

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

This chapter outlines the methodological framework utilized in this study to investigate the strategies employed by EFL learners during their autonomous listening activities. The chapter is organized into five sections: the research design, the setting and participants, the data collection, the data analysis, and the research schedule.

3.1 Research Design

In order to investigate the utilization of podcasts to support listening skills in English language learning, a qualitative research design was applied to conduct the study by using a descriptive case study as the method.

Qualitative research aims to reach data as rich as possible (Holliday, 2015) in which words as data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). According to Creswell (2012), qualitative research explores an issue and elaborates on a particular concept of a primary occasion. Furthermore, Holliday (2015) pointed out that the outcomes of qualitative research are influenced by the researchers' beliefs and viewpoints.

In addition, according to Noor (2008), the focus analysis of a case study is examining a particular issue and complex real-life activities. In addition, a descriptive case study is research that begins with an in-depth descriptive theory that implies the hypotheses of cause-effect relationships (Tellis, 1997).

3.2 Setting and Participants

This study was conducted with the participation of two EFL learners who were selected based on specific criteria, such as having prior experience using podcasts as a tool for learning English, ideally for at least 6 months, being actively involved in self-directed learning activities particularly those who independently incorporate podcasts into their language practice routines, listening to podcasts regularly, with a minimum frequency of three times a week, having access to the necessary technology (e.g., smartphones, computers, and stable internet) to listen to podcasts autonomously, and demonstrating a willingness to engage in the interview process, share their experiences openly,

and provide informed consent. These criteria help to ensure that the participants are relevant and can provide comprehensive and meaningful data for the study.

Both participants have regularly listened to Spotify Podcasts with a distinct area of topics. Participant 1 engages in listening to English podcasts on a variety of topics, including social, political, and geography. Participant 2 frequently listens to English podcasts, particularly those related to the Middle East (Gaza and Palestine), psychology, mindfulness, and politics. Both participants prefer auditory learning and often listen to Spotify podcasts to assist their learning styles. In addition, participant 1 has listened to English podcasts almost every day with a length of 40 minutes to two hours for over 6 years in their listening activities. While participant 2 has listened to English podcasts four times a week with a length of 12-15 minutes each session for a total of 6 months. The selection of these two EFL learners as participants of this study was guided by several key factors that align with the research objectives and ensure a diverse and comprehensive analysis of podcasts in autonomous listening activities.

Regarding the ethical concerns, the participants were given a consent form that contained the procedures and detailed explanations about the study. In addition, they signed the form as a formal agreement to participate in the study. The participants' data and information are anonymized and will be mentioned as P1 and P2.

3.3 Data Collection

The data were collected through semi-structured interviews to reach the actual and richer data of self-directed learners who use podcasts in their listening activities. Semi-structured interviews were used since the flexibility allows the researcher to ask follow-up questions regarding the participant's responses. As Saldana (2011) pointed out, an interview is one of the techniques that researchers use in doing qualitative research since it is one of the effective, factual, flexible, and situational ways to explore an individual's views, feelings, beliefs, and attitudes about their personal experiences that the participant(s) can share in their own words.

In conducting an interview, Creswell (2012) listed several stages, there are:

1. Identify the interviewees

Participants were selected based on their experience with autonomous listening activities and the use of podcasts in learning English. This ensured that the interviewees were relevant to the research objectives.

2. Determine the type of interview

A semi-structured interview format was chosen to balance consistency in questions with flexibility for in-depth exploration.

3. Audio recording of questions and responses

With the interviewees' consent, all interviews were audiotaped to ensure accurate data collection and to allow for detailed transcription and analysis.

4. Take brief notes during the interview

Notes were taken during the interview to capture initial impressions, non-verbal cues, and key points for follow-up questions.

5. Locate a quiet, suitable interview setting

Interviews were conducted in quiet, comfortable, and distraction-free environments, such as online platforms by using WhatsApp chat and call to facilitate open and focused discussions.

6. Obtain consent from the interviewees

Before beginning, each interview was provided with a detailed explanation of the study's purpose and procedure. Written consent was obtained to ensure ethical compliance and voluntary participation.

7. Have a plan, but be flexible

An interview guide was prepared beforehand to ensure all key topics were covered. However, flexibility was maintained to explore new and relevant ideas brought up by the interviewees.

8. Use probes to obtain additional information

Probing questions were employed during the interview to encourage interviewees to elaborate on their responses and provide richer data.

9. Be courteous and professional when the interview is over.

At the end of each interview, participants were thanked for their time and contribution. They were also reassured of the confidentiality of their responses and offered the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

The interviews were conducted in three stages to ensure a comprehensive and systematic data collection process. The first interview focused on identifying and selecting participants based on specific criteria, such as their experience with podcasts in autonomous learning and their willingness to participate. The second interview involved engaging with the participants using a semi-structured format, where their responses were audiotaped and complemented with brief notes for additional context. Finally, the third interview consisted of verifying the accuracy of the recorded data by sharing the summarized results with the participants for confirmation, ensuring the reliability and validity of the collected information. The interviews were conducted using Indonesian (L1) to talk more comfortably and not be restricted by the language barrier.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data that have been collected were analyzed by using thematic analysis. A thematic analysis is a method of analyzing data by identifying, analyzing, and reporting themes in depth (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Moreover, the collected data that have been classified into themes and sub-themes, were analyzed by using the theory of autonomous learning by Holec (1979) and the theory of listening activities by Vandergrift (2004) which addressed three stages of listening: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities. In addition, Braun and Clarke (2006) elucidated several stages that should be followed in conducting a thematic analysis, such as:

1. Familiarizing yourself with your data

In analyzing the data of the research, the researcher got familiar with the data. The researcher conducted the repetitive reading and actively engaged with the collected data from the interviews. Afterwards, continued with identifying the scheme of the coding and establishing ideas for coding.

