

Complexities of Authentic Assessment Implementation in English Learning at Rural Areas-Based High Schools

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Abstract

This research aimed to examine the level of the implementation of authentic assessment by high school English teachers in a rural area of a district in one province in Sumatera island, Indonesia, and to explore their perception regarding the authentic assessment as well as the challenges they faced during the implementation. This research used a mixed method in which both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed. The research samples were 39 high school English teachers in the area under investigation. The research instrument used is a questionnaire comprising 38 closed questions and three open ones, distributed online via Google Forms. The questionnaire was designed using Likert Scale with options ranging from 1-5 (very poor to very good) Data were also collected using semi-structured interviews to enrich data from the Google Form. This study found that the total average score of quantitative data is 4.1, classified as good. That means the implementation of authentic assessment by English teachers is at a good level. Then from the analysis of the qualitative data, it appeared that the majority of teachers have a positive perception of authentic assessment as a tool for monitoring and evaluating student learning outcomes. However, there are still some problems faced by the teachers in implementing this assessment such as the lack of time allotment for the English subject at school, the complexity of the assessment procedures, and burden for the students. This implies that some policies are required to make the authentic assessment work well at school levels so teachers can benefit from the assessment for improving English learning at schools.

Keywords: Authentic assessment; high school; English teachers

Introduction

To keep up with new challenges brought by the changes of the environment, the Indonesian government consistently continues to make improvements and adjustments of the curriculum. The curriculum in Indonesia has been reformed at least ten times in the last 70 years (1947, 1952, 1964, 1968, 1975, 1984, 1994, 2004, 2006, and 2013, and the latest curriculum named the *Merdeka Curriculum*). These curriculum changes are to improve the quality of national education following the standards demanded by the times. By doing so, Indonesia is expected to be able to prepare and produce human resources that have the skills and competence needed in the future (Khasanah, 2015).

The *Merdeka Curriculum*, on the other hand, aims to make learning more meaningful and relevant to students' life experience. Generally, this curriculum was designed not to replace the existing system in 2013 Curriculum, but to improve and upgrade it. One of the main programs initiated in the *Merdeka Curriculum* is where the national standardized school examination (USBN) is transferred to a continuous assessment such as portfolio (group assignments, papers, lab work, and so on) (Adit, 2019). Owing to this, it can be assured that authentic assessment in the 2013 Curriculum is still relevant to be integrated into *Merdeka Curriculum* (Sugiri & Priatmoko, 2020).

One example of authentic assessment integration in *Merdeka Curriculum* is project assignments. According to Sugiri and Priatmoko (2020), project assessment is an assessment activity that students must complete within a certain period or time. The completion of this assignment is in the form of an investigation carried out by students, starting from planning, organizing, collecting, analyzing data, and presenting the results. For this reason, it can be seen that this type of assessment also involves understanding, applying, investigating, and others (Majid, 2014). Therefore, students are expected to be able to use the knowledge and competencies they have learned in real situations, as stated in Permendikbud (2014), and produce a product that has essential value.

However, several previous studies indicate the implementation of authentic assessment in English lessons is still not optimal. Marhaeni et al. (2014) revealed that although many teachers do use authentic assessment, their knowledge of authentic assessment itself is still lacking. Also, it cannot be denied that there are still many teachers who choose to use the traditional assessment instead of the authentic one (Marhaeni & Kusuma, 2017). Then a research by Rahayu et al (2021) regarding the perception and implementation of authentic assessment in learning English discovered that the English teacher's knowledge of the application of authentic assessment was 64%; which was only categorized as 'enough'. This result corresponds to research by Ningsih (2019), which also found that only half of English teachers had conducted authentic assessments properly. This also shows that there is a gap between the implementation of ideal authentic assessments, as requested by the 2013 Curriculum and the real one (Marhaeni & Kusuma, 2017). Some of the reasons for this include rejection by students because the assessment system is too complicated and burdensome, teachers who are not ready to apply assessments, lack of communication between schools as implementers of the applied curriculum (Kastina, 2017), and the amount of time needed to carry out authentic assessments (Kastina, 2017; Wildan, 2017; Darong et al., 2021).

