

# Critical Incident Technique in Teaching EFL Writing: A Study at One of Public Schools in Southeast Sulawesi

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## Article Info

## Abstract

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This study aims to quantitatively investigate the effect of Critical Incidents Technique on students' writing aspects, particularly vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The design of this research is pre-experimental one group pre-test and post-test design. The sample of this study was taken through purposive sampling based on the students' writing score in EFL class. The students' writing aspect was successfully improved through Critical Incident Technique (CIT) based on the writing score. This can be seen on the students' mean score in three aspects of writing in pre-test was 48,39, while the students' mean score in post-test was 81,50. There were 33,11 points differences between the students' mean score in pre-test and post-test. This implies that students' writing in content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanic aspects can be improved using CIT. Although this research employs only quantitative design, it is recommended to have further investigation using qualitative study.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Developed in the nineteenth century by John Flanagan, an American researcher in the field of occupational psychology, the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) is a technique that helps people deal with stressful situations (Flanagan, 1954). Its original emphasis on human behavior reflects the dominant positivist research paradigm at the time of its publication. Flanagan created it in order to collect and analyze objective, reliable information about specific activities that he was involved in. He hoped that the discovery would serve as a foundation for practical problem solving in areas such as employee evaluation and performance enhancement. For him, cognitive inquiry techniques (CIT) were a set of procedures for collecting direct observation of human behavior in such a way that their potential usefulness in solving practical problems and developing broad psychological principles could be maximized. The procedures for collecting observed incidents of special significance and meeting systematically defined criteria are laid out in detail in this document. Flanagan (1954) proposes a CIT process that is clearly defined, systematic, and sequential, and that consists of the five steps listed below:

- a. Identify the overall objectives

The first and most important CIT step is to define the activity to be studied and to determine its purpose. Developing a research question and providing direction for the data analysis and presentation of the findings are both aided by this step. When the goal is stated

succinctly and clearly, it can be reduced to a functional description that identifies the activity's objective as well as what someone participating in the activity is expected to accomplish.

b. Define the objectives and specifications.

A detailed and defensible plan of attack for data collection must be developed in order to accomplish this goal. This includes, most importantly, the identification of critical incidents as well as the recording of critical behavior.

c. Compile the information

This step entails compiling a list of critical incidents that are related to the activity under investigation.

d. Conduct an investigation into the data

Critical incidents and critical behavior are classified and identified in this step, which is carried out using an inductive data analysis process to achieve this goal. These are arranged into a series of well-defined, mutually exclusive categories and sub-categories, with decreasing generalizability and increasing specificity as they progress through the hierarchy.

Furthermore, Hughes (2006) asserted that CIT is a well-proven qualitative research approach that provides a practical step-by-step approach to collecting and analyzing information about human activities and their significance to the people involved, as it can yield rich, contextualized data that reflects real-life experiences. Hughes (2006) further stated that CIT is a well-proven qualitative research approach that offers a practical step-by-step approach to collecting and analyzing information about human activities and their significance to the people involved. Critical incidents, according to the Institute for Learning, are incidents that, while not necessarily "dramatic," are significant in their impact nonetheless. According to David (1993), people frequently inquire as to what critical incidents are and how to recognize them. The answer, of course, is that critical incidents are not things that exist independently of the observer; rather, critical incidents are created in the same way that all data is created. Critical incidents are caused by the way we perceive a situation: a critical incident is a subjective interpretation of the significance of a particular event or series of events. In other words, CIT is a tried-and-true method of analyzing and generating ideas based on the observed data. According to Soini (2012), this method is also frequently used in science, particularly in fields such as health, medicine, and surgery, where it is used to obtain data that is important to the researcher or students (Branch & Paranjape, 2002; Fook & Cooper, 2003). Even though critical incidents can involve issues of communication, knowledge, treatment by others and by oneself, culture, professionals, or personal relationships, emotions, or beliefs, they become significant for two main reasons: they take the form of an event that causes one to pause and think, or one that raises questions about one's beliefs, values, attitude, or behavior, and the incident has an impact on one's personal and professional learning and teaching. As a result, CIT is used not only in science, but also in almost every aspect of human life, included in education which is also known as Critical Learning Incident.

