Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter includes theories that serve as the basis of the discussion. The purpose of this chapter is to give deep understanding about the topic of the research. This chapter consists of the definition of writing, importance of writing, how to assess writing competency, definition of assessment, types of assessment, principles of assessment, definition of washback, and the impacts of washback.

Writing

Writing is one of the four skills in English learning. Since it requires the learner to produce something, writing skill is considered a production skill. Writing is a complex activity that includes many skills to decide ideas and to transfer it clearly so the reader can understand it (Brown, 2007). According to Brown (2007), writing is a skill that makes the learners put in extra effort. Writing is a skill that involves thinking, preparation, and revision. Writing is a productive skill that needs procedural thinking which means this skill is one of the difficult skills to master for students. According to Turk and Kirkman(2005), writing is a skill that makes a person able to transfer their ideas into words that can be understood by others who read it and make the ideas into accurate information.

Writing is a difficult skill to master even in the first language. Brown (2003) stated that it is difficult to write well in any language, even in our own native language.Hence, writing is an activity which needs a long time to practice,

because doing this activity requires time to think about the relative topic,as well as analyze and classify the background knowledge (Chakraverty & Gautum, 2000). For this skill,the writer needs to have a good grasp of language to compile the idea into a coherent discourse (Shokrpour & Fallahzadeh, 2007).

The Importance of Writing

Writing is one of the important skills in academic perfomance because this skill help people as the way to communicate their ideas in written form.This skill is also a productive skill which makes the students learn many things such as summarize, analyze, and criticize. According to Ahmed (2010), writing is important for students becausewriting can motivate students to think. Since they need ideas to write something, they will take more time to think before they start to write. The students can also learn to organize their ideas and develop their ability to summarize, analyze and criticize. Therefore, they learn how to write by processing their ideas, pouring them into words, and producing the results of their writing to be delivered to the reader.

Writing also can make students become a creative thinkers. In writing the student will try to combine their ideas on the first language to transfer into foreign language. It was also mantioned by Ahmed (2010) that writing strengthens students' learning, reflecting and thinking ability in English. In the writing process, students need many ideas, and they will learn how to elaborate their ideas and express their ideas into words.

Assessment

Assessments have various purposes in education. Assessment can be used to present information about students' learning, students progress, teaching quality, program and institutional accountability (Fletcher, Meyer, Anderson, Johnston, & Rees, 2012). Assessment is usually judged the same way as tests with some differences. A test is prepared for situations that can be identified in the curriculum that results in the students getting an achievement. On the other hand, assessmentsare a sustainable process that coversa wider region. Whenever the students want to make a response for a question, give comment, or try to use a new word or new stucture, subconsciously the teacher will make an assessment to see the students perfomance. A good teacher will never stop assessing their students' performance (Brown, 2003).

Types of Assessment

Assessments can be divided into two types: formative and summative assessment. Brown (2003) identified two types of assessment with different functions: which are formative and summative assessments. One of the factors that distinguishes both of them is the time of implementation.

Formative assessment. Formative assessment is usually implemented while the process of teaching and learning is still going. Brown (2003) stated that formative assessment is conducted in the process of "forming" students competencies and skills which aims to help them continue that growth process. Formative assessment uses informal strategies in gathering information about

students learning that consists of students knowledge about the end goal or outcome (Regier, 2012).

Summative assessment. Summative assessment is implemented when the teaching and learning process is finished. Brown (2003) stated that the aim of summative assessment is to measure students' comprehension that typically occurs at the end of a course or unit of instruction. The example of summative assessments are final exams and general proficiency exams.

How to Assess Writing

There are various ways to assess students' writing skill. Brown (2003) suggests that a teacher can assess students' writing by conducting assessmentsand considering the various objectives in writing. There are various objectives that can be set, such as handwriting ability, spelling ability, grammatical accuracy, paragraph construction, logical development of the main idea, and others.

One of the ways to measure students' writing is by using an evaluation checklist. An evaluation checklist can indicate students' areas of strength and weakness. According to Brown (2007), there are six general categories to evaluate students writing ability:content, organization, discourse, syntax, vocabulary, and mechanics.

