

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter consists of the outlining methodology of the research. It briefly describes the method and respondents of the research involved as the data resources. This chapter also presents some considerations in determining the data collection, instruments and data analysis.

3.2. Aims of the Present Study

This research aims to collect data about the realizations of the speech act of complaining by EFL students. Data were used to explore the comparison between EFL male and female learners regarding the production of the components of complaining strategies. The present study aims to reveal the answers of the research questions mentioned earlier as follows:

1. To discover the realizations of the speech act of complaining by Indonesian EFL male and female learners;
2. To explore the aspects of gender that affect the differences of complaining acts between Indonesian EFL male and female learners.

3.3. Method of research

This research was conducted by using a qualitative method. I decided to employ this method because I intended to discover the differences of complaining realizations and how these realizations relate with gender aspects. To do this, I attempted to seek descriptions and explanations about how complaining realizations and gender aspects are interconnected.

My decision to use this method is in accordance with Locke, Spirduso, and Silvermanout who say that the qualitative research is intended to understand a particular social situation, event, role, group, or interaction. (Locke, Spirduso & Silvermanout, 1987, cited in Creswell 1994). This research deals with the observation of people's behavior about how people complain and is deeply viewed by gender's theory as the point of view.

According to Fryer (1991), a qualitative study is often associated with the collection and analysis of written or spoken texts or the direct observation of behavior. The qualitative procedures are often used in investigating complaint strategies, whereas the simple quantification deals with the occurrences of complaining strategies both male and female. Fraenkel & Wallen (1990), Locke et al (1987) and Merriam (1988) in Creswell (2004) assert that the focus of a qualitative study is on participants' perceptions and experiences, and the way they make sense of their lives.

Since this research deals with the investigation of a phenomenon or case in a real-life context, it is called a qualitative case study. A case study, according to Yin (1994), is typically designed to answer questions such as "how" and "why".

Thus, it fits with the aims of this research that attempts to reveal the realizations of complaining acts and describes the relationship between Indonesian EFL male and female learners in complaining acts. Furthermore, this research was conducted through several steps: collecting, classifying, interpreting, making conclusion and reporting.

3.4. Respondents of the Study

A respondent selection was first determined to select respondents who were involved in this research. The respondent's selection was based on the consideration that people can provide significant contributions for the experience under the investigation (Polkinghorne, 2005).

Respondents in this research were selected from the English Department of the Indonesian University of Education. The subjects for this investigation were 40 advanced students who were registered since 2006 or 2007. The 40 students were divided into 20 male and 20 female students.

The respondents were chosen based on purposive sampling. In this research, the samples should have studied at least three or four years in the English Department in the Indonesian University of Education. They were selected based on the assumption that they have 'adequate' English competences.

Dealing with this study, the qualitative approach and purposive sampling were an appropriate method to select respondents. According to Merriam's advice (2002, cited in Polkinghorne, 2005,) it is stated that a qualitative researcher aims to seek understanding the meaning of a phenomenon from the perspective of

participants and it is supposed to make participants' selection based on the people who can be learned most. Therefore, it is called purposive sampling.

Since this study investigates the pragmatic realizations, the selection of the respondents involved of a high standard for their linguistic abilities, majors, communicative and sociolinguistic competence.

By using communicative and sociolinguistic competences, the subjects of the research were expected to be able to produce good grammatical sentences and give appropriate responses to the particular situations given. Gumperz (1972, explained in Wardhaugh (1992).

The next step to be considered was the sample size. Based on Best and Kahn (1989 in Libugan 1997 as cited in Ramdhan, 2006), they state that generally, the minimum number of subjects believed to be acceptable for the study depend on the type of research involved. In addition, according to Porkinghorne (2005) qualitative researchers most often use a small number of participants in their studies. Therefore, this research took 40 respondents and they were considered to be an appropriate number to reveal the realizations of complaining.

3.5. Data Collection

According to Creswell (1994), a qualitative study is defined as an investigation process of understanding a social or human phenomenon which is conducted in a natural setting. Cohen (1996:391-2, cited in Ramdhan, 2006)

explained the advantages and disadvantages of gathering natural data as summarized in Table 3.1

TABLE 3.1
Advantages and Disadvantages of gathering natural data

Advantages	Disadvantages
1. The data are spontaneous	1. The speech act being studied may not occur naturally very often.
2. The data reflect what the speakers say rather than what they think would say.	2. Proficiency and gender may be difficult to control.
3. The speakers are reacting to a natural situation rather than to a contrived and possibly unfamiliar situation.	3. Collecting and analyzing the data are time-consuming.
4. The communicative event has real-world consequences.	4. The data may not yield enough or any examples of target items.
5. The event may be a source of rich pragmatic structures.	5. The use of recording equipment may be intrusive.
	6. The use of note taking as a complement to or in lieu of taping relies on memory

