

CHAPTER III

METHOD OF THE STUDY

3.1. Research approach

The writer then was the teacher and in a researcher at the same time. The best approach for this is Action Research approach. Johnson (1992) stated that teacher involvement in research is an effective way to bridge the gaps between theory and practice and contribute to knowledge (p. 212). Because teachers are so close to students on a daily basis, their own inquiry from their technique perspectives can make an important contribution to knowledge about teaching and learning (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990; Miller, 1990). It is very focused on individual or small-group professional practice and is not so concerned with making general statement (Wallace, 1998, p. 18). In addition, teachers who conduct their own research build a richer understanding of their work lives and gain the confidence, knowledge, and support needed to make important changes (Miller, 1990; van Lier, 1990).

Action research which is an inquiry conducted to examine an action or practice to improve the quality of the action or practice can be conducted in a classroom setting, school setting, or a broader area (Cahyono, 2011, p.8). In broader terms, Burn (Cited in Wallace, 1998) stated that Action Research applies a systematic process of investigating practical issues or concerns which arise within a particular social context (p. 31). The Action Research method helped the

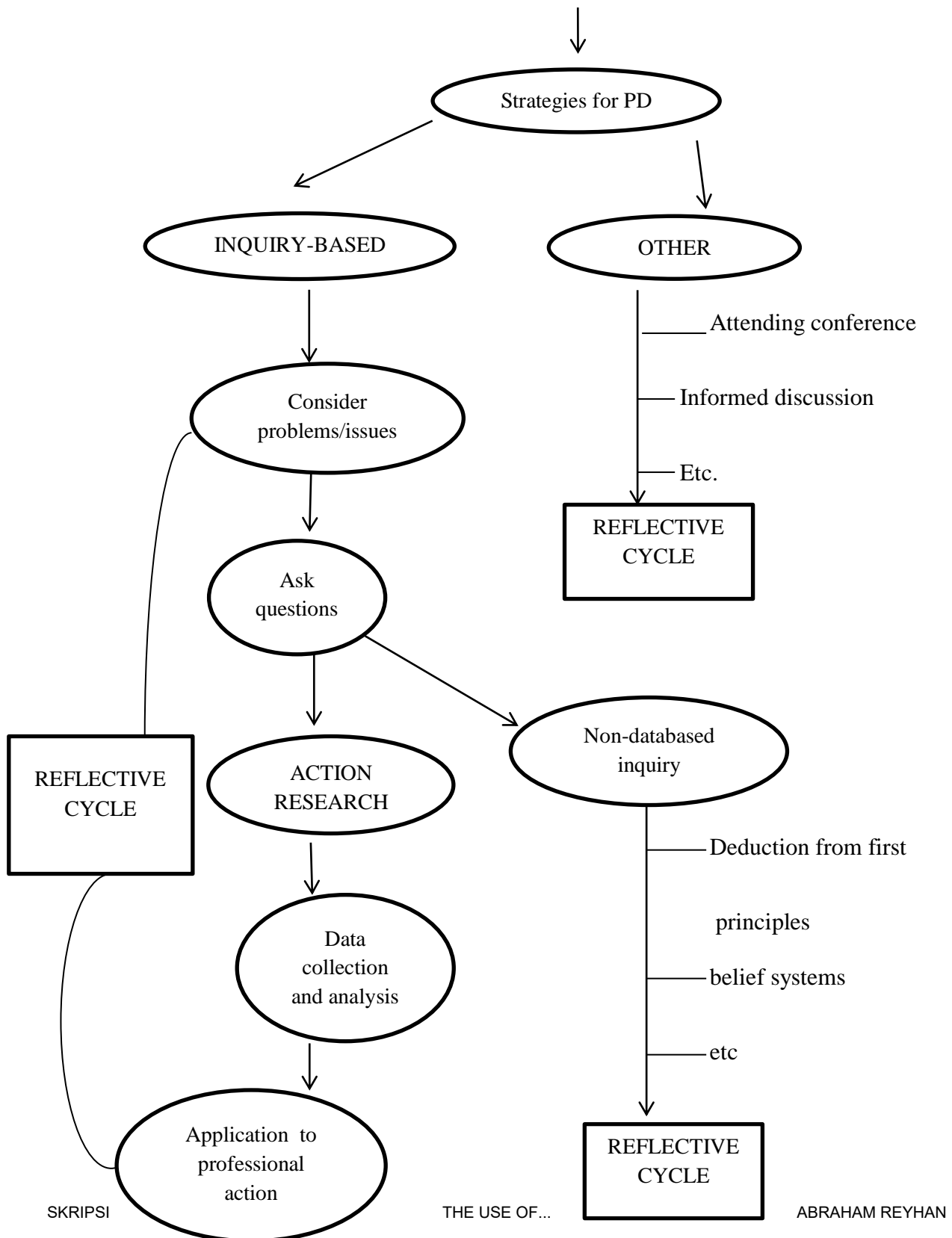
writer to explain the student's writing ability in specific and in particular social context such as classroom activities, students, and other contexts. In addition, Action Research involves the collection and analysis of data related to some aspect of professional practice. The process can be repeated (reframing the problem, collecting fresh data, rethinking analysis, etc) until researcher or teacher found a solution that satisfied (Wallace, 1998, pp. 16-17).