Critical learning incidents are learning situations that students have identified as being effective, exceptional, or personally meaningful to them (Soini, 2012; Erasmus, 2020). Critical learning incidents have the potential to result in educationally significant learning and personal growth for participants. The term "critical" refers to the fact that the circumstances described in the incident play a significant role in determining the outcome of the learning process, as opposed to "important." The learners themselves describe the critical characters in an incident, which is typical of these types of encounters with critical characters. In other words, incidents can consist of a variety of different types of activity, and they do not necessarily become critical until after they have occurred. Because it reveals successful behaviors by identifying key actions associated between excellent and poor performances, the use of the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) has the potential to be effective in improving teaching (Khandelwal, 2009). From the perspective of students, the current study sought to identify teaching behaviors that distinguish excellent performance from very poor

performance among undergraduate college teachers in India who used CIT in their classes. Sixty female students from three different undergraduate humanities courses participated in this study, and a total of 237 critical incidents were gathered through a combination of questionnaires and personal interviews. Data analysis was carried out using qualitative procedures that emphasized the verbatims that students had generated. In order to categorize the data collected from the incidents, it was subjected to content analysis and divided into six categories. Relationships with students, course preparation and delivery, encouragement, fairness, spending time with students outside of class, and control were the six categories that were identified.

Additionally, not only has CIT been recognized and widely used in scientific research and contexts, but it has also been recognized and widely used in the education field around the world, particularly in the field of Teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language (Walker, 2015; Wijaya & Kuswandoyo, 2019; Megawati, et al, 2020; Khandelwal, 2009; Joshi, 2018; Hall & Townsend, 2017; Erasmus, 2020; Langeling & Pablo, 2016). The research was carried out to examine the teacher's professional development (Joshi, 2018; Erasmus, 2020; Langeling & Pablo, 2016; Wijaya & Kuswandoyo, 2019; Megawati, et al, 2020; Khandelwal, 2009; Liliyana, 2012), language evaluation (Mayhew, 19556), students' learning and perspectives on instructions (Walker, 2015; Ali, et al, 2016; Hall & Townsend, 2017), (Misnawati, 2014; Episiasi, 2017; Yani, 2013). It appears that the research on education that has been conducted using CIT as a set of procedures to obtain and analyze data has been widely publicized and discussed. However, research on ELT methodology has received little, if any, attention, particularly in the area of writing instruction. As demonstrated by Misnawati (2014) and Episiasi (2017), CIT has been shown to aid students in the communication of their ideas through written communication, particularly in the Indonesian context. The researchers are interested in conducting similar research with a different context and purpose in the future. The current study not only examines the students' writing scores after being treated by CIT, but it also investigates to what extent this procedure aids students' writing in various aspects. As a result, the content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics of the document are all examined.

According to Misnawati (2014), after receiving treatment using the CIT procedure, students' ability to write a recount text improves, and they express positive attitudes and feelings toward the procedure. She continued to receive treatments for a total of two cycles and saw a satisfactory improvement in the students' writing scores. She gathered this information through field notes, a writing test, and a questionnaire administered to the students in her class. Also in the same vein, Episiasi (2017) conducted a similar study with different student populations, with the results showing that students' writing scores improve after being exposed to CIT, indicating that the technique is considered to be a useful and effective method of writing instruction. Writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning in form of text for a variety of purposes, including personal pleasure, learning, recording, and handling information and acquiring knowledge, keeping in touch with people, providing entertainment and stimulation to others through writing as a verbal art form and even for provocation through writing as a verbal art form, and even for provocation through writing as a verbal art form, it is noted. While we recognize that not everyone will be involved in many of these applications of writing, we want to ensure that our students have access to the full range of writing opportunities. When it comes to writing, there are several approaches to consider, including the product approach, the process approach, and the genre approach. According to the previous point of view, in order to create a good composition, students should have good technique in transferring their ideas using the proper procedures. Previous knowledge, thought, vocabulary, language use, mechanics, and organization will all have an impact on the ability of learners to compose a good composition. This is because those aspects will support and enhance the content of composition itself. Prior knowledge should be acknowledged and encouraged by the teacher in order for the learners to transfer their thoughts. Consequently, the teacher should use an appropriate technique to explore their prior knowledge in this situation. The teacher can

