

## Chapter Two

### Literature Review

As stated in the previous section, the aim of this research is to explore the teachers' challenges on the use of multiple choice questions (MCQs) on the students' assessments in one private high-school in Yogyakarta. Therefore, the discussion in this chapter focuses on the review of related literature underlying the research. This chapter presents three sections. Firstly, the researcher discusses assessment. It consists of the definition of assessment and types of assessment. Secondly, the researcher discusses MCQs. It consists of the definition, advantages, and disadvantages of MCQs. Thirdly, the researcher explains the guidelines in designing MCQs for the English assessment. Fourthly, the researcher presents the challenges in designing MCQs for the English assessment. Fifthly, the researcher provides several prior studies related to this research. Finally, the researcher elaborates the challenges in designing MCQs for English assessment. The final part of this chapter discusses the conceptual framework.

#### Assessment

In this section, the researcher elaborates the definition and types of assessment. The explanation is presented below:

**Definition of assessment.** According to Brookhart (2004), assessment is defined as the process of gaining information about some specific things used for some objectives. Mussawy (2009) stated that assessment is a process to attain the information about the students' accomplishment. Namdi, as cited in Hendra (2014), stated that assessment is a tool to measure the knowledge and ability of the students. These statements mean that assessment is a tool for the teachers to measure how far the students' understanding about the material. The teachers use

assessment to inquire and measure their students' ability in order to make judgements about their efforts. According to Taras (2005), assessment refers to judgements about the students' achievement.

Assessment is an important part in the teaching and learning process that includes more than one component. Jabbarifar (2009) stated that assessment is a process that includes some basic components; measuring the improvement progressively, motivating students to learn, evaluating the teaching techniques, and ranking the students' abilities in relation to a group evaluation. As elaborated in the previous explanation, the purpose in conducting assessment is to test whether learning objectives have been achieved or not. Forms of assessment should be based on what the teacher has taught in the classroom. Jones (2005) argued that assessment is a process to inform all about the students' progress to allow them to take the essential action to improve their performance.

**Types of assessment.** In language learning, examiners or teachers can use different types of test to assess the students' ability. According to Ahangari, Ghorbani, and Hassanzadeh (2015), the format of tests can be categorised into two main categories: recognition tests and production tests. In recognition tests, the tests that are commonly used are true-false, multiple-choice, and matching-type items. Meanwhile, the most common form of production tests is open-ended questions, where the students are required to answer the questions in their own words.

Brookhart (2004) stated that there are four types of assessment. The first is paper-and-pencil assessments that includes objective tests using multiple choice, true or false, matching, and fill-in items. The second is performance assessment. This assessment is used to observe and make judgements regarding the students'

performance or how the students perform a certain task. The third is oral communication, which is a form of formative assessment that can be conducted during the teaching and learning process in the classroom such as when the teacher asks the students a certain question. The last is portfolio assessment. This assessment is conducted to obtain the students' information. This assessment is often called as the students' reflection. Portfolio assessments can be used to bridge the communication gap between the teachers and the students. This assessment is also used for teacher feedback.

### **The definition of multiple-choice questions.**

Ahangari, Ghorbani, and Hassanzadeh (2015) stated that MCQs are type of recognition test that include a stem and alternatives choices. Grondlund (as cited in Hendra, 2014), stated that multiple choice items are the most widely used test items. Multiple choice questions consist of one question that includes the stem and several possible answers. According to DiBattista and Kurzawa (2011), in MCQs, the students are required to select the correct option from a set of options that are posed for the question. Cheung and Bucat (2002) stated that the multiple-choice item is one of the most popular formats of assessment used in educational assessments. Cheung and Bucat added that MCQs items consist of three parts: a stem that presents a problem, the correct option, and several distractors.

### **The Advantages of MCQs**

MCQs is one of the most commonly used types of objective test to assess the students' knowledge. The use of MCQs by teachers to assess the students' knowledge has some advantages. The advantages of using MCQs are explained as follows:

**MCQs is easy and quick to grade.** According to Coombe (2011), MCQs is quick and easy to mark. MCQs allow the teachers to give score for the students rapidly, and accurately. It is because the correct answer of each item of MCQs is clear and certain so that the teachers do not need more time to score. Bu and Ghana (2013) also stated that MCQs can be marked by computer. By using computer, it also makes scoring process of MCQs more quickly and can reduce errors measurement in giving score. It can be concluded that scoring process of MCQs is efficient.

