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# The Death of Authentic Language Learning Assessment in Indonesia During The Global Pandemic

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**Abstrak**— This article aims to discuss the implementation of authentic language learning assessment in Indonesia during the global pandemic. In the 2013 curriculum, the result of the learning process requires an authentic assessment because it has high relevance to a scientific approach of learning that meets the demands of the curriculum. However, authentic assessment has faced serious challenges in the process of its implementation during the COVID-19 pandemic that has hit globally since 2019. In this case, teachers face major challenges in the assessment process including in learning foreign languages, especially English subjects. The assessment system in the language learning process during the pandemic is demanded to be more flexible therefore government must consider a solution. The solution is expected to open up opportunities for teachers to modify the authentic assessment system to an alternative assessment as an adjustment during the global crisis.

Kata Kunci— authentic assessment, alternative assessment, language learning, global pandemic

Abstract— Artikel ini bertujuan untuk membahas implementasi asesmen pembelajaran bahasa otentik di Indonesia selama pandemi. Dalam kurikulum 2013, hasil proses pembelajaran memerlukan penilaian otentik karena memiliki relevansi yang tinggi dengan pendekatan pembelajaran saintifik yang memenuhi tuntutan kurikulum. Namun penilaian otentik menghadapi tantangan yang cukup berat dalam proses implementasinya selama pandemi COVID-19 yang melanda global sejak tahun 2019. Dalam hal ini, guru menghadapi tantangan besar dalam proses penilaian termasuk dalam pembelajaran bahasa asing, khususnya mata pelajaran bahasa Inggris. Sistem penilaian dalam proses pembelajaran bahasa pada masa pandemi dituntut lebih fleksibel sehingga pemerintah harus mempertimbangkan solusinya. Solusi tersebut diharapkan dapat membuka kesempatan bagi para guru untuk memodifikasi sistem penilaian otentik menjadi penilaian alternatif sebagai penyesuaian pada masa krisis global.

Keywords— penilaian otentik, penilaian alternatif, pembelajaran bahasa, pandemi global

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The curriculum of 2013 also known as K-13 is the national curriculum of Indonesia. It is broadly known since 2013 when the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture proudly published the newest curriculum to replace School-Based Curriculum or well-known as KTSP (Rimini, Asri, & Saputri, 2017). This new curriculum is expected to give an equal education to all children nationwide. But unfortunately, K-13 needs more time to adjust to the school situation, school staff, teachers and students should adapt to the policy in K-13 which has a big difference in the implementation.

Based on Rimini, Asri, & Saputri (2017) the significant difference between the previous curriculum and the curriculum of 2013 of K-13 is in the implementation of the assessment method. 2013 curriculum tent to use a new method of assessment namely authentic assessment but KTSP was using traditional assessment. The traditional assessment is commonly presented in the form of paper-based tests such as multiple choice and short answer questions. On the contrary, the authentic assessment is assessing students' abilities in performing meaningful tasks that they may have to do in the "real world. So instead determines students' learning in forms of assessment such as multiple-choice tests and quizzes, it consists of multiple forms of assessment that reflect student learning, achievement, motivation, and attitudes on instructional-relevant classroom activities. It is clear that authentic assessment aims to assess students' competence and ability therefore teachers are expected to assess students' language skills and competence through authentic assessment forms such as performance, project, and portfolio assessment.

Although the implementation of authentic assessment was facing pros and contras due to many aspects such as teaching and learning duration, the number of subjects and the complex of scoring, all element of education like school, teacher, staff, parents, and students have worked well and hand-to-hand to fulfill the demand of curriculum. Sadly, at the end of 2019, global issues speeded around the world and gave a big impact in all fields including education.

The issue of the coronavirus 2019 or COVID-19 also gives an extreme change toward society. Since the call of global pandemic announces by countries all over the world including Indonesia, the government should send students, teachers, and staff away from school then all teaching and learning activities should be conducted through online learning. In this case, the performance of authentic assessment faced new complex challenges. Therefore the government must act and consider a solution for the educational issue in Indonesia to assure that students, teachers, and the school can still operate as the fundamental goals of education.

