

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a brief description of the entire contents of the research. In detail, this chapter presents research background, research questions, research purposes, significances, rationale, hypothesis, and research methodology.

#### **A. Background of Research**

This research is aimed to examine the significant level of the use of sentence combining strategy to enhance students' ability in sentence structure. Sentence structure is a necessary part of writing. In syntactical perspective, the meaning of a sentence can base on its structure. Therefore, teaching structure of a sentence is important to build well-formed sentences so that students' writing will be technically correct.

Writing is one of language skills that need a great attention since it is a difficult skill to master. It used to be regarded as a tedious activity that takes a lot of efforts. Even, it is done in one's own language. Based on Hancock & McDonald (2000), writing has a bad view either for teacher or students. For the teacher, it means the activity to mark a pile of compositions that they are almost always worse than expected. For the students, writing is a boring core, and it is an "opportunity" to make a lot of mistakes.

From the statements, neither teacher nor students consider that writing is complicated. On the other hand, writing is one of the ways people convey their ideas, arguments, and opinions in written form. Brown (2001: 336) also argues that "writing is a process of thinking". Thus, writing helps students to explore the

language deeply and carefully. It also develops them in reinforcing vocabulary, grammar, and other competencies.

According to Eisa & Balal (2015:19), there are five factors that influence students' ability in writing: (1) Most of the students are not introduced to parts of speech; (2) The time allocated for writing skills are extremely rare; (3) For teachers, students' encouragement in writing skills is entirely rare; (4) There is an absence in teaching lessons of English structure; (5) Students, mistakes in writing skills are not discussed in the presence of students.

This research focuses on the first and fourth factors. From those factors, constructing a well-formed sentence is one area of writing that important to learn by students. Harmer (2007) argues that the sequence of sentence elements is crucial because a good sentence depends on putting a number of elements in the right order, in this case, subject, verb, complement, and modifier. Consequently, the elements have to go in the correct order to make the sentence works. A sentence works if it conveys a clear meaning. Thus, in order to improve the students' difficulties in writing, students need a guide to know how to generate a good sentence by using the part of speech and the variety of sentence structure in their sentences. Students also should learn how to write a strong sentence and convey their intended meaning.

Sentence structure has been a challenging part in writing. Based on the preliminary study to one of the state vocational high schools in Bandung, students' ability in making a good sentence is still questionable. It is also supported by finding of research conducted by Harris (2014), which sentence structure is one of

student difficulties in writing. However, a sentence is a fundamental part of the writing process. The sentences are used to communicate a complete thought before students convey their ideas become a coherent paragraph. Hence, sentence structure influences students' comprehension in understanding the meaning of a word, a sentence, and whole text. It also affects student' ability in utilizing the function of the word classes, word order, grammatical elements, and punctuation.

To overcome the difficulties in sentence structure, there is a writing intervention created in the 1960s called *Sentence Combining (SC)* (Sadler, B. & Asaro, K, 2010). More than 80 studies show that sentence combining is an effective strategy for helping the student to produce syntactically mature sentence (Cooper, 1973; Crowhust & Piche, 1979; Hunt, 1965; O'Hare, 1973; Sadler & Graham, 2005 cited in Graham et al, 2007). Sentence combining provides structured practice which manipulates and rewrites a basic kernel sentence into more syntactically and varied sentence (Ney, 1981; Strong, 1976 in Sadler, B. & Asaro, K, 2010). Besides, sentence combining helps writers to change short sentences or choppy sentences into well-formed, syntactical, and effective sentences, it also assists writers who produce sentences that overly complex. However, although this strategy is effective and has strong evidence in improving students writing, sentence combining is not widely used in teaching writing. The sources and the research about this strategy are limited and difficult to find. Therefore, this research used *Sentence Combining* to develop students' sentence structure, as a part of enhancing students' writing skills. In detailed, the research

is entitled *“Enhancing Students’ Ability in Sentence Structure by Using Sentence Combining”*

## **B. Research Questions**

This research attempts to solve the following questions.

