

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains some important aspects supporting the research methodology. The detail methodology of the study described consists of: Research Questions; Location, Participants and Respondents; Methods including Research Design, Data Collection and Data Analysis.

3.2 Research Questions

The research problems were limited to the teaching strategies, materials and the activities applied by the lecturer in order to improve the students' quality and critical thinking skill either in their own field or their social environment. The research focuses primarily on:

1. How is the teaching-learning process of academic essay conducted in one of Business and Management Schools?
2. What aspects of academic essay does the lecturer assess in order to get to know the students' achievement?

3.3 Site and Participants.

The study was carried out at one of Schools of Business and Management in Bandung, particularly with the first year students who involved in the writing-reading class as participants. The reason why the location has been chosen is that

this School of Business and Management mostly uses English in teaching-learning program and academic writing is given as a single subject of the course program. To improve the students' quality and their capability in using English language, this school has broadened its syllabus by making ELT more relevant to the needs and interests of its students. In order to cover this issue, ELT in this school has been classified into *writing - presentation* and *writing -reading* classes.

The reason why writing is given mostly because in the first two (2) years, the students should report a final project and it must be written in English. Furthermore, in teaching-learning process all instructions are delivered in English except for Indonesian subject.

Unlike the other writing classes which have normally *two-credit* hour courses meaning that each period of teaching program has 16 class meetings with two hours class meeting including one mid test and one final test, this college has ***3 hours per class meeting for two-credit*** semester system.

Each class has an average of 30 - 40 students. The class classification is based on the result of the *EPT* (English Proficiency Test) scores given when they enter the college and *TOEIC* given when they are accepted at this school. The EPT scores are used by colleges and universities in North America and elsewhere to measure English proficiency for would-be students (Harmer, 2001:334). The students with score more than *650 of TOEIC* score are involved in writing-presentation class, the students with the score less than 650 are in writing-reading class.

Knowing the fact that the students admitted at this school have high qualification in English for undergraduate level particularly for non-native speakers, the writer is interested to get to know on 1) how the teaching –learning process of academic essay is conducted in one of School of Business and Management, 2) what aspects of writing in the students’ assignments are assessed in order to get to know the students’ achievement.

In addition, the researcher is familiar with location, where she can find the data easily. Besides, based on the objective of the study, she can also find the data how the teaching-learning process of academic essay is applied, what text types used, and the assessment used in order to get to know the student capability in writing task given.

3.4 Methods

In this section, the detail methodology of the study is described. The description consists of: Research Design, Data Collection and Data Analysis.

3.4.1 Research Design

This study used a naturalistic qualitative research method proposed by Bogdan and Bicklen (1987) in Fraenkel and Walen (1990:368-369). It means that the researcher has got the direct source of data in the natural setting without any manipulation made. The study investigates the students’ capability and difficulty faced both by the students and the teacher. In addition, in order to have deeper understanding towards the class activities and to get valid data and more

information needed, the classroom observation was held in the real process where the direct source of data including documents supporting the research could be obtained by the researcher who is as the key instrument. This follows the suggestion from Fraenkel and Wallen (1990). In this study, the researcher has used the qualitative case study as a particular approach because it has features that only characterize the real process. The chosen approach is related to the issues being investigated. That is how academic essays given in limited time by focusing on the activities running at the time of observation and analyzing the texts produced by students (enclosed in the appendix) would identify some characteristics in qualitative approach.

In addition, in order to get more accurate information towards the teaching learning process, the researcher also conducted interview with the lecturer and gave questionnaires for both lecturer and students. Then, the data obtained from observation were integrated to the data gained from interview and questionnaires. By doing so, there would not be data manipulated by the researcher.

Based on the description mentioned above, it can be said that **first**, the researcher is a key instrument of data collection. She went directly to the certain setting under study without trying to manipulate the data obtained from both observation and respondents. **Second**, the obtained data were interpreted or portrayed in the form of the description and analysis. **Third**, the qualitative researchers believe in themselves in finding theories that explain their data instead of finding data to match theories. **Fourth**, the process was the primary concern in

qualitative study rather than the product, and the last, the meaning is the most important issue in qualitative study.

