

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Design

A good methodological framework is necessary to accomplish the goal of this study, which is to investigate students' opinions regarding the usage of self-directed learning to improve speaking abilities. The qualitative method, which is thought to be best suited for investigating participants' perspectives, experiences, and the meanings they ascribe to a specific phenomena, is used in this study.

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative research is used to gain an in-depth understanding of the meaning that individuals or groups give to a human or social problem. The study is conducted in a natural setting, with the researcher acting as the main instrument, data gathered from multiple sources (triangulation), analyzed inductively, and focused on the subjective meaning of participants rather than on generalizing the findings.

This study specifically uses narrative inquiry as its research design. Narrative inquiry is aimed at exploring personal experiences through the stories people tell. As described by Connelly and Clandinin (2016), narrative inquiry focuses on how individuals make sense of their life experiences by constructing narratives. Researchers collect data through personal stories, in-depth interviews, and reflective documents to understand participants' lived experiences and perspectives.

In qualitative research, sampling is done purposively. Purposive sampling allows researchers to intentionally select participants based on specific criteria — those who are believed to have the most relevant and rich insights into the issue being studied. According to Palinkas et al.,(2015) purposive sampling is highly effective in qualitative studies because it enables the selection of participants who possess significant experience and can provide meaningful data aligned with the goals of the research.

Therefore, by employing a qualitative approach through narrative inquiry, this study seeks to gain a deeper understanding of how students experience and interpret self-directed learning in the development of their speaking skills in the context of English language learning. The procedure was applied to the research, here are the steps:

1. Identifying the phenomenon

The first step in data collection involved identifying the central phenomenon to be explored—students’ perceptions and experiences with self-directed learning in developing their English-speaking abilities. This step formed the basis for designing interview questions aimed at uncovering meaningful, personal insights from participants.

2. Participant selection (purposive sampling)

Participants were selected using purposive sampling, a technique that allows researchers to choose individuals with specific characteristics relevant to

the research focus. This study employed purposive sampling to select participants who could provide rich and relevant insights into the research topic.

The criteria included:

- (1) Active student of Antasari State Islamic University Banjarmasin
- (2) Having experience in using self-directed learning (SDL) to develop speaking skills
- (3) Willingness and ability to share their personal learning experiences in a narrative interview.

3. Data collection through semi-structured interview

Primary data was collected through semi-structured interview. This method offers flexibility to explore answers in depth while maintaining alignment with the research topic. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed narratives about participants' experiences, strategies, challenges and perceptions of self-directed learning. Interviews were conducted in person or via video call, lasting approximately 30 to 60 minutes.

4. Narrative construction and re-storying

Once the interviews were transcribed, the researcher reconstructed the participants' stories into coherent, sequential narratives. This process known as re-storying—reflected how the participants experienced and made sense of their learning journeys. The stories were structured based on the flow of events, actions taken, and personal reflections shared during interviews.

5. Collaboration between researcher

In line with the principles of narrative inquiry, the data collection was carried out collaboratively. The researcher maintained close communication with participants throughout the process to clarify information, verify story accuracy, and ensure the final narratives genuinely represented their lived experiences

6. Thematic analysis

The re-storied narratives were then analyzed thematically. This step aimed to identify recurring patterns, key themes, and underlying meanings within the participants' accounts. Emerging themes included learning motivation, strategies used, the role of technology, emotional challenges, and the perceived impact on speaking skills.

Through these steps, the data collection process aimed to produce authentic, context-rich, and meaningful narratives that offer deep insights into how students perceive and experience self-directed learning in their efforts to enhance English speaking skills.

7. Writing the participants' experiences

In this study, the participants' experiences were explored and documented in narrative form. The researcher collected detailed information through interviews and observations, then organized the data into coherent stories that reflect the participants' real experiences related to self-directed learning and their speaking skills. These narratives aim to provide in-depth insight into how each participant perceives and responds to their learning process, challenges, and strategies. Writing the participants' stories allows the

researcher to present the data in a more personal and contextualized manner, giving voice to each individual involved in the study.

B. Research Setting

This research was conducted at the Antasari State Islamic University Banjarmasin which has an address at Jalan Jenderal Ahmad Yani KM. 4.5, Kebun Bunga, East Banjarmasin District, Banjarmasin City, South Kalimantan 70235. The research was conducted in February-March 2025.

