

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 significance of the study is presented in the next section of this chapter. Then, the scope of the study is also discussed to narrow the focus of the research. Then, the definition of each of the key terms becomes the penultimate discussion of the chapter. Lastly, to inform the body of the dissertation, the outline of the dissertation will be provided in the last section of this chapter.

1.1 Background

The current issue of assessment in Indonesia, particularly in the primary and the secondary education levels, leans toward the use of authentic assessment as mandated by the latest curriculum, the 2013 Curriculum. Although this curriculum has been implemented for a half-decade, it is still in the refinement to fulfill the best shape of the practice in every area including the assessment (see Bangsaku, 2016; Guru-id.com, 2017). It is because good assessment practice is the key to effective teaching and learning (Fautley & Savage, 2008). Although the excellent practice of authentic assessment requires a great deal of time to create and a lot more to evaluate thoroughly (Lund, 2012), the teacher should follow the procedure of implementing the assessment to make sure that assessment fulfills the principles of good assessment such as validity, reliability, practicality, and washback (see Brown, 2004; Hughes, 2003).

The authentic assessment (henceforth AA) is defined as multiple forms of assessment consisting of real-world and higher-order thinking tasks the students should perform (see Mahdavinia, Tabatabaei, & Rahimi, 2011; Mueller, 2014; O'Malley & Pierce, 1996). This assessment provides a close connection to real-life skills (Banks, 2005; Campbell, 2000; Meyer, 1992; Wiggins, 1993a). It 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 Cole et al., 1997; Nolet, 1992; Paulsen, Paulsen, & Meyer, 1991). Therefore, to promote the advantages, the assessment should be implemented well through the proper process of designing, administering, and reporting.

However, AA in Indonesian context has gained educators' interest, especially teachers', due to the confusion in implementing it in their practice (Ahmad, 2014; Bentri, Hidayati, & Rahmi, 2016; Jaedun, Hariyanto, & Nuryadin, 2014; Retnawati, Hadi, & Nugraha, 2016). Although the mandate of implementing the assessment is issued along with the guideline, in terms of practice most of the teachers still face the confusion because of the unspecific guideline resulting in the lack of understanding of the assessment (Ahmad, 2014; Bentri, et al., 2016; Jaedun, et al., 2014; Retnawati, et al., 2016). As a result, they tend to do an old practice of assessment, which is not suggested by the curriculum. This is also demonstrated by the preliminary study with twenty English teachers from six different schools in West Java in which they felt confused about the implementation although they had joined the training of AA embedded in the training of 2013 Curriculum implementation (Saputra, 2015).

This phenomenon implies that the training does not help much the teacher in gaining the insight of AA. Besides, the existence of insufficient guideline creates the situation in which the teacher cannot learn the concept by themselves. This phenomenon is supported by the findings from several studies (i.e., Ahmad, 2014; Bentri, et al., 2016; Jaedun, et al., 2014; Retnawati, et al., 2016) that found hundreds of teacher deem the existing guideline of assessment is quite challenging to be implemented, so it needs to be explained in more straightforward ways.

This suggests that they need a more practical procedure of how to conduct the assessment, especially AA. This issue is also supported by the preliminary data from twenty English teachers in which they require a new guideline of implementing AA. Hence, further follow up studies is needed to help them to cope with the confusion during the implementation of AA in the 2013 Curriculum

context. For this reason, this present study tries to develop a model of AA implementation for senior or vocational high school EFL teachers, particularly in the context of the 2013 Curriculum which will be drafted in the form the implementation guideline.

