



## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses some important aspects related to research methodology. This chapter consists of research design, research site, participants, data collection technique, and data analysis technique.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

This research describes the reading difficulties faced where many students of SMP Negeri 6 Pekanbaru Riau in comprehending reading texts. This research describes the phenomenon that occurs in the school which is most students are not able to comprehend reading texts well.

To find the answers to the research question, it is necessary to apply a suitable method. In this study, the researcher used a descriptive method to understand the process by which events and actions take place (Maxwell, 1996:19). In addition, Merriam (1998:16) states that a qualitative case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit.

There were nine student respondents and two English teacher respondents involved in this study, thus a descriptive method compared and contrasted the findings from these respondents to find differences and similarities. Merriam (1998) calls it as a multicase study that elaborates the similar importance of the respondents.

The reasons of choosing student respondents and teacher respondents can be seen in the sub-chapter of reasons for choosing participants.

### **3.3 Research Site**

The study was conducted in Academic Year 2007/2008 at SMP Negeri 6 Pekanbaru Riau. There were two main reasons why this school was chosen. First, the school is popular among students and parents. Second, the researcher has been teaching at this school for quite long time so it is easy for him to observe as well as to interview both teachers and students. This research was done from September 17 to November 30, 2007.

### **3.4 Participants**

This research used a qualitative approach in order to understand comprehensively about students difficulties in comprehending reading materials used in their class of SMP Negeri 6 Pekanbaru Riau. The participants were selected purposively (Alwasilah, 2003: 145), that is, the strategy in which particular settings, persons, or events, are selected deliberately in order to provide important information that cannot be obtained from other strategies. There were nine student respondents and two English teacher respondents involved in this study.

### **3.5 Reasons for Choosing Participants**

There were two main reasons to choose students and teachers as respondents. First, the nine student respondents were selected purposively of this study to get in depth information related to problems in comprehending reading texts. These nine students are considered some of the students who have problems in reading lesson in this school. Second, the two teacher respondents were chosen to validate the data obtained from the nine students' responds. These two teachers are the teachers who teach the student participants, so they could give some information about the difficulties faced by the students.

Besides that, Maxwell (1996) mentions that there are also several reasons for choosing students respondents, as follows: (1) they are accessible; and (2) they are low, medium, and high level based on the grades they got. The nine students were selected based on their English scores (three students whose score is 8 or 9, three whose score is 7 and the rest is whose score is 6). The two English teachers—one English teacher teaches in class 8.5 where the researcher conducted class observations and one teaches in class 8.1—were also chosen as purposive sample to get and to validate data.

### **3.6 Data Collection Techniques**

Before collecting the data, the researcher conducted a preliminary research to get the information regarding the nature of: 1) teaching activities in the classroom,

especially on the teaching reading; and 2) the student's responses to the teaching of reading.

Afterwards, the researcher went to the field to collect the data by using data collection techniques, such as interviews and observations. This is in line with Creswell's statement (1994: 148) that in a qualitative research, one step of collecting data is collecting information through interviews, and observations. Two instruments mentioned above will be briefly explained, as follows.

### **3.6.1 Classroom Observations**

Class observation is the main technique used by the researcher in this study. The observation was conducted at SMP Negeri 6 Pekanbaru for four meetings from September 17 to November 30, 2007. This was focused on what teachers and students did in the teaching and learning process in the classroom, focusing on the problems students faced in comprehending the reading materials.

The researcher conducted the class observation in class 8.5. During the observation, the researcher sat in the classroom to observe, and to watch the teaching learning activities. The researcher used some supporting instruments to analyze the data easily, such as a set of observation sheet to record how the teaching is conducted by the teacher and how the teaching is responded by the students (Alwasilah, 2003:229) and digital camera, which were used to take photos for research documentations.

Besides, the researcher also used a tape recorder to help him gain more accurate data. It recorded all activities, more specifically, during the teaching and learning process. The researcher observed the activities in the classroom to see directly the teaching and learning process by using a digital camera to take some photos, tape recorder to record, and the researcher wrote some field notes. Through the tape recorder, the researcher could record the conversation between the teacher and students. Besides, the researcher made notes or memos on what the researcher saw, heard, and read in his data and developed ideas about categories and relationship. It relates to Maxwell (1996:78) suggestion that "We should regularly write memos while we are doing data analysis; memos not only capture our analytic thinking about our data, they facilitate such thinking, stimulating analytic insights". Meanwhile Glesne and Peshkin (1992:128) state that by writing memos to ourselves all keeping a reflective field log, we develop our thoughts; by getting our thoughts down as they occur, no matter how preliminary or in what form, we begin the analysis process.

Since this was a qualitative study, the researcher needed very detailed information occurs in the class. Tape recorder served two different purposes in this study: namely ensuring the descriptive validity of his observations, and stimulating recall and reflection as a component of the interviews with teachers and students. This is in line with what Maxwell (1996) mentions that observation enables us to draw inferences about someone's meaning and perspective that we could not obtain by relying exclusively on interview data.

