CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The chapter presents the methodology of this research. It reported the information about the research design, the site and the participant of the study. Finally, this chapter describes the data sources, collection, and analysis.

3.2. Research Design

The study comprised several research methods. Namely, the program evaluation and the case study (Patton 1987; Lynch, 1996; Emilia, 2005). It was regarded as a program evaluation since the study aimed to evaluate the Literature Circles, a teaching program. The purpose of the evaluation was to learn the program effectiveness in improving the students' written responses, and its appropriateness for a high school setting. The data resulting from the evaluation was used to assist the researcher in deciding whether a cycle of Literature Circles needed to be modified or altered in anyway so that the objectives was achieved more effectively.

Moreover, the study could be considered as a case study because its purpose was to deeply learn about what was happening in the program and the particular outcomes, the students' written responses. It involved multiple data sources rich in context. And the study focused on one particular experience for

education that was the students' written responses in Literature Circles program (Travers, 2001; Nunan, 1991; Patton, 1987; Creswell, 1998 see also Emilia 2005).

3.3. Setting

The study took place in one state high school in Demak. The program was run in five weeks, sequentially from 28 April to 28 May 2010. The determination of particular place of investigation deals with several reasons. Firstly, the program initiation was based on a thought that the students of high school in Demak need dynamic experience in their learning. They lack experience in group process learning and found it difficult to express their responses. As has been mentioned by Dawson & FitzGerald (1999: 5) those common classroom problems Literature Circles can work on. Secondly, the students in the school had enough experience in reading for comprehension but had never done critical reading and writing for assignment. Thirdly, the researcher has had the experience in teaching several high schools in Demak. Therefore, the participants intentionally chosen were representative of common high school students in the region. There was no special artificial conditioning in preparing the students to join the program instead of the program itself. Lastly, it maintained the feasibility and effectiveness of the time to conduct the study in a certain period of time. As what Creswell (1998) say that the data of case study is rich in context. Therefore, the study could be a true benefit for future development in the particular region.

3.4. Participants

The participants of this study were a class of second grade students in a public high school of Demak. The participants were purposively chosen for

several reasons. The first, the selection of the particular second grade class underlies on the assumption that the students had been exposed with a reading program conducted by the teacher. Because Literature Circles are considered as complex classroom activities (Daniels, 2002), it was hoped that the condition benefitted the research in gaining the expected data within a limited time. The later was the consideration that the students had started in process of learning and teaching English and have been unexplored.

Initially, the study involved 30 students. In average their ages ranged from 15 to 16 years old, with 19 females and 11 males. The students originally lived in Demak. Since the class was doing its regular routine. Some students couldn't fully join the program. During the program implementation seven students were assigned for a competition, two students couldn't attend the class due to illness. And during the week of the program implementation six students had left the class for movies. It left 15 students, 12 females and three males as the data sources of the study.

3.5. The Literature Circles Program

In this research the Literature Circles Program was conducted in five weeks. The program covered 2 weeks of training session which included explicit teachings followed by one cycle of Literature Circles Training. And the other 3 weeks covered 3 cycles of Literature Circles. The major stages of the program can be summarized by table 2.

Table 1. Major Stages of the Literature Circles Program

	Steps in starting the Literature Circles	Activities
Week 1 Training	Explain & Demonstrate	Explicit Teaching: Introduction to Literature Circles and Written Response writing.
Week 2 Training	Practice & Debrief	Reading assigned text. Literature Circles Training (LCT)
Week 3	Refine	Reading the self-selected text. Literature Circles One (LC1)
Week 4	Refine	Reading the self-selected text. Literature Circles Two (LC2)
Week 5	Refine	Reading the self-selected text. Literature Circles Three (LC3)

In addition, students were asked to write their written responses after the discussion finished, without the process of drafting and refining. It followed Thomson (1987 in Amer, 2003) and Squire's (1964) procedures in researching students' responses to Literature. And the students' written responses were treated as product (Hilgers, et. al., 2010; Frodesen & Holten, 2003: 144).

Every after a Literature Circles cycle finished the students were asked to write the written responses (Daniels, 2002). In this study, the teacher prepared the students with prompt questions. The questions might help the students with ideas in giving responses of the texts (Carter & Long, 1992) (See Appendix 2 for the

prompt questions). Moreover, the questions were intended to invite the participants' attentions to go through efferent and aesthetic stance continuum.

3.6. Data Collection Techniques

There were three data collection techniques that were used in this study. The techniques applied were observation, interview and document analysis (Patton, 1987; Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993; Denzin & Lincoln, 1993; Lynch, 1996; Marshall & Rossan, 2006). Below is the elaboration.

3.6.1. Class Observation

Observations in this study were done ten times during the Literature Circles implementation. (See Table.3 for day to day teaching activities). In this study, observation was mainly used for obtaining descriptions of behavior and events in the Literature Circles. The observation enabled the researcher to draw inferences about the students' behaviors and perspectives of doing Literature Circles that could not be obtained by relying on the interview data (Maxwell, 1996).

In this study, the teacher acted as the participant observer (Richards, 2003: 119). The observation was conducted while the teacher moved around the classroom. The teacher role as facilitator gave reasonable time to monitor and note what happened in the program implementation. Maintaining the observation validity an outside observer was invited (Allwright, 2003: 45 as well as Marshall & Rosman, 2006: 98). The presence of the outside observer was to help the researcher accurately capturing the events and the students' behaviors while doing Literature Circles. Both the observer discussed and jotted down the field notes

immediately while and after each session (Van Lier, 1988 See also Emilia 2005) (See Appendix 6 for the teachers' field notes).

