

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Settings

This research is conducted in the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FITK) at the State Islamic University of North Sumatera (UINSU) Medan. This university is located on Jalan Willem Iskandar Pasar V Medan Estate 20371 Kecamatan Percut Sei Tuan Kabupaten Deli Serdang Sumatera Utara, Indonesia.

This location was selected because the researcher observed the phenomena of students facing problems in writing a thesis as their final assignment to fulfill the compulsory requirement in finishing their studies in this faculty. The researcher acknowledged the problems faced by the students through her friendship relationship in daily social interaction in class, community, and the library of the campus.

This study will be conducted in four months beginning from March to June 2022. Table 3.1 below displays the timetables in detail:

Table 1. 1 Time Schedule of Research Activities

ACTIVITIES	TIME															
	MARCH				APRIL				MAY				JUNE			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Proposing topic of research																
Writing proposal																
Proposal consultation with supervisors																
Proposal revision																
Proposal agreement																
Proposal seminar																
Developing research instruments																
Conducting observation																

ACTIVITIES	TIME															
	MARCH				APRIL				MAY				JUNE			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Conducting Focused Group Discussion																
Doing in-depth interviews to the informants																
Working on data analysis																
Writing a research report (thesis)																
Thesis consultation with supervisors																
Thesis agreement																
Presenting result of the research																

3.2 Research Design

This research is initiated by doing a grand tour activity to the location of the research. The purpose of doing a grand tour activity is to gain perspectives on how students work on their final papers. In this phase, the researcher does an observation by direct participation in the library as well as in the faculty. By involving the community of English students who are in the state of writing a thesis, the researcher will gain an understanding of students' problems in finding references as well as their understanding and use of those references in their academic writings.

While doing a grand tour activity, the researcher will make note-taking derived from the field. This activity is extremely important in conducting qualitative research because the nature of this method relies heavily on the rich of descriptive data to conclude. Lack of data will result in inaccurate finding that will make the result unreliable.

After achieving a basic understanding of the nature of students working on their thesis, the researcher will follow up with more formal investigation by using techniques of data collection that are planned in this proposal.

Only after the analysis of the data is finish do the researcher conclude and write a draft of the thesis.

3.3 Subjects

Students from Tarbiyah's English Department and the Teaching Faculty of the State Islamic University of North Sumatra (UINSU) semester 8 PBI 2 were the subjects of this study. These individuals were later used as informants in this investigation. Subjects were chosen to qualify based on the criteria established prior to the start of the study. The following criteria are created:

1. Subjects are students of the English Department of Tarbiyah Faculty
2. Subjects are at least in the eighth semester of their study
3. Subjects are in the state of writing a thesis as their final assignment.

Nevertheless, the key informant of this research is, of course, the researcher alone. This is because the researcher's experience in this piece of research as the final assignment will contribute to the understanding of the data collection and analysis.

The researcher will use a snowball sampling technique by which the subject is selected purposively and developed gradually. The selection of sampling continues until the data are saturated (Naderifar et al., 2017), meaning that there is no other new data raised by the informants. To anticipate the bias, the researcher will select homogeneous participants, that is including students of various classes and categories.

3.4 Research Method

This study employs a qualitative approach in which data are collected from the site of the study naturally where the participants experience problems being studied (Creswell, 2014, p. 185). As mentioned earlier that the researcher plays a role as the key informant in this qualitative approach. Data will be collected from multiple sources of data that can be used for triangulation to ensure validity. Data collected will include students' experience in working on

writing a thesis, their problems, and strategy in coping with difficulties. The flow of the research report in a qualitative approach will go inductively from a very specific case to a general theory. Findings of the research will be reported descriptively using texts and no statistical measurement will be involved.

3.5 Techniques of Data Collection

To collect the descriptive data on students' experience in writing a thesis, the problems they face, and the strategy they take to overcome the problems, the following techniques are used:

1. Observation. The researcher will conduct a participatory observation in which a direct personal involvement with the subjects being studied will be chosen. In this case, the researcher will build a rapport with the participants to obtain rich and accurate data regarding students' experiences and problems in writing a thesis.
2. Focused group discussion (FGD). This technique will be planned to collect the data collectively in which participants will involve in real discussion about their experience and problems in writing a thesis. Using this technique, the research expects to collect richer data through the activity of sharing amongst the participants.
3. In-depth interview. Following the focused group discussion, the researcher will also conduct an in-depth interview with selected participants to dig more understanding about personal experience in writing a thesis. Using this technique, the researcher expects to obtain more personal feelings participants have while working on their final assignments. Psychological issues that might not be shared during the FGD, might be obtained during the in-depth interview session.
4. Documentation. This technique involves recording data collection activities be it in the form of a voice recording or video recording.