3.4.2 Data Collection Techniques

In qualitative research, the process of collecting data involves both the selection of the instruments and the conditions where they are administered (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1990:89). For the study, the researcher has collected the data through observation, document analysis (texts produced by students), interview, and questionnaire.

3.4.2.1 Observation

The observation has been done in seven (7) times of class meetings which lasted for seven (7) weeks to find out the information of process of teaching & learning. The first observation began on August 26th 2009 and finished on 21st October 2009. This observation focused on how the lecturer introduced the academic writing to students, how the lecturer taught the elements of writing, and how the students were able to apply the writing process guided by the lecturer.

Furthermore, the material contained in the handbook has been investigated and related to teaching materials given to students. There were some class meetings missed, that is, when all tutorials were held in the auditorium watching video related to business and management topic that should be analyzed and interpreted by students. These activities were not only done in order to give the students

chance to practice analyzing towards the problem shown in the film but also to get to know the difficulties the students have (Russell, 2003).

Unlike the other writing program that was held in two credit semester system with two (2) hours per class meeting this class meeting was held for three (3) hours per class meeting and conducted 16 times per semester.

3.4.2.2 Text Produced by Students

The texts produced by students were classified into three groups of writing practices. First texts were in the form of **pre- writing** exercises given at the first class meeting; the second was the exercise of **writing essay with 500 words** and the last was the exercise of **writing essay with 700 words**. However, there were some sessions missed and there might be some writing practices missed as well. It means that there might be some more texts produced by students with better writing achievements.

3.4.2.3. Questionnaire

Data were also obtained from questionnaire given to the lecturer and students as participants. The questionnaire was used to get information related to teaching learning process on the teacher side and the benefit and difficulty of learning to write on the students' side. The data were employed to reveal the solution the lecturer made towards the problems faced during the teaching learning process. The data obtained from questionnaire also became the source to cross check the data gained from observation.

3.4.2.4 Interview

In order to get clear and more accurate information of the data obtained, the interview with the lecturer as main participant was conducted in more or less for 20 minutes. This duration was given due to the lecturer's teaching schedule. The interview was done in order to find some new facts emerged relating to the teaching learning process. In addition, the data were also used as the source to cross check the validity of all data obtained in the research.

This study conducted an open-ended interview in which the fact of matter and opinions about events can be asked as suggested by Yin (2003). The questions given in the interview were taken from the questionnaire as guidance to get clearer information related to the teaching learning process of academic writing.

However, the interview with students could not be conducted because of the limitation of time the students had.

3.4.3 Data Analysis Method

The data obtained from the sources include the result of class observation, the teaching materials used, and the students' work which was in the forms of texts produced by students. The observation was conducted for seven (7) times in which the first observation began on August 26th 2009 and finished on 21st October 2009. There were some class meetings missed, that is, when all tutorials were held in the auditorium watching video related to business and management topic that should be analyzed and interpreted by students. These activities were not only done in order to give the students chance to practice analyzing towards

the problem shown in the film but also to get to know the difficulties the students have (Russell, 2003). Each class meeting was held for three (3) hours and conducted 16 times per semester.

Videotaping was not allowed to be used during teaching learning process so the authentic data related to the group discussions and lecturer's consultations couldn't be shown visually. In this session, the researcher only relied on the field notes to observe the teaching learning process. However, the researcher was still able to engage with the students' class activities during observation. **Then**, the researcher noted how the lecturer did the introduction before giving the lecture and how he used electronic media provided in the class room for lecturing. In addition, the researcher noticed whether the lecturer well prepared or not.

