CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Assessment turns into the primary element of academical teaching writing for education development (White, 2009). Stiggins (2002) said that assessment literacy grows into an important value to keep up the whole education activities. Assessment literacy is constructed by three main parts, teachers’ knowledge, beliefs, and practice (Crusan, Plakans, & Gebril, 2016). Interestingly, the relationships among each are disconcerting while 11 – 20 years experienced least teachers have reported having lower knowledge. She argued that expertise is not certainly assured by the many years of teaching experience, and concluded that more assessment components yield a better result of assessing writing. Experienced teachers need a responsibility to develop their knowledge and beliefs independently centered on the students’ need (Rodríguez & McKay, 2010). They need experiments to inspire the enthusiasm of knowledge in order to boost their practice. Popham, (2009) demanded that the teacher who has a low understanding of assessment may injure the nature of education. Therefore, being a second language writing teacher requires advances in constructing an assessment (Crusan et al., 2016; White, 2009). More specifically, writing teachers evaluate the students with assessments, and they have no choice to cope in the nature of tests related to the effective nor ineffective of tests in behalf of having improper assessment will expend much time and energy (Weigle, 2007; White, 2009).
Weigle (2007) summarized that teachers from TESOL do not require a rater training program for the teachers. It means that many teachers do not acquire assessment resources. Mertler (2009) reported that many teachers from the United States do not satisfactorily qualify in assessing the students’ achievement. Subsequently being tested with the Assessment Literacy Inventory, evidenced that it was tremendously effective for the teachers. Similarly, research from Vogt and Tsagari (2014) reported that teachers in the three European countries (Greece, Germany, and Cyprus) were not satisfactorily prepared and the majority of them were not comfortable on their daily activities at language testing and assessment (LTA). Most of them also reported have less training during LTA training. Additionally, for the teacher who has done the training only received some strategies from their mentors and colleagues. Moreover, more than half of teachers feel indistinct on assessment perception methods and less idea to develop their assessment skills. They argued that teacher from in-service training requires real opportunities for their work as a teacher, especially as an assessor.

Research from Dempsey, PytlikZillig, & Bruning (2009) reported that teachers from the Midwestern U.S do not acquire treatment in writing an assessment. After obtaining the evaluation from assessment experts, the participants' assessment skills were highly improved and confidently greater in assessing writing. Also, Seker (2018) reported that teachers’ scoring have an impact on the inconsistencies in assessing writing by participating in a Community of Assessment Practice (CAP). Raters who have chipped in with CAP significantly increase their degree of agreement regarding the validity and
reliability of assessment such as variety and lexical accuracy in language writing rather than scoring based on their own judgment. Lam (2019) similarly reported a proof that most of writing teachers in Hong Kong have a restricted understanding of Assessment of Learning (AoL), which provides the information of using assessment to offer the learning progress (for example self-, peer-, or teacher feedback), and Assessment for Learning (AfL), which stresses the learners’ capability to improve the cognitive aspect via self-assessment. However, only a few teachers understand the Assessment as Learning (AaL), a way of making a judgment and summarizing the students’ results at the end of the semester. In conclusion, writing teachers need to develop the knowledge and practice in making a decision to the student whether he or she deserves to pass the learning or not.

A previous research from Hima & Saputro, (2017) reported that most of students does not feel confident when they are asked to do self-assessment, but more assured when they are involved in designing the rubric before producing a paragraph. Otherwise, Andrade, Du, & Mycek, (2010) reported that self-assessment arranges the students to product better writing at middle school. Moreover, peer-assessment disposes the learners to reflect and identify the quality of works, including writing, test performance, presentations, and others from the different students at the same level (Topping, 2009).

This research attempted to make a study in exploring the teacher's assessment literacy including their knowledge and the practices in assessing second language writing. In the last decade, especially in Indonesia, research that
focuses on investigating assessment literacy of the teachers is hard to be found, so, the researcher decides to conduct an investigation in the area.

1.2 Research problems

The research problems addressed are:

1. What do the writing teachers know about the assessment knowledge?
2. How do the teachers practice their knowledge in the classroom?

1.3 Research objectives

a) To investigate what second language writing teachers know about writing assessment.

b) To investigate how the second language writing teachers practice of the knowledge in the classroom

1.4 Significance

Concluding from the research objectives above, the researcher aims to afford the benefit from this research for Language Center (LC) program, the English for Specific Purposes (ESP), at University of Muhammadiyah Malang (UMM), who will be the research subject in this research. The leaders of LC will be able to evaluate the writing teachers’ proficiency in assessment and promote the quality of teaching writing in the department through this research in order to develop the institution’s teaching value. Moreover, we expect that for the further researchers investigate English reading, speaking and listening assessment literacy, so we presume that those research will improve the EFL English teachers’ quality.

1.5 Scope and Limitations
This research investigates EFL writing teachers’ assessment literacy, especially in teachers’ knowledge and practices in writing assessment. This limitation of the study is ordered specifically for the teachers who have taught writing a subject. This study involves 20 ESP writing teacher in University of Muhammadiyah Malang

1.6 Definition of key terms

Assessment: (Classroom) assessment is “close observation of students in the process of learning, the collection of frequent feedback on students’ learning, and the design of modest classroom experiments, classroom teachers can learn much about how students learn and, more specifically, how students respond to particular teaching approaches”. (Angelo & Cross, 1993, p. 3)

Assessment literacy: Assessment Literacy is defined as the knowledge of means for assessing what students know and can do, how to interpret the results from these assessments, and how to apply these results to improve student learning and program effectiveness. (Webb, 2002)