### **3.6.2 Student Interviews**

Students Interviews were used to support the data obtained from classroom observations to answer the research question. According to Moleong (1993) the function of interview that commonly helps a researcher to attain information that construct people, event, activities, organization, feeling, and motivation.

The researcher interviewed nine students. The student interviews began with an open-ended question and the subsequent questions were conversational in an attempt to get the interviewee to discuss further details he/she mentioned in an answer. In interviewing the students, the researcher used Indonesian to avoid students' misunderstanding in answering the questions and expressing their feelings. Besides, the researcher also wanted to get accurate data from the students. The interviews were carried out after the class. The researcher called the nine students who had incorrect answers, and then they were interviewed about why he/she answered the questions incorrectly. All interviews were recorded to ensure the completeness and then transcribed into the written form for analysis.

Initially, the interview to students was conducted once. However, the data needed were insufficient, that's why the second interview to students was done to find out the problems faced by them in comprehending reading materials used in their class.

The first and the second interviews were tape recorded. All the nine interviewees were interviewed at a place and time that convenient for each

respondent. Some interviews were conducted in library, and others in laboratory and teachers' office (see appendix 2).

### **3.6.3 Teacher Interviews**

The teacher interviews were also used to support the data obtained from class observations. Teacher interviews were also conducted twice (see appendix 3), to gather information relevant to answer the research question, namely to identify the students' difficulties in comprehending the reading materials used in their class. It was also used to get more detail information and to cross-check information found in student interviews and class observations. The researcher provided lists of questions before the interview sessions began. The interviews were carried out after the class. Therefore, the researcher had to make an appointment to the teacher respondents to conduct the interviews in their office.

In interviewing the teachers, the researcher interviewed two English teachers. One teaches in class 8.5 where the researcher conducted the class observations and the other teaches in class 8.1 (no class observation). The interviews occurred after the activity of teaching and learning process. The interviews were also used in both English and Indonesian and it recorded by a tape recorder. Before asking several questions, the researcher informed that the questions generally were about the issues of giving evidence that the students' difficulties in comprehending the reading materials used in their class. Furthermore, the teacher interviews were used to obtain information about their experiences, opinions, goal expectations, and



knowledge about reading comprehension difficulties. In interviewing teachers, the researcher interviewed the teachers in the teachers' office.

### **3.7 Data Analysis Technique**

All the data gathered were analyzed qualitatively. Some descriptive quantification in the form of percentage was also used in this study in analyzing the data analytically. In this study, the researcher applied inductive analytical approach where the researcher presented facts or general statements from the obtained data to come to the conclusion. The data analysis was done soon after class observations and interviews, the sooner the better (Alwasilah 2003:158). Therefore, the researcher began to analyze the data as soon as the data were gotten. Therefore, the researcher used some techniques for analyzing data, as follows.

First, all the recorded data by the tape recorder during observation were then transcribed. After getting information through observations, the researcher interviewed the respondents including teachers and students to cross-check their consistency in answering the questions. All the interview data were also listened to repeatedly to be transcribed.

Second, the researcher read field notes and the transcribed data consisting of observation and interview transcripts. During the reading of interviews and observations transcripts, the researcher coded the data that were obtained from observations and interviews by using the simple marks: "obs" instead of Observation, "Int" for Interview, SR# stands for Student Respondent, and TR# for

Teacher Respondent. Related to coding, Maxwell (1996: 78) suggests that the goal of coding is to code the data and to rearrange them into categories that help the comparison of data within and between these categories.

Third, the researcher categorized the data from interviews based on the problems faced by respondents when they were comprehending the reading materials. The categorization of the problems experienced by the respondents which is divided into some sub categories (see Table 3.1). Fourth, the researcher sorted the unnecessary data after coding and categorizing them. The result, in the following categorization.

**Table 3.1 Data Categorization**

<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Sub Categories</b>
What problems do the students face in comprehending reading materials used in their class?	1. Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meaning</li> <li>• Synonym</li> <li>• Reference</li> </ul>
	2. Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tense</li> </ul>
	3. Main Idea	3. Determining the Main Idea

### **3.8 Validity and Reliability**

#### **3.8.1 Validity**

According to Merriam (1988:166), “validity deals with the question of how one’s findings match reality. Do the findings capture what is really there? Are

investigators observing or measuring what they think they are measuring?” Merriam (1988:166) adds that there are some strategies to ensure the validity of the investigation, such as, triangulation, member checks, observation, provision of a rich thick description.

To ensure the validity of this study, the researcher used multiple methods of gathering data and multiple sources of data to confirm the emerging findings (Merriam, 1988: 168). The methods of collecting data applied were observations and interviews. Those instruments were member checked by asking the respondents to check whether all the data transcribed and interpreted were in line with what they had said. This is in line with what Merriam (1988:169) states that member checking is taking data and interpretation back to the people from whom data were derived and asked students if the results were plausible.