provide opportunities for students to write down their thoughts without being concerned about making any mistakes or mistakes in their writing. As a result, CIT is regarded as effective and beneficial in assisting them to communicate ideas more effectively as there is a sense of reflection in form of some questions (Erasmus, 2020) in the stage of CIT in teaching and learning process which facilitates the students to convey ideas as well as organize them in a good order. For example, what environment did this incident take place in, what exactly were the circumstances that led to this unfortunate event, What was the pattern of behavior that resulted in the incident, Who were the individuals who were involved, What was the outcome, or what was the result, What are the consequences of continuing to act in the same manner or handling the situation in the same manner in the future, In this situation, which cognitive, affective, or behavioral processes are appropriate based on the context and people involved in the situation, What are the long-term consequences of changing one's behavior, What have we taken away from this experience, and how can we better adapt to or prepare for similar situations in the future, What was my emotional reaction to the situation, Why, What assumptions did I make about the situation, What did I think would happen, Would the outcome have been different if I had taken a different approach to interpreting what I was seeing, Would there have been any other actions that were more successful or beneficial, Why, What will I do if I find myself in a similar situation again. These are questions may help the students to think and get more ideas about what they want to write. Therefore, some researchers (Misnawati, 2014, Yani, 2013, Epsiasi, 2017) decided to try the CIT in teaching.

In university context, critical incidents can include:

1. An aspect of work going particularly well or proving to be difficult or demanding.
2. A piece of work or group which increased awareness or challenged understanding of social justice issues like equality and diversity.
3. An incident involving conflict, hostility, aggression, or criticism: either with colleague or a learner

While at the school level, some teachers use CIT in order to teach speaking skills and to help students come up with ideas for what they want to say (Yani, 2013). Additionally, it can be in the form of an essay as a mid-term or final exam, which allows students to express their ideas, or it can be in the form of a recount form, which allows them to write about their experiences (Misnawati, 2014, Epsiasi, 2017). Critical incidents technique (CIT) is a type of teaching technique that requires students to improve their skills, in this case their writing skills, by exploring their ideas or experiences. It is one of several teaching techniques that are used in schools today. Using the critical incidents technique, the students will create compositions that are based on their own personal experiences or on a memorable moment that they have stored in their minds. It will be easier for the students to produce quality writing if the teacher assists them in properly organizing their composition.

In light of previous related research, the researchers were willing to quantitatively investigate the students' writing scores after they had experienced learning through CIT in the classroom in order to determine what had happened to the students' writing scores after experiencing learning through CIT in the classroom. This research is also conducted in a different setting than the previous studies conducted on the same topic, and an additional focus has been added to this research, which is to investigate the writing aspects that are improved or changed after the treatment has been completed.

## 2. METHODS

The research design used in this study was a pre-experimental in one group, followed by a pre-test and post-test. The pre-experimental method is used to compare the writing abilities of students between the pre-test and the post-test. Using this research method, the students were divided into three groups: pre-test, treatment, and post-test, in order to determine the effectiveness of critical incidents on students' writing abilities. According to Frey (2018), pre-experimental design is a type of research scheme in which a subject or

group is observed after a treatment has been administered in order to determine whether or not the treatment has the potential to cause change (Frey, 2018). Pre-experiments differ from experiments in two ways: (1) they are a more rudimentary form of design in comparison to experiments, devised in order to anticipate any problems that experiments may encounter in terms of causal inference; and (2) they are often preparatory forms of exploration prior to engaging in experimental endeavors, providing cues or indications that an experiment is worth pursuing. Specifically, the researchers wanted to know whether the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) could cause changes in students' writing scores, and if so, whether the changes were positive. They also wanted to know to what extent these positive changes could occur. The illustration of the design is as follow:

**Table 1: One group pre-test post-test design**

Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
$X_1$	Y	$X_2$

(Issaac and William, 1983: 37)

Where:

$X_1$  : The result of pre-test

Y : The treatment given to the group with critical incidents

$X_2$  : The result of post-test

The written test used in this study served as the study's instrument. This was given to the students both before and after the test. Its goal is to assess the students' writing abilities both before and after they have been taught through the use of critical incidents. The task was assigned by the researcher to the students who had been selected as a sample for the research study. The task was completed by the students in the classroom. The students were given 90 minutes to write a recount text consisting of 75-100 words about "an unforgettable experience in their lives" that they would like to remember. The text was composed of at least three paragraphs (Orientation, Events, and Re-orientation), and it was written in a formal style (Jacobs, et al, 1981).

