CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter will explain two main angles of the investigation: 1) Data Collection and 2) data analysis. With regard to both issues, answers to such questions as who will be involved, where and how to obtain the data, and finally how to analyze them, will be the steps to discuss both procedures.

3. 1 Formulation of the Problems

The present research will investigate the problems that are formulated in the following questions:

a. How do Indonesians who speak English as a foreign language perform their responses to apology?

b. How do social variables influence their responses?

c. Do the strategies of apology influence their responses?

d. How do linguistic politeness theories view such patterns?

3.2. Methods of Research

This research is a qualitative research. Hoepfl (1997) stated that qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings.

In addition, she also stated that there are 8 characteristics of qualitative research:

1). Qualitative research uses the natural setting as the source of data; 2). The researcher acts as the 'human instrument' of data collection; 3). Qualitative researchers use inductive data analysis; 4). It reports descriptive, incorporating expressive language; 5). It has an interpretative character; 6). It pays attention to the idiosyncratic as well as the pervasive, seeking the uniqueness of each case; 7). It has an emergent design; 8). It is judged using special criteria for trustworthiness. (Hoepfl: 1997).

The method of this research is carried out by using descriptive method. The descriptive method is used since this research is not searching for something or making the prediction; it only describes the situation or phenomenon.

A descriptive method is a method of research that involves collecting data in order to test hypothesis or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. The descriptive study determines and reports the way things are. (Gay L.R: 1987).

In addition, Nazir (1983) says that a descriptive method is a method used in the research to describe an object, a set of condition, a system of thought and an event that takes place in the present time. Therefore, the goal of a descriptive method is to systematically, factually, and accurately describes of illustrates the facts. Furthermore, Sukardi stated some uniqueness of Descriptive methods, there are:

1). Descriptive method uses questionnaire and interview; 2). Sometimes, in collecting data, descriptive method, which uses the observation, doesn't get a great data. In that case, it's needed a qualified observer; 3). Descriptive methods also need problems that have to be identified and explained clearly. (Sukardi, 2003: 158)

In the sum, this qualitative research reports descriptively, using words rather than statistical procedures, using naturalistic approach, identifying

phenomenon in specific situations in order to answer the research questions. Furthermore, this method is conducted through several steps: collecting, classifying, computing the data, making conclusion and reporting them.

3.3 Respondents of the Study

Methods of selecting respondents are essentially determined by the types and amount of data needed. One of the objectives of this research is to investigate the patterns of responses to apology performed by Indonesians who speak English as a foreign language. Attempts are made to select respondents representing a diverse background in terms of their age, gender, and educational backgrounds.

Students of English Department of Indonesia University of Education are selected to become the population of this study. This study employs a judgment sampling method. It starts with the identification of the types of speakers to be involved and the proportion that fits the specified categories. Basically, there are reasons underlying the use of judgment sampling.

> *First*, the samples in linguistic research are in general demonstrably *not* technically representative, and to claim that they are leaves a researcher open to quite proper academic criticism. *Second*, relatively small samples (too small to be considered technically representative) appear to be sufficient for useful accounts of language variation in large cities (Milroy 1987: 27).

Since this study investigates pragmatic realizations, the respondents of this study are required to have both linguistic and communicative competence. Therefore the researcher decided to take a higher grade of the students, i.e. the students in the ninth semester who enrolled in 2000, to get involved in this investigation. The researcher consider the higher-grade students as the best

sample since they have already taken some subjects related to the study of responses of apologizing speech act. For instance, Cross Cultural Understanding, in which it was expected that the students have already had a good understanding of the culture of English language, English speaking countries, and its society.

As this study is included into linguistic research which has more homogeneous behavior compared to other types of survey (Sankoff 1980 in Milroy, 1987: 21), 20 respondents are considered appropriate (for the distribution of each respondents, see figure 1) to reveal the realizations of responses to apology. Furthermore, Sankoff in Milroy (1987: 21) pointed out

> "... even for quite complex speech communities, samples of more than about 150 individuals tend to be redundant, bringing increasing data handling problems with diminishing analytical returns ..." (1980:51-52).

