

The Six Tactics In Architectural Qualitative Research At Nua Bena, Flores

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Abstract - The implementation of qualitative methods to architectural research in *Nua Bena*, Flores is very typical in terms of research strategies and research tactics. Research strategies that include grounded theory, ethnography, and interpretivism, as taught by Groat and Wang, are inadequate to be used to obtain architectural data from local knowledge sources in the cultural cell network of the indigenous *Bena* community. Therefore, referring to the local context of *adha Ngadha*, a research strategy was developed, *lobo papa tozo tara papa dhaga*, and six research tactics, namely: 1) documentation tactics with photography, film and sketches; 2) physical survey tactics with anthropometric measurement methods; 3) in-depth interview tactics using open-ended questions; 4) interactive discussion tactics; 5) participatory and independent observation tactics; 6) architectural interpretation tactics. The six tactics were initiated inductively, formulated contextually with ethics, aesthetic, art, and communicated with simple language. This paper is a part of the findings of architectural qualitative research in *Nua Bena* regarding research methods, which were subsequently donated to complement architectural research knowledge in the future.

Index Terms—tactics, architecture, qualitative, research, *Bena*.

1 INTRODUCTION

The application of qualitative methods applied in naturalistic paradigm of architectural research held in *Nua Bena* (the village of *Bena*, in the *Ngadha* language) needs caution behaviour when using research strategy, research tactics, interview technique, inductive minded, local communication, acting ethically and interpreting architectural phenomena properly. Therefore, apart from applying research strategy of grounded theory, ethnography, and interpretivism^[1], additional strategies are needed to obtain data from local knowledge sources, namely cells network of culture (*lobo papa tozo tara papa dhaga*,^[2] in the *Ngadha* language), which have existed in the indigenous community of *Bena*. This last strategy is the findings founded by the researcher at the first time in research field, because there are so many cultural cells in the village of *Bena*, such as culture cell of traditional architect so called "*lima pade*," carving culture cell so called "*weti*," culture cell of chief of the clan so called "*mosa laki*," weaving culture cell so called "*sapu lue*," youth culture cell so called "*ana fai - ana saki*," and many others more of which may be potential as sources of qualitative research data and information and they must be arranged as network data of meaningful information. They may be members of community with unique cultural manner, prioritizing the social interests of clan, and some times coloured by mindset, perspective, interest of the clans whose manners are different among each other. The social situation and environmental conditions of the *Bena* traditional village are very typical, full of kinship, open mindedness, and *Ngadha* custom is able to organize the process of cultural sustainability for a better life of the people. When the researcher made architectural research in the indigenous village of *Bena* in 2010 - 2013,

the inductive process focused on building construction and environmental phenomenon, the achievement and circulation phenomenon, ownership and rights of occupancy/land management phenomenon, the development for tourist infrastructure phenomenon, the shape and typology of building phenomenon, the building structure and construction phenomenon, the space hierarchy and function as well as building function phenomenon, the traditional dimensions and building materials phenomenon, the furniture and ritual devices phenomenon as well as the symbols and architectural ornaments phenomenon. The ten phenomena are very closely related to the concepts of ideas, forms, norms, and meanings of which are closely related to the process of traditional houses construction, traditional building construction, and finally the *Bena* village itself as well as closely related to the sustainability of vernacular architectural phenomenon in *Bena* village.

2 METHODOLOGY

This research seeks to find answers to the phenomena of vernacular architecture in *Nua Bena*, Flores that is unique, the context of the natural environment of the *Inerie* mountain valley, and has the customs and culture of *Ngadha* that is still preserved by its citizens. The method used is a qualitative method with a naturalistic paradigm^[3]. Researchers use the natural environment as a source of data, indigenous peoples as informants, emphasizing the importance of the process of descriptive analysis, inductive, to be able to conclude the findings of norms and meaning of vernacular architecture in *Nua Bena*.

3 DISCUSSION

This section describes six architectural qualitative research tactics that were conducted by researchers in year 2010-2013. The six qualitative research tactics referred to are as follows:

3.1 Documentation tactics with photography, film, and sketches method

Documentation is the earliest tactic used by Rudolfsky to begin his vernacular architectural research^[4]. Architectural object data recording using photographic methods, and open-source shooting tactics of which the object data was permitted by the owner is one of the tactics applied in this study. The camera equipment used is a type of semi-professional camera