This lack of knowledge regarding authentic assessment by teachers will greatly affect the process of teaching English in Indonesia. How it is implemented in class may differ from how it

is supposed to be according to the curriculum. In the long term, these obstacles can hinder the success of the existing curriculum implementation (Anisa, 2015; Darong et al., 2022). More specifically, these hurdles tend to reduce the effectiveness of English lessons in Indonesian high schools, particularly in rural areas.

Rural areas, such as those in the region under the investigation, have unique characteristics and influence various aspects of life, including the education system. Outside the district city center, this area is considered rural as it is also quite far from the urban center. Rural areas typically refer to regions characterized by low population density, often dominated by agricultural and natural landscapes. These areas tend to have limited access to urban amenities and services, including healthcare, education, and transportation. Rural communities often maintain a closer connection to nature and may face unique challenges related to economic opportunities and infrastructure development. This condition creates its own challenges in the educational context, especially in learning English at the Senior High School level. In this area, schools still adhere to traditional approaches in terms of teachers and teaching methods.

Limited access to technology, especially the internet, is one of the characteristics of rural areas like this (Hadi, 2018; Yusri et al., 2022). The lack of digital infrastructure affects the way learning is done and access to modern educational resources. This also creates a gap in the application of technology in education, which can affect the quality of English learning in high schools in this area (Poedjiastutie et al., 2021). In addition, the socio-economic composition of the population of this rural area mostly consists of farmers (Yulianti et al., 2018). Students in these rural schools often contribute to family work in the fields after school. These factors can influence their availability of time and energy to focus on learning English.

It is in this context that this research becomes important, as it will identify these constraints in implementing authentic assessment in English language learning in rural high schools. Additionally, the findings of the research can also explore the opportunities and strategies that can be implemented to overcome these challenges, taking into account the uniqueness and educational needs of these very different rural areas.

Literature review

Assessment in education

Assessment is an important part of the curriculum. It deals with techniques and procedures used by teachers to assess the student's growth and learning achievement. At the same time, it is also instrumental as a tool by which teachers get feedback for their instructional quality (Taras, 2007). Assessment can be conducted at different stages and in various ways. It can be done at the end of the learning process (summative evaluation or assessment of learning) and during the learning process (formative evaluation or assessment for learning). Assessment can also be done as a metacognitive tool whereby it becomes a process of learning (assessment as learning) (Earl, 2012). Furthermore, assessment can be in the form of tests and non-tests. The assessment in the form of tests usually appears in the form of objective tests, written tests, and oral tests, while non-tests one can be done in various forms, such as observation, performance, assignments, presentations, seminars, and other authentic forms (Daud *et al.*, 2020).

Authentic assessment

Assessment is considered authentic when the tasks within the assessment are real-to-life or have real-life values (Vu & Dall'Alba, 2014). O'Malley et al. (1996) describe some forms of authentic assessment that could reflect students' learning, achievement, motivation, and attitudes

toward classroom instructional activities. They classified into three types of authentic assessment: performance assessment, portfolios, and students-self assessment. Performance assessment consists of oral reports, writing samples, individual or group projects, exhibitions, and demonstrations in which students respond orally.

The design of authentic assessment is generally based on Bloom's taxonomy, in which the learning outcomes are a measure of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that promote change in students (Maryani & Martaningsih, 2017; Achmad & Prastowo, 2022). In short, this assessment is designed to ensure that there is an increase in knowledge (cognitive domain), development of new skills (psychomotor domain), and improvement of emotional balance (affective domain). For this reason, the competencies of the students in authentic assessment are written in paragraphs that combine knowledge, skills, and attitudes in learning. By structuring it this way, the knowledge learned by students is showed as a related series.

Additionally, the learning achievement of authentic assessment is designed with a lot of reference to Constructivism theory by Piaget (1980) and "Understanding by Design" (UbD) approach by Wiggins and Tighe (2005). Constructivism theory asserts that knowledge is constructed rather than passively absorbed by students. This indicates that students actively establish or make their own knowledge based on their experiences. Meanwhile, the UbD approach defines '*understanding*' as ability built through learning processes that provide opportunities for students to explain, interpret and apply information, use multiple perspectives, and make their own representations. As a result, this makes comprehension not just a simple cognitive or low-level thinking process but something more complex.