According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), action research occurs through a dynamic and complementary process, which consists of four essential 'moments': of planning, action, observation and reflection. These moments are the fundamental steps in a spiralling process through which participants in an action research group undertake to:

- develop a plan of critically informed action to improve what is already happening.
- act to implement the plan,
- observe the effect of the critically informed action in the context which it occurs, and
- reflect on these effects as the basis for further planning, subsequent critically informed action and so on, through a succession of stages.

(Kemmis and McTaggart, p. 10)

In his book, Wallace explained that Action Research is useful for the professional development of the teacher. Wallace (1998, p. 14) gave procedures of professional development strategies of Action Research in this figure:



In this research, the writer conducted 3 cycles in 15 meetings. It means that the writer spent approximately four months to conduct this research. Basically, the process of the action research could not be set in fixed certain period because it is obviously depend on situation in the class. Therefore, the writer decided to stop the cycle regarding to the score of students in second post-test which improved significantly compared to the pre-test.

The qualitative approach was also applied as supporting approach in this study. Qualitative approach for this study can explain the student's English writing skill in detail. Descriptive way to describe the English writing development can reveal their L2 development. Qualitative approaches to research, therefore, have gained a strong foothold in L2 research (Johnson, 1992, p. 33). In addition, McDonough and McDonough stated that "Whereas normative research requires a numerical evaluation, qualitative research usually gathers observations, interviews, field data records..." (1997, p. 53).

Au, Cazden, Erickson, Heath, Mehan, Moll and Reil (cited in Johnson, 1992) stated that

For a field in which cultural issues play a crucial role in everyday practice, this diversity can only enrich inquiry...with its attention to contextual and cultural interpretation, has added to our knowledge of how students approach L2 learning, how culture interacts with language learning, and how teachers and institutions can be culturally sensitive.

In short, Hyland (2002) described qualitative approach as a general label for a research methodology that seeks to be naturalistic, interpretive, inductive, contextualized and respectful of the participants' views (p. 157).

Because of its focus, the writer used more than one method. According to McDonough and McDonough this kind of study is “medium scale research” and can, therefore, use of more than one method (1997, p. 222).

3.2. Participants of the study

This research was conducted in Surabaya. The participants for this study were students who took English writing course in “Different English Course Surabaya”. They are males and females students and their ages are similar ranging from 16 to 18 years old in tenth and eleventh grade of senior high school.

Furthermore, the participants come from different various English education background and senior high school in Surabaya. The reason why choosing tenth and eleventh grade is because they have more experience in learning with curriculum and not so busy compared to twelfth grade students who are very busy preparing for the National Exam, the tenth and eleventh grade would be the most suitable subjects for this study. In addition, students had understanding of narrative writing in their junior high school but in general way and not in specifically taught the complete definition of narrative writing. In this senior high school, they still got problems or difficulties regarding to narrative writing composition.

3.3. The setting

The setting for this study was conducted in “Different English Course” which located at Jln. Klampis Sacharossa no 60, Surabaya and the study began on January 2012 to Mei 2012. The writing class is one of its subjects and total

duration in each meeting is 90 minutes. The reason why this English course selected due to it is specifically provided several classes which focus in students' ability and one of the classes is writing class. Since this writing class could give contribution to this study, the writer considered it as advantageous factors for the detail of study.