C. Participants

This study is aimed at active students at the Islamic State University of Antasari Banjarmasin with different faculties who use self-directed learning methods to develop speaking skills. The researcher used purposive sampling so that the researcher managed to take 4 people to become participants in this study, the researcher wrote the participants' real names with pseudonyms. The following are the pseudonyms of the selected participants:

Tabel 3. 1 Participants

No	Name (pseudonym)	SDL Method	Length of Time Using SDL
1	Baila	TikTok Role-Play	2022 - now
2	Shameera	Elsa Speak App	2015 - now
3	Hamizan	English Learning Community	2019 - now
4	Rabbani	Speaking Journal	2021 - now

D. Data

The data used in this study is qualitative in nature and was collected through in-depth interviews with participants selected through purposive sampling.

Qualitative data was chosen to allow for a deeper understanding and exploration of students' personal views, experiences, and interpretations regarding the use of self-directed learning in improving their English-speaking skills.

The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide designed to explore various aspects of self-directed learning. These included how frequently students engage in self-study, the types of materials or strategies they use, the impact of these methods on their speaking confidence and fluency, as well as the challenges and motivations they encounter throughout the learning process.

The researcher employed thematic analysis to identify key patterns and themes that emerged from the participants' narratives. These themes included the perceived improvement in fluency, the role of digital media (such as videos, podcasts, and language learning apps), and the importance of internal motivation in sustaining self-study habits.

This approach enabled the researcher to gather rich, descriptive data that not only addressed the main research question but also provided meaningful insights into how students experience and make sense of learning to speak English through self-directed efforts.

E. Technique of Data Collection

To support the narrative inquiry design, data was collected using in-depth semi-structured interviews. This interview method allows for an open dialog while guiding the conversation with pre-prepared questions, thus allowing participants to express their thoughts freely and reflectively (Jamshed, 2014). The interviews focused on several key areas, such as how often students engaged in self-directed

learning, the types of resources they used (e.g., videos, language apps, practice with peers), their feelings about progress in speaking skills, and any internal or external challenges they faced during the process. The interview was conducted with 4 student participants of Antasari State Islamic University under the pseudonyms Baila, Shameera, Hamizan and Rabbani. The interviews were conducted over a period of two months, in February-March through face-to-face interviews and also online through video calls, the researcher also recorded the interview conversations to help the researcher recall information accurately, analyze the data in more depth, and ensure the data collected can be verified and relied upon.

F. Research Instrument

This study employed a qualitative approach, which is considered the most appropriate for exploring participants' experiences and perceptions in depth. In line with the narrative inquiry design, interviews were used as the primary instrument for data collection. Interviews are widely recognized in qualitative research as effective tools for capturing detailed personal stories, understanding participants' viewpoints, and generating rich, contextual data (Silverman, 2020).

According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2018), qualitative interviews are designed to obtain descriptions of the interviewees' lived world with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena. Through interviews, researchers can explore not just what participants do, but also how they feel and why they act in certain ways within their social and educational contexts.

I developed the interview questions based on the research focus and the principle of narrative inquiry, which is to explore participants' life experiences in

depth through open-ended, reflective, and chronological questions according to their personal context so that participants can tell their life experiences freely and deeply.

G. Data Analysis

According to Creswell (2012) the data analysis carried out refers to the research design. In Narrative Inquiry research, data analysis begins after researcher collect information in the form of personal experiences obtained from field notes and other research data.

Braun and Clarke (2006) developed a method of thematic analysis that is often used in qualitative research. They define thematic analysis as: “A method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic.”

Steps of Thematic Analysis According to Braun & Clarke (2006):

1. Familiarization with the data : Reading and understanding the data thoroughly, usually done by reading interview transcripts repeatedly.
2. Generating initial codes : Generating initial codes by labeling parts of the data that are relevant to the research questions.
3. Searching for themes : Grouping similar codes into initial themes.
4. Reviewing themes : Evaluating and reviewing themes to ensure they represent the data as a whole.

5. Defining and naming themes : Naming and defining revised and refined themes.
6. Producing the report : Compiling the final report with relevant quotes to support the themes.