As authentic assessment is carried out by exploring the abilities of students from various possible sides, there are two types of assessment according to the Guidebook of Learning and Assessment in Indonesia (2022). The first type is formative assessment, which aims to provide information or feedback for students to improve the learning process, while the second one is summative assessment, which aims to determine the overall achievement of students' learning objectives.

Formative assessment is primarily developed using two of the three main concepts of assessment; assessment for learning and assessment as learning. *Assessment for learning* entails teachers to provide feedback on students' learning processes and monitor their progress. Assignments, presentations, projects, practices, and quizzes are common forms of assessment for learning. Meanwhile, *assessment as learning*, though almost similar to the previous concept, entails students to position themselves as assessors. That means the students are asked to reflect and evaluate themselves; what they do and don't understand about the lessons. Examples of assessment as learning are self-assessment and peer-to-peer assessment. Summative assessment, on the other hand, is developed following the concept of assessment of learning. Basically, this concept lies on assessing what students can perform and determining whether or not they are able to apply the knowledge they have learned and perform the skills they have mastered. Thus, summative learning is usually done at the end of students' learning. Midterm tests and final semester exams are part of the assessment of learning. To simply put, assessment (as/for) learning uses authentic assessment to identify what needs to be improved on students' learning performance; knowing their challenges or weaknesses as well as finding their strengths, whereas assessment of learning uses authentic assessment to measure their learning achievements as a whole; how far they have achieved the learning objectives.

Authentic assessment in Indonesian curriculum

In the Indonesian school context, the implementation of authentic assessment had actually been started since the School-Based Curriculum (KTSP), but had not been optimally done. This kind of assessment began to be thoroughly performed in 2013 Curriculum for each subject (Permendikbud, 2014). As stated in the Regulation of the Minister of Education no. 104 of 2014 Article 1, assessment of learning is a process of collecting evidence about student learning outcomes in the competence of spiritual attitudes, social attitudes, knowledge competencies, and skill competencies that are carried out in a planned and systematic manner. So not only is the cognitive aspect the main reference, the aspects of affective and psychomotor are also important elements in assessing students' abilities. In short, authentic assessment is a comprehensive assessment of student learning outcomes which includes aspects of attitudes, skills, and knowledge (Mulyasa, 2015; Afrianto, 2017), and this form of assessment must be employed by every teacher to students in the 2013 Curriculum.

The objective of 2013 Curriculum, based on Permendikbud no. 69 of 2013, is to prepare the Indonesian people to live as individuals who are loyal, productive, active, creative, innovative and affective and able to contribute to society, nation, state and world civilization. With the authentic assessment being mandatory in the 2013 Curriculum, all teachers are required to implement this assessment in the learning process in their classes, including English. As a matter of fact, authentic assessment is needed in English lessons because learning English is closely related to 4 language skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This is in line with the implementation of authentic assessments which are carried out using several assessment techniques, namely performance, project, product, portfolio, and self-reflected assessments (Marhaeni & Kusuma, 2017). Thus, for students to be able to master these basic skills of language, they have to be given practice in which they have to perform these skills. As a result, authentic assessment is a very suitable form of assessment to be applied in learning English.

Research method

Research design

The research employed a mixed method, which is a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data. The qualitative data were used to further examine the subject under investigation. In other words, the qualitative data played a complementary role by offering a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the subject under investigation. In essence, the qualitative component served as an extension and elaboration of the findings derived from quantitative analysis. This combination allowed the research to not only quantify trends and patterns but also explore extended information on the implementation of the authentic assessment. In this study, it explored teachers' perception and challenges in implementing the authentic assessment.

Research sample

The population of this study was the English teachers at senior high schools at one district, totaling 39 teachers, at one province in Sumatera island. This district is located around 112 kilometers from the capital of province. Due to this long distance, schools located in this region are considered rural areas-based schools. As the typical characteristics of rural areas, the school locations under investigation are characterized by low population density, and dominated by agricultural and natural landscapes. The areas tend to have limited access to urban amenities and services, including healthcare, education, and transportation. In addition, the area faces unique challenges related to economic opportunities and infrastructure development.

Due to the relatively small population size, the samples were taken using total sampling technique, meaning that the entire population was used as research samples (Sugiyono, 2013). Invitation to participate was sent to all participants via a WhatsApp group and their respective email addresses. However, after waiting several weeks for the participants' confirmation to participate in this study, only 14 teachers managed to participate in the research.

