CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

In this introductory chapter, the background underpinning the study will be provided along with the overview of the theory and several other studies. Then, this chapter will also discuss the purpose of the study derived from the formulation of the research questions. The scope of the study will also be discussed in order to narrow the focus of the study. Then, the significance of the study will be discussed in the penultimate section of this chapter. Lastly, to inform the body of the thesis, the outline of the thesis will be provided in the last section of this chapter.

1.1 Background

Assessment is central to the teaching and learning. As one of the aspects embedded in a curriculum, it can be defined as a set of procedure of collecting information about the students' development, growth, and achievement toward the learning objective (Shermis & Di Vesta, 2011) (see also Walvoord, 2010; Atkin, Black, & Coffey, 2001; Popham, 2008; Stiggins & Chappuis, 2006 for similar discussion). Besides, it is an ongoing process involving a large domain (Brown, 2004). Therefore, it is always conducted continuously from any kind of evidence in order to reach a decision for learning and teaching (see Walvoord, 2010; Shermis & Di Vesta, 2011).

Discussing about assessment, over the last three decades, actually there has been a major shift in this area around the world (Roscoe, 2013) (see also Wullur, 2011). This also changes the concept of assessment in Indonesia through the policy and practice which are interesting to discuss. It is demonstrated by the policy in which since 2013 the government through Ministry of Education and Culture has decided to change the previous curriculum by implementing the new one namely 2013 Curriculum. One of the prominent characteristics of this curriculum is the use of authentic assessment which Tavakoli (2010) claims as a part of the post method era. This assessment

is a mandated assessment to implement by the teacher as stated in Regulation of Ministry of Education and Culture Number 66, 2013 on Assessment Standard, Reguation of Ministry of Education and Culture Number 81A, 2013 on Curriculum Implementation, and Kemendikbud (2014). In terms of practice, although the authentic assessment is stated clearly by the government though some regulations, based on the pleriminary study conducted with sixteen teachers from six different schools in West Java, they still have some various understandings and perspectives about that. That is why further investigation is needed to figure out the real implementation of authentic assessment in the context of the 2013 Curriculum.

Authentic assessment itself can be defined as multiple forms of assessment consisting of real world and higher order thinking tasks the students should perform (see O'Malley & Pierce, 1996; Mueller, 2014; Mahdavinia, Tabatabaei, & Rahimi, 2011). It therefore provides several advantages and one of them is the connection to the real-life skills (Meyer, 1992; Campbell, 2000; Wiggins, 1993a; Banks, 2005). This assessment views that life is not a series of isolated multiple-choice questions but full of complex, embedded problems to be solved (Wiggins, 1993b), so that higher order thinking consisting of synthesizing, collaborating and problem solving can be assessed (see Paulsen, Paulsen, & Meyer, 1991; Nolet, 1992; Cole, Stryuk, Kinder, Sheehan, & Kish, 1997). Therefore, in order to promote the advantages, the assessment should be implemented well through the proper process of designing, administering, and reporting.

Since authentic assessment consists of multiple forms of assessment to assess several students' competences (see O'Malley & Pierce, 1996), there are plenty of tasks or techniques that can be employed by the teachers. Accordingly, the teachers may vary in employing the authentic assessment although some techniques have been stated clearly in the Regulation of Ministry of Education and Culture Number 66, 2013 on Assessment Standard, Regulation of Ministry of Education and Culture Number 81A, 2013 on Curriculum Implementation, and Kemendikbud (2014). In addition, the

existence of mandated competences to assess by the teacher in the 2013 Curriculum also creates some variation on how the teachers assess them using authentic assessment.

In addition, because authentic assessment should be planned and administered properly to promote the advantages, the teachers may found it difficult to do. This is demonstrated by the preliminary study which revealed that most of the teachers felt difficult to implement the assessment although they have joined the training of the 2013 Curriculum. This becomes a classic problem in which the teachers know the theory or concept but they are not able to implement it as it is required.