There are a number of studies that have been conducted in the area of AA in several contexts. Concerning on the issue of the implementation of AA, especially in Indonesian context, there have been many studies conducted in this area especially in Indonesian secondary education context (i.e., Ahmad, 2014; Bentri, et al., 2016; Jaedun, et al., 2014; Retnawati, et al., 2016). However, they only capture the perspectives, practices, and problems without providing alternatives to the issues found in their study. In terms of the study dealing with AA development, there are also many studies conducted outside the country (i.e., Charoenchai, Phuseeorn, & Phengsawat, 2015; Kearney & Perkins, 2014; Rennert-Ariev & College, 2005; Tatsukawa, 2007) and in Indonesian context (i.e., Arlinawati, Hermawan, & Chodryah, 2017; Sastrakirana, 2015; Setiawan & Sitompul, 2017). However, they do not specifically focus on the development of an implementation model of AA. Meanwhile, previous studies of teacher professional development as an avenue to develop curricular elements especially assessment have also been conducted by several authors from outside the country (i.e., Lam, 2015; Scarino, 2017) and inside the country (Rustaman, Rusdiana, Efendi, & Liliawati 2017). Again, they only help the teacher to improve the practice of assessment not to develop a model which can help the teachers improve the implementation by themselves.

Based on the previous studies mentioned in three categories above, the present study tries to fill the contextual, theoretical, and methodological gap concerning the development of EFL AA model in the Indonesian context. The contextual gap is filled through the selection of site and participants involved in this study in which this study involved six English teachers, 228 students, and one school administrator from a vocational secondary school in Cimahi, West Java, Indonesia. Therefore, this supplements the findings of AA in a different context.

Meanwhile, the conceptual gap is filled through synthesizing the theories and concept of AA implementation from several scholars. It also embraces the theory of curriculum development as a starting point for the assessment model development. Besides, this study also involved the theories of teacher professional development, in this case, professional learning community (henceforth PLC) (see Andrews & Lewis, 2002; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006; Sigurdardottir, 2010). Lastly, the methodological gap is filled through employing modified design-based research cycle, namely the Integrative Learning Design Framework (ILDF) model as proposed by Bannan (2009). This framework is applied due to its flexibility in the process of development. The framework includes informed exploration, enactment, and evaluation in which the cycles are not always conducted linearly, but rather a particular phase of one cycle would intersect with a different phase of the subsequent cycle. What makes it different is that the design-based research in this study is modified through the use of the participatory nature of the activity. This means that the study is not only involving the participants in context analysis and or evaluation but also involving their participation in all the process of development covering context analysis (informed exploration), design and development (enactment), and evaluation (evaluation). Hence, those features make this study take a stance as a research novelty by trying to fill those contextual, theoretical, and methodological gaps. It, therefore, makes conducting the study is worth doing to provide additional insight into understanding the existing problems and needs of the teachers and students dealing with AA, the theories and concepts of AA development as teachers professional development project, and the design-based research study which embraces participatory philosophy of research.

1.2 Formulation of the Problems

Following the background of the study stated in the previous section, the study documented in this dissertation deals with the way of developing an implementation model of AA for secondary EFL education in Indonesia. Therefore, this study is guided by the following research questions.

- 1) What are the current conditions of EFL authentic assessment practice in secondary education in Indonesia?
- 2) What are the processes of design and development of EFL authentic assessment model through participatory design-based research?
- 3) What changes are observed in English teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and practices of authentic assessment after the participatory design-based research project?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

The research questions proposed in the previous section aim to capture the process of designing and developing a model of the implementation of AA in the EFL context. The whole research project involves several activities. The first research question aims at a close investigation into context analysis of the implementation of the EFL AA in a vocational secondary school under the current national curriculum, namely the 2013 Curriculum. The second research question aims at reporting the process of designing and developing an AA model for the EFL classroom in line with the current curriculum mandate. This will also look at the application of the developed model through teachers' implementation. The last research question aims at evaluating the effectiveness of the developed model in changing teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and practices of the implementation of AA.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The findings of the study are expected to provide conceptual, empirical, practical, and policy contribution to English language assessment, particularly in the Indonesian context, which adopts the 2013 Curriculum. Conceptually, the result of this study is highly intended to contribute to the implementation of AA in the context of the 2013 curriculum that is, to some extent, not understood well by the teacher. This conceptual significance can be obtained from the outcome of the study in the form of design principles, the AA model, and the theory of AA development and implementation.