Data collecting technique

To obtain the data of the research, an online questionnaire using the Google Form platform was utilized. The purpose of it is to discover how teachers applied authentic assessment in their classes. The questionnaire used in this study was adopted from Khafidzoh (2016). There are five main sections of the questionnaire: 1) Planning; 2) Procedures; 3) Instruments and techniques of affective assessment; 4) Instruments and techniques of cognitive assessment; and 5) Instruments and techniques of psychomotor assessment. The questionnaire consists of 41 items; 38 closed questions and 3 open questions. The questionnaire link was then distributed via a group chat on WhatsApp application. The closed questions have a design of 5 point Likert scale with 5 = always; 4 = often; 3 = sometimes; 2 = rare; and 1 = never.

To further examine the topic, semi structured interviews were conducted with three English teachers from the schools under investigation. The interviews were conducted face to face with the teachers. It was recorded and then transcribed verbatim. The results of transcription were sent to the participants so they can validate the results of the transcription. After the participants agreed with the transcription, the analysis was then done.

Data analysis technique

The data was analyzed statistically using SPSS application. The total scores of all items in the questionnaire were calculated for each participant to find the final mean score. A higher score indicates a better implementation of authentic assessment by the teachers. As a result, the analysis of the data from closed questions is quantitative.

Table 1. Data classification

No	Mean	Description
1	$4.3 < X < 5$	Very Good
2	$3.5 < X < 4.2$	Good
3	$2.9 < X < 3.4$	Moderate
4	$1.9 < X < 2.8$	Poor
5	$1 < X < 1.8$	Very Poor

On the contrary, the open questions and the interviews are for qualitative analysis. The qualitative data were analyzed qualitatively with reference to the four phases introduced by Cresswell (2012), Reading/Memo, Classifying, Describing, and Interpreting.

Results

The implementation level of the authentic assessment

The results of quantitative data analysis in this research provide a fairly clear picture of the level of ability to implement authentic assessment by English teachers at schools in rural area. There are five indicators used to assess this ability, namely authentic assessment planning,

authentic assessment procedures, affective assessment instruments and techniques, cognitive assessment instruments and techniques, and psychomotor assessment instruments and techniques.

Table 2. The implementation level of authentic assessment

No	Indicator	Mean Score	Classification
1	The Planning of Authentic Assessment	4.1	Good
2	Authentic Assessment Procedure	4.2	Good
3	Instrument and Technique for Affective Assessment	3.7	Good
4	Instrument and Technique for Cognitive Assessments	4.1	Good
5	Instrument and Technique for Psychomotor Assessments	3.6	Good
Total Mean		3.94	Good

Firstly, in terms of authentic assessment planning, the average score of 4.1 shows that English teachers in this rural area have a good understanding in planning authentic assessment. This indicates that they have good abilities in designing assessments that are relevant to the curriculum, and are able to integrate authentic elements into their learning process. This shows that they have realized the importance of authentic assessment in measuring student comprehension more deeply, which also results more meaningful learning experiences.

Then, In terms of authentic assessment procedures, the mean score of 4.2 reflects excellent ability in implementing authentic assessment procedures in their teaching. These scores indicate that these teachers have demonstrated a high commitment to creating authentic learning experiences for students, promoting a learning environment that supports students' holistic development. These results are a positive proof that the efforts of teachers in schools in the rural area to provide authentic learning experiences have reached an adequate level in their context.

For the assessment instruments, there are three domains that are required to be assessed, such as affective, cognitive, and psychomotor. According to Noviansah (2020), affective assessment instruments and techniques refer to the way teachers assess students' emotional aspects, attitudes and values in learning. This includes the extent to which students demonstrate empathy, motivation, cooperation, and commitment to learning. Noviansah (2020) also explains that psychomotor assessment instruments and techniques are concerned with evaluating a student's physical abilities or practical skills, such as public speaking or participating in a role in a drama play. Meanwhile, cognitive assessment instruments and techniques place greater emphasis on assessing students' conceptual understanding, knowledge and analytical thinking abilities in certain subjects (Noviansah, 2020).

