CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

This chapter describes some important elements related to research methodology. The elements are research design, data collection technique, validity and reliability of data, participants and site of the study, and procedure of analysis.

3.1. Research Design

When one concerns with exploring people's life histories or everyday behavior, a qualitative method should be used (Silverman, 2000). A qualitative study attempted to identify unexpected phenomena and influences as well as provided rich narrative descriptions. It also attempted to understand the process by which events and actions take place (Alwasilah, 2002: 108). The design of this study was a qualitative case study in nature, since it dealt with a small-scale case; interpretation as its main method; and put emphasis on the development process in which events and actions took place (Maxwell, 1996: 71). Thus, this study used qualitative case study research method in collecting and analyzing data.

Since this study investigated deeply the issue of the teaching of English for young learners, the researcher used a qualitative case study research methodology in order to document the detail of information of how people react and interact in certain situation. This is in line with the characteristic of case study: examining a specific phenomenon. The specific phenomenon can be a teaching program, an event, a person, a process, an institution or a social group (Merriam, 1991).

A case study aims to uncover the interaction of essential factors that characterize the phenomenon under investigation. Becker (1968, cited in Merriam: 1988) defines the purpose of case study as to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the groups under study. In addition, Stake (1988, in Nunan, 1992) views that the difference between case study with other research studies is that the focus of attention is the case, not the whole population of cases.

3.2. Data Collection Technique

The data for this research were collected using qualitative research method. Fraenkel & Wallen (1993) say that the collection of data in qualitative research is ongoing. The researcher is continually observing people, events, and occurrences, often supplementing his or her observations with in-depth interviews of selected participants and the examination of various documents and records relevant to the phenomenon of interest.

In this study, the process of collecting the data involved both the selection of instruments and the sites where the instruments would be appropriately administrated. In collecting the data, the researcher conducted four techniques: questionaire, interview, observation, and document analysis. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1993), the use of multiple sources of evidence in case study allows a researcher to gain valid data. Below is the explanation of the techniques used in collecting the data.

3.2.1. Observation

In this research, the researcher acted as a non-participant observer. The researcher sat at the back of the classroom, took notes on, and videotaped "what was said and done" (Van Lier, 1988) by the teacher and the students. These classroom observations were done to answer research questions.

The observations were conducted seven times in the class of teacher 1 (T1) and teacher 2 (T2). Unfortunately, it could only done five times in T3's class because she was absent on the agreed days. As a whole, the observations were administered from February 11th up to February 27th 2009. Detailed dates of each observation could be seen in appendix 3 of this thesis. During the observations in T1 and T2's classes, in first three observations, the researcher took field notes, and for the following sessions she videotaped the instructional activities occured in the classroom in order to keep the authenticity of the data. In T3's class, field note was taken in the third observation only, while the rest observations were videotaped. Data from observation were transcribed, coded, categorized, synthesized, and interpreted by relating them to relevant theories.

3.2.2. Questionnaire

Questionnaire is one of research tools for collecting data. It provides a means of communications between respondent and researcher (Labaw, 1980). The kind of questionnaire used in this research was that of open-ended one which allows the respondents to give a totally free answer and they were expected to chose the answer

category which came closest to or best represented their feeling, beliefs, attitudes, opinions, behavior, or knowledge of a situation (Labaw, 1980: 131).

In this study, the distribution of questionnaire for T1 and T2 was done on February 18th and for T3 on February 19th. The questionnaire consists of certain elements related to topic under study (see appendix 1, questionnaire). Data from questionnaire were categorized and percentaged. The researcher used this type of questionnaire also to answer both research questions.

3.2.3. Interview

Interview is the third technique applied in this study, but it functions as a secondary source of qualitative data needed to comprehend the phenomena under study. Merriam (1988: 72) states, "Interviewing is necessary when we cannot observe behavior, feeling, or how people interpret the world around them." Moreover, Fraenkel and Wallen (1993:385) state that the purpose of interviewing people is to find out what is in their mind, what they think and how they feel about something. In line with this, Silverman (2000) defines interview as an effort used to elicit respondents' perceptions.

The interview of this study consists of questions formulated in order to gather data for answering the research questions. Hence, it was addressed to three participants and their fourth-graders about the information needed by the researcher. In this case, the interview aims to obtain more information to support the questionnaires results. The researcher provided list of questions before the interview session began.

