

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Design

Research design is defined as the strategy to organize the research so that the researcher can gain valid data which fit the characteristics of variables and the objectives of the study. There are three main types of research design based on theory: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods, as explained by (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In qualitative research, the researcher must not only mention the approach used, but also explain the reasons for choosing a qualitative design and the type of research applied, such as ethnography, case study, narrative inquiry, photovoice, phenomenology, which must be supported by adequate theory.

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative approach. According to (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), qualitative research is a method for exploring and understanding the meanings that individuals or groups give to social or human problems. Qualitative research allows a researcher to investigate participants' lived experiences in natural settings, emphasizing descriptive data and meaning rather than measurement and generalization (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Recent literature confirms that qualitative design is suitable for educational studies that explore personal experiences and processes in depth because it reveals complex social phenomena through participants' perspectives.

Qualitative research design was chosen because the purpose of this study is to explore pre-service teachers' experiences in engaging students through active learning strategies during classroom practice. Unlike quantitative research that focuses on numerical analysis, or mixed methods that combine both, qualitative design enables the researcher to capture rich, contextualized narratives about how participants interpret and make sense of their teaching experiences. This aligns with other recent discussions in educational research emphasizing the role of qualitative design in revealing meaning and contextual factors in educational contexts.

Among various qualitative research designs such as ethnography, case study, photovoice, and phenomenology, this study employed narrative inquiry as its research method. Narrative inquiry focuses on individuals' lived experiences as expressed through their stories and is particularly appropriate when the aim is to understand personal and temporal experiences as they unfold over time. Narrative inquiry recognizes that human beings make meaning through storytelling and that narrative provides access to participants' internal perspective and experiences. Recent studies utilizing narrative inquiry in educational research have demonstrated its effectiveness in exploring teaching experiences, including teachers' reflections on instructional strategies and challenges faced in diverse contexts.

This narrative inquiry approach is used to explore pre-service teachers' experiences in engaging students through active learning strategies during their Teaching Practice II (PPL II). According to (Creswell, 2007), narrative research involves interpreting experiences that individuals live and tell as stories over time. In narrative inquiry, the researcher interprets participant stories to understand how events and actions are meaningful to them. The method emphasizes collaboration with participants to ensure credibility and accuracy of the narratives (Creswell, 2007). Narrative research typically involves collecting detailed stories through interview or other narrative sources, and then organizing these stories into themes and plausible interpretations.

The procedures taken in this research were based on Creswell's framework for narrative inquiry.

1. Step 1: Determine if the research problem best fits narrative research

This step emphasizes the focus on pre-service teachers' experiences in line with the narrative inquiry method. The researcher focused on how English Education Department students' experiences in engaging students through active learning strategies. Then, analyze which active learning strategies they use when teaching and what challenges they face when applying that strategies in classroom practice during PPL II.

2. Step 2: Select one or more individuals to study

The criteria for selecting participants are English Education Department students in UIN Antasari who are currently undergoing the Teaching Practice II (PPL II) program.

3. Step 3: Collect informations or stories from the participants

In this step, data collection involves gathering detailed stories from the selected pre-service teachers about their classroom experiences.

4. Step 4: Analyze and re-story the participants' stories

The collected stories are analyzed to identify themes such as which strategies they used, common challenges, and successful strategies. The researcher then reconstructs or re-writing these narratives in a coherent format.

5. Step 5: Collaborate with participants

The researcher kept collaborating with the participants to ensure that their stories are accurately represented

B. Research Setting

This research was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 3 Banjar (MAN 3 Banjar), located at Jl. A. Yani KM. 15.200, Gambut District, Banjar Regency, South Kalimantan Province. The research was carried out from August 25, 2025, to October 25, 2025, during the participants' teaching practicum period. The selection of MAN 3 Banjar as the research location was based on its suitability with the research focus entitled "Engaging Students

through Active Learning: A Qualitative Study on Pre-Service Teachers' Strategies in Classroom Practice.” This school regularly hosts field practice (PPL II) for pre-service teachers from universities, providing an authentic space for students to directly apply active learning strategies in real classrooms. The presence of pre-service teachers involved in the learning process allows researchers to observe in depth how active learning strategies are implemented in teaching practice.

