

## **CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents the description related to the method of this study. These include the descriptions related to Research Design, Research Site and Participants, Data Collection Techniques and Data Analysis.

### **3.1 Research Design**

This study applied a method commonly associated with qualitative research method. First of all, this research has the characteristics of qualitative research method as stated by Alwasilah (2011); Burns (2009); Creswell (2008); and Croker (2009). They propose that qualitative research often uses multiple data collection methods, including observations, interviews, open-response questionnaires, and diaries. In addition, this research is also characterized by the nature of qualitative research which tries to describe social phenomena as they occur naturally and concerns subjective interpretation of the data into the findings.

Furthermore, this research employed practical action research that involved a small-scale research project, narrowly focused on a specific problem or issue, and was undertaken by individual teacher within a school or school district as indicated by Alwasilah (2011); Burns (2009); Creswell (2008) and Nunan (1992). The action research in this study followed the model suggested by among others Alwasilah (2011); Burns (2009); Creswell (2008, p. 604, cited from Stringer, 1999); Emilia (2008, cited from Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988); Emilia (2010, p. 109, cited from Stringer et al, 2010, p. 8); Depdiknas (2005, cited from McNiff, 1988, p. 22); Koshy (2005, p. 4, adapted from Kemmis & McTaggart: 2000, p. 595) and Stringer, Christensen, & Baldwin (2010).

There are some definitions of action research offered by different authors. Koshy (2005, p. 1-2) describes ‘action research as an enquiry, undertaken with rigour and understanding so as to constantly refine practice; the emerging evidence-based outcomes will then contribute to the researching practitioner’s continuing professional development’. Bassey (1998, p. 93, cited in Koshy, 2005, p. 8) maintains that ‘action research is an enquiry which is carried out in order to understand, to evaluate and then to change, in order to improve educational practice’. Cohen and Manion (1994, p. 192, cited in Koshy: 2005, p. 8) describe action research as

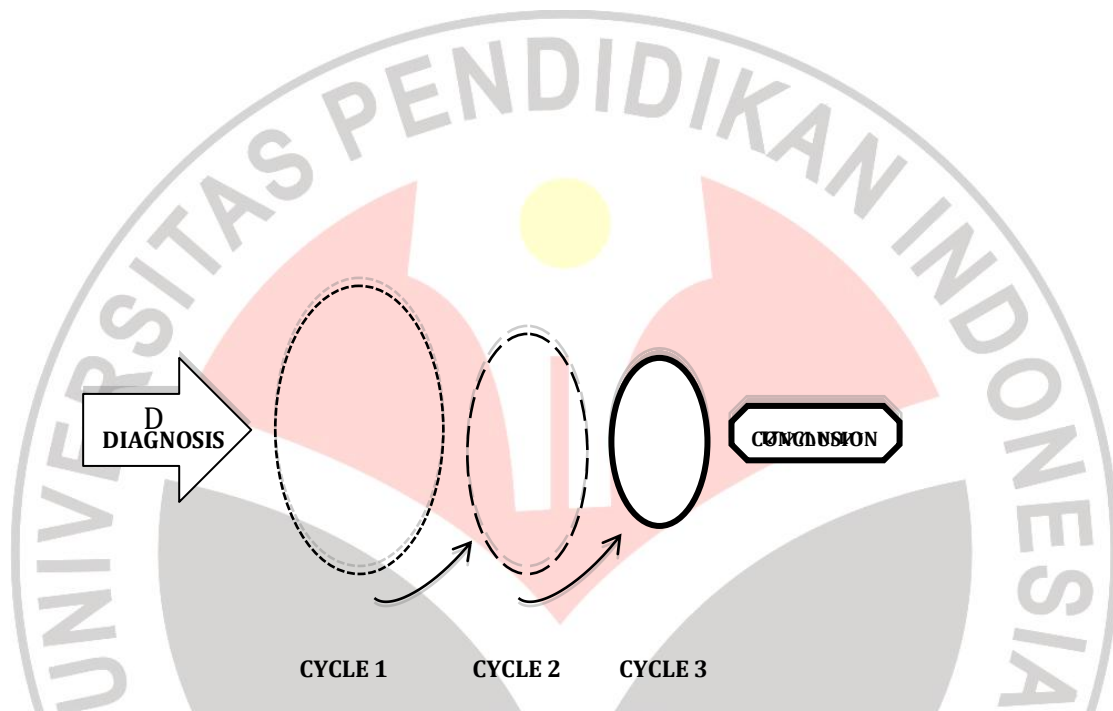
essentially an on-the-spot procedure designed to deal with a concrete problem located in an immediate situation. This means that ideally, the step-by-step process is constantly monitored over varying periods of time and by a variety of mechanisms (questionnaires, diaries, interviews and case studies, for example) so that the ensuing feedback may be translated into modifications, adjustment, directional changes, redefinitions, as necessary, so as to bring about lasting benefit to the ongoing process itself rather than to some future occasion.

