CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Method of the Research

This study used a qualitative descriptive case study design. Descriptive case studies explained the nuances of real-world situations that might not be well captured through research experiments or surveys, tested or described data in real-life settings, and provided a comprehensive and contextual view of a particular phenomenon (Yin, 2018). This method was used to examine an intervention or phenomenon in its natural, real-life context. Furthermore, this approach was well-suited for an in-depth analysis of a particular phenomenon, which could yield a comprehensive understanding. Therefore, this design was applied to find out the challenges and solutions faced by English teachers at a junior high school in Tasikmalaya.

B. Focus of the Research

This research focuses on identifying the challenges experienced by an English teacher in teaching reading to seventh-grade students and examining the strategies used to address these challenges. The study specifically limits its scope to one junior high school in Tasikmalaya and concentrates on the teacher's instructional practices, classroom difficulties, and the forms of scaffolding provided during reading instruction.

C. Setting and Participants

This research was conducted at a junior high school in Tasikmalaya, West Java. The school implements English as a compulsory subject starting from the seventh grade, where many students are still at the early stages of learning English. The English learning environment at this school is characterized by limited student exposure to English outside the classroom, varying levels of student proficiency, and instructional practices that require teachers to provide continuous support to help students understand reading texts. This setting was selected because it represents a real-life context in which English teachers commonly encounter

challenges when teaching reading to young learners, making it relevant to the focus of this study. In this study, the participating English teacher was assigned the pseudonym "Luna" to protect her identity and maintain confidentiality throughout the research process.

D. Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews allowed this research to explore the challenges and solutions faced by an English teacher in teaching reading to grade 7 students at Tasikmalaya Junior High School. This approach was selected due to its adaptability, which enabled the researcher to monitor participant responses and conduct an in-depth exploration of the topic. Adams (2015) asserts that semi-structured interviews are ideal for thoroughly understanding personal experiences, particularly in situations where participants might be hesitant to speak candidly in front of others. During the interview process with the participants, the researcher used the interview design technique from Adams (2015), which involved the following stages:

1. **Selecting Respondent and Organizing the Interview**

The researcher purposively selected an English teacher who met the criteria of this study. The criteria included: (1) having experience in teaching English at the junior high school level, (2) actively teaching seventh-grade students who are categorized as young learners in this research, and (3) being directly involved in teaching reading in the classroom. The participant was an English teacher from a junior high school in Tasikmalaya with twelve years of teaching experience and regular responsibility for teaching seventh-grade students. After selecting the participant, the researcher organized the interview logistics, including the venue, time, and necessary recording tools.

2. **Develop Interview question and Guide**

In developing the interview guide, the researcher used Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) as a basis. The interview questions were designed to explore how teachers utilize social interactions with students to overcome reading challenges, as well as the scaffolding strategies employed.

3. Start the Interview

The researcher began the interview by introducing the research purpose, building rapport with the participant, and ensuring their informed consent. The researcher also created a comfortable atmosphere to help the participant feel relaxed while answering questions.

4. Refining the Interview Technique

During the interview process, the researcher asked questions and responded to participants' answers. If there were answers that were unclear and not understood, the researcher could ask for further explanation.

5. Analyzing and Reporting Interview Results

After the interviews were completed, the collected data were analyzed to identify relevant themes or patterns. The results of the analysis were then reported systematically, including quotes from the participant to support the research findings. These results explained the teacher's challenges and solutions in teaching reading.

E. Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was applied in this research to examine the interview transcripts. It is an independent, qualitative, and descriptive approach primarily used to identify, analyze, organize, describe, and report themes within data. Braun and Clarke (2006) and King (2004) argue that thematic analysis is a useful method for exploring the perspectives of various research participants. Furthermore, as part of Sociocultural Theory (SCT), all data were analyzed using Vygotsky's (1978) scaffolding theory, which includes verbal, metacognitive, and visual scaffolding. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis involves six phases:

1. Familiarizing the data

During this phase, the researcher became acquainted with the data by carefully reviewing the interview transcripts multiple times.

