

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses overview of the methodological aspects of the study. The overview begins with the discussion of research site and participants of the study, followed by the procedures of the qualitative method which becomes the research design of the study. The present study obtains research data from interviews, document analysis, classroom observation, and questionnaires. In this study, interviews serve as the main source of data. The data obtained from those data collection techniques are further analyzed to get the findings of the study.

3.2 Research Site and Participants

The research was conducted in the Language Centre of STIA LAN Bandung (State School of Administration Sciences) where the researcher is one of teachers. STIA LAN offers an English enrichment program at the first semester with the aim at providing basic communication of English. Therefore, by the end of the program, it is hoped the students will be able to communicate in simple English with friends and lecturers at campus as well as with their colleagues at work or when they serve the foreign society considering that the students are government employees and come from different state agencies throughout Indonesia.

The class meets six sessions with two teaching hours for each session. There are eight classes taught by eight teachers. In each class, there are around 20 students at the most with the average age is around 25 years of age. The students are given a coursebook “New Headway” for pre-intermediate students as the primary workbook the students do in the classroom.

There are 8 (eight) English teachers (referred to here as T) involved in this study (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8). There were no specific criteria in the selection of these teachers, but only those who were teaching on the enrolled term became the subject of the study. There were five male teachers and three female teachers whose average age is 27 years of age. They had an undergraduate degree of English language and pedagogy, and have had one or two years of teaching experiences.

3.3 Research Design

The study employed a qualitative approach since it is relevant to the purpose and research questions of the study that are how teachers use the materials and how the students respond to it. In line with this, Woods (1999; 2) characterizes the qualitative study with “life as it is lived, things as they happen, situations as they are constructed in the day-to-day, moment-to-moment course of events.” This research particularly seeks lived experiences in real situations and is interested in how materials are used by the teacher. With an emphasis on process, therefore, this research analyzes the process the teachers use the materials from the preparation stage to the implementation stage.

Accordingly, a case study was used as the method of the study. Wallace (2000; 47) defines a case study as the systematic investigation of an individual ‘case’, whether that refers to one teacher, one learner, one group, one class, or whatever. In this research, a group of teachers was investigated for their use of materials. In addition, a case study is also relevant to the research since the researcher gathers evidence from multiple sources (McKay, 2008; 17). In this study, as will be discussed later, the data for this research were taken from multiple data collection techniques, namely: interviews, document analysis, classroom observation, and questionnaires. Each data collection will be presented below.

3.4 Data Collection

As mentioned earlier, three data collection techniques were used in this study; interviews, document analysis, classroom observation, and questionnaires. Furthermore, these multiple methods of data collection were taken into account to triangulate the data. With this triangulation, it verified the validity of the information being collected (Blaxter et al., 2006; 86), and therefore the subjectivity of the study can be avoided because according to Blaxter et al., the findings from one type of data collection can be checked against the findings deriving from the other types (2006; 85).

In the following section, each of the data collection will be elaborated further.

3.4.1 Document Analysis

In this study, document analysis tries to depict the evidence of what the teachers do during the preparation process in a written form. This type of data collection technique, according to Merriam (1988), is considered as “objective sources of data compared to other forms”. The document data is also used to triangulate the interview data.

The document data investigated in this study were taken from the materials provided in the textbook unit and lesson plan. For the purpose of the study, only one unit is used. The consideration is that the study only limits for one unit teaching process of how teachers use the material. On the other hand, the lesson plan here is not necessarily a detail document but a written indication that the teacher has thought in advance about the ‘why’, ‘what’, and ‘how’ of the lesson (Gabrielatos, 2004). In this study, the teachers were obliged to submit their lesson plans (see an example of lesson plan in Appendix B) to see the outline of what he/she was going to do in the classroom. From the lesson plan, we will know which materials are used, whether adaptation to materials takes place, what delivery

strategies are used, and whether the activities are organized based on certain lesson structure.

3.4.2 Classroom Observation

Classroom observation was conducted to find how the teachers use the materials in the implementation process. Observations, according to Merriam (1988), were useful in such a way that they showed things that had become routines to the participants themselves, things which may lead to understanding the context. The use of audio or video recording of lessons also provides a more reliable record of what actually happened in the classroom (Richards, 1990). During observations, the researcher was an observer and did not take part in any classroom activity.

The whole processes of classroom activities were recorded through the use of video recorder. As Merriam (1988) suggests that recording make the data analysis easier. The video also helps the researcher give the description of the material implementation which later will be cross checked to the interview result. The study seeks for what activities are conducted in the classroom. The list of activities as a result of classroom observation data can be seen in Appendix D. Due to the limitation of the time, the observations were conducted to the first four teachers (T1, T2, T3, T4).

3.4.3 Interviews

In this study, the main sources of data were the interviews that I undertook with the eight teachers as the respondents of the study. Merriam (1998) defines interview as “the person-to-person encounter in which one person gains information from another.” In this case, interviewing teachers were carried out to get in-depth information (Alwasilah, 2002) of their knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and practices (Baker and Johnson in multilingual-

matters.net/le/012/0229/le0120229.pdf), for this particular study, of how teachers use the materials.

