

Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter discusses the methodology that was used in this research. This chapter covers research design, research participants, research setting, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Design

This research was conducted to find out the lecturers' strategies in assessing students' soft skills. Based on the research purposes, this research used qualitative research design focusing on describing statements from participants. Creswell (2011) defined that "qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individual or group describe to a social or human problem" (p. 4). Based on the explanation, qualitative research is a research design employed to describe people's opinions or arguments.

The researcher used qualitative research method to explore people's experience. Hancock, Ockleford, and Windrige (2009) stated that qualitative research method is used if the research questions are formulated to explore people's experience, their views. Therefore, qualitative research design is appropriate for this research investigating the lecturers' strategies in assessing students' soft skills at the English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta.

The researcher used descriptive qualitative method because the researcher obtained the data based on the experience of the participants. Grant (2007) stated “descriptive qualitative method is one method that seeks to present the voice of the particular population under study” (p.16). Using descriptive qualitative research helped the researcher to interpret the data of this research.

Research Participant

The participants of this research were four lecturers at the English Education Department (EED) of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY). The researcher used purposive sampling. As mentioned by Creswell (2012), “purposive sampling can identify the sampling strategy and be able to define it use. Purposive qualitative sampling is selecting people or sites who can best help us understand phenomena of research” (p. 206).

The researcher selected the participants who met some criteria. First, the participants were lecturers at the EED of UMY who have been teaching and assessing students’ soft skills for at least two years. Additionally, they have been teaching English more than three classes at the EED of UMY. Second, the participants were familiar with assessing students’ soft skills and they have experience of assessing students’ soft skills.

The researcher believed that the lecturers at the EED of UMY could provide information for this research since they had experience in assessing students’ soft skills. . However, the researcher only selected four lecturers as the research participants and interviewed them. as suggested by Patton (2002, p. 244)

“there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what a stake, what be useful, what credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources.”

Research Setting

This research was conducted at the English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (EED of UMY). The researcher had some reasons to choose the EED of UMY as the research setting. First, the lecturers at the EED of UMY assess students' soft skills, and promote soft skills to the students. Students of the EED of UMY are assessed from the first to the last semester. The soft skills are assessed at every class in every meeting at. Second, the researcher is the student of the EED of UMY. Therefore, she understands the issue and what has been happening at the EED of UMY. Last, the researcher knows all of the lecturers so that she could gather the data easily.

Data collection method

The researcher conducted interviews to collect the data. According to Creswell (2014), in qualitative interviews, the researcher could conduct interviews, with participants. There were some steps of conducting interviews. First, the participants were chosen by the researcher based on the aforementioned criteria. The researcher contacted the lecturers of the EED of UMY and asked them to become the participants of this research. After they agreed to be the research participants, the researcher made an appointment with the participants by WhatsApp to conduct interview.

In the next time, the researcher met with participants to start the interview in different day each participant. Before the interview, the researcher firstly introduced herself to the participants, explained the aim of the interview, and thanked the participants for their willingness to provide information for this research.

The researcher used interviews because she could obtain the data based on lecturers' experience related to the strategies and the problems in assessing students' soft skills. The researcher interviewed four lecturers by using in-depth interviews as the instrument of this research.

The questions of the interviews focused on lecturers' strategies in assessing students' soft skills and problems faced by the lecturers in assessing students' soft skills. Each interview took 10 – 20 minutes. The interview was conducted in the Indonesia language to avoid misunderstanding between the interviewer and the participants. The researcher also used cell phone to record the conversation during the interview so that the data could easily be analyzed. Creswell (2014) stated that “the researcher record information from interviews by making audiotaping” (p. 194). Then, the researcher transcribed the recorded data into written data.

Data Analysis

There were some steps of data analysis, namely member checking, coding, reporting the findings, interpreting and summarizing the data. After transcribing the data, the researcher did member checking by returning the transcribed data to

the participants so that they can check the validity and the accuracy of the transcription. Creswell (2012) stated that, in member checking process, the researcher shows the data and asked them to check the accuracy. Member checking is an important aspect to deal with the issue of the validity. In member checking, the participants agreed with the transcription. The next step was coding. Rossman and Rallis (2012) as cited in Creswell (2014) said that “coding is process of organizing the data by bracketing chunk (or text or image segment) and writing a word representing a category in the margins” (p. 197-197). There three steps of coding; open coding, axial coding, selective coding but in this research the researcher only used open coding because it was clear.

The first coding was open coding. According to Bohm (2004, p. 271), “it is advisable to analyze single short textual passages (line by line). Subsequently, larger paragraphs or even whole texts may be coded in order to avoid simple paraphrasing.”

The last step of data analysis was data reporting. After the researcher did all of the steps, she analyzed and described the data to find the results. The findings of this study were discussed on the next chapter that the strategies and the problems in assessing students’ soft skills at the EED of UMY were reported