

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is aimed at revealing how the participants experience in preparing and taking English proficiency test, finding the benefit and hope for English proficiency test model. This chapter explains research design, research procedures and the quality of research outcomes.

A. Research Design

This research implements narrative inquiry as the research design. Clarke and Braun (2014) explained that narrative inquiry shows the stories and experiences of a person through life journeys, autobiographies, diaries, and life notes. In addition, narrative inquiry is also the study of how humans direct their lives in the world (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). For example, students, teachers, and researchers are storytellers and characters in their own stories or telling the stories of others.

Narrative inquiry tells how participants experienced in achieving high score in English Proficiency test. The first time preparing English proficiency test, the participants need course or specific time to learn English because they are not majoring in English education or English literature. The participants need to achieve the high score for some purposes. For instance, the participants need high score of English Proficiency Test certificate to apply for work or apply for scholarship. As a result, only narrative inquiry was capable of capturing all those experiences. It is consistent with the potential of

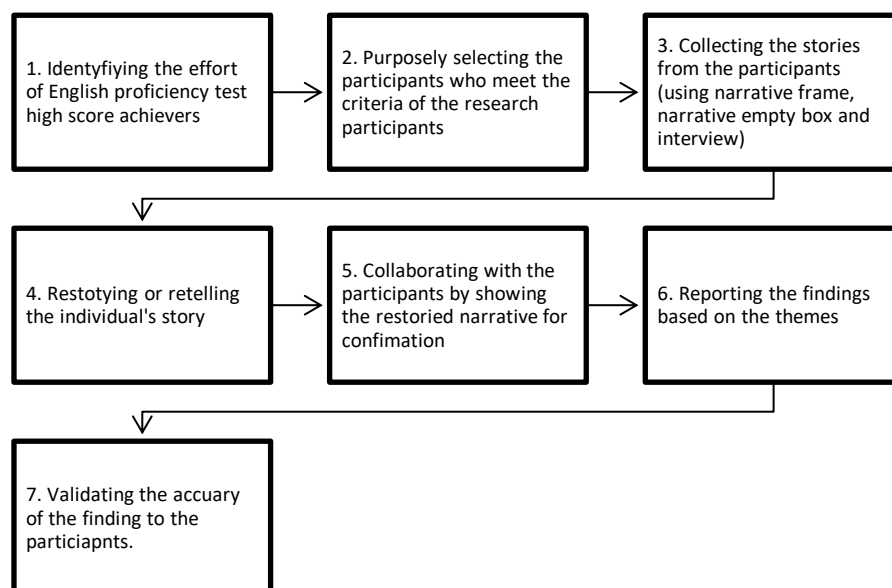
narrative inquiry as a research tool that has demonstrated its power to understand the day-by-day experiences (Rohmah, 2017).

This research explores the effort of the participants' experiences in achieving a high score in the English Proficiency test. The researcher selected the participants' successful experiences by structurally arranging them into the past experience (the preparation of taking an official English Proficiency test and the first time experienced taking an English Proficiency test), the present experience (finding the benefit after taking an English Proficiency test), and the future experience (hope and aspiration of a future English Proficiency test model).

B. Research Procedures

The research procedures were adapted from Creswell (2012). The steps in the procedures indicate clear and comprehensive phases of conducting narrative inquiry. The steps were showed as follow:

Figure 1: Steps in Conducting Narrative Inquiry



Step 1: Identifying a Phenomenon to Explore

The phenomenon of the effort of achieving a high score in an English proficiency test for non-English education or English literature students has been identified by first conducting a preliminary study. The study involved eleven participants from any major and education level who were given an open-ended questionnaire by Google form to gain their consent to be participants in this research and to know the range of the score on their English Proficiency tests.

In conclusion, there are three participants who achieved high scores on English proficiency tests, namely TOEFL and IELTS. They achieved a TOEFL score of at least 500 and an IELTS score of 6.5. Therefore, they were intentionally selected as the participants in this research.

Step 2: Purposely Selecting the Participants

The identification process produced that three participants, Participants 1 (P1), Participants 2 (P2), Participants 3 (P3), were a person who achieved high score in English proficiency test. The researcher gives the participants questions related to the range of scores on their English proficiency tests. All the participants achieved a TOEFL score of more than 500 and an IELTS score of 6.5. See the educational background of the participants who were non-English education or English literature students but achieved high scores in the English Proficiency Test.

Participants	Major	Last Education	TOEFL score	IELTS score
P1	International Relations	Bachelor Degree	>500	>6.5
P2	Agriculture	Bachelor Degree	>500	>6.5
P3	Health Nutrition	Master Degree	>500	>6.5

Table 1. Participants' educational background and English proficiency tests' score

Step 3: Collecting the Stories from the Participants

Collecting the stories is the process when the participants are asked to write specific experiences about their effort to achieve a high score in the English proficiency test. The time for collecting stories was after the participants took official English proficiency tests. To collect the stories, the key research instrument is the researcher herself, because she is the one who explores and develops a detailed understanding of personal phenomena, who collects verbal data from individuals, and who analyses and interprets data that includes subjective reflexivity and bias. (Creswell, 2012). In addition, to collect stories, the researcher uses a narrative framework (see Appendix 1), a narrative empty box (see Appendix 2), and interviews guides (see Appendix 3).

