

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Design

The research design employed in this study follows a qualitative approach with a narrative inquiry research design. Narrative inquiry is suitable for this study because it focuses on exploring and understanding individuals' life experiences through their personal stories and reflections. In terms of language learning, narrative inquiry allows researchers to analyze how students deal with challenges and how they develop strategies over time in a specific learning environment.

According to Creswell (2014), narrative inquiry is used when researchers aim to collect and analyze individuals' stories to understand how they give meaning to their experiences. Furthermore, Clandinin (2006) explained that narrative inquiry highlights experience as the primary phenomenon in the study and views stories as both the method and the outcome of the research. Therefore, this design is suitable for investigating students' experiences in facing challenges in English conversation and the strategies they use to overcome these challenges in academic speaking courses.

This study focuses on students' narratives regarding their participation in academic speaking courses, specifically their experiences in English conversation, the difficulties they faced, and the strategies they used to

overcome these difficulties. Instead of measuring speaking performance or frequency of strategy use, this study aims to understand how students describe, interpret, and give meaning to their speaking experiences.

The researcher collected students' stories primarily through semi-structured narrative interviews, which allowed participants to freely share their experiences in their own words. According to Tisdell et al. (2025), qualitative interviews are an effective tool for gaining a deep understanding of the perspectives and experiences of participants. The interviews were designed to encourage narration by asking participants to reflect on their feelings, thoughts, and actions when facing speaking challenges and when using conversation strategies in an academic context. This approach allowed the researcher to capture rich, detailed, and personal narratives about students' learning journeys.

In accordance with the principles of narrative inquiry, this study does not rely on classroom observation as its primary source of data. Instead, the emphasis is placed on students' personal reflections and narratives, as these provide deeper insights into their internal experiences, such as anxiety, self-confidence, motivation, and strategic decision-making during English conversations.

The collected narratives were analyzed using thematic narrative analysis, which allowed researchers to identify recurring themes among participants' stories while maintaining the narrative nature of the data. As stated by Riessman (2008) narrative analysis focuses on the interpretation of

stories to understand how individuals construct meaning from their experiences. Through this analysis, this study highlights common patterns related to speaking challenges and conversation strategies, as well as individual variations in student experiences.

Overall, the narrative research design allowed this study to present students' voices authentically and provide meaningful insights into how they experience and overcome challenges in English conversation in academic speaking courses.

B. Research Setting

This study will be conducted at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, involved undergraduate students from the English Education Department who were enrolled in the Academic Speaking course. The academic speaking course is crucial to the development of students' spoken English competence, especially in academic settings like presentations, discussions, and formal communication, which is why the research setting was selected.

As required by the course, the participants were students who actively engaged in academic speaking exercises. Because, it offered a pertinent context for examining students' difficulties with spoken English and the conversational strategies they employ in a classroom setting, this setting was deemed suitable for the study.

Table 3.1 Schedule of Interview

No.	Participant	Day	Date	Place
1.	P1	Monday	9 February 2026	Online

2.	P2	Friday	13 February 2026	Online
3.	P3	Wednesday	18 February 2026	Online
4.	P4	Wednesday	18 February 2026	UIN Antasari Banjarmasin

C. Population and Sample/Participants

The population of this study consisted of undergraduate students enrolled in the Academic Speaking course in the English Education Department. These students had participated in various speaking activities, including discussions, presentations, and conversations, which were relevant to the focus of this study.

The participants in this study were four undergraduate students who had completed the Academic Speaking course. Two participants were taken from Class A and two from Class B to provide variation in classroom experience. In addition, participants were selected based on their high grades in the Academic Speaking course, as indicated by their final scores. Students with high grades were considered capable of providing rich and reflective narratives about their experiences in facing challenges and using conversation strategies in an academic speaking context. Participation in this study was voluntary, and the participants' identities were kept confidential through the use of aliases. Interviews were conducted in person with three people and online with one person.

D. Data

The data in this study consist of students' personal narratives regarding their experiences learning and practicing spoken English in an academic conversation course. The data consist of verbal responses and accounts obtained from in-depth interviews with the participants.

Therefore, the data is qualitative, focusing on the participants' perspectives, experiences, and interpretations rather than numerical data. The data was transcribed into written form to facilitate analysis and interpretation.