In this research, the researcher adopted semi-structured interview in order to get more complicated informations about the topic under study (see appendix 2, Interview Guide). By this kind of interview, it is assumed that individual participants define the world in unique ways, and the purpose is not to put things in someone else mind but rather to access the perspective of the person being interviewed (Patton, 1980, cited in Merriam, 1991: 73). In this research, this kind of interview was used because it provided freedom for both interviewer and interviewees. In addition, the researcher could also gain in-depth information on the practice of how the teachers plan and implement their teaching and assess their students' learning.

The interviews of teachers were conducted on 23rd of February (T1 and t2), and on February 26th (T3). The interviews of the students were administered for 18 students (boys and girls) from the three schools. They were chosen as lower (6 students), middle (6 students), and higher (6 students) students. They were interviewed on February 19th (T2's students) and on February 26th (T1 and T2's students). All of the interviews were conducted in sequence and recorded.

3.2.4. Document Analysis

Regarding the importance of document in a research, Merriam (1998: 120) explained that since the investigator is the primary instrument for gathering data, he or she relies on the skills and intuition to find and interpret data from documents. "Document is an umbrella term to refer to a wide range of written, visual, and physical material relevant to the study at hand" (Merriam, 1998: 112). Further, Merriam elaborates that the data found in documents can be used in the same manner

as data from observations and interviews. It also, as Merriam adds, can furnish descriptive information, verifies emerging hypotheses, advances new categories and hypotheses, and offers historical understanding. By using documentary materials, the researcher uses objective and unobtrusive instrument.

Therefore, in order to complete the data for answering the research questions, the researcher copied and collected teachers' lesson plans and posttest items (see appendix 5, documents of lesson plans). In addition, some relevant pictures were also taken. These documents were necessary to complete the data obtained in the classroom.

3.3. Validity and Reliability of Data

In attempting to get valid and reliable data, triangulation was done by collecting information from diverse range of individuals and settings, using a variety of methods (Maxwell, 1996,cited in Alwasilah, 2008; 175; Cresswell, 1994; 167) which was conducted to make a contrast and comparison of all the data obtained from diffrent sources (Free body, 2003, cited in Emilia, 2005). This is in line with Merriam (1998), and Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) who argue that validity and reliability of data can be strengthened by triangulation. Thus, by relying on the four instruments as sources of data, the researcher builds the so-called triangulation. It can be traced to Fraenkel and Wallen (1993: 400) who highlight, "When a conclusion is supported by data collected from a number of different instruments, its validity is thereby enhanced." In this way, the researcher has conducted "methodological triangulation, which involves the convergence of data from multiple data collection sources" (Denzin, 1978 retrieved at http://www.okstate.edu/).

51

3.4. Research Site and Participants of the Study

Before conducting a research, a researcher needs to consider what, whom, where, and when to observe (Merriam, 1998: 60). In other words, sampling in field research involves the selection of events, people, site and time. Further, Merriam (1998: 61) states, that nonprobability sampling is the method of choice for most qualitative research. It is chosen because it suitably answers qualitative problems, such as discovering what occurs, the implication of what occurs, and the relationship linking occurrences (Honigmann, 1982: 84, cited in Merriam, 1998: 61). Thus, the most appropriate sampling strategy is non-probabilistic—the most common form of which is called purposive (Chein, 1981, cited in Merriam, 1998: 61). In line with this, Maxwell (1996) states that qualitative paradigm had a close-link with purposeful sampling.

As Merriam (1998: 61) further argues, purposeful sampling is based on criteria that directly reflect the purpose of the study and lead to the identification of information-rich cases. Purposeful sampling is the technique of sampling used by the researcher that concerns some considerations, such as limitation of time, money, and availability of sites and respondent, in order to acquire a certain objective (Merriam, 1998; and Arikunto, 2005). It was based on this kind of sampling, the site and participants of research were selected.

