# CHAPTER 3
# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains the methods used in conducting this research, including research design, research setting and participants, data collection, data analysis, and research schedule.

## A. Research Design

The research design used in this study is a case study, in accordance with the researcher's aim, namely to focus more in-depth research on the barriers faced by students in learning English syntax. As stated by Duff (2018), case studies are a research method that emphasizes an in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon or case in a real-life context.

## B. Research Setting and Participants

This research was conducted at one of the junior high schools in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia. This school has students whose first language is Sundanese. At this school, English is one of the core subjects. At the junior high school level, including in this school, students have begun to be taught to understand and make sentences, starting from simple sentences. At the ninth grade level, students begin to understand and produce sentences at a higher level than when they were in seventh and eighth grades.

The participants in this study were three ninth-grade junior high school students. The researcher selected three students with the aim of gaining deeper data or information. This aligns with the principles of qualitative research, which emphasizes the depth or richness of information rather than the number of participants. Although the number of participants was limited, qualitative research values the extent to which meaningful and comprehensive information can be generated (Asrulla et al., 2023). Therefore, three students were sufficient for this study to learn more about the barriers they face in learning English syntax.

Three students were selected using purposive sampling based on the research criteria, namely students experiencing barriers in learning English syntax.

Furthermore, students were selected based on different levels of English proficiency, namely high, medium, and low. This aimed to represent all levels of English proficiency. The students' English proficiency level was measured based on the English teacher's assessment report. The researcher chose this technique because the researcher wanted to gain more diverse information regarding the barriers students face in learning English syntax.

The students who participated in this study were between 14 and 15 years old. The students who participated generally use Sundanese as their first language. However, students also master another language, namely Indonesian. Indonesian is the language that students use when learning. This makes students tend to use Indonesian language structures when learning to make English sentences. This is one of the things that can influence them in learning English, especially learning English syntax.

To find out the barriers in learning English syntax faced by the selected participants (three students), the researcher analyzed the documents in the form of English notes or assignments that they had made.

## C. Data Collection

To collect the data, the researcher used document analysis. Document analysis is chosen by the researcher because the researcher wanted to analyze, review, and evaluate the syntactic errors made by students, this is to find out the barriers that students face in learning English syntax. According to Bowen (2009), document analysis is a systematic way to review and evaluate a document, whether printed or electronic. In this research, the documents that were analyzed are student notes or assignments collected by the teacher.

The steps that the researcher took in collecting data are as follows:

1. The researcher coordinated with the school in one of the junior high schools in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia, where the researcher conducted the study. The researcher coordinated related research, especially regarding the time that can be used by the researcher to conduct research.

2. The researcher selected the participants by purposive sampling based on the

students' English proficiency level, namely high, medium, and low English proficiency. The researcher asked the teacher for help with this.
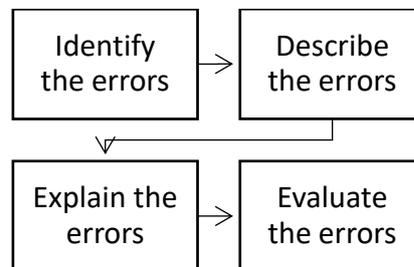
3. The researcher asked the participants about their willingness to participate in the study, i.e., to have their notebooks and assignments analysed for syntax errors, to find out the barriers they face in learning English syntax. The researcher provided a consent form for the participants to sign if they agreed. The consent sheet contained some information, including explaining to potential participants about this study, explaining the rights, risks, and benefits in this study, explaining that the identity of participants in this study will be kept confidential, using initials, codes, or numbers to replace participants' names, and explaining that the data obtained will be stored and used as well as possible for this study. In addition to being included in the willingness sheet, the researcher explained this information to potential participants directly.

4. The researcher also asked permission from the English teacher to access the English notes and assignments of the students selected as participants.

5. The researcher collected the English notes and assignments that were made by three students selected as participants in this research.

## D. Data Analysis

To analyze the data, the researcher analyzed document data using error analysis, because the researcher wants to find out the syntax errors made by students. According to Karim et al. (2018), error analysis is the process of recognizing, categorizing, and regularly understanding inadequate forms produced by foreign language learners.

There are several steps in carrying out error analysis. According to Ellis (2002, as cited in Pardede et al., 2023), several steps in carrying out analysis are: (1) identify the errors, (2) describe the errors, (3) explain the errors, and (4) evaluate the errors.

Figure 3. 1 Error Analysis Steps

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┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐
│  Identify   │ ───> │  Describe   │
│ the errors  │      │ the errors  │
└─────────────┘      └─────────────┘
       ┌──────────────────┘
       v
┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐
│ Explain the │ ───> │  Evaluate   │
│   errors    │      │ the errors  │
└─────────────┘      └─────────────┘
```

The steps that have been mentioned were carried out by the researcher in this research as follows:

1. The researcher identified syntax errors made by students.

2. The researcher described the syntax errors made by students by classifying errors into several categories. According to Corder (1973, as cited in Al-Khresheh, 2016), FL learner errors are categorized into several terms based on the difference between learners' utterances and the reconstructed version. Based on this, errors are divided into four categories, namely: (1) Omission errors, errors occur when students omit one word in a sentence, for example, 'She beautiful,' which must be 'She is beautiful.' (2) Selection errors, errors occur when students choose the wrong structure in making sentences, for example, 'I enjoy to swim,' which must be followed by a gerund, not an infinitive, 'I enjoy swimming.' Errors also occur when students choose the wrong words in making sentences, for example the use of the wrong preposition, such as 'it depends in your struggle,' while 'depend' must be followed by 'on' not 'in' 'it depends on your struggle.' (3) Addition errors, errors occur when students add unnecessary words, for example 'I am always eat bread every morning,' which must be 'I always eat bread every morning.' (4) Misordering errors, errors occur when students arrange elements or words incorrectly in a sentence, for example 'Why you are crying?' which must be 'Why are you crying?'

3. The researcher interpreted syntax errors made by students using Interlanguage Theory Perspectives.

4. The final step is the researcher evaluated the syntax errors made by students, analyzed the level of syntactic error and its impact on the meaning of the sentence, and determined whether the sentence is still understandable or not.

During the analysis, the researcher carefully guards the data so that it is not misused. The researcher kept the identity of the participants confidential, such as replacing real names with pseudonyms or initials to maintain the confidentiality of the participants' data.

In addition to maintaining participant data and identity properly, the researcher ensured the validity of the data obtained by the researcher. The researcher ensured the validity of the data by consulting with supervisors as experts in the field being studied. Consultations were carried out in stages, especially consulting on data collection techniques, data analysis, and data interpretation that the researcher does, so that they are in accordance with research ethics and the data produced is relevant to the research objectives.

**E. Research Schedule**

The researcher conducted several stages in this study, the stages carried out can be seen in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Research Schedule

| Description | Sept/ 2024 | Oct/ 2024 | Nov/ 2024 | Dec/ 2024 | April/ 2025 | June/ 2025 | Oct/ 2025 | Nov/ 2025 | Dec/ 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Research Proposal writing | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | | | | | | |
| Research Proposal examination | | | | ▓ | | | | | |
| Data Collection | | | | | ▓ | | | | |
| Data | | | | | ▓ | ▓ | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Analysis | | | | | ▓ | ▓ | | | |
| Report | | | | | | ▓ | ▓ | | |
| Thesis Result Seminar | | | | | | | | ▓ | |
| Thesis Examination | | | | | | | | | ▓ |