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# The Effectiveness of Journalist Questions Technique on Teaching Writing

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## ABSTRACT

### Keywords:

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The aim of this study was to find out the significant difference of the skill in writing of recount text between the students who were taught by using Journalist Questions Technique and those who were not. In this study, the researcher used quantitative approach with quasi-experimental design which was conducted at a public junior high school in Pangkalpinang. The researcher used purposive sampling technique and two classes were taken as samples. The result of the test was analyzed by using statistical analysis of Paired sample t-test and Independent sample t-test. The finding showed that the students from the experimental group got higher score than those from the control group. It could be seen from the result of the mean score of post-test in the experimental group was higher (85.68) than the mean score in the control group (80.00). Furthermore, the result of independent sample t-test stated that t-obtained (3.605) was higher than critical value of t-table (2.00) and the p-output or the significant (2-tailed) was 0.001, lower than computation with significant level 0.05. Therefore, there was a significant difference between the experimental and the control group. In conclusion, Journalist Questions Technique has a positive effect in improving students' writing ability.



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## Introduction

Writing is one of the essential skills in foreign language learning that must be comprehend by English learners besides reading, speaking, and listening. Each learner must be able to comprehend this skill to perfect their English skill. Writing is an instrument of communication and sharing between the writer and the reader (Handayani & Tiarina, 2013). Writing is also a crucial form of communication. By writing, we can show our feelings, dreams, joys, and hopes including our angers, frustrations, and fears (Jane, 1983). The use of writing in transferring the knowledge, opinion, and feeling is no doubt an important skill to be mastered.

However, as a productive skill, writing is a complex process and very challenging. Writing is considered the most challenging skill to comprehend (Richards, 2002). It is the last skill taught in class usually since mastering it involves many aspects from the ability to imply the idea clearly until to master the writing aspects. Writers have to be able to transfer their ideas to make their writing became interest by readers. Through writing, writer have to pay attention on expressing their thought, information and knowledge to reader. It is also an activity to create something by combining many system of put in writing symbols, representing the sounds, mechanisms, syllables, and function (Durga & Rao, 2018). It becomes challenging because it needs much proficiency including grammar, vocabulary, organization, cohesion, coherent, etc. The challenging of writing is faced commonly by many English foreign language learners because of their lack understanding on the aspect of writing and transferring ideas. This problem is also faced by English foreign language learner in Pangkalpinang, especially in the school.

Writing aspect as one of the ways to create a good writing must also be mastered by the learners. They must have knowledge on how to create a good writing. There are five writing aspects used in this research to score their writing which are content, organization, vocabulary, grammar and mechanics (Jane, 1983). Content of writing should be clear to make the readers understand the

message and get the information from written product. Every paragraph should have topic sentence and supporting sentence. Topic sentence identifies the main idea of paragraph. While supporting sentence is a sentence with information that support a main ideas and claim. Achieving a good writing, completeness is important in technical writing. By achieving a good writing, it is expected that the content is writing will be clear and understandable for the readers. Organization in writing is how ideas are presented. An organized writing is clear, focused, logical and effective. According to literature reviewed, organization refers to paragraphing, the use of cohesive devices and coherence. Cohesive device and coherence are often taught in academic writing course to improve the flow from the beginning till the end of written text. Vocabulary means as knowledge of words which is considered required for language development and acquisition and is known as an essential factor in writing. It also describes as the ability to use words in understanding of sentences. By mastering knowledge of word choice can help us to develop our writing. Grammar is very important for writing. Writers need to know how to use words and suitable put them in writing. As we know, writers are the keepers of the language. If you want to keep your reader engaged and interested in your writing, you have to use appropriate and correct grammar. Mechanics means the rules of the written language. In writing mechanics, there are many technical aspects including spelling, punctuation, capitalization, abbreviation and so on. The purpose of the mechanics of writing is to make writing in particular and grammatically correct.

