

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Background

Equipping the students' ability in applying their language skills in the real-life becomes one of the language learning goals. As one of the essential teaching and learning components, authentic assessment is widely promoted as an activity that should be conducted in the classroom. Authentic assessment refers to the assessment which involves a real-work task and demonstrates the meaningful application of necessary knowledge and skills (Sumardi et al., 2020). Wahab (2021) explains that authentic assessment is an assessment technique that is applied to increase students' motivation and skills through the real-world problem or context of the assessment activities. Rahayu et al. (2019) add that authentic assessment is where the students are provided with an organized assessment involving authentic problems, so that the students are able to perform the skills that they normally need in their real life. It can be assumed that authentic assessment can be used to develop students' knowledge and skills that can be applied both in the classroom and in society.

Authentic assessment gives the students a meaningful application of their knowledge and skills in learning a language and helps them to be more confident in using the target language in their real situations (Alfiani & Wijayati, 2022). It means that authentic assessment is expected to be able to help students in stimulating and practicing their language in order to make improvement and able to perform better communication skills in their job or life in the future. Dewi (2014),

adds that in order to improve students' intrinsic motivation in learning, alternative assessment such as portfolios, projects, self-assessment, and performance assessment are flexible to be applied. Thus, it can be concluded that authentic assessment does not only provide the students with more chance for practicing their language skills but also able to increase their motivation and confidence along with the learning process.

The importance of authentic assessment has been proven by Ministry of Education and Culture by proposing 2013 Curriculum which contains that authentic assessment is used as a process of reflecting the real-world activities and problems. In line with 2013 Curriculum, the current policy known as “*Merdeka Belajar*” or Freedom to Learn which is proposed by the Ministry of Education and Culture also emphasizes the use of authentic assessment and expect that the teachers are able to implement more authentic assessment. This policy is stated in “*Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia no 21 tahun 2022*”. Moreover, the concept of “*Merdeka Belajar*” is a response to the needs of education's system in the era of industrial revolution 4.0 which requires students to have critical thinking, problem solving skills, and be creative and innovative (Azmi & Iswanto, 2021). Authentic assessment is also a part of the English instruction, which is able to improve students' skills that they will use in their real life context (Gusmuliana et al., 2021). It can be assumed that authentic assessment strongly relevant to be implemented by the teachers in assessing students' language skills. In this case, teachers need to consider and design the appropriate authentic assessment for their students (Refinaldi et al., 2017).

In language learning, there are two major skills that are required to be mastered by the students. According to Brown (2004), language skills are divided into two, namely receptive skills and productive skills. Receptive skills are listening and reading, while productive skills are speaking and writing. The importance of productive skills cannot be denied. Those two skills are required by people as their basic needs in conveying and sharing their ideas (Jaashan, 2022). Nayman & Bavlı (2022) states that speaking and writing are the two skills that can be put on a more visible performance. In language learning, speaking and writing can be expounded as the evidence of how well the learners are able to acquire the language (Majeed & Ilankumaran, 2022). Whereas, productive skills cannot always be measured through objective test item, it needs to be assessed more authentically such as performance-based assessment (Desheng & Varghese in Marhaeni et al., 2019).

As the key factor in teaching and learning process teachers require to have sufficient understanding and positive perception of authentic assessment in order to plan and implement it effectively (Butakor and Ceasar, 2021). Similarly, O'Malley and Pierce (1996) indicate that teachers' understanding and positive perception of authentic assessment will affect their authentic assessment preparation and implementation. This has been proven through the study conducted by Al Fama (in Ayubi et al., 2021) which revealed that the implementation of authentic assessment was affected by teachers' perception and experience, in which the teachers with positive perception and sufficient knowledge of authentic assessment were able to implement it properly. Another study that is conducted by Sangia (2018) also found that there are two main teachers' perception of authentic assessment, such as an

optimistic and pessimistic teacher. The optimistic teachers assumed that authentic assessment is able to improve students' learning behavior, while the pessimistic teachers revealed that authentic assessment wasted their energy and time because it needs more preparation (Sangia, 2018). It means that teachers' perception of authentic assessment impacts its implementation.

Considering to the importance of teachers' perception towards authentic assessment, the teachers in all academic level are expected to belief that authentic assessment is the essential aspect in their teaching activities, including for vocational high school English teacher. The implementation of authentic assessment in vocational education should be emphasized since the concept of authentic assessment is fully supporting the goal of the vocational education itself (Nuryanto & Eryandi, 2020). Both authentic assessment and vocational education aim to equip students with "life-career skill" that is urgently needed in this era (Nuryanto & Eryandi, 2020). Fortunately, it is also in line with the concept of the current curriculum "*Merdeka Belajar*" which aiming to create the individual that is able to apply their skills in the real context (Syaharani & Fathoni, 2023). Thus, it means that the authentic assessment implementation is an essential part in the language teaching and learning, particularly in tourism vocational high schools. It is also supported by Sugiyono et al. (2018) who propose that authentic assessment in tourism vocational high school takes a major rule for students in practicing their English skills that they need in their future job since tourism areas are identical with tourists and English as the most practical means of communication. Chumphong & Chuai-in (2020) argue that in this era, the ability of speaking English is one of the

main requirements to be able to compete and grow in the tourism industry. Consequently, the tourism vocational school teachers are expected to continuously hone their knowledge and produce the graduates who are competent to apply their knowledge in order to face the challenges in the relevant context (Hidayati, 2016).

