

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter describes the methods used in this study. It covers the research design, research setting, participants, research data, data collection techniques, research instruments, and data analysis techniques. Each section describes the research procedures used to systematically collect and analyze data in order to answer the research questions. In addition, this chapter explains the stages of the research process so that the data collection and analysis processes can be clearly understood. Thus, this chapter serves as the methodological foundation for the presentation of the research results in the following chapter.

A. Research Design

The methodology used in this research study is a Qualitative approach. It is one of the ideal methods to explore personal experiences, emotions, and perspectives, which align with the focus on learners' language learning journeys. Then the kind of research design employed in this research study is Photovoice. According to Wang and Burris (1997), based on the tradition of Participatory Action Research (PAR), Photovoice is a participatory method of inquiry that allows community members to visually record and express their knowledge, voices, and lived experiences related to issues impacting their lives. It also

prioritizes these voices as a foundation for critical reflection on power, structures, and practices (Call-Cummings et al., 2019).

This research used Photovoice to explore learners' experiences in improving their English skills and how did they face the challenges of learning English in each phase of their language learning journey. The steps in this photovoice study were adapted from the photovoice methodology guide proposed by Sutton-Brown (2014), with several adjustments to fit the context of the study on the English language learning journey of EFL students. These adjustments were made because the photovoice methodology is flexible and can be adapted to the research objectives and context. As explained by Wang and Burris (1997), photovoice can be adapted to meet the needs of different participants, groups, communities, and research issues.

The research steps are as follows:

1. Participant Recruitment and Selection

In this step the researcher identified the 5 potential participants for this research based on criteria determined by the researcher, the researcher decided to search the learners from students who are studying in college, especially 8th semester student English majors at UIN antasari, because the researcher viewed that students have quite a lot of experience in English compared to students of other majors and school-level students.

2. Introduction to the Photovoice Methodology

After the participants were selected, the researcher introduced the Photovoice methodology to all participants. At this point, the researcher explained the basic concepts of Photovoice, how to choose the photos, the criteria for the photos, and the procedures for the activities to be carried out during the study. The purpose of this explanation was to help participants understand how the use of photo illustrated their experiences learning English.

3. Obtaining Informed Consent

After receiving an explanation of the study, the researcher asked the participants for their consent to participate in the study. Consent was given online via WhatsApp after the participants understood how their data would be used, the confidentiality of their identities, and their rights as research participants.

4. Photo Selection and Collection

Participants were then asked to select a photo that illustrates their experience in their English language learning journey, which has helped improve their English proficiency. The photo could portray a moment involving the participant, a specific location, a moment or an illustration of an activity that captures a meaningful learning experience in their English language learning process. Before the photo-interview session began, participants were asked to prepare the photo they would present and send it to the researcher via WhatsApp. After all photos were

submitted, the researcher collected them as primary data for the photovoice study. Participants were also interviewed about the meaning or story behind the photo they selected to support the discussion and data analysis process.

5. Photo-Interview Session

The participants were interviewed individually about the stories behind the photos they had prepared, specifically regarding how their experiences had enhanced their English language skills throughout their English learning journey. This was followed by an interview session on the challenges participants faced during the learning process throughout their lifelong English language learning journey. This photo-interviews would help them explore their progress in learning English more deeply and personally.

6. Preparation for Data Analysis

Before the analysis began, the researcher prepared all the data collected during the study, such as photographs and the transcripts of photo-interview provided by the participants. All of this data was then organized and categorized based on emerging themes or experiences to facilitate the subsequent data analysis process.

7. Thematic Analysis and Interpretation of Findings

The data was then analyzed using thematic analysis to identify themes that emerged from the participants' experiences. The analysis was

conducted on the participants' photo-interview, to understand their experiences in the process of learning English as EFL learners. The results of this analysis were then used to address the research focus.

B. Research Setting

This study was conducted at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, a top Islamic University in Kalimantan at Jl. A. Yani KM 4.5, Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, Indonesia. The university is well known for its commitment in integrating Islamic values with the quality education. I chose UIN Antasari at English Department program as my research setting because of its supportive academic context for English language learning.

