gaining the information to answer the various research problems, more than one instruments are used in order to meet the triangulation which intended to seek the validity of the data collected. According to Guion (2002), "*triangulation is a method used by qualitative researchers to check and establish validity in their studies*".

#### 1. Document Analysis

Patton (1990) as cited in Hatch (2002) perceives document as the device that can provide the original aspect of something that makes it came into being. In

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this research, the document used is in the form of lesson plans which are designed for four meetings teaching and learning process.

The lesson plans designed contained the activities applied in Action 1 and Action 2 in every cycle. In view of the fact that the main purpose of the research is to discover how the reading activities which implement Theme-Based Teaching help the students to improve their reading skill, the lesson plan designed for this research includes pre-reading activities, while-reading activities and post-reading activities (*see Appendix G*).

## 2. Assessment

In this research, the assessment was conducted in each end of the action that is four times. The purpose of conducting assessment is to observe the improvement showed by the students in terms of their reading skill. The assessment conducted in this research was formative assessment. According to Hughes (2003), formative assessment is a kind of assessment which was aimed to check the progress of the students.

In this case, the assessment was intended to find out the answer for the first research problem which is about the how the reading activities presented through Theme-Based Teaching improve students' reading skill. Through assessment, it is possible to monitor students' improvement after being given some reading activities as the implementation of Theme-Based Teaching in the teaching and learning process.

The following table is the rubric for assessing students reading skill.

**Table 3.2**  
**Rubric for Assessing Students' Reading Skill**

	<b>Good (4-5)</b>	<b>Fair (2-3)</b>	<b>Poor (0-1)</b>
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<b>Fluency</b>	Read the sentence smoothly	Read the sentence smoothly most of the time	Read with many pauses
<b>Articulacy</b>	Be able to hear every word	Be able to hear most words	Be unable to hear most of the word
<b>Correctness</b>	Read all the word correctly	Make two or three incorrect words	Make more than three incorrect words
<b>Comprehension</b>	Response/answer all the task correctly	Make two or three incorrect responses/answers	Make more than three incorrect responses/answer

### 3. Observation

Observation, as stated by Hatch (2002), is aimed to understand the culture, setting, or social phenomenon being studied from the perspectives of the participants. In addition, “*observing a particular event or circumstance is a way to see and hear directly what is happening, rather than having to rely on someone else’s account of it*” (Naughton and Hughes, 2009, p. 152).

Additionally, Hatch (2002, p. 72-73) identifies some advantages of gathering data through observations for general qualitative research. Some of them are:

- 1) Observation gives the opportunity to the researcher to look into the real sights of how the situation occurs and gain the actual information for better comprehension of what is happening.
- 2) Researcher can find any other information that is not fully expressed throughout the other data collection method.

The observation was accomplished four times for around 70 minutes in every meeting. This observation was focusing on investigating the implementation of Theme-Based Teaching in reading activities presented in the classroom and observing the responses toward the activities showed by the students.

In this research, the observation was conducted by using two techniques namely video taping and observation sheet.

#### *Video taping*

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The videotaping that was conducted in each meeting aimed to observe how the teaching and learning process was conducted in the classroom by implementing Theme-Based Teaching. It was used as the main instrument to collect the data that could be used to find the answer of the research problem.

Videotaping was used to examine the improvement of students' reading ability in every meeting in two cycles. Videotaping was also used to find the visual information about how the teaching and learning process was conducted and the activities presented in order to improve students' reading ability.

In addition, videotaping was also managed to investigate students' responses toward the activities presented during the teaching and learning process. In this case, students' behavioral responses were intended to be investigated by observing the video tape. The data from video taping can be seen in Appendix E.

#### *Observation sheet*

The use of observation sheet was intended to record the phenomenon occurred in the teaching and learning process. According to Olsen (2008), observation sheet can be used to critically evaluate the learning process and identify the actual data of the effectiveness strategies and techniques employed in the classroom. In line with the principle of reflection in action research, observation sheet can also be used to evaluate how the previous teaching and learning process accomplished and plan the strategies for the next teaching and learning process in the following cycle.

