# CHAPTER 3

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the procedure involved in developing and conducting this study to gather information regarding the use of cartoons in language learning. Details on the samples, selected cartoons and instrumentation of this study including their selection criteria and methodology are described and explained in this chapter.

### 3.1    Sample of The Study

The samples selected for this study are students who are studying at the Faculty of Art and Design, MARA University of Technology (UiTM) in Shah Alam, Selangor. A few lecturers who are teaching English at this faculty were also selected to be interviewed. The data gathered from the interviews will help provide information for this study.

### 3.1.1    Students

The students who are chosen as the sample for this study consists of twenty-eight (28) semester two students represented in two different groups -- Group A and Group B, from the Faculty of Art and Design in Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM). The students of these two groups are basically chosen from the existing groups in the faculty. The students from the first group (Group A) is the group which

produced writings based on the cartoons given and students from the second group (Group B) on the other hand, produced their writings based on the linear instruction given.

The Art and Design students were chosen mainly because of their familiarity with the art pieces and creative art creations and are specifically trained in dealing with visuals in their field of study. Furthermore, these students, in the nature of their course, deal with a lot of visuals. Thus, with this background knowledge, these students are expected to be able to use their knowledge of interpreting visuals and explain what they see in the visuals in the form of writing using the English language.

The semester two students were chosen because they have undergone a semester of English and passed the Preparatory English paper which is offered to all semester one students in UiTM. The content of the course includes parts of speech and tenses for grammar, reading and as well as other language skills namely speaking and listening. Hence, these students are assumed to have mastered the parts of speech taught when they were in semester one, particularly the adjectives and know how to use them. Furthermore, all the basics of writing were taught when they were in semester one. In the case of art, these students have been trained the basics of art and drawing in semester one. Therefore, with the knowledge of art and writing still fresh in their mind, they could help the students to deal with the tasks

given in this study. Hence, these students are assumed to be equipped with the knowledge required in this study.

## 3.1.2 Lecturers of English

The four lecturers teaching the English Language at the Faculty of Art and Design in UiTM were chosen based on the number of years of service in this faculty which reflect the amount of experience they possess in teaching the Art and Design students. All the lecturers chosen for this study have at least five years of experience in teaching these students.

## 3.2 Instrumentations

There are a number of instruments employed in gathering the data for this study. In order to establish the validity and reliability of data, triangulation of data is done through the data collection methods which are as below :

a)    questionnaires

b)    lecturer interview

c)    analysis of documents (the analysis of the students' writing).

### 3.2.1 Questionnaires

A set of questionnaires was administered to the students in this study. The questionnaire (Appendix I) which contained two parts was used to obtain information on students' demographic data regarding sex, age, language(s) spoken at home and questions asking for their opinion with reference to the English language results. The second part of this questionnaire was on cartoons and the English language. In this section, the purpose was to elicit the students' responses on cartoons and the role of cartoons in learning English. The questionnaire was administered prior to the study, during the first session of the data collection.

### 3.2.2 Interview

The collection of data through interview was carried out on the lecturers of English in the Faculty of Art and Design in UiTM.

### 3.2.2.1 Lecturer Interview

Four English lecturers at the Faculty of Art and Design were randomly selected for the interview. The purpose of this interview is to gather information on the lecturers' point of views on the use of cartoons in language learning and teaching. The structured interviews consist of open-ended questions (Appendix II), which were carried out after the data collection sessions were completed. The

rationale of having these interviews is to obtain the lecturers' perceptions on the use of cartoons in learning language. The information obtained was used to help the researcher gauge all the information gathered from other sources of data for this study. The questions put forward during the interviews were pertaining to the use of cartoons in classroom instruction and their effectiveness in language learning and teaching.

### 3.2.3    Analysis of Documents (Students' Written Work)

During the data collection sessions, the students were required to produce some written work. The students' essays were then analyzed to gather a more detailed data on the use of cartoons in language learning and teaching.

### 3.2.3.1 Cartoons as a Data Gathering Tool

Cartoons play a significant role in this study. They act to elicit students' responses in the form of writing for this study. In this study, a popular local cartoon which is *Lat* was selected. The rationale for choosing this cartoon was mainly because it deals with various issues related to, for instance, social, political, gender and other aspects of the Malaysian culture which is familiar to the students. All the cartoons by *Lat* are normally presented in the local context and phenomena, carrying local themes which are appropriate for classroom use. By using a more

familiar material and real-life or authentic materials, learning is made more meaningful since what is presented is something that the students are familiar with.

Another reason is that cartoons are normally associated with humour. Humour in classroom provides a fun and enjoyable learning atmosphere to the learners of language. Cartoons are undoubtedly enjoyed by all age groups and levels in the society, so, the students have no problem in accepting their use in the learning of language.

Cartoons are easily available in the market and inexpensive and could even be found in daily newspapers. In the learning of language, cartoons can provide the materials for classroom discussions. Therefore, cartoons can encourage students to use the language more and make them active users of the language which help improve their fluency and ability in it. Since cartoons are often presented in actual context, they can provide a rich source of authentic language and help students in expanding their vocabularies.

3.3    The Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out in order to validate the instruments of the study. The pilot study was carried out upon twenty-four (24) students who are in their first semester of study in the UiTM. Based on this pilot study, the instruments for this study was refined and improved in order to achieve the expected results.

3.4     Research Procedure


The study was carried out in natural settings of classroom environment. The students are from two different groups which are Group A and Group B and are placed in two different classrooms.


3.4.1   Task of Group A


During every session of data collection, students of Group A were given a copy of cartoons (visual aid) (as exhibited in Appendix III) each and were required to describe the cartoons in an essay of at least 350 words within a period of one hour.    Three different cartoons which represent three different topics to be discussed by the students of Group A were used in this study.


3.4.2   Task of Group B


On the other hand, students of Group B were given a linear form of instructions (as exhibited in Appendix IV) which carried the similar theme and context as the cartoons given to Group A.  Hence, students of Group B are required to imagine the situations presented by the linear instructions provided to them before they produce their writings.  They were then to write an essay of about the same length (at least 350 words) of those in Group A within a period of one hour.

Based on the three topics presented by the cartoons, three linear instructions were constructed for students of Group B in helping them to write their essays.

### 3.4.3    Linear and Non-linear Instructions

The purpose of having linear instructions and the non-linear instructions is to enable the analysis of the students' writing to see the similarities and differences in the writing based on the two different tasks provided. The content, organisation of ideas, the use of adjectives and the strategies the students' use in producing their essays were analysed. The role of cartoons and their influences in helping the students' produce their essays were also looked into.

### 3.5    Data Analysis

The data gathered from the questionnaires was analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. The data was then tabulated and interpreted. Students' opinions and responses pertaining to the questions asked were also discussed and summarized.    Data obtained from the lecturer interviews was analyzed and summarized and used in achieving data triangulation for this study.

The data gathered from the students' written work (essays) was analyzed accordingly to see the students' performance in the use of adjectives and their

overall performance in the English language. The technical aspects of writing such as the organisation of ideas and the strategies employed by the students from both groups in realizing their essays were also looked into in this study. The findings from this data provided the primary findings for this study.