

## Empowering Creativity: Assessing the Impact of Inquiry-Based Learning in Creative Writing Performances

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### ABSTRACT

Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) is an effective approach for enhancing students' creative writing skills. This study aims to examine whether the IBL method has an impact on student's creative writing performances specifically within the framework of Vietnam. The study utilized the mixed methods research design, which enables the researchers to obtain quantitative data from pre-test and post-test for investigating the effects of IBL instruction on students' writing performances. The experimental group and the control group were administered two 2-hour sessions per week for a total of eight weeks. The pre- and post-tests were administered to gather data on the students' written performance, prior to and following the intervention. Although the results indicated that IBL and the traditional teaching method had a significant impact on students, the analysis of students' writing portfolios revealed that the inquiry-based learning class demonstrated more enhanced aspects of creative writing, showcasing increased creativity in their language use and writing. Furthermore, the results of the analysis revealed IBL can serve as a powerful tool for cultivating creativity in writing classrooms in Vietnam.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Engaging in creative writing is an integral component of the educational experience. When it comes to its definition, creative writing is considered a form of original expression that involves using imagination, creativity, and self-expression to produce written works that engage readers (Wang, 2019). Creative writing involves using language creatively to convey ideas, emotions, and narratives in unique and compelling ways. It encompasses various genres and styles, such as fiction, poetry, drama, and creative non-fiction, allowing writers to experiment with different forms of expression (Barton et al., 2023). Therefore, the researchers Wyse et al. in their 2013 study observed that the teaching of creative writing necessitates an 'open' pedagogical approach where students are provided with the freedom to make imaginative choices, as it entails the absence of rigid structure.

However, the conventional product-focused approach aligns with the deductive approach, where a model text is analyzed, key structures and useful vocabulary are highlighted, and mechanical aspects are emphasized (Pham & Truong, 2021). Moreover, the conventional methods of teaching writing tend to prioritize instructor-led instruction, thereby potentially suppressing students' creative thinking and exploration (Hang & Van, 2020). As a result, a lack of such creative freedom may potentially hamper the flourishing of their creative abilities (Wyse et al., 2013).

Another challenge with creative writing in education is the emphasis on standardized testing and curriculum requirements, which can limit opportunities for creative expression and exploration. (Gibson & Ewing, 2020). The pressure to meet specific writing standards and assessment criteria may lead to a focus on formulaic writing practices, stifling students' creativity and individuality in their writing (Ryan & Barton, 2014). Therefore, to foster students' creative writing skills and address the shortcomings of the deductive method in writing instruction, alternative pedagogical approaches should be considered. In particular, Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) is regarded as a viable option as it embraces the writing process and promotes creativity.

Therefore, the objective of this research is to examine whether the IBL method has an impact on creative writing performances specifically within the framework of Vietnam. In addition, this study also delves into each aspect of creative writing to have a better understanding of its effects.

The purpose of the investigation is to examine the following research questions:

1. To what extent does the implementation of inquiry-based learning method in writing class affect students' creative writing skills?
2. How does the use of inquiry-based learning method in writing classes affect the aspects of creative writing performances?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Principles of Inquiry-based Learning

Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) has been the subject of extensive research over several decades. In contrast to passive learning approaches, IBL is characterized as a student-centered methodology that fosters active engagement and self-directed exploration. According to Justice et al. (2009), IBL empowers learners to formulate their own questions and pursue answers at a pace and according to their individual interests. Additionally, Yesudhas et al. (2014) define IBL as a pedagogical approach that facilitates real-world exploration and the development of action plans. Key features such as student-centeredness, active learning, self-directed learning skills, a foundation in constructivism, and cooperative learning strategies position IBL as an inductive approach to both teaching and learning (Spronken-Smith, 2012).