The sites of the study were three elementary schools that are located in Kota Solok, West Sumatera. There are some reasons for choosing the teachers and the schools as research sites. First, all the teachers are civil servants. In fact, Education Bureau (Dinas Pendidikan) of Kota Solok officially and specially had appointed

English teachers for all Elementary schools in Kota Solok as civil servants. Second, all the teachers are undergraduates who are majoring English. Third, all the teachers teach in public schools. In other words, all the participants have the same characteristics: civil servants, undergraduates majoring English, and teach in public schools.Therefore, this study fulfills the recommendations of several previous researches (Sutiyono, 2003; Luciana, 2004; Suharno, 2005; Suryawati, 2005; Sary, 2006; and Defianty, 2007) in which the participants were non civil servants, not all the participants were undergraduates majoring English, and not all of them taught in public schools.

Nevertheless, there are some differences between the three schools. The first two schools are noted as the members of HES Program. This program was initiated and sponsored by Gebu Minang (GM), an Association of Minangkabau (native ethnic of West Sumatera province) people who lived outside Minagkabau region. This program is specially designed as a pilot program for Elementary school in West Sumatera. It provides more duration for teaching Arabic, English, and Islamic Religion in order to make the students can speak both languages in daily classroom activities and have good morals. In fact, in SDN 05 all students from grade 1-6 are taught both languages 280 minutes a week, four days in a week; and in SDN 03 all students are taught both languages 210 minutes a week, six days in a week. Meanwhile, as a non-hybrid Elementary School, SDN 02 PPA is selected because it provides more duration (140 minutes) for English teaching than other non-hybrid schools do. Moreover, the three schools are located nearby and do not have overlapped schedules, as the researcher found in some previous schools identified.

Therefore, the participants of this study are three English teachers, coded as teacher 1 (T1), teacher 2 (T2), and teacher 3 (T3). The participants under study are numbered sequentially based on the amount of their teaching period in a week: from the most (T1) to the least (T3). Their participation is voluntary-based: the teachers are willing to participate in the study and to have their classes observed by the researcher. The participants profile is presented as follow:

Participants	Age	Gender	Teaching Experience	Educational Background
T1	31 years	Female	6 years	S1 English Education, 2003, Public University
T2	36 years	Female	6 years	S1 English Education, 2000, Public University
T3	34 years	Female	9 years	S1 English Education, 1998, Private University

Table 1. Profile of Participants under Study

Fourth, in relation to the students, the researcher's reason to particularly select grade four is that the students at this age are in the transition of developmental stage. As Bradway and Hill (1993: 157) explain, children at grade four transform from the children who have long depended on parental approval for every word and deed, to those who develop greater allegiance to peers. In this stage, as Bradway and Hill (1993: 157) further argue, much of attention which previously lavished on dolls, toys car, or soccer begins to refocus on clothing trends, friends, the opposite sex, and the social acceptability of everything, from hobbies and possessions to taste in music and TV viewing habits.

Hence, concerning the reasons, it is expected that this study is very appropriate to be done in this setting. It is hoped that the results of the study can give meaningful contribution to the teaching of English at Elementary Schools.

3.5. Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis was conducted during and after data collection. This was done in line with Krueger (1998), in order to "strike when the iron is hot" and avoid "jeopardized by delay." In other words, the data were soon analyzed after collecting them. In this study, the analysis was done simultaneously as an ongoing activity during data collection and after data collection. The analysis was done based on central themes of the study, which were the two research questions.

The data for this research were analyzed through qualitative data analysis. Fraenkel and Wallen (1993) state that analyzing data in a qualitative study involves coding, categorizing, synthesizing, and interpreting the data, and finally making the conclusion based on the data the researcher obtains from various sources into coherent description of what he or she has observed or discovered. Thus, all data obtained from the instruments are categorized and analyzed based on the research questions.

In order to answer the research questions, data from classroom observations, interviews, questionnaires, and document analysis were analyzed. Both observation and interview data were transcribed (see appendix 3 and 4), and then categorized as it was done to data from questionnaire. After categorizing, the data were interpreted and synthesized. Descriptive statistics was also used to percentage the participants'

responses. In addition, the data from documentation were used to equip the data from the previous three sources. At last, the whole data were concluded in findings.

3.6. Concluding Remark

This chapter has discussed a detailed methodological description of the research. It covers the discussion of instruments used to answer the two research questions. The instruments used in this research are observation, questionnaire, interview, and document Analysis. All of them are used to answer the research questions. The whole research findings are presented in the next chapter.