Carr and Kemmis (1986, p. 162, cited in Koshy, 2005, p. 25) definition of action research reflects these sentiments:

A form of enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their own understanding of these practices and situations in which these practices are carried out.

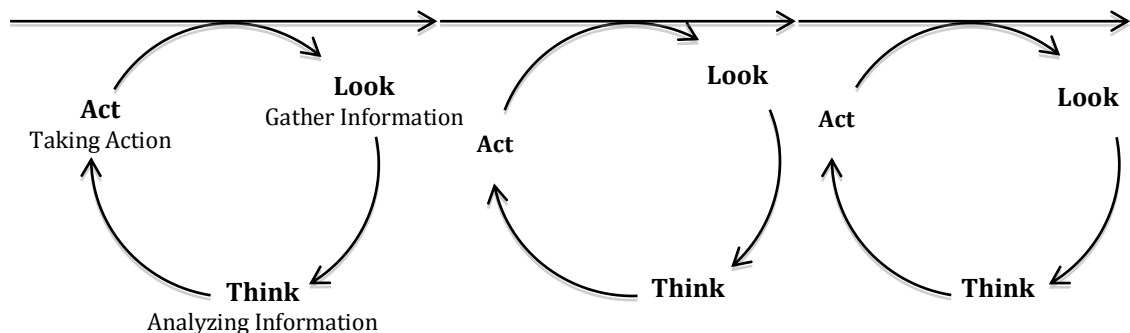
This research was action research with a teacher acted as a researcher and a class (37 students) of junior high school students in one state junior high school in Subang District, West Java. This study used Classroom Action Research focused on the classroom activities especially a written cycle under the SFL Genre Based Approach and the result of the teaching learning as reflected in students’ texts identify the values of the Genre Based Approach. Moreover, the material and topics of English for junior high school for grade 9 in this study focused on the teaching of the Report genre relevant to what is stipulated in the 2006 Curriculum or *KTSP*.

The three cycles of action research in this study was cyclical or *iterative* which means that the process going through several spirals of action and reflection that each built on the previous data the researcher had collected as suggested by Alwasilah (2011, p. 153) as shown in Figure 3.1 below.



**Figure 3.1 The ongoing model of action research**  
(adapted from Alwasilah, 2011, p. 153)

In addition, to follow Creswell (2008: 604, cited from Stringer, 1999), the action research process in this study was also called *the interacting spiral* which conveys that action research is not neat, orderly, and linear, but is a process of repeating and revising procedures and interpretations. Figure 3.2 below illustrates this.



### Figure 3.2 The Procedure of Action Research

(adapted from Emilia, 2010, p. 109, cited from Stringer et al, 2010, p. 8; Creswell, 2008, p. 604, cited from Stringer, 1999; Stringer, Christensen, & Baldwin, 2010, p. 1).

This action research used the following phases: a diagnostic phase, in which students' capacities and any problems were identified, and a therapeutic phase, in which steps were taken to address the problems (Alwasilah, 2011, p. 154; Creswell, 2008, p. 604-607, cited from Stringer, 1999; Emilia, 2010, p. 106-108; Kurt Lewin, 1946, 1952, cited in Emilia, 2010). Each cycle was composed of look, think and act.