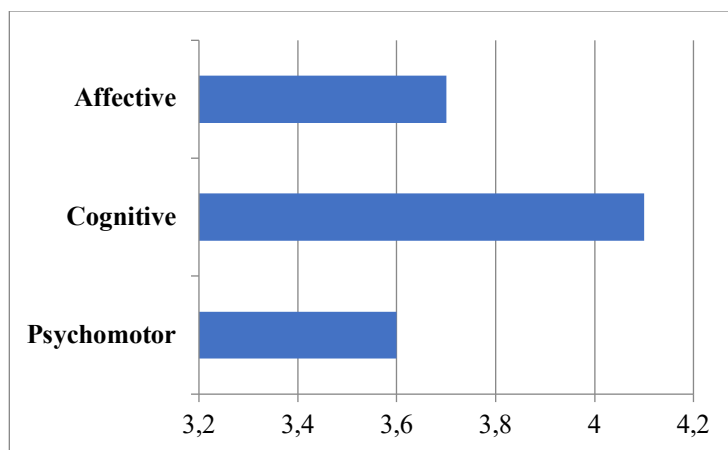


Figure 1. Implementation of instrument and techniques of assessment

Based on the research results, although the affective and psychomotor assessment instruments and techniques scored "good" (3.7 for affective and 3.6 for psychomotor), there is potential for improvement. This means that while teachers have attempted to integrate affective and psychomotor elements in English learning, there is still room to develop more authentic and in-depth assessment instruments and techniques. Perhaps teachers could focus more on using creative approaches, such as practical skills-based projects or activities that evoke emotional responses and positive values in learning. On the other hand, cognitive assessment instruments and techniques received a higher score (4.1), indicating that teachers in this rural area have succeeded in integrating authentic cognitive assessment in their English learning. This illustrates that their students have had the opportunity to develop a deep understanding and analytical thinking skills in the foreign language, which is a positive achievement in their learning.

Overall, the results of this quantitative data analysis indicate that high school English teachers in rural areas have quite good abilities in implementing authentic assessment in their teaching. However, it should also be emphasized that further development efforts are still needed to ensure that authentic assessments truly reflect students' holistic development, especially in affective and psychomotor aspects.

Teachers' perception and challenges of the implementation

For qualitative data, the research aims to explore the teachers' perceptions toward authentic assessment. From the research results, the majority of teachers have positive perceptions of this method. They see authentic assessment as a good and valuable approach to measuring student understanding and students' learning progress, as mentioned by one of the participants below:

Unlike the assessment model in the past which emphasized more on knowledge or cognitive aspect, this authentic assessment is better as it assesses students' learning achievement comprehensively. It is a more balanced approach of assessment. So, the development of products and skills was not overlooked.

~ Reni, High School Teacher 1

Other participants also positively perceived this authentic assessment for its ability to create a learning context that is relevant to the real world. Furthermore, some others mentioned that this authentic assessment enables students to practice students learning centered as the curriculum

mandates. In other words, teachers perceived this authentic assessment as a good technique which gives students the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding through assignments or projects that reflect real situations. This can improve understanding of concepts, practical skills, and application of knowledge in everyday life. Teachers also see it as an effective tool for encouraging students' critical thinking, creativity, and independence in learning (active learning) (Affifah, 2014).

Applying the authentic assessment can make my students more active now, sir. Students are indeed more active. We have come to understand our limitations as educators, realizing that we can no longer monopolize or act as the central figure, as used to be known as a teacher-centered approach. But now, we have started to change; we have begun to understand what students want and identify our weaknesses. Project-based assessment, for example, has made my students active in the learning process.

~ Widodo, High School Teacher 2

Although there are positive views of authentic assessment, teachers also face several problems and obstacles in implementing it. The analysis of the interview data from the participants brings the following emerging themes:

Limited time allocation

The first problem faced by teachers in implementing authentic assessment is the significant problem of time. Many teachers reported that authentic assessment is time consuming, while their English lesson hours is very limited. This problem is mentioned, for example, by one of the participants during the interview.

The first issue is the time constraints. Under the 2013 curriculum, we only have two hours instead of the previous four teaching hours. So, our opportunity to provide a broader knowledge base for the students is limited. Conducting an authentic assessment is always time-consuming. For instance, if we want to assign a task that requires practice or application of the theory, the two-hour is never enough.