By 20 respondents, the data analysis would be simpler, more focus, and more convenient (Patton 1990). In addition, Arikunto (1997) states that if the subject is bigger than 100, it can take 10-15 % from the population.
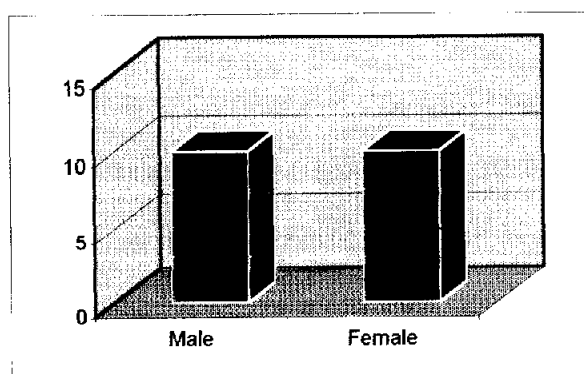

Figure 1. Number of respondents involved in the study according to

respondents' gender

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

3.4.1. The preparation

After the researcher set up the characteristics of the respondents, the questionnaires were then distributed. First of all, the researcher created a matrix, (see Table 1) as a guideline used in the creation of relevant situations in the questionnaires. The matrix showed the information about the situation, the speaker, the hearer, the hearer's gender, the setting, the hearer's age, the power, the social distance, the seriousness of mistake, and the initiations (strategies of apology). In order to measure the validity of questionnaire, previously the researcher held the try-out of questionnaire on 2nd of August 2004. The questionnaires were distributed to 50% of the real respondents (10 students) of the fourth year students in English Department. The researcher decided to hold the try-out of DCT to the fourth year students, because the researcher considered that they had already taken some subjects related to this study, such as semantic, and now they were studying Sociolionguistics and Cross Cultural Understanding. For further information about the distribution of try-out DCT, see at appendix 1. Another instrument used is an interview. This instrument can complete the collected data in order to check their accuracy.

Table 1 A description of situation along with the speakers & hearer, hearer's gender, age, setting, power, social distance, the seriousness of mistake, and the initiations (strategy of apology).

Situations	Apology comes from...... (Hearer)	Expected response to apology from...... (Speaker)	Hearer's gender	hearer's age	Setting	The Power	Social Distance	Seriousness of mistake	Initiations (Strategy of apology)
#1 Forget to put a novel	A younger Friend	A friend	Male	Younger	Informal	Low	Close	Light	IFID
#2 forget a promise	A friend	A younger friend	Male	Older	Informal	High	Close	Medium	Taking on Responsibility
#3 lose certain amount of money	A treasurer of student association	A head of student association	Female	Equal	Formal	Equal	Close	Heavy	Offer of repair
#4 insult someone in meeting	A member of student association	A member of student association	Male	Younger	Formal	Low	Casual	Heavy	Taking on Responsibility
#5 Drop a book	A senior student	A student	Female	Older	Formal	High	Casual	Light	Offer of repair
#6 Forget to bring a book	A friend	A friend	Female	Equal	Informal	Equal	Casual	Medium	IFID
#7 Take someone seat	A younger student	A student	Female	Younger	Informal	low	Distant	Medium	Offer of repair
#8 Lose a book	A senior student	A student	Male	Older	Informal	High	Distant	Heavy	IFID
#9 Step on someone's toe	A participant of seminar	A participant of seminar	Male	Equal	Formal	Equal	Distant	Light	Taking on responsibility

3.4.2. Questionnaire survey

Having completed the matrix, the researcher constructed the questionnaires. The type of questionnaire used in this study was Discourse Completion test (DCT). DCT was firstly adopted by Blum-Kulka in 1982. The test consists of incomplete discourse sequences that represent socially differentiated situations. Each discourse sequence presents a short description of the situation, specification of the setting, the social distance between interlocutors and their status relative to each other. Then an incomplete dialogue will follow it. Respondents are asked to complete the dialogue. The following item is an example of DCT to elicit an apology.

At the college teacher's office

A student has borrowed a book from her teacher, which she promised to return today. When meeting her teacher, however, she realizes that she forgot to bring it along.