**MCQs can assess all levels of students' knowledge.** Burton, Sudweeks, Merrill, and Wood (1991) argued that MCQs are able to assess various levels of students' knowledge. It means that MCQs can assess from the lowest to the highest level of the student's cognitive ability, such the student's cognitive ability to analyse phenomena, apply principles to new situations, comprehend concepts and principles, discriminate between fact and opinion, interpret cause-and-effect relationships, interpret charts and graphs, judge the relevance of information, make inferences from given data and solve problems. Mitchell (2013) also stated that MCQs are able to assess students' knowledge within six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy which consist of knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

**MCQs are reliable.** Coombe (2011) stated that MCQs are reliable because there is only one correct answer. Burton, Sudweeks, Merrill, and Wood (1991) also stated that MCQs also allow the teachers to give scored objectively. It means that MCQs can eliminate the teachers' bias in score-giving activity so that the teachers can give more reliable scores for the students. As mentioned in the

previous explanation, MCQs can be scored objectively. It will not affect to the teachers consistency in giving score as in essay questions. MCQs are also unaffected by students' writing skill which can decrease the scores reliability of essay test.

**MCQs can cover a lot of material.** MCQs are possible to assess a broader scope of material. According to Reichert (2011), MCQs enable the teachers to assess a large variety of material. Students usually do not take a long time in filling out MCQs. It is different from essay test in which the students need more time only to complete one item of essay test. Burton, Sudweeks, Merrill, and Wood (1991) stated that students need more time to answer an essay test than MCQs. In responding only one item of essay test, the students should need to think their answer first, and they also need more time to write their answer. This process takes much longer time. In this time, the students are able to answer many items of MCQs, while the students are able only to answer a single essay question.

### **The Disadvantages of MCQs**

As mentioned in the previous explanation, the use of MCQs for assessment has advantages. In fact, use of MCQs also has disadvantages. The disadvantages of using MCQs are explained as follows:

**MCQs are difficult to construct and time consuming.** According to Olayemi (2013), although MCQs are easy to score, it is difficult, and it takes a long time to construct a good MCQs. The teachers need some training to design MCQs properly. Collins (2006) also stated that MCQs are time consuming and difficult to construct, even for a formally trained teacher. It means that the quality

of MCQs is influenced by the teacher's skill to design good questions. MCQs are time consuming in which teachers need around one hour or more only to design one question of MCQs.

**MCQs may encourage student to guess and cheat.** According to Valiathan (2009), MCQs allow the students to guess and cheat the answer of MCQs. Not all of the students study the material which will be tested. They will use their way to get a good score. One of their ways is they can answer MCQs correctly by guessing. If their guesses are right, it gives the advantages for unprepared students. Valiathan (2009) added that another way of the students to answer MCQs is by cheating. They used such body gesture to get the answer from their friends.

**MCQs are not effective to assess the student's ability of problem solving, synthesis and express ideas.** According to Priyambodo and Marfuatun (2016), MCQs are not effective to assess the student's ability of problem solving, the ability to establish, and to express the student's idea. In MCQs, the students are asked to select the correct answer, but they do not asked to explain their answer. It is different from other assessment types such essay which is the students are asked to explore their answer based on their idea. In essay test, the students should understand the questions, organize, and express their idea. These abilities are not assessed effectively by using MCQs.

**Scores of MCQs can be influenced by reading ability.** According to Priyambodo and Marfuatun (2016), students' level of reading ability effect to the student's ability to understand the materials being assessed in MCQs. MCQs are one of assessment types used by teachers to assess the student's comprehension.

Veeravagu, Muthusamy, Marimuthu, and Michael (2010) stated that many teachers assess the students' comprehension by recalling the information that they have read. Therefore if the students do not have a good ability in reading, it will be difficult for the students to understand the materials, and it influences their score.

**MCQs provide inadequate teachers' feedback.** According to Zimmaro (2016), by using MCQs, there is lack of teacher's feedback for the students result. The teacher's feedback is important to improve the student's understanding toward the materials. If there is little feedback of teachers, it means that there is no direction or way for the student's on how to improve their understanding. It is different from essay test that allows the teachers to give more feedback for the student's result so that the students can know how to improve their understanding.