Journalists' questions are one of the strategies that can improve students' writing. It is also one of the parts of prewriting strategies. Journalists' question is the questions that are referred to as the five Ws and one H (Who? What? Where? When? Why? or How?). These questions have not lost their value in classroom instruction, regardless of the content area. Students can also use these questions to explore the topic they are writing about for an assignment. The students answer these questions focuses their attention on the specifics of a given topic (McIver, 2005). By using these questions, it will help students to generate ideas in writing. Besides, answering these questions about our topic will help us to generate details and give us a context for writing about the topic you have selected. Here, the questions are related to the topic. Furthermore, Preszler states that called the Journalists' Questions or the 5 Ws and an H, these simple questions help writers identify important information about a topic. Only after the questions have been answered, can writers organize their news stories—or in the case of your students—their summaries (Preszler, 2006). Journalist question is a great strategy because it already has the questions prepared. This strategy is designed to help students to generate and focus on specific ideas while writing. The students should be informed that they do not have to fully answer every question. In answering the questions, it will help the students to discover information and focus the students thinking on their topic (Gatz, 2008). After the students have answered the questions, they should begin to select and organize the information that they would like to use in their paper. The journalist's questions strategy is useful for all types of learners. The questions are general but aid in the thinking process. It allows the student to pre-plan their ideas, and help the heuristic process of completing a first rough draft. Here is a description of several questions used:

Who?	Who are the primary or most important characters? Who are the secondary characters? Who participated? Who is affected?
What?	What is the topic of the lesson? What is its significance? What is the problem? What are the issues? What happened?
Where?	Where did the event occur? Where is the setting? Where is the source of the problem?
When?	When did the event occur? When did the problem begin? When is it most important?
Why?	Why did the event, issue, or problem occur? Why did it develop the way it did?
How?	How is the lesson, problem, or issue important? How can the problem be resolved? How does it affect the participants or characters identified in the Who question?

The study on writing using journalist questions technique is not something new anymore. There are several researches conducted to discover the effectiveness of this technique in teaching writing. First, Kurniyasari on her study entitled “The Effectiveness of Journalist Question Technique to Improve Students’ Writing Skill in Narrative Text (An Experimental Study at Eighth Grade Students of SMPN 19 Semarang in the Academic Year of 2014/2015)”. The result of the analysis shows that Journalist Question technique is effective in improving the writing skill at the eighth grade of SMP Negeri 19 Semarang in the academic year of 2014/2015. It can be seen based on the result of average and mean score. The pre-test in the experimental group was 54,78 and the post-test was 66,42. The improvement on the experimental group was 11,64. While on the control group, the average score of the pre-test was 53,69 and the post-test was 66,42. The improvement on control group was 6,73. The means of both groups increase in the post-test but the mean of the post-test in the experimental group was higher than the control group (Kurniyasari, 2016).

Second, Munawwaroh on her paper entitled “The Effect of Journalist Questions on Students’ Writing Recount Text at the Tenth Grader of SMKN 1 Jombang”. She used a quantitative approach on the research. This paper aimed to find out the significant effect of the use of journalist questions on tenth graders’ ability in writing recount text. The instruments she used were a test and questionnaire. From the researcher’s observation, most of the students agree with the use of journalist questions in writing recount text. There were five questions with possible scales provided which were started from strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree, agree and strongly agree. The researcher concluded most of the students agree with the use of journalist questions in writing recount text. Because the result shows that 2% neither agree nor disagree, 36% agree, and 62% strongly agree from 30 participants. Therefore, there are no participants who disagree with the use of journalist questions in writing recount text. The findings of this study indicated that the tenth graders have a positive response towards the use of journalist questions in writing recount text (Munawwaroh, 2018).