Step 4: Restorying the Participants' Stories

The researcher identify elements of a story and organized the elements into a structural narrative based on literary elements of setting, characters, actions, problems, and resolution. This step also allowed the researcher to build on past, present, and future experiences. After the restory process was finished, the researcher gave the restoried version to participants to verify whether the researcher version close-

represented their stories. The participants were also allowed to add further information or to make alternations to their stories.

When all the participants agreed with the researcher's version of the story, the researcher segmented the narrative data into themes. The themes were segmented based on the chronology of the experiences to gain insight into the participants' past, present, and future. For participants, theme 1 'Preparing English Proficiency Test' (Past) covered reason, goal, effort, and steps to prepare for the test. Theme 2: 'Taking English Proficiency Tests' (Pas) covered the strategies when taking the official tests. Theme 3: 'Benefitting of Achieving a High Score' (Present), which carries the benefit after taking the test and achieving high scores. Theme 4: 'Giving Aspiration of English Proficiency Test Model' (Future), which expressed participants' hopes for the next type or model of English proficiency test.

The restoried version of the narrative is coded and categorized based on themes. The coding is focused on the key meaning of the participants' narratives in which the researcher have to pay attention on conducting understandable sign to represent every single experience. The coding process involves identifying narratives, placing the brackets, and assigning a code word or phrase that describes the meaning of the narratives.

Participants' Experiences	
Codes	Meaning
P1	Participant 1
P2	Participant 2
P3	Participant 3
Re	Reason for taking English proficiency tests
Pre	Preparation for studying English proficiency tests
Str	Strategies for doing the English Proficiency Tests
Fe	Feeling for taking English proficiency tests
Sc	Score of English proficiency tests
Us	Uses of English proficiency tests
Be	Benefit of achieving high score of English proficiency tests
Ho	Hope

Table 2. Coding System

Step 5: Collaborating with the Participants-Storyteller

The researcher collaborates with the participants during the research process to validate the data source. The researcher begins to work with participants in collecting the narrative. Before asking participants to write narratives, the researcher make sure that each participants understood well and correctly what had to be written, whether in the form of what efforts were made to get a high score on the English proficiency test. The effort can be in the form of a pleasant or even sad experience experienced by the participants as long as it is still on the track of discussion. The next collaboration is carried out through interviews with participants.

In the process of restory, the researcher does not completely restory the narrative because the narrative is the primary data point of the research. The researcher combines both the interview results and the narrative frame result to complete the data in the narrative frame.

Therefore, the researcher adds and changes several points in the merging process. Finally, the researcher will send the story back to the participants to decide whether the researcher's story has represented the goals of the participants' narrative.

Step 6: Reporting the Findings about the Participants' Experiences

This step refers to the time to report findings. In narrative inquiry, the theme is prioritized to be placed in the first part of the findings. There is no single structure to present the report, but this study compiles a report using thematic analysis through a single case, which means that participants' narratives are analyzed individually. Then, the discussion section summarizes all the narratives into a comprehensive perspective on efforts to get high scores on the English proficiency test.

Step 7: Validating the Accuracy of the Report

To maintain the accuracy and credibility of the narrative accounts, the researcher continues to collaborate with the participants throughout the process of collecting, restorying, and reporting their narratives. The findings report is completed after going through a validation process such as member checking, triangulation of data sources, and looking for disconfirming evidence.

C. The Trustworthiness

All forms of qualitative research, including narrative inquiry, aim to describe, explore, and discover subjective and personal and socially

constructed realities. To build the trustworthiness of this narrative inquiry, I referred to the highly influential and much cited classic work of Lincoln and Guba (1985) and current systematic list provided by Loh (2013). The four criteria of trustworthiness were used, namely 1) credibility, 2) transferability, 3) dependability, and 4) confirmability.

1. Credibility

In qualitative research, the credibility test of the data or the trustworthiness of the research data is carried out by triangulation and member checking (Creswell, 2012). Triangulation was used to find the probability that the finding and interpretations would be found credible.

In this study, the researchers applied the triangulation method. The triangulation method results from the use of two kinds of research instruments for data collection. This study uses a narrative framework and interview guidelines. The second technique for achieving credibility is member checking. After completing the restoration (combining the narrative framework and interview transcription), the researcher returned it to the participants to ask whether the restored version still represented the narrative.

2. Transferability

To establish the transferability of this study, data base that makes transferability judgments possible on the part of potential appliers should be provided. Therefore, a description of the subjects, research procedures, research instruments were provided in detail in chapter 1 of this thesis. In

addition, the materials—the narrative frame for teachers and students, interview guides, teachers’ and students’ narratives, coding-categorizing lists, and the summary of the findings are presented as appendices.

3. Dependability and Confirmability

To manage the dependability and confirmability of this study, the researcher constructs: 1) a reliability audit that examines the investigation process: how the data was collected, how the data is stored, and the accuracy of the data); and 2) a confirmability audit (which examines the product to provide its findings, interpretations, and recommendations supported by the data).