1. What is the students’ ability in sentence structure before implementing the sentence combining?
2. What is the students’ ability in sentence structure after implementing the sentence combining?
3. How significant is the improvement of students’ ability in sentence structure with the sentence combining?

## **Purposes of Research**

With regard to the research questions above, the purposes of this research are:

1. To find out the students’ ability in sentence structure after implementing the sentence combining.
2. To find out the students’ ability in sentence structure after implementing the sentence combining.
3. To find out the significant improvement of students’ ability in sentence structure with the sentence combining.

## **C. Significances of Research**

The research is expected to provide theoretical and practical significances for the teacher, student, and the next researcher.

## **1. Theoretical Significances**

- a. For a teacher, the result of the research can give the information about the strategy to develop students' ability in writing skills, particularly in sentence structure. Furthermore, it supports prior research on the use of the strategy called Sentence Combining.
- b. For next researcher, the result of the research can be a reference for the next researcher to create a new investigation with a similar topic. It also can be a source to enhance researcher's ability in developing knowledge and teaching writing, particularly sentence structure.

## **2. Practical Significances**

- a. For a teacher, the result of the research can support English teachers to apply alternative sentence structure development strategies, as a part of writing skills. For instance, the SC strategy potentially enhances students' ability in making a well-formed sentence and students' writing interest.
- b. For students, this research hopefully can help students to learn writing sentence easily in order to write the sentence structurally and grammatically by using one of strategies namely sentence combining strategy.

## **D. Rationale**

This research concerns the area of writing skills, students' ability in sentence structure, the importance of sentence, and the basic concept of sentence combining.

“Writing is recursive. It goes back and forth we plan a little, put words on paper, stop to plan when we want to say next, go back and change a sentence, or

change our minds altogether” (Palmer,1994:5). Based on the statement, there are varieties of the definition of writing. Writing can be defined as ability, activity and a process. First, writing is often claimed as an ability to determine how well people learn a language. Second, writing is an activity to convey the ideas in a written form. Third, writing is a complex process to figure out ideas and translate them into understandable sentences in more than one occasion.