Teacher   : Miriam, I hope you brought the book I lent you.
Miriam   : _____
Teacher   : OK, but please remember it next week.

                                                    (Blum Kulka *et al*, 1989: 14)

The DCT used for this study consists of nine situations. The respondents were asked to read the short descriptions of each situation in the questionnaire and write the response in the space provided as much or as little as they like. (See Appendix 2 for the complete version of the DCT).

Situation # 1: You lent a novel to your close friend (younger and male). When you asked for it, he said that he forgot where he put that novel, and he said "please forgive me."

You   : _____

_____

The use of DCT in collecting data has several advantages. However, the most obvious one according to Aziz (2000: 49) as cited in Novianti (2002: 27) lies in the factor of time and effort efficiency by which a very large corpus can be gathered. This means that we can obtain as many respondents as possible from various level of subject. However, the DCT also has some disadvantages. The readiness of the respondents can be a barrier in using of DCT. In DCT, the respondents are faced with different situations and roles they have to play, which they might not have any experiences in such situations in their daily life. Another problem is how much we can trust subjects to write down what they actually say in such situation. Here, the speaker and hearer in the DCT are hypothetically speakers of English.

Beebe and Cummings (1985 in Aziz 2000: 51) summarized the advantages and disadvantages of DCT as can be seen in Table 2.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Discourse Completion Test	
DCT is a highly effective tool of	DCT responses do not adequately represent
1. Gathering a large amount of data quickly.	1. The actual wording used in real interaction.

2. Creating an initial classification of semantic formulas that will occur in natural speech.	2. The range of formulas and strategies use (some, like avoidance, tend to be left out).
3. Studying the stereotypical, perceived requirements for a socially appropriate (though not always polite) response.	3. The length of response or the number of turns it takes to fulfil the function.
4. Gaining insight into social and psychological factors that are likely to affect speech and performance.	4. The depth of emotion that in turn qualitatively affects the tone, content, and form of linguistic performance.
5. Ascertaining the canonical shape of refusals, apologies, parting, etc., in the minds of the speakers of that language.	5. The number of repetitions and elaborations that occurs.
	6. The actual rate of occurrence of a speech act — e.g., whether or not someone would naturalistically refuse at all in a given situation.

Table 2   Advantages and disadvantages of DCT

(Beebe and Cummings 1985 in Aziz 2000; Adapted)

The researcher constructs the DCT based on the matrix, which consists of the contextual variables and the initiations, which are used by the speaker.

3.4.2.1. *The contextual variables*

Each situation in the Discourse Completion test (DCT) describes the role relationship between participants, the setting, the social variables, and seriousness

of mistake. The respondents may take into account these variables before giving the responses to apology. Further, the detail of each variable is presented below (adapted from Novianti, 2002: 29-31).

1. *Setting.* The term setting is defined here to refer to the actual physical, time, place, environment, and surrounding circumstances of an event where a transaction takes place. Here, I used the formal and informal setting in order to obtain various patterns chosen by respondents. Informal setting generally refers to the activities conducted in private domains such as at home and neighborhood. On the other hand, the last refers to the activities conducted mainly in formal situation such as in the college or in the seminar, or even in the meeting.

2. *Relative power.* It refers to the degree of power, which a speaker can enforce the hearer to make a response to apology. In this present study, three categories are used which are determined by the characteristics of the speaker. They are:

   a. low power, when the speaker is speaking to a more powerful person in terms of personal and social variables, e.g. the younger student apologized to her/his senior student;

   b. Equal power, when the speaker and the hearer share equal power and regard each other as equally important, e.g. a friend apologized to his/her friend;

   c. High power, when the speaker can control the behaviour of the hearer, e.g. a lecturer apologized to his/her student.

3. *Social Distance.* It refers to the relationship between the speaker and the hearer. They might be had close, casual, or even distant distance. The close distance is used as a term to refer to any circumstances in which participants have kin relationship or have long established close relationship. Casual distance has a meaning that the relationship does not fall into either distant or close. Meanwhile the distant means if the relationship between the speaker and hearer does not close, i.e. the strangers.