~ Serli, High School Teacher 3

Authentic assessment is indeed time consuming as it encourages a comprehensive assessment of various aspects of student abilities, including affective, cognitive and psychomotor aspects (Fitriani, 2014; Hamidah, 2017). Therefore, to accurately measure students' abilities in a variety of contexts, teachers need to spend more time planning, developing, and implementing these authentic assessments.

The main challenge arises when the number of students in a class is large (Darong et al., 2022). In situations like these, teachers need to ensure that each student receives sufficient attention in the authentic assessment process. This requires careful monitoring of each student's individual progress, which in turn can take additional time. In rural areas with limited resources, as described previously, teachers may have limited time to conduct these comprehensive assessments.

The impact of this time issue can also create tension between carrying out thorough authentic assessments and following existing curricula by specific deadlines (Retnosari, 2018). Teachers may feel limited by the time available for teaching and must seek a balance between producing authentic learning experiences and meeting established curriculum requirements. Therefore, efficient time management strategies and support are needed to help teachers overcome

these challenges so that authentic assessment can be well integrated in the learning process in rural areas.

Complex procedures

The second obstacle faced by teachers in implementing authentic assessment is the complexity of this assessment procedure. The complexity is not only about the technicality issues, but also related to the mandatory to assess students' daily affective domain as part of the assessment, as mentioned by the following participant:

I found this authentic assessment is complicated, particularly in dealing with the affective domain. It appears that we are expected to address it daily. Documenting the affective domain is challenging. It's different from the cognitive and psychomotor domains, where we have documentation, reports, and tangible evidence. With the affective domain, it's really difficult.

~ Widodo, High School Teacher 2

Authentic assessment requires a comprehensive evaluation of various aspects of students' abilities, including affective (emotional and values), cognitive (knowledge and understanding), and psychomotor (physical or practical skills) aspects (Rukmini & Saputri, 2017). This means that teachers must be able to design tasks or activities that can accurately measure each of these aspects.

The process of designing appropriate tasks and valid instruments can be complex and requires careful preparation in advance (Fitriani, 2017). Teachers need to ensure that the assignments they give are relevant to the learning material and reflect real situations in the real world. This involves creative and strategic thinking in designing activities that can illustrate the affective, cognitive and psychomotor aspects of English language learning. Careful preparation and testing of instruments is an important step to ensure that authentic assessments can provide accurate information about students' abilities. In short, the complexity of authentic assessment procedures emphasizes the importance of teacher training and development in designing authentic tasks and valid instruments to support effective implementation in rural learning contexts.

Difficulty in adjusting assessment

The third obstacle faced by teachers in implementing authentic assessment is adjustment to the existing curriculum, as reported by this participant:

We are kind of shock and confused of the new curriculum policy. The policy keeps changing. We are still learning the previous one. Then, new curriculum comes with complicated procedures. It takes time for us to adjust, including with this assessment.

~ Reni, High School Teacher 1

The curriculum implemented in some rural areas sometimes focuses more on more traditional standardized test-based assessments (Rukmini & Saputri, 2017). Such assessments may place greater emphasis on measuring conceptual understanding through written tests, while authentic assessments attempt to measure deeper understanding and application of knowledge in real contexts through situation-based projects, assignments, or performance.

When teachers want to integrate authentic assessment into existing curricula, they may need to make significant adjustments in their teaching and evaluation methods (Syaifuddin, 2020). In other words, teachers need to be creative in finding ways to align authentic assessment with the teaching materials set by the curriculum, which sometimes may not align naturally.

An example of a subject that may be difficult to implement with authentic assessment is Mathematics (Pardimin, 2018). In many curricula, this subject is often measured through written tests that assess students' understanding of mathematical concepts. Meanwhile, authentic assessments in mathematics may involve practical projects that require real problem solving or the application of mathematics in everyday situations. This can be a challenge because it requires teachers to design tasks that illustrate a deep understanding of mathematical concepts in an authentic way.