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and poker, with the format of portrait, landscape, or sequential images. Especially for data objects refer to spatial objects, or moving objects, the film method with a portable camera or handy cam is used. The color technique is black and white and color, as well as using natural lighting quality, or minimally using artificial lighting, even though recording at night. Object data recording was done by the researchers themselves. If the images of documentation results are displayed in the discussion of this dissertation, the name of the data sources and informant might be mentioned as well. In terms of recording traditional village site data, base plan data, visible data, pieces of data on traditional houses and traditional buildings using the line-scale, anthropometrically measured, or metered method. While the text / image / painting / sketches data from print / engraving / ornament media in the field is carried out using the micro film recording methods. An example of the sketch tactics application was done by At figure 1, Uncle Anton whose application might be completed by himself as a "lima pade" from the traditional village of Bela when explaining about the "S" ornament on the wall board of traditional house "one," which has the interpretation of "sawa," or rice field, a symbol of survival (*go muzi robha nee maru* in the *Ngadha* words), which put it on the residential of Bela village.

Source/informant: Anton, *Bena* 12/9/2012



Fig.1 Documentation tactics with sketches methods

3.2 Physical Survey Tactics of Anthropometric Measurement Methods

In a survey of architectural objects data measurement which was carried out by anthropometric methods, whether for the measurement of the length, width, and as well as height of objects. The anthropometric method is expressed by the individual size of the length of the hand, or the palm of the hand, the distance of the footsteps, and the height of an adult, etc. In the context of research held by the researcher in Flores, which contains the interpretation might refer to adult anthropometric reference as it is the measurement of height, leg length, span of arms and palms of their ancestors. The researcher practiced the measurements by using a meter device, though this tactics might not be the best way to do it. In many cases, the activity of traditional houses measurement could not be allowed by *Bena* villagers. Therefore, the researcher had converted the size of 1 meter to a piece of bamboo to be used as a measurement device in the research field.

3.3 In-depth interview tactics using open-ended questions

In-depth interview tactics using open-ended questions guidance^[5], as well as recording open or hidden data are intended so that more information can be extracted more conveniently in order to obtain a wealth of various ideas whether they might be informative, clarificative, explorative, or predictive. Hidden data recording applied if the respondent felt insufficiently convenient to speak out as well as explained the question interviewed. Finally, the researcher applied

interview tactics in local language of *Ngadha*, that it might certainly be with the role of involving one of the researcher's friend as a translator, so that respondents felt sufficiently convenient to give ideas, speak out, and express phenomena in the research field. On the other hand, the researcher improvised other profound questions, while recording the profound interview process for better results. Figure 2 below is an example of the application of in-depth interview tactics with the performance of an expert from the village of *Bela* so called "*lima pade*," shown obviously in video streaming.

Source/informant: Clemen, *Bena* 12/9/2012



Fig. 2 In-depth interview tactics

This is a guidance sheet for in-depth interview tactics, i.e.

- 1) Tell us how to build a traditional house, since choosing wood, cutting log, preparing for a place of installment and finally the installment implementation so called "*anaie*," "*kabepere*," "*mata raga*," including determining the size of "*one*"?
- 2) Tell us how to name a traditional house construction, and a traditional ritual which are generally held a long with the construction of a traditional house?
- 3) Are there other traditional rituals held in a traditional house construction, or in the middle courtyard of a traditional village? for example baby birth rituals, marriage rituals, death rituals, etc. Is there a relationship between rituals and the use of space for daily activity?

3.4 Interactive Discussion Tactics

Interactive discussion tactics are carried out with FGD (Focus Group Discussion) of community groups who are willing to discuss about research problems^[6]. It is not easy to conduct FGDs in the research field, because residents who are familiar with adat, traditional leaders, tribal leaders, etc., only have time to gather at night. In addition to (detailed) research problems propounded by researchers were not considered as the subject of discussions that were significant by residents, even though researchers had asked for the help of the tribal leader to coordinate the FGD program. Therefore, the researcher discussed about the technical details of the substance of the research was outside of the research field, that it was not inside the traditional village, so that the respondents might communicate conveniently, speak out independently, give ideas as well as vision widely, without time constraints and traditional customs violence. Because, if the FGD is ruled by traditional customs in its implementation, the certain people may only be allowed to give ideas, after all the topic of discussion might be related to the traditional ritual behavior, daily behavior in social and cultural relations, the figure role of behavior, etc, then the chief clan will appoint a

certain "*male mosa*" to give explanation on it.

