

The Effect of Discrete-Point Task towards Student Writing Ability

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ABSTRACT

This research was discovered the effect of using Discrete-point task towards students' writing ability. Most of student got difficulties to organize the generic structure of text. This research used experimental research. The researcher used a quasi- experimental design by using the pre-test pos-test control group deisgn. The population of this research was tenth grade of in SMK Cendana Padang Panjang. The sample was X TKJ.1 which was treated as experimental class and taught by using Discrete-point task and X TKJ.2. The researcher used *total sampling technique* because the population less than a hundred. From the result of the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental class, it was found that the t-obtained (**8.25**) was higher than the t-table (**1.960**). Then, the calculation of post-test both classes: experimental and control classes was obtained the (**3.557**) was bigger than t table (1.67). For the third hypothesis, mean score of the experimental class is bigger than control class ($77.44 > 68.5$). There is the effect of descrete-point task tovars students' writing Ability.

Keywords: *Writing ability, Discrete-point task, descriptive text*

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English as an international language has big role in the world. English is a lingua franca to connect people with difference language backgrounds. English has significant roles in wide areas, such as in technology, politics, economy, education, science, and many other areas. So, the ability to use English is importance for people. It helps them to' access many information resources and knowledge. Because of those reasons, the government of Indonesia decided English as the first foreign language which have to be taught at every level of education.

There are four skills that students have to learn in school; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They cannot be separated from each other if someone want to be able to freely communicate in English. Among thoseskills, writing is considered the most difficult skill to learn because its need not only hard think but also good accuracy. According to Hedge (1990 p.5) large numbers of adult native speakers never achieve a high level of expressing in writing their first language. Furthermore, commenting Hedge elaborates that writing is taken from the wide range of expressive possibilities in speech. A writer is unable to exploit all the devices available to a speaker: gesture, body movement, facial expression, pitch and tone of voice, stress, and hesitations. As it is known, writing involves not only much work but also practicing. The writing process integrates visual and conceptual abilities. Therefore,

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the students need to have extensive knowledge if they want to write something successfully. The extensive knowledge will support their writing in order to be interesting and easy to understand.

There are two types of tasks focus of language learning: textbook task and discrete-point. Discrete-point task focuses on the mastery of language components. The tasks are not interconnected, and they are isolated from the context. While, textbook task refers to learning activities that focus on the wider use of language.

In addition to discrete-point tasks. Lado (1961) stated that discrete-point tasks consist of many questions which try to task a large number of linguistic points, but each question tasks only one linguistic point. This theory is constructed on the assumption that language can be broken down into its component parts and that those parts can be tasked successfully. These components include four main skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and various units of language (discrete point) of phonology/graphology, morphology, lexicon, syntax, and discourse. It is believed that a language proficiency task should contain and task all four language skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) and as many discrete-point tasks as possible. A discrete-point item approach to teaching language isolates the language and enables teachers and learners to focus on the item itself.

Discrete-point items often appear in tasking, where there is a need to focus on knowledge of specific items. Examples of discrete-point tasks are phoneme recognition, yes/no, true/false answers, spelling, word completion, grammar items and multiple-choice tasks. Both integrative and discrete-point tasks have advantages and disadvantages. The advantages of a discrete-point tasks is that they are easy to score and achieve reliable scoring (objective), easily administered & statistically analyzed and can be norm (compared with other task takers) or criterion (reached objective) referenced.

The disadvantages of discrete-point tasks are that they may focus on what task takers know about the language rather than if they can use it, instruction may not go beyond a focus on manipulation of language components and they may ignore effects of context. A research was conducted by La Dunifa (2016) and published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK stated that discrete task is suitable to improve students' English Writing Performance.

The researcher interviewed teacher of Tenth Grade of SMK Cendana Padang Panjang at September 2019 and discovered based on interview from the teacher that some students are not really sure about the language components, there are three language components but the researcher only focuses on grammar. The teacher stated that task that used on learning english especially writing is the task that already on textbook. The teacher also stated that on learning writing the student is always running out of time that already given when writing an essay or paragraph. To determine the students' writing performance, the students were asked to write down a paragraph that focuses on certain tense . Which focused on content, structure, rhetoric, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Based on the limitation of problem above, the researcher formulates the question of the research as follows: 1) Is there any significance effect of discrete-point task on students' english writing performance? 2) Is there any significance difference of discrete-point task on students' english writing performance? 3) Are students' writing performance taught by discrete-point task are better than taught by integrative (textbook) task?