In addition, the heterogeneous classroom conditions at MAN 3 Banjar require pre-service teachers to use various strategies to increase student engagement. This is in line with the research objective of exploring the strategies used by pre-service teachers in creating active and participatory learning. Overall, MAN 3 Banjar provides an authentic, structured, and relevant research context for examining the active learning practices carried out by pre-service teachers in real classroom situations.

C. Participants

The participants in this study were 2 students of the English Education Department at Antasari State Islamic University who were enrolled in the Teaching Practice II (PPL II) program. These participants were selected based on several criteria. First, they were actively involved on classroom teaching during the PPL II program. Second, they had direct experience in applying teaching strategies, particularly active learning strategies, in a real classroom

setting. Third, they were willing to participate in this study and share their teaching experiences through interviews and observations.

Based on the researcher's observation and prior knowledge, these participants consistently demonstrated efforts to engage their students during the teaching process. They showed initiative in creating interactive classroom activities and attempted to apply various strategies to make students more involved in learning. This condition made them suitable and relevant participants for this study, as they were considered capable of providing rich and meaningful data related to student engagement and the implementation of active learning strategies.

The participants in this study are pre-service teachers who are in the process of developing their professional teaching skills. Through their teaching practice, they encounter various classroom situations, students characteristics, and instructional challenges. Therefore, their experiences are valuable for understanding how active learning strategies are implemented and how students engage during the learning process in the classroom.

The number of participants in this study was limited to two, which is considered appropriate in qualitative research, particularly in narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry focuses on in-depth exploration of individual experiences rather than generalization. By involving a small number of participants, the researcher was able to conduct a deeper and more comprehensive analysis of each participant's teaching experience. This allowed the researcher to capture

detailed stories and meanings behind their teaching practices. Thus, selecting three participants support the aim of obtaining rich, detailed, and context-specific data.

D. Data

The data type in this study is qualitative data in the form of narratives and descriptions of pre-service teachers' experiences in implementing active learning in the classroom. The main data sources are pre-service teachers as the research participants and the classroom situations where the teaching and learning process takes place. The data focus on participants' experiences, feelings, interactions, reflections, and challenges while using active learning strategies during classroom practice.

This study uses narrative inquiry as the research method. According to (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), narrative inquiry explores experience through three dimensions: interaction, continuity, and situation. Therefore, the interview and observation guides in this study are designed based on this framework to understand pre-service teachers' lived experiences during teaching practice. (1) interaction focuses on participants' feelings, emotions, and interactions with students during the learning process; (2) continuity focuses on participants' past and present experiences, reflections, and changes throughout their teaching practice; (3) situation focuses on the classroom

context, learning environment, and situations experienced during the implementation of active learning strategies.

To collect the data, the researcher used semi-structured interviews and observations. Interviews were chosen as the main instrument because they allow participants to explain their experiences, feelings, and reflections in depth. According to (Sahoo, 2022), interviews are one of the best ways to obtain detailed information because they allow two-way communication and deeper explanations from participants. In this study, the interview focuses on exploring how pre-service teachers describe their experiences in implementing active learning strategies to engage students during classroom practice. The data obtained include participants' feelings when teaching, interactions with students, classroom experiences, meaningful moments, reflections, confidence development, and perceptions regarding the use of active learning strategies.

In addition, observations were conducted by recording activities and interactions in the classroom during learning process. According to (Creswell, 2014), observations are conducted when researchers make field notes to understand the behavior and interactions of individuals in real situations. Through classroom observations, the researcher observed how pre-service teachers implemented active learning strategies, interacted with students, responded to classroom situations, and managed teaching activities during the teaching process.

For research question 1, the data were mainly collected through interviews and supported by observations. The researcher aimed to obtain data related to interaction, continuity, and situation in order to understand how pre-service teachers describe their experiences in implementing active learning strategies to engage students in classroom practice. The data include participants' feelings and emotions while teaching, their interactions with students, memorable teaching experiences, reflections on their teaching practice, changes in confidence or teaching ability over time, classroom situations, and students' responses during active learning activities.