More burdens on students

The fourth obstacle in implementing authentic assessment is the additional burden placed on students, as seen from the following excerpt:

This authentic assessment has put more burdens for our students. You know our students return home in the late afternoon, some as late as 4:30 or even 5 o'clock. Can you imagine that? There are indeed those who arrive home around 5:30 or 6, especially if they live far away. That's one thing, and on top of that, we haven't even discussed extracurricular activities yet. Plus, there's another significant challenge in our area: most of the children don't bring their own meals. The schools also don't provide food; they only have a cafeteria. So, it seems like these kids are genuinely exhausted. Doing projects for the assessment will put them more pressure.

~ Widodo, High School Teacher 2

Authentic assessments require students to engage in assignments or projects that are often more complex than standard tests (Haliq & Sakaria, 2019). Students are expected to apply their knowledge and skills in real situations, which may require more effort and time (Wijaya, 2020). As a result, students may feel overwhelmed and experience higher levels of stress.

The impact of this additional load can affect student learning motivation. They may start to lose interest in learning if they feel the tasks are too difficult or complex. Laziness can also arise if students feel too pressured by the tasks they have to complete. Therefore, there is a need for additional strategies and supports to ensure that students remain motivated and engaged in this authentic assessment process.

In addition, it is also necessary to pay attention to the selection of authentic tasks that are appropriate to the student's level of development and interests. Assignments that are too difficult or irrelevant to their daily lives can reduce student motivation. By considering students' individual differences and designing assignments that are engaging and meaningful, teachers can help minimize the additional burden students feel while maintaining the integrity of authentic assessments.

Discussion

This study answered the research question related to the implementation of authentic assessment by English teachers at some schools located in rural areas in one district in Sumatera island. After analyzing the data, it was found that how the teachers applied authentic assessment concurs with how it should be. From the results of the analysis of closed questions regarding how teachers implemented authentic assessment, the average score as a whole is 4.1, which indicates that the implementation of authentic assessment by the English teachers is at good level. That means the teachers duly planned authentic assessment, such as referring to the lesson plan and syllabus in designing authentic assessment, developing achievement indicators for the three aspects of authentic assessment, setting assessment criteria for various types of authentic

assessment, and so on. Also, among the five main aspects of the research instrument, the procedure of authentic assessment got the highest average score (4.2). This implies that the teachers understand and know how to conduct authentic assessment properly, for instance, informing students about the competencies to be assessed, carrying out assessment activities according to the agreed plan, providing feedback, and so on.

In addition, the instruments and techniques used by the teachers to assess all aspects of authentic assessment (affective, cognitive, and psychomotor) are also at a good level. This proves that the teachers have proper knowledge of how to complete authentic assessment. Also, most teachers have a positive perception and agreed that authentic assessment is a good method of students' evaluation. They agreed that they can appraise the students completely through authentic assessment because it requires students to apply what they have learned in real situations. These findings are actually similar to a research by Sukraningsih (2019) which also discovered that teachers and students have a positive view of authentic assessment implementation in the English learning process. Then according to Saputri et al. (2019), the application of authentic assessment can increase student participation, motivation, creativity, self-confidence, and interest in learning English. In brief, authentic assessment can improve students' English learning abilities and outcomes.

In contrast to these studies, research by Nurgiyantoro (2009), Marhaeni et al. (2014), and Rahayu et al. (2021) discovered that most teachers still don't have sufficient knowledge about authentic assessment. A research by Ningsih (2019) also revealed that only some teachers can implement authentic assessment well in English lessons, denoting that there are differences in teachers' knowledge and skills regarding authentic assessment. This might be due to the discrepancy in training and seminars they have participated; some teachers might join more seminars than others. Thus, the more knowledge about authentic assessment the teachers have, the better their implementation will be. Then because of its complexity and completeness, there are still many teachers who prefer to use traditional assessment to determine student learning outcomes (Marhaeni and Kusuma, 2017). This clearly shows the negative side of authentic assessment when, according to Fazilla (2013) and Jiwandani et al. (2021), this type of assessment should make a positive contribution to students' mastery of 4 language skills in English.

Additionally, from the five techniques of authentic assessment; performance appraisal, projects, products, portfolios, and self-assessments, Rahayu et al. (2021) found that most teachers can only apply 3 of them in English lessons; all but portfolio and self-assessment. Self-assessment, or often also referred to as self-reflection, is a process in which students are asked to assess themselves in relation to status, process, and level of competency achievement they have learned (Otaya, 2015). With self-assessment, students are expected to be able to assess whether or not they completely understand the lessons and where their weaknesses lie. However, discovered by Zuhera (2017), the majority of students are still unable or lazy to do this self-assessment when in the actuality by assessing themselves, students will be trained to become more independent and mature in the learning process (Theresia, 2015).