3.6 Instrument of Data Collection

To facilitate the process of data collection technique, the researcher will develop some instruments as described below:

1. Observation guide. This instrument is used to collect data obtained through the observation technique. The instrument contains a list of questions regarding the setting of the research, students' activities during the writing of the thesis, students' behaviors in seeking references, students' behaviors in using references in their academic writings, and students' actions in coping with the problems.
2. Digital recorder. It is a voice recorder that will be used during the FGD and in-depth interview sessions. The purpose of using this instrument in research is to anticipate the loss of data due to lack of personal memory and disregard.
3. Interview guide. This instrument is used to guide the researcher to collect data that deal with personal experience. The instrument contains a list of questions detailing the research problems of this study.
4. Digital camera. This instrument is used to record videos and take photographs for documentation purposes.

3.7 Technique of Data Analysis

This research employs Miles & Huberman's (1994) technique in analyzing the data. In this technique data collected through the phase of data collection will be analyzed using three main activities, they are data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. To ease the understanding of the process below is the visual illustration:

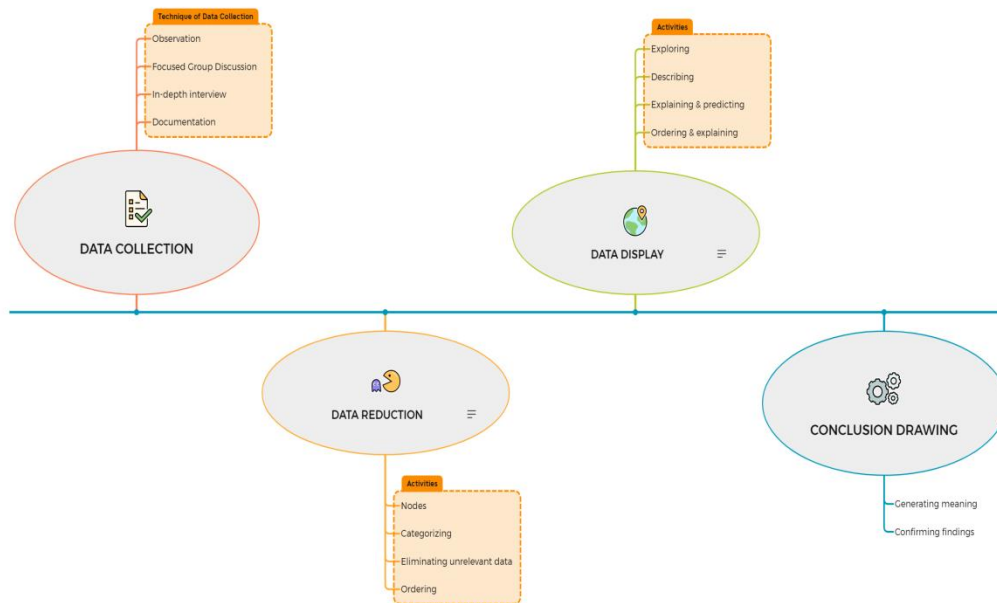


Figure 3. 1 Technique of Data Analysis

The actual data analysis process begins with data reduction of the collected data through observation, focused group discussion, in-depth interviews, and documentation.

3.8 Technique of Data Validity

To validate qualitative data collected and analyzed in this research, the researcher uses the qualitative data validation technique suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 277) that consists of four basic principles as described below. This is done to ensure that data collected and analyzed can be trustworthy and biases can be minimized.

1. **Confirmability/objectivity.** To ensure the objectivity of the data general methods and procedures are described explicitly. The researcher will describe in detail step by step procedure of the research following the standard of qualitative design. In addition, the researcher will 'picture' the subject of the research, which is the students of the English department of FITK, UINSU. The data collection process will be recorded carefully using a tape recorder to anticipate data misunderstanding or mistaken. Finally, the conclusion will be linked with the data explicitly. In this phase, documentation is a very important tool to help maintain the objectivity of the data.

2. **Dependability/reliability/auditability.** For the data to be dependable or reliable, the researcher will conduct stable observation by attending the sites of the research very often or at different times. This includes the library and the faculty where the subjects of the research can be approached easily. The researcher will also prolong self-involvement with the student community of the final year. In addition, the researcher will also conduct a triangulation among the subjects, methods, and times to get the real picture of the data. By using the data coding technique, the researcher will analyze adequate agreement among those elements so that data can be auditable. To add the trustworthiness, findings of this research will be consulted with the supervisors as the experts of the subject to gain more perspectives and inputs on the quality of data analysis and findings.
3. **Credibility/internal validity/authenticity.** The insurance of credibility of the data can be obtained by the process of checking, questioning, and theorizing the 'thickness' or the 'context-rich' meaning of the data. Therefore, elaborating the data in detail will help ensure the credibility value of the data. Data will be linked to the prior categories and emerging theories. Here, the triangulation activity will also contribute to credibility insurance. The selection of original informants of the research by conforming to the criteria created will be one of the insurances of credibility value.
4. **Transferability/external validity/fittingness.** This validity is equal to the external validity in which the findings of this research can be replicated by other researchers for other settings as long as the criteria are similar. Although research methodology acknowledges three generalizations, including from sample to population, analytic (theory-connected), and case-to-case transfer, only do the last two mentioned above are applied for the qualitative method. Generalizability requires connection-making, either to unstudied parts of original cases or other cases.