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### II. METHOD

This research uses literature study method. This means that the data processed and discussed in this study refers to library data that has been collected, read and integrated by the author. The purpose of the literature study is to develop theoretical and practical aspects of the themes discussed (Kartiningrum, 2015).

Furthermore, the authors describe the authentic assessment concepts presented by several experts. According to the curriculum of 2013, English is a foreign language and one of the compulsory subjects for students starting from junior high school level to high school. Based on the regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 81, the year 2013 regarding the implementation of K-13, all process of English learning have the same demand in the curriculum in which it also needs to use authentic assessment for the assessment method (Retnawati, Hadi, & Nugraha, 2016). It is because authentic assessment focusing on measuring student's learning process. This kind of assessment values how students deal with their behavior, knowledge, and skill therefore teachers should be able to assess students' skills using performance, project, and portfolio assessments (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996).

Performance assessment is assessment tasks to score students' skills in using the language. It requires students to construct a response, create a product, or demonstrate the application of the language. Performance assessment aims to assess students by observing student's activities in demonstrating particular activity such as reading aloud, free speaking, role-play, or other interactive communicative learning.

In scoring students in performance assessment, firstly students are expected to create a product or demonstrate a process, or both, and secondly, the teacher must use clearly define criteria to evaluate the quality of learning outcomes with students' knowledge, such as making or producing a report or demonstrating the process of learning. The second is a portfolio. Portfolio assessment is defined as a continuous assessment process based on a set of information that shows the development of students' competence in a given time. Gottlieb, (1995) claimed that there are several stages to implement a portfolio assessment in the classroom activities. So the teacher should consider and pay attention to each stage.

Those stages are as follows, the teacher needs to explain to the students about the benefit of the portfolio for both students and the teacher; the teacher should negotiate with students regarding decide the kinds of portfolio tasks; The Teacher should provide a special folder to collect and organize the tasks of students. The teacher must classify the task and identify each of them according to the date of submission to keep the track of the students' learning progress during the school program period; the teacher may discuss with students determining the criteria

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of scoring so the students know the expectation of each task; The teacher and students may cooperate in the scoring process by allowing students to check their work and at the same time teacher can assist them in how to assess and give suggestion to improve the task; and the teacher may give students a second chance to improve or fix their works within a particular time in case that the students get a low score on the assessment. In the end, the teacher will archive the collected-works of each student into one file as the portfolio assessment archive.

In the meanwhile, there is also project assessment. According to Fitriani (2017), this kind of assessment consists of activities to assess students which have an integrated unit of works. Phillips, Burwood, & Dundorf, (1999) claimed that Teacher cannot finish it at one period of time because it requires the students to do a series of tasks resulting in specific products or data. The tasks are in the form of observation or investigation starting from the planning, data gathering, organizing, data analysis, and data presenting.

Project assessment helps the teacher to know the students' understanding, students' ability in applying, and their ability to informing toward certain subjects. Students may complete a project based on the specific topic given by the teacher and then they can exhibit their work. For instance, the project task may include displays or models of buildings or objects appropriate to an instructional setting, role-plays, simulation, artistic creation, videotaped segment, charts, graphs, tables, etc. (Fitriani, 2017). Moreover, the project may also be done individually or in small groups and it is often presented through an oral or written report. The project presented orally can be reviewed by a panel of judges rating the content presented, its organization, and or the language used. Teachers often ask students to develop a presentation on a particular historic period and to generate a drawing and written product appropriate to the period. This approach may be effective when English language learners are taught to communicate step by step procedure or project description that is supported by visual learning tools or material.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

# 3.1. Authentic Language Learning Assessment Issues Before The Pandemic COVID-19

Generally, in implementing authentic assessment, facing an issue is inevitable for teachers. Even before the implementation teachers generally have to handle several challenges in preparing the authentic assessment such as lack of support from the school administration and parents, overwhelming documentation, burdening teaching hours, too many school activities on the weekends (Aziz, Yusoff, & Yaakob, 2020). Besides, teachers still face some crucial issues in the implementation of authentic assessment.

