CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the previous chapter, the theoretical foundations related to the study have been previously explained. In the following chapter, the research methodology related to the study will be explained further. This chapter will also consist of the research method including research design, place of research, population and sample, data collection and data analysis.

3.1   Research Design

As this current study deals with human experiences in explaining how teacher identity is constructed in English as an International Language (EIL) context in Indonesia, choosing a qualitative approach is in fact appropriate. As suggested by Hancock (1998) that qualitative research concerns on human's opinions, experiences and feelings. Alsup (2008) strengthen this argument by saying that not only identity construction that clearly affects experience, but identity also depends on experience or individual's physical performance.

Along with him, Creswell (1998) argues that qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups that is assigned to a social or human problem. According to him, data obtained in this study is typically collected in the participant's natural setting and the data analysis is built

inductively from particulars to general themes. Then, the researcher makes interpretations of the meaning of the data while the final written report has a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation (Creswell, 1998)

Shank (2002) proposes that qualitative research is a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning. By systematic, he means that the research is planned, ordered and public following rules agreed by members of the qualitative research community. By empirical, he means that this type of inquiry comes from human's experience. Inquiry means that the researchers try to understand how others make sense of their experience (Shank, 2002).

Denzin & Lincoln (2000, in Ospina, 2003) claim that qualitative research involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach meaning that

> qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.
>
> (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000 in Ospina, 2003)

In detail, this present study needs to be provided by comprehensive discussion and analysis of the participants' experience as English teachers in a particular context that is English as an International Language (EIL) context. Hence, case study and narrative inquiry are chosen as methods used in this study.

Since this study sought to find out how teacher identity is constructed in a context, which is Indonesia EIL context, case study is appropriate to employ. It does fit since Hancock (2008) says that case study involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e., a setting, a context). This is also strengthened by Cresswell (1998) by contending that case study research is a qualitative approach in which the researcher explores a case or various cases over time through detailed and in-depth data collection involving various sources of information. According to him, the source of information of case study may come from observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports.

The purpose of a case study, as said by Cohen and Manion (1994) is to make a deep investigation and to make an intensive analysis of various phenomena forming the unit's (or people) life cycle in order to set up generalization about the wider population to which that unit belongs. However, according to Hodkinson & Hodkinson (2001), there are some weaknesses of case study. First, there is too much data to be analyzed. Second, a case study can be very costly if it is done on a large scale. Third, the complexity examined is difficult to represent in a simple way. Forth, the data mostly cannot be presented in numerical presentation. Fifth, they cannot be generalized in the conservative sense. Sixth, the objectivity is questionable. Seventh, they are easy to dismiss by people who do not like the presented messages. Finally, they cannot answer a large number of relevant research questions.

Besides the drawbacks of using a case study research, Hodkinson & Hodkinson (2001) also contends that there are also some strengths of case study. First, case studies emphasize specific context and separate people and groups of individuals and their "thick description", which imparts to the research a more human face and eliminates the gap between real life practice and conceptual data. The majority of theories and assumptions were obtained by means of case study researches. Another strength of case study, according to Hodkinson & Hodkinson (2001), is the flexibility that case study provides to researches. They give more explanation of this strength by saying:

> "Starting from just an exploration, they can have no specific objectives and results to obtain at the end, and, thus, are free to discover and further explore the issues that are raised in the course of study. Case study tool allows to start with objectives of broad scope and gradually narrow the focus as the research progresses".

> (Hodkinson&Hodkinson, 2001)

Thus, unlike traditional statistical research methods, which are applied for finding solutions where routine and homogeneous behavior is observed, case study methods serves as an excellent platform for creativity and innovativeness (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001).

Another method namely narrative inquiry is also chosen as the second method in this study as it involves the gathering of written, oral, and or visual narratives focusing on the meanings that people assign to their personal experiences, seeking to provide insight that befits the human lives complexity (Josselson, 2006, in Trahar, 2009). Nevertheless, narrative inquiry is more than the uncritical gathering

of stories since according to Trahar (2009), narrative inquirers make every effort to attend to the ways in which a story is constructed, for whom and why, as well as the cultural discourses that it draws upon:

> "The term narrative carries many meanings and is used in a variety of ways by different disciplines, often synonymously with story (...) the narrative scholar (pays) analytic attention to how the facts got assembled that way. For whom was this story constructed, how was it made and for what purpose? What cultural discourses does it draw on—take for granted? What does it accomplish?"
>
> (Riessman & Speedy, 2007, in Trahar, 2009)

Three commonplaces of narrative inquiry, temporality, sociality, and place, specify dimensions of an inquiry and serve as a conceptual framework (Clandini & Connelly, 2000). According to them, in applying a narrative inquiry, commonplaces are dimensions that need to be simultaneously explored. The first commonplace is temporality, which is related with temporally points inquirers toward the past, present and future of people, places, things and events under study temporally points inquirers toward the past, present and future of people, places, things and events under study (Clandini & Connelly, 2000). The second commonplace that is sociality, according to Clandini & Connely (2000), is related with both personal and social conditions. In relation to the third commonplace that is place, place is defined as "the specific concrete, physical and topological boundaries of place or sequences of places where the inquiry and events take place". In conclusion, narrative inquiry can then be concluded as a kind of qualitative research studying human experiences gathered through human stories or narrative.