METHOD

In conducting the research, the researcher used the quantitative research. The quantitative research refers to the systematic empirical investigation of social phenomena via statistical, mathematical or numerical. According to Margono, the quantitative research is a process to find knowledge which uses the numeral data; in other words, the data is used as a tool to find information that will be found by the researcher. Furthermore, experimental research is accurately used to test the cause-effect relationship by using hypothesis test. Gay (1990) states that experimental research is the method of research that can truly test

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hypothesis concerning cause and effect relationships. Dealing with this purpose, the experimental research is conducted to compare two groups by giving a test to check whether there is a significant difference between the group that gets a special treatment and the other group that does not.

In this experimental research, the researcher used a quasi-experimental design by using the pretest-posttest control group design. Gay (1990) also adds that an experiment typically involves two groups (two classes), an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group and the control group will be given in the same test. The test is the same in qualities and quantities to keep the reliability of the research. It will be given to know how the effect of discrete task toward students' writing performance. The research is described as following table:

Table 1
Control-Group Pre-test-Post-test Design

	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental Class	T1E	X	T2E
Control Class	T1C	-	T2C

Where:

T1E = the pre-test for the experimental class

T2E = the post-test for the experimental class

X = the treatment

T1C = the pre-test for the control class

T2C = the post-test for the control class

Based on the research design above, the special treatment is only given to the experimental class. The post-test is conducted after giving the treatment to the experimental class and be given in order to observe students' test result in writing.

Population and Sample

Population is the total subjects of the research. According to Gay (1990), the population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which she or he would like the results of the study to be generalizable. The population of the research is all of the first grade students (X class) at SMKCendana Padang Panjang in academic year 2019/2020. The population is described in the following table:

Table 2
The Total Population of the Second Grade Students (VII Classes) SMK Cendana Padang Panjang in Academic Year 2019/2020

No.	Class	Students' Totality
1.	X TKJ.1	23
2.	X TKJ.2	23
Total		46

Source: English teacher

From this table, the population from this research is 46 student, that's the total of the students in the two classes of the first grade in SMK Cendana Padang Panjang. Sample represents the quality and characteristic of population. According to Sugiyono (2009), a sample is a part of the total and the characteristics that exist in that population. In this research, the researcher used two classes as the experimental class and the control class. To determine sample in this research, the techniques will be used is total sampling. Sugiyono (2009) states that total sampling is a sampling technique of data sources with all the population concluded in the research because the population were less than 100 student.

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Instrumentation

Instrument is a technique that is used to collect data. The instrument that used in this research is a test about the students' writing performance. This test conducted in order to identify the effect of using discrete task toward students' writing performance. There were two kinds of the test will be used in this research, they were pre-test and post-test. The form of test is essay. The test created by considering the validity and reliability test. According to Arikunto, the main requirements of the test are validity and reliability, as explained below:

Technique of the Data Collection

In line with the research design above, the data would be taken from the students' writing performance. The pretest was given to the experimental and the control class before giving the treatment. The students made an essay within the limited time.

Technique of the Data Analysis

To analyze the data, the researcher taken the t-test to compare the difference of the mean score between two classes: the control class and the experimental class. Sugiyono (2009) states that if the research is compare between two groups and the hypothesis is tested by using t-test.¹ The researcher uses the t- test as suggested by Gay.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Description of the Data

The data of this research based on the research that had been done by the researcher at the tenth grade of scientific major in SMK Cendana. The scores of the students' writing skill were collected after conducting the pre-test at the beginning of the research and the post-test at the end of the research, both the experimental and control classes were used as the data of this research.

