

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The four skills that must be learned in English are reading, writing, listening, and speaking. These are crucial in determining a person's capacity to communicate in English. Writing is one of the four talents that students must learn. People, especially students, can convey their feelings, ideas, opinions, and experiences in writing. Writing is one of the productive abilities that should be learned when learning a language. It is because writing skill is important in enhancing communicative competency when learning a language. Harmer (2004:31) stated writing is a way of creating language and expressing ideas, feelings, and opinions. Nunan (2003) also stated writing is a process of thinking to develop ideas, thinking about how to represent ideas in effective writing, and clearly arranging the ideas into statements and paragraphs. Writing is an activity in which people use their ideas and thoughts to express themselves through writing on paper or other materials. People can share their knowledge and information with the reader. Despite the fact that most people tend to place more emphasis on speaking than writing, writing is one of the four language abilities and has a position of equal importance to the others. Writing needs the writer to display simultaneous control over a number of factors, which is an extraordinarily complicated cognitive activity. Not only does it require spelling accuracy and

vocabulary expansion, but also grasp of linguistic structure. Additionally, it necessitates a command of word choice and sentence structure.

For some people, writing is the hardest linguistic ability because it required complex thinking. Writers always apply our analytical and creative skills to the writing process. It is supported by the appropriate laws in addition to that. Additionally, compared to other language skills, it is thought to be the most difficult to learn. In written communication, writing is a skill that is necessary. Even the finest students may find it difficult to produce consistently high-quality work. The primary element of getting good writing is mastering vocabulary and tenses. For the purpose of structuring a phrase and developing it into a paragraph, we must select the proper vocabularies. Furthermore, in order to convey an event that occurred at a specific moment, the proper tense must be used. That is why some students think that writing is one of the most difficult skills to have in learning language. This is because in writing, students have to think hard about things to do such as finding the right and appropriate words, composing correct grammar, and channeling ideas creatively. Since the majority of genuine communication takes place in written form, people with strong writing skills will be better at transmitting and receiving information or messages from others. But developing strong writing abilities is challenging. To write well, students need to comprehend the components of writing. According to Jacob (2004), there are five general components of writing: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. To summarize, writing components play the most important function when creating good writing.

One of the learning materials in the eleventh grade high school is invitation letter. In this material, students are required to be able to write an invitation letter. Ali in Faramarzi (2015) stated that an invitation is a commemorative social activity with the function of cordially and politely informing and requesting the presence or participation of a person(s) to some event, gathering, celebration, etc., or to do something. Invitation letters are letters that are written to invite people to a certain event. The former provides information about the event, while the latter ensures that the guest will attend. Invitations are classified differently. Some people divide it into formal and informal invitations, while others divide it into business and friendly invitations. The purpose of writing an invitation letter determines the type of letter. For instance, formal letter could be used to invite coworkers or clients to a company event or to a crucial meeting. These are formal letters that fall within the category of business invitation letters. Invitations addressed to friends and relatives, however, can be less formal. To develop writing abilities, it takes a lot of practice and the right technique, media, or equipment. It takes more work to teach this specific talent because of the challenges that teachers may face when doing so.

SMA N 10 Medan uses curriculum 2013 in the teaching/learning process. Based on curriculum 2013 for eleventh grade students, invitation letter is one of the material that is taught in English class. All students should achieve some basic competences from the lesson plan. The first is to find the differences and similarities between several formal invitations for several different events. After that, students are expected to be able to identify and mention the parts of the

invitation. Later then, students can understand the generic structure and linguistic elements of formal invitations. In the end of learning, students are expected to make formal invitations related to school activities and then display the invitations by sticking them on the classroom wall. In SMA N 10 Medan, English is taught only once a week. The passing grade of the English lesson is 75 points. In the initial observations made by researchers to obtain preliminary data, researchers asked students to write an invitation letter in a formal form because the material from the invitation letter had been taught before. Here are some examples of formal invitation letters written by eleventh graders.

" Invitation letter "

Name: Wednesday Date: 16-11-2022
 Name : Eliza Veronika Br kacaribu
 class : XI-IPA 1
 Invitation : school reunion party

Over the last ten years, have you ever wondered about your karpas-smanten 2024 classmates?

Whatever happened to that smokin' hot jack? That loveable geek? That thug prince or princess? That brainy nerd? That class clown? That popular osis? That scary Goth?