- **Look** was the stage when classroom observations were conducted by the researcher to see to what extent the SFL Genre Based Approach had developed, whether it was successful, what aspects could be improved, whether students' learning could be enhanced, and what strategies could be used to enhance students' learning.
- **Think** was the stage when the researcher interpreted the evidence obtained from observation in greater depth and identified priorities for action.
- **Act** was the stage when the researcher took action to improve the teaching practice and students' learning. This stage also involved monitoring the effects or evaluation of strategies used.

This study also employed multiple data collection techniques and analytic procedures to increase the validity of the study, i.e. classroom observation, documentation of students' report texts and interview. In addition, this study focused on analyzing the writing performance from nine participants or students only and the results were not to be generalized as general conditions of the whole students in Subang Regency.

### **3.2 Research Site and Participants**

This study was carried out with the ninth grade students in one state junior high school in Subang where the researcher works or work-site approach (Alwasilah, 2011). This research site had been chosen for the reason that the researcher is one of the English teachers with more than ten years teaching experience within the school. This helped the researcher to get easy access to the research site.

The participants of this study were thirty seven junior high school students (both male and female) of grade nine (class IX H). The students had been chosen for two reasons. First, the students were regular classroom accessible for the researcher to get the data since they were still active as the fifth and sixth semester students in the research site as suggested by Van Lier (1988, p. 9) that “Classroom Research requires that the researcher spends most of the time during the data-gathering phase(s) of the project inside actual, regular, ongoing classrooms that have not been specially set up for the purpose of research”. Second, their score represents low, mid, and high achievers, based on their performance in previous writing lessons. This was used as the basis for selection of texts to be analyzed in detail.

### **3.3 Data Collection Techniques**

In this study, the researcher employed three data collection techniques, i.e. classroom observation, the documentation of students’ report texts and interview. The data gained from this study were categorized, analyzed and interpreted to answer the research questions.

#### **3.3.1 Observation**

The first data collection technique was observation. This observation was conducted to follow the suggestion from Alwasilah (2011, p. 98); Burns (2009, in Heigham & Croker, eds, 2009); Cowie (2009, p. 171-174, in Heigham & Croker,



2009); and Weber (1990, p. 279, in Cooper, ed, 1990). The observation in this study included handwritten brief notes and photographs. The observation was conducted in the classroom, the multi media room and in the library.

The handwritten brief notes aimed to find out more about the place, the people, students' behaviors and interactions that occur during the teaching program. This handwritten brief notes was made by the researcher by using a notebook while the class was in progress or immediately after each session while the memory of the observation was still fresh as suggested by van Lier (1988, p. 241).

The photographs aimed to find out more about the context of social interaction in the classroom as suggested by van Lier (1988, p. 81). The researcher took photographs by using a handphone as suggested by Burns (2009, in Heigham & Croker, 2009, p. 120) and Richards (2003, p. 175).

### **3.3.2 Documentation of Students' Report Text**

Documentation of students' report texts was the second data collection technique. This technique was done by choosing nine Report texts from thirty seven texts. The texts were collected at the end of the teaching program. The texts represented different levels of achievement – three texts from low achievers, three texts from mid achievers and three texts from high achievers. The students' Report texts then were analyzed based on Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL GBA) in terms of the schematic structure and linguistic features, to do with the textual, ideational and interpersonal metafunctions.

### **3.3.3 Interview**

The third data collection technique used in this study was individual semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. These open-ended questions are appropriate for small samples and for knowing the 'experience' of the respondents as

suggested by Silverman (2005) and (Kvale, 1996, p. 5). In this interview, the researcher set up the interview appointments and facilitated a quiet environment (in multimedia room) where interruptions could not occur during the interview.

The interview aimed to find out more about students' responses toward the teaching of writing using the Genre Based Approach and its application in improving students' writing ability. The interview was conducted in the last meeting after the teaching program. The interview was conducted in *bahasa Indonesia* though the interviewees could also use English in expressing their ideas. The questions were asked to the respondents based on the data gained from the text analysis of their writing results and some questions about the respondents' experiences along the way process.

