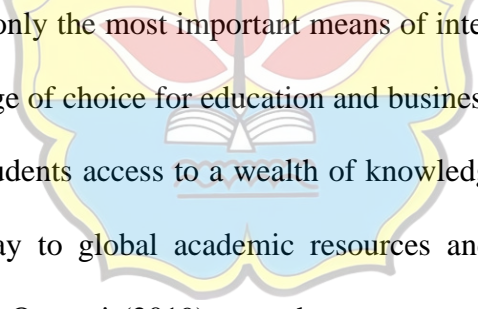


CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

English serves as a bridge that connects people from different language backgrounds. Rao (2019) stated that English is used as a common language although there are some differences in habits, cultures, traditions, regions and idiosyncratic aspects. Since English has common features, it has been accepted as a global language by speakers of thousands of different languages. Therefore, it is no wonder that English is often referred to as a "language bridge" that enables effective interaction between people from different cultures.



English is not only the most important means of international communication but also the language of choice for education and business worldwide. Proficiency in English gives students access to a wealth of knowledge and opportunities as it serves as a gateway to global academic resources and professional networks. Tërnavá-Osmani & Osmani (2019) state that mastery of the English language is nowadays essential to achieve professional goals in education and communication. Therefore, learning English is a must for students to broaden their horizons, hone essential skills, and open up a variety of career prospects that promote personal and professional growth.

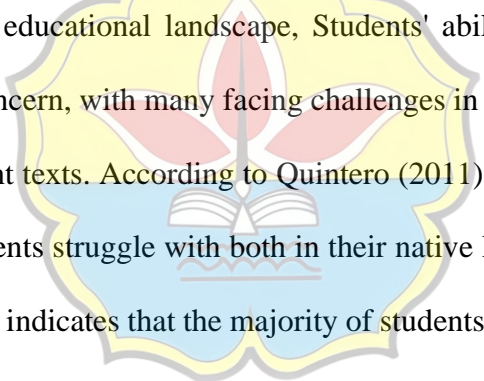
One of the important elements that students need to master when learning English is grammar. Wang (2019) explains that English grammar is an essential part of learning English and forms the basis for understanding the English language. Grammar is a set of rules and conventions used by people to communicate.

Grammar helps students avoid common mistakes, such as subject-verb agreement or inconsistencies in tense, so that their communication is clear and precise. In addition, a solid understanding of grammar improves students' writing skills so that they can express themselves eloquently and coherently. In essence, understanding grammar is a key component on the path to mastery of the English language and equips students with the essential skills they need to succeed in a variety of academic and professional settings.

In social contexts, the function of grammar becomes evident in its role as a facilitator of effective communication among speakers. Grammar serves as a guiding framework for learners, aiding their comprehension of how words, phrases, and punctuation are employed in everyday conversations and written expressions to articulate meanings with clarity and consistency. Moreover, Grammar is a set of rules and conventions people use for communication. It covers things like how words such as words, phrases, and sentences are used to convey meaning.

Proficiency in grammar is not only about avoiding grammatical errors but also positively impacting the expression of ideas and information. Grammatical competence, often regarded as a cornerstone of language proficiency, refers to the ability to use grammar accurately and effectively in communication. Nassaji & Fotos (2011) highlight that grammatical competence significantly contributes to communication abilities in the classroom and overall. Having a strong understanding of grammar rules not only allows writers to compose grammatically sound sentences but also helps in creating structurally coherent and reader-friendly texts.

The importance of grammatical competence in English writing cannot be underestimated. Grammatical competence, often considered a cornerstone of language proficiency, refers to the ability to use grammar accurately and effectively in communication. Proficiency in grammar extends beyond mere error avoidance; it significantly impacts the expression of ideas and information, enabling students to craft grammatically sound sentences. Debata (2013) states that grammar plays a crucial role in language teaching as it facilitates error correction and improves the quality of written work. Therefore, the importance of grammar in English writing cannot be overstated as it is essential for conveying precise ideas and constructing coherent and meaningful sentences.



