

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Design

Based on research approach theory, there are two main types of research design: qualitative and quantitative. According to Creswell (1994), as cited in Creswell (2013) describes qualitative research as an inquiry process that seeks to understand a social or human issue by employing distinct methodological traditions. It focuses on building a complex, holistic perspective, analyzing words, capturing the detailed views of participants, and conducting studies in natural settings.

This study adopts a qualitative research design using a narrative inquiry approach. According to Creswell et al. (2007), as cited in Creswell (2013) narrative research focuses on exploring individuals' life experiences over time. Furthermore, Clandinin and Connelly (2000), as cited in Creswell (2013) emphasize that narrative inquiry entails collaboration between researchers and participants over time, across various settings, and through social interactions. This collaboration allows the researcher to continually refine the narrative as additional data is collected and analyzed.

In this study, narrative inquiry is used to explore the English learning strategies of students through Digital Game-Based Language Learning

(DGBLL). Following the research procedure outlined by Creswell (2013), this study applies a systematic approach to narrative inquiry, adapted to its specific context. The steps are as follows:

Step 1: Identify the phenomenon to explore

The phenomenon explored in this study is the role of Game-based English Learning in improving English Education Department students' motivation and interactivity at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin. This stage identifies issues, challenges, and significance of integrating Digital games to improve students' communicative competence.

Step 2: Select one or more participants to study

Participants were selected based on their active involvement in the Use of Digital Games in Learning and their experiences in learning English through DGBLL. These participants were selected based on their ability to provide meaningful insights into the focus of the study.

Step 3: Collect the stories from participants

Participants were invited to share their experiences of using digital games in english learning. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews and other relevant materials, such as reflections or class activities, to gather rich narratives about their experiences.

Step 4: Re-story or retell the participants' stories

The collected narratives are analyzed and restructured to highlight key elements of the participants' experiences. This step includes identifying patterns and themes from interviews and other data sources, ensuring the narratives align with the research focus.

Step 5: Collaborate with participants

Throughout the process, the researcher collaborates closely with participants to ensure their stories are accurately represented. This includes clarifying meanings, validating interpretations, and encouraging participants to share both positive and challenging experiences related to their learning journey.

Step 6: Write a narrative of the participants' experiences

The findings are written in narrative form, structured around key themes identified during the analysis. These themes reflect participants' experiences in Game-Based English Learning, reflecting individual perspectives and shared patterns.

Step 7: Validate the findings

To ensure the accuracy and trustworthiness of the findings, validation processes such as member checking and triangulation are employed. The

researcher collaborates with participants to confirm the narratives and themes, ensuring that the final report authentically represents their experiences.

B. Research Setting

This research was conducted at the State Islamic University (UIN) Antasari Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, Indonesia. UIN Antasari was chosen as the research location because this institution has implemented the Digital Game-Based Language Learning (DGBLL) learning approach in the English language learning process. This program allows students to teach English through digital games designed to improve their language skills, such as language skills, grammar, and communication.

English Education Department Students at UIN Antasari are directly involved in this English language learning method, teaching the language in their academics, as well as using game-based technology to support the learning process. Their perspectives provide valuable information on how the use of DGBLL affects their learning experience, helps them face challenges, and supports the development of English language skills. DGBLL provides many benefits in language learning, including increasing student motivation, helping them understand the material better, and creating an immersive and enjoyable learning environment.

This research was conducted over a two-month period, from February 5

to April 5, 2026. During this period, data were collected through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. The data collection process was designed to explore students' experiences and English learning strategies while engaging with DGBLL in both classroom and out-of-class learning contexts.

C. Research Participants

Participants in this research are two English Education Department students at the State Islamic University (UIN) Antasari Banjarmasin in South Kalimantan, Indonesia, who are studying English using the Digital Game-Based Language studying (DGBLL) technique. These students were chosen as participants because they are actively involved in using DGBLL to improve their English ability. They practice English in a digital game-based learning environment that aims to improve their vocabulary, grammar, and communication abilities. Their opinions give essential insights into how the usage of DGBLL affects their learning experiences, how they overcome obstacles, and the rewards they perceive along the process.

To select the participants, the researcher initially conducted observations in two classes of the English Education Department, namely 23 A and 23 C. During the observation process, the researcher focused on students' participation and classroom activities related to the implementation of digital game-based learning in English learning. After the observations were

completed, the researcher distributed a Google Form to the students who were involved in the learning activities. The Google Form consisted of several simple questions concerning students' experiences, frequency of use, and familiarity with digital games in English learning. Based on the responses obtained from the Google Form, the researcher selected participants who met the predetermined criteria and were considered relevant to the focus and objectives of this study.