Regarding the topic, there are plenty of studies concerning authentic assessment both from inside and outside the country (e.g. Mintah, 2003; Gulikers, Bastiaens, & Kirschner, 2006; Fook & Sidhu, 2010; Whitelock & Cross, 2012; Aksu-Ataç, 2012; Saputra & Rahmat, 2014; Ningsih & Adiantika, 2014; Saputra, 2015a, 2015b; Lubiz & Rahmawati, 2015; Jumiarti, 2015; Surya, 2015; Putri & Noviani, 2015). Generally, they do not discuss the topic of implementing authentic assessment in the context of the 2013 Curriculum. Although some studies had similarities with the present study in terms of the types and problems of authentic assessment to be reinvestigated more in different context, this study tries to fill the gap by investigating the process of implementation and assessed competences. It therefore makes conducting the study about the authentic assessment in terms of implementation embracing the types and assessed competences, and challenges of the authentic assessment in the 2013 Curriculum in deep will be worth doing to shed light about the real practice of English language teaching and assessment in Indonesia. Hence, it is for that reason this study was carried out.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

In accordance to the background of the study stated in the previous section, this study document the implementation embracing types and assessed competences and challenges of authentic assessment in the context of the 2013

Curriculum from one English teacher in deep. Therefore, this inquiry is guided by the following research questions.

1) How does the teacher implement authentic assessment mandated by the 2013 Curriculum?

   a) What types of authentic assessment are used by the teacher as mandated by the 2013 Curriculum?

   b) What competences are assessed by the teacher using authentic assessment mandated by the 2013 Curriculum?

2) What are the challenges encountered by the teacher in implementing authentic assessment mandated by the 2013 Curriculum?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

In line with the research questions proposed, the purposes of the study are to identify the way an English teacher implement authentic assessments embracing the types of authentic assessment and the assessed competences, and the challenges encountered in implementing authentic assessment in the context of the 2013 Curriculum.

1.4 Scope of the Study

As mentioned in the previous sections and in order to narrow the focus, the present study concerns on the implementation embracing types and assessed competences, and the challenges of authentic assessment as mandated by the 2013 Curriculum derived from the data of interview, observation, and document analysis from one secondary school Englsih teacher along with her students in Cimahi, West Java. The limited respondent is intended to get the rich data and create thick description of the focus of the study.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Theoretically, the result of this study is highly intended to contribute the discussion of the authentic assessment in the context of 2013 curriculum that is still less understood by teachers, practitioners, and educators. Practically, this study is intended to be used as an additional guideline for the teachers to

implement authentic assessment in the context of 2013 curriculum. Professionally, it is intended that the result of this study provides the fundamental reasons for educational stakeholders in making policies related to the authentic assessment in the context of 2013 Curriculum in Indonesia.

1.6 Outline of the Thesis

The thesis is organized into five chapters. As indicated in the earlier section of this chapter, Chapter 1 discussed the background underpinning the study along with the overview of the theory and several relevant studies. Then, it discusses the purpose of the study derived from the formulation of the research questions. The scope of the study is also discussed in order to narrow the focus of the study. Lastly, the significance of the study is discussed in the rest of this chapter. Meanwhile, the subsequent chapters will be framed as follow. Chapter 2 explores relevant literature concerning the theories related to the topic of the study which are the authentic assessment in general and 2013 Curriculum itself. In addition, the studies of the relevant research are also discussed in this section. Chapter 3 outlines the design and methodology of this present study. This includes by explanation of the site and participant involved in this study, the design of the study, and the procedures of collecting and analyzing the data. Chapter 4 displays the findings and discussion of the study. The display will be outlined based on the research questions of this study stated in Section 1.2 of Chapter 1. Chapter 5, the last chapter of this study, provides the conclusion derived from the Chapter 4. It will also discuss recommendations for teachers, policy makers, and further researchers.