

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

3.1 Introduction

The following explanation will mainly reflect the general plan of research investigation. It is also intimately related to the scientific phase of how the investigation answers the research problem. The detail is as follows:

3.2 Research Site

This study has single setting—which is called single-site study (Maxwell, 1986:64)—that is SMUN 8 Bandung which has six parallel classes with different teacher for each three-class. Only three classes with one similar teacher were chosen. The details of the respondents will be in the following explanation. The second-grade students were chosen because of school management's decision. Pre-pilot study was done in June 2, 2004. The researcher visited the school to get permission from the headmaster, and got in touch with the respondents—students and teachers.

3.2.1 Reasons for Choosing the Site

As mentioned earlier, the research was conducted in SMUN 8 Bandung which lies on Jl. Solontongan No.3, Bandung. The decision of taking this school falls into three reasons, they are:

1. SMUN 8 Bandung is a popular and one of favourite schools in Bandung so that every student who wants to be admitted in this school should compete with each other to meet the school's passing grade. It is not surprisingly if the students here were good achievers in their previous junior high school.
2. The school is one of 'Model Schools' that always becomes pilot project of new program issued by either local or central government, including portfolio assessment. This was expected to enable the researcher to gain data needed in this research.
3. The second grade classroom was chosen because the school started to implement portfolio assessment in the year of 2003-2004 and it was assumed that the investigation will not disturb the teaching-learning process.

3.2.2 Participants

Participants of this study can be classified into three categories, they are:

1. Students

It has been mentioned before that the students involved were the second graders who were being taught by the respondent's teacher. They are 120 students which were divided into three classes—2 IPA 1, 2 IPA 3, and 2 IPA 4, with 40 students in each class. In Preliminary research, the students were from 2 IPA 3 consisting of 40 students. In the current research, the sample used is purposeful sampling or

criterion-based selection, that is, the strategy in which particular settings, persons, or events, are selected deliberately in order to provide important information that can't be gotten from other choices (Maxwell, 1996). Therefore, this study took 30 second-grade students of XI IPA 4.

2. Teachers

There were two English teachers getting involved in the research. Teacher #1 was as a respondent to fill in teacher's questionnaire in preliminary study. She really helped in revising teacher's questionnaire in the next step of investigation. Teacher #2 was the real respondent for the implementation of portfolio assessment.

3.3 Design of the Research

Since the research is not really depending upon the numbers or statistics for the data, the method used is qualitative in nature. The study is a case study for it presents a detailed account of phenomenon under study (Merriam, 1991:27)—to see the process by monitoring: describing the context and population of the study, discovering the extent to which program has been implemented, providing immediate feedback of a formative type and by discovering or confirming the process by which the program had the effect that it did (ibid:31). In other words, the study is to describe the implementation of portfolio assessment in the classroom and its empowerment to the students without conducting any changes to the class.

In addition, in order to get intended data, emic perspectives were used in which participant's viewpoints were considered as the main data source (Maxwell, 1996).

3.4 The Researcher's Role

The researcher is a key instrument in the research. It is supported by Bogdan & Biklen (1992:29) claiming that data are collected and all materials are reviewed in their entirety by the researcher's insight being the key instrument for analysis. Merriam (1988:19) adds that the researcher in qualitative study is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis, the researcher acted as the non-participant observer whose activity were sitting, observing the process of portfolio assessment without any involvement with the process.

3.5 Data Collection

The explanation of data collection will be seen from the procedure of the research and the phases of data collection.

3.5.1 Procedure of the Research

The investigation took three months in seven classroom visits in order to have gaining entry or establishing rapport. The researcher got acquainted to research site and respondents (Alwasilah, 2002:144), distribute the questionnaires, do interviews, and conduct observations.

The research conducts three-way study. The first is pre-pilot study which performed school permission, respondents' acquaintance through students and teachers and research site's observation.

Purposed by gaining in depth-data through valid and reliable instruments, the second study, that is preliminary study or pilot project, was done which is useful in having revision of the questionnaire.