#### **Guideline of Designing MCQs on the English Assessment.**

To design MCQs, the teachers should follow the guidelines to design good MCQs that are appropriate to assess the student's cognitive ability. There are some guidelines suggested from some scholars. The guidelines to design good MCQs are explained as follows:

##### **The stem or questions must be meaningful and state a clear problem.**

According to Cheung and Bucat (2002), in good MCQs, the stem or questions must be meaningful and state a certain problem. If the stem is meaningless and the problem is not clear, it can be difficult for the students to see the meaning of the item after they read the stem. The teachers also should state clearly the problem in stem so that the students can understand what the problem exactly is after reading the stem. Jennings (2012) also stated that the problems or questions should be

concise and clear. To design good MCQs, make sure that the questions or problems are stated clearly and concisely in the stem.

**The teachers must avoid to use blanks in the beginning when constructing the multiple choice items.** Cheung and Bucat (2002) stated that when constructing MCQs items, the teachers sometimes write the stem as an incomplete statement or a sentence that requires the students to complete by using insertion of the correct option. It should be avoided, because the students have to remember the question in short-term memory while they look at the options to complete the statement. It makes more difficult for the students who are not native English speaker. If the completion format is required for the learning outcomes, the teachers should put a blank line in the last statement. Zimmaro (2016) stated that if the teachers use a completion format, the teachers must avoid using a blank line in the beginning middle of the stem.

**In designing MCQs, the teachers should only use a negative statement only when the learning outcomes require it.** According to Cheung and Bucat (2002), most of students encounter difficulties in understanding the meaning of negatively phrased items. A negative statement can be used if it is needed for the learning objectives. The negative statements that familiar for students are such *which of the following is true* or *all of the following except*. Collins (2006) stated that negative questions are not effective and tend to be more difficult to understand by students. If negative stems are used, it should be emphasized. The teachers can capitalized, underlined, or italicized the negative terms to make sure that the students notice the terms. Jennings (2012) also stated that teachers have to avoid negative question. It means that the stem should be word positively.



**In designing MCQs, the teachers should avoid irrelevant difficulty in the items.** According to Cheung and Bucat (2002), a good multiple choice item should avoid having complicated information contained in the items. The difficulty level of an item can increase because of the use of more irrelevant and complicated information in the stem. For example, the purpose of teachers make MCQs is want to assess the student's understanding of the materials they have learned, not reading proficiency. In fact, there is unfamiliar vocabulary or word that there is no in their material they have learned. It will increase the student's difficulty to answer the questions. Burton, Sudweeks, Merrill, and Wood (1991) stated that irrelevant material that is crucial to answer can increase the student's problem in reading and the students' confusion about what the problems exactly are.

**To design good MCQs, all distractors should be plausible.** Cheung and Bucat (2002) stated that designing a good distractor is the most difficult part in writing MCQs item. To make plausible distractors, the teachers are required to use common misconceptions instead of options that are obviously incorrect. Based on Burton, Sudweeks, Merrill, and Wood (1991), to make distractors more plausible, the teachers can use familiar and realistic words. It will make the students perceive that distractor is the correct answer. If the distractor is not realistic, it can increase the student's guessing of the correct answer.

**To design good MCQs, the teacher must avoid the use of a complicated format.** Cheung and Bucat (2002) stated that a complicated MCQs item consists of a list of possibly correct answers called primary responses and a list of combinations of the primary responses called secondary options. Sometimes teachers use this format to make the questions more difficult. In this

format, the students are asked to select one of the secondary options to answer the item. This format increases the students' difficulty to answer the question.

Therefore, the teachers should avoid using complex MCQs format so that the learning objective can reach.

**To write good MCQs, the teachers must avoid using none of the above or all of the above as an option.** According to Cheung and Bucat (2002), the use of *none of the above* and *all of the above* as options in MCQ items is appealing for many teachers, because they appear to fit easily into many items. However, many measurement experts do not suggest to use of those statements. Towns (2014) stated that the statement *none of the above* or *all of the above* should be avoided, because those allow the students to use their analytic test taking to select or eliminate these distractors. The statement *none of the above* make the students decide the item into true or false. The students will decide the correctness of each option, and the one of the options is intended as the correct answer. For the statement *all of the above*, it makes the students easy to detect the correct answer, because they only need to identify two options are correct for the statement *all of the above*.

