

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This section highlights the introductory part of this thesis. It includes the background of the study, the problem statements, the objectives of the study, and the benefits of the study. Those introductory parts are presented below respectively.

#### **A. Background of the Study**

School as an educational institution cannot be separated with curriculum. Curriculum is a set of regulation that controls the school to reach the objective of education. According to Oliva (2009), curriculum has become one of the key concerns of today's school, and its meaning has expanded from a real track to an abstract concept. In the world of professional education, the word curriculum has taken on an elusive, almost esoteric connotation. This poetic, neuter word does possess an aura of mystery. By contrast, other dimension of the world of professional education like administration, instruction, and supervision are strong, action-oriented words. Therefore, curriculum guides the schools based on its way to implement the policy made by the government in order to develop the progress of education itself.

In Indonesian curriculum development, Indonesia has issued the latest curriculum called 2013 curriculum. All schools were supposed to use all the rules in that curriculum including the application of assessment. The assessment used in the curriculum is authentic assessment. One of the authentic assessments is

portfolio assessment. This is the main reason of this research to know more about the enactment of portfolio assessment in Junior High School as the policy of government in education field. Based on informal interview with some teachers, actually most schools are not ready to realize that policy. Hence, a research about the enactment of portfolio assessment in English writing classes is accomplished by conducting a case study. Later, the result of this research will take a part of giving a clear description about the enactment of portfolio assessment in the real field of education especially in Junior High School level.

A curriculum set by the experts of education of each country covers all subjects on it. English is one of the subjects that ought to be mastered by the learners. Stated in the curriculum, especially in Indonesia, English develops four skills. One of the important skills in English that should be mastered is writing. Introducing the writing skill since in the young age of learners can make them fluent to write something. The learners need a big effort to combine word by word, sentence by sentence, even constructing a good flow of paragraph. Many people need to learn about writing in English for not only occupational (curriculum vitae and the others) but also academic purpose (scientific paper and the others). It is also helpful even for learners in Junior High school level to comprehend and understand to write correctly and properly. Writing is agreed generally that it is the most difficult skill to be mastered by the learners of English. According to Richards (2002), writing not only focuses on generating and organizing the ideas using an appropriate choice of vocabulary, sentence, and paragraph organization but also on turning such ideas into a readable text. In

addition, transferring ideas from their native language (e.g. Indonesian) into target language (e.g. English) is the difficult part of writing that is faced by the learners.

The learners have to be trained to write regularly. They have to practice their writing a lot in order to get the habits of writing. However, teaching writing is not easy activity. The teachers have to create a good class condition to attract the learners' interest in learning writing skill. According to Fauziati (2009), studies in the teaching of writing have identified that there are at least three paradigms of writing: the product approach, the process approach, and genre-based approach. Moreover, teaching how to write effectively is one of the most important life-long skills educators impart to their students. When teaching writing, educators must be sure to select resources and support materials that not only aid them in teaching how to write, but that will also be the most effective in helping their students learn to write. Teaching writing is often about teaching grammar. If grammar comes up anywhere in EFL, it is in the writing classroom. Most EFL students will have some writing skills when the teacher gets them and they will often have an idea that their writing is quite good. Unfortunately, it will very often be quite poor. In fact, the students often will have quite poor writing skills even at the sentence level. Therefore, the teacher will need to take them back to sentence level and begin to teach them very basic structure and how to write simply. Run-on and fragmented sentences will be very common until the teacher corrects those errors. Once a good foundation is built, the teacher can move on to basic paragraph writing and on to essays. These skills take time to

develop though and the teacher will find that most textbooks will move your students forward too quickly.

To know about the development of learners' ability and capability in writing, English teachers should administer a certain assessment. According to Bryant and Timmins (2002), assessment is an integral part of the school curriculum. The feedback from assessment should be effectively used to improve teaching and learning. The different purposes and modes of assessment (e.g. objective test, projects, portfolios) need to be distinguished and made clear the school; so that, they are consistent with different curriculum aims, teaching or learning processes, and contents. In the latest curriculum used by Indonesia, there is a famous assessment type, which is authentic assessment. There are three kinds of authentic assessments, and one of which is portfolio assessment. Portfolio assessment is commonly used by English teachers to collect learners' writing product. Good assessment practice has been described by Gipps (1997) as 'assessment that supports learning and reflection, including formative assessment'. She and many others have highlighted the need for assessment to be open and linked to the clear criteria, as well as advocating the use of range of performance assessment strategies, such as portfolio assessment, so that all learners have a chance to perform well. The use of portfolio assessment is an example of this type of good practice.