For research question 2, the data were mainly collected through observations and supported by interviews. The researcher aimed to examine the challenges faced by pre-service teachers when applying active learning strategies in the classroom, particularly related to the dimension of situation. Through observations, the researcher identified observable challenges during the teaching and learning process, such as classroom management difficulties, time management issues, low student participation, unexpected classroom situations, and students responses toward active learning activities. Interviews were used as supporting data to help the researcher understand participants' explanations, feelings, and reflections regarding the challenges they experienced while implementing active learning strategies in classroom practice.

E. Technique of Data Collection

The researcher used narrative inquiry in this research, taking observations and interviews to collect the data

1. Observation

Observation is a data collection technique conducted by directly observing the behavior, interactions, and situations that occur in the research object. (Ardiansyah et al., 2023) explain that observation allows researchers to directly see the activities and interactions that occur in the research context so that they can obtain more realistic and in-depth data.

In this study, observation was used to directly observe the learning practices carried out by pre-service teachers in the classroom, particularly in applying active learning strategies to increase student engagement. The data observed in this study included pre-service teachers' experiences and feelings while implementing active learning strategies, such as confidence, nervousness, enthusiasm, and emotional responses during teaching. The observation also focused on teacher-student interactions, students' participation and responses, classroom atmosphere, challenges faced during the lesson, and how pre-service teachers responded to classroom situations and reflected on their teaching experiences.

2. Semi-Structured Interview

Interviews are a data collection technique conducted through direct interaction between researcher and participants to obtain information about experiences, views, and perceptions related to the phenomenon being studied (Merriam, 2009). Through interviews, researcher can explore information that cannot be obtained through observation alone.

One type of interview often used in qualitative research is the semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviews use a list of questions as a guide, but researcher still have the flexibility to ask follow-up questions based on the participants' answers. This approach allows researcher to explore research topics in greater depth.

According to (Chand, 2025), semi-structured interviews provide a balance between structure and flexibility. Researchers have the same core questions for each participant, but can still explore additional information through follow-up questions so that the data obtained is richer and more in-depth.

In this study, semi-structured interviews were used to explore pre-service teachers' experiences and views on the strategies they used to implement active learning in the classroom. Through these interviews, researcher was able to understand the reasons for choosing learning strategies, the challenges faced during teaching practice, and their perceptions of student engagement during the learning process.

F. Research Instrument

1. Observation Guide

The observation guide was used to observe the implementation of active learning strategies during the teaching practicum. It was designed to examine how pre-service teachers implemented active learning in the classroom and how students responded to the learning activities. In addition, the observation aimed to identify the challenges encountered by pre-service teachers while applying active learning strategies.

In this research, observation data served as one of the primary sources of data to answer both research questions regarding pre-service teachers' experiences in implementing active learning strategies and the challenges they faced during classroom practice. The aspects observed included the types of active learning strategies used, teacher-student interactions, students' participation and engagement, classroom atmosphere, pre-service teachers' emotional responses during teaching, and challenges encountered during the implementation of active learning activities. The observation guide helped the researcher collect data systematically and consistently across all classroom observations.

2. Interview Guide

The interview guide was developed to explore pre-service teachers' experiences in implementing active learning strategies during their teaching

practicum. It was designed to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' perceptions, feelings, reflections, and challenges related to the use of active learning in the classroom.

In this research, interview data primarily served to support and clarify the findings obtained from classroom observations. Furthermore, the interviews provided detailed information regarding the participants' emotional experiences, perceptions of student engagement, reflections on the effectiveness of active learning strategies, and challenges encountered during classroom implementation.

The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format with open-ended questions. The interviews were conducted face-to-face with two pre-service teachers, recorded with participants' permission, and supported by field notes.

G. Data Analysis

Following the necessary data collection, the collected data were organized, reviewed, and selected based on their relevance to the research objectives. The research focused on identifying meaningful information related to pre-service teachers' experiences in implementing active learning strategies during classroom practice. In qualitative research, data analysis is an important process because it helps researcher interpret participants' experiences and understand the meaning behind the data. According to (Creswell & Creswell,

2018), qualitative data analysis involves preparing and organizing the data, reducing the data into themes, and interpreting the larger meaning of the findings. Therefore, after the interviews and observations were completed, the researcher transcribed, organized, and categorized the data before conducting further analysis.

