CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter describes some important elements related to research methodology. The elements are research design, setting and participants, data collection method, data analysis method, and validity issues.

3.1 Research design

In relation to its nature, purposes and research questions, this study employs a case study research which uses qualitative method in order to document the detail of information of how people interact in this situation. Silverman (2005: 6) suggests that when we are concerned with exploring people's life histories or everyday behavior, a qualitative method should be used.

The case study is chosen since the focus of attention is the case, not the whole population of cases (Stake, 1998 in Nunan, 1992: 75) that will be studied in detail (Punch, 1998 in Silverman, 2005: 126) in order to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the groups under study and to develop general theoretical statements about regularities in social structure and process (Becker, 1968, cited in Merriam, 1988: 11). In addition, this study used multiple sources of evidence or multiple data collections (Yin, 1993 and Freebody, 2003 cited in Emilia, 2005: 74) which include questionnaire, classroom observations, and interview which was taken before and after the observation (see section 3.3)

To specify teachers' beliefs about CLT, this study used questionnaire as main instrument for collecting the data. The data, both from classroom

observations and interview were used in order to describe the implementation of teachers' beliefs about CLT in teaching learning process.

A pilot study was carried out before the main research. Alwasilah, (2008: 99) suggests that in qualitative research, pilot studies are useful, because they can narrate an understanding of the concepts and theories held by the people we are studying. Additionally, the participant can be chosen by using purposive sampling. Therefore the pilot study was conducted by distributing a questionnaire to two English teachers from other MTsN in Jambi city who were not involved as the participant in the main study.

The consideration taking these two teachers were firstly because they taught in a school which also succeeded in passing all their students in 2006/2007, 2007/2008 and 2008/2009 National Examination. Secondly, concerning teaching experience, one teacher has 10 years experience in teaching English and the other has 3 years experience. Thirdly, they both hold an undergraduate level of education, majoring in English education. Finally, the respondents were cooperative concerning the researcher as their fellow teacher in the same school, therefore it eases the researcher to get the information needed.

Upon the completion of the questionnaire, an interview with the respondents followed. The questionnaire and interview were intended to probe their opinion regarding the feasibility and understandability of the instruments. The most significant findings of the pilot study were their criticism of the research instrument. They noted that the questionnaire, which was fully adapted from the real version, was something new for them and they found it hard to catch the

meaning. To respond the criticism, before taking the questionnaire in the main study, the questionnaire then was modified and once again given to the respondents with an interval of a month (see Appendix 1).

The main study was conducted after the pilot study by distributing the questionnaire which has been modified. Then the results of the questionnaire were analyzed to find out the teachers' beliefs about CLT. Based on the questionnaire results, the researcher conducted classroom observations to get a clear picture on how the teachers implement their beliefs into daily teaching learning process. The researcher tried to understand every phenomenon that had been observed and gave more attention on the implementation of the beliefs by having in-depth interview before, and after the observation.

3.2 Setting and Participants

This study uses the purposive sampling in selecting the sample based on the assumption that one wants to discover, understand, and gain in sight; therefore one need to select a sample from which one can learn the most (Merriam, 1988: 48). One of the aims of selecting the sample purposively, according to Maxwell (1996, cited in Alwasilah, 2008: 147) is because of the uniqueness or representativeness of background, individual or activities. In addition, Lincoln and Guba (1985, cited in Alwasilah, 2008: 72) and Arikunto (2005) suggest that purposive sampling can be used when the researcher concerns on some convenience considerations (limitation of time, site, energy and fund) in order to acquire a certain objective.

This study was conducted in one Islamic Junior High School (MTsN) in Jambi city for some reasons. Firstly, it was the model school for other Islamic Junior High School (MTsN) in Jambi city. Secondly, the school succedeed to pass all students in the National Exam (100%) from 2005/2006 up to 2008/2009 (Depag Kota Jambi, 2009). Thirdly, the school welcomes the researcher who wants to conduct a research as a part of teachers' professional development.