C. Participants

In this study, the participants consisted of five students who were in their eighth semester of undergraduate program in English language education, with one male and four female students, they participated in this research to reflect on their English language learning journey. Their ages ranged from 21 to 23 years old. Participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling. According to Sugiyono (2013), purposive sampling is a technique for selecting data sources based on specific criteria. The criteria for participants in this study are as follows:

1. They had been learning English since elementary school, so they were considered to have started learning English early and had more variety of

learning experiences.

2. They are undergraduate students in the English language education program, and
3. They were in their final semester “the eighth semester” at the time this study was conducted and were considered to have quite a lot of language learning experience during their undergraduate studies and they also had gone through various phases in their English language learning journey.

First, the researcher contacted each student individually via WhatsApp and scheduled a specific time to meet through G-Meet. Then, before these virtual interview meetings began, the researcher briefly explained the ethical considerations of the study to all participants. In line with Dearnley (2005), ethical principles in qualitative interviews include mutual respect, voluntary participation, and the protection of participants’ rights during the research process. Participants were provided with an explanation of the research objectives, data confidentiality, the use of photographs and interview results, as well as their right to leave the study at any time without pressure. The researchers also ensured that the interview process was conducted in a respectful and collaborative manner to maintain participants’ comfort and trust throughout the study. And here is the detailed background information on the participants:

Tables 3. 1 Participants' Demographic Information

No.	Pseudonyms	Gender	Previous School
1.	Elsa	Female	- Elementary School - Islamic Boarding School (Junior High School & Senior High School)
2.	Anna	Female	- Elementary School - Islamic Boarding School (Junior High School & Senior High School)
3.	Belle	Female	- Elementary School - Public School (Junior High School & Senior High School)
4.	Alice	Female	- Elementary School - Public School (Junior High School & Senior High School)
5.	Olaf	Male	- Elementary School - Islamic Boarding School (Junior High School & Senior High School)

D. Data

The data source for this study was primary data. According to Sugiyono (2013), primary data is a data source that directly provides data to the data collector or researcher. In this study, the participants served as the data source based on their experiences in learning English, from the beginning of the learning process to the present. The data for this study were collected through photo-based interviews, which included photographs selected by the participants and transcripts of the interviews conducted during sessions with the researcher. The data describe meaningful experiences in the participants' English language learning journeys, such as how these experiences helped improve their English

proficiency, as well as the various challenges they faced and how they overcame them during the English language learning process.

E. Technique of Data Collection

In this study the researcher used Photovoice, so the researcher employed two techniques for data collection in order to gather the information required to support the success of the study. They are Photo Elicitation and Interview.

1. Photo Elicitation

Photo elicitation is an interview technique that uses photos as stimuli to help participants express their experiences, thoughts, and perspectives in greater depth. According to Harper (2002), photo elicitation is conducted by including photos in the interview process so that the photos can provoke discussions and reflections among participants regarding the topic under study. Tinkler (2014) added that the use of photos can encourage participants to recall their experiences, facilitate communication during interviews, and help researchers obtain richer and more meaningful data. In photovoice research, photo elicitation is used to help participants reflect on the photos they have produced and explain the meanings behind them, thereby generating more in-depth personal narratives (Carlson et al., 2006)

2. Interview

Interview, as defined by Valeria Janesick is "a meeting of two persons to exchange information and ideas through questions and responses, resulting in

communication and joint construction of meaning about a particular topic" (Esterberg, 2002). This study employed semi-structured interview involving five participants. Semi-structured interview is an interview conducted with flexible questions. This means that the researcher has a list of questions or main topics to explore, but still gives the informant room to speak freely and in depth (Fadila et al., 2025). Each participant was interviewed individually to explore their personal learning experiences, including their reflective responses toward the moments captured in their photographs. The data were collected in four different time, adapting to the participants' availability. The schedule for data collection is as follows:

Tables 3. 2 The Schedule of Data Collection

Date	Activities	Participant
January 16 th 2026	Photo Elicitation and Interview	Belle
January 21 st 2026	Photo Elicitation and Interview	Anna
January 23 rd 2026	Photo Elicitation and Interview	Elsa
January 23 rd 2026	Photo Elicitation and Interview	Alice
January 25 th 2026	Photo Elicitation and Interview	Olaf

F. Research Instrument

1. Photo Elicitation Guidelines

The instrument took the form of photo elicitation, where participants chose one picture and described the picture that they considered to be representative of their English learning experiences in improving English language skills through their language learning journey. A more detailed explanation of the photo elicitation guidelines is presented in the appendix tables.

