CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To achieve the objectives of the study, the method used in this inquiry was descriptive qualitative. Dealing with such a method, in this chapter, the writer discusses the research design, the setting of the study, the participants of the study, the data gathering techniques, and the method of analyzing the obtained data.

3.1. Research Design

The present inquiry was considered as a research since it in nature involves elements of a research. According to Nunan (1992), a research is a systematic process of inquiry consisting of three elements; (1) question, problems or hypothesis, (2) data, and (3) analysis and interpretation of data. It is a process which involves defining problem, stating objectives, and formulating a hypothesis. In the other words, this study can be considered as a systematic process of inquiry which involves gathering information, classification, analysis, and interpretation to see to what extent the initial objective has been achieved.

Based on the nature, the purpose and research questions as stated in the previous chapter, this study was conducted through employing a qualitative research design, in the form of a descriptive case study. Creswell (1994) states

that qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed informants, and conducted in a natural setting. While Erickson (1986) as cited in Stainback and Stainback (1988) defines qualitative research as a research which involves (a) intensive, long term participation in a field setting, (b) careful recording of what happens in the setting by writing field notes and interview notes and by collecting other kinds of documentary evidence; (c) analytic reflection on the documentary records obtained in the field; and (d) reporting the results by means of detailed descriptions, direct quotes from interviews, and interpretative commentary.

According to the definitions above, it seems clear that qualitative research is an inquiry method which focuses on revealing the mental process and what are involved in the process regarding whole aspects related to the whole context in social world. Therefore, it deals with answering questions of how, what and why. Related to it, Merriam (1988) and Creswell (1994) give further explanation on qualitative research's characteristic, that qualitative research is focused primarily on process, rather than outcomes or products. This kind of research is also descriptive in which the researcher is interested in process, meaning, and understanding gained through words or pictures.

In harmony with the conceptions above, this particular study was particularly attempting at revealing the process of how the teacher constructs the final test for the students in the end of the English program conducted at the primary school. It descriptively answered the question of how the teachers

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constructed the final test on English for the sixth grades primary school students and also to find out the tests' complies with the objectives of the English program conducted in the schools.

The process of this qualitative study was inductive in that the researcher builds abstractions, concepts, hypotheses, and theories from details. It was more interested in seeing how participant makes sense of his or her experiences, and the structures of the world. In this present study, the researcher was the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Data were mediated through this human instrument, rather than through inventories, questionnaires, or machines.

The form of case study had been chosen for several reasons. First, this study were carried out in a single case (Stake in Emilia, 2005:8), that was, investigating descriptively how teacher develop a final test on English for the sixth grades primary school students in 2008/2009 and the test's compliance with the objectives of the English program. Secondly, for conducting the present case study, the researcher was actually working in the nature of technique in doing a case study since it was considered as the most suitable method to reveal the questions of the study. Here, the researcher explored a single entity or phenomenon (as the case) bounded by time and activity; which was the process of how the English tests were being constructed by the participants.

The researcher collected detailed information through a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time, which was conducted by conducting interview and documentation. This case study was a descriptive record of an individual's experiences and/or behaviors kept by the researcher, who was

an outside observer. Besides, this study employed multiple sources of evidence-converging from the same set of issues, which constituted the important aspect of a case study (Yin, 2003:85 in Ansori, 2007). It was also mentioned that multiple data collections also intended to expand the construct validity of the study (Merriam, 1998). The data collecting techniques operated in this study were questionnaire, interview and documentation.

3.2. Setting

The study focused on investigating descriptively how English teachers develop final tests on English for the sixth grades primary school students in 2008/2009 and the test's compliance with the objectives of the English program. It was conducted at three primary schools in Purworejo, Central Java, and it involved three English teachers of the schools who were chosen purposively as the sample of the study. In consideration of normative ethical aspect of the study (Reese et.al. 1984, Martin 2009, Ekvall et.al 2005), therefore, the name of the chosen participants and the schools are not stated explicitly in this research report since it deals with individual actions and institutional works.

The site was chosen as it was apparently valuable to make the study to be more efficiently conducted, since both of the researcher and the participant lived in the same city, therefore the researcher possibly had adequate access to the participants. The researcher was also interested in conducting the study in the site since English had been known as relatively new subject for students of primary

schools in the area so that it seemed valuable to evaluate whether the construction

of testing on English subject had been conducted properly there or in contrary.

3.3. Participants

Since this study was attempted at investigating descriptively how final tests on English for the sixth grades primary school students in 2008/2009 were constructed by the teachers and the test's compliance with the objectives of the English program, therefore, this study involved English teachers as the participants of the study. There were three English teachers of three different primary schools in Purworejo, Central Java, who had been teaching English and constructing English tests for the final examination, who were chosen purposively as the participants of this study.