Third, Zuriyanti on her paper entitled “The Effect of Using Journalists Question Strategy Toward Writing Ability in Narrative Text of the Second Year Students at MAN Kampar Regency”. The objectives of the research were to find out the students’ ability in writing narrative text by using journalists question strategy, and to find out whether there is significant difference on the students’ ability in writing narrative text by using journalists question strategy of the second-year students at MAN Kampar. The type of this research was quasi experimental research. Based on the research findings, there is significant difference on the students’ ability in writing narrative text by using journalists question strategy of the second-year students at MAN Kampar (Zuriyanti, 2012).

Finally, last previous studies by Alvisa and Noerjanah on their study entitled “The Effectiveness of Journalist Questions Method in Writing Recount Text at Tenth Grade Students of MA Al-Hidayah Sumbakeling Pancalang Kuningan”. The method used in this research was a quantitative research and the design was a quasi-experiment. In collecting data, the researcher conducted a writing test which was divided into test (pre-test and post- test) and documentation. The data collected were analyzed by using SPSS v.20 and t-test. The result of their study showed that using journalistic questions method has good effects on teaching writing recount text (Alvisa & Ayunoerjanah, 2018).

The similarity of this research with all those previous studies was in the using Journalist Questions Technique by Preszler in writing skill. However, three studies used senior high school students as the sample of the research. On the other hand, the researcher did her study towards junior high school students. The researcher limited the writing test to recount text. Another difference between the other studies with this research was in the topics of a writing test and the number of words in paragraph. It is between 50 words. By assessing the previous related study, it is confirmed that there was no such research in this title.

This research was proposed to find out the significant difference in writing achievement of recount text between the students who are taught by using Journalist Questions Technique and those who are not. This research is expected to be able to make students enjoy the teaching learning process, so they will understand the materials. It will help students to write better where they can use right grammars, the range of vocabularies, making good paragraphs, good content, and also right punctuation. If they understand the materials, automatically their writing ability will increase and also can make them more confident in their ability to write. The researcher hopes this study could be applied regularly and continuously or improved by English teachers to have a better teaching writing recount text. The result of this research also expected to be used as additional sources for who conduct a study on writing skill by using Journalist Questions Technique.

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## Method

This research used quantitative research method that attempt to improve writing skill. Furthermore, the writer conducted experimental design as a method. Experimental researchers are particularly concerned with the problem of external validity and the formal is specially designed to enable the researcher to extrapolate the out-comes of the research from the sample to the wider population (David Nunan, 1992). Also, the quasi-experimental design was chosen to find out the effect of certain treatment. The researcher decided an experimental class and a control class in conducting quasi-experimental research. In the experimental class, the researcher gave treatment by using journalist questions technique in writing recount text, while without using journalist questions technique in the controlled class. The research design used journalist questions technique as the independent variable, and students' writing recount text as the dependent variable.

The population of this research is all of the IX grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Pangkalpinang which is divided into 6 parallel classes with 39 students in each class. It meant that 233 students were the population of this research because they had been given recount text material. Thus, the researcher targeted this population. To select the sample, the writer used simple purposive sampling. Which means the sample is taken by the researcher based on a specific need or purpose. The writer chose two classes which have equal level and similar characteristics in learning English by asking the English teacher about the class and knowing from the result of writing score of each class. The first class will be used as an experimental class (IX D=38 students) and the second class will be used as a control class (IX E=39 students). The experimental group will receive the treatment through the Journalist Question technique. In contrast, the control group will not receive any experimental treatment. Then, the researcher generalized the results obtained from the sample to the population.

The writer conducted this research through test. This research had two kinds of tests included pre-test and post-test. The data collected through pre-test in the first meeting. The objective of pre-test is to measure students' writing recount text in both class before giving the treatment. After conducting the pre-test and treatment, the students in both classes given a post test. It is used to find out the result after the treatment and the effectiveness of journalist questions technique in students' writing skill of recount text. The rule and the score of the test was the same as the pretest.

The result of validity measurement of 40 question items showed that 1 question was indicated valid from 3 questions; for  $\alpha = 5\%$ , and r-table of critical value for two tailed significance of 20 students was 0,444. If r-count is higher than r-table, it is valid. If the r-count is lower than r-table, it is invalid. Then, the valid test items could be used as the instrument of the test.