2. Generating initial codes

In this step, the researcher identified the initial codes and determines them for the potential themes. The researcher generated the initial codes by coloring each code with different colors. The generated codes are shown in the following table.

Table 3.1. Making Codes

Data Item	Codes
<p>The topic I prefer for the podcast is the Middle East. It's like Palestine and Gaza, some updates about their current condition. But in my spare time, sometimes I listen to other topics. I have a preference for psychology, mindfulness, or politics. I also rarely listen to finance, but I'm not interested in that topic. Basically, I chose the podcast topic based on what I want to listen to, it's more like interest.</p>	<p>Choosing podcast topic</p>
<p>Actually, I choose the topic based on my interests. Like I have some interest in the topic. Besides, to still keep up with the issues around me.</p>	<p>The reason in choosing podcast topic</p>
<p>I rarely read the description, but most of the time, if I already know how the topic is going to be from the title, I will directly play the podcast. But if I'm not familiar with the topic, I will surely search for the topic. So, instead of reading the description, I prefer to search for the topic in general. Later, if I</p>	<p>Reading description before listening to podcast</p>

already know about the topic, I will read the description.

Honestly, there isn't any target. It's more about the topic. For example, I've already listened to this, which would mean I already gained something from it, and the knowledge changes after listening to it. Then, I checked off the list and looked for other topics. So, I learned based on the context. For instance, one word can have different meanings in different contexts. It's more about how to use it, like how to use it in certain contexts. So, I don't formally or specifically target the learning goals.

While listening to the podcasts, I usually do some activities. It's like taking notes and making a kind of glossary. If I come across a word and I want to become familiar with it, I create a glossary. It can be said that I write what I read. For example, if I come across a word, I look up its meaning. Then, I review everything and summarize it at the end of the day or after some time. What I get from the podcast I listen to that day.

It depends on the topic. If the topic is related to real life, for example, psychology. Then sometimes I also end up reflecting on myself, but not in a very deep way, just like a reminder. If the topic is relatable to my self-

Setting goals before listening to podcast

Taking notes while listening to podcast

Reflecting on the content after listening to the Podcast

problem, it can be used as a solution. But if it's not relatable, then just a reminder.

Usually, it's like little notes on my phone or if there are blank papers, I will do it on paper as well.

The way to make a reflection after listening to the Podcast

I rarely discuss the topics I listen to on podcasts because now I rarely meet my friends. Mostly colleagues, but even that is rare. So, it's just for personal consumption. If, for instance, when we're talking and there's information from the podcast that we got, we might share. But it's not like "I want to discuss something that I listened to this podcast," so it's not very formal.

Sharing information after listening to the Podcast

There are 8 initial codes that have been generated from the interview dialogue with the participants. The following table presents the initial codes with each frequency.

Table 3.2. Initial Codes and Frequency

No	Initial Codes	Frequency
1	Choosing Podcast topic	2
2	The reason for choosing the Podcast topic	3
3	Reading the description before listening to the Podcast	4
4	Setting goals before listening to the Podcast	5
5	Taking notes while listening to Podcast	3

6	Reflecting on the content after listening to the Podcast	2
7	The way to make a reflection after listening to the Podcast	3
8	Sharing information after listening to the Podcast	2

3. Searching for themes

This phase focused on categorizing and organizing all the various codes from the previous step into some potential themes. In order to refocus the research at the level of themes rather than codes, the researcher has sorted the codes into different themes and sub-themes. The table below will show the potential themes.

Table 3.3. Searching for Themes

Codes	Potential Themes
Choosing Podcast topic, the reason for choosing the Podcast topic	Selecting content
Reading the description before listening to the Podcast	Reading Podcast descriptions
Setting goals before listening to the Podcast	Setting learning goals
Taking notes while listening to Podcast	Engagement during listening
Reflecting on the content after listening to the Podcast, the way to make a reflection after listening to the Podcast	Making reflection after listening
Sharing information after listening to the Podcast	Discussion after listening

4. Reviewing themes

In the reviewing themes phase, the researcher reviewed and refined the potentially applicable themes. The researcher examined if the themes were coherent with each other. Afterward, the potential themes that have been determined will be the sub-themes of the main themes.

5. Defining and naming themes

After reviewing and refining the sub-themes, the researcher defined a suitable name for each theme. Furthermore, the researcher determined the main themes based on the theory of listening activities by Vandergrift (2004), as follows: pre-listening activities, while-listening activities, and post-listening activities.

Table 3.4. *Defining and Naming Themes*

No	Sub-themes	Themes
1	Selecting content	
2	Reading Podcast descriptions	Pre-listening Activities
3	Setting learning goals	
4	Engagement during listening	While Listening Activities
5	Making reflection after listening	Post-Listening Activities
6	Discussion after listening	

6. Producing the report

In the last phase, the researcher drew the analysis report. The data report has been written with a vivid, coherent, and logical explanation of the analysis process.

3.5 Research Schedule

The study was conducted online using smartphones, laptops, and WhatsApp calls. In addition, the study took place within 6 months.

