

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative approach because its focus is to understand students' experiences in the context of listening learning. This approach allows the researcher to observe phenomena directly in natural conditions and interpret the meanings that emerge from the participants' perspectives, as suggested by Sugiyono (2019). In line with this, Creswell (2013) emphasizes that qualitative research allows the researcher to capture individual experiences in depth through data obtained directly from them. Therefore, the researcher positions the qualitative approach as the most appropriate foundation for exploring students' subjectivity and interpretations of listening tasks.

The specific design used is Narrative Inquiry, a strategy that focuses on the stories or lived experiences of participants. Drawing on the fundamental framework of Clandinin and Connelly (2000), this study views human experience as a story lived and told in a meaningful sequence. Creswell (2013) further explains that this design helps the researcher understand how individuals narrate meaning through a series of events, interactions, and contexts they experience. Thus, the researcher establishes Narrative Inquiry as the primary instrument to renarrate the challenges, strategies, and personal reflections of students during the Academic Listening course.

This study takes a micro-longitudinal strategy, concentrating on a "critical incident" (the intense IELTS simulation), whereas classic narrative inquiry frequently covers longer time periods. According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), narrative inquiry is characterized by the depth of "meaning-making" from an experience rather than just its duration. The participants' emotional and cognitive experiences were compressed by the high-stakes nature of the IELTS simulation, resulting in a "density of experience" that produced rich narrative data comparable to lengthier, less intense periods.

B. Research Setting

This research was conducted at the English Education Study Program, UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, specifically in the Academic Listening course. The selection of this location was based on a preliminary study conducted in early December 2025. Through communication with the course lecturer, Thaibatun Nisa, M.Pd. (see Appendix IV), it was confirmed that the course adopts competency-based listening tasks aligned with IELTS standards. Specifically, the lecturer implements the 'Weak Version' of the TBLT framework (Littlewood, 2004), where language forms are still explicitly discussed to support students' listening comprehension. Data collection took place from December 1 to 15, 2025, focusing on the IELTS simulation held on December 8 - 9, 2025. In line with Creswell (2013), qualitative research can focus on a specific information-rich event to be explored in depth. The researcher specifically chose the IELTS Simulation session as the observational focal point because it serves as a 'critical

incident'. The high-stakes nature and difficulty of IELTS trigger intense cognitive and emotional responses from students, providing rich data for narrative inquiry compared to routine listening tasks.

C. Participants

The participants in this study were four students (coded as S1, S2, S3, and S4) selected using purposive sampling. According to Nyimbili and Nyimbili (2024), participants in narrative research must have direct and relevant experience with the phenomenon under investigation to provide rich narrative accounts. To ensure rich data variation, the participants were identified based on recommendations from the course lecturer who understood their classroom behavior. The selection criteria focused on representing contrasting characteristics: students with high engagement versus passive engagement, and students who displayed visible anxiety versus those who appeared calm during the simulation. By establishing these specific criteria, the researcher aims to highlight the uniqueness of each individual's narrative regarding their anxiety management and learning strategies. Participation was voluntary with informed consent, where each student agreed to share their stories regarding the learning process.

D. Data

The primary data in this study are the narratives of students' experiences obtained through in-depth interviews. Creswell (2013) explains that

qualitative studies generally rely on multiple data sources to provide a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences. As supporting data, this study used field notes to provide contextual confirmation of the narratives shared by students. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the combination of verbal narratives and field notes generates a holistic understanding of the dynamic interaction between students and their learning environment.

E. Technique of Data Collection

To obtain a comprehensive and valid understanding of the students' experiences, the researcher employed two main data collection techniques. These techniques were designed to capture both the participants' internal reflections and their external behaviors during the learning process. The details of these techniques are as follows:

- 1) In-depth Interview: Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to allow participants to retrospectively retell their experiences chronologically. Creswell (2013) affirms that interviews in qualitative research provide space for researchers to explore meanings constructed by participants. In this study, interview questions were developed based on observation results to clarify phenomena occurring in the classroom, following Merriam and Tisdell (2016). Based on this, the researcher positions the semi-structured interview as the main tool to explore affective and cognitive dimensions.

- 2) Observation: Non-participant observation was conducted to record learning situations and students' non-verbal responses. Sugiyono (2019) explains that observation is used to capture behaviors that may not be fully revealed through verbal data alone. Therefore, the researcher establishes observation as a reinforcing technique to validate participant narratives through real behavior in the classroom.

F. Research Instrument

in qualitative research, the researcher serves as the key instrument (human instrument) who is responsible for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data. To support this role, the researcher developed two physical instruments: an interview guide and a field notes sheet. These instruments were designed to capture the richness of students' experiences with in the narrative inquiry framework.

The interview guide was developed based on the research focus, encompassing the TBLT stages (pre-task, task cycle, and post-task) and specific elements of students' experiences. The interview guide was developed based on the TBLT framework proposed by Willis (2021), which consists of three main stages as described in Table 2.1 (see Chapter II). The guide consists of open-ended questions to allow participants to recount their stories freely and deeply. While the questions provided a general structure, the interview flow remained flexible to accommodate the natural development of the participants' narratives. All interviews were recorded with participant consent and

subsequently transcribed for narrative analysis. The detailed interview guide is provided in Appendix III.

Additionally, observation sheets were utilized to record the learning environment in the Academic Listening course. This instrument focused on several key aspects, including the types of listening tasks, students' non-verbal responses, student-lecturer interactions, and overall classroom dynamics. These observations were recorded as field notes, enabling the researcher to capture the nuanced details of the context as the learning process unfolded. The observation sheet is presented in Appendix III.

To ensure the relevance and adequacy of these instruments, both the interview guide and observation sheets were reviewed by the thesis supervisor before field implementation. This validation process was conducted to maintain the content validity of the instruments. Furthermore, as both instruments were developed entirely by the researcher to suit the objectives of Narrative Inquiry, the researcher ensures that the instruments have been calibrated to explore students' internal thoughts and external behaviors effectively. To ensure the validity of the narrative reconstruction, the researcher conducted Member Checking. The drafted stories were shown back to the participants via WhatsApp to confirm that the researcher's interpretation aligned with their actual feelings and experiences, minimizing researcher bias.

G. Data Analysis

Data from interviews and observations were analyzed gradually throughout the research process. In qualitative research, analysis conducted concurrently with data collection helps the researcher understand patterns that emerge early on, as suggested by Creswell (2013). The analysis began with transcribing all interview recordings and reading them repeatedly to capture the essence of the experiences significant to each participant. Subsequently, the researcher performed initial coding to mark recurring statements or events, which were then grouped into categories describing the main themes of students' experiences during TBLT-based listening tasks.

This process was followed by re-storying, where the researcher rearranged the raw data into a chronological narrative to provide a clear flow of each student's journey. In this stage, the researcher specifically adopted the Three-Dimensional Space Narrative Structure proposed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000). The data were mapped onto three dimensions: sociality (personal feelings and social interactions), temporality (past experiences and present actions), and place (the specific context of the IELTS simulation classroom). By utilizing this framework, the researcher could analyze how students' internal interpretations were influenced by their learning history and the classroom environment.

To ensure the depth and accuracy of the analysis, observation notes were used as part of the triangulation process. This step was taken to ensure

that the participants' stories corresponded to the actual learning situations that occurred in the classroom, in accordance with the triangulation principles suggested by Sugiyono (2019). Through these systematic stages, the researcher obtained a comprehensive narrative picture of how students interpreted TBLT in their listening learning process. Thus, the researcher positions this multi-dimensional analysis as the primary lens to dissect the participants' complex lived stories in Chapter IV.