3.5 Participatory and Independent Observation Tactics

Observation activities on the tangible and intangible objects can be carried out participatively by researchers and groups of citizens who are concerned with research problems, and / or independently by researchers. Theoretically, participant observation^[7] might be carried out mainly on research problems whose activities might require clarification of data and information, confirmation of the philosophical interpretation in which containing the data and information, and predictions of the temporary findings. The participation of indigenous people in Flores to attend events (rituals) related to adat actually has shown the high motivation because the ritual events are recognized as an obligation of the community whose inheritance has been descended from ancient generation to the next generation. The researcher also realizes that participatory observation activities need sufficient research funds to entertain respondents involved in observation. Therefore, research tactics of participatory observation ought to be applied in limited manner compared to independent observation tactics. Below is shown an example of participatory and independent observation tactics towards the phenomenon of main space, i.e "*one*," an essential room of the traditional house of *Bena*.

3.6 Architectural Intepretation Tactics

Architectural interpretation tactics^[8] could only be done with respondents who understand architectural problems, in this term so called "*lima pade*" or "*male mosaics*" as (an)expert(s) sent for handling the art of building the traditional village of *Bena*. The architectural interpretation tactics actually has started from the beginning of making data and analysis process, when researchers tried to understand the results of observations and profound interviews, which were adopted by using open ended questions to traditional leaders, religious leaders, the leaders of *Ngadha* community, local communities of various segments of age, traditional house construction workers, other village residents who have domiciled around traditional villages, or recent visitors either domestic or foreign tourists. The researcher when interpreting the words^[9] and providing the interpretation of architectural design aimed to present a holistic picture of the vernacular architectural phenomena under his research as well as the images understood by the interviewees. Therefore, the researcher ought to cross-check the interpretation and architectural meaning given by the informan so that it does not cause fault in meaning and / or miss interpretation of the phenomenon under his research. There is also an architectural interpretative tactic obtained through the chanting so called "*SOKA*," as a teaching for safety and smoothness in building by using ritual performance belief to ancestors when building a traditional house construction as well as a reminder of the sequence of construction steps in building a traditional house construction. The complete contents of the requests can be seen in the following video streaming in Figure 3. Architectural interpretive tactics. Based on the recitation of the poem "*Soka*," and the dance "*Ja?*" performed by the informant, it can be analyzed that the events of building a traditional house construction as well as traditional building construction either establishing a traditional village, or activity of moving are actually considered as particular cultural events to be practiced as well as traditionalized for the sustainability of

customary life itself. The "*SOKA*" singer uses traditional clothing, or at least a ikat cloth, and further chanting continuously while dancing around the construction site.

Source/informant: Clemen, *Bena* 12/9/2012

Figure 3: Architectural interpretation tactics

It may occasionally be interspersed with the musical instrument of gong together with drum performed by youth group of people. At present tourism interests are presented in the Province of Nusa Tenggara Timur, finally the singer



performed chanting so called "*SOKA*," and dances packed into a very interesting object for tourist visits. The poem chanting so called "*SOKA*" as shown below:

"SOKA"

*pitu peka watu lau mai lipi leke dia
leke da peka lie wutu sea' tenga mona doe
go wisu bhisu wutu mai remi ube kedu
da sede lado lena mai paja soku dia
keri lai lewa mai wa'e sa'o ga'e
guru waja bheto waja dhu olo*

Source/ informant: Clemens, *Bena* 12/9/2012

Translation

REQUEST (to ancestors)

Look for stones for pillar base of houses
The pillar for the position of the home body
The poles are clipped, the boards are inserted into the body of the house
The pillar above the body of the house mounted roof truss
Long weeds for the roof of the house
The traditional house is strong forever like bamboo teacher.

Understanding the poem of "*SOKA*" with the meaning of "*Ja?*" dancing, actually reseracher can make deeper analysis of the qualitative data, related to the open-ended questions, and the development of informants' answers, and the phenomena of tangible and intangible data found in the field. With full attention and carefulness to understand the whole series of events and qualitative phenomena, conclusions are drawn as in the following chapter.

4 CONCLUSION

The work of architectural qualitative research in Nua Bena was carried out by using 6 typical of unique research tactics, the context of research problems was held in the cultural circumstances of *Ngadha* on the island of Flores. The research tactics referred to are as follows: 1) Documentation tactics with photography, film, and sketches

methods, 2) Physical survey tactics with anthropological measurements methods, 3) In-depth interview tactics with open ended question methods, 4) Interactive discussion tactics, 5) Participatory and independent observation tactics, and 6) Architectural interpretation tactics. After all, the research also applied the research strategy of cultural cells network of *Adha Ngadha*, so that the active involvement and corrective contributions of the *Bena* clan and indigenous people, such as chiefs of the clans, are called "*mosa laki*," traditional architects of the *Ngadha* culture, are called "*lima pade*," group of women's *ikat* weaving craft, youth groups of *Nua Bena*, traditional dancer groups, and many others more ought to be applied in discussing the substance of *Bena* vernacular architectural research and become very significant as well.

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