The reliability of test was computed by the researcher using SPSS 25. The computation result of reliability test by means of Kuder-Richardson formula 20 (in SPSS, Cronbach's Alpha) showed that the coefficient number was 0.624. It indicated that the question items were reliable because the Cronbach's Alpha number was higher than the regulation of r-table or coefficient reliability.

The researcher was used SPSS statistic program version 25 to analyze the data by comparing the mean scores of the Pre-test and Post-test. The writer compared those scores to find out the difference before and after test. The researcher tried to conduct three kinds of data. They are analysis of the writing test, T-test, and the effect size measurement.

## Results and Discussions

### 1. The Statistical Analysis of Pre-Test and Post-Test of the Experimental Group and Control Group

There are four description of analyses that the researcher described in this section. The result of the analyses of the pre-test and post-test in both control and experimental groups were analyzed by using *t-test*. The analyses were done by using SPSS 25 (*Statistical Package for Social Science*). In this study, the researcher used four statistical analyses; (a) the statistical analysis on the result of the pre-test and post-test in the experimental group by using *paired sample t-test*, (b) the statistical analysis on the result of the pre-test and post-test in the control group by using *paired sample t-test*, (c) the differences analysis of pre-test between experimental and control groups by using *independent sample t-test*, (d) the differences analysis of pre-test between experimental and control groups by using *independent sample t-test*.

a. The Description of Pre-Test and Post-Test Score in Experimental Group

Table 1. Paired Sample Statistics in Experimental Group  
 Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre Test	70.31	38	9.767	1.584
	Post Test	85.68	38	5.465	.887

Based on *paired samples t-test statistics* of the experimental group above, it could be detailed that, the number of students that did both of pre-test and post-test was 38 students. Then, the *mean* of the pre-test was 70.31, the *standard deviation* was 9.767 and the *standard error mean* was 1.584. Although the *mean* of the post-test was 85.68, the *standard deviation* was 5.465 and the *standard error mean* was 0.887.

Table 2. Paired Sample Correlations in Experimental Group  
 Paired Samples Correlations

		Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Pre Test & Post Test	.315	.000

Based on *paired samples t-test correlations* of the experimental group above, it could be described that, the correlation between the pre-test and post-test of experimental group was 0.315 with *significant output* 0.000 was lower than *computation with significant level* 0.05, it means that there was correlation between pre-test and post-test very significant.

Table 3. Paired Sample t-test in Experimental Group  
 Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences						t	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		df		
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Pre Test - Post Test	-15.276	9.572	1.553	-18.422	-12.130	-9.8387	.000	

Based on the result of *paired sample t-test* table above, the paired differences showed that the *mean* between pre-test and post-test in the experimental group was 15.276, *standard deviation* was 9.572, *standard error mean* was 1.553, *t-obtained* 9.838, *two tailed significant level* was 0.000 and degree of freedom was 37. Since the *p-output* was lower than the *computation with significant level* 0.05, it could be represented that there was an improvement between students' pre-test and post-test in improving students' writing skill by using Journalist Questions Technique.

b. The Description of Pre-Test and Post-Test Score in Control Group

Table 4. Paired Sample Statistics in Control Group  
 Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre Test	66.97	39	8.248	1.321
	Post Test	80.00	39	9.107	1.458

Based on *paired samples t-test statistics* of the control group above, it could be detailed that, the number of students that did both of pre-test and post-test was 39 students. Then, the *mean* of the pre-test was 66.97, the *standard deviation* was 8.248 and the *standard error mean* was 1.321. Although the *mean* of the post-test was 80.00, the *standard deviation* was 9.107 and the *standard error mean* was 1.458.

Table 5. Paired Sample Correlations in Experimental Group  
 Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Pre Test & Post Test	39	.244	.000

Based of *paired samples t-test correlations* of the control group above, it could be described that the correlation between the pre-test and post-test of experimental group was 0.244 with *significant output* 0.000 was lower than *computation* with significant level 0.05, it means that there was correlation between pre-test and post-test very significant.