Content. One of the things that can be judged from the writing of students is the content.Content is the ideas that are included into the text. Assessing the content also includes assessing the thesis statement, illustration, development of ideas by personal experience, facts, consistency focus, and opinion.

Organization. Another aspect that can be assessed in writing is the ability to arrange an effective writing, called organization. Organization in writing includes an effective usage of introduction, logical sequence of ideas, conclusion, and length of text.

Discourse. The aspects that can be judged in discourse consist of 10 things. Theseinclude topic sentence of the writing, transition of the writing, paragraph unity of the writing, cohesion of the writing, discourse makers, fluency, references, rhetorical conventions, and variation.

Syntax. Syntax refers to grammatical accuracy. Syntax can be judged in terms of how the students arrange the words they use into well-formed thoughts by using the correct grammar on their writing. Therefore, syntax assessesthe students' grammatical arrangement of words.

Vocabulary. Vocabulary is about the words that studentsusein their writing. In writing student should choose the words carefully, and the words that students use should be appropriate with the sentences that they write on their writing.

Mechanics. The kind of items that will be judged as mechanic of students writing consists of correct spelling, use of punctuations, use of citation and references, appearance of the writing, and neatness of the writing.

Principles of Assessment

There are five principles of assessment. Brown (2003) stated that there are five principles inassessment that should be applied in a formative test which are

divided into five: practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity, and washback to make sure that the test is effective.The tests are given within appropriate administrative constrains, and must be dependable and accurate.

Practicality. Practicality of assessment means the assessment is not excessively expensive. Assessments must have appropriate time which means the students must not take a long time to finish the assessment. The assessment should also be relatively easy to administer andhas specific and time-efficient method of scoring and evaluating (Brown, 2003).

Reliability. Reliability means the test is consistent and dependable. This means when the teacher give the same test for the same students or matched the same students on two different occasions, the given test should yield the same result (Brown, 2003).

Validity. Test validity means the test will measure what it should measure. For example, when the teacher would like to assess students ability in physics but requires the answers to be written in German, it will not be a valid assessment because it will focus on their knowledge to write in German rather than their knowledge in physics. It is important to design a test that focuses on the subject that is needed to assess (Mcalpine, 2002).

Authenticity. Authenticity of test means the test will use a language that is as natural as possible. The items of test are contextualized rather than isolated, the topics of the test is meaningful (relevant, interesting) for the students. The test

provides some thematic organization such as through story line or episode. In addition, the tasks represent or is close to real world tasks (Brown, 2003).

Washback. Washback generally refers to the effect of test on the learning process in terms of what the students can do before the test. It can be a positive or negative impact. One of the ways to increase washback is by giving feedback. Feedback on student task can give information about students weaknesess so they can learn from their mistake to improve their skill (Brown, 2003).

Washback

Washback is an important principle of an assessment in language testing. According on Bedford(2002), washback has generally been described as the effect of assessment on teaching and learning. Brown (2003) stated that washback also includes the effect of the tests on teaching and learning in terms of students preparation for the test. This effect can be positive or negative. According to Brown (2003), there are two kinds of assessment that present washback: informal and formal perfomance assessment. Informal assessments are more likely to present washback than formal assessments because the teacher usually providesan interactive feedback in informal perfomance assessments. The challenge for teacher is to achieve washback on the classroom test. One way to enhance washback is by giving feedback on students test perfomance.

Impact of Washback

Washback has two kind of impacts in teaching and learning process which are positive and negative. In addition, there are two levels of washback: micro and

macro level. According to Palmer, there are two levels of washback impactwhich are micro and macro level (as cited in Karabulut, 2007). Micro level impacts students and teacher who are directly affected by the testing procedures and the results. Macro level impacts involvethe entire educational context and society.

Djurić(2008) stated that washback shows itself as a form of liaison between teachers and testers. If in the process of teaching learning the teacher is not isolated with a test and understands and respectsthe ethical principles of the class, the teacher will produce a positive washback. This is in line with Alderson and Wall who identified different factors about washback in their hypothesis (as cited in Fulcher and Davidson, 2007).

Positive washback. Positive washback will occur when the teacher uses tests in the classroom which aims to get students to pay attention prepare throughly. This means teachers encourage the students to prepare themselves for the test by studying the materials they get in the classroom before the test and making them remember all the lessons that they have from the begining of the learning. Those kinds of preparation present a positive of washback.