Furthermore, some previous studies were conducted to investigate the implementation of authentic assessment. For instance, Inayah et al. (2019) proved that authentic assessment fits to assess English language learning, especially speaking skills, by using various types of assessment. Another authentic assessment in senior high school research was conducted by Suwartono & Riyani (2019) and found similar findings. Yet, several problems were encountered by students and teachers during the implementation namely the time-consuming due to the big cases and project works. There was also a research carried out by Ekawati (2012), which found several obstacles in the preparation and implementation stages namely time-consuming, and complicated administration, especially in scoring process. Similarly, Roma, (2021) conducted the study to describe the rules of authentic assessment on students speaking skills in the tourism and hospitality education. The study also revealed that authentic assessment provided some benefits such as to developed students' critical thinking, self-confidence, and social-intelligence through the real world-based practices and authentic assessment instruments.

These empirical findings demonstrate that authentic assessment is feasible to assess the students' English skills but with varied obstacles in its implementation (Suwartono & Riyani,2019; Ekawati, 2012). Moreover, authentic assessment has

many strengths in assessing the English language learning context (Inayah et al., 2019; Roma, 2021).

However, those studies investigate the authentic assessment in general English skills or in one skill only. The studies above did not investigate the productive skills, especially in the Merdeka Curriculum context. Beside that, Merdeka Curriculum is the newest curriculum implemented in Indonesia as the response of the learning recovery after the Covid-19 Pandemic (Baharullah et al., 2022). Moreover, its implementation is being tested in the 10th grade. Nowadays, the curriculum is applied in the phase of adjustment and adaptation. The implementation of the Merdeka curriculum brings certain changes in the education system, including modifications of the assessment process. The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum places significance on integrating assessment with learning (Cristiana et al., 2023). As the principles of the Merdeka curriculum, the assessment process plays a crucial role in guiding students and teachers to develop future learning strategies (Siregar et al., 2019). The implementation of Merdeka curriculum can be seen from the adoption of authentic assessment (Rizki & Fahkrunisa, 2022). Authentic assessment encourages students to apply their skills, competence, and behavior in real-life situations (Moria et al., 2018). Therefore, the current study was conducted in order to investigate the teachers' perception and implementation of authentic assessment on the major skills such as productive skills in the tourism vocational high school based on Merdeka Curriculum.

Due to the phenomenon above, more exploration and description about teachers' perception of authentic assessment and its implementation on students'

productive skills become valuable research to be conducted. The present study aimed to describe authentic assessments practices in a vocational school. Based on the preliminary study, the teachers at SMK Puriwisata Pancasari actively implemented authentic assessment for assessing students' English skills. They revealed that authentic assessment is the appropriate assessment to help their students in improving their real-life skills. The authentic assessment was mostly implemented on students' productive skills, namely speaking skills and writing skills. The preliminary study also revealed that authentic assessment was implemented by using several techniques of authentic assessment. Therefore, three main topics were analyzed in this research, such as 1) the perception of the English teachers at SMK Puriwisata Pancasari about authentic assessment implementation on students' language skills; 2) the authentic assessment planning by the English teachers at SMK Puriwisata Pancasari on students' productive skills; and 3) the authentic assessment implementation by the English teachers at SMK Puriwisata Pancasari on students' productive skills.

1.2. Research Problem

Due to the importance of authentic assessment in language learning particularly in vocational high school, the teachers are expected to have a positive perception of authentic assessment which is able to direct them into its implementation. As it is in line with the concept of vocational high school to build the graduates who are ready for their future profession, the regulation of "*Merdeka Belajar*" also explicitly recommends the use of authentic assessment in learning, as well as on students' productive skills. Preliminary observation showed that two

English teachers at SMK Puriwisata Pancasari were actively implementing authentic assessment for assessing students' productive skills

1.3. Research Limitation

There were three limitations of this study. First, this study focuses on teachers' perception and practices of authentic assessment on students' productive skills. Second, this study was conducted in SMK Puriwisata Pancasari as one of the tourism vocational schools. Third, this study investigated the authentic assessment in Merdeka Curriculum.

1.4. Research Questions

1. How do the English teachers at SMK Puriwisata Pancasari perceive the authentic assessment on students' productive skills?
2. How do the English teachers at SMK Puriwisata Pancasari plan the authentic assessment on students' productive skills?
3. How do the English teachers at SMK Puriwisata Pancasari implement the authentic assessment on students' productive skills?

1.5. Research Purposes

Based on the statement of the problem, there are three purposes of the study namely:

1. To describe the perception of the teachers at SMK Puriwisata Pancasari about authentic assessment on students' productive skills.
2. To describe how the English teachers at SMK Puriwisata Pancasari plan authentic assessment on students' productive skills.
3. To describe how the English teachers at SMK Puriwisata Pancasari implement authentic assessment on students' productive skills.

1.6. Research Significances

The result of the study is expected to provide useful information in term of theoretical and practical significance as follows:

1.5.1. Theoretical significance

The results of the study are expected to give meaningful information which are able to be used for the education development, especially for the practices of authentic assessment in vocational high school.

1.5.2. Practical Significances

a. For the English teachers

The results of this study are expected to become empirical evidence about the planning and implementing authentic assessment in English classes in vocational schools, which prioritize the achievement of the productive skills in the foreign language.

b. For the stakeholders

The stakeholders are expected to reflect on the result of this study as the feedback of authentic assessment standards in developing a curriculum or subject design in the university related to the assessment education. It is expected that the education related to authentic assessment in universities will be reflected based on the result of the study so that the prospective teachers from the universities are able to improve their authentic assessment ability based on the authentic assessment practices revealed in this study when the become a teacher.

c. For the other researcher

This study is expected to become first hand reference for the further studies.
in related research areas.