**In writing the items of MCQs, the teachers have to make sure that they use appropriate grammar.** Jennings (2012) stated that to design a good MCQs, the teachers have to make sure that they use correct or appropriate grammar. Both questions and options must use grammar correctly. Burton, Sudweeks, Merrill, and Wood (1991) stated that the teachers must use grammar, spelling, and punctuation appropriately in the items. It can reduce the ambiguity of the item which makes the students misunderstand to the items. It also makes the students more serious in taking the assessment.

**To design good MCQs, teachers should create questions**

**independently.** Jennings (2012) suggested that to write good MCQs, the teachers should avoid to create a series of questions that may provide an answer for another question. It allows the students to identify the correct answer from another question. According to Collins (2006), the options of one item do not provide any information allowing the students to recognize the correct answer from another question. The teachers also have to avoid making a question with the answer which depends on the other questions. It means that the students can answer one item if they are able to answer another item.

**To design good MCQs, the teachers have to make sure that each of the distractors is 'viable'.** According to Jennings (2012), distractors should be able to function effectively by steering students away from the correct answer. It means that distractors should be more interesting than the correct answer. Collins (2006) stated that to design viable distractors, it should be similar as possible as the correct answer in terms of grammar, complexity, and length. There are any students who think that the correct answer is the option with correct grammar or the sentences longer than other options. If there is any difference of these terms in distractors, it allows the students to detect that it is a wrong answer.

**In designing good MCQs, the materials should in accordance with the indicator.** Karwapi (2008) stated that the question of MCQs must ask the materials that are tested in accordance with the indicators. It is because indicator is a signal of competence achievement. According to Angga (2014), indicator is an indication that the specified competence has been achieved. Indicator also refers to the materials that are appropriate with competence. It can be concluded that indicator is important part to design good MCQs so that the teachers have to make

sure that the materials should be in accordance with the indicator to know whether learning objectives has been achieved or not.

**The materials of the options in MCQs should be homogeneous.** Burton, Sudweeks, Merrill, and Wood (1991) stated that to design good MCQs, teachers should keep the options homogeneous. It means that the teachers should make the options related to the stem and related to each other so that the students are not confused in answering the questions. It also means that the option materials should be paralleled with the design of good MCQs. It can allow the item to present a clear problem so that it makes the items more capable to measure the achievement of a learning objective. Therefore, the teachers should pay attention to this thing to make good MCQs.

**In designing MCQs, the stem should only include the necessary material.** According to Collins (2006), the stem or the questions should only contain the necessary information, and it should not be overly wordy. To design good MCQs, the stem should not include unneeded information or statement that will not be assessed. Teachers can present the informative statement, but not needed the students to choose the correct option. Ideally the teachers should avoid including unnecessary information as much as possible. It can make the questions effective to assess the student's cognitive ability.

**To design good MCQs, the options do not contain the clues to the correct answer.** According to Burton, Sudweeks, Merrill, and Wood (1991), in designing MCQs, teachers do not design tasks which give clues to the correct answers. MCQs should be written well, because bad written of MCQs can increase the guessing chance of the students who do not know the correct answer.

Burton, Sudweeks, Merrill, and Wood (1991) added that the teachers can use parallel options, use the options similar or same in length, avoid to use keywords, avoid using specific determiners, and use the correct grammar for each option to help the teachers to remove the clues in the item of MCQs. Collins (2006) stated that option with grammatically error can lead the students to the correct answer. The teacher can use those suggestions to help them to design good MCQs.

**In good MCQs, picture, graphic, table, or diagram must be functional and clear.** Zaim (2016) stated that to design good MCQs, picture, graphic, table, or diagram should be clear and functional. It means that if the teachers use picture, graphic, table, or diagram, the students can read and understand it. Picture, graphic, table, or diagram also must be functional. It means that these elements are used, because they linked with the questions. All elements of MCQs must be clear and functional to make the students easy to understand and answer the questions.