The underlying principles of IBL in the context of language education can be summarized using four key aspects, often referred to as the *Four Cs*. Firstly, *Curiosity* serves as the foundation of IBL, as highlighted by Justice et al. (2009), drawing upon Dewey's educational philosophy. IBL aims to activate learners' curiosity, prompting them to pose questions and engage in the pursuit of answers. This process of exploration and active engagement facilitates the acquisition of new knowledge, leading to improved retention and the flourishing of inquirers. Secondly, *Creativity* is nurtured through IBL's student-centered approach, as noted by Rodríguez et al. (2019). IBL encourages students to employ their knowledge and imagination to generate ideas, critically evaluate their work, and collaborate with peers. By engaging in open, discovery-focused inquiries and team-based activities, students acquire diverse skills and foster creativity (Bachtiar & Puspitasari, 2024). Thirdly, *Collaboration* is a fundamental element of IBL, as advocated by Pedaste et al. (2015).

Instead of solely relying on teacher-led instruction, IBL promotes collaborative activities such as discussions, peer review, and support. Students are encouraged to work together, valuing peer perspectives and prior knowledge, which leads to deeper learning and knowledge construction. Finally, *Critical thinking* is developed through IBL, as emphasized by Archer-Kuhn et al. (2020) and Justice et al. (2009). By engaging in tasks that require comparing, contrasting, and problem-solving, students cultivate critical thinking skills. IBL recognizes the significance of critical thinking in the process of discovery and self-directed research, enabling learners to develop their academic abilities.

## 2.2. Framework of Inquiry-Based Learning

IBL in writing classes follows a structured framework consisting of five phases: engagement, exploration, explanation, elaboration, and evaluation, synthesized from Duran and Duran (2004). In the engagement phase, students' prior knowledge is activated through prewriting tasks, guided by the teacher who poses questions, facilitates brainstorming, and clarifies the writing topic. Moving into the exploration phase, students retrieve and assess their existing knowledge while actively seeking additional information. Discussions among students and with the teacher play a crucial role during this phase, providing scaffolding and guidance for inquiry adjustment (Bachtiar et al., 2024). Students then visualize their writing process, evaluating and selecting relevant information to support their final product. The explanation phase involves students expressing their understanding of the writing topic by organizing the gathered information in their own words, considering writing register and audience. The teacher provides constructive feedback and addresses any misconceptions that emerged during earlier phases, working with students to revise their drafts until final essays are completed. The elaboration stage emphasizes real-life connections, allowing students to consolidate their knowledge and gain deeper insights into the writing topic. By going beyond memorization and engaging in knowledge building, students develop the skills necessary to become lifelong learners. Lastly, the evaluation stage incorporates both formal and informal assessment approaches. Formative assessments, such as self-assessment and peer-assessment, enable students to gauge their understanding and progress. The teacher conducts ongoing assessments to gather evidence of students' improvement, while summative evaluations, such as exams or writing assignments, may also be employed.

Based on the well-structured framework put forth by Duran and Duran (2004), which offers a comprehensive approach to writing instruction, it is important to recognize the significant benefits it brings to various aspects of student learning, particularly the fostering of creativity. This aspect holds a pivotal position within educational practices, serving as a fundamental building block for effective pedagogy. According to Cho et al. (2017), the significance of creativity in education cannot be overstated, as it plays a pivotal role in stimulating innovation, fostering critical thinking, and driving academic excellence. By prioritizing creativity within the classroom, educators have the opportunity to enrich the learning journey for students, empowering them to explore novel ideas, engage in critical analysis, and establish meaningful connections across various disciplines. This emphasis on creativity not only equips students with the necessary tools to navigate uncertainties in the future but also cultivates their adaptability and resilience in an ever-evolving world. Moreover, creativity nurtures personal development by encouraging self-expression, bolstering self-confidence, and honoring individuality, all while fostering collaborative dynamics, effective communication, and adept problem-solving skills.