2. Interview Guidelines

The interview guide was used to gather information about the participants' experiences in the English language learning process. This instrument took the form of a semi-structured interview. According to (Dearnley, 2005), a semi-structured interview is one in which all participants are asked the same questions within a flexible framework. In general, the interview questions in this study focus on learning experiences, the development of English language skills, participants' feelings during the learning process, the challenges they faced, and participants' reflections on their learning experiences as depicted in the photos they selected. A more detailed explanation of the interview guidelines is provided in the tables in the appendix.

G. Data Analysis

Data analysis is an important aspect of research because the findings provide the study's ultimate conclusion. The process of looking at tabulated data

to identify facts of a kind or significance is called "data analysis." Qualitative data is typically represented by words. Researchers must arrange, classify, or code vast amounts of data in order to explain and interpret it. The researcher analyzed the study's data using thematic analysis.

The qualitative information gathered from students' photos and interview transcripts was examined using thematic analysis in this study. Thematic analysis is a technique for finding, examining, and summarizing patterns (themes) in data. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), a theme captured important meaning in relation to the research questions and reflects repeated ideas or insights across the dataset. The analysis was conducted in accordance with Braun and Clarke (2006) in six steps:

1. Familiarizing with the data

The researcher carefully reviewed all photos and interview transcripts. This step involved reading and re-reading the materials while taking notes on initial observations and patterns.

2. Generating initial codes

The researchers highlighted and color-coded relevant sections of the students' photo interview transcripts. Each code represents a key idea related to their English language learning experiences or the challenges they faced.

3. Searching for themes

The codes were then grouped into broader themes. The researcher identified repeated patterns based on the Photovoice framework, such as:

For research question 1:

- a. Experience: What experience or moment is shown in the photo.
- b. Improvement: How did it help the learner improve.
- c. Emotion: How did the learner feel during that experience.
- d. Lesson Learned/Reflection: What did the learner learn from the experience.

For research question 2:

- a. Challenge Type: What problem did the learner face.
- b. Learning Phase: When did this happen.
- c. Emotional Response: How did they feel.
- d. Coping Strategy: How did they handle it

4. Reviewing themes

The researcher re-examined all data to ensure that the themes accurately represented the content and were relevant to the research questions. Any overlapping or unclear codes were revised or merged.

5. Defining and naming themes

During the defining and naming themes stage, the researcher reviewed the themes that had emerged from the data coding process to ensure that each theme had a clear meaning and focus. The researcher then identified the core of each theme based on the participants' English learning experiences as shared during

the photo-interview sessions, and assigned representative names to the themes in accordance with the patterns found in the data.

6. Producing the report

In the final step, the researcher selected representative quotes and photographs to illustrate each theme. These examples were used to support the findings and answer the two main research questions, such as how students improved their English skills and what challenges they faced during the learning journey.

This analysis process helped the researcher gain a deeper understanding of students' personal experiences in learning English. The use of photograph made it easier for participants to express meaningful moments, which were then explored further through photo-interviews. Lincoln and Guba's proposed four criteria for evaluating a qualitative investigation's, there are Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability (in Alexander, 2019).

1. Credibility

Credibility is comparable to internal validity in positivist research, or faith in the veracity of the results. Triangulation and member checking were thus employed by the researcher.

- a. The method used to make sure an account is rich, solid, thorough, and well-developed is called triangulation.

- b. The most important step that able to be taken to increase a research's credibility is member checking. This can be done both formally and informally because opportunities for member checks may arise during regular observation and conversation

2. Transferability

To prove the transferability of this study, a database that makes transferability judgments possible on the part of potential appliers should be provided.

3. Dependability and Confirmability

To establish the dependability and confirmability of the study, the researcher conducted a confirmability audit of the product to provide data that supported the findings, interpretations, and recommendations, and a dependability audit of the inquiry process to ensure that the study was reliable and confirmable. Data supported each finding to conduct these types of audits, and prospective auditors were given access to all data.