In collecting the data, the researcher carried out the following procedures:

1. Pre-test  
The researcher firstly conducted a pre-test to know the students' writing ability before being given treatment. They were asked to make composition of narrative text.
2. Treatment  
The researcher gave outline about narrative text. In this case, the students were taught under critical incidents technique.
3. Post-test  
This step was carried out after treatment conducted. It was conducted in the last meeting. This post-test aimed to find out the students' writing ability after being taught how to write under critical incidents technique.

For any test purpose or intended use, Jacobs et al. (1981) state that it is always described to obtain the highest reliability possible in any particular test situation, because tests with low reader reliability make the scores available for only limited use in attempting to draw conclusions about the writing abilities of students in the test group. When it comes to the reliability of composition tests, Jacobs et al (1981) state that reader consistency is the most significant concern. The writing of the students was evaluated by two independent raters because the writing test was used as a tool for assessing their performance.

When it came to rating, the researchers (who acted as the teacher in this study) and the English teacher (who acted as the observer) were both able and competent in English

and shared the same background knowledge. According to Jacobs et al (1981), the teacher should be the reader whenever possible. Specifically, the first rater in this instance was an English teacher, and the second rater was the researchers themselves.

In addition, the researcher carried out the following procedures in order to avoid significance difference of students' scores that assessed by the two independent raters:

1. The raters discussed about marking scheme or scoring guidelines to determine the indicators and scores for each aspect in assessing the result of students' writing.
2. The raters started to give the score of the result of students' writing ability by using the criteria as proposed by Jacobs et al (1981).
3. The description of score scale was discussed again after the scoring session to make sure that both raters were not deviating from the guidelines.

In conducting the teaching under critical incidents approach, the researcher applied steps as proposed by Cahyono (2009) that had been described in review of related literature:

1. The researcher explained briefly about critical incidents and the way to assess the students' writing. Furthermore, the researcher explained how to organize the recount text well in terms of generic structure, language use and social function.
2. The researcher gave an example of recount text by writing one theme on the white board to be composed into good recount text.
3. In the final step, the researcher assessed the students writing after being submitted.

Additionally, the composition for scoring writing by Jacobs et al. was utilized by the researcher (1981). It is critical to specify the standard by which the raters, in this case an English teacher and the researchers, will judge the students' performance, as this is one of the most important aspects of this study's main findings. The marking scheme in writing is comprised of five elements, which are content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics, as well as the score proportion of each element, with a maximum score of 100 being awarded for each element.

**Table 2: Composition for Scoring Writing (Jacobs et al, 1981)**

Score	Level	Description
<b>Content</b>	<b>30 – 27</b>	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> knowledgeable, substantive, thorough development of ideas, relevant to assigned topic
	<b>26 – 22</b>	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> some knowledge of the subject, adequate range, limited development of ideas, mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail
	<b>21 – 17</b>	<b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> limited knowledge of subject, little substance, inadequate development of ideas
	<b>16 – 13</b>	<b>VERY POOR:</b> does not show knowledge of the subject, non-substantive, not pertinent, or not enough to evaluate
<b>Organization</b>	<b>20 - 18</b>	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> fluent expression, ideas clearly stated/ supported, succinct, well-organized, logical sequencing, cohesive
	<b>17 – 14</b>	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> somewhat choppy, loosely organized but main ideas stand out, limited support, logical but incomplete sequencing
	<b>13 – 10</b>	<b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> non-fluent, ideas confused or disconnected, lack logical sequencing and development
	<b>9 – 7</b>	<b>VERY POOR:</b> does not communicate, no organization, not enough to evaluate
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<b>20 - 18</b>	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> sophisticated range,