3.6.2. Interview

The interviews were conducted to clarify the students' perceptions and experiences during Literature Circles in the classroom. It was one of the most common ways for the researcher to find out and understand what students think or how they feel about the Literature Circles implementation (Dowson, 2009; Lynch, 1996; Marshal & Rossan, 2006; Frankle & Wallen, 1993; Denzin & Lincoln, 1993).

The in-depth semi structured interviews were conducted twice, before and after the program. Initial interview involved 30 students. It tried to uncover the students' previous experiences in writing activities. While at the end of the program the interview was conducted to evaluate the program implementation. As much as 10 students were involved in the last interview. By doing the interview the researcher was able to scrutinize the information given by the students so that a deeper understanding of their statement about the Literature Circles implementation could be explored. (See Appendix 3 for the interview condensed data).

3.6.3. Document Analysis

The document analysis was done to obtain two purposes. The first was to obtain the program implementation process (Dowson, 2009; Lynch, 1996; Marshal & Rossan, 2006; Frankle & Wallen, 1993; Denzin & Lincoln, 1993). For this the document analysis referred to the students' role sheets, reading logs,

students written responses, book pass reviews, students' self assessments (See appendices for the samples of the documents). The documents represented the main source of information to determine the students' comprehension of texts and processes of learning. (See Appendices for the samples of the documents)

The second purpose of document analysis was to gain the evidence of the students' written response improvements and the students' types of responses. The documents evaluated were taken from 15 students as indicated in section 3.4.. The students' written responses were collected from the Literature Circles Training (LCT) to the Literature Circles 3 (LC3) (See Appendix 16 for the samples of the students' written responses).

3.7. Methods of data analysis

The data analysis of the study was carried out during the program and after. The data analysis was crucial since it provided the material for answering the research questions: (1) Can Literature Circles improve the students' written responses? (2) What types of written responses do the students produce after doing Literature Circles? (3) What are the students' opinions about the Literature Circles program in their EFL classroom?.

3.7.1. Observation

The ongoing data were gained from the teacher's notes of observation, role sheets, reading logs, story ratings, students' self assessments, and students' written responses. The data analysis was conducted in three steps: managed, analyzed, and interpreted (Silverman, 2005). First, the data were managed based on which sessions of Literature Circles the events or the behaviors appeared. In

this study the sessions was divided into two, meeting I which is notes and logs, and meeting II which was the discussion sessions. Secondly, the data was analyzed to provide the researcher with the materials for evaluations and refinements of the Literature Circle cycles (See Appendix 6 for the teachers' field notes). The events or the students' behaviors were categorized according to the principles of the Literature Circles. Finally the data were interpreted to answer the research questions.

1.7.1. Interview

The interviews were conducted twice, before and after the program. Initial interview was intended to uncover the students' previous experiences in reading and writing activities. The second interview was to evaluate the program as a whole. The data of interview was analyzed in several steps (Kvale, 1996 see also Emilia 2005). Initially, the students' names were replaced with pseudonyms during the transcription of the data. Then, the data were sorted out and interpreted into three central themes. Firstly, it was about the students' opinions towards Literature Circles. Secondly, the students' thoughts of what they had gained from the Literature Circles program. And thirdly, it recorded students' suggestions for Literature Circles best suit for future implementation (See Appendix 5 for the interview condensed data by topics and Chapter VI for the discussion of the interview data reports).

3.7.3. Document Analysis

As has been indicatet in section 3.6.3. the document analysis was done for two purposes. The first was to obtain the program implementation process.

Analyzing the students' learning process, besides the teachers' field notes, the document analysis referred to some data collections: the teachers' evaluation sheets, the students' role sheets, the students' reading logs, the students' self assessments and the students' written responses. (See Appendices for the samples of the documents). By analyzing those evidences, the evaluation of Literature Circles program implementation was done. This was because in general students' portfolio works provided concrete instances of learners' progress (Nunan, 1999; Freebody, 2003; Emilia, 2004).

Secondly, in order to answer the first and the second research questions, text critical analysis was applied. The main data analyzed was the students' written responses. For the first question, the researcher had done careful evaluation towards students' written responses from the LCT to LC3 utilizing a rubric (See Appendix 11. for the rubric). The rubric measured the students' abilities in *retelling the story*, *Personal reaction*, *Connection making*, *Comments on Authors craft*, and *Personal reflection* (See Appendix 14 for the students' written responses index).

Specifically in the attempt of answering the second research question, the students' written responses were critically analyzed based on Rosenblatt's description of reader stance. In defining the continuum, the description of reader stance by Cox and Many (1992) were applied. They were: Most efferent response, Primarily efferent responses, Primarily aesthetic responses, and Most aesthetic responses.

Moreover, to scrutinize the compiling items within the students' written responses, the response categories of Squire's (1964; See also Sheila & Ray, 2005:74; Karolides, 1999; Benton, 2003: 91; Early and Odlan) and Thompson (1978 in Amer, 2003). (See 2.4.2.for further explanation of types of responses) were utilized. Based on the categories, the students' written responses were piled up to withdraw the response patterns. This kind of written response analysis had been done by Angelotti (1972) in his research. (See Appendix 15 for the samples of the students' written responses analysis)

All the data gained were triangulated to stretch the findings of the research questions. The findings were the improvements in the students' written responses, the students' types of responses (See Chapter V for the discussion of text analysis), and the students' perceptions of the Literature Circles program implementation (See Chapter VI for the discussion of the interview data).

3.8. Conclusion

This chapter has focused on a detailed methodology of the study. It includes the setting, the participants, the data collection techniques and analysis employed in the study. The program overview will be elaborated in Chapter Four.