

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Education is an essential part of human life. Education leads humans to gain knowledge and enlightenment to know whether something is right or wrong (Johan & Harlan, 2014). Through education, individuals have the potential to have promising careers and status in society. Education acquiring information and knowledge leads to a successful person in the future (Shuaibi, 2014). Through education, each individual is equipped with the knowledge and various kinds of skills, both hard and soft skills. Therefore, education improves quality and quantity to prepare people with optimal attitudes, knowledge, and skills. The education system dynamically follows human needs (Johan & Harlan, 2014).

The curriculum is one part of education that can support and direct students toward success. The curriculum is designed to guide the learning process, consisting of learning objectives, learning resources and topics that must be taught to the students, evaluating process, and other learning guides (Campbell-Phillips, 2012). The curriculum is an essential part of education because it makes the education system more organized and enhances education qualities and values. The significant curriculum influence causes the curriculum continuously change and develop based on human needs and learning objectives.

In 2022, the Ministry of education, culture, research, and technology was changing and developing a new curriculum called Merdeka or Independent curriculum. The implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka is stated in the regulation of the Ministry of education, culture, research, and technology number 56 of 2022 about guidelines for curriculum implementation in the context of learning recovery. It contains three curriculum options that can be used in education units in the context of learning recovery, along with the Kurikulum Merdeka structure, learning and assessment rules, and teacher workload. The implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka is a continuation of the 2013 curriculum and an effort to improve education quality. Moreover, the Covid-19 virus has spread worldwide and affects learning activity and quality. So, the Kurikulum Merdeka was developed and implemented in the context of learning recovery from the Covid-19 effect (Marisa, 2021, as cited in Rizki & Fahkruniza, 2022). Each curriculum has a different educational system, so each school needs to adjust to the implemented curriculum.

The assessment process is one essential part of education that must be adapted to the implemented curriculum. Assessment is an integrated part of the learning process. Teachers must be aware of the assessment process based on the curriculum standards and focuses (Handler, 2010). In the Kurikulum Merdeka assessment principle, the assessment process guides teachers, students, and parents to determine future learning strategies by providing thorough information as feedback (Siregar, 2022).

Authentic assessment remains one of the assessments emphasized in the Kurikulum Merdeka because the realization of Kurikulum Merdeka can be seen

from the use of authentic assessment (Rizki & Fahkruniza, 2022). Moreover, Maipita et al. (2020) state that Kurikulum Merdeka's learning process focuses on learning in a real community environment. This approach is expected to produce knowledgeable graduates and a new mindset that can respond to life's challenges, innovate, and increase creativity. Kurikulum Merdeka allows students to learn independently with high flexibility (Tedjokokoesoemo et al., 2021). Authentic assessment encourages and leads students to use behaviors, a combination of skills, knowledge, and competence to be implemented in real-life situations (Gulikers, Bastiaens, & Kirschner, 2004, as cited in Mohammed & Lebar, 2017).

Implementing an authentic assessment can be helped by using suitable learning methods. The teacher must know and understand the suitable method to apply in the classroom to create an authentic learning experience, and the authentic assessment process can also be carried out. Using appropriate learning methods is one of the teacher's efforts to achieve excellent learning benefits (Morrow, 2011, as cited in Oktaviani & Fauzan, 2017). Problem-based learning, discovery-based learning, and project-based learning are 21st century learning methods and are appropriate to be implemented to provide varied and authentic learning experiences for students.

The world has entered the 21st century, in which many fields of human life are developing very rapidly. One of which is the fundamental changes in the world of education. 21st century skills refer to knowledge, skills, character, and work habits that are critically important for human success in this era (Malik, 2018). In 21st century learning, schools need to consider the learning process scope for students. So, the learning process is not only limited to mastering academic abilities

but also leads to skills and abilities that will help students to be able to compete in the world and digital development after graduation (Haryati, 2017). 21st century learning is a learning design that integrates four skills that can help students be ready to face the development of the world. These four skills are called the 4Cs, Communication, Creativity, Collaboration and Critical Thinking (Greenhill, 2010). The 21st century skills will equip individuals to face the problems of real-life positions in the future to maintain the advancement of the world and convert it into an improved situation to be alive (Quieng et al., 2015). So, the demands and objectives of 21st century learning and the principle of authentic assessment are very related.

Even though authentic assessment is one of the recommended assessments to be implemented in the Kurikulum Merdeka, adjusting to the new curriculum is challenging, including implementing the authentic assessment. A preliminary field observation conducted by Hayati et al. found that not all teachers understood the authentic assessment concept. Most teachers stated that authentic assessment is challenging to implement in the classroom. As a result, they were using the simple method of doing assessments. In line with Hayati et al., Fitriani (2017) also states that authentic assessment in assessing students' English skills is quite challenging. Many teachers state that they found difficulties implementing authentic assessment in performance and projects.