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Firstly, the teacher is expected to be able to design an authentic assessment and learning objectives as suitable as possible for the students' level. There eight stages in planning and designing authentic assessment suggested by Barker (1993) as follows:

- Team building; Teachers need to assure that the students can cooperate well in accomplishing the tasks.
- 2) Determining, the goal of the authentic assessment; teachers should allow the students to know why they will be assessed.
- 3) Formulating specific objectives; teachers need to formulate the objectives specifically to know the standard of scoring.
- 4) Conducting professional development on authentic assessment; teachers should aware that time is always changing and the development should be required.
- 5) Collecting examples of authentic assessment; having more references will be helpful for teachers in deciding the assessment.
- 6) Adapting the authentic assessment from the old version or developing the new one; teachers should make sure that the assessment can score the students fairly.
- 7) Trying out the selected assessment; after providing the assessment, teachers should try it out to examine whether the assessment is eligible or not.
- 8) Reviewing the assessment; in this stage, teachers will decide whether the assessment will be applied or it needs to be modified before the implementation.

Furthermore, another issue is teachers should be able to provide the scoring instrument. In scoring, the authentic assessment uses a rubric, rating scales, and a checklist (Nitko, 1983). A rubric functions as a scoring guide in which it consists of specific pre-established performance criteria, used in evaluating student works on authentic assessments (Mertler, 2001). Mertler (2001) added that there are two kinds of rubrics that can be applied namely holistic and analytic. A holistic rubric requires a teacher to score the overall process or product of students as a whole, without judging the components or parts separately. In the meanwhile, an analytic rubric expects the teacher to score separately individual parts of the product or performance first, and then conclude the individual scores to obtain a total score (Nitko, 1983). Nitko further suggested that there are three types of rating scales namely a numerical rating scale, a graphic rating scale, and a descriptive graphic scale that will serve the teacher well for most purposes. A checklist consists of a list of specific behaviors, characteristics, or activities or a place for marking whether or not each is present. Teachers may use a checklist for assessing procedures students use, products students produce, or behaviors students' exhibit.

In the case of implementing authentic assessment (portfolio, performance, and project Assessment) in assessing students' English skills competence is quite challenging for the English

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teacher. According to Fitriani (2017) teachers are highly expected not only to comprehend the curriculum 2013 evaluation system but at the time also to enhance their concept towards the theories of authentic assessment (Retnawati, Hadi, & Nugraha, 2016).

Furthermore, the English syllabus in which supports an integrative teaching package demand teachers to effectively design each of the English skill assessments such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. However, teachers face the most challenging circumstances in managing the activities for classroom assessment and giving a score to the result of the students' task. These issues appeared due to in English subject, teachers should assess students in three domains of competencies during a semester and each type of the authentic assessment has different issues in the implementation of three kinds of assessments. Those issues are as follows:

# 1) The issue of performance assessment

Firstly, although performance assessment is quite familiar at school even before K-13 is applied, but teachers were being complicated since curriculum 2013 required them to use this assessment annually at every end session of completing one basic competence. In other words, teachers should be able to design and organize performance assessments as much as basic competencies in a semester according to the existing syllabus.

Secondly, it was hard to manage the classroom activities proportionally because the duration of English teaching hours is too short according to teachers' perception. Moreover, it is also possible to have students' work in a group but the scoring process would be more complicated so teachers have to carefully and concentrate on students learning outcomes one by one to give the objective score for them.

Another problem is the class hour organization. Commonly, in the afternoon hour class, students' spirit and energy have been decreased rather than in the morning hour learning. In this situation, teachers usually found that students are not in such a good mood or mental to perform a good task anymore. Once a student in this state performs, then it will also affect his or her classmates' performance (Fitriani, 2017).