## 2.3. Inquiry-Based Learning in Writing

It can be said that the integration of inquiry-based learning (IBL) in writing classes not only provides a structured framework for effective instruction but also establishes a conducive environment that nurtures and enhances creativity in the learning process. In particular, the study conducted by Puspitasari et al. (2016) yielded significant findings regarding the effectiveness of the Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) Model in supporting students' creativity in English language learning. The experimental group, which received instruction using the IBL Model, demonstrated notable advancements in creativity compared to the control group. Notably, the implementation of the IBL Model resulted in enhanced student engagement. Prior to the intervention, many students exhibited a lack of enthusiasm for learning and heavily relied on teacher-centered explanations. However, the introduction of the IBL Model sparked increased curiosity among students, leading to active engagement in pre-class learning, utilization of diverse information sources, and active participation in group discussions. Furthermore, the implementation of the IBL Model enriched the overall learning experience for students. It provided them with opportunities to delve deeply into topics, gather information from various sources, and engage in collaborative group discussions. The IBL Model served as a platform for students to think creatively, pose meaningful questions, and develop a deeper understanding of the lesson at hand.

In addition, the findings from the study, conducted by Fitriyani et al. (2023), examining the effectiveness of the IBL method on students' creative writing abilities, specifically in the context of narrative texts, indicate notable improvements in their writing skills. By actively engaging students and encouraging exploration, IBL facilitated the unleashing of their creativity and imagination, resulting in more innovative and expressive writing in their narratives. The inherent inquiry process within IBL fostered critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and collaborative learning experiences, all of which are crucial for nurturing creativity in writing. Integrating IBL into instruction on creative writing not only enhances students' language proficiency but also promotes holistic development by nurturing cognitive, emotional, and social skills through storytelling and collaborative activities.

As a result, it is strongly believed that Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) can serve as an effective solution for enhancing creativity in writing classes (Irasuti & Bachtiar, 2024). The primary objective of this paper is to assess the effectiveness of IBL in improving creativity within the context of writing instruction. By adopting an IBL approach, students are believed to be empowered to actively engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate their writing processes. Through this research, the researchers aim to shed light on the potential of IBL as a powerful tool for cultivating creativity in writing classrooms in Vietnam.

The study conducted by Wale and Bogale (2021) also state the incorporation of IBL into the teaching of writing has been shown to have a positive impact on the creativity exhibited in students' written work. By placing an emphasis on the development of critical thinking skills, IBL encourages students to deeply explore subjects, analyze information, and engage in critical reflection regarding their writing. This approach not only heightens students' involvement and motivation when engaging in creative writing tasks, but also nurtures the growth of their research abilities, allowing them to incorporate factual details and contextual information into their writing projects. Moreover, IBL prompts students to explore a range of perspectives, thereby stimulating their creativity and inspiring innovative storytelling in their writing endeavors. The problem-solving capacities fostered through IBL can also be applied to challenges encountered in plot development, character progression, and narrative structure, thus fostering creative solutions in student writing. Furthermore, by fostering curiosity, imagination, and self-expression, IBL empowers students to write in an authentic manner and develop their distinct writing style, ultimately enhancing their creativity in the realm of writing.

### 3. METHOD

#### 3.1 Participants

The study comprised secondary school students in grade 8, who were from two distinct classes at a public school. The first class served as the control group while the second class was assigned as the experimental group. 52 students were opted based on their identical proficiency level, parents' permits, and matched schedules.

This age group was selected due to their critical developmental stage, during which they demonstrate advanced cognitive abilities such as abstract reasoning and perspective-taking, which is conducive to creative thinking (Kokkola & Rydström, 2022). Moreover, teenagers in this age bracket possess dynamic language learning capabilities and exhibit a heightened motivation to explore creative expression through writing and reading activities.