3.4. Techniques of Data Collection

The writer used several ways to collect the data from the students which are assessment scoring in pre-test and post-test, written exercises of weekly guided writing and sequences of pictures, and interview. The techniques of data collection taken in this study are as follows:

1. The result or score of student composition in pre-test and post-test

It is evitable that the score or result of student composition in pre-test and post-test would reflect the ability of writing of students. This result would contribute primary data for this study. Pre-test reflected the basic ability of the students who did not have any treatments (guided writing and sequences of pictures) and the post-test would show the success of the treatments or not. Then, from this result, the writer could draw a conclusion for the main aim of this study.

2. Written exercises of weekly guided writing, sequences of pictures, and combined exercises.

These written exercises done by the students showed the result and process of guided writing and sequences of pictures in classroom. These written exercises showed development of writing for each student in detail. The writer as the

teacher collected those after the classroom was over. The assessment was done by the teacher. Every week the teachers also distributed the result to each student and added explanatory comment to their exercises.

3. Questionnaires

Questionnaires was used when the researcher want to tap into the knowledge, opinions, ideas and experiences of our learners, fellow teachers, parents or whatever. It was done by asking question in written form. Wallace (1998) stated that the questions are usually set out in a very systematic way, and it is very often the questionnaires are answered by reading the questions, and then ticking responses, or writing in short answers (p. 124). Furthermore, by using questionnaires, it can elicit basic factual data (Wallace, 1998, p. 151). The questionnaires were done in order to do reflective stage and identify students' problems or obstacles, the writer distributed questionnaires to the students after the treatment. These questionnaires gave basic background on what students have got. As Wallace (1998) stated, in action research, the technique in gathering data such as questionnaires is commonly applied. Since the questionnaires provided limited information, the writer predicted that students did not get proficient English lesson, especially in writing composition compared to duration of how long they have learned English.

4. Interview

In order to know the student's view toward the guided writing and pictures of scene, the writer used interview. Questions were asked to the students with the interview guide which the writer used. The setting for this interview was informal and it was conducted after the post-test. Therefore, by using interview, it could follow up on attitudes and experiences (Wallace, 1998, p. 151).

In short, the procedures to collect the data are:

1. giving the pre-test and analysing the score results
2. collecting written exercises of weekly guided writing
3. giving the post-test and analysing the score results
4. distributing the questionnaires to the students as reflective stage
5. transcribing the data which is collected from the interview

3.6. Techniques of Data Analysis

Techniques of Data analysis are necessary for this study. The explanation of the steps is described in these sequences. First, the writer gave the pre-test and scored in analytic scoring. The teacher assessed the student composition and decided whether the compositions have followed the standard of generic structures in narrative writing or not. To guarantee the reliability of the results of this evaluating system, White (1994, as cited in Weigle 2002) stated that one of the procedures of scoring scripts is that each scripts must be scored independently by at least two raters (p. 129), thus, three evaluators who are also the teachers in DEC were assigned to grade the narrative composition by the students. The

evaluators adopted the following five criteria to measure different aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. Then, the writer's thesis advisor also evaluated the score.

Second step of data analysis is scoring the written exercises of weekly guided writing and sequences of pictures. This step could provide detail improvement of student's writing ability. The exercises were assessed by the teacher. From this data, the writer evaluated and monitored the progress of the students.

After guided writing and sequences of pictures applied to the students, the post-test result was the source for writer to assess the test. The post-test result was evaluated by the writer and three evaluators; furthermore, it determined the improvement of the students.

After analysing the score of post-test, the questionnaires were checked to identify problems and obstacles in class. By analysing questionnaires, the teacher could consider the problems and obstacles as consideration to conduct the next cycle or not.

The transcript of student interview then was analysed and the writer drew conclusion from those data about the students' view toward guided writing and sequences of pictures. This showed the reflection for students and determined whether the students were influenced by the guided writing and sequences of pictures or not.

The last is analysing the students' cognitive from the verbal report which was transcribed by the writer. The transcribing data gave information about the students' cognitive when composing a narrative text.