There were 46 students who were involved in the pre-test; 23 students in the experimental class and 23 students in the control class. There were also 46 students who were involved in the post-test; 23 students in the experimental class and 23 students in the control class. The description of the data in both of the experimental and control classes will be explained below:

Data From the Pre-test of Experimental and Control Classes

Pre-test that had been given by researcher at the first meeting before conducting the treatment for experimental class by using Discrete-Point Task and for control class by using conventional technique. The analysis of raw pre-test scores in experimental class(class X TKJ.1) analyzed by the data obtained shows that the lowest score of pre-test that is gained by the experimental class is 37 and the highest score is 60. It is found that there are two students who get 37, six of them gets 47, three of them get 53,three of them get 57, three of them get 50, five of them get 43, and one of them gets 60. The analysis of raw pre-test scores in control class (class X TKJ.2) shows the data the data obtained shows that the lowest score of pre-test that is gained by the control class is 33 and the highest score is 63. It is found that there are two students who get 33, three students who get 53, 50, 43, two student get 37, one of them get 57, 60, 63, seven of them get 47.

After classifying the data in pre-test, the researcher made the result calculation of scores that was gained from the pre-test. This was done by the researcher to know the result of student's score including mean, standard deviation, sums of square, variant, the lowest and highest score as on table below:

Table 3. The Result of the Calculation of Scores That Was Gained from the Pre-test

¹Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan: Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*, p. 249

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Class	N	Mean	Standard Deviation (S)	Variance (S ²)	The Lowest Score	The Highest Score
Experimental	23	48.30	6.19	38.31	37	60
Control	23	47.26	7.68	58.98	33	63

The table above shows that the mean of the experimental class pre-test score is 38.31 while the mean of the control class pre-test score is 58.98 with a slight difference of these class's score.

Data from the Post-test of the Experimental and Control Classes

Based on chapter three, the post-test conducted at the end of the treatment in order to find out the Effect Discrete-Point Task towards Students Writing Performance. The post-test was given to the experimental and control classes after treated. Both classes were given the same test material and time allocation. The analysis of raw post-test scores in experimental class (class X TKJ.1). The data shows that the lowest score of the post-test that is gained by the experimental class is 53 and the highest score is 83. It means that there is significant progress on students' post-test score if it is compared to the pre-test score. The significant progress on experimental class achievement occurs after getting the treatment. After classifying the data, it is found that there are three students who get 57, 63 and 83, two students who get 53 and 80, four of them get 60 and 67, the rest of them get 70 and 83.

The analysis of raw post-test scores in control class (class X TKJ.2) is showed from the data above, the lowest score of post-test that is obtained by the control class is 43 and the highest score is 67. After classified, it can be seen that there are two students who get 63, three of them get 60, four of them get 57, five of them get 53, six of them get 50 and the rest of them get 43, 47, 67. Based on the calculation of the score that was gained in the post -test of speaking test of both class, it can be summarized as follows:

Table 4. The Result of the Calculation of the Score that Was Gained from Post-test

Class	N	Mean	Standard Deviation (S)	Variance (S ²)	The Lowest Score	The Highest Score
Experimental	23	65.47	8.51	72.42	53	83
Control	23	54.60	5.78	33.40	43	67

The table above shows that the mean score of the experimental class post-test score is 65.47 while the mean score of the post-test score of control class is 54.60. It means that the mean score of the experimental class is higher than the control class. The standard deviation of the experimental class is 8.51 and the control class is 5.78. In addition, based on the maximum result of the experiment class and the control class above, it can be showed that experimental class maximum result is higher than the control maximum result; 83 is higher than 67. After doing the pre-test and post-test, the researcher compared both of the result of pre-test and post-test from the experimental and control classes. The comparison test result of pre-test and post-test from the experimental and control classes were showed in the following table:

Table 5. The Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test of the Experimental and Control Classes

Test Result The Class	Pre-test	Post-test
Experimental Class	\bar{x} = 48.30 S = S ² = 38.31	\bar{x} = 65.47 S = S ² = 72.42
Control Class	\bar{x} = 47.26 S = S ² = 58.98	\bar{x} = 54.60 S = S ² = 33.40

Based on the table above, the post-test result of the experimental class is higher than the pre-test result (65.47 is higher than 48.30). It means that the treatment that has been used by the researcher can help the students in improving their writing skill. The comparison of the post-test results between experimental and control classes show that the control class test result is lower than experimental class. It is indicated by the mean score of the post-test result of control class (54.60) is lower than the experimental post-test result (65.47). It means that the students who are treated by using Discrete-Point Task give better result than the students who are taught by using conventional technique.