Negative washback. If the teacher fears the result from students test and does the teaching and learning process that aims to make the students able to pass the test while ignoring the curriculum, it will produce a negative washback. This means the teacher is isolated by the test and the tests drive the curriculum. The test also make students more concern about the result of test rather than understanding the lessons they received from this test. This is in line with

Pearson, who stated that positive or negative washback depends on the quality of the test (as cited in Karabulut 2007). However, he also said that the test will present negative washback if the test does not reflect the principle or objective of the course.

Review of Related Studies

Here, the researcher presents previous studies about the washback in writing on EFL setting. The researcher takes two studies which are summarized based on the aim, setting, methodology, and finding. These are the two studies that will be discussed:

The first study was conducted by Kolahi (2007). This study aimed to investigate the washback effects on improving the writing performance. This study was conducted at Iranian EFL University Students. This study showed that giving information, describing, and classifying students weaknesess and their errors on test presented a positive washback for student. This research showed that giving feedback can improve students perfomance.

The second study was done by Şenel and Tütüniş (2011). It discussed the washback effect of testing on students' learning in EFL writing classes. This study was conducted at English Preparatory School of Istanbul Aydın University. This study used questionnaire and treatment (written test) for 42 students. By using the quantitative experimental method, this study showed that the test presented a negative washback effect because the students felt anxious in the test and they

would be more comfortable if the teachers did not let them know that an assessment was taking place.

Those studies adopted quantitative method, which meansthe researchers got the information of their study from a large number of respondents.However, the result is not detailed because they used questionnaire, which means the answers of the questions do not include the reason and explanation from the respondents. This study different because it uses qualitative method in order to get a richer information even with a small number of participant.The researcher usedthe interview instrument to dig out the information from the participant so the researcher can get the answer along with their reason and explanation. However, those studies discussed the washback effect in the context of writing, which is similar with this study which also investigate the washback in writing contexts.

Conceptual Framework

Writing is one of the four skills in English learning. Since it requires the learner to produce something, writing skill is considered a productive skill. According to Ahmed (2010), writing is important for students because writing can motivate students to think. Writing also can make students become creative thinkers. In writing, the students will try to combine their ideas on the first language and transfer into foreign language. It is important for teachers to make sure their students have a good ability in writing.

In the learning of writing, assessment is an important aspect to measure students abilities. Assessing student's progress and achievement in particular

learning circumstances requires teacher's advanced skills and methods. Assessments can be divided into two types: formative and summative assessment. Brown (2003) identified two types of assessment with different functions:Formative and summative assessment. In addition, assessment that teacher will use for their students should adhere to some principles of second language assessment. According to Brown (2003), there are five principles for evaluating and designing second language assessment which are practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity, washback.

One of the assessment principles is washback.According to Bedford (2002) washback is the effect of an assessment on the teaching and learning process and it can be positive or negative.According to Alderson and Wall (as cited in Fulcher and Davidson, 2007) positive washback will occur when the teacher uses tests in the classroom which aims to get students to pay attention and prepare throughly. This means teachers encourage the students to prepare themselves for the test by studying the materials they get in the classroom before the test. Those kinds of preparation present a positive washback. According to Pearson, who stated that positive or negative washback depends on the quality of the test (as cited in Karabulut 2007). However, he also said that the test will present negative washback if the test does not reflect the principle or objective of the course.

Washback of writing assessment can occur in a form of feedback and type of assessment. It was mentioned by Brown (2003) that one of the way to enhance washback is by giving feedback on students task perfomance because from the

feedback student can know their mistake. Brown (2003) also stated that he prefers to use fomative assessment than summative assessment because in formative assessment the student can get feedback and they will know their progress. The type of writing assessment that usually present negative washback is multiple choice assessment because this kind of assesssment is not good, because the teacher return students' task perfomance with score and do not give feedback or explanation about students'mistakes on their writing task perfomance (Brown, 2003).

Figure of Conceptual Framework

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            │  Writing Assessment  │
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┌────────────────────┐   ┌─────────────────────┐
│ Positive Washback  │   │ Negative Washback   │
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