		effective word/ idiom choice and usage, word from mastery, appropriate register
	17 – 14	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> adequate range, occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice/ usage but meaning not obscured
	13 – 10	<b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> limited range, frequent errors of word/ idiom form, usage, choice, meaning confused or obscured
	9 – 7	<b>VERY POOR:</b> essentially translation, little knowledge of English vocabulary
<b>Language Use</b>	25 – 22	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> effective complex constructions, few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order. Function, articles, pronouns, preposition
	21 – 18	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> effective but simple construction, minor problem in complex construction, several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/ function, articles, pronouns, preposition, but meaning seldom obscured
	17 – 11	<b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> major problems in simple/ complex constructions, frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/ function, articles, pronouns, preposition, and or fragment, run-ons, deletions, meaning confused or obscured
	10 – 5	<b>VERY POOR:</b> virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules, dominated by errors, does not communicate, or not enough to evaluate
<b>Mechanics</b>	5	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> demonstrate mastery of convention, few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing
	4	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, but meaning not obscured
	3	<b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, poor handwriting, meaning confused or obscured
	2	<b>VERY POOR:</b> no mastery of conventions, dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, handwriting illegible, or not enough to evaluate

For the purpose of determining the students' writing score based on pre- and post-test results, the above-mentioned writing description has been selected as the marking scheme standard to see whether the CIT causes any positive changes to some elements of students' writing. Due to the fact that the above criteria has been demonstrated to be effective in examining all aspects of writing with the detail indicators (Jacobs et al, 1981), which assist the raters in determining the score.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The recount writing drafts of the students were scored by the raters according to the assessment criteria, and the scores were then analyzed by the researchers in order to determine the range of scores in the pre-test and post-test. The two raters were present for this session, and they were both involved in assigning a grade to the students' writing. The inter-rater agreement was calculated in order to determine the degree to which the two raters agreed in their assessment of the same score. As a result of the inter-rater agreement test, it

was discovered that both raters have a high degree of correlation in their scoring, as indicated by  $R_{xy} = 0,97$ , indicating that they have similar insights and scoring criteria. In order to test the raters' correlation, the raters selected five samples of students' writing to be evaluated according to the criteria that had been agreed upon. Following that, the correlation coefficient (R value) is calculated in order to see the relationships. Appearances suggest that the correlation score is high.

Student writing scores based on pre-test and post-test to determine the overall score of the students, students' writing scores on each element of writing, and an interpretation of the scores in each aspect to determine which aspect is affected the most are the outcomes of this study, which are summarized as follows:

### 3.1 Overall Students' Writing Score based on pre-test and post-test

The findings of this study indicate that students' writing scores significantly improve after they have been exposed to the Critical Incident Technique during the course of their education and learning process, according to the findings. On the pre-test, the average score of the 19 students who participated in this study was 52.82, which was deemed acceptable despite the fact that it did not exceed the school's standard score. Meanwhile, the post-test result was quite impressive, coming in at 87.70, which is significantly higher than the school standard of 76. This year, we can see a significant improvement in the students' writing scores. In line with the findings of Misnawati (2014) and Episiasi (2017) who both obtained similar results, the writing score of the students has been significantly improved in a positive direction. To summarize, CIT in general has the potential to improve students' writing abilities or, at the very least, to cause positive changes in students' writing performance.

### 3.2 Students' writing score in each writing aspect

In this section, the students' pretest and posttest scores were segmented into five aspects of writing, which included their performance on the following aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics of the writing.

#### a. The Students' Performance on Content Aspect

The ability of students to write well-informed ideas that are relevant to the topic under consideration is referred to as the content aspect of writing. In addition to whether or not they are capable of writing, their work must be informative and of high quality. According to the students' pre-test results, the content aspect does not meet the "excellent to very good" criteria, and even some of the students meet the "very poor" criteria in terms of content knowledge. However, after several meetings of learning through CIT, some students may receive "excellent to very good" writing evaluations, and no one will receive a "very poor" rating in the content area. The following table shows the difference between the students' writing performance in the pre-test and post-test in terms of the content aspect:

**Table 3: Students' writing performance on content aspect**

No	Level	Criteria	Frequency		Percentage %	
			Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
1	30 - 27	Excellent to very good	0	11	0.00	57.89
2	26 – 22	Good to average	8	7	42.10	36.84



3	21 – 17	fair to poor	2	1	10.52	5.27
4	16 - 13	very poor	9	0	47.38	0.00
$\Sigma$			19	19	100	100

In terms of content, the scores of the students on the pre-test and post-test were presented in the table above. Based on the pre-test outline provided above, it can be seen that there was no single student who met the criteria for excellent to very good performance. The majority of students met very poor criteria, with nine students falling into this category (47.38 percent ). In the meantime, there were only two students (10.52 percent) who met the criteria for fair to poor performance. Lastly, there were eight students with good to average interval level scores (42.10 percent).