#### 3.2 Research Design

The study utilized the mixed methods research design, which enables the researchers to obtain quantitative data from pre-test and post-test for investigating the effects of IBL instruction on creative writing performances. These tests were evaluated by at least two different people, including the teacher involved and the researchers. Moreover, through ongoing assessment of qualitative data from writing portfolios, deeper insight into how IBL influences various aspects of creative writing could be gained. This design was chosen to meet the objectives of the study.

The writing lessons delivered in both groups remained consistent content while the instructional strategies employed differed. The control group followed a traditional method, whereas the experimental group received writing instruction based on the principles of IBL.

The implementation of inquiry-based writing lessons was conducted as a supplementary class after the study plan and venue were accepted by the school administration and parents. There was no connection to the official curriculum since a textbook different from the official course book and suitable for the students' level was chosen. The treatment involved 2-hour sessions per week for a total of eight weeks. The teaching content not only included writing skill section but also incorporated other language components and additional skills as sources of input for writing lessons.

In order to dissect the effects of IBL on creative writing aspects, participants were also required to complete one writing task in their writing portfolios in each lesson, which were then collected before the post-test. The two classes were taught by the same teachers who had been introduced and practiced IBL in writing lessons.

#### 3.3 Instruments

The pre-test and post-test were administered to gather data on students' writing performance, prior to and following the intervention. In light of the study's central aim to assess the effects of IBL on creative writing, the writing tests and writing portfolios centered around fictional writing and were evaluated by a rubric developed by Vaezi and Rezaei (2019). This rubric, specifically created for assessing works of fiction, encompasses nine elements, namely narrative voice, characterisation, story, setting, mood and atmosphere, language and writing mechanics, dialogue, plot, and imagery. Each criterion had a total score of 2.

The writing portfolios for the study consisted of 16 different writing tasks that were completed by the participants. After the participants had been exposed to the learning content, they were given time in class to work on drafting each of one writing task in each lesson. Once the in-class drafts were finished, the participants were then able to revise and refine their work as homework.

assignments. The revised versions of the writing tasks were then collected and checked by the teacher during the following lesson.

### 3.4 Procedure and Data collection

The researchers obtained permission from the related parties, namely the school administration, the involved teachers, and parents before commencing the study. The initial phase of data collection involved the administration of a pre-test of fictional writing to both groups, aimed at assessing their existing creative writing performances. Following the eight-week intervention period, a post-test of fictional writing was assigned to both groups. The writing portfolios were collected before the post-test to scrutinize how IBL affects creative writing.

### 3.5 Data analysis

The students' writing tests were assessed by the rubric from Vaezi and Rezaei (2019). After having specific scores, the independent t-test was conducted to find out whether the implementation of IBL in writing instructions impacted on students' creative writing. Additionally, the descriptive statistic test was employed to delve deeper into the data. Finally, the collected data from both groups' writing portfolios were examined to pinpoint the specific impacted areas of creative writing based on the rubric's criteria.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Results of the tests

To determine if there was a significant difference in the effectiveness of IBL on students' creative writing performance, the independent samples T-test was conducted on the data from the control the experimental groups.

**Table 1** Independent samples T-test of control and experimental groups

		<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Std. Error Difference</b>
Test results	Equal variances assumed	.83	.37	8.60	24.94	.00	6.53	.76
	Equal variances not assumed				28.00	.00		

As indicated in the data presented in Table 1, the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances revealed no violations of the homogeneity of variance assumption, with a p-value of .37. Furthermore, the test result indicated that the implementation of IBL had a significant impact on students' creative writing abilities ( $p \leq .05$ ). However, it was noted that similar results were also observed in the control group. The intervention implemented in this group also had a significant impact on the students' creative writing performance. Subsequently, a descriptive statistics test (Table 2) was carried out to further examine these findings.

