

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the study that is described in the background of the study, the research question, the purpose of the study, the scope and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

Assessment becomes an integral component of teaching and learning process. According to Airasian (2012, p. 3), assessment is “the process of collecting, synthesizing, and interpreting information to aid in decision making”. In addition, assessment is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development (Banta & Palomba, 2015). Hence, it takes important part in teaching and learning process and serve to offer teachers and students with important information about student performance and the extent to which learning objectives have been attained by the teachers.

According to Zaim (2013), the assessment conducted by teachers have to be in line with the means to measure students’ competence in accordance with the curriculum desired. In other word, the assessment should relate to the attainment

of student standard competence. Thus, in implementing the standard competence, teachers have to develop authentic assessment which ensure the accomplishment and the mastery of competence. Authentic assessment is one of the basic approaches in alternative assessment (Aschbacher, 1991). According to O'Malley & Pierce (1996, p. 4) stated, "Authentic assessment is used to describe the multiple forms that reflect students' achievement, motivation, and attitudes which relevant to classroom activities". It aims to relate the instruction to the real world experience of the learners; thus, the task needs to be meaningful in order to be authentic (Simonson M., 2000). It is suitable with the statement of Frey, Smith, & Allen (2012) that stated authentic assessment is usually defined as having something to do with the real world.

In Indonesia context, referring to Permendiknas No. 16 (2007), teachers are required to understand the principles of assessment, to conduct the assessment and evaluation of learning processes and outcomes, and to utilize the assessment results and evaluation for interest of learning. And, according to Permendikbud No. 23 (2016), assessment should be authentic. It is an activity undertaken to measure the ability of learners apply knowledge in performing certain tasks. Therefore, it requires teachers to make use of authentic assessment approach in classroom teaching.

Though authentic assessment involves students to demonstrate competencies, or combinations of knowledge, skills and attitudes that they need to apply in the context of professional life (Gulikers, Bastiaens, & Kirschner, 2004, pp. 67-86), many of teachers still encounter difficulty in performing authentic assessment (Jpnn.com, 2014). It is reflected in the National Teacher Competency Test result, where the result showed that teachers' pedagogic competence was 48,94 which the total minimum score was 50 (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 2015). This is one evidence of teachers' less-capability in planning and performing classroom assessments (Peraturan Presiden No. 02. Buku II RPJMN 2015-2019, 2015).

This present study focuses on authentic reading assessment. Referring to OECD (2016, p. 28), teaching reading is one of an important aspect as it is a process of measuring students' ability to understand, use, reflect on and engage in written texts in order to achieve one's goals, develop one's knowledge and potential, and participate in society. In line with this, in Indonesian national school curriculum, reading is considered as one of the most important skills to be developed in EFL classrooms along with listening, speaking and writing as it holds significant role in promoting success in learning (Depdiknas, 2006). Therefore, English subjects are directed to develop these skills so that graduates are able to communicate and discourse in English at a certain level of literacy (Depdiknas, 2006).

However, Indonesian students' reading performance has shown an unfavorable picture. in PISA and PIRLS international reading tests. Indonesia is ranked 64th out of 65 countries in the 2012 PISA international reading assessment; and 41st out of 45 in the PIRLS 2011 reading (OECD & ADB, 2015).

International Reading Assessment ¹	Year	Results	
		Rank	N
PISA	2012	64th	65
	2015		
PIRLS	2011	41st	45

Frey (2013:216) added that authentic assessment of reading is an advanced issue in teacher education. This is reflected on these results that lead us to question teachers' use of meaningful assessment in their teaching, particularly in the teaching of reading skills. *Do EFL school teachers practice authentic reading assessment in their teaching? How do they practice it?* Zaim (2013) studies the EFL teachers' ability in implementing authentic assessment in their teaching of speaking and writing skills. For this purpose, he collected his data by analyzing lesson plan documents written by EFL teachers of Padang in West Sumatera. His study reveals that teachers' ability in developing authentic assessment tools is at "*sufficient*" level; which calls for improvement in their related skills. Another study, conducted by Nurcahyanti (2015),

¹ (OECD & ADB, 2015)

explores EFL Teachers' Perception of Authentic Reading Assessment and involves teachers of Vocational Secondary Schools in Central Jakarta. Findings of this study suggests that teachers only rely on paper-based test in their reading assessment practices, practice more assessment-of-learning—which focuses on *achievement-OF-learning*, or product-oriented assessment)— rather than assessment-FOR-learning, which focuses on achievement-of-learning, or process-oriented assessment) *process-assessment*. In summary, both studies suggest teachers' less attention on authentic reading assessment practices in their teaching of reading skills despite the importance of such type of assessment in promoting students' success in learning English.

Considering that teachers are directly responsible for teaching and learning processes and responsible to serve students with the authentic tasks, there is a need to obtain empirical data that depict current situation related to EFL teachers' authentic reading assessment practices. Such data can then be used as the basis to make decisions on what need to be done to promote improvement of EFL teachers' knowledge, skills and practice of authentic reading assessment.

1.2 Research Question

This study focuses on finding answer to the following research question:

Do EFL school teachers practice authentic reading assessment in their teaching?

The question is broken down further into the following sub-questions:

1. *Do they connect the assessment to the real world condition?*
2. *Do they encourage peer-collaboration?*
3. *Do they demand certain products from the process?*

1.3 Purpose of the Study

To obtain a profile of authentic reading assessment practices of SMP EFL teachers in South Jakarta area.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the teachers' practices of authentic reading assessment through the methods and the techniques.

1.5 Significance of the study

The result of this study may invaluable to:

1. Enrich knowledge of the concept in authentic reading assessment
2. Give the policy makers prompt updates on how the practices of authentic reading assessment are going in the field. The data can give them some evidence on current condition among teachers in designing their lesson plans.

In addition, this will give input data as the reference for policy makers to conduct more training to update their skill and knowledge.

3. Help further study in conducting research about authentic reading assessment.