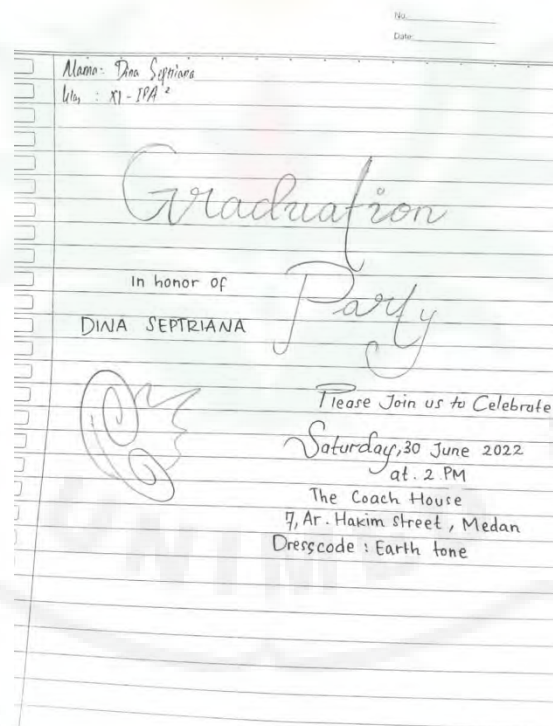
Well, this is your chance to find out!
It's time to party like a rock star, baby!

PLEASE JOIN US AT THE KARPAS-SMANTEN OF 2024 REUNION!

Saturday, 16th September 2024
(one night only)
7:00 P.m - 11:00 P.m

In one of the data the researchers obtained, it was seen that the students' content in the letter was less appropriate for a formal invitation letter. In the

grammar and vocabulary section, the content of the letter is less appropriate for formal language and more suitable for an informal letter. The organization in the letter is also not appropriate to the formal structure of the invitation letter, because the contents of the letter directly indicate matters related to the event that will be held which are contained in the body of the letter. The letter does not include a salutation, closing, or signature at the end of the letter.



In one of the data that the researcher obtained, it was seen that the students' content explained in the letter was not well developed because it directly stated the body of the letter. The organization is also not appropriate to the formal structure of the invitation letter, because the contents of the letter directly indicate matters related to the event that will be held which are contained in the body of the letter. However, the letter did not include a salutation, closing, or signature at the end of the letter. The use of grammar and vocabulary in the letter is also very

minimal so it is not appropriate to use as a formal invitation letter. While in mechanic sections are written effectively and appropriately. As can be seen from the preliminary data above, some students still have mistaken in writing formal invitation letters. In writing an invitation letter, they have difficulty in adjusting the content of the invitation letter with the right structure, especially in making a formal invitation letter. The researcher also discussed with the teacher who teaches in the eleventh grade of SMA N 10 and said that students are not used to writing in English. Students are still unsure of the characteristics of invitation letters. The teacher said that students have difficulty writing freely due to limited knowledge, especially in grammar and vocabulary, so they feel unable and lazy to express the ideas they have in written form. Teachers also do not use learning media that helps students in writing. Teachers only rely on books in school. In learning English, they prefer learning that involves speaking, such as doing conversations. Even though they sometimes make mistakes in speaking, they consider activities that involve talking to be more exciting and enjoyable. Meanwhile, writing is considered difficult and boring.

Based on the elaboration above, the research is interested in doing a research with a title, "Eleventh Grade Students' Ability in Writing Formal Invitation Letter at SMA N 10".

1.2 Problems of Study

Regarding to the background of the study, the problems of the study are formulated into:

1. How is the eleventh grade students' ability in writing formal invitation letter at SMA N 10 Medan?
2. What difficulties are faced by students in writing invitation letter?"

1.3 Objectives of Study

Concerning to the problem statement, the objective of this research are:

1. To describe the eleventh grade students' writing ability in writing formal invitation letter.
2. To investigate the eleventh grade students' difficulties in writing formal invitation letter.

1.4 Scope of Study

Based on the background of the problem and the identification of the problem, the scope in this study will focus on analyzing students' ability and difficulties in writing invitation letter. The limitation of this study is to find out how is the students' writing about invitation letter and the difficulties that are faced by the students. The study was conducted at eleventh grade students.

1.5 Significance of Study

The result of this study is expected to provide some contributions to the teaching and learning of English as:

1) Theoretically

This study will have expanded and deepened the writer's understanding of students' writing abilities, particularly in formal invitation letters.

2) Practically

- a) For students, this study will help them to know their ability in writing text in English to be specific for an invitation letter.
- b) For teachers, this study will help teachers to understand valuable information about students' ability in writing English text.
- c) For other researchers, this study will give information about writing in formal invitation letter. It is expected to be a guidance and reference for future research who will do research about students' ability in writing formal invitation letter.