Analysis of the Data

In analyzing the data of this research, the researcher used two kinds of data analysis; pre-test and post-test from the experimental and control classes. The pre test of the two classes showed that both experimental and control classes were equal at the beginning of the research because they were normal and homogenous. The researcher used the Lilliefors test to find out whether the data distributed normally or not and used F-test to obtain whether the data of two classes were homogenous or not.

a. Normality Test of Pre-test Score of Control and Experimental Class

After analyzing the data using SPSS 22, the result used to find out whether the instrument was distributed normally or not. The Data is normal if Sig. (p value) > 0.05 and is not normal if Sig. (p value) < 0.05. The output of normality test using SPSS 22 is shown in table 4.8

Table 6
Test Normality Using SPSS 22

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest control	,162	24	,102	,959	24	,418
Pretest experiment	,165	24	,090	,951	24	,288
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.						
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Based on the table above the Sig. (p value) of pre-test control is 0,102 which is bigger than 0.05, it means that the data distributed normally and the Sig. (p value) of post-test experiment is 0,090 which is bigger than 0.05, it means that the data distributed normally. On the table above there are Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk. The normality Test of Post-test Score of Control and Experiment Class can be seen after analyzing the data using SPSS 22, the result used to find out whether the instrument was distributed normally or not. The Data is normal if Sig. (p value) > 0.05 and is not normal if Sig. (p value) < 0.05. The output of normality test using SPSS 22 is shown in table 7.

Table 7. Test Normality Using SPSS 22

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	T	Df
data	Equal variances assumed	.225	.616	-,589	46
	Variances no assumed				

Based on the table above the Sig. (p value) of post-test control is 0.085 which is bigger than 0.05, it means that the data distributed normally and the Sig. (p value) of post-test experiment is 0.147 which is bigger than 0.05, it means that the data also distributed normally. The normality of the post-test data was used to test the hypothesis was accepted or not. This data showed the improving of this research after comparing with the pre-test. When the data had improving, it proved that there was significant effect in this research.

The normality of pre-test data was used as the condition for the data can be analyzed by using t test or not. This data were comparing with the post-test of experimental data for analyzing the hypothesis. So, by comparing both of the test, the hypothesis showed that there was significant different between experiment and control class.

Homogeneity Test of the Pre-test Score from the Control and the Experiment Class.

The data from the pre-test of the experimental and control class were homogeneity as presented in the table 8 below:

Table 8. Test Homogeneity test of Pre-test Using SPSS 22

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	T	Df
data	Equal variances assumed	2.837	,099	-5.093	46
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.093	40.909

One of the ways to determine the data is homogenous or not is to compare the Sig.(p value) with the level of significance which is 0.05. The Sig. (p value) is $0.616 > 0.05$, then the data is homogenous. This sample was also used to test the hypothesis. Before testing the hypothesis by using t test, the sample had to be homogenous. So, the hypothesis can be analyzed because both pre and post-test had been homogenous. Homogeneity Test of the Post-test Score from the Experiment Class and the Control Class can be seen on one of the ways to determine the data is homogenous or not is to compare the Sig.(p value) with the level of significance which is 0.05. The Sig. (p value) is $0.099 > 0.05$. Then it can be concluded that the data is homogenous. This homogeneity of both post-test and control class had function to see between the two classes are homogenous or not. When they are homogenous, the t test as the formula to test the hypothesis can be analyzed.