The researcher used a handphone (a handheld audio-recorder) to record the students' responses in order to ease the researcher in doing the interview as suggested by Burns (2009, in Heigham & Croker, 2009, p. 120) and Richards (2003, p. 175). The responses were then transcribed. The interview lasted 3 to 5 minutes for each interviewee. Before conducting the interview, the researcher informed the interviewees about points to be discussed, the use of pseudonyms in the research report and the fact that the conversation was tape-recorded and transcribed. All these were done so that the interviewees were willing to disclose a lot of personal information during the conduct of the interview (Alwasilah, 2009).

Nine students were interviewed in this study. Three of them, Adi, Ani and Ela (categorized as high achievers) were respectively the writers of Text 5.1, Text 5.2 and Text 5.3. The three students, Ina, Nur and Anti (categorized as middle achievers) were respectively the writers of Text 5.4, Text 5.5 and Text 5.6. The three other students,

Arul, Hendra and Aji (categorized as low achievers) were respectively the writers of Text 5.7, Text 5.8 and Text 5.9.

### **3.4 Data analysis**

Data analyses in this study were conducted over the course of the teaching cycles and after the teaching cycles. Ongoing data analyses based on data from observation notes, students' texts and interviews provided valuable material for evaluation and modification of the action research.

#### **3.4.1 Observation**

The data from observation including handwritten brief notes and photographs were analyzed based on students' behaviors and context of social interaction in the classroom that occur during the teaching program.

The handwritten brief notes were analyzed as soon as possible after each session as suggested by Burns (2009, p. 124, in Heigham & Croker, 2009). The handwritten brief notes were analyzed in steps as suggested by Cowie (2009, p. 171-174, in Heigham & Croker, 2009). The first step was to divide the pages in a notebook into three columns. The left-hand column was for details about the time and place, the middle column was for the field notes themselves, the third column was for analytical memos and comments about the field-notes which were made after the observation was over. The second step was to notice particular paradoxes or contradictions that emerge. The next step was to notice analytical comments in the third column of the field notebook to find what to focus on for the next set of observation. A summary of observation field-notes can be seen in Appendix 4. The interpretation of observation will be presented in Chapter 5 Section 5.4.



### 3.4.2 Students' Report Texts

The data from students' report texts were analyzed based on Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL GBA) to follow the suggestion of the genre theorists such as Butt et. al. (2000), Christie (2000), Derewianka(2004), Eggins (2004), Emilia (2005, 2008, 2010, 2012), Feez and Joyce (1998), Gerot & Wignell (1994), Halliday (1994), Humphrey, Droga & Feez (2012), Hyland (2004), and Martin (1992). The texts were first analyzed in terms of the schematic structure, organization and purpose. Then the texts were analyzed in terms of linguistic features along with the textual, ideational and interpersonal metafunctions. The analysis was carried out during the data collection as well as after the data had completely collected. The analyses of students' texts will be described in more detail in Chapter 5.

### 3.4.3 Interview

The data collected from recorded interviews were analyzed in steps to find the key topics that emerge to follow the suggestion of Burns (2009, p. 123, in Heigham & Croker, 2009) and Kvale (1996, p. 189). The first step was to transcribe the recording. During the transcription stage students' names were replaced with pseudonyms. Due to time constraints the transcription of the interview was not sent back to the participants. Then categorization was conducted through reading and listening to the data several times to arrive at the key categories.

The interview questions that can be seen in Appendix 5 were categorized based on the central themes to answer the research questions. The first central theme was about the identification whether the GBA can improve the students' ability in writing. The second central theme was about the students' responses toward the teaching of writing using the GBA. The data were then classified in line with the central themes and sub theme and presented in a condensed body of information

(Kvale, 1996, p. 193) as described in Appendix 6. The interpretation of the interview data will be presented in Chapter 5 Section 5.3.1 and Section 5.3.2.

### **3.5 Reliability and Validity**

Triangulation was used to present fact or general statements from the obtained data to come to the conclusion (Alwasilah, 2009, 2011; Croker, 2009; Emilia, 2009; van Lier, 1988) and to strengthen trustworthiness in action research (Burns, 2009, p. 127, in Heigham & Croker, 2009). The triangulation was conducted through triangulation of data and triangulation of theories.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

This chapter has described a detailed methodology of the conduct of study, including the descriptions related to research design, research site and participants, data collection techniques and data analyses employed in the study. The next chapter will discuss the description related to the teaching cycles of this study in the classroom.

