

# I-Search Paper towards Writing Ability of Students with High Self-Engagement

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**Abstract:** *This article concerns with the effect of I-Search Paper towards writing ability of students with high self-engagement at Junior High School. It was quasi experimental research by using two classes which became experimental and control class. The samples were two classes of the third grade students that were taken by using cluster random sampling. The main focus of the study was to find out whether teaching writing by using I-Search Paper produce significance result in writing ability of students with high self-engagement dealing with recount text. The data were collected through writing test and questionnaire and analyzed through normality, homogeneity, and t-test. The result shows that there is significance result after the treatment where the writing result of the students shows  $t_{observed}$  is higher than  $t_{table}$  in the significance level 0,05. It means that the students with high self-engagement who are taught by using I-Search Paper have better writing ability. Therefore, this I-Search Paper can be an option for teacher to boost the high self-engagement students in learning and writing.*

**Keywords:** teaching writing, I-Search Paper, High Self-Engagement, writing ability

## 1. Introduction

The importance of students being the main focus and active in learning makes the teacher need suitable and up-to-date learning strategies to support learning goals. The participation of students in learning, especially in English subject, is one of the important factors for teachers to choose the appropriate learning strategy. The students who are expected to be able to participate in each step of learning should get good results. One of the English learning outcomes that become a focus and challenge for the teacher is writing.

The students often feel that writing is boring and difficult. They often seem difficult to find ideas in writing and are hesitant in arranging writing. One strategy that can be used by teachers in facing this challenge is the I-Search Paper Strategy. This strategy has many benefits in which it puts the students in charge of communicating content that the teacher might not know and doing so in a way that is comprehensible and engaging. Besides the letter "I" in I-SEARCH Paper means as Inquiry, it also shows that the word "I" refers to someone who has responsibility to conduct a research regarding to what she/he wants to know more or curious about.

This strategy has been investigated by several researchers in various research fields and student levels. They are Zorfass et al in 1995 conducted a study in New York middle school; Lin in 2007 conducted a study in in public Southeastern University; Czap et al in 2011 conducted in 7th-grade English Language Arts classroom in Chapa Middle School; and Harjanto in 2014 conducted at EFL graduate students in Indonesia. Yet, this study was formulated as "Does I – SEARCH Paper strategy result in higher writing ability on the part of high self-engagement students in grade eight at SMP N 7 Padang compared to freewriting strategy?"

## 2. Review of Literature

Writing is as a bridge in delivering idea or people thought in written form. Writing is the way in understanding someone's thought and processes of thinking in committing ideas to express statement (Kimbell-Lopez, 1999; Nunan, 2003). In making a good writing, the writers need to consider some components which develop their good writing such as content, organization, discourse, syntax, vocabulary, and mechanics (Brown, 2001). All the components of writing should be taught in order to help the students understand writing process. Since writing is a process, it requires skill. Writing skill is a crucial skill to support writing (Weigle, 2002; Harmer, 2004). Therefore, writing is one of necessary communication tools and requires more effort in making it happen.

All of the English skills have its own assessment, including writing. There are many ways in assessing writing, for instance short story rubric from Glass (2005). The use of a rubric is according to the goal of the writer or the assessor in writing or giving the task.

The I-Search Paper was one of the Inquiries based learning strategy. It is appropriate to be carries out in 21st century learning and increase critical curiosity ( Lin, 2007; Bruno, 2013). Macrorie (1988:17) explained that the I-Search is when "a person conducts a search to find out something he needs to know for his own life and writes the story of his adventure. The I-Search should be provided in order to develop students' ability especially in engaging in a learning and writing (Appling-Jenson et al, 2013; Lyman, 2006). The I-Search is broken into some basis parts. They are four parts in conducting I-Search Papers which are What I Know, Why I am Writing This Paper, The Search, and What I learned (Macrorie, 1998), What I Know, What I Want to Know, Research Journey, What I Have Learned, Reflection and Works Cited (Bruno, 2013), prewriting, writing, revising,

and publishing (Holt et al, 2007), and phase 1, phase 2, phase 3, and phase 4 (Zorfass et al, 1995). Thus, the use of I-Search Paper assumes to be a good learning process for developing the students' ability.

### 3. Method

This research was a quasi-experimental research to find out the effect of I-Search Paper Strategy towards writing ability of students with high self-engagement. The cluster random sampling was used to select the sample. The sample was the third grade students at SMP N 7 Padang. There were two classes used in experimental class. The experimental class was taught by using I-Search Paper strategy and the control class was taught by using freewriting. The material and the time allocation were the same. The difference between both classes was only the strategy used. The instruments were the writing test and the questionnaire. The writing test was used to find out the writing ability of the students and the questionnaire was used to find out the high students' self-engagement. The Likert scale was used in summing up the questionnaire, and the Short Story Rubric by Glass (2005) was used in scoring the writing test. The questionnaire was given before the treatment and the writing test was given after the treatment. Finally, the data were analyzed by finding out the normality, homogeneity, and hypothesis testing.