Table 9. Test Homogeneity test of Post-test Using SPSS 22

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Posttest control	,166	24	,084	,961	24	,455
Posttest experiment	,154	24	,147	,943	24	,194
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.						
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Testing the Hypothesis

After finding the mean score, the standard deviation, and the value of the t-obtained by using t-test of the both classes, the hypothesis was tested. The hypothesis of this research was tested as follow: the first hypothesis of this research, there is any significant Effect Discrete-Point Task towards Students Writing Performance at the ten grade SMK Cendana. To measure whether the researcher accepted or reject the hypothesis, the researcher used the formula task to find whether H_0 or H_a is accepted or rejected through comparing the pre-test and post-test of experimental class. The value of the t-obtained was compared with the value of the t-table, it means that H_a accepted and H_0 rejected ($t_{\text{obtained}} > t_{\text{table}}$) as explanation: It was found that t_{obtained} was -8,135 and the t_{table} for degrees of freedom was 42 with level of significance 0.05 was 1.645. Through comparing the t_{obtained} (-8,135) and t_{table} (1.645), it was found that the $-t_{\text{obtained}}$ (negative) was smaller than the t_{table} .

Table 10. T test For Pre-test and Post-test Experimental Class

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	t	df
D a t a	Equal variances assumed	2,837	0,099	-5,093	46
	Equal variances not assumed			-5,093	40,909

It was found that t_{obtained} was $-8,135$ and the t_{table} for degrees of freedom was 42 with level of significance 0.05 was 1.645. Through comparing the t_{obtained} ($-8,135$) and t_{table} (1.645), it was found that the $-t_{\text{obtained}}$ (negative) was smaller than the t_{table} .

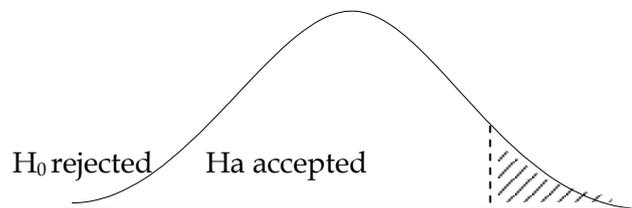


Figure 1: The Curve of the t-test Result in the Pre-test and the Post-test of Experimental Class

From the data, it shows that the descriptive hypothesis (H_a) is accepted or the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected because the t_{obtained} was higher than the t_{table} . So, it can be concluded that there is a significant Effect of using Discrete-Point Task toward students' writing Performance

The Second Hypothesis

The second hypothesis was there is any significant difference of the students' writing Performance between the students who are taught by Discrete-Point Task and the students who are taught by using conventional technique in the classroom as following explanation: that to measure whether the researcher accepted or reject the hypothesis, the researcher used the formula two tails test to find whether H_0 or H_a was accepted or rejected through comparing the post test of experimental and control classes. The value of the t_{obtained} was compared with the value of the t_{table} , it means that H_a accepted and H_0 rejected ($t_{\text{obtained}} > t_{\text{table}}$) as explanation below:

Table 11. T test For Post-test of Control and Experimental Class

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	T	df
Data	Equal variances assumed	2,602	,114	-8,135	46
	Equal variances not assumed			-8,135	42,017

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It was found that $t_{obtained}$ is -5,093 and the t_{table} for degrees of freedom 46 with $\alpha=0.05$ is 1.645. Through comparing the $t_{obtained}$ (-5,093) and t_{table} (1.645), it was found that the $-t_{obtained}$ was smaller than the t_{table} .

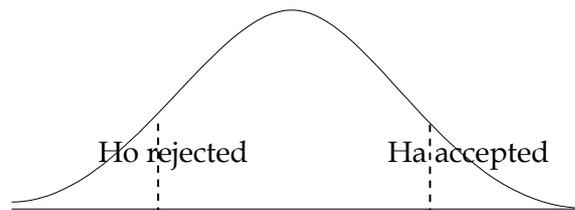


Figure 2: The Curve of the t-test Result in the Post-test of Experimental and Control Classes

From the data in curve above, it means that the descriptive hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. So, it can be concluded that there is any significant difference of the students' writing Performance between the students who are taught by Discrete-Point Task and the students who are taught by using conventional technique in the classroom. So, it can be said that there is any difference of the students' writing performance between the students who are taught by using Discrete-Point Task and the students who are not taught by using task based learning.