**The use of book of scoring technique.** Mucle (2012) said that giving score is also an important activity in assessment process. Giving score activity should be done carefully, because it is the foundation for the process of assessment results. The teachers have to make scoring technique before they conduct the assessment. The teachers must use book of scoring technique to give score accurately. There are three techniques to give score of MCQs. Mucle (2012) added that there are three techniques to score the result of MCQs that consist of scoring technique without correcting the answer, with correcting the answer, and with different score of the items. The first technique is scoring technique without correcting the answer. It means that the teachers give one score for each correct answer so that the scores that student achieved are the total of their correct

answer. The second technique is scoring technique with correcting the answer. This technique allows the teachers to give score by considering the wrongly answered and unanswered questions. The last technique is scoring technique with different score of the items. This technique allows the teacher to give score by giving different score for certain group of items. The scores of the question usually adjust with cognitive level ability such knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

**In a good MCQs, there is must have only one correct answer.** Burton, Sudweeks, Merrill, and Wood (1991) stated that good MCQs should have one or only one correct or clearly correct answer. The teachers have to ensure that for each question only has one correct answer. If the teachers make question with more than one correct options, it must have one clearly best answer. If the teachers design a question with some alternatives that possible correct, there is only one clearly best answer. It can increase the ambiguity of the questions so that the students are difficult to select the correct answer.

**To design good MCQs, the correct option should be placed logically.** According to Burton, Sudweeks, Merrill, and Wood (1991), to design a good question, teachers should place the correct answer randomly. There are many teachers who tend to place the correct answer in the middle or last option position. The easiest of randomizing method is by arranging the correct option logically. Towns (2014) stated that the options should have one correct option and be organized vertically, not horizontally. If there is numeric, the teacher should arrange them in ascending or descending. The teachers also should keep the statement in similar length and organized logically. It is to avoid the pattern that can be noticed by students to the correct answer.

**In designing MCQs, the alternatives should be same in the length.**

According to Towns (2014), in writing the correct options of MCQs, the teachers should keep the options same or similar in length. It is to avoid the students to assume. Towns (2014) added that in designing the alternatives, the teachers should make the alternatives in the same length. If the sentence of correct answer is short or long, the teachers should also design the distractors short or long too. It is because an alternative that looks longer or shorter than others is often considered as the correct answer.

**In designing MCQs, the teachers should use communicative language.**

According to Collins (2006), to design good MCQs, the language used by the teacher in MCQs should be communicative. It means that the teachers should use the language that is easy to understand by the students. The language used by teachers in designing MCQs should in accordance with English rules. By using communicative language, the meaning of the questions can be conveyed correctly so that the students can understand it correctly. If the students understand what actually the problem is, they can know what they should do to answer the questions.

**Challenges in Designing MCQs for English Assessment**

As elaborated in the previous explanation, there are twenty guidelines which are used in constructing good MCQs. The teachers might have some challenges in applying those guidelines when designing MCQs. There are several challenges in constructing good MCQ items. The challenges in designing MCQs are explained as follows:

**Good MCQs should be accurate to assess the higher level of cognitive ability.** Reichert (2011) stated that there are some challenges in designing MCQs. Good MCQs should be accurate in order to be able to assess higher levels of students' cognitive ability and maintain high standards of students' accomplishment. As explained in the previous explanation, MCQs can assess from the lower level to higher level cognitive abilities in Bloom's Taxonomy, but it is not effective. In MCQs, the students are asked to select the correct answer from a list of options than construct their response. According to Burton, Sudweeks, Merrill, and Wood (1991), MCQs are not able to assess certain learning objectives such as the student's ability to communicate explanation, demonstrate thought processes, furnish information, organize personal thoughts, demonstrate a specific task, produce original ideas, and provide examples. These learning objectives are better assessed by using essay, short answer question, or performance test.

**Teachers need more time to create the item.** Another challenge in designing MCQs is that the teachers need more time to create the item of MCQs, especially for the students with higher cognitive abilities. Reichert (2011) argued that to design MCQ items, teachers usually need around one hour to create one item of MCQ. Similarly, Priyambodo and Marfuatun (2016) stated that designing good MCQs is time consuming. It takes a long time to construct the item of MCQs, because the teachers should pay attention to the guidelines of designing good MCQs to design valid and reliable assessment. It makes the teachers need more time to design good MCQs that appropriate to assess the student's cognitive ability.