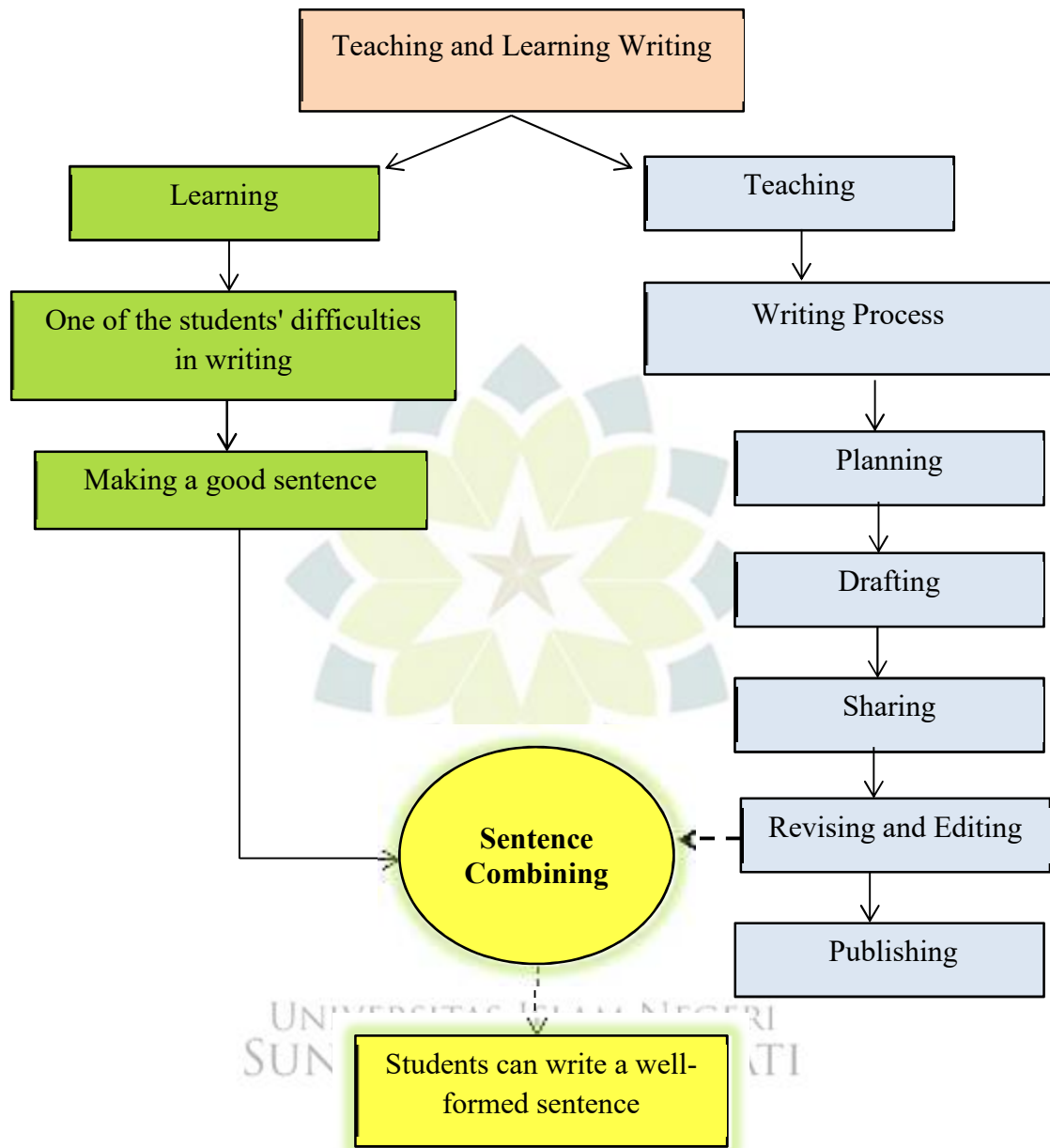
Developing writing skills for students are useful for a wide variety of purposes. Harmer (2004) explains in the most exams, students’ writing proficiency is important to measure their knowledge. Therefore, writing regularly used to test people knowledge in a formal setting. Besides learning writing can benefit to test their knowledge, it also can develop students' skills as writers. As Harmer (2007:112) states that "It is helpful to make a distinction between writing for learning and writing for writing". It means the most important in teaching writing; the student is able to compose a text based on their needs and wants. In addition, students should know how to write a formal and private letter, reply an advertisement, make a note in the interview and so on. The teacher also can develop students' interest in writing whether for academic writing or creative writing such as short story, comic etc.

One of the significant abilities that a writer needs in composing a text is using sentence structure to enhance and clarify the meaning. According to Fromklin et. al, (2011) a grammatical sentence does not depend on having heard the sentence before but students’ syntactical knowledge tells themselves that it is grammatical. Therefore, students need guidance how to construct the well-organized and

grammatical sentence. *Sentence combining (SC)* is a strategy which has a purpose to develop that ability (Dean, 2008). A writing intervention called *sentence combining (SC)* is one way to teach how to construct well-formed sentences (Saddler & Asaro-Saddler, 2010). Sentence combining (SC) developed in the 1960s when the researcher and a teacher were looking for an alternative to teach formal grammar such as part of speech, sentence structure, sentence diagraming etc. SC provides structural practices that ask students to change and rewrite a basic kernel into a complex sentence. Dean (2008) also states that SC helps students not only develop new strategies for expressing ideas but also find new ideas to express. For those reasons, sentence combining will be appropriate to overcome students' difficulties in sentence structure.