### 4. Finding

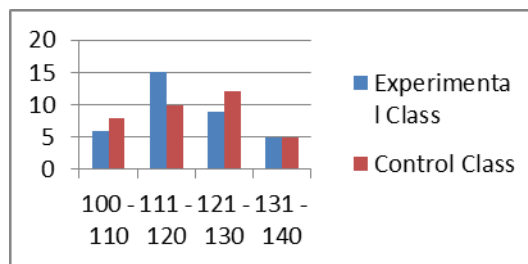
The data were described from the questionnaire result and writing scores of the students. They were analyzed and evaluated by statistic formula.

#### a) Self-Engagement questionnaire

The score of each student was sorted from the highest score into the lower score. Then, the students with the higher score were taken by taking 27% students with the highest score. There were 9 students from experimental class and 9 students from control class. The summary can be seen on the table and chart below:

**Table 1.** The result of students' with high self-engagement in the experimental class and control class

Class	Experimental Class		Control Class	
	Self-Engagement	Writing Test	Self-Engagement	Writing Test
N	9		9	
Mean	131.22	67.24	130.56	51.35
Max	136	89.3	134	73.7
Min	124	53.6	126	26.8
SD	4.15	11.68	2.92	14.13
SUM	1181	605.14	1175	462.16



**Figure 1:** The chart of the students' self-engagement in experimental and control class

From the chart above, the numbers of the students in experimental class and control class who have the highest self-engagement were the same. On the other hand, it was different for the previous range of number. The number of the students in experimental class had the higher score in range 111-120. Then, the students in control class had the higher number of students for range 100-110 and 121-130. This chart shows that the students in both classes have the variety of self-engagement.

#### b) Writing Score

The result of students' writing test was described from the results of the post-test. It can be seen on the following table and chart:

**Table 2:** The result of writing test of students' with high self-engagement in experimental and control class

Class	Experimental Class		Control Class	
	Self-Engagement	Writing Test	Self-Engagement	Writing Test
N	9		9	
Mean	131.22	67.24	130.56	51.35
Max	136	89.3	134	73.7
Min	124	53.6	126	26.8
SD	4.15	11.68	2.92	14.13
SUM	1181	605.14	1175	462.16

The calculation of the data shows that the mean score of self-engagement in experimental class is 131.222, and the mean score of writing test is 67.24. Meanwhile, the mean score of self-engagement in control class is 130.556, and the mean score of writing test is 51.35.

Before testing the hypothesis, the data need to be normal and homogenous. Thus, the normality testing and homogeneity testing should be analyzed. These testing were analyzed by using SPSS17 software. The summary of the normality, homogeneity, and hypothesis testing are shown below:

**Table 3:** The result of normality testing of students' writing test with high self-engagement in experimental and control class

Class	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Score Experiment	.914	9	.344
Control	.979	9	.957

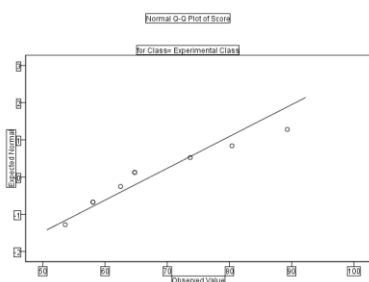


Figure 2: The chart of normality testing students' writing test with high self-engagement in experimental class

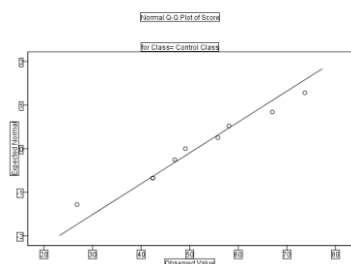


Figure 3: The chart of normality testing students' writing test with high self-engagement in control class

Based on the analysis of the normality, it was found that the significance value in experimental class is 0.344. It is higher than significance alpha 0.05. It means that the data are distributed normally. It is similar to control class where the significance value is 0.957 which is higher than significance alpha 0.05. The data of control class are distributed normally.

The data of writing test was also analyzed by using Levene test in order to see the homogeneity. Then, the finding of the data of homogeneity testing of students' writing test with high self-engagement is shown in the table below.

Table 4. The result of homogeneity testing of students' writing test with high self-engagement in experimental and control class

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.236	1	16	.634

After analyzing the homogeneity, it was found that the significance value of students' writing in experimental class and control class with high self-engagement is 0.643. It is higher than significance alpha 0.05 that means the data are homogeneous.

The data of both classes were normal and homogenous. Therefore, the hypothesis can be analyzed. The t-test result of students' writing test with high self-engagement who are taught by using I-Search Paper and freewriting strategies can be seen in the following table.

Table 5. The result of t-test analysis of students' writing test with high self-engagement in experimental and control class

t-test analysis	t <sub>obtained</sub>	t <sub>table</sub>	Note
Students' writing test	2.600	2.100	t <sub>obtained</sub> > t <sub>table</sub> Ha: accepted

After analyzing, it was found that the result of t-test analysis shows that the value of t<sub>obtained</sub> is higher than the value of t<sub>table</sub>. It means that Ho was rejected and Ha was accepted. Thus, the students with high self-engagement who are taught by using I-Search Paper get better writing result than those who are taught by using freewriting.

### 5. Conclusion

Based on the findings, I-Search Paper showed better results in the students who have high self-engagement. It can be seen from the analysis of t-test where t-obtained is higher than t-table. The students who have high self-engagement can do better in doing a task and have basic effort to finish the writing. They assign success based on their work and effort. This is proved from the writing of the students with high self-engagement; most of them are in the range of good writing results.

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