3.5.1 Discourse Completion Test

A Questionnaire in the form of Discourse Completion Test (DCT) was employed to obtain data. This procedure first developed by Levenston and Blum (1978) to study lexical simplification. Blum-Kulka (1982) then adopted this procedure to investigate speech act realizations. Since then DCT has been developed and it is widely used in numerous studies to investigate other speech act realizations phenomena, among others are studies of requests (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986; Faerch & Kasper, 1989; Blum-Kulka et al, 1989), apologies (Blum-Kulka et al, 1989), complaints (Olshtain & Weinbach, 1987), refusal (Takahashi & Beebe, 1987; Beebe et al, 1990)

A DCT consists of scripted dialogues that represent socially differentiated situations. There is a description of the social variables involved in every situation.

The following is one example of the DCT.

At the University

Ann missed a lecture yesterday and would like to borrow Judith's note

Ann : _____

Judith : Sure, but let me have them back before the lecture next week

(Blum Kulka et al, 1989)

The DCT in the present study consisted of three different situations and provided detailed descriptions of the situations. The respondents were asked to complete dialogues, in this case to complain as much or as little as they might actually say in the provided blanks (see appendix B). Below is one example of the situations in the DCT.

Situation #1

Your junior borrowed your quite new digital camera to document a birthday party. Today, he/she returns it, but it is broken. You are angry, because the camera is your first gadget u bought by yourself, from your savings 3 years and it costs 5 million rupiah. The worst is, he/she just says sorry without showing any deep regret. You want to tell him/her how careless he/she was and you tell him/her to be responsible by asking for repair or replacement. If you are to complain, what will you say to him/her?

You say: _____

Using DCT as an instrument has some advantages and disadvantages, as stated by Bee and Cumming (1985, cited in Azis 2000) in table 3.2

TABLE 3.2
Advantages and Disadvantages of DCT
(Based on Beebe and Cummings 1985)

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 fulfill 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 occur
	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.

3.5.2. Interview

The second instrument served as a complementary method of collecting data. It was involved in evaluating, clarifying, and expanding the respondents' responses in the DCT. In this term, the researcher asked some questions to the respondents about the reasons, underlying a given response and got clear information related to the respondents' answers.

The interview was conducted in *Bahasa Indonesia* with the assumption that it would be more comfortable for the respondents to express their responses.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data responses of the DCT were collected and used as the resources of the analysis. The obtained data were classified to get the framework of the realizations of complaining and to get any differences between men and women. The classification was categorized based on the complaining strategies adopted by Trosborg (1994) and was improved by Rinnert and Nogami's (2006) taxonomy of the speech act of complaining that describes the main components of complaint, the level of directness and the degree of mitigation.

Respondents' responses in the DCT were identified and classified on the basis of the classification of complaint strategies of Trosborg (1994), as in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3
Complaint Strategies
(Trosborg, 1994:319)

Category I	No Explicit reproach Strategy 1 : Hints
Category II	Expression of disapproval Strategy 2: Annoyance Strategy 3: Ill consequences
Category III	Accusation Strategy 4: Indirect Strategy 5: Direct
Category IV	Blame Strategy 6: Modified Blame Strategy 7: Explicit Blame (Behaviour) Strategy 8: Explicit Blame (Person)

The data were identified based on the four notions of the complaining categories that have eight complaining strategies: Hints, Annoyance, Ill Consequences, Indirect Accusation, Direct Accusation, Modified Blame, Explicit Blame (Behavior), and Explicit Blame (Person) proposed by Trosborg (1994). These eight strategies are important to relate the realizations speech act of complaining with the gender differences' theories.

Afterwards, the result would be analyzed by Rinnert and Nogami's (2006) taxonomy that consists of three main components of complaints and their sub-strategies. This taxonomy is presented as follows:

Three aspects of complaints and their sub-strategies:

- (1) Main component: (a) Initiator, (b) Complaints, (c) Request
- (2) Level of directness: (a) Indirect, (b) Somewhat direct, (c) Very direct
- (3) Amount of mitigation

Next, the data analysis was conducted to produce findings in terms of the differences of complaining realizations between men and women. Later, the results were examined by gender perspectives to reveal the interrelationships between gender and speech acts of complaining.

3.7 Concluding Remarks

This chapter presents how the research methodology was implemented. It can be a guidance to determine the research subjects and sample size, the data collection instruments and the data analysis.

The primary data were collected by means of questionnaires and the second was obtained by way of interviews. The data were identified and classified according to the classification of complaint strategies of Trosborg (1994) and Rinnert and Nogami's (2006). The findings and discussion of the present study will be presented in the following chapter.