Based on the issues, preliminary observations were conducted in a secondary school in Buleleng, SMAN 4 Singaraja. SMAN 4 Singaraja is one of the driving schools implementing Kurikulum Merdeka since 2022. Based on the observation, it is found that the implementation of authentic assessment was not

carried out optimally. There are several reasons why authentic assessment cannot carry out optimally. First, the teacher's knowledge of authentic assessment is low. The low knowledge about authentic assessment causes teachers to use simpler assessments. Second, the previous pandemic situation causes the teachers not ready to use authentic assessments. Third, teachers do not use assessment tools in conducting assessments, and there is no authentic assessment rubric that is appropriate and suitable to be used following classroom activities. The assessment only focused on students' learning output, not the process. Fourth, a Kurikulum Merdeka is implemented, especially in grade 10th. This new curriculum affected the assessment criteria, and the teacher felt it took work to adjust the Kurikulum Merdeka with the assessment process. The learning activity also does not use appropriate learning methods. The teacher only uses communicative-based learning and does not use 21st century learning methods. The learning activities are fewer and not varied. Increasing students' motivation and participation in learning activities take much work. This situation will undoubtedly impact students' ability to absorb knowledge and master skills so that education will not be able to run optimally. This situation will undoubtedly impact students' ability to absorb knowledge and master skills so that education will not be able to run optimally.

To assist in overcoming this problem, one of the assessment tools that can answer this problem is by designing and developing authentic assessment rubrics based on 21st century learning methods. The methods used are discovery, problem, and project-based learning, which can be used for English learning activities. The product developed is adjusted with the Kurikulum Merdeka principles. Teachers play an essential role in students' success in mastering various kinds of skills. In the

classroom, the teacher is the facilitator, assessor, manager, and evaluator (Archana & Rani, 2017). So, the teacher is the key, and the teacher has to know what students need and what suitable methods and approaches can be applied in the class. The existence of an authentic rubric assessment will assist teachers in creating a learning atmosphere that is fun, creative, and innovative. These three learning methods can be applied in the classroom by the teacher and will have a good influence on training students' abilities to learn English as a foreign language. Each of these learning methods has advantages to assist students in mastering language skills. These methods could lead students to master many skills, get varied learning experiences, and increase students' motivation. If it can be done correctly, it will produce good outputs for students.

This study aims to help English teachers assess high school students' abilities using an authentic assessment rubric. This study focuses on developing the authentic assessment rubric based on 21st century learning methods (problem-based learning, project-based learning, and discovery-based learning) and adjusted to Kurikulum Merdeka and 10th grade senior high school learning topics. Through this study, it is hoped that the developed product can help improve the implementation and development of authentic assessments, especially at the secondary school level in Indonesia.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on the research background above, the problem can be identified. First is the low application of authentic assessment, especially at the high school level. The low application of authentic assessment happened because the teacher does not have more knowledge about authentic assessment and cannot find an

authentic assessment rubric suitable for implementation in the classroom. Teachers tend to need clarification about the assessment mechanism that must be carried out. As a result, the teacher chooses to apply the test model in assessing the learning outputs, regardless of whether it measures cognitive, affective, or psychomotor aspects. So far, the assessment process usually done by teachers only describes aspects of students' conceptual mastery. The teachers only focus on students' output results and ignore the learning process. Second, the Ministry of education, culture, research, and Technology started implementing the new curriculum in Indonesia, namely Kurikulum Merdeka. For this reason, it is necessary to strive for an assessment technique that can reveal aspects of the product and process and adjust to the demands of Kurikulum Merdeka, namely an authentic assessment rubric.

1.3 Problem Limitation

This research is limited to developing an authentic rubric assessment in Kurikulum Merdeka based on 21st century learning methods for assessing 10th grade senior high school students that can be used in English learning. The rubric was designed following the learning methods related to 21st century learning: project-based, problem-based, and discovery-based.

1.4 Research Question

According to the background and problem identification above, the research questions can be formulated as follows:

1. What are the criteria for designing an authentic assessment rubric for English subject in Kurikulum Merdeka with 21st century learning methods (problem-based learning, project-based learning, and discovery-based learning) for assessing 10th grade senior high school students?

2. How to design an authentic assessment rubric for English subject in Kurikulum Merdeka with 21st century learning methods (problem-based learning, project-based learning, and discovery-based learning) for assessing 10th grade Senior high school students?
3. What are the qualities of the authentic assessment rubrics development in Kurikulum Merdeka for assessing 10th grade senior high school students?

1.5 Research Objective

The research objectives of this research are:

1. To find out the criteria used in designing an authentic assessment rubric in Kurikulum Merdeka with the 21st century learning methods for assessing 10th grade senior high school students.
2. To develop an authentic assessment rubric in Kurikulum Merdeka with 21st century learning methods for assessing 10th grade senior high school students.
3. To find out the quality of the developed authentic assessment rubrics in Kurikulum Merdeka for assessing 10th grade senior high school students.