Participants were be chosen using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is the deliberate selection of people based on their relevance to the study objectives and their capacity to deliver rich and relevant information (Tajik et al., 2024). This method allows researchers to concentrate on information-rich situations and get in-depth insights into the topic being studied (Tajik et al., 2024). Purposive sampling is used in this study to guarantee that the selected students have firsthand experience with DGBLL and can provide extensive and genuine accounts of their learning experiences.

The researcher initially made preliminary observations to discover which classes or semester groups are actively using DGBLL during English learning activities in order to identify suitable participants. In order to ensure that the information gathered accurately reflects real and significant experiences with digital game-based learning, students who exhibit active engagement and sincere involvement in DGBLL will subsequently be purposefully chosen for

interviews.

The two participant were chosen based on the result of Google Form responses. Throughout the study process, ethical principles such as informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity will be upheld. This study is to offer a thorough knowledge of how DGBLL might assist English learning and significantly contribute to educational innovation at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, Indonesia, by concentrating on students' experiences.

D. Data

In this study, data were collected through observation and open-ended interviews with English Education Department students of UIN Antasari Banjarmasin who engage in Digital Game-Based Language Learning (DGBLL) as a medium for learning English. The purpose of collecting these data is to obtain comprehensive information regarding students' experiences and the English learning strategies they employ while interacting with digital games, including the challenges they encounter during the learning process.

Observation was conducted to obtain contextual data about participants' learning activities while playing digital games. Through this technique, the researcher directly observed how participants interacted with game features, responded to English language input, and applied various strategies to

understand and produce English. Observation enables the researcher to capture natural learning behaviors and real learning situations, thereby providing authentic data that may not be fully revealed through interviews alone.

In addition, open-ended interviews were conducted to gain deeper insights into participants' personal experiences, perceptions, and reflections regarding the use of digital games for English learning. This type of interview allows participants to express their thoughts, feelings, and strategies freely without being restricted by predetermined answer options. As a result, the researcher can obtain rich, detailed, and meaningful data that reflect participants' perspectives.

By combining observation and interviews, this study produces comprehensive and credible data. Observation provides evidence of actual learning behaviors, while interviews uncover the underlying reasons, motivations, and interpretations behind those behaviors. Therefore, the data collected through these techniques are expected to be relevant, authentic, and supportive of the research objectives.

E. Technique of Data Collection

Data collection is a crucial process for obtaining the necessary information to achieve the objectives of the research. In conducting Narrative Inquiry in this study, the researcher uses interviews as the primary technique

to collect the data. This technique is considered appropriate because narrative inquiry focuses on exploring participants' personal stories and lived experiences in depth.

The research employs a narrative interview approach to investigate how English Education Department students at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin describe their experiences and learning strategies while engaging with Digital Game-Based Language Learning (DGBLL). Interviews are widely used in qualitative research because they aim to reveal individuals' experiences and how they interpret those experiences. According to Dursun (2023), interviews seek to obtain information by asking participants questions about a particular subject and exploring their knowledge, feelings, intentions, and thoughts in depth. Through this process, the researcher can understand the participants' perspectives by viewing events from their point of view.

Before conducting the semi-structured interviews, the researcher distributed a Google Form as a preliminary data collection tool to identify participants who met the research criteria. The Google Form collected general information regarding students' experiences with Digital Game-Based Language Learning (DGBLL), including whether they had used digital game-based platforms, the learning context (inside or outside the classroom), the frequency and duration of use, and the digital game-based platforms they had experienced. The information obtained from the Google Form was used to

support the participant selection process before the interviews were conducted.

Furthermore, interviews enable researchers to access aspects that cannot be directly observed, such as perceptions, meanings, and internal experiences. Dursun (2023) explains that people's feelings, thoughts, and interpretations of phenomena can only be learned by asking them directly through interviews. Therefore, this technique is suitable for exploring students' experiences in using digital games as tools for English learning and the strategies they employ during the process.

The data are collected through semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with selected participants. This format allows the researcher to prepare guiding questions while still providing flexibility for participants to elaborate on their narratives. The interviews focus on students' experiences using digital games for learning English, the strategies they apply to improve their English skills, the challenges they encounter, and how they respond to those challenges within a game-based learning environment.

To ensure credibility and accuracy, the interviews are audio-recorded with participants' consent. Recording helps capture participants' responses precisely and reduces the risk of misinterpretation during analysis. In addition, field notes are taken to document contextual information and non-verbal cues

that may enrich the interpretation of the data.

The data collection process aligns with the objectives of the study, which aim to explore students' experiences and identify the English learning strategies they employ while engaging with digital games. By focusing on participants' narratives, this technique enables the researcher to obtain detailed, authentic, and meaningful insights into how DGBLL influences students' language learning processes.