At the time of data collection, the school employed 5 English teachers and they all agreed to take part in the study. However after they noticed that they would also be observed, 2 of the teachers resigned after completing the questionnaire. Therefore only three participants were involved in this study. The participants were observed regularly at least three times a week, and interviewed twice. The table below shows demographic data of the teachers. It shows each teacher's highest educational qualification, whether they held teaching qualification (Teach Q), whether they were specifically trained as a language teacher (ELT Q), the lenght of years they had been teaching (Yrs of Exp), their ages (Age) and the number of classes they taught in the school at the time (No. Of Classes). All names have been coded in order to maintain anonymity.

Table 3.1: Teacher Demographics

Participants	Gender	Highest Qualification	Teach Q	ELT Q	Yrs of Exp	Age	No. Of Classes
T1	M	S1 Degree	√	√	10	38	6
T2	F	S1 Degree	√	-	4,5	34	6
T3	F	S1 Degree	√	-	5	33	6

In addition, T1 and T3 are given the responsibility to handle local content lesson which emphasizes the speaking ability. This is one of the school vision and misssion to develop students who are educated in islamic way combined with the general ability in order to compete with non Islamic junior high school.

3.3 Data Collection

As stated previously, the data for this research were collected using qualitative research method. Patton (1980: 22 in Merriam, 1988: 67) states that qualitative data consist of *detailed descriptions* of situations, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviors; *direct quotation*s from people about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and thought; and excerpt or entire passages from documents, correspondence, records, and caser histories.

The idea that qualitative case studies rely heavily upon qualitative data obtained from interviews, observations, and documents (Merriam, 1988: 68) which are conducted not only as the conclusion of the study but also in an ongoing way (Frankel and Wallen, 1993: 383). Based on this theory, the researcher collected the data by using questionnaires, interview, classroom observation, and document data.

3.3.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaire provides a means of communications between respondents and researcher (Labaw, 1937: 9) in order to get the respondents' responses in a form of written data. The questionnaire in this study was in form of closed questions in which the actual answer categories are provided to the respondents.

The respondents are expected to choose the answer category which comes closest to or best represents their feeling, beliefs, attitudes, opinions, behavior, or knowledge of a situation (Labaw, 1937: 131).

A questionnaire, including the major principles of CLT, namely group work, quality and quantity of error correction, the place and importance of grammar, the role and contribution of the learners, and the role of the teacher, served as the instrument of the study. The questionnaire was originally developed by Karavas-Doukas (1996: 191), consisted of 24 statements (12 favorable and 12 unfavorable) which followed the Likert scale.

As stated in previous section, the modified questionnaire were presented to the participants after a pilot study had been conducted. Advisors' suggestions were taken into consideration during the questionnaire modifying process. The questionnare were placed in 5 categories order: *Group work/Pair work, Error Correction, Role of Grammar, Teacher Role, and Learner Role* in order to ease the teachers comprehend the questionnaire.

According to Karavas-Doukas (1996), the maximum score that can be obtained in the attitude scale and the one indicative of the most favorable attitude/beliefs toward CLT is 120, the middle/neutral point is 72 and the minimum/the one indicating the least favourable beliefs towards CLT is 24. Thus, favourable statements (i.e statements consonants with principles of the CLT) is scored 5 for "strongly agree" down to 1 for "strongly disagree"; for the scoring of unfavourable items the scoring was reversed (unfavourable items scored 1 for "strongly agree" up to 5 for "strongly disagree").

The questionnaire sets were given to the participants based on an appointment. Similar to any questionnaire in general, a pre-notification letter was attached on the first page of the questionnaire in order to establish the legitimacy of the study. Within this letter, a brief description of the study, the reason for the participants to complete the questionnaire, its confidentiality, and some stated instructions to fill in the questionnaire were provided (see Appendix 2).