2. Generating Initial Codes

During this phase, the researcher initiated the organization of the data by assigning symbols or markers that aligned with the study's objectives. The researcher employed a color-coding technique to distinguish between various aspects identified by the participants, resulting in the creation of initial codes.

Table 2. *Generating Initial Codes*

Extracts	Initial codes
P: Mungkin yang pertama sebelum belajar kita memberi motivasi dulu. Jadi dia imingi, nanti kalau begini nanti kalian akan sukses dan lain sebagainya. Kemudian dikasih metode yang menyenangkan, yang membuat siswa itu tidak boring.	Give motivation Create playful teaching method
P: Ibu juga sambil memberikan dukungan, misalnya ketika ada anak yang kurang mengerti dan bertanya, Ibu biasanya memandu. Jadi, kalau ada yang masih belum paham, Ibu biasanya menerjemahkan dulu semua isi teks setelah selesai membaca. Namun, biasanya setelah selesai diterjemahkan pun, anak-anak tetap bertanya lagi. Mereka bertanya, 'Bu, ini artinya apa ya?' Jadi, tidak serta-merta setelah kita memberikan contoh membaca dan menerjemahkannya, anak-anak langsung paham. Mereka tetap bertanya lagi dan lagi.	Give support through guidance Give translation strategy
P: Tentunya setiap anak berbeda-beda. Terutama untuk di SMP 9 itu mungkin anak-anaknya berbeda dengan SMP di alun-alun, latar belakang dan lain sebagainya. Kalau di SMP 9 ini cenderung anak-anaknya itu kurang keinginan untuk belajar dan bisa. Jadi agak sulit meskipun kita udah motivasi hanya beberapa anak saja yang mau.	Lack of motivation
P: Kebetulan tahun lalu saya mengajar kelas 7. Sekarang saya juga mengikuti kurikulum mandiri (kurmer). Jadi, saya tetap mengajar anak-anak yang sama. Untuk buku kurikulum mandiri ini, menurut saya bukunya cukup sederhana, jadi tidak terlalu sulit bagi siswa. Akan tetapi, saya juga pernah mengajar kelas 9. Kalau tidak salah, waktu itu masih Ujian Nasional. Saya sempat membaca teks ujian dan saya bingung, karena sepertinya teks tersebut diambil dari berbagai sumber yang tidak jelas. Kadang, dari bahasanya terlihat bahwa teks	Follow the curriculum Non_credible material sources

24

tersebut kurang sesuai untuk jenjang SMP. Terlalu tinggi, seperti jenjang madya. Meskipun begitu, saya tetap berusaha agar siswa saya bisa mengerti. Untuk itu, saya sendiri harus memahami teksnya terlebih dahulu. Apa pun yang diperlukan, saya mencari terjemahannya di Google dan sumber-sumber lainnya.	Not understandable material sources
	Learning Independently

The researcher identified 19 initial codes, each representing different aspects highlighted in the participants' interview transcriptions. These codes encapsulated various themes and patterns observed in the data, providing a comprehensive framework for further analysis and interpretation of the participants' experiences and insights.

Table 3. *Calculating initial codes*

No.	Initial Codes	Total
1	Lack of support	1
2	Unequal participation	3
3	Lack of reading interest	1
4	Lack of visual media	2
5	Lack of visual content exploration	1
6	Share personal experience	1
7	Give support through guidance	1
8	Give appreciation	1
9	Create playful teaching method	2
10	Monitor the learning process	1
11	Use the smartphone	2
12	Give a translation strategy	2
13	Familiarity with culture through the text	2
14	Learning through watching a short film	1
	Use the smartphone	

3. Searching for themes

The third phase involves analyzing interconnected codes to form main themes. During this phase, the researcher consolidates relevant codes into cohesive themes that align with the research questions. The process involves selecting data transcripts and identifying something notable or intriguing in the data that relates to the research questions.