It does not appear that there was a statistically significant difference between the pre- and post-test results, based on the data presented above. There were 11 students (57.89 percent) who met or exceeded the criteria for excellent to very good performance. The fact that there were 7 students (36.84 percent) with good to average levels of achievement and one student (5.27 percent) with fair to poor levels of achievement can also be seen in this chart. There were no students who met the extremely low standards. This finding is also supported by Yani (2013)'s investigation into the use of CIT in speaking skill, which found that students can obtain ideas more easily when using this procedure.

#### **b. The Students' Performance on Organization Aspect**

The students' ability to organize their ideas into paragraphs and turn them into an essay is measured by their organizational skills. It also considers whether or not the organization is cohesive and coherent enough to form the basis of a good piece of work. In addition, based on the comparison score between the pre-test and post-test, CIT can assist students in organizing their ideas. It is possible that this is due to the fact that CIT allows students to tell their incident or significant experience in a sequence and organize order (Misnawati, 2014; Epsiasi, 2017; Erasmus, 2020; Hall & Townsend, 2017; Soini, 2012). The following table shows the difference between the students' writing performance in the pre-test and post-test in terms of organization aspect:

**Table 4: Students' writing performance on vocabulary aspect**

No	Level	Criteria	Frequency		Percentage %	
			Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
1	20 - 18	Excellent to very good	0	9	0.00	47.37
2	17 - 14	Good to average	7	7	36.84	36.84
3	13 - 10	fair to poor	3	3	15.79	15.79
4	9 - 7	very poor	9		47.37	0.00
$\Sigma$			19	19	100	100

The results of the students' pre- and post-tests on organizational skills were presented in the table above. From the pre-test outline provided above, it can be seen that there was no single student who met the criteria for excellent to very good performance. The majority of students fell into very poor criteria, with nine students falling into this category overall (47.37 percent ). Meanwhile, there were three students (15.79 percent) who met the criteria for being fair to poor performers in the class. And the remaining seven students (36.84 percent) received a good to average interval level score on the test.

It does not appear that there was a statistically significant difference between the pre- and post-test results, based on the information presented above. Students who met the

criteria for excellent to very good performance included nine (47.37 percent). The fact that there were seven students (36.84 percent) who were in good to average level and three students (15.79 percent) who were in fair to poor level can also be seen. Unfortunately, there were no students who met extremely low standards.

### c. The Students' Performance on Vocabulary Aspect

The ability of students to use words and idioms appropriately, as well as the ability of the words to be appropriate for the context in which the writer is writing, is referred to as the vocabulary aspect. The following table shows the difference between the students' writing performance in the pre-test and post-test in terms of vocabulary aspect:

**Table 5: Students' writing performance on vocabulary aspect**

No	Level	Criteria	Frequency		Percentage %	
			Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
1	20 - 18	Excellent to very good	0	9	0.00	47.37
2	17 - 14	Good to average	6	8	31.58	42.11
3	13 - 10	fair to poor	1	2	5.26	10.53
4	9 - 7	very poor	12		63.16	0.00
$\Sigma$			19	19	100	100

In terms of vocabulary, the scores of the students in the pre-test and post-test were presented in the table above. Based on the pre-test outline provided above, it can be seen that there was no single student who met the criteria for excellent to very good performance. The majority of students fell into very poor criteria, with 12 students falling into this category (63.16 percent). In the meantime, there was only one student (5.26 percent) who met the criteria for fair to poor performance. And the remaining six students (31.58 percent) received a good to average interval level score on the standardized test.

It does not appear that there was a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test, based on the information presented above. Students who met the criteria for excellent to very good performance totaled nine (47.37 percent). There were 8 students (42.11 percent) who performed at a good to average level, and the remaining 2 students (10.53 percent) performed at a fair to poor level, as can be seen in the table. There were no students who met the extremely low standards.