The last step is to analyze the data collection based on the current instruments spread into three classes which involves 120 respondents in order to determine recurring patterns of portfolio assessment implemented in school setting and its empowerment as perceived by the students.

3.5.2 Phases of Data Collection

As has been mentioned previously, this study did three phases of the inquiry: pre-pilot, preliminary (pilot), and main study. The first step was Pre-pilot study that was done in June 2, 2004. The researcher came to the school to get permission from the headmaster, got in touch with the respondents in order to have gaining a whole picture of the setting.

The second step was pilot study or preliminary study. It was an important phase to have reliable and validity of the instruments in order to obtained in-depth and focused questions. The questionnaire consisting 25 questions and were analyzed whether the students' response and answer address the research's intention. This is indeed a starting point of the questionnaire revision.

The last part is the main study. The revised questionnaire consisting 40 questions was spread to 120 second-grade students. Interviews, videotaping, sample of portfolio collection were gathered in doing the observation. All in all, there were 10 visits within three-month investigation.

3.5.3 The Techniques of Data Collection

Moreover, the research data was taken from various sources and analytic interpretative procedures to findings or conclusions (Strauss and Corbin, 1990 in Wirza (2004:58). Qualitative methods were selected to generate data collection such as questionnaire, interviews, and observation including videotaping, photo-taking, and doing fieldnotes. In addition to these, students' work and scores were also used to support the data analysis. The following explanation provides the selected method of the investigation.

A. Observation

The observation is done through three activities: conducting videotaping, writing fieldnotes, and collecting other document such as photograph and sample of students' work. The detail explanation is as follows:

1. Videotaping

Videotaping was used to facilitate the inquiry with unanticipated data that the researcher could see or not in the observation. It provides the actual teaching process where portfolio assessment took place. It also showed what is going on in the classroom including the attitude of both teacher and students.

2. Fieldnotes

Fieldnotes are the written account of what the researcher hears, sees, experiences, and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting on the data in a qualitative study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992:107). In line with this, the fieldnotes were conducted as an attempt of reflection of researcher felt, saw, and thought in the time of the observation.

3. Other supporting data

Taking a photograph and keeping student's work on writing are available in order to check and recheck the data.

B. Interviews

There were formal and informal interviews selected for following-up the respondent's answer in questionnaire and for gaining further information about the matter. Both teacher and students were interviewed for purposive questions so that they varied each other in number of questions and time. In addition, the interview can be a valuable way (the only way, for events that took place in the past or ones to which researcher cannot gain observational access) of gaining a description of actions and events (Maxwell, 1996:76).

C. Questionnaire

The last instrument used for data collection is questionnaire. Questionnaire was built up from open-ended and closed questions. The open-ended question is dedicated for the answer that will help to determine the length any fullness of responses the research obtains (Oppenheim, 1966:41) while closed questions were intended to guide the respondent' answers in

order to focus on the inquiry. The questionnaires were distributed to both teachers and students as the participants of the research.

3.6 Data Analysis

To get better insight and closer involvement of the data collection, the data was analyzed by a triangulation method as Denzin in Maxwell (1996:74) points out:

Triangulation is collecting information from a diverse range of individuals and settings, using a variety of methods.

This study was also used the methods as follows:

1. Coding and categorizing. These ways were used to search through the data (from questionnaire) for regularities and patterns as well as for topic the study covers and then write down words and phrases to represent these topics and patterns (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992:166).
2. Doing recursive checking. By rechecking the other data gathered such as interview, fieldnotes and observation, and literature references, the data was analyzed to interpret the phenomenon of portfolio assessment happened in school setting.

All analysis was observed and thought based on participants' perceptions. That is why emic perspectives—the "insider's" or "native's" interpretation of or "reasons" for his or her customs/beliefs about what things mean to them as members of a process—are used in this research.

3.7 Summary

In doing research, certain procedures are done in order to have right path on investigation. Therefore, expected and better findings will be gained through determining design and procedures, choosing research sites and participants, deciding the role of researcher, selecting instruments, and deciding analysis of the data.