E. Technique of Data Collection

The data collection technique used in this study was semi-structured interviews. This technique was chosen because narrative research emphasizes data collection through participants' personal stories and experiences. semi-structured narrative interviews allow participants to describe in detail their experiences in facing challenges and employing conversational strategies during English conversations in academic speaking courses.

The data collection process was conducted in several stages. First, the researcher identified and selected participants, focusing on students who had completed taking an academic speaking course and were willing to share their experiences. Second, the researcher contacted the participants and explained the research objectives, interview procedures, and ethical considerations, including confidentiality and voluntary participation.

Third, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews using open-ended questions designed to encourage participants to tell their stories. During the interviews, participants were invited to describe their experiences regarding speaking challenges, emotional responses, and the strategies they used to overcome these challenges. The researcher used follow-up questions to clarify participants' accounts and gain deeper insights when necessary.

Interviews were conducted in person or online, depending on the participants' availability. Each interview lasted approximately 15–20 minutes and was audio-recorded with the participants' consent.

Finally, all interview recordings were transcribed verbatim and prepared for data analysis. The collected narratives were then analyzed to identify recurring themes related to students' experiences in facing challenges and their conversational strategies in the academic speaking course.

F. Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study was a semi-structured interview guide. This instrument was designed to explore the students' personal stories, life experiences, and reflections regarding the challenges they faced in English conversation, as well as the strategies they used to overcome these challenges in the academic speaking course.

The narrative interview guide consisted of open-ended questions and prompts that encouraged participants to share their experiences in their own words. Rather than focusing on brief answers, the questions were designed to

stimulate storytelling and reflection, which are key characteristics of narrative inquiry.

The interview questions were developed based on the research questions of this study and relevant theories regarding speaking challenges and conversational strategies.

G. Data Analysis

The data in this study were analyzed using thematic narrative analysis, which is considered relevant to the narrative research design. This approach allows researchers to identify recurring themes in participants' stories while preserving the integrity and context of their personal experiences. In narrative research, the focus is not only on grouping data but also on understanding how individuals construct meaning from their experiences (Creswell, 2018).

The data analysis process in this study was adapted from the qualitative data analysis framework proposed by Miles et al. (2014), which consists of three main steps: data condensation, data display, and drawing conclusions/verification. In this process, themes were identified by following the six-step thematic analysis procedure proposed by Braun & Clarke (2006).

The first step is to familiarize oneself with the data, during which the researcher reads all interview transcripts repeatedly to gain a deep and comprehensive understanding of the participants' narratives. The second stage is to develop initial codes, which aligns with the data condensation step according to Miles et al. (2014), where meaningful data segments related to

speaking challenges and conversational strategies are identified and systematically labeled. Important statements were highlighted and coded by labeling meaningful segments, such as anxiety, limited vocabulary, fear of making mistakes, use of filler words, and requests for clarification. The third step was theme identification, in which the resulting codes were grouped into potential themes based on patterns and similarities found throughout the participants' narratives. The fourth step is theme review, which aligns with the data presentation step in the study by Miles et al. (2014), where the identified themes are evaluated and refined to ensure they accurately represent the data. The data were then categorized into broader themes based on the similarities and patterns found in the participants' responses. For example, the challenges faced by students were grouped into linguistic and psychosocial factors, while conversational strategies were classified into several types based on their function in maintaining the flow of communication. The fifth step is to define and name the themes, in which each theme is clearly defined and given a descriptive name that captures its essential meaning. The sixth step is to draft a report, which aligns with the steps of drawing conclusions and verification according to Miles et al. (2014), where the refined themes are presented and interpreted in relation to the research questions and the theoretical framework of this study. The researcher formulates conclusions based on the identified themes and continues to verify them by reviewing the original data to ensure accuracy and consistency. This

process also involves comparing findings among participants to identify shared experiences and individual differences.

Furthermore, because this study employs a narrative inquiry design, the researcher pays specific attention to the context and narrative structure of participants' responses. This analysis aims not only to identify the challenges and strategies involved, but also to understand how students experience, interpret, and respond to these challenges within the context of academic speaking.

Through these systematic steps, the data analysis provides a comprehensive and meaningful understanding of the challenges students face in speaking English as well as the conversational strategies they use to overcome these challenges in the academic speaking course.