Table 6. Paired Sample Correlations in Experimental Group  
 Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
				Lower	Upper		
Pair 1 Pre Test - Post Test	-12.038	10.693	1.712	-15.505	-8.572	-7.0318	.000

Based on the result of *paired sample t-test* table above, the paired differences showed that the *mean* between pre-test and post-test in the experimental group was 12.038, *standard deviation* was 10.793, *standard error mean* was 1.712, *t-obtained* 7.031, *two tailed significant level* was 0.000 and degree of freedom was 38. Since the *p-output* was lower than the *computation with significant level* 0.05, it could be represented that there was an improvement between students' pre-test and post-test in improving students' writing skill by using Journalist Questions Technique. In another way, researcher concluded that there was a significant difference between students' writing skill before and after the implementation of the treatment in control group.

2. The Difference Analysis of Pre-Test and Post-Test of the Experimental Group and Control Group
  - a. The Difference Analysis Students' Pre-Test between Experimental and Control Groups.

**Table 7 Group Statistics Independent Sample t-test in Pre-test**  
**Group Statistics**

Group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-Test Score	Experimental Group	8	70,31	9,767	1,584
	Control Group	9	66,97	8,248	1,321

Based on output of the group statistics table of *independent sample t-test* on the pre-test above, it could be seen that the number of data for the experimental group is as many as 38 students, while the number of the control group is 39 students. The *different analysis* of students' pre-test between the control and experimental groups such as; the *mean* of the experimental group was 70.31, the *standard deviation* was 9.767, the *standard error mean* was 1.584. While the *mean* of control group was 66.97, the *standard deviation* was 8.248, the *standard error mean* was 1.321;

**Table 8 Independent Sample t-test in Pre-test**  
**Independent Samples Test**

	Levene's Test for Equality of		t-test for Equality of Means							
					Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
Pre-Test Score	Equal variances assumed	1,872	,175	1,435	75	,156	2,953	2,058	-1,147	7,053
	Test Equal variances not assumed			1,432	72,295	,157	2,953	2,063	-1,159	7,064

Based on the *independent sample t-test* in the table above, it was found that the *mean difference* between pre-test in control and experimental group was 2.953, and *standard error difference* was 2.058. Then, *significant (2-tailed)* was 0.156, *t-obtained* (1.435), *critical value of t-table* (2.00) and *degree of freedom* was 75. Since the *p-output* or *the significant (2-tailed)* was 0.157, higher than *computation with significant level* 0.05 and *t-obtained* 1.432 was lower that *critical value of t-table* (2.00), therefore it could be stated that there was no significant difference in pre-test between experimental group and control group.

b. The Difference Analysis Students' Post-Test between Experimental and Control Groups.

**Table 9 Group Statistics Independent Sample t-test in Post-test**  
**Group Statistics**

Group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-Test Score	Experimental Group	38	85,68	5,465	,887
	Control Group	39	80,00	9,107	1,458

Based on output of the group statistics table of *independent sample t-test* on the pre-test above, it could be seen that the number of data for the experimental group is as many as 38 students, while the number of the control group is 39 students. The *different analysis* of students' post-test between the control and experimental groups such as; the *mean* of the experimental group was 85.68, the *standard deviation* was 5.465, the *standard error mean* was 0.887. While the *mean* of control group was 80.00, the *standard deviation* was 5.465, the *standard error mean* was 1.458.

