

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses a set of methodological approaches which covers the research design, the research setting and participants, the data collecting techniques and the data analyses techniques.

3.1 Research Design

This study is qualitative in nature since it focuses on how the participants experience and interact with a phenomenon at a given point in and in a particular context (Heigham & Croker, 2009:7; Richards, 2003:10). This study can be characterized as a case study because it observes and analyzes an exploration of a “bounded system” (Merriam in Heigham & Croker, 2009:68) such as an individual, program, event, school, and institutions. In this case, it investigates the issues of English speaking test at tertiary levels.

This study involves multiple sources of information including questionnaires, observations, documents and interviews in order to gather detailed information to establish the complexity of the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2008:220), in this case, the preparation, administration and the scoring of speaking test result.

Questionnaires and open-ended interviews were applied to investigate the preparation of making the speaking tests and test results scoring. Whereas, observation was carried out to explore lecturers’ emphasis when implementing the speaking tests.

3.2 Research Setting and Participants

This study was conducted at two tertiary education levels in West Java. The institutions were chosen due to the accessibility and time efficiency in conducting the study. They both possessed an English major program that produced graduates with S1 degree who were required teach and test the speaking skill. Another reason was that the researcher intended to raise the popularity of both institutions as a promotional agenda.

The participants involved in this study were two speaking lecturers who taught the speaking course towards sophomores. In addition, they could provide useful information towards the study, as they were familiar with the central phenomenon. They were voluntarily participated because they thought that this study would be useful to better their speaking tests. Both participants were between 40-45 years old. They were both Sundanese whose Sunda was their mother tongue and English as their foreign language.

3.3 Data Collecting Techniques

3.3.1 Interview

Interviews were conducted by the researcher by asking the participants individually or one-on-one interview with open-ended questions or semi-structured interview. So, the participants could best voice their experiences without constrained by any perspectives of the researcher's findings and it allowed the participants to create the options for responding (Creswell, 2008:225).

The interviews were given in Indonesian. The guideline questions for the interview were largely focused toward the three questions, regarding the test preparation, test administration and scoring procedures in the speaking class. All the interviews were recorded, transcribed and translated into English by the researcher. The researcher also backed up the data into computer files. As Davidson says in Creswell (1998:134) we should always develop backup copies of computer files.

3.3.2 Questionnaire

In this study, questionnaires used to collect data from participants in the form of responses and comments, that is why, the researcher used open-ended questions or open-response item. As Cresswell (2008:228) says that open-ended questions have advantages for the researcher in having many responses-some short and some long-to analyze.

The guideline questions for the open-ended questionnaire were largely focused towards the test preparation, test administration and the scoring procedures in the speaking class. Before the questionnaire was distributed to the participants, a

preliminary questionnaire was given to several lecturers who were not involved in the study.

3.3.3 Observation

The observations were conducted by the researcher as a complete observer who was not active in the setting, visit a site, sit quietly, record and taking notes without involved in the activities of the participants (Creswell, 2008:222). The observation was carried out to observe what do the speaking lecturers focus on while implementing the speaking test. The information included portraits and activities of participants, lecturers and students' interaction during the implementation of the tests. The field notes were used to record the data.

3.3.4 Document Analysis

The document analysis was done in order to find out the scoring rubrics that were used by the respondents. It was done to recheck the scoring rubrics and the final score form that is made by the respondents. The scoring rubrics were requested from the respondents' file and was copied by the researcher. The syllabus' institution was also analyzed to recheck the teaching objective of the speaking course. The syllabus was copied from the respondents' document.

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were categorized, organized, transcribed and redacted from the discursive data since there were large amounts of information during the study. The first stage in analyzing and interpreting the data deals with the analysis and interpretations of the respondents' draft of interviews and questionnaires. While the second stage deals with analysis and interpretations of the observation.

The analysis continued with coding the data for segmenting and labeling or categorizing text to form descriptions and broad themes in the data (Creswell, 2008:251). Every coding was done as soon as the data had been gathered.

Collecting more data was also conducted if the researcher still lack of resources. The data collection and analysis were processed simultaneously and continuously.

The findings were reported in narrative discussion then they were interpreted by reviewing the major findings and how the research questions were answered.

To validate the findings, the researcher used triangulation to check the accuracy or credibility. This study employed three methods of collecting data: questionnaires, open-ended interviews and observations. They were used to ensure the credibility. Questionnaires and interviews were carried out to investigate how the speaking tests were prepared, how the results were scored, and what was focused during the tests. The observation notes were used to review the process and the results of the speaking tests implementation.

This triangulation did not only allow the exploration of the phenomenon to be effective, but also enhanced credibility.