In this research observation sheet was used to examine how the reading activities which were design through Theme-Based Teaching help students to improve their reading skill.

**Table 3.3.**  
**Observation Sheet**

No.	Reading Process	+	-	Comment
1	Pre-Reading Activity:			
	- The activities stimulate students'			

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	prior knowledge.			
	- The activities connect students' prior knowledge to the material that will be taught.			
	- The activities help students to prepare their knowledge for the material that will be taught.			
2	While-Reading Activity:			
	- The activities facilitate students' curiosity.			
	- The activities help students to comprehend the material.			
3	Post-Reading Activity:			
	- The activities help students' to confirm their understanding about the material.			
Overall Comment:				

The observation sheet's takers were the observers which were consisted of a university student of ninth-semester from Indonesia University of Education (Observer 1) and an English teacher (Observer 2). The data from this instrument can be retrieved in Appendix C.

In this research, the observation was done by implementing both participant observation and non-participant observation. According to Atkinson and Hammersley (2011), "*participant observation is referred to the observation which carried out the researcher to play an established participant role in the scene studied*" (p. 248). This observation was done when the researcher played the role as the teacher who planned, implemented and also did the reflection of the lesson. On the other hand, non-participant observation refers to the state when the researcher was not being involved in the study. In this case, the non-participant observation was done in the process of observing the presentation of reading activities as the implementation of Theme-Based Teaching which was taken by the observers who fill the observation sheet.

#### 4. Interview

According to Hatch (2002), interview helps researcher to gain more interpretation on the perspective of the participant. It explores information which is not explored in the observation. The intention of conducting interview in this

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research was to collect the information from the participant which is more informative related to their view in teaching and learning process deliver through Theme-Based Teaching. It was used to verify the information developed from another instrument (triangulation).

In this research, interview was conducted to 5 students which were chosen randomly. The interviewees were hereafter labeled as Interviewee 1, Interviewee 2, Interviewee 3, Interviewee 4 and Interviewee 5. The interview included four major questions about their opinion related to the activities presented in the classroom as the implementation of Theme-Based teaching in teaching reading. The interview was intended to examine students' opinion including the following issues:

- 1) Students' feeling during the learning process.
- 2) Students' opinion toward the lesson presented in the classroom (whether or not it helps them to get better comprehension).
- 3) Students' opinion related to the implementation of Theme-Based Teaching in their learning process.

By means of the interview, it was expected to find out the affective and cognitive response from the students. According to Eagly and Chaiken (1993) as cited in Kwon and Vogt (2008), *“an affective factor is based on emotional experiences or preferences”* (p. 299). In this case, the students were inquired about their feeling and opinion related to the learning process presented in the classroom. Additionally, the interview also explored students' cognitive response when they were led to recall what they had learned during learning process. The transcription of the interview was attached in Appendix E.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Hatch (2002) defines data analysis as *“a systematic search for meaning”* (p. 148). After gathering data, the next stage is analyzing data to obtain the actual meaning of the data. The procedure of analyzing qualitative data involves the

process of preparing the data for analysis, comprehending the data, representing the data, and interpreting of the meaning of the data (Cresswell, 2008).

In accordance with Cresswell's statement, the process of analyzing the data in this research was mainly conducted through three steps namely (1) transcribing the data as the process of preparing the data to be analyze; (2) Coding data as the process of comprehending and representing the data; and then (3) Interpreting the data.

### **3.5.1 Transcribing the data**

The process of analyzing the data beginning with transcribing the data collected through videotaping and interview. Cresswell (2008) explains transcribing the data as the process of converting any forms of data into text data. The purpose of transcribing the data in this research is to textualize the information logging on the video of teaching and learning process and the recording of interview.

### **3.5.2 Coding the data**

The next step after transcribing all the data from observations and interview is coding the textual information from the transcription. As stated by Rossman & Rallis (1998) in Creswell (2002), "*Coding is the process of organizing the material into "chunks" before bringing meaning to those "Chunks"*" (p. 263).