1.6 The Expected Specifications of the Product

From the product developed, some specifications are expected in this research, namely:

1. It is expected that the researcher can help the teachers to develop an appropriate rubric to assess the 10th grade senior high school students in Kurikulum Merdeka by using an authentic assessment.
2. The developed rubric is expected to help the teacher assess 10th grade senior high school students in Kurikulum Merdeka by using authentic assessment.

3. The authentic assessment rubric with appropriate learning methods is expected to help teachers or schools apply better rubric assessment in the English learning process.

1.7 Research Significant

There are two research significances of this research:

1. Theoretical Significance

This research is expected to be a guideline for researchers with similar research. This research can positively contribute to knowledge advancement, particularly in authentic assessment rubric development to assess students.

2. Practical Significance

- To the students:

Students are expected to have a better English learning experience in Kurikulum Merdeka by using authentic assessments.

- To the teachers:

Teachers are expected to have more profound knowledge and be able to use and develop authentic assessments in Kurikulum Merdeka.

- To the other researchers:

This research is expected to be a reference for other researchers conducting related research on developing an authentic assessment rubric.

1.8 Assumption and Limitation of the Development

There are several things to assume and the limitations in developing the authentic assessment rubric, such as:

1. The development of an authentic assessment rubric in this research uses the 10th grade senior high school students as its characteristics and adjusted to the Kurikulum Merdeka so that the developed product is limited to the 10th grade students in senior high school.
2. This authentic assessment rubric is developed as a reference for teachers to assess the students in Kurikulum Merdeka.
3. The product in this research is developed in the form of an authentic assessment rubric to assess the students' abilities in the English learning process.
4. The product is developed based on each syntax in 21st century learning methods (problem-based learning, project-based learning, and discovery-based learning).

1.9 Definition of Key Terms

There are several essential terms focused on in this research. The terms refer to the definition of authentic assessment, assessment rubric, secondary education, and EFL teachers. There are two types of definitions, namely conceptual and operational definitions. The definition will be explained below.

1. Conceptual Definition:

A conceptual definition can be defined as a definition that comes from an expert theory. The conceptual definitions are explained as follows:

- a. Authentic Assessment

Authentic assessment can be used to assess students' abilities and knowledge and also provide students with opportunities to apply all knowledge in reality (Nguyen & Phan, 2020). Students will be directed to several things related to authentic assessment, such as authentic tasks or activities, social and physical assessment contexts, and assessment results with criteria. Authentic assessment will direct educators to have the ability to provide effective and intensive learning (Fatonah et al., 2013, as cited in Suarimbawa et al., 2017). The authentic assessment provides students with opportunities to learn and get many experiences to face real-life situations such as problem-solving, communication, critical thinking, and others (Aziz et al., 2020).

b. Assessment Rubric

A rubric is a tool that is used in assessment activities. An assessment rubric can be defined as a tool to help teachers effectively assess and train students' skills, knowledge, and performance (Chowdhury, 2018). Using an assessment rubric will make the assessment process more valid and transparent. The assessment rubric will direct students to know the criteria and the assessment process that will be faced in a learning activity to increase their performance. Students will also have opportunities to discover their learning strengths and weaknesses.

c. EFL Teachers

An EFL teacher can teach English as a foreign language (Abu & Halim, 2017). The EFL teacher has the appropriate skills to teach and gain students' spirit in learning English. With great competence in English and many other skills, the EFL teacher can do their work well (Abu & Halim, 2017).

d. Secondary education

There are several levels of education, one of which is secondary education. Secondary education will be carried out after finishing primary education. Secondary education is a level to prepare adolescents for healthy and productive adult lives (Jacob & Lehner, 2011). Secondary education prepares students to get ready to face the future within society and prepares them to continue their next level of education (Chika, 2015).

2. Operational Definition

The operational definition can be defined as a procedural definition used in the study. The conceptual definitions are explained as follows:

a. Authentic Assessment

Authentic assessment is a kind of assessment that can be used to assess students' knowledge and skills and provides students an opportunity to learn in a real-life context using several activities that involve projects, tasks, and performance. This research conducted an authentic assessment based on several learning topics for 10th grade senior high school students. These topics can be completed authentically by students at the level in question. Then,

the authentic assessment was adjusted with appropriate learning methods, such as discovery, problem, and project-based learning.

b. Assessment Rubric

The rubric is an assessment tool to help teachers assess students' knowledge, skills, and performance in the learning process.

In this research, an authentic assessment rubric was developed to help teachers teach students in the future English learning process.

c. EFL Teachers

EFL teachers are those teachers that have been qualified and competent to teach English languages. In this research, EFL teachers were focused on 10th grade senior high school teachers.

d. Secondary education

Secondary education is a level of education after primary education. Secondary education is a place for students to prepare to face life in the future. In this study, the students in question are those in secondary education, especially those of 10th grade senior high school.