**Table 10 Independent Sample t-test in Post-test**  
**Independent Samples Test**

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Post-Test Equal variances assumed	9,099	,003	3,605	75	,001	6,191	1,717	2,770	9,611
Post-Test Equal variances not assumed			3,627	62,511	,001	6,191	1,707	2,780	9,601

Based on the *independent sample t-test* in the table above, it was found that the *mean difference* between post-test in experimental and control group was 6.191, and *standard error difference* was 1.717. Then, *significant (2-tailed)* was 0.01, *t-obtained* (3.605), *critical value of t-table* (2.00) and *degree of freedom* was 75. Since the *p-output* or the *significant (2-tailed)* was 0.03, lower than *computation with significant level* 0.05 and *t-obtained* 3.605 was higher that *critical value of t-table* (2.00), therefore it could be stated that there was a significant difference in post-test between experimental group and control group. From the description above the researcher concluded that there was a significant difference between who were taught by using Journalist Question Technique and the students who were not taught using Journalist Question Technique. Thus, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted, while the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected.

After conducting experiment on teaching students' writing recount text by using Journalist Question Technique, the researcher concluded that Journalist Question Technique is a moderate effect in improving students' writing ability. The researcher interpreted that there was a significant difference between who were taught by using Journalist Question Technique and the students who were not taught using Journalist Question Technique. It could be proved from the explanation below.

Firstly, the result of the test, based on the students' pre-test and post-test score of experimental group who were taught by using Journalist Question Technique were presented as below. The *mean* score of the pre-test was 70,31 and the mean score in the post-test was 85,68. The lowest score in the pre-test was 55



and the highest score was 89. Meanwhile, the lowest score of the post-test was 75 and the highest score in the post-test was 94. Therefore, the researcher known that the scores of pre-test and post-test in the experimental group were increased.

In addition, based on the students' pre-test and post-test score of control group who were taught by using non-Journalist Question Technique were presented as below. The *mean* score of the pre-test was 66,97 and the mean score in the post- test was 80,00. The lowest score in the pre-test was 50 and the highest score was 85. Meanwhile, the lowest score of the post-test was 60 and the highest score in the post-test was 93.

Furthermore, based on the result of *independent sample* test of the students' post-test between experimental and control group, it was found that the *mean difference* between post-test in experimental and control group was 6.191, and *standard error difference* was 1.717. Then, *significant (2-tailed)* was 0.01, *t- obtained* (3.605), *critical value of t-table* (2.00) and *degree of freedom* was 75. Since the *p-output* or the *significant (2-tailed)* was 0.03, lower than *computation with significant level* 0.05 and *t-obtained* 3.605 was higher than *critical value of t- table* (2.00), therefore it could be stated that there was a significant difference in post-test between experimental group and control group. Thus, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted, while the null hypothesis ( $H_o$ ) was rejected. From the description above the researcher concluded that there was a significant difference between who were taught by using Journalist Question Technique and the students who were not taught using Journalist Question Technique.

## Conclusion

In this research, the researcher applied the Journalist Question Technique on teaching students' writing recount text of the ninth-grade students in SMP Negeri 1 Pangkalpinang. The researcher used quantitative research method that attempt to improve their writing skill. The quasi experimental design was chosen to find out the effectiveness of that technique. The researcher chose two classes, they are IX D (Experimental Group) and IX E (Control Group).

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher reached the conclusion that the journalist question technique was effective in teaching writing recount text. It is in accordance with the advantages of journalist question technique, the Journalist Question Technique encouraged student to start their writing, the WH- Questions guide the students to generate and make them focus on the topic while writing, and the last journalist question technique help students' ideas well organized.

There was significant difference between post-test scores of experimental group and post-test scores of control group. It could be seen the *mean* score of the post-test in experimental group (85,68) was higher than the *mean* score of the post- test in control group (80,00). Then, the result of *independent sample t-test* stated that *t-obtained* (3.605) was higher than *critical value of t-table* (2.00) and the *p- output* or the *significant (2-tailed)* was 0.001, lower than *computation with significant level* 0.05. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted, while the null hypothesis ( $H_o$ ) was rejected. It could be stated that there was a significant difference in post-test between experimental group and control group. From the description above the researcher concluded that there was a significant difference between who were taught by using Journalist Question Technique and the students who were not taught using Journalist Question Technique.

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