Alwasilah (2011) says that coding is necessary in helping the researchers to analyze the transcription. Furthermore, he also explains several advantages of coding. Some of them are coding can help researcher to identify the occurrence of certain phenomenon and reckon the frequent of phenomenon existing. In addition, coding is also help researcher in giving the code for the invention. Therefore it will ease the researcher to arrange the categorization of the invention.

In this research, coding data was conducted to the data collected through observation, especially videotaping, which were mainly used to answer the

research question about students' responses toward reading activities presented in the classroom. The following table displays some codes used in this stage.

**Table 3.4.**  
**Code**

No.	Categories	Codes
1.	Pre-Reading	Stimulating students' prior knowledge
		Connecting students' prior knowledge with the new material
		Stimulating students' curiosity
		Preparing students for new material
2.	While-Reading	Facilitating students' curiosity
		Introducing students to the new material
		Helping students to comprehend the material
3.	Post-Reading	Confirming students' understanding

By means of giving clearer illustration of how the codes were established, the following table enlightens the indicator of each code.

**Table 3.5.**  
**Indicator of the Codes**

No.	Code	Classroom Activities
1.	Stimulating students' prior knowledge	- Teacher elicits students' prior knowledge related to the theme of the material.

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		- Teacher asks students to talk about what they know related to the material they will learn.
2.	Connecting students' prior knowledge with the new material	- Teacher asks students to make prediction of what they will learn from, for example, picture or the title of the text. - Teacher sets the situation by providing context.
3.	Stimulating students' curiosity	- Teacher shows pictures or other media to attract students' interest.
4.	Preparing students for new material	- Teacher introduces new vocabularies related to the material. - Teacher reviews what students have learned in the previous meeting.
5.	Facilitating students' curiosity	- Students are introduced with the learning material through several media such as picture.
6.	Introducing students to the new material	- Students learn new language and language feature from the reading material.
7.	Helping students to comprehend the material	- Students able to identify the general information from the reading material. - Students able to identify the specific information from the reading material.
8.	Confirming students' understanding	- Students give the opportunities to show what they have learned - Students reproduce the essence of the reading material.

In this sense, the process was started by reading the whole transcripts while giving some notes on important points found in the transcriptions. To give clear illustration of how the coding process was carried out, what follow is the example of coded excerpts taken from the transcription of interview.

T	: Sekarang kita belajar tentang classroom. Ada yang tau classroom itu apa?	
S1	: Kelas.	Stimulating students' prior knowledge
T	: Kelas... Ya... this is our classroom. This is our classroom. Coba sekarang kalian bisa lihat apa aja di kelas kalian ini?	
Ss	: (overlap mentioning several objects)	
T	: Apa ini?	Connecting students' prior knowledge with the new material
Ss	: Table... Table...	
T	: Yes, table.	
S2	: Chair...	
T	: Terus? Chair... iya...	
S3	: Chair...	
S4	: Table... Chair...	
T	: Lalu apa lagi?	
Ss	: Whiteboard.	

(cited in the video-taping transcript Cycle 1 – Action 1 in Appendix D)

### 3.5.3 Interpreting the data

The next stage of data analysis was interpreting all the data collected. Hatch (2002) rationalizes the term on interpretation as follows:

Interpretation is about giving meaning to data. It's about making sense of social situations by generating explanations for what's going on within them. It's about making inferences, developing insights, attaching significance, refining understandings, drawing conclusions, and extrapolating lessons. (p. 180)

In this research, the data obtained from coding the transcription of video of teaching and learning process and interview were used to answer the second research question by describing the phenomenon found in the transcription. Additionally, the data obtained from observation sheet which is used to find out the effectiveness of reading activities presented through Theme-Based Teaching to improve students' reading skill. Then, the data resulted from the test was described to support the data obtained from observation sheet that show the improvement of the students' after giving the activities.

## 3.6 Concluding remarks

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This chapter has described the statement of problems, research design, site and respondents, and also the process of gathering and analyzing the data. The following chapter will describe the findings and the discussion of the research.