Besides, Fitriani (2017) added that the scoring procedure is the hardest section in performing this kind of assessment. Teachers should directly score students in their class by using rubrics at the same time students are performing the task in a very short time. Despite the availability of a scoring standard, maintaining a consistent score is also difficult for the teachers. Teachers should be professional in scoring the students' tasks so they can give objective judgment because it is somehow hurting when sometimes teachers tend to be biased by giving high scores to high achieving students and low score too low achieving students without looking at their performance carefully.

2) The issue of portfolio assessment

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In the implementation, the portfolio expected the teachers to seriously manage students' tasks. Teachers have the responsibility in monitoring the authenticity of students'. It highly challenges teachers' capability to check students' work one by one just to prove that they did it by themselves and teachers sometimes are confused when students' work closely similar with their friends' since it may increase the impact in the scoring validity. Another case is that the English teachers could not assist students when students experience problems in doing the assignment at home. Generally, for high-achieving students, it is not a big deal to rely on their independence; unfortunately, the low achievers might probably need a more intensive assistant and guidance from the teacher (Fitriani, 2017).

On the other hand, collecting students' work or portfolio is a simple thing to do for teachers. Teachers tend to be difficult handling, managing, and organizing the binders of students' portfolios because it is very complicated. Each student has one folder map or binder for one subject and the teacher should regularly input the task into the binder each time students submit the task.

Moreover, Fitriani(2017) assumed that teachers find a new issue in scoring students. Although teachers can apply the available scoring rubric in the teacher book, they must be very careful to check the students' work up to the smallest part of the task. Teachers should realize that the scoring procedure is not only giving a score to students but also diagnosing how each student performed on their task from which the teacher decides the reflective teaching and the follow-up actions whether to give remedy or material enrichment.

### 3) The issue of project assessment

According to Fitriani (2017), the project evaluation preferably permits students to illustrate all factors in their English skills. Unfortunately, it additionally precipitated troubles in lots of ways. Many teachers experienced that it became tough to depend upon college students' obligations for their activity. It is even nearly possible to make a certain that each college student took the equal component on doing the tasks.

Likewise, the low achieving students consider being more active compared to low achievers who frequently neglected their task. it is then afterward might turn to group cluster conflict. On the contrary, high achievers tend to dominate the work without assisting others. In other words, the group failed to increase the works' quality and scores. Secondly, project tasks as homework may cause another problem without the teacher's guidance, it can encourage students to plagiarize the task from online sources (Fitriani, 2017).

Therefore, teachers find many challenges in the scoring section, it will be unfair for scoring the group task project if the students' do not cooperate well, and for homework project, it is not fair to give a high score for students' who manage to cheat by using internet sources to finish the

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task. The teacher perhaps may be able to manage the group project issue at school but it's another case for a homework project. The stressful fact is that cheating by using a searching machine or even gaining help from relatives is inevitable.

### 3.2. Authentic Language Learning Assessment During The Pandemic COVID-19

The Covid-19 Pandemic period changed teaching and learning activities around the world, including Indonesia. Indonesia divides the conditions of the areas affected by Covid-19 into three, namely green, yellow, and red zones. For the green and yellow zones, you can do face to face. While the red zone and others are done by distance learning or courage. (Raharjo, 2020). It means that some areas consider not to close the public places and schools may open and conduct the learning process in classroom interaction. Besides, the unqualified area should close the public places including the school and educational activities such as teaching and learning must be conducted by an online learning activity.

Regarding this condition, it is not ideal to implement the 2013 curriculum anymore. As a result, the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) released a Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 719 / P / 2020 concerning Guidelines for Implementing Curriculum in Education Units in Special Conditions. Educational units in special conditions can use a curriculum that is following the learning needs of students. This curriculum certainly sounds the same as the KTSP curriculum before the 2013 Curriculum but this curriculum is claimed to be a simplified form of Curriculum 13 itself. To make a difference, this curriculum is commonly called an emergency curriculum during the pandemic (Kemendikbud, 2020).