### **3.8.2 Reliability**

According to Merriam (1988: 70), reliability refers to the extent to which one’s findings can be replicated. In other words, if the study is repeated will it yield the same results?

Essentially, researchers should present their methods in such detail “that other researchers can use the original report as an operating manual by which to replicate the study” (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984 cited in Merriem, 1988:174). Furthermore, to ensure the reliability the researcher tried to describe in detail what the methods are, how the data are collected, how categories are derived, and how decisions are made

in a thick description of this study. The whole methodology is summarized in the following framework:

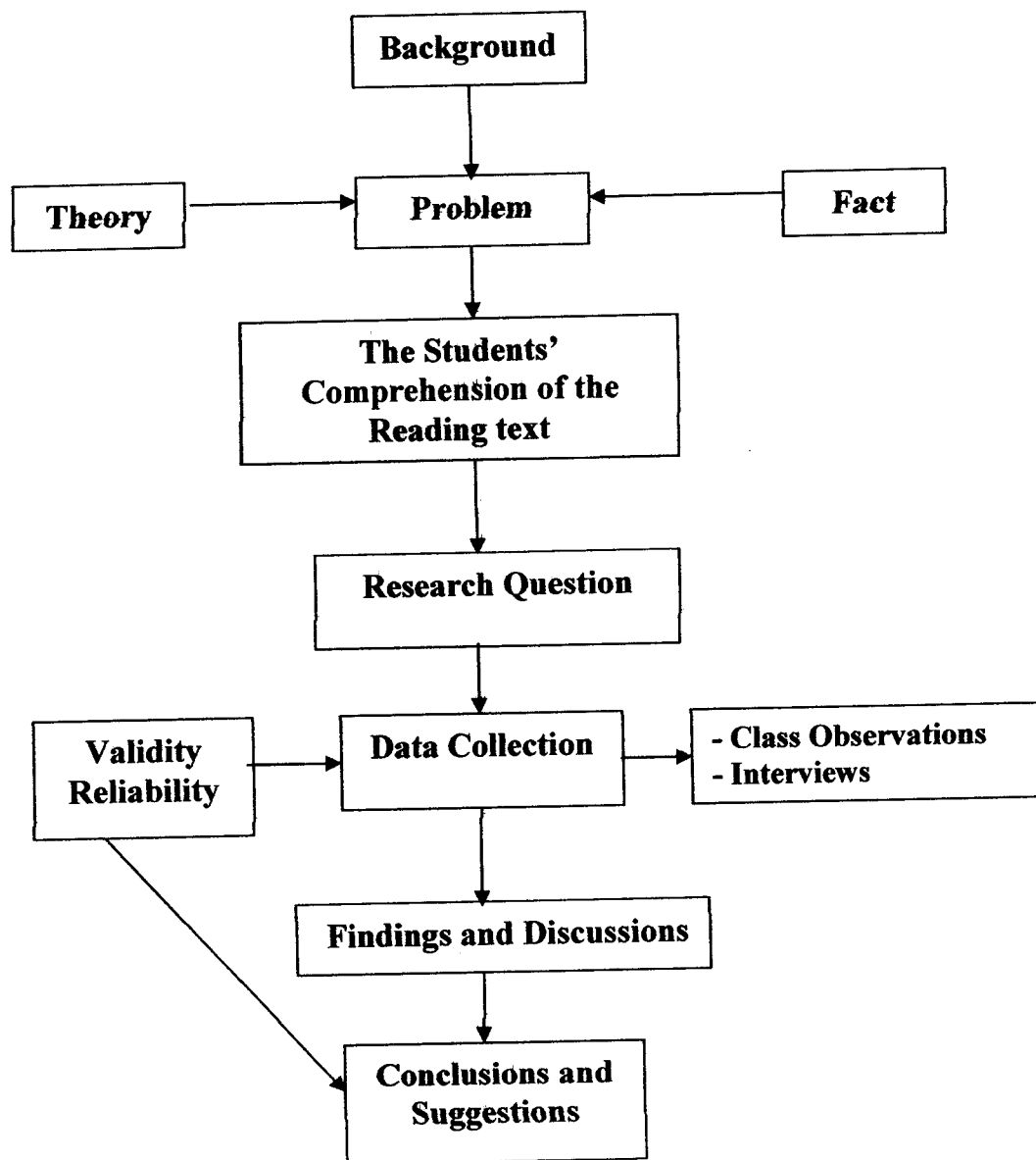


Figure 3.2 Research Design

### **3.9 Concluding Remarks**

This chapter has discussed the methodology of the research which used of a qualitative design case study as its method and approach. The data were collected through classroom observations and interviews, and then they were analyzed. The validity of the research was maintained by means of member checks procedure. The analysis of the findings will be discussed in the next chapter.