

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

EFL students in the English department at one of the universities in Tasikmalaya have to conduct a research proposal as a final exam for the Qualitative Research course in semester sixth. And the fact that this is also the first experience of EFL students conducting a qualitative research proposal. As stated by Kristiana (2020) as one of the three requirements of the college, qualitative research courses provide a tool for post-graduate students to conduct research. Most students had never taken the class before, had never practiced it, and were unfamiliar with the subjects. The importance of this research to conduct is the students know the challenges when conducting qualitative research, the students can prepare themselves before conducting research, and the students learn how to solve the challenges if the students have the same problems or challenges when conducting qualitative research.

While conducting research, the researchers saw a phenomena that some students are late submitting qualitative research proposals for the final exam in Qualitative Research Course because the challenges faced by the students in conducting the research. It is in line with Kue et al. (2015) Methodological and practical problems in doing research are referred to as challenges. There are various reasons why students encounter problems in conducting qualitative research. According to some students who were late submitting qualitative research proposals, the challenges or difficulties they felt were mainly related to data collection and analysis. Confirming by David (2015) Finding an appropriate approach to analyzing qualitative data analysis to meet the aim of a study might be difficult.

The previous study has identified difficulties and challenges faced by students while conducting a qualitative research. Bakhshi et al., (2019) investigate the challenges of conducting Qualitative Research in Iranian Higher Education by hearing the voices of ELT Faculty Members. The result shows The ELT faculty

members' view that Iranian higher education policies are the primary cause of the underdevelopment of Qualitative Research in academic settings, and some of them claimed that the research trend in the Iranian higher education system was determined by the professional preferences and personal interests of the professors. Li and Searle (2007) investigate PhD student challenges when conducting a qualitative data analysis. The result shows for novice researchers, data analysis in QR was challenging. Several of the issues that the student faces with coding are their inability to know where to begin, ambiguities in the definition of codes, inaccurate reporting and recording of data, inability to distinguish between researcher and actor categories, and an excessive interpretation of the evidence. Khankeh et al., (2015) investigate the challenges in conducting qualitative research in the health field. The research result shows some of the problems that researchers face in the early stages of a qualitative research project are identifying the research problem, formulating the research question, and choosing an appropriate methodology and research design.

Through the previous studies, the researcher wants to investigate challenges when conducting a qualitative research in the EFL setting. Previous research studies did not provide any solutions to prevent the challenges or difficulties when students are conducting a qualitative research. Therefore, in this study, the researcher wanted to investigate the challenges and also solutions when EFL students conducted qualitative research.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem(s)

Based on the background, the problems related to this research are as follows:

1.2.1 What are the challenges of the students when conducting Qualitative Research in EFL setting?

1.2.2 What solutions do the students perform to overcome those challenges?

1.3 Operational Definitions

This section, the researcher would like to give the operational definitions of topic as follows:

- 1.3.1 Qualitative Research** : Qualitative research intends to understand the phenomena of what is experienced by research subjects, such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, actions, and others, through descriptions in the form of words and language in a natural context.
- 1.3.2 EFL** : English as a Foreign Language is learning English in a non-English-speaking country. EFL is people living in their own country where English is not the dominant or official language. For example, students in Indonesia who are learning English are considered EFL students because English is not the official language of the country.
- 1.3.3 Challenges in Doing Qualitative Research** : There are challenges when EFL students carry out Qualitative Research, various challenges that students feel can be in the form of external and internal challenges from the students themselves.

1.4 Aim(s) of the Research

Based on the formulation of the problem, the research is aimed to know the challenges in writing Qualitative Research Proposals and solutions by the students to overcome those challenges.

1.5 Significances of the Study

It is expected that this study can be useful contributions, as follows:

1.5.1 Theoretical Use

This present study shows the theories related to how students' challenges and solutions while conducting Qualitative Research in the EFL setting. The

results of this study are expected to complete existing theories regarding challenges and solutions when conducting qualitative research. It helps other researcher who want to analyze the same topic about qualitative research.

1.5.2 Practical Use

The result of this research will provide empirical use into how students can preparing and solving challenges or problems that occur before or in conducting research and also evaluations for lecturers related to challenges in making a proposal qualitative research.

1.5.3 Empirical Use

Practically, this study reviews, develops, supports, the previous studies about the students' challenges when conducting Qualitative Research. However, the previous study does not include the solutions to the challenges students faced when conducting qualitative research. Thus, this study aimed to investigate the challenges and also find out the solutions when students conducted qualitative research. This study aims to add to students' insights about student challenges and solutions when conducting qualitative research, which in previous studies only explained the challenges.