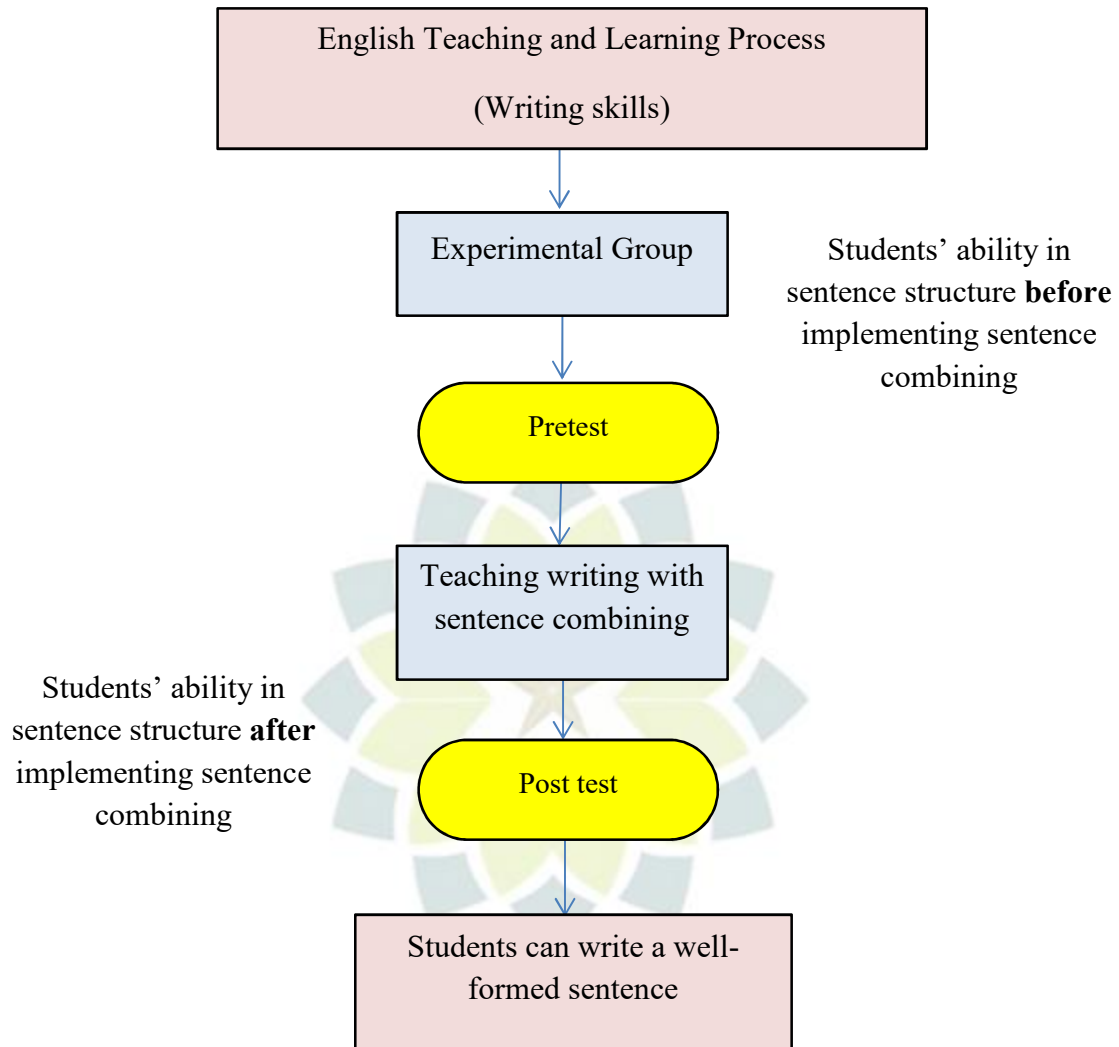
Sentence combining happens in two different ways, there are open-ended and cued (Dean, 2008). In an open-ended way, students are asked to combine at least two short sentences into one single sentence in any way they can. On the other hands, cued way provides the cues, the students are asked to combine at least two sentences into one single sentence. Open-ended combining makes the students have an opportunity to combine based their own compositions while cued combining makes the students should combine the sentences and linking them by using the cues.

In conclusion, the first core competence of learning writing is students can be able to write what student know about a topic by creating the well-formed and understandable sentence so that the intended meaning of the students' writing can engage the readers.