**A good item of MCQs is difficult to construct.** Priyambodo and Marfuatun (2016) stated that the most difficult part in designing MCQs item is making good distractors. Teachers should make attractive distractors in order to make the students more interested in selecting those distractors. Similarly, Collins (2006) stated that the most challenging part in designing good MCQs is designing plausible distractor. It is because the quality of the distractor can influence the quality of the item of MCQs. To design plausible distractor, it requires certain skill. Burton, Sudweeks, Merrill, and Wood (1991) stated that this skill may be increased through learning, practice, and experience. Similarly, Buckles and Siegfried and Palmer and Devit as cited in DiBattista and Kurzawa (2011) stated that designing item of MCQs requires more skill than writing memory-based items. It means that the teachers should not only have a good quality in writing skill, but they should also have a good knowledge on how to construct a good MCQs for their students. If the teachers have a good skill in writing the items and knowledge on how to construct good MCQs, it can support the teachers in designing good MCQs. Komunika (2015) stated that in order to increase the teachers' skill in designing a good assessment, the teachers can follow Kelompok Kerja Guru. Komunika (2015) added that KKG has important role to develop the quality of the education. Through KKG, the teachers' competency will be increased so that the teachers are able to design a good assessment.

Designing good MCQs is difficult. The teachers can do it individually or in group. According to Osnal, Suhartoni, and Wahyudi (2016), in designing MCQs, teachers can work together with senior teacher, their colleagues, or it can be constructed in KKG.

**Writing clear directions.** According to Sanna (2013), the most difficult challenge of designing MCQs is writing clear directions. Teachers should create clear directions for each set of questions to make the students understand the question. It means that the direction should specify whether the students is selecting the correct answer or the best answer. If the students understand the direction or instruction, it will make the students easy to understand the question.

**There is no guidance of senior teacher in designing good MCQs.**

According to Komunika (2015), one of the challenges in designing reliable and valid MCQs is if there is no guidance of the senior teacher. There are still many teachers who have difficulty to design reliable and valid items of MCQs. In this case, the teachers need the expert who can guide them to design a valid and reliable assessment. Osnal, Suhartoni, and Wahyudi (2016) stated that senior teachers are experienced teachers that committed to the high quality of teaching and professional learning. Senior teachers have an important role to mentor, supervise, give professional support, give counselling, and guide the teachers in designing a good assessment. Therefore, the senior teacher's guidance is very needed by teachers to design a good assessment. Osnal, Suhartoni, and Wahyudi (2016) stated that headmaster is one of the senior teachers, because the headmaster has been experienced in following some training on how to design a good assessment. The headmaster also has ability in mentoring, supervising, giving support, and guiding the other teachers. It means that the teachers can ask the headmaster if they have some problems in designing assessment.

**Designing MCQs items that do not provide the clues to the correct answer.** One of the ways to decrease students' chance in guessing is by providing

the questions that do not provide clues to another question. According to Ibbett and Wheldon (2016), it is a challenge for the teachers to design MCQs that do not provide the clue to the correct answer. There are many teachers who still use the words or statement such all of above, none of above, never, always, or only which can make the students detect the correct answer. It is one of the guidelines that is difficult for the teacher to apply. The teachers also still design the correct answer with the longer or shorter sentence which can make the students guess the correct answer.

### **Review of Related Studies**

Many researchers conducted studies to look for some challenges on the use of MCQs on the English assessment. The first prior study is the study conducted by Donnelly (2014) which aims to investigate the impact of blended assessment methods (Case Based MCQs) on student' learning. Additionally, this study used exploratory research through three forms of data capture: qualitative semi-structured interview, open-ended questionnaires, and focus group interviews. Semi-structured interview was used to gather the data from three lecturers. Open ended questionnaire was employed to collect the data from 33 male and 38 female respondents. Two mixed focus group interview was also conducted to gather the data from five students of various age and progression background. The first finding obtained from semi-structured interview was that MCQs provided some of assurances that assessment were corrected fairly and it rewarded the students who finished their work. The second finding gained from questionnaire was that out of the 71 students who answered the questionnaire, only 24 students had experience about assessment universities. Over 90% of the students had a good response about assessing their knowledge used MCQs. The third finding collected from

mixed focus groups was that the majority of students engaged in discussion stated that they tried to understand the trick of the question in MCQs, and they did not think that MCQs should be applied to a theory or practice module. However, the majority of students liked case based MCQs, because they could think more, though it required more time to finish. They could also think in a broader base, and they might see that the theories would be applied in the blended assessment. Through the two focus group discussion done by both females and males, it was known that contradictory opinions were provided in the form of assessment and stress level, and it could affect the students' learning ability.