**Table 2** Descriptive statistics of control and experimental groups

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Control group	Pre-test	25	5.80	1.52
	Post-test	25	7.33	1.68
Experimental group	Pre-test	27	5.87	1.64
	Post-test	27	13.87	2.42

As illustrated in Table 2, a statistically significant difference was observed between the pre-test and post-test scores for participants in the both groups. It can be seen that the control and experimental groups exhibited comparable writing performance prior to the intervention. Although the experimental group's mean score of 5.87 was slightly higher than 5.80 of the control group, the statistical analysis determined this difference was not significant. The data implies the participants had analogous writing abilities before the program was implemented. Nonetheless, the post-test writing scores exhibited a notable difference between the experimental group and the control group, which can be attributed to the impact of IBL. Based on an evaluation of the students' post-test performance, it was apparent that the group exposed to the inquiry-based instructional approach demonstrated more pronounced improvement in their creative writing abilities compared to the control group with mean scores of 13.87 and 7.33 respectively. In summary, the findings indicate that the instructional methods employed in both the control group and the experimental group had a significant impact on students' creative writing performance. However, the data suggests that the inquiry-based learning instructional approach exerted a greater positive influence on student outcomes compared to the traditional instructional approach utilized in the control group.

#### 4.2 Assessment of writing portfolios

In addition to this, the analysis of students' writing portfolios, based on the creative writing rubric developed by Vaezi and Rezaei (2019), revealed that each aspect of creative writing demonstrated more improvement in the IBL class compared to the traditional class. Nonetheless, this section focuses on broader aspects of creative writing and will not delve into language mechanics which remain a factor in evaluation but are considered a more localized concern. Besides, the ideas in the extracts below from students' writing portfolios maintain originality, while the language had been corrected by the teacher.

##### 4.1.1 Characterisation, dialogue and image

The IBL students appear to provide more effective character development and portrayal. The dialogues in IBL portfolios are described as more authentic, creating a heightened sense of tension and serving as a stronger introduction to the unfolding events. Additionally, the actions and occurrences are presented in a more understandable way, with concrete and meaningful details that appeal to the audience's senses. Interestingly, the IBL method also allows the story's moral lesson to be conveyed in a more indirect, nuanced manner.

Furthermore, the language used in the IBL dialogues seems to provide deeper insights into the psychological and emotional states of the characters. The social standing of the characters can also be depicted in a detailed yet discreet fashion. This contrasts with the traditional method, which may not delve as deeply into these complex aspects of characterization. Crucially, the IBL approach focuses on describing the characters through their actions, thoughts, and speech, rather than relying primarily on direct exposition. This likely leads to a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the characters for the audience. Some extracts are included in Table 3 as the evidence for these arguments.

**Table 3** The extracts highlighting differences in characterisation, dialogue and image

<b>Portfolios of students in IBL class</b>	<b>Portfolio of students in traditional class</b>
- 'Wait, what did you just say?' Tom asked, his eyes wide with surprise. 'I don't understand.'	- 'Mike was a curious boy. He didn't know what was happening.'
- 'No, no, that's not right,' Sarah interrupted, shaking her head. 'We have to do it this way, okay'	- 'Taylor wanted everything to be done like what she wished.'
- 'The old man slowly opened the dusty book, carefully turning the pages with his wrinkled fingers.'	- 'The woman opened the door and saw a table.'
- 'Lily ran across the field, the tall grass brushing against her legs.'	- 'Mike went past a hospital.'
- 'When the little girl found the lost puppy and took it home, her parents were proud of her kindness.'	- 'The class decided to be more welcoming and include the new student because bullying is wrong.'

#### 4.2.1 Story and plot

The IBL students organize the storylines in a more logical manner, with few irrelevant elements that do not contribute to the plot's progression. The narrative includes less confusion and instead creatively engages the audience's imagination, guiding them through the staging of next scenes. The causal relationships between actions, events, and scenes are developed in a more creative and meaningful way, with clear lines of incident that are easy to follow. Changes are more likely to be presented through scenes rather than summarized, and any conflicts are always explained through preliminary accounts, settings, or references. The purpose of the story is conveyed in a more implicit, less explicitly stated manner.