**Figure 1.1 The Use of SC in Learning Process**





**Figure 1.2 Research Frameworks**

Based on the research framework 1.1 presented above the SC can be conducted in third part of writing process called revising and editing. Furthermore, in the research framework 1.2, the process of this research consists of three key steps that are firstly giving pre-test, secondly teaching writing skill, and lastly giving post-test. The results of those steps will provide the answer for the question of significant of enhancement of students' ability in sentence structure with *Sentence Combining*.

## **E. Hypothesis**

According to Sugiyono (2015), that hypothesis is a temporary assumption about neither research question nor research problem is simply based on theories, not empirical data. This research has two variables. The first variable is the sentence combining as the "X" variable; the second is the students' ability in sentence structure as the "Y" variable. Thus, this research formulates the associative hypothesis as follows.

1. Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is accepted if  $t_{\text{count}} < t_{\text{table}}$  to mean that there is no significant improvement of students' sentence structure ability after using sentence combining.
2. Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted if  $t_{\text{count}} > t_{\text{table}}$  to mean there is the significant improvement of students' sentence structure ability after using sentence combining.

## **F. Research Methodology**

This research is quantitative research which is aimed at determining whether the variable (X) influences the outcome or not. As Creswell (2012) states that quantitative is the best design to use to research cause and effect relationships. In this case, the SC influences students' ability in sentence structure.

The type of this research design is time series. Since the participant of the research is limited so that this research takes one class purely. The circumstances of the school setting also cannot support the assignment of group randomly because the school party does not allow forming the artificial group. Randomly assignment also can disrupt classroom learning. According to Creswell (2012:

318), if the design is without random assignment, the single-subject design is a quasi-experimental design. Nunan (1992) and Cresswell (2012) noted that quasi-experiment with time series design consists of both pre-test and post-test to only one group. For these reasons, this research is a quasi-experimental which takes one class and consists of pre-test and post-test.

### **1. Research Site**

This research is conducted in SMK Negeri 6 Kota Bandung, which is located on Jalan Soekarno-Hatta, Gedebage, Kota Bandung. This school is chosen based on three reasons, there are; Firstly, the background of the school is appropriate for the problem of the research. Khoerul (2017), said in the vocational high school, students are prepared to be able to take part in the business & industry work. Therefore, the teacher emphasizes the speaking skill than writing skill. However, it makes the period allocated for writing skill is rare. For EFL students, writing is an important skill that students also need to be mastered because it gives four benefits for students. They are reinforcement, language development, learning style and writing skills (Harmer, 2004; Byrne, 1988). Secondly, the school responsively allows conducting this research because the teachers need to decide a writing intervention which is suitable to be applied for the students. Thirdly, it was found that students are lack of knowledge about a part of speech and sentence structure.

## **2. Research Subject**

### **a. Population**

According to Creswell (2012), that population is a group of individuals who have the same characteristic. Therefore, the target population of this research is a group of individuals which has the common characteristic that can be identified and studied. In this case, the target population of this research consists of the eleventh-grade vocational high school students. Moreover, there are different majors of eleventh grades. Each major has four classes. However, the several of them were conducting an internship, so that not all majors can participate in this research. From the observation, the major of Architecture Engineering (Teknik Gambar Bangunan) has the appropriate character with the research background. Thus, the major of Architecture Engineering (*Teknik Gambar Bangunan*) is chosen as the population.

### **b. Sample**

According to MacDonald & Headlam (1986) sample is the section of the wider population that will be engaged in the survey and sampling is the process of identifying the specific participant from the population. Hence, the selection of a sample of individuals should be representative of the entire population. Since several classes of eleventh grade were conducting internship and could not participate in this research. Therefore, the school only allows taking one class. From four classes of Architecture Engineering, the class of XI TGB 1 is taken as samples. The class consists of 35 students. Based on the teacher recommendation this class is reported to have almost equal average scores of English subject.

Moreover, this class is regarded the most conducive and active class than the other one. For this reasons, the students' characteristics can be an appropriate sample for this research. Thus, the class of XI TGB 1 is taken as the experimental class that will be given treatments by using the *Sentence Combining* during the process of teaching and learning writing skills.