From the empirical side, since this study is context-specific emphasizing the whole spectrum of teaching and assessment situation, teachers, and students, this study expands the tradition by investigating how the AA is implemented. To know whether this process impact learners and teacher development related to assessment, case study, as Yin (2003) suggests can capture the process of implementation in a particular context. Thus, the findings of the study are expected to provide further direction for empirical studies on the development of AA implementation in other educational sectors in Indonesia or other countries.

Practically, the present study provides the English teachers at the secondary level of education in Indonesia several contributions. Since one of the outcomes of the study in the form of AA implementation model is documented, the findings can demonstrate evidence-based practice informed by theoretical orientation. For this reason, the developed model drafted in the form of the guideline can be utilized as implementation guideline of AA, which challenges the existing guideline or procedure, which is still confusing for the teachers.

Lastly, in terms of policy contribution, the outcomes of the study are expected to provide improvement in the area of policy, especially professional development and training systems. The findings suggest some modification of professional development into a professional learning community (PLC) which can empower teachers and thus improve their agency. Inside the PLC itself, the training system in the form of collegial training and mentorship can be implemented to replace the existing traditional training system, which is seen to be ineffective yet.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The development of the implementation model of authentic assessment in this study involves multi-layer processes. The processes include context analysis which is represented in the first research question, model design, development, and implementation which are described in the second research question, and model evaluation which is represented in the last research question of this study.

- 1) **Context analysis:** This analysis is used to capture the current situation of the implementation of authentic assessment covering the teachers' and students' perspective, practice, curricular guideline, and assessment guideline.
- 2) **Model design and development:** This process portrays how the authentic assessment model is designed and developed according to the result of context analysis connected to the theoretical basis.
- 3) **Model implementation:** This process depicts how teachers apply the developed model in an implementation phase. The actual use of the model in the form of the guideline is empirically documented.
- 4) **Model evaluation:** This process captures the result of the analysis regarding the effectiveness of the developed model after being implemented. This consists of teachers' and students' perspective. For teachers, how the use of the developed model facilitates their professional development is investigated. For students, how the process of assessment impact their learning is examined.

1.6 Clarification of Key Terms

The title of the study is the development of authentic assessment implementation model for secondary EFL teachers in Indonesia. Based on this title, several key terms that need to be clarified to narrow the focus of the study covering development, authentic assessment model, and secondary EFL teachers.

- 1) **Development:** The development activity in this study embraces the process of developing an AA implementation model involving multi-layer processes. The processes include context analysis which is represented in the first research question; model design, development, and implementation which are described in the second research question; and model evaluation which is represented in the last research question of this study. The outcomes of the development are in the form of design principles, model, and theory of development and implementation of the AA model.
- 2) **Authentic Assessment Model:** The authentic assessment or AA model in this study is the implementation model which directs the teacher step by step of how

to implement the assessment. This model is drafted in a guideline (see Appendix 11), which has been distributed to the teachers in the study.

- 3) **Secondary EFL Teachers:** The term secondary EFL teachers in this study covers the senior or vocational high school level of education teachers in Indonesia equal to *SMA/SMK* who teach English as a foreign language. They are selected as the focus of the study based on the result of the preliminary study which discusses some problems with the teachers of this level of generation.

1.7 Outline of the Dissertation

The dissertation 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 explains the purpose of the study derived from the formulation of the research questions. In the next section, the scope of the study addresses the focus and limitation of the present study. Lastly, the clarification of key terms becomes the last part of the chapter, which discusses the scopes of the study to narrow the focus of the research. Meanwhile, the subsequent chapters will be framed as follows. Chapter 2 explores relevant literature concerning the theories related to the topic of the study, which is the AA and the 2013 Curriculum. Besides, 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 the research design embracing the research procedure of developing an AA model, the site and participant involved in this study, the data collection techniques, the research instruments, and the data analysis. Chapter 4 displays the findings and discussion of the study. The display is outlined based on the research questions of this study, as stated in Section 1.2 of Chapter 1. Chapter 5, the last chapter of this study, provides the conclusion derived from Chapter 4. It also discusses recommendations for teachers, policymakers, and further researcher.