Table 4. *Searching for themes*

Challenges	
Initial Codes	**Themes**
Unequal discussion participation Lack of support	Verbal Scaffolding Challenges
Lack of reading interest	Metacognitive Scaffolding Challenges
Lack of visual media Lack of visual content exploration	Visual Scaffolding Challenges
Solutions	
Initial Codes	**Themes**
Share personal experience Give support through guidance Give appreciation	Providing Social and Emotional Support through Verbal Scaffolding
Create playful teaching method Monitor the learning process Use the smartphone Give a translation strategy	Regulating the Learning Process through Metacognitive Scaffolding
Familiarity with culture through the text Learning through watching a short film	Enhancing Students' Comprehension through Visual Scaffolding

4. Reviewing themes

During this phase, the researcher revisits the themes identified in the third phase to evaluate their relevance and appropriateness for the study. Each theme is carefully reviewed to determine whether it accurately represents the data and aligns with the research objectives. If any themes are found to be unsuitable, they are either revised or discarded in favor of more appropriate alternatives. In this process, the researcher draws on Vygotsky's (1978) scaffolding theory as a guiding framework, specifically focusing on three types of scaffolding: (1) Verbal Scaffolding, (2) Metacognitive Scaffolding, and (3) Visual Scaffolding.

5. Defining and Naming Themes

The researcher analyses and interprets each identified themes as an answer to the research question that was initially posed.

Table 5. *Defining and Naming Themes*

Challenges	
Themes	**Definitions**
Verbal Scaffolding Challenges	Verbal scaffolding challenges refer to difficulties encountered by teachers when using language-based strategies to support students' understanding and engagement in learning tasks.
Metacognitive Scaffolding Challenges	Metacognitive scaffolding challenges are difficulties teachers face when attempting to guide students in planning, monitoring, and evaluating their own learning processes.
Visual Scaffolding Challenges	Visual scaffolding challenges refer to problems in using visual aids such as images, videos, diagrams, charts, or gestures to support student comprehension.

Solutions	
Themes	**Definitions**
Providing Social and Emotional Support through Verbal Scaffolding	This theme refers to the use of spoken language (e.g., explanations, affirmations, praise, or motivational language) by teachers to foster a supportive and encouraging learning environment.
Regulating the Learning Process through Metacognitive Scaffolding	This theme captures the ways teachers help students become aware of and manage their own learning processes, including setting goals, planning strategies, monitoring progress, and self-evaluating outcomes.
Enhancing Students' Comprehension through Visual Scaffolding	This theme refers to the use of visual tools and media such as images, videos, mind maps, gestures, and realia to support students in understanding and processing information, especially in reading or content-heavy tasks.

6. Producing the Report

The final phase in thematic analysis involves the researcher creating a report on the research findings. Once the central themes have been identified and analysed, the researcher synthesizes the results and presents them in a comprehensive report. This report typically includes an overview of the research question, a description of the methodology employed, a presentation of the central themes and their supporting evidence, and an interpretation of the findings. The

report aims to provide a clear and coherent account of the research outcomes based on the identified themes.

F. Time and Place of the Research

This research was conducted at a junior high school in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia. The data collection process, including interviews, was conducted on March 14, 2025. The research schedule was arranged based on the participants' availability to ensure that the research activities could be carried out effectively and did not interfere with the participants' teaching responsibilities.

Table 6. *Research Timeline*

Activities	Month													
	gt 2024	ep 2024	ct 2024	ov 2024	ec 2024	an 2025	eb 2025	ar 2025	pr 2025	ay 2025	un 2025	ul 2025	gt 2025	ep 2025
Research Proposal Writing	■	■	■	■										
Research Proposal Examination					■									
Data Collection						■	■	■	■	■	■			
Data Analysis												■	■	■