**Table 1.1 The Sample of Research as Experimental Class**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
XI TGB 1	26	9	35

### **3. Research Procedure**

This research provides five systematical steps. As stated by Creswell (2012:170), there are five steps in the process of quantitative data collection.

- a. The first step is obtaining permission from the parties of SMK Negeri 6 Kota Bandung.
- b. The next step is selecting one class of eleventh-grade students in SMK N 6 Kota Bandung as the research participants.
- c. The third, preparing writing sentence test as the research instrument to be used for pre-test and post-test.
- d. The fourth, the instruments used be assessed for its reliability and validity.

Finally, the last is collecting the data. It needs to be standardized so that it can be appropriate for the procedure of the research. There is the table of research schedule that lists activities in data collection.

**Table 1.2 The Research Schedule in SMKN 6 Kota Bandung**

No.	Time	Activity	Target
1.	March 2017	Giving permission letter of research to SMK N 6 Bandung	Headmaster, Curriculum Staff, Administration Staff, English Teacher
2.	April 2017	Administering Try-out (Examining the pre-test worksheet) 30 minute.	XI TAV 3
3.	April 2017	Administering Pre-test (30 minutes) in Experimental class	XI TGB 1
4.	May 2017 (1 meetings)	The process of teaching and learning sentence structure development as a part of writing skills	
		Teaching with <i>Sentence Combining</i>	XI TGB I
5.	May 2017 (1 meeting)	The process of teaching and learning sentence structure development as a part of writing skills	
		Teaching with <i>Sentence Combining</i>	XI TGB I
6.	May 2017 (1 meeting)	The process of teaching and learning sentence structure development as a part of writing skills	
		Teaching with <i>Sentence Combining</i>	XI TGB I
7.	June 2017	Administering Post-test in Experimental class	XI TGB I

#### 4. Research Instruments

In this quasi-experimental research, the instruments used to collect the quantitative data only consist of pre-test and post-test. In addition, there are two steps of data collection:

##### a. Pretest

According to Creswell (2012: 297) argues that "A pretest provides a measure of some attributes or characteristics that you assess for participants in an experiment before they receive a treatment". Hence, the pre-test is used to measure students' ability in sentence structure before the teacher gives a treatment. The pre-test is administering a test to the experimental class which has 35 students. *Sentence combining* is the material in the pre-test. The pre-test is conducted in one meeting and for thirty minutes.

The pre-test exercise consists of 16 questions which each part has different instructions and points. The exercise is divided into four parts: The first, question number 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 are multiple choices (1 point). Students are asked to choose the correct answer from the A, B, C, D. It is the basic level of the entire exercises because it provides a choice for the students, so that although the students have not learned about sentence combining, the students automatically can answer the exercise by analyzing and comparing between the question and the answer. The second, question number 8,9,10 are combining the sentences with the direct clues (2 points). The students are asked to write and combine the sentences into one single sentence by using the available clues. Sentence combining occurs in two ways: open-ended and cued sentence (Dean, 2008) and it is cued sentence

combining. The third, question number 11, 12 combining the sentences by selecting the correct clues (2 points). The students are asked to write and combine the sentences into one single sentence and select the appropriate clues to connect the sentences. The fourth, question number 13,14,15,16 are combining the sentences in any way the student can (2 points). It is the open-ended sentence combining. Students are asked to combine the sentences in the way they can.

It will be measured by the formula:

The total of the correct answer x 4

$$25 \times 4 = 100$$

b. Post test

The last is administering post-test to the two classes. Likewise, Creswell (2012) explains about pretest that is a test before treatment, while a post test is measuring students' ability in sentence structure after students received the treatment. In this post-test, the same material and exercise instruction in the last pre-test is provided for students. Post-test is conducted in one meeting and for thirty minutes.

## 5. Data Analysis

There are two main steps of analysis data. The first is analyzing try-out score of the classes which are not the experimental to determine validity and reliability of exercise in the pretest worksheet. The level of difficulty and difference competence will be measured by using application of ANATES. The second is analyzing data of pre-test and post-test scores by. the data are analyzed quantitatively by using t-test. The steps are provided below.