There were several reasons for choosing the teachers as the respondent of the study. First, the teachers had been experiencing teaching English in the classes of the primary schools for years and that they were developing the English final test for the sixth grade primary school students by their selves according to the objectives of the program. Secondly, the teachers were considered educated, and therefore, had knowledge, adequate perception and practice on the identified case. Thirdly, the teachers, as the respondents, were accessible. It enabled the researcher to conduct the study efficiently. And finally, the participants involved were considered adequate to fulfill the need for conducting the study.

3.4. Data Collection Techniques

There were two instruments used for collecting the data of this study. Those instruments were: interview and document analysis.

This present study focused on understanding and revealing the process of constructing the test as the 'world' being investigated from the subject's point of view. The process of constructing the test was investigated through operating interview with the subject. It was the characteristic of qualitative research which apply interview in inquiry. In this qualitative research, the interview was conducted to understand the world from the subject's point of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples' experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanation (Kvale, 1996:1).

The interview in the present study was aimed at revealing the process of how the teacher constructs the test. It focused on the steps in constructing the test. As stated in chapter II, there should be certain periodic steps in constructing a quality language test in this process. The method of obtaining the data was operated for this case since the process of constructing the test, like writing process, seemed to be psychological process which was invisible and, therefore, revealing the process could be conducted by interviewing the subject.

Interview, in this study, meant a conversation between the researcher and the respondents, i.e. the selected English teachers. The interview was the conversation with a purpose (Merriam, 1988:71). In interview, one gives information to another. In this case, information given by the respondents was the information needed by the researcher as the data of the research.

Interview was considered very effective in this study. Guba and Lincoln (1981:158) as quoted by Ansori (2007) said that:

> Experience in the field demonstrates that on some occasions, individual, one-on-one interviewing is effective, that panel interviewing can sometimes elicit about as much information as it is possible to gamer from a particular group, and that dual-interviewer modes may prove extraordinarily useful under some circumstances.

In conducting the interview, the individual, open-ended interview technique was applied. In this study, the researcher interviewed the teachers as the respondents in March to June 2009.

The interviews were then documented by voice recorder and then they were transcribed in the form of written texts. All the texts were read by the respondent to confirm that all data are correct. Therefore, some correction or clarification occurred during this process. It meant that checking was needed to develop the credibility and accuracy of the data (Alwasilah, 2004).

Document analysis was the second technique in collecting the data of the study which was used to examine the tests' correspondence with the objectives of the program. This data gathering technique was used to obtain the data in the form of documents. The first thing to do is to get the complete information of the objectives of the English program implemented at the primary school and the written English final tests in the sixth grade of the primary school, the researcher used the document analysis technique of obtaining the data. It then is followed by analyzing the tests batteries and correspond them in terms of their particular

objectives so that the researcher may find the tests' correspondence with the objectives of the English teaching program conducted in the classes.

The steps of collecting the data by using document analysis technique were as follows:

1. Getting the document of the objectives of the English program implemented in the primary school, i.e. the curriculum and the syllabus of English program.

2. Making a copy of the curriculum and syllabus of the program.

3. Getting the printed documents of the written English test batteries used for the final test for the sixth grade primary school students in the academic year of 2008/2009.

4. Making a copy of the documents as the data.

3.5. Data Analysis

Data analysis was the process of systematically searching and arranging the information of the data gathering techniques (the interview transcripts, and also the document analysis) that were accumulated to increase understanding of them and to enable to present what researcher had discovered to others (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992:153 in Ansori, 2007). In this study, the data analysis involved working with data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what was important and

what was to be learned, and deciding what would be told to others in the report of the study, according to the two determined research questions.

In doing data analysis of the data obtained from the interview, the result of the interview was firstly transcribed. In the transcription, similar with the data of the questionnaires, the researcher used the initial name of the participants to keep the objectivity in analyzing the further data (Kvale, 1996). The interviews which had been transcribed were then re-checked by each of the respondents to ensure that the transcriptions really reflected what the participants had meant (Kvale, 1996), and to enable the researcher to get some possible input from the respondents (Smith et.al, 1990).

The examined transcriptions were then categorized according the topic to which they were addressed for. This categorization were then continued by interpreting and analyzing the data; whether the revealed process of constructing the test were correspond with the theory proposed by the language testing experts, and revealing what possible factors caused it and why. The analysis, then, were reported descriptively.

The analysis of the documents data, on the other hand, involved the following stages:

1. Classifying the objectives of the English program according to the type of language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and the type of language elements (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation).

2. Classifying the English final test batteries according to the type of language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and the type of language elements (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation).

3. Comparing the objectives of the English program and the test batteries according to the type of language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and the type of language elements (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation).

4. Interpreting the result of the analysis by giving description and some critical comment on each of the case.

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