Furthermore, from the three main aspects of authentic assessments, the researchers found the psychomotor having the lowest average score (3.6). This may be because of the problem of lack of time stated by the teachers in the open questions. Research by Wildan (2017), Darong et al. (2022), and Saputri et al. (2019) also found that time is the greatest difficulty for teachers to carry out optimal authentic assessments. Teachers need sufficient facilities and time to observe and record all the progress of knowledge, attitudes, and skills possessed by students during the learning process, both inside and outside the classroom (Trisanti, 2015).

As known in the 2013 Curriculum, the teaching duration for English subjects was cut from four hours a week to only two hours a week. This then makes it difficult for teachers to apply authentic assessment especially in psychomotor assessment. Most of the psychomotor assessment techniques are individual assignments such as presentations, storytelling, speeches, and interviews. All of these assignments entail the teacher to assess students one by one. Therefore, if there are a lot of students in the course, the teacher will need more time to spend. Besides, there are also project appraisals and product appraisals which take a lot of time to complete. Thus, if the teaching duration is only two hours a week, assessment activities will indeed be arduous to conduct and may not be completed in one day. In line with these findings, O'malley and Pierce (1996) stated that there are three issues that teachers may face regarding objectives, fairness, and the assessment process. The purpose of the assessment affects whether or not students receive special instruction based on language, type of instruction, and the duration in which the instruction continues.

Another obstacle expressed by the teachers in the open questions is that authentic assessment is complicated. This is decently understandable because there a lot of things to assess in authentic assessment. As mentioned previously, there are three aspects to be assessed in authentic assessment: affective, cognitive and psychomotor. Therefore, the teachers need to prepare a number of assessment formats for each aspect. Moreover, the teachers also have to assess every aspect for every student and find out their needs and how well they are developing. This finding is supported by Khafidzoh (2016) who stated that authentic assessment is particularly complicated in planning because there are so many components that must be considered and organized.

Lastly, this research also revealed that the teachers suggest practical guidance of authentic assessment procedures be provided so that authentic assessment can be carried out effectively. Practical guidance is needed because most teachers feel that authentic assessment is too complex, as explained previously. Concurring with this result, Zaim (2013) also asserted that the authentic assessment guidance provided is insufficient, so teachers have to try very hard to understand authentic assessment. If there is a practical authentic assessment guidance, it will not only make teachers understand the assessment better, but also possibly solve the problem of the complexity of authentic assessment and the lack of time they experienced in implementing it.

Conclusion

This study confirms that the implementation of authentic assessment by high school English teachers in a rural area in Indonesia has been at a reasonable level. In short, the teachers have implemented the authentic assessment properly. This can be seen from their perception concerning authentic assessment, which is mostly positive, indicating that they understand what authentic assessment is, why it is good for teachers, and how to implement it. Nevertheless, there are still a number of problems faced by the teachers during the implementation of this assessment. They are the lack of time, complicated procedures, difficulty in adjusting to the new assessments, and burdens for the students and teachers.

The findings of this study suggest several implications for both high school English teachers in rural areas in Indonesia and educational policymakers. Firstly, the positive perception of authentic assessment among teachers suggests that there is a readiness and willingness to adopt innovative assessment methods. This could serve as a foundation for further professional development and training to enhance their proficiency in implementing authentic assessment effectively. Secondly, the identified challenges such as the lack of time, complex procedures, and the burden on both students and teachers indicate a need for targeted support. Educational

institutions and policymakers should consider providing additional resources, such as time management strategies, simplified guidelines, and support for teachers and students to ease the transition to authentic assessment methods. Lastly, the study highlights the importance of continuous monitoring and evaluation of authentic assessment practices in rural high schools. This can aid in identifying specific areas where teachers may need ongoing support and allow for adjustments in the implementation process. Overall, the study emphasizes the potential for improving the quality of education in rural areas by addressing these challenges and building upon teachers' positive attitudes towards authentic assessment.

Declaration of conflicting interest

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