In addition, **in terms of teaching writing process**, the researcher watched how the lecturer explained the theory related to aspects of academic essays and applied the stages of writing process and noticed whether he considered time left for students to finish the task before the time ended. Then, noted how he got his students have more theory and practices about academic writing and what handbook contains teaching material given during writing course. Furthermore, I noted what optional supplementary at the first class meeting he suggested to the students to gain more information about academic writing, and what facilities that the students can access to complete their assignments and what strategy used to enable the students to learn to write.

Meanwhile, **in terms of the result of the learning process**, the researcher collected the texts produced by students which are classified into three categories,

namely, prewriting (warming up activity=PW), mid writing task (500 words essay=E5) and last writing task (700 words essay=E7) during observation.

The texts produced by students were then selected on the basis of the scores or comments given by the lecturer and randomly chosen. The texts classified into three categories, namely, **high, average, and low achievers.**

The texts were then analyzed and interpreted which focused on the text function including the structure of organization, content, mechanic and linguistic features, the proper name used in texts. These texts then were analyzed in the ways suggested by Hyland (2003), Feez and Joyce (2000) namely, the orientation of the aspects of writing given:

- focused on the text function. This means that the criteria of ‘good writing’ is on the basis of the performance of language use specifically in communicative functions that most relevant to students’ needs.
- focused on the creative expression and writing process particularly when students doing writing practice in the first class meeting.
- focused on the content when students started learning to write their first essay. However, the organization of text and linguistics features ((How clear transition between ideas and sentences, variety and complexities of sentences, etc) are still considered. Since academic writing demands high standard quality, so, it is necessary for student writer to have acknowledgement towards language used in writing particularly its grammar and its lexis, the types of sentence structure used will influence the meaning of the text.

The aspects that have been analyzed are actually as the ones that what Zemah, et. al., claim as *aspects of essay writing* that should be evaluated in academic writing including *content and organization of text*. The analysis of the texts produced by the students are firstly focused on the content that involves introduction with a thesis statement that directly answers the test question, a body that contains clear related ideas that support the thesis statement, and conclusion; *secondly*, be focused on the organization that involves logical organization of supporting ideas. According to Eggins (2002:5), in higher education *content and organization* are as primary matters and need more attention than convention of language including voice, tone, style, accuracy and mechanic. What has mentioned above in fact is in line with Hyland and Cooper who suggest that analyzing argumentative writing is by identifying the claim and the supports in which Eggins and Zemah, et al., consider them as part of the content.

In terms of assessment, the researcher noted what aspects of writing that the lecturer primarily assessed through comment and score given to texts produced by students collected.

In order to get to know the students' difficulty and expectation towards the academic writing program given and to get more information about the respondents, the researcher also distributed some questionnaires and interviewed the lecturer. The questionnaires distributed to the students were about writing experiences, background of literary, difficulty during writing process and efforts done.

Briefly, the steps of analyzing data were firstly observing the TLP, making notes, analyzing texts produced by students and distributing the questionnaires and the last was interview the lecturer. Then, the researcher coded and categorized the data. The coding and the categorized are as follows:

Coding

- * RL (Respondent Lecturer)
- * RS (Respondent Student)
- * Pre Writing (PW): PWH < PWM < PWL.
- * Essay 500 (E5): E5H < E5M < E5L.
- * Essay 700 (E7): E7H < E7M < E7L.

Categorization

The data were categorized into three categories as follows:

Prewriting categorized into high achiever (PWH), Mid-achiever (PWM), Low achiever (PWL). Then, assignments with 500 and 700 words were categorized also into high achiever (E5H), mid-achiever (E5M), low achiever (E5L) and E7H, E7M, E7L.

3.5 Concluding Remark

The purpose of the research is to portray the implementation TLP of Academic Essay. It uses a naturalistic qualitative method research and an analytic induction method. To collect the data, the researcher employed some techniques and resources such as making notes, questionnaires, and interview. In addition, some documents such as texts produced by students, and handbook were

collected. In order to answer the research question, the data obtained from the instruments will be presented and analyzed in the next chapter.