About a week afterward, the questionnaires were all then collected. In this phase, the result of the questionnaire were counted and analyzed to find which teachers tend to be favourable, neutral and least favourable beliefs toward CLT. An interview to clarify the participants' responses through self-visited and also a confirmation of conducting a classroom observation were done. This process of questionnaire delivery, analysis, and confirmation took three weeks.

3.3.2   Interview

Interview, as the second instrument for collecting the data in this study, is one of the most powerful tools used in attempting to understand people's point of view, beliefs and attitudes (Best and Kahn, 1998 in Naashia, 2006). Interviewing is described as "a conversation with a purpose" (Kahn and Cannell, 1957: 159 in Marshall and Rossman, 2006: 101) and conducted to check the accuracy of – to verify or refute - the respondents' answer through observation (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993: 385) or from questionnaires. By doing an interview, a researcher can probe the respondents for additional information in response to interesting or important answer that arises unexpectedly from the planned questions (Genesee

and Upshur, 1996: 130) as well as related information to the problems being investigated (Silverman, 2000: 154; Creswell, 2008: 226).

One-to-one interviewing (Creswell, 1994: 150), was chosen as one of the primary methods of data collection in this study for two reasons. Firstly, it provided an ideal means of exploring the beliefs teachers had about CLT in language learning and teaching. By asking questions about teaching approaches, sources of influence and views of teaching, it was anticipated that the underlying beliefs would be articulated. These were then compared with the results of questionnaire in order to enrich the data gathered to answer the first research question.

Secondly, interviewing helped to establish a rapport which can bring out detailed information about teachers' personal beliefs and theories of language learning and teaching which was performed in the classroom observations as well as to answer the second research question.

Two interviews were conducted with each teacher both in the teachers' mother tongue (Bahasa Indonesia) and English, before and after the observation. All the interviews were audiotaped as suggested by Creswell (1994: 152) and Alwasilah (2008: 203) and later transcribed for further analysis. The interviews were semi-structured and the sample of questions for interviewing the teachers can be seen in Appendix 5.

In addition to these two formal interviews with the teachers, regular informal conversations were held, often prior to or following observations. These

proved to be valuable opportunities to informally discuss the teaching and learning that occurred in the school, as well as to get to know the teachers better at a more personal level. Teachers would often talk about their teaching without any prompting on the researcher' part, and discuss the difficulties they faced as well as shed light on other matters of their professional lives.

3.3.3 Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is non judgemental description of classroom events that can be analysed and given interpretation (Gebhard, 1999: 35 in Naashia, 2006). Certain kind of research questions can be best answered by observing how people act or how things look (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993: 384). The purpose of observation in the context of the present study was not to evaluate the teaching. Rather, observing the teachers in action allowed a means of assessing the extent to which the teachers' beliefs about CLT corresponded to what actually happened in the classroom as the answer to the second research question.

As a complete observer, the researcher used audio visual recording in order to record the teaching learning process. The recordings were then transcribed to reveal the implementation of the beliefs teachers hold about CLT, especially regarding to groupwork, error correction, grammar role, teacher role and student role in class. The observation scheme, designed on the basis of literature on CLT, for observing how well teachers practice what they theorize was modified from Razmjoo and Riazi (2006) (See Appendix 6). A minimum of six hours of lesson (three meetings) observations were made for each teacher started from April 13th, 2009 to April 25th, 2009.

41

3.3.4   Document Data

A valuable source of information in qualitative research can be documents which consist of public and private records. Creswell (2008: 230) and Alwasilah (2008: 156) suggest that records and documents provide valuable information in helping researchers understand central phenomena in qualitative studies.

The data obtained from document were collected to provide further information regarding the actual practice of teaching English. In this case, the documents needed include the syllabus being followed, the scheme of work planned for school term, a random selection of teachers' lesson plans, and worksheets.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data for this research were analyzed through qualitative data analysis. Creswell (1994) states that the data emerge from qualitative study are descriptive, that is, data are reported in words (primarily the participant's words). Therefore, all data were categorized and analyzed on the basis of the research questions. An ongoing data analysis and interpretation in this study was conducted. The following are the description of analyzing the data.