Therefore, in order to answer the research question, a list of questions (see the Appendix E) was formulated in a semi-structured interview. In this type of interview, the interviewer has more freedom to deviate from the set questions (Sproston, 2005) with the expectation that teachers would account for their answers and that the researcher might have queried those accounts further (Nicholson, 2002 in <http://www.aare.edu.au/02pap/nic02194.htm>). This study thus employs semi-structured interviews to generate teachers' talk about their use of materials in an attempt to make visible their understandings of the use of materials that they do.

The questions of the interview were generated from four categories – (1) general questions; (2) material preparation; (3) material implementation; (4) reflection (see the detail questions in Appendix E). First, general questions ask about the general description of the materials the teacher used including the objective of the lesson (Q1), the characteristics of the materials (Q2), and the evaluation of the textbook unit (Q3). Second, the material preparation seeks for sources of materials (Q4), classroom activities (Q5, Q6), and material modification ((Q7, Q8, Q9, Q10). Third, material implementation will seek for classroom activities (Q11, Q12, Q13), and difficulty in delivering the materials (Q14). The last, the section tries to reflect on the teacher's material use.

The interview was taken place shortly after the class finished. Then, the teacher was interviewed around 30 minutes. The interview was recorded using the tape-recorder, and then transcribed. To reveal the findings, the interview data will be supported by other data collection techniques.

3.4.4 Questionnaires

In this study, questionnaires were used to give the information about the use of the materials in the written response. Questionnaires, according to Alwasilah (2002; 151), were argued to know the respondents' opinion, attitude, and perception. Alwasilah further contends that questionnaires could be used to judge factual information. In similar veins, Richards (2001; 60) says that questionnaires can also be used to elicit information about many different kinds of issues.

Richards (2001; 60) contends that questionnaires have a set structure (in which the respondents choose from a limited number of responses) or unstructured (in which open-ended questions are given that the respondent can answer as he or she chooses. For this study, the study tries to combine both types. Further, in this study, the questionnaires serve as additional data collection to the interview since this questionnaire was given to the students to reveal their responses about the materials and the teacher who uses the materials.

The questionnaires in this study (see Appendix A) have two issues to reveal; first, what they think of learning materials and what responses were made to how teacher uses the materials. The questionnaire used in the study is modified from WIP (2008). Learning materials are further jotted down into three questions about the material suitability to the students' needs (Q1), the degree of material difficulty (Q2), and materials' drive to interaction (Q6). Similar to learning materials, teacher's use of materials is also broken down into three questions – teacher's techniques in delivering materials (3), organizing skills in delivering materials (Q4), and teacher's knowledge of the materials (Q5).

3.5 Data Analysis

As has been mentioned, the data analysis used the qualitative method by employing a case study. The analysis of data will be sorted, coded, and formatted into a story or a picture as what Cresswell (1994; 153) suggested. Therefore the data taken from document analysis, classroom observation, interview, and questionnaires will be further coded and categorized to answer the research questions. The data analysis will be organized based on each data collection technique.

Regarding the data analysis, the study refers to the data analysis given by Miles and Huberman (1984). Here, the data analysis consists of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusions: drawing/verifying (Miles and Huberman, 1984; 21). From the existing raw data, the data are reduced and selected based on what the research requires. The results of the data reduction are then presented in the data display from which the data will be verified and drawn for the conclusion.

The data taken from the document analysis is based on the textbook unit and the lesson plan the teacher handed in before the class begins. There are several steps to analyze the document data. For the analysis of the textbook unit, the analysis will describe the basic competence of the unit and the material description for each unit. In other words, facts and feature of textbook units will be described. While for the analysis of the lesson plan, first, the analysis will seek for the organization of activities based on the teaching stages. The result of the activities will be provided in the table. Second, the analysis also seeks for which materials will be used. In this case, the data will be about the information of materials sources used in the study. Third, the analysis is conducted to reveal what teaching techniques will be employed.

The analysis for the classroom observation can be done through the use of video recording of the classroom processes. The result of the video recording can yield the

classroom activities conducted in the classroom. The data of the observation will be a list of procedures in conducting classroom activities. The procedures aim at giving general description of the teachers' activities with the materials.

The main source of data collection is the interview to the teachers. The rest of data collection techniques serve as an additional data to the interview. The interview draws teacher's process in using the materials from the preparation to the implementation. The interview itself covers four categories – (1) general questions; (2) material preparation; (3) material implementation; (4) and reflection.

The analysis of the interview is conducted through several steps. First, the participant's voice is recorded. Then, the result of recording is transcribed. The transcript of the interview will be organized based on four categories mentioned above. The findings will then be supported by the relevant theories and findings from the previous research.

Previously, three data collection techniques were taken from the teacher. However, the study also seeks the responses of the students who were also involved in the subject of the teaching and learning process. Therefore, in order to do so, the students were given the questionnaires consisting of two categories – learning materials and teacher's competence in using the materials. Each category has three questions in the form of multiple choices. In addition, to each question, the students were given a space if they still have further responses to write which are not catered in the multiple choices.

The analysis of the questionnaires can be done through tallying for the frequency of the answers for each category. Then, the tallying result will be converted into percentage (in number). The findings of the percentage for each category will be elaborated for further analysis.