In this study, the researcher used thematic analysis to analyze the data. Thematic analysis is considered suitable because this research aims to explore pre-service teachers' experiences, effective strategies, and challenges in implementing active learning strategies in classroom practice. According to (Clarke & Braun, 2017), thematic analysis is a flexible qualitative method used to identify, analyze, and interpret patterns or themes within qualitative data. This method allows researchers to explore participants' experiences deeply while remaining adaptable to different qualitative approaches. Similarly, (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) states that thematic analysis helps researchers classify detailed information into broader categories and themes that represent participants' experiences. Through thematic analysis, the researcher can understand how pre-service teachers experience active learning implementation and how they interpret those experiences during teaching practice.

The researcher followed several procedures in conducting thematic analysis adapted from (Clarke & Braun, 2017).

1. The first step was familiarizing the data, where the researcher repeatedly read interview transcripts and observation notes to gain a deep understanding of the participants' responses and experiences. During this process, the researcher also wrote initial notes and highlighted important statements related to active learning strategies. According to (Clarke & Braun, 2017), data familiarization is essential because it helps researchers become fully engaged with the data before generating themes.
2. The second step was generating initial codes. In this stage, the researcher identified important segments of the data and labeled them with specific codes. Coding was conducted by selecting meaningful statements related to pre-service teachers' experiences, teaching strategies, classroom interaction, student engagement, and challenges during implementation. Saldana (2021) explains that coding is a process of assigning labels to qualitative data in order to categorize and interpret meanings systematically. Through coding, the researcher can organize large amounts of qualitative data into smaller and manageable units.
3. The third step was involved searching for themes. After generating the codes, the researcher grouped similar codes into broader categories and potential themes. These themes represented repeated patterns and important ideas emerging from the participants' experiences. (Clarke & Braun, 2017) explain that themes capture significant patterns in the data that are relevant to the research questions and objectives.

4. The fourth step was reviewing and refining the themes. In this stage, the researcher re-examined the identified themes to ensure that they accurately represented the data. The researcher compared the themes with the interview transcripts and observation notes to check consistency and relevance. Themes that overlapped or lacked sufficient supporting data were revised or combined. According to (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), reviewing themes is important to ensure that interpretations are coherent and supported by the collected data.
5. The fifth step was defining and naming themes. After reviewing the themes, the researcher clearly defined the meaning and focus of each theme. Each theme was named based on its main idea and connection to the participants' experience. (Clarke & Braun, 2017) state that defining themes helps researchers explain the essence of each theme and how it contributes to understanding the research problem.
6. The final step was producing the report and interpreting the findings. In this stage, the researcher presented the themes in narrative form and supported them with participants' statements and observation findings. The researcher interpreted the findings by connecting them with previous studies and relevant theories regarding active learning strategies and pre-service teachers' experiences. (Creswell, 2018) explains that interpretation in qualitative research aims to provide meaning to the findings and connect them with broader educational contexts and literature

H. Technique of Data Validity

In qualitative research, data validity is important to ensure that the findings are trustworthy and accurately represent participants' experiences. Instead of using validity and reliability as in quantitative research, qualitative research commonly uses trustworthiness. According to (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), trustworthiness consists of four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Therefore, this study applied those criteria to ensure the quality of the data and findings

1. First, credibility refers to how accurate and believable the findings are. To achieve credibility, the researcher reread the interview transcripts and observation notes several times to better understand participants' experiences. The researcher also used triangulation by comparing data from interviews and observations to check the consistency of the findings (Stahl & King, 2020).
2. Second, transferability refers to whether the findings can be applied to similar contexts. To support transferability, the researcher provided clear descriptions of the participants, research setting, and research procedures so readers can understand the context of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
3. Third, dependability refers to the consistency of the research process. In this study, the researcher documented each step of the research process, including data collection, coding, and data analysis procedures. According

to (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), clear documentation helps ensure the research process is consistent and understandable.

4. Lastly, confirmability refers to the objectivity of the findings. To achieve confirmability, the researcher used participants' direct statements and observation data to support the findings and reduced personal bias during the analysis process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985)