

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methodology and procedures which are conducted in the research. The discussion comprises six sections, they are research design, research location, research participants, research instrument, data collection technique, data analysis, and data validity.

3.1 Research Design

This research uses a qualitative approach and multiple case study method as the researcher aims to investigate the strategies of non-English major students to elevate TOEFL prediction test score. This approach will allow for an in-depth exploration of the experiences, perspectives, and strategies of several non-English major students who have successfully improved their prediction TOEFL scores.

A qualitative research technique analyses social issues using observation and a detailed written description, among other methods (Creswell, 2008). The qualitative approach is chosen to gain a deep understanding of the individual experiences and strategies employed by non-English major students. Moreover, a qualitative approach enables the researchers to uncover the nuances and complexities of the participants' TOEFL prediction test journeys.

The multiple case study method was employed to select and investigate multiple cases of non-English major students who had significantly improved their TOEFL prediction scores. This method allowed for in-depth exploration while also identifying common themes and patterns across each student case. Multiple cases

were purposively selected to provide a diverse range of experiences and strategies, thereby enhancing the external validity of the findings.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with the selected participants. The interviews were conducted to obtain information about the strategies used by non-English major students to improve their TOEFL test scores. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing techniques.

3.2 Research Location

The research location for this study is not limited to a physical place, as the data collection method involves conducting interviews by phone calls. Although the interviews were conducted via phone calls rather than at a specific physical location, the participants in this study were limited to individuals residing in Aceh Province, Indonesia. This approach provided flexibility in data collection while ensuring that the study focused on the experiences and perspectives of participants within the same geographical context.

3.3 Research Participants

The research participants selected for this study were 10 non-English major students from multiple universities in Banda Aceh. Various students, including both female and male students, had been chosen with consideration due to the study's specific objectives and criteria. The primary reason for selecting non-English major students is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the strategies employed by individuals who do not have a specialized background in English but seek to

enhance their English language proficiency, especially in the context of taking the TOEFL test. Therefore, the researcher only chose the participants who were considered to give their opinions, which was related to the research.

By including participants from various universities in Banda Aceh, this research ensures a broader representation of non-English major students with distinct educational backgrounds, experiences, and characters. This diversity enhances the study's external validity, allowing for the exploration of a wide range of strategies and experiences that may differ across institutions.

Furthermore, the decision to include both female and male participants reflects a commitment to gender inclusivity and the recognition that gender dynamics can play a role in language learning and test preparation. By considering both genders, this research aims to uncover any potential differences or similarities in the strategies employed by male and female non-English major students.

The timeframe for selecting participants who have taken the TOEFL test from 2021 to 2024 ensures that the study captures a picture of TOEFL test preparation strategies. This period allows for the examination of evolving approaches, considering changes in TOEFL test formats, available resources, and educational practices during this timeframe.

3.4 Research Instrument

This research used interviews as the primary research instrument. The interviews conducted by the researcher were in-depth interviews using a semi-structured interview method. In-depth interviews were particularly suitable for this

research because they allowed for a deeper exploration of the strategies employed by non-English major students in improving their TOEFL test scores. The semi-structured format provided a balance between maintaining consistency across interviews and allowing flexibility in the conversation.

During the interviews, participants had the opportunity to express their strategies, challenges, and successes in their own words, allowing for a nuanced understanding of their TOEFL test experiences. The semi-structured approach enabled the researcher to explore specific areas of interest in greater depth and encouraged participants to elaborate on their experiences and share valuable insights that might not have emerged in a fully structured interview.

Overall, the use of in-depth interviews with a semi-structured method as the research instrument was well-suited to achieving the research objectives, ensuring a comprehensive and detailed exploration of the strategies employed by non-English major students to improve their TOEFL test scores.

3.5 Data Collection Technique

To obtain accurate data, the researcher employed specific data collection strategies. Since the primary objective of the research was to collect data, data collection techniques played an important role in the study. Data were collected from various sources and through different methods. In this study, the researcher gathered data through interviews. Furthermore, the researcher followed the steps outlined below in the data collection process.

3.5.1 Before Data Collection

Before collecting the data, the researcher made several preparations and plans. First, the researcher collected data on 10 suitable participants by visiting the language centers of universities in Banda Aceh. The selected participants were non-English major students who had obtained a TOEFL score of 500. After identifying the participants, the researcher contacted them one by one through WhatsApp and explained the purpose of the study. The researcher then asked whether they agreed to participate in the study. After obtaining the participants' consent, the researcher arranged interview schedules based on their availability.

In addition, before data collection, the researcher prepared a set of interview questions to explore the strategies used by non-English major students to pass the TOEFL prediction test in order to address the research problem.

3.5.2 While Data Collection

During data collection, the researcher made phone calls to each respondent individually and asked a prepared set of interview questions. Moreover, the researcher also asked follow-up questions to obtain more detailed information relevant to the research problem.

During the interviews, the researcher used an audio recording application to record the participants' responses and followed the interview protocol to ensure that the required data were collected.

3.5.3 After Data Collection

After data collection, the researcher reviewed the data from all respondents. The researcher also conducted clarification to obtain additional information from the respondents to support the data analysis process.

3.6 Data Analysis

In research, data analysis is an important part of the research, with the help of data analysis all the information obtained can help solve the research problem. To analyze the data, this study uses the theory of data analysis techniques of Sugiyono (2008), The steps are as follows; Data reduction, data visualization, conclusion, and verification.

2.6.1 Data Reduction

The process of selecting, identifying, classifying, and coding data is considered important. In this step, the researcher focused on selecting, identifying, and classifying research subjects based on data from interviews. This step focused on the results of student interviews, which refers to the students' answers regarding strategies of non-English major students to pass the TOEFL test.

3.6.2 Data Display

The next step was data display after the data had been reduced, which referred to the researcher's process of organizing and presenting the data in well-structured sentences. This process helped the researcher to better understand the data. In this phase, the interview data were presented in a clear narrative sequence to make them easier to interpret. Data display also referred to presenting

information in the form of tables, graphs, and pictograms so that it could be easily interpreted and analyzed.

Moreover, the data were organized and compared with relevant literature for clearer understanding. The data were presented according to the focus of the research, which was to analyze the strategies of non-English major students in passing the TOEFL test.

3.6.3 Conclusion and Verification

In the final stage of data analysis, we have the conclusion and verification. This step is to conclude the result of data obtained from the beginning of the research. We have to look at the data reduction results and continuously analyze and check the validity to get a perfect conclusion. The researcher continuously analyzes the results of data reduction to answer the question posed and come to a perfect conclusion.