### d. The Students' Performance on Language Use Aspect

When it comes to language use, the students' ability to write with proper grammar is considered. This includes things like tenses, subject verb agreement, numbers, prepositions, and other similar aspects. It is expected that the students will make few mistakes when it comes to the use of grammar. The following table compares the writing of students in the language use aspect before and after they were treated with a language use intervention:

**Table 6: Students' writing performance on language use aspect**

No	Level	Criteria	Frequency		Percentage %	
			Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
1	25 - 22	Excellent to very good	0	6	0	31.58
2	21 - 18	Good to average	2	10	10.53	52.63

3	17 - 11	fair to poor	3	3	15.79	15.79
4	10 – 5	very poor	14	0	73.68	0.00
$\Sigma$			19	19	100	100

When it comes to language use, the results of the students' pre- and post-tests are shown in the table above. The students' performance in the pre-test was dominated by extremely poor performance criteria. In this level category, there were 14 students (or 73.68 percent) who completed the course. However, there were only two students (10.53 percent) who met the criteria for good to average performance in this category. And the final three students (15.79 percent) met the criteria for fair to poor performance. It also demonstrates that there was no single student who met the criteria for excellent to very good performance.

The data clearly demonstrate that the students' scores on the post-test improved by a statistically significant amount. There were 6 students (31.58 percent) more in excellent to very good level criteria than there were previously, and there was not a single student in very poor level criteria. The majority of students (10 students, or 52.63 percent) fell into the good to average level category, with the remaining three students (15.79 percent) falling into the fair to poor level category.

#### e. The Students' Performance on Mechanics Aspect

It is the ability of students to use capitalization, paragraphing, punctuation, and spelling correctly and appropriately that is measured by the mechanics of a piece of writing. Following is a summary of the students' performance on the pre- and post-tests.

**Table 7: Students' writing performance on mechanics aspect**

No	Level	Criteria	Frequency		Percentage %	
			Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
1	5	Excellent to very good	0	1	0.00	5.26
2	4	Good to average	2	14	10.53	73.68
3	3	fair to poor	5	4	26.32	21.05
4	2	very poor	12	0	63.16	0.00
$\Sigma$			19	19	100	100

The results of the students' pre- and post-tests in term mechanics are summarized in the table above. When comparing the students' scores in the post-test to their scores in the pre-test, it is clear that the students' scores improved. It can be seen that there were no students who met the excellent to very good criteria in the term excellent to very good criteria, but there was one student who met the level in post, indicating a 5.26 percent increase. In the meantime, it has shown significant improvement in the good to average category. In the pre-test, there were only two students (10.53 percent) who were in this level; however, in the post-test, there were 14 students (73.68 percent), or 12 more students (63.15 percent higher). In the fair to poor level category, there were 5 students (26.32 percent) in the pre-test, but only 4 students (21.05 percent) in the post-test, indicating a significant drop in participation. In terms of the very poor level category, the post-test results are 63.16 percent better than the results of the pre-test. During the pre-test, there were 12 students who met this criteria, and there was no student who met this criteria during the post-test.

### 3.3 Interpretation of the students' writing score

Based on the comparison of pre-test and post-test scores for overall writing performance as well as for each writing aspect, it can be concluded that CIT can result in positive changes in students' writing ability after they have gone through the CIT procedure

and learned new skills and strategies. Following the administration of the post-test, the students' writing score improves in a quantitative manner. Accordingly, the findings of this study have contributed to the advancement of research in ELT methodology, particularly in the area of writing instruction in Indonesian context (Walker, 2015; Wijaya & Kuswandoyo, 2019; Megawati, et al., 2020; Khandelwal, 2009; Joshi, 2018; Hall & Townsend, 2017; Erasmus, 2020; Langeling & Pablo, 2016), as well as in TEFL in general (Khandelwal (Misnawati, 2014; Espiasi, 2017). In other words, CIT can be used as a substitute for teachers when it comes to implementing their instructions in a classroom setting (Yani, 2013).