4. *The seriousness of mistake.* It defined as the degree of violation of social norm, which inconveniences another person. In the present study, three categories are used, they are:

   a. Light, if:

      - It violates the norm of polite behaviour but does not offend the other's prestige,

      - The interlocutors can still tolerate it,

      - It is usually unintentionally made, and

      - There is no obligation to apologize.

   b. Medium, if:

      - It disregards the other's interests,

      - It violates moral value,

      - The doer needs to restore the social harmony, and

      - There is a need to apologize.

c. Heavy, if:

- It disturbs the other's tranquility and secure feeling,

- It can lose the other's trust,

- The doer needs to restore the interlocutor's social status,

- It greatly and negatively ruins the relationship between the interlocutors,

- It violates law or social norms, and

- The doer is socially/normatively obliged to apologize and take responsibility.

3.4.2.2. *Initiations*

There are five strategies of apology that have been successfully revealed by Olshtain and Cohen (1983) in Blum-Kulka *et al* (1989: 20). They are as follows:

1. an IFID (be sorry, apologize, regret, excuse);

2. an explanation or/account of the cause which brought about the violation;

3. an expression of the speaker's responsibility for the offence;

4. an offer of repair; and

5. a promise of forbearance.

However, to limit the nature and variety of the responses to apology, only three strategies - the most preferred ones, are chosen as the strategies of apology and they are presented in the Discourse Completion Test (DCT).

3.4.3. The Interview.

Interview was a complementary instrument of collecting data. It was carried out primarily to some respondents in order to clarify responses given by them in the written DCT. The answers from the interviewees can be used as a justification of their responses provided in the DCT. Besides, it was also used to investigate the reasons underlying a given response.

In the present study, the interview was conducted in respondent's first language, Indonesian, to make them more comfortable in expressing their ideas or opinion towards the questions of interview. It was held after the DCT was collected due to the time availability of the respondents and it was recorded.

The conduct of interview, in essence, gave benefit to this study. The respondents' background motivation of their varied responses can be fully understood.

3.5. Data Analysis

Each response of the situations in the DCT was identified then classified. The frameworks employed in the analysis were adapted from Blum-Kulka (1989) and Searle (1969). The classification of responses was based on the types of *head-act* and the *supportive moves*. A *head act* is "the part of the sequence which might serve to realize the act independently of other elements" (Blum-Kulka 1989: 17). The other elements, which can occur either before or after a head act, are called *supportive moves*. Utterances [3a] and [3b] exemplify the *head act* and *supportive moves*.

[3a] Leave me alone!
   Head-act (mood derivable strategy)
[3b]. *Can you find it again! Because I really need it*
   supportive moves   Head-act (mood deriv.)

Through the identification of *head-act*, the examples [3a] and [3b] are the best category of a request—the speaker wants the hearer to do something for him/her. The speaker uses mood derivable strategy in which he/she employs an imperative form to show his/her mood. The *supportive moves* are intended to aggravate the request. However, if the responses to the utterance in DCT did not contain any *head-act*, the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs) proposed by Searle (1969) was used. Utterances [3c] and [3d] exemplify the Illocutionarry Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs).

[3c]. that's fine...
[3d]. It's ok...

The utterances in examples [3c] and [3d] cannot be readily interpreted through the locution. The illocutionary force, therefore, is the only apparatus left to be used. Hence, both are categorized into an acceptance—the speaker agreed to the alternative offered by the hearer. Instead of directly saying 'Yes' or 'All right', the speaker straightly stated the agreement in another way.

3.6 Concluding Remarks

The steps and procedures of data collection have been discussed specifically in this chapter. This present study involved 20 respondents from the Department of

English Indonesia University of Education. They were enrolled in the ninth semester students under the assumption that they have already had 'sufficient' linguistic and communicative competence. The selection of respondents was based on judgment sampling method.

In designing the investigative instruments, the initiations for the issue of the responses to apology were firstly determined. Five strategies of apology revealed by Olshtain and Cohen (1983) in Blum-Kulka (1989: 20) were regarded as the initiations. Moreover, matrix was also crated, as the guideline for the development of each situation in the DCT. The data was collected by a Discourse Completion Test and supported by interview with selected respondents.