The second study is the study conducted by Ko (2010) which aims to compare the differences between MCQs and Open Ended (OE) reading comprehension test in a within-subject. This study used test and survey to collect the data. The participants of this study were 70 Korean university students taking English reading class with their ages ranging from 19 to 26. The classes consisted of freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors with different majors such as humanities, science, engineering, and education. Then, the participants were divided into two proficiency groups (low and advanced) based on the test results. The finding of this study throughout the test was the OE type was more difficult than MCQs type. Survey was used to investigate the students' perceptions and attitudes toward two formats concerning four areas: (a) knowledge about the content; (b) discrimination between discrimination levels; (c) appropriate methods toward participant levels; and (d) proficiency levels to test methods. In the first area, there were 55 out of 70 students who still could answer even though they only knew some of contents in the case of MCQs format. However, in the case of OE format, the students should know accurately the requested answer. It appeared

that OE demanded more about the content knowledge rather than MCQs format. In the second area, there were 32 students stating that it might not be able to distinguish low and advanced level. It appeared that most of the students designated that OE was better to distinguish among levels. In the third area, there were 61 students who stated that MCQs format was the most suitable tool in reading comprehension for low level students. Additionally, there were 46 students who selected MCQs format for intermediate level. However, there were 57 students who selected OE format for advanced level students. In the last area, 55 students stated that they favoured MCQs format; 17 students preferred an OE format to MCQs format; and 8 students suggested to use mixed methods.

By knowing these previous studies, there are some similarities and differences with this study. The similarity between the previous studies and this study is that both are in the same context, namely English language teaching. The first difference between those two previous studies and this study is this study was conducted at senior high school in one private high-school in Yogyakarta. It is different from the two previous studies that were conducted in undergraduate level. The second difference is that those previous studies investigated MCQs in students' point of view. Whereas, this study investigate MCQs in teachers' point of view. The third difference is that those previous studies used mixed method of quantitative and qualitative design. The first previous study used qualitative semi-structured interview, open ended questionnaires, and focus group interviews. The second previous study used test and survey, while this study adopted qualitative research design and used interview to collect the data.

## **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework explains the related theories which can be summarized and synthesized from the theoretical discussion in the previous discussion. The aims of this study based on the formulation of the problem of this study are to find out the teachers' guidelines in designing MCQs for the English assessment and the teachers' challenges in following their guideline in one private high-school in Yogyakarta.

Based on the previous explanation, there are some guidelines in designing MCQs. The teachers in one private high-school in Yogyakarta also have their own guideline in constructing MCQs for English assessment. However, it is not easy for the teachers to design MCQs. The teachers also face challenges when designing MCQs for their English assessments.

This study focuses on the teachers' guideline in designing MCQs and the teachers' challenges in following their guideline of designing MCQs for the English assessment in one of private high-school in Yogyakarta. The conceptual framework for this study is drawn as the figure below.

**MCQs in one private high-  
school in Yogyakarta**

**Teachers' Guidelines that might be faced in  
following guideline of designing MCQs for  
English assessment in one private high-  
school in Yogyakarta:**

Teachers' guideline in designing MCQs  
according to Cheung and Bucat (2002) :

1. The stem must be meaningful and should state a clear problem.
2. Avoid the use of beginning blanks when construct the multiple choice items.
3. The teacher can use a negatively stated stem only when the substantial learning outcomes require it.
4. Avoid irrelevant difficulty in the items.
5. All distractors should be plausible.
6. Avoid of using "none of the above" or "all of the above" as an option.

**Teachers' challenges that might be faced  
in following guideline of designing  
MCQs for English assessment in one  
private high-school in Yogyakarta:**

1. MCQs should be accurate to assess higher levels of students' cognitive ability and maintain the high standards of students' accomplishment. (Reichert (2011))
2. Need more time and difficult to create the item. (Reichert (2011))
3. Designing a good item of MCQs is time consuming. (Priyambodo and Marfuatun (2016))
4. Difficult to make plausible and attractive distracter. (Priyambodo and Marfuatun (2016))
5. Writing clear directions. (Sanna (2013)).

Five guideline for writing good questions of MCQ according to Jennings (2012):

1. Be concise and clear.
2. Using appropriate grammar.
3. Create questions independently.
4. Make sure each distractor is 'viable'.
5. Avoid negative questions.

6. Designing item of MCQs requires more skill than writing memory-based items. (Buckles and Siegfried and Palmer and Devit's study as cited in DiBattista and Kurzawa (2011))

*Figure 1. Conceptual Framework*