In contrast, the traditional approach includes more irrelevant items and events, placing the plot in a less logical order. Some events are added without proper justification, which can easily lead to misunderstanding or make the story difficult to follow. The connections between actions, events, and scenes are less meaningful, making it hard to discern the causal relationships. Moreover, changes are more likely to be directly demonstrated in the summary before any conflicts, which helps the audience understand the story but may lack the creative presentation of scenes. Preliminary details or references often do not appear until after the changes have occurred. The purpose of the story is illustrated in a more explicit way, using a certain number of formal statements. Some extracts are presented in Table 4 as the evidence for these arguments.

**Table 4** The extracts highlighting differences in story and plot



<b>Portfolios of students in IBL class</b>	<b>Portfolio of students in traditional class</b>
- 'Emma faces a problem at school with a bully. She decides to talk to her teacher for help, and that is where the bully apologizes and they become friends.'	- 'Tom often goes to school with two boxes of milk. Before the start of the school, he always has a big breakfast such as banh mi. When he enters the class, he realizes that there is a test today.'
- 'Suzy looked at her math worksheet... She did not know how to solve it...she thought 'What if the teacher thinks I'm not smart? What if the other students laugh at me?' Emma chewed on her lip. She tapped her fingers on the desk. She took a deep breath. 'I have to do this'.	- 'First, during English class, the teacher assigned a long essay. Dan felt worried - he didn't know how to write such a long paper...he enjoyed doing experiments. he forgot the essay for a while...when the final bell rang, he didn't know where to start'
- 'When the teacher came to talk the emotional damage the others suffered...the boy realizes he was wrong.'	- 'The man scolded his son and gave him a warning.'

#### 4.3.1 Narrative voice, mood and atmosphere, setting

Narrative voice is more appropriate and detailed by the use of flexible language and structure. This can assist to build mood and atmosphere throughout stories, leading to the reasonable development in characters' actions and dialogues. Furthermore, the narrators' word choice and descriptions can help to create a more complete image of the setting. A clearer described setting serves as the backdrop for the story, which is also likely to convey mood and even influence the characters' development.

In contrast, although students in the conventional setting demonstrate sufficient vocabulary to express their ideas, their narratives seem less appealing compared to students in the other group due less descriptive languages. While details are presented, these narratives sometimes lack clarity, and convincing justification. The limited descriptive language in narrative voice occasionally results in an ambiguous mood and atmosphere, thereby undermining the effectiveness of the overall setting. Some extracts are included in Table 5 as the evidence for these arguments.

**Table 5** The extracts highlighting differences in narrative voice, mood and atmosphere, setting

<b>Portfolios of students in IBL class</b>	<b>Portfolio of students in traditional class</b>
- 'The room went dead silent and the only sound was from the fan. Her eyes looked at me really mad. I felt like I couldn't speak at that moment.'	- 'Alice was home that afternoon. It was a rainy day and she felt bored. It rained a lot.'
- 'It makes her frightened but she knows she can't handle it alone. "Mom, I've got another problem.", she mumbled and hesitated.'	- 'Someone was knocking the door. It was annoying but I still stood up and walked to the door but no one there. "This is annoying.", I think.'
- 'We did it! I jumped up and down with my teammates, enjoying the victory. But a voice in my head: "Maybe they forgot my birthday?". I felt down. Suddenly, my friends lifted me up and shouted "Happy birthday, dude!".'	- 'When I got up last Sunday, I decided to get all of my friends to play football together. There were about 10 people in the park when I got there, but then even more people came.'

#### 4.3 Discussion

The study found that while both instructional methods had a significant impact on students' creative writing performance, IBL approach produced more favorable outcomes compared to the traditional teaching method. Furthermore, the analysis of students' writing portfolios revealed that the IBL class demonstrated enhanced aspects of creative writing, showcasing increased creativity in their language use and writing. This greater improvement can be attributed to the distinctive characteristics inherent to the IBL approach.