Firstly, the researcher analyzed the data from the questionnaire by using each item as a point of interest to see how teachers responded to them. For example, when one looks at Item #3 about Group work/Pair work wasting time, 2 disagreed and 1 took Neutral. The responses of those who chose "Neutral" was aggregated with "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" and presented in the table under the heading "Rest" (see Table 2). This gave 33.3% to those who agreed with this

statement. Another way of putting this would be that just over 66.7% of the respondents did not clearly disagree with this statement. The reason for this decision was that those who disagreed with this statement were not strong in their belief that group work and pair work are important forms of activity in order to develop communicative skills. In other word, as group work and pair work features fairly prominently in the literature on CLT, those who chose a weak response have been deemed not to be strongly committed to this feature of teaching. The tables that are presented in the section are therefore to be read so that the "Rest" represents an aggregate and it also represents an attitude that is not consistent with the espousal of a CLT approach in the classroom.

Secondly, after finding out the teachers favourable attitude/beliefs about CLT (the data which were used to answer the first research question; it is to find out the English teachers' beliefs about CLT), an interview was used as crosscheck information from the questionnaire and also a confirmation for the classroom observation.

Thirdly, the data on teachers' practices, in order to answer the second research question, were collected through classroom observation. The data were used to describe the implementation of teachers' beliefs about CLT into classroom practice by means of observation checklist which was designed on the basis of characteristics in CLT. The data were also confirmed with an interview after the observation and consulted with the questionnaire results.

Finally, the data from interview (before and after the observation) were transcribed, coded, categorized and interpreted to complete the questionnaire in

order to find out the research question (Alwasilah, 2008: 177). A system of coding to indicate each participants was made in order to ease the data analysis. The coding and the categorization were as follows:

Table 3.2. System of Coding

Coding	Meaning
T1	Participant I
T2	Participant II
T3	Participant III
I	Interviewer

3.5 Validity Issues

It is essential to ensure the trustworthiness of the research, and thus its findings, by addressing the issues of validity and reliability. Maxwell (1996 in Alwasilah, 2008: 170) suggests that validity is a goal rather than a product. It also refers to appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of the inferences researchers make based on the data collected (Silverman, 2005: 210). Meanwhile, reliability refers to the consistency of these inferences over time (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993: 400).

The data gathered from the field can be proven to be valid by doing several steps. The first step is methods of triangulation. Triangulation of data is collecting information from a diverse range of individuals and settings, using a variety of methods (Maxwell, 1996, in Alwasilah, 2008: 175; Creswell, 1994: 167); which was conducted to make a contrast and comparison of all the data obtained from different sources (Freebody, 2003 in Emilia, 2006).

Therefore the data of this study were collected using a variety of methods such as a questionnaire, observations, and also interviews (method triangulation)

in order to ensure the validity and reliability. This is also done by giving the questionnaire which was adapted from the original version to the respondents in a pilot study, gaining their response, and modified the questionnaire with the help from researcher's supervisor before given to the respondents in the research.

The next step is member checking. This step suggests the researcher to consult the transcriptions of the interview (before and after the observation) with the respondents to check the appropriacy of the answer (Creswell, 2008: 267; Alwasilah, 2008: 177) as well as to ensure the truth value of the data (Creswell, 1994: 167). By doing so, the researcher wanted to make sure that the researcher had understood about their beliefs and practices from the observations and conversation with them as well as to convince that the story was the participants' own stories.

3.6 Concluding Remark

As the aims of this study are to explore teachers' beliefs about CLT and its implementation in classroom practice, this study employs a qualitative case study approach which will explain the case in detail. The researcher used a multiple techniques and tools such as audio-videotaping, questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations in gathering the data needed. The data from the instruments are presented and analyzed in the next chapter in order to answer the research questions.