In the current educational landscape, Students' ability to write English has become a major concern, with many facing challenges in producing grammatically precise and coherent texts. According to Quintero (2011), writing is a complicated area that most students struggle with both in their native language and in a foreign language. Research indicates that the majority of students at the primary level have problems with grammar, resulting in poor command of English tenses, syntax, and vocabulary. In addition, students often suffer from writing anxiety, weak structural organization, and dependence on their native language, which further impairs their writing skills. Lack of interest in writing and insufficient experience with writing in English also contribute to students' difficulties in developing effective writing skills. These challenges highlight the urgent need to address the factors that impact students' writing abilities and provide targeted support to improve their grammatical competence and overall writing skills.

The various difficulties in writing English texts are problems that often have to be overcome by writing students, especially Senior High School students as beginner text learners. Fareed et al (2016) stated that the various writing problems of students are identified at the stage of learning writing skills. The problem of students' writing skills is particularly evident at SMAN 9 Kota Jambi. Based on the writer's experience and discussion with the English teacher in observing learning texts in all eleventh grade classes, many students have difficulty writing simple texts. Many of them find it difficult to write down the learning material well in written English and they seem to need more time to complete a text.

Even though grammatical concepts are covered during English classes, students make recurrent errors in written assignments and tests in applying the same. Common issues noted are inappropriate tense selection, missing articles, and lack of agreement between sentence constraints. Students get confused about defining correct grammatical structures for different contexts. These errors disrupt the logical flow of ideas in their written texts. Therefore, Understanding precise areas of difficulty can help customize assistance required by students to remedy such grammatical problems in writing.

Based on the case and explanation above, the researcher was interested in finding the correlation between students' grammatical competence and their ability to write English texts specifically among eleventh grade students to determine whether there was a significant positive or negative relationship between these two variables.

Therefore, the researcher conducted a study Under the title "*The Correlation between Grammatical Competence and Students' Ability in Writing English Text at the Eleventh Grade of SMAN 9 Kota Jambi.*"

1.2 Identification of the Research

Based on the observation, the researcher found several problems. Below are the problems found by the researcher:

1. The English text writing skills of students at the Eleventh Grade of SMAN 9 Kota Jambi are still low.
2. The students' mastery of English grammar rules is still weak, especially in the use of tenses and subject-verb agreement.
3. Many students at the Eleventh Grade of SMAN 9 Kota Jambi have difficulties and are unable to write simple English texts.

1.3 Limitation of the Research

This research was conducted in the eleventh grade of SMAN 9 Kota Jambi. This research only focused on analyzing the grammatical competence of the students and investigating the ability to write English texts, especially in the fields of subject-verb agreement and tenses. Therefore, this study concerned on investigating the correlation between grammatical competence in subject-verb agreement and tenses and writing ability.

1.4 Formulation of the Research

Based on the limitations above, the formulation of the Research are:

1. How is English grammar mastery of Eleventh Grade students at SMAN 9 Kota Jambi?
2. How is the English text writing skill of students at the Eleventh Grade of SMAN 9 Kota Jambi?
3. Is there any significant correlation between grammatical competence and the ability to write English texts at the Eleventh Grade of SMAN 9 Kota Jambi?

1.5 Objective of the Research

1. To know the student's mastery of English grammar of students at the Eleventh Grade of SMAN 9 Kota Jambi.
2. To understand the student's English text writing skill of students at the Eleventh Grade of SMAN 9 Kota Jambi.
3. To find out whether there is a significant correlation between grammatical competence and the ability to write English texts at the Eleventh Grade of SMAN 9 Kota Jambi.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1. Grammar: Grammar is a set of rules and conventions used by people for communication. (Wang, 2019)
2. Grammatical Competence: Grammatical competence significantly contributes to communication abilities in the classroom and overall (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011)
3. Writing Ability: Writing is a complicated skill that poses challenges for students in both their native language and foreign languages (Quintero, 2011)