However, although the result indicates that the students' score is improving after the students learn using CIT, there is always limitation which can be further investigated by further researchers. It is possible, and it does happen more frequently than we think people realize, that a critical incident was handled exceptionally well, but this is not always the case. What is lacking, however, is the application of the teachers' knowledge and experience in dealing with this situation as a model for dealing with similar situations in future. Appreciative inquiry is the term used to describe the process of dealing with successes and strengths. This can be a good idea to be examined for the next research.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

According to the data presented above, in the content aspect of writing, there was no student who met the criteria for excellent to very good in the pre-test. The majority of students met very poor criteria, with nine students falling into this category (47.38 percent ). In the meantime, there were only two students (10.52 percent) who met the criteria for fair to poor performance. Lastly, there were eight students with good to average interval level scores (42.10 percent). During the post-test, there were 11 students (57.89 percent) who met the criteria for excellent to very good performance in the previous test. Another interesting finding was that there were 7 students (36.84 percent) who were in good to average level of performance, and one student (5.27 percent) who was in fair to poor performance. Furthermore, it can be seen that there was no single student who met the excellent to very good criteria in terms of organization, particularly when looking at the pre-test mentioned above. The majority of students met very poor criteria, with nine students falling into this category (47.37 percent ). Meanwhile, there were three students (15.79 percent) who met the criteria for being fair to poor performers in the classroom. And the remaining seven students (36.84 percent) received a good to average interval level score on their tests. In the post-test, however, it appears that there was a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test. Students who met the criteria for excellent to very good performance totaled nine (47.37 percent). It can also be seen that there were 7 students (36.84 percent) who were in good to average academic standing, and the remaining three students (15.79 percent) were in fair to poor academic standing. There were no students who met the extremely low standards.

According to the pre-test results, the mean score of the students in the vocabulary section of the test was 53, 16 points. It can also be seen that only 5 out of 19 students (26, 3 percent) achieved the required level of achievement. The mean post-test score for the students was 85, 13, and 17 out of 19 (89, 5 percent) students had already achieved the school's minimum score requirement (65). This means that there were only two students who did not meet the minimum requirements set by the school. Additionally, the mean score of the students can be used to determine the aspect of language use based on the results of the pre-test. The mean pre-test score for the students was 39.37 percent, and there were only two students (10.5%) who received a score higher than the school standard. Contrary to this, the average post-test score was 79.37, and there were 18 students (94.7%) who received a score that was higher than the school standard. Finally, the mean score of the students in the pre-test in terms of mechanics was 52, with a standard deviation of 63. The pre-test yielded

three students (15.8% of the total) who were successful in attaining a score that was above the school standard. Students' mean post-test scores were 80.53, and there were 17 students (89.5%) who achieved the required level of performance. On the basis of the data presented in the preceding table, it can be concluded that the students' mean score on five aspects of writing in the pre-test was 52.82, whereas the students' mean score on the same aspects in the post-test was 87.70. A difference of 34.88 points existed between the mean score of the students in the pre-test and the mean score in the post-test. As a result, it can be concluded that the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) had a statistically significant impact on the students' writing ability. The findings of this study have, as a result, contributed to the advancement of research in ELT methodology, particularly in the area of writing instruction in the Indonesian context (Walker, 2015; Wijaya & Kuswandoyo, 2019; Megawati, et al., 2020; Khandelwal, 2009; Joshi, 2018; Hall & Townsend, 2017; Erasmus, 2020; Langeling & Pablo, 2016); and, more broadly, TEFL methodology (Misnawati, 2014; Espiasi, 2017). In other words, when it comes to putting their instructions into action in a classroom setting, CIT can serve as a substitute for teachers (Yani, 2013).

All in all, it is possible, and it does happen more frequently than we think people realize, that a critical incident was handled exceptionally well, but this is not always the case. What is lacking, however, is the application of the teachers' knowledge and experience in dealing with this situation as a model for dealing with similar situations in future. Appreciative inquiry is the term used to describe the process of dealing with successes and strengths. Critical incident, regardless of how well it was handled, allows us to generate a wealth of data and processes that can be used to inform future practice. In contrast to experience, which enables us to deal effectively with situations we encounter on a regular basis, critical incident analysis allows us to examine incidents that occur less frequently and reflect on them regardless of whether the outcome was positive or negative. It is important to remember that critical incident analysis is primarily concerned with a personal perspective, and while the larger-scale contexts that may arise in your management journey are beyond the scope of this blog, it is important to develop a repertoire of methods for collecting and analysing data that examines any incident critically. Example: It is possible to devise an excellent solution to a problem that will require thousands of dollars to implement because cost was not taken into consideration during the analysis process, but the solution will be brilliant. A critical incident analysis tool, like any other tool, should not be seen as the ultimate solution, but rather as another tool in a manager's toolbox for dealing with issues, challenges, conflicts, and other similar situations that may arise.

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