Due to this regulation, the existence of authentic language learning assessment has not been in peace; as mention before, as the curriculum has been changed then the authentic assessment should be changed to. Many factors cause authentic assessment cannot be conducted especially for language learning. some situations such as observing, controlling, and assisting students in the learning process that teachers cannot do due to the long-distance circumstances are also inevitable.

The challenge factors of authentic language learning assessment during the pandemic include the authenticity of students' tasks, the slow submission of students' tasks, too much assessment burden, and the fair scoring. First of all, teaching from home is unable teachers to control their students in making their tasks. It is just like giving the students homework that some students take it as a chance to cheat behind the teacher. There is no guarantee that parents, siblings, relatives, or private tutors will not be hesitated to help or do the task instead of the student itself. Moreover, it still is tolerated when the students honestly do the task with some bits of help rather than do nothing in their tasks.

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Secondly, due to many reasons, some students always find excuses to procrastinate the submission. Many people advocate that In conducting online teaching and learning, teachers and students can optimize the use of technology. Computer and smartphone devices, internet connection, and communication platforms can support the process of an online class effectively. Students also have more mobility in searching the material through the searching machine. With all of these facilities, the process of teaching and learning is expected to perform smoothly. But the fact shows that one of the reasons students did not submit the task on time is because of the unstable internet connection. CNN Indonesia (2019) report that a survey shows that internet speed in Indonesia is one of the slowest one among 77 countries. The results of that survey noted that Indonesia has a lower limit speed of the 4G network of 6 Mbps in 2018. During the pandemic, students do experience the challenges a lot especially for those who leave in a village and county side. Several local and national news revealed that a group of students have to climb the mountain to have an internet connection for joining the online class. One of the vocational school students in a remote mountainous area in Gunungkidul named Aldiyan is a real example. He has to climb the mountain in the morning and go down after having the information about the task of the day (Husna, 2020). The lack of an internet connection is not only a big problem for students to not submit the task on time but the teacher is also difficult to control in making the task from the students from the distance. This case is integrated with the first problem in implementing the authentic assessment.

Consequently, that issue leads to new problems in which students advocated that they have a lot of assignments. Students sometimes have a series of tasks from all subjects in a day. It also causes the students to have no chance of making their portfolio due to the overburden of the task. Automatically, it also impacts the teachers, because it means that at the end of deadline sections they should work hard to select the task based on the date, managed the types of tasks, and checked students' tasks in a very short time. This works looks simple, but practically it takes a lot of teachers time in a day especially when they have to open the folders one by one from each task of each meeting then they have to check it at the last section of one semester, and dramatically it could affect the assessing proses.

Jankowski (August 2020) mention that based on the survey of NILOA (National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment) about 75% of the respondents considered that the change would not impact the assessment culture of the school negatively, but about 25% of them felt worried about the number of work increase rapidly and the assessment is far away from teaching and learning goal and the accuracy of learning measurement (Jankowski, August 2020). This fact shows that the overload assignments give no guarantee to the accuracy of assessing students and the affectivity in reaching the teaching and learning goals.

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Last but not the least, the scoring section also becomes something that teachers should consider carefully, regarding the first case it would be unfair for students who have low achievement but doing the task by cheating then they get a better score than the student who has the high achievement. Besides, teachers are expected to be professional without putting their biased preferences but somehow there is no assurance that the teacher would recall students' attitudes in the classroom before the pandemic as one of their references in deciding the score of the students. moreover, the second case also impacts the scoring section, when students' mostly submit the task at the end of the course due to deadline, it means that teachers are very limited to give remedial for students' works in the case that the tasks achieve the dissatisfied result.

Regarding all explanations above, researchers assume that the issue of implementing authentic assessment turns to be worse if it is still implemented than before the global pandemic. Fortunately the government of Indonesia especially the ministry of education acts fast and provides an alternative curriculum to assure that students still have a proper education even during the terrible situation.

Minister of Education and Culture (Mendikbud) Nadiem Makarim conveyed that in the emergency curriculum or special conditions the teacher still serves to send or assess students. He also urged teachers to carry out a diagnostic assessment as an alternative assessment (Raharjo, 2020). Therefore, during this critical situation English teachers require to use diagnostic assessment as an alternative assessment instead of authentic language learning assessment.