**a. Normality Test**

1) Calculating Range (R) of Data

$$R = H - L + 1$$

Note: R = it is to find out the distribution of the data before testing The Length of Class Interval

H = the highest score

L = the lowest score

(Rahayu, 2016)

2) Calculating the Class interval (K)

$$K = 1 + 3,3 \log n$$

Note: K = it is to find out the number of class in data distribution

n = the number of students

(Rahayu, 2016)

3) Calculating The Length of Class Interval

$$P = \frac{R}{K}$$

Note: P = it is to find out the length of each class interval

R = Range

K = Class Interval

(Rahayu, 2016)

4) Making table Frequency distribution based on the data the pretest and post-test score, class interval, and the length of the class interval.

**Table 1.3 The example of Table Frequency Distribution**

<i>No.</i>	<i>Class interval</i>	<i>Fi</i>	<i>Xi</i>	<i>Xi<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>fi.Xi</i>	<i>Fi.Xi<sup>2</sup></i>

- 5) Calculating the mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) by using the formula:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum X}{n}$$

(Gunawan, 2015:11 and Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991:162)

Note: mean = to find out the average of the number of the score

$\sum X$  = Addition of total scores

$n$  = Total numbers of students (sample) in a class

- 6) Calculating Median (Md)

$$Md = b + p \left( \frac{\frac{1}{2}n - f_{kb}}{f_i} \right)$$

Note:  $b$  = Class limit

$K$  = Class interval

$p$  = the length of class interval

$n$  = the number of students

$f$  = frequency

(Rahayu, 2016)

- 7) Calculating standard deviation (S) by using the formula:

$$S = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (X - \bar{X})^2}{n - 1}}$$

(Gunawan, 2015: 28) and Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991:173)

Note:  $\sum X$  = Addition of total scores  $\bar{X}$  = Mean of scores

$n$  = Total numbers of students in a class

- 8) Determining the frequency of distribution of normality of pretest and post test data.

**Table 1.4 The Example of Frequency Distribution of Normality**

Class Interval	Class Limit	Z <sub>count</sub>	Z <sub>table</sub>	Li	Ei	Oi	x <sup>2</sup>

**b.** The testing hypothesis with t-test paired (before-after) formula.

- 1) Testing the differences between the mean of pretest score and posttest score using the formula:

a) Mean of difference ( $\bar{B}$ )

$$\bar{B} = \frac{\sum B_i}{n}$$

b) Standard deviation of difference ( $S_B$ )

$$S_B = \sqrt{\frac{n \sum B_i^2 - (\sum B_i)^2}{n(n-1)}}$$

c) Calculating  $t_{\text{count}}$

$$t = \frac{\bar{B}}{S_b / \sqrt{n}}$$

d) Determining  $t_{\text{table}}$

$$t_{\text{table}} = t_{(\alpha)(dk)} = t_{(\alpha)(n-1)}$$

$\bar{B}$  = Mean of difference (*rata – rata beda*)

$S_b$  = Standard Deviation of Difference (*Simpangan baku dari beda*)

$n$  = the number of data

$dk$  = degree of freedom

2) Determining the hypothesis based on the following statement below:

(1)  $H_0$  accepted if  $t_{\text{counted}} < t_{\text{table}}$ , it means that there is no significant improvement of students' sentence structure ability before using SC.

(2)  $H_a$  accepted if  $t_{\text{counted}} > t_{\text{table}}$ , it means that there is a significant improvement of students' sentence structure ability after using SC.

**c. Data Normal Gain (N-Gain)**

This procedure is to find out the improvement of students' learning outcomes by analyzing the results the test before and after learning. The N-Gain formula is present as follows:

$$N - Gain = \frac{\text{Post-test score} - \text{Pre-test score}}{\text{s maximum score} - \text{Pre-test score}} \quad \text{with category :}$$

**Table 1.5 Normal Gain Interpretations**

Score	Interpretation
0,00-0,30	Low
0,31-0,70	Medium
0,71-1	High