1. Observation

Classroom observations provide a direct view of how students interact with DGBLL during English language learning sessions at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin. Observations focus on identifying learning strategies such as collaboration, task management, and in-game problem-solving. According to Creswell (2014), as mentioned in Ishtiaq (2019) observation in qualitative research involves systematically recording behaviors and interactions within a natural setting to understand the studied phenomenon. Observations are documented using a structured observation sheet to ensure consistency and reliability.

2. Google Form

Google Form was used as a preliminary data collection instrument to identify students who met the participant criteria before the interview stage. The form collected general information about students' experiences

with Digital Game-Based Language Learning (DGBLL), including whether they had used digital game-based platforms for learning English, the learning contexts in which DGBLL was implemented (inside or outside the classroom), the frequency and duration of use, and the digital game-based platforms they had experienced. The information obtained from the Google Form was not analyzed as the primary research data but served as supporting data for participant selection. This process enabled the researcher to identify participants who had sufficient experience with DGBLL and were able to provide rich and relevant narratives during the semi-structured interviews.

3. Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with students are conducted to explore their experiences, learning strategies, and challenges in using Digital Game-Based Language Learning (DGBLL). This method follows Creswell's (2014), as cited in Ishtiaq (2019) qualitative approach, which emphasizes interviews as a primary technique for collecting data through open-ended questions. The researcher prepares guiding questions related to the research objectives while allowing flexibility for follow-up questions based on participants' responses. This approach enables the researcher to obtain in-depth information about how students use digital games to learn English, the strategies they employ, and the difficulties they encounter.

F. Research Instrument

In this research, the researcher used three instruments, namely an observation sheet, a Google Form and a semi-structured interview guideline. These instruments were used to collect data related to students' experiences and English learning strategies through Digital Game-Based Language Learning (DGBLL). The observation sheet was used to record the learning activities directly in the classroom. The Google Form was used as a preliminary instrument to identify students who met the participant criteria before the interview stage, while the semi-structured interview guideline was used to explore students' experiences, strategies, challenges, and responses toward the use of digital games in English learning. The use of these instruments is in line with the qualitative approach, which emphasizes understanding participants' experiences, perspectives, and behaviors in a natural context Creswell (2013).

a. Observation Sheet

The observation sheet was used to record the activities of the lecturer and students during the learning process. According to Creswell (2013), observation in qualitative research involves systematically recording participants' behavior and interactions in a natural setting. In this study, the researcher recorded several important aspects, such as the date, time, class, observed activities, and observation analysis. The lecturer's activities observed included opening the lesson, explaining the game rules, using Bamboozle as a learning medium, guiding the game, asking students to

read and translate the questions, and providing feedback. Meanwhile, the students' activities observed included paying attention to the lecturer's explanation, participating in the game, discussing with classmates, responding to scores, and being involved in reading and translating the questions.

The observation was conducted in two classes of the English Education Department, namely class 23 A and class 23 C, during the Cross Cultural Communication course that used Bamboozle as a learning medium. During the observation, the researcher recorded how the lecturer guided the game and how the students participated in the learning activity. The observation results showed that the students were active, enthusiastic, involved in peer discussion, and responded positively to the feedback and scores given by the lecturer. The observation data were then used to support the interview data in order to provide a clearer description of the implementation of DGBLL in the classroom.

b. Google Form Sheet

The Google Form was used as a preliminary research instrument to identify students who met the participant criteria before the main data collection process. It was designed to collect general information about students' experiences with Digital Game-Based Language Learning (DGBLL), including whether they had used digital game-based platforms

for learning English, the learning contexts in which DGBLL was implemented (inside or outside the classroom), the frequency and duration of use, and the digital game-based platforms they had experienced. The information obtained from the Google Form was used to support the participant selection process by identifying students who had sufficient experience with DGBLL and were able to provide relevant and meaningful narratives during the semi-structured interviews. Therefore, the Google Form functioned as a screening instrument rather than as the primary source of research data.

c. Interview Guideline

The semi-structured interview guideline was used as a guide for conducting interviews with the selected participants. Creswell (2013) states that interviews in qualitative research are used to collect data through open-ended questions, allowing participants to express their experiences and perspectives in depth. In addition, Dursun (2023) explains that interviews help researchers obtain direct information from participants regarding their experiences, thoughts, and feelings about a particular topic. Therefore, the interview questions in this study were designed in an open-ended format so that the participants could provide broad and detailed answers based on their experiences in using DGBLL.