# 3.3. Language Learning Assessment Demands an Alternative

According to Jankowski (August 2020) based on the survey of NILOA (National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment) about 97% of the respondents respond to Covid-19 by making changes. The changes include modifying many aspects. For instance, modifying both the process of assignment and assessment procedures and also creating a flexible deadline for the assignment and the assessment reporting.

In Indonesia, the ministry of education, Nadiem Makarim has announced the change of curriculum from K-13 or curriculum of 2013 to Special KTSP for COVID situation or commonly known as the Emergency curriculum. Emergency curriculum implementation is carried out with the application of alternative assessment namely a diagnostic assessment (Raharjo, 2020). This assessment is carried out at all grade levels regularly to diagnose students' cognitive and non-cognitive conditions as a result of distance learning.

The cognitive assessment aims to test the ability and achievement of student learning, in English, this includes the ability of students to master the language based on the learning objectives to be achieved. On the other hand, the non-cognitive assessment aims to measure the psychological aspects and emotional conditions of students, such as the psychological and social-

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emotional well-being of students, students 'enjoyment while studying from home, and the condition of the students' families (Harususilo, 2020).

Hence, to create the best decision as responding this global issue, teachers advocated that that students' need is the main preferences in assessment-related changes for instance; teacher need to consider how students can use the target language in the context of learning from home and how students can apply it after the condition back to the normal stage. The next is students' condition and background and technology access also one of the factors in determining the changes in case that not all students have no gadget (Antara, 2020). So teachers have to assure that the assessment is affordable and reachable for students, for instance, a teacher can let students record themself by voice note rather than using interactive video conferences, which would not work well with an unstable internet connection. Therefore surveying students need analysis took concern of the decision-maker and there are about 90% of respondents who have the same point (Jankowski, August 2020).

The alternative assessment has been decided to be applied nationally. After modifying both the process of assignment and assessment procedures according to the diagnostic assessment, it is the only best choice and has been already implemented by many teachers in Indonesia right now. Regarding the scoring Neutuch (July 2020) mentioned that the Coronavirus has succeeded in changing the lives of the world of education with the enactment of distance learning and often loosening graduation/failing deadlines for community colleges that introduce passing/failing grading options. He also added that since mid-April, one of the higher education associations of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) has asked universities to change their transfer policies to facilitate college admission selection with a scoring system triggered by COVID. It is due to the extraordinary mental burden that students suffer during this study period.

In the Indonesian context, Candraditya (2020) reported that as schools and teachers have the flexibility to apply the emergency curriculum during this crisis time, teachers have the same opportunity to elaborate their ability and creativity in giving final assessments to students more flexibly. The scoring section should not bother both teachers and students due to keeping the mental issue that possibly may cause their decreased immune. It must be an undesirable issue that people should avoid to fight the virus. Therefore schools should consider the minds of students regarding the score by giving them whether it is a pass or fail score predicate.

# IV. CONCLUSION

According to the explanation above, the researcher concludes that the implementation of authentic language learning assessment cannot be conducted during the global issue of COVID-19. The problem is caused by several factors such as the performance of teaching and learning

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and assessing students in long-distance, limited access to technology, and difficulty in scoring. Hence, the government has applied a new policy in the education field as a response for this critical period by such as freezing the existing curriculum of 2013 then applying an alternative curriculum and assessing system. The change of curriculum caused the modification of the assessing system to support the language learning process and assessment during the pandemic. Those changes are expected to not only be used temporarily but also for future consideration. The changes in curriculum and assessment systems include some aspects. Those aspects are the rise of assignment and assessment flexibility and the negotiated learning process. And the most urgent thing is the existence of alternative assessment. It must be able to measure and score students learning outcomes through cognitive assessment and to assess students' psychological aspects and emotional conditions by using non-cognitive assessment. Overall both assessments intend to not give a burden towards students physically and mentally.

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