The Third Hypothesis

The third hypothesis is the students' writing performance that is taught by Discrete-Point Task is better than the students who are taught by using conventional technique as follows: H_a : the students' writing performance that is taught by Discrete-Point Task is better than the students who are taught by using conventional technique; and H_0 : the students' writing performance that is taught by Discrete-Point Task is not better than the students who are taught by using conventional technique. To prove this hypothesis, the researcher used the formula one tail test-right to find whether H_0 or H_a is accepted or rejected through comparing the post test of experimental and control classes. The value of the t -obtained was compared with the value of the t -table, it means that H_a accepted and H_0 rejected ($t_{obtained} > t_{table}$) as explanation below:

Table 12. The third Hypothesis result

The Class	Test Result	
	Pre-test	Post-test
Experimental Class	$\bar{x} = 48.30$ $S =$ $S^2 = 38.31$	$\bar{x} = 66.78$ $S =$ $S^2 = 72.42$
Control Class	$\bar{x} = 47.26$ $S =$ $S^2 = 58.98$	$\bar{x} = 54.60$ $S =$ $S^2 = 33.40$

From the calculation of post-test score of the experimental and control classes, the mean score of the post-test in experimental class (\bar{x}_1) is 66.78. It is greater than the mean score of the post-test in control class (\bar{x}_2) 54.56.

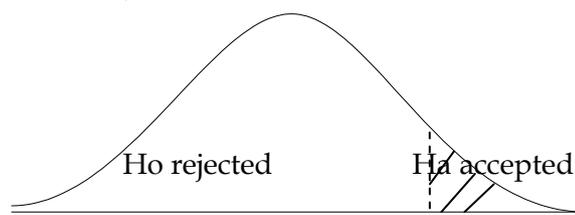


Figure 3. The Curve of the t-test Result in the Post-test of Experimental and Control Classes

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From the data in curve above, it means that the descriptive hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected. So, it can be concluded that the students' writing Performance that are taught by Discrete-Point Task is better than the students who are taught by using conventional technique.

Discussions

Based on the hypothesis result, researcher found that using Discrete-Point Task toward students' test result in writing gave significant effect on students written test result. Based on the result from the data analysis, it can be seen that H_o was rejected for first, second and third hypothesis. It means H_a was accepted. There were some explanations about the testing hypothesis above. First of testing hypothesis, the researcher found that using Discrete-Point Task towards students' writing Performance gave significant effect on students' writing Performance.

It can be showed from the mean score of pre-test and post-test in experimental class. The mean score of pre-test of experimental class was 48.30 and the mean score of post-test was 66.78. It means that the mean score of post-test of experimental class was higher than the mean score of pre-test of experimental class. The t-test result is showed that the $t_{obtained}$ was 8.25 higher than the t_{table} 1.960. The differences of both classes was caused by the treatment given. The fact showed that the Discrete-Point Task had significant effect in increasing the students' writing performance. So that, the students' curiosity can be improved. It can be seen from the students' writing performance which is showed by the achievement of the students' score.

In the second hypothesis, it has also proven that the using Discrete-Point Task towards students' writing Performance gave significant difference on students' writing Performance. It can be showed from the mean score of post-test in experimental and control class. The mean score of post-test of experimental class was 66.78 and control class was 54.56. It means that the mean score of post-test of experimental class was higher than the mean score of post-test of control class. The t-test result is showed that the $t_{obtained}$ was higher than the t_{table} , $5.15 > 1.960$. The difference of both classes was caused by the treatment given. The fact showed that the Discrete-Point Task had significant difference in increasing the students' writing Performance.

Finally, the data of the experimental and control classes were also obtained to indicate the students who are taught by using Discrete-Point Task is better than the students who are not taught by Discrete-Point Task from the data that was obtained. It was found that the mean score of post-test of the experimental class ($X_{TKJ.1}$) was higher than the mean score of the control class ($X_{TKJ.2}$) $66.78 > 54.56$. It can be concluded that Discrete-Point Task can help students to increase their writing Performance.

CONCLUSIONS

Discrete-Point Task could help students to improve their writing and mastering it. Discrete-Point Task as a powerful approach for teaching English learning. From the research, the researcher also found that the students who used Discrete-Point Task were more interesting in learning writing. They would be easier to focus on the materials and the students be encouraged to produce as much language possible. It can concluded that, Discrete-Point Task is the useful in helping the students to improve their writing Performance

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