According to Brown (2000), one of the most popular alternatives in assessment, especially within a framework of communicative language teaching, is portfolio assessment. A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that

exhibits the student's efforts, progress, and achievements in one or more areas of the curriculum. The collection must include (1) the student participation in selecting contents, (2) the criteria for selection, (3) the criteria for judging merits, (4) evidence of a student's self-reflection. It should represent a collection of students' best work or best efforts, student-selected samples of work experiences related to outcomes being assessed, and documents according growth and development toward mastering identified outcomes.

Without any purpose, a portfolio is just a folder of student work. Different purposes could result in different portfolios. For example, if the student is to be evaluated on the basis of the work in the portfolio (e.g., for admission to college), then he or she would probably choose the final version of his or her best work. If the portfolio is to be used to see how students go about doing a project, a complete record of all activities, drafts, revisions, etc., it might be kept. Sometimes the purpose for doing a portfolio is to celebrate what has been accomplished. This is a reminder purpose, and might include personal favorites. On top of all this, adding the purposes of large-scale assessment, which may require more standardized samples of work. Because of the potential differences in content and approach, it is essential that users have a clear idea of the purpose of the portfolio.

Moreover, completing the understanding of portfolio assessment and appearing the curiosity of it, the researcher conducted the preliminary study in order to get preliminary information about the case that was investigated. In November 2014, the researcher conducted an interview with an English teacher of

the school and conducted brief observation about the implementation of portfolio assessment. Based on the interview, the information was found that (1) the English teachers have not completely understood about the implementation of portfolio assessment yet, (2) the English teachers use the portfolio as tool of collecting of students' writing task. (3) Most students have not known yet about the function of portfolio assessment that implemented in English writing classroom.

The researcher took the sources from the school which is located in Jember regency because it is one of the schools which implements 2013 curriculum. This research must be reliable to be conducted in that school. Moreover, 2013 curriculum is a novelty of their environment. Hence, the researcher tended to make a profound field study about the enactment of portfolio assessment in which this assessment is the element of 2013 curriculum.

There are some researchers who conducted a study on portfolio assessment. They focused on the implementation of it. For example, the research conducted by Lam Che Keung and Ricky (2011). It also focused on the implementation of Portfolio assessment. They assumed that the effectiveness of implementation of portfolio assessment in order to improve the students' writing ability is essential. They also tried to analyze the students' perception by hearing the students' perception about that implementation. Some steps that have been done by Keung and Ricky will be accomplished as well in this research later, such as knowing about the students' perception, the implementation of portfolio and some others. The other research about the implementation of portfolio is

conducted by Angel Monsalve Sanchez (2014). The results of this case study reveal the significant contribution of a writing portfolio to enhance students' motivation toward English learning, as well as the knowledge gained about contents and how learners came to reflection on themes and self-reflection on their own learning process.

Sun Joo Chung (2012) argued through his paper entitled *Portfolio Assessment in ESL Academic Writing: Examining the Effect of Reflection in the Writing Process* that the results of the reflective journals show that students were able to identify their strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement in the journals. Furthermore, the analysis also revealed an overreliance on peer reviews and writing conferences to write their journals. The results of the questionnaire show that students' perceptions about portfolio assessment were generally positive with some recommendations about better guidance and instruction. Students also expressed the intent to use portfolios for other projects as a part of their professional development. Another researcher, Mahmood Hashemian and Batool Fadaei (2013), intend to investigate the impact of portfolio assessment as a process-oriented mechanism on the autonomy of Iranian advance EFL learners. The portfolio assessment was integrated into the experimental group to explore whether and to what extent their autonomy might enhance and also to investigate the possible effect of gender on portfolio assessment in writing ability. The result showed that the portfolio procedures considerably improved the autonomy of the participant. Also, gender had no impact on portfolio assessment.

The researcher combined all aspects that had done by the previous researchers, not only knowing the students' perception but also the impacts of implementing portfolio assessment were also involved in this study about the enactment of portfolio assessment in English writing classroom.

In reference to the discussion above and the strong desire, the researcher had a motivation to conduct a case study research entitled "*The Enactment of Portfolio Assessment in English Writing Classroom ( A case Study at one of Junior High School in JEMBER in Academic Year 2014/2015)*".