According to Clandinin & Huber (2000), most narrative inquiries starts with asking participants to tell their stories and this can be done through one-to-one situations or in-groups situations. They explains that in one-to-one situations, participants are asked to tell their stories in a variety of ways by responding to more or less structured interview questions, by engaging in conversation or dialogue, and by telling stories triggered by various artifacts such as photographs or memory box items (Clandinin & Huber, 2000). Contrastly, in the in-group situations, two or more participants meet with the inquirer to tell their stories of their experience when they have lived through similar situations (Clandinin & Huber, 2000).

If the participants' narrative or story is gathered through semi-structured interviews, retelling is the most possible technique that is used in presenting the study results. Syrj & Estola (1999) explains that retelling is a technique that is used to tell other people's narrative or story where the 'reteller' does not tell her own story but she makes her interpretation based on other people's story. According to them, the interpretation can be considered as acceptable and accurate if it can represent the key ideas of the people's stories comprehensively where 'the ideas of the actual words and the meaning behind them are fully reflected' (Gibson, Gold, & Sgouros, 2003).

According to Castell (2008), there are some weaknesses of narrative inquiry; firstly, he believes that there are little agreements in field about exactly what does

or does not constitute a 'narrative'. Secondly, the bias of this kind of study related to its reliability. Thirdly, he questions the validity of narrative inquiry's results. Lastly, he contends that narrative inquiry often very reliant on the researcher's sole interpretation.

In opposing the first weakness of narrative inquiry proposed by Castell (2008) related to the ambiguity of the term 'narrative' in narrative inquiry, some appropriate definitions of this term supporting the distinctness of the term 'narrative' in this study. Alsup (2005, in Amirulloh, 2008) defines narrative as a method that is used to recall and to (re) structure individuals experiences that is set in the original order. Clandini & Connely (1990; Holmes, 2006, p.169; Zembylas, 2003, in Amirulloh, 2008) also adds that a narrative is a like a story focusing on the categorization of the phenomena in individuals' natural experience. According to them, narrative consists of elements like those of literary work: themes, plots, and characters. In conclusion, it is clear that the term narrative in narrative inquiry can be defined as a method of recalling and (re)structuring individual's experience that is set in its original order focusing on individual's natural experience.

In addition, to argue Castell's hesitancy on narrative inquiry's reliability and validity, some experts' arguments will then be provided. To state matters succinctly, reliability in narrative research usually refers to the dependability of the data, while validity typically refers to the strength of the analysis of data, the

trustworthiness of the data and ease of access to that data (Polkinghorne, 1988, in Webster & Mertova, 2007). Polkinghorne (1988, in Webster & Mertova, 2007) argues that the validity of narrative is more closely associated with meaningful analysis than with consequences. He also maintains that reliability is not measurement stability, but rather the notes or transcripts' trustworthiness.

Craig (2010) also argues Castell's statement saying that narrative inquiry often relies on the researcher's sole interpretation by contends that narrative inquiry involves relational knowing and it follows where the story leads. Thus, narrative inquiry is not only based on the researcher's interpretation since it requires relational knowing and it is designed and set based on the flow of the story.

3.2 Research Setting and Participants

This research was conducted in a private university in Purwokerto, Central Java. To obtain the data of teacher identity formation in Indonesian EIL context, two western-trained English teachers were involved as participants of this study. The participants were asked to answer questions and tell their experiences forming their identities as English teachers in EIL context in Indonesia.

3.3   Data Collection and Data Analysis

The data of this study were from the participants' personal stories or narratives based on some themes as written below.

- Personal learning and teaching experiences

- Studying abroad and its influence

- Working with colleagues in Indonesia

- (Re)selecting teaching materials, teaching techniques, classroom language, and classroom culture

From the above five themes, semi structured interview consisting of ten questions are designed (see Appendix 3). Borrowing the term from Clandinin & Huber (2000), *one-to-one* situation was conducted where each participant was interviewed separately. In addition, semi structured interview means that the interview is not highly structured, as is the case of an interview that consists of all closed-ended questions, nor is it unstructured, such that the interviewee is simply given a license to talk freely about whatever comes up (Zorn, 2009). Simply, semi structured interview is able to enrich the information gathered from the participants since it gives bigger opportunity to various data to occur.

After the data from the teachers' narratives were all gathered, the interview recording was transcribed and the phenomena occurred was thoroughly analyzed, classified and related with the existing theory grounded on the social and

postcolonial theory of identity formation. The results of the study coming from the participants' narratives found in the interviews were presented through retelling and excerpt taken from the interview transcripts.