The interview questions were developed based on the two research questions. The questions for the first research question focused on students' experiences in using digital games for English learning, such as their understanding of DGBLL, the types of games they used, their motivation, perceived benefits, difficulties, and comparison with traditional learning methods. Meanwhile, the questions for the second research question focused on students' learning strategies in improving their English through digital games. These strategies included understanding vocabulary and language structures, solving problems, setting learning goals, planning learning activities, monitoring progress, interacting with others, maintaining motivation, managing anxiety, building confidence, and using feedback from the games.

In conducting the interview, the researcher followed several steps. First, the researcher prepared the interview questions based on the research questions and the focus of the study. Second, the researcher interviewed the participants by using the prepared questions while also allowing them to explain their answers freely. Third, the researcher asked follow-up questions when the participants' answers needed further clarification. The interview was recorded with the participants' consent to ensure the accuracy of the data. After the interview was completed, the researcher

transcribed the data and organized the results based on the research questions for further analysis.

G. Data Analysis

This study employs Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006), a systematic method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns within qualitative data. This approach is particularly suitable for this research as it provides deeper insights into how English Education Department students at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin utilize strategies in Digital Game-Based Language Learning (DGBLL) to improve their English language skills. Additionally, the analysis follows the framework proposed by Miles et al. (2014), ensuring that data management is conducted in a structured and transparent manner. Below are the detailed steps involved in the data analysis:

1. Data Familiarization

The first step in the analysis involves immersing fully in the data to develop a comprehensive understanding of its content. This includes transcribing semi-structured interviews, reading and re-reading observation notes. During this phase, the researcher identifies and highlights emerging patterns related to the research objectives, such as “collaborative problem-solving,” “using rewards to motivate learning,” and “overcoming technical challenges.” The researcher takes detailed notes on initial observations and reflections, which serve as the foundation

for the subsequent phases of analysis. This process ensures that all critical data is captured and no meaningful insights are overlooked.

2. Data Reduction

In line with the Miles et al. (2014) Interactive Model of Data Analysis, data reduction is a crucial step. It involves condensing large volumes of raw data into manageable segments while retaining relevant and meaningful information. Data are categorized into groups reflecting their content, such as "vocabulary-building strategies," "handling gameplay challenges," and "in-game communication." Any irrelevant, ambiguous, or redundant data are excluded, ensuring that the analysis remains focused on addressing the research questions. This process allows the researcher to focus on the most important aspects of the data while maintaining its connection to the overall objectives of the study.

3. Data Display

Once the data has been reduced and coded, the next step involves organizing the findings into visual displays, such as matrices, charts, or tables. These visual tools reveal patterns and relationships, making interpretation easier. For instance, a table might display the frequency of specific strategies students employ in different types of games, or a matrix might illustrate the relationship between game mechanics and learning outcomes. By organizing the data visually, the researcher can uncover

insights that might not be apparent from raw text, facilitating a more comprehensive understanding of the data.

4. Theme Identification and Refinement

After organizing the data, the researcher groups related codes into broader themes. These themes represent significant patterns or insights that emerge from the data. Examples of potential themes include “Effective Strategies in DGBLL,” “Challenges in Digital Game Environments,” and “Motivational Impacts of Game-Based Learning.” Sub-themes, such as “collaborative learning in multiplayer settings” or “adaptive use of feedback systems,” capture specific aspects within each broader theme. These themes are reviewed and refined to ensure they align with the research focus and accurately reflect the data. Cross-checking the themes against the original data helps confirm their validity and relevance, ensuring that they are both comprehensive and meaningful.

5. Drawing Conclusions and Producing the Report

In the final step, the themes and patterns are synthesized to generate meaningful conclusions addressing the research questions. The findings are presented in a narrative format, enriched with direct quotes and examples from the data. For instance, a finding might describe how collaborative gameplay fosters better language comprehension, supported by a quote from a student about working with teammates to solve in-game challenges. Additionally, the analysis highlights how specific game elements, such as feedback systems and reward mechanisms, enhance engagement and learning outcomes. The report concludes by offering practical recommendations for educators and game designers to optimize the use of DGBLL in language education.

6. Ensuring Rigor and Credibility

To ensure credibility and reliability, this study employs various validation techniques. Member checking is conducted by sharing findings with participants to confirm their accuracy. Triangulation is achieved by cross-referencing data from interviews, and observations. Efforts are also made to address conflicting data, ensuring a balanced and comprehensive interpretation. These strategies enhance the robustness and trustworthiness of the findings.

By following this systematic approach, the data analysis ensures that the findings are grounded in evidence and provide valuable insights into how students utilize DGBLL to enhance their English learning. This process not only addresses the research objectives but also offers practical recommendations for improving language education through digital game-based methods.