In the context of inquiry-based learning (IBL), students are empowered to enhance their use of descriptive language when portraying setting, atmosphere, and mood. By engaging in inquiry-driven tasks that prompt students to observe, analyze, and articulate the nuances of different settings, atmospheres, and moods, students can develop a more profound ability to express themselves vividly and evocatively (Bachtiar & Puspitasari, 2024). Through hands-on exploration and critical reflection within the learning process, students are encouraged to use rich and detailed language to capture the essence of various settings, convey the mood through sensory descriptions, and create an immersive atmosphere through their linguistic choices. This approach not only fosters students' language proficiency but also nurtures their creativity, critical thinking, and communication skills, enabling them to effectively convey emotions and experiences through descriptive language. This idea is supported by the research of Van Oostrum et al. (2007), which highlights how IBL can help students develop descriptive language skills and deepen their understanding of textual elements. The paper underscored the role of IBL in fostering active engagement and reflection, which are essential for students to enhance their descriptive language proficiency in portraying settings, atmospheres, and moods.

In addition, the view that students in the IBL class generated more detailed and creative ideas compared to their counterparts can be fortified by the implementation of peer sharing and discussions. Peer sharing and peer discussions provide a platform for students to exchange perspectives, receive feedback, and engage in critical thinking, which can significantly enhance their own ideas (Bachtiar, 2024; Chaerunnisa et al., 2024). When students share their ideas with peers, they are exposed to diverse viewpoints and constructive criticism. This can lead to a deeper understanding of the topic and the refinement of their own thoughts. Peer discussions allow students to articulate their ideas, defend their viewpoints, and engage in intellectual debates that challenge their thinking and encourage them to consider alternative perspectives. Through this process, students can clarify their thoughts, identify gaps in their reasoning, and strengthen their arguments. Furthermore, peer sharing fosters a collaborative learning environment where students can learn from each other's experiences, knowledge, and insights, leading to the generation of new ideas and innovative solutions. By actively participating in peer sharing and discussions, students not only improve their own ideas but also develop essential communication, critical thinking, and collaboration skills. This finding is supported by the study of Qiu and Lee (2020), which concluded that by participating in collaborative activities, students can tap into their creativity, explore innovative solutions, and push the boundaries of their own thinking to produce more robust and well-rounded ideas.

While the findings indicate that the traditional teaching method also had a significant impact on students' creative writing performance, the analysis of their writing portfolios revealed a contrasting outcome. Particularly, students in the traditional class had produced content that was somewhat identical, suggesting they lacked the necessary knowledge and information before practicing the writing portfolios. This led to a lack of individuality and freedom in their written texts. This viewpoint is supported by Hyland's study in 2019, which states that the emphasis of conventional writing instruction is on students imitating text models. In traditional writing

instruction, students may be taught to follow specific formats for different types of writing, such as essays, reports, or narratives. Writing solely by emulating a provided example can prevent students from expanding their writing skills beyond basic sentence structures. Additionally, this approach may mislead or confuse students when they need to write in different contexts that do not match the example they have learned from. Furthermore, traditional writing instruction, where students are asked to write without constraints or specific guidelines, does not incorporate the cognitive and metacognitive processes involved in writing, including planning, drafting, monitoring, and evaluating (Todd, 2002). As a result, this approach may not always focus on developing higher-order thinking skills, creativity, or metacognitive strategies that are essential for effective writing.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This research examined the effects of inquiry-based writing instruction on student's creative writing, and showed the following primary finding. Both groups displayed the development in creative writing; however, the experimental group grew to a greater extent within some aspects. Firstly, IBL assisted students in honing their descriptive language by the self-discovery process and critical evaluation. This engaging experience empowered students to become more active participants in their learning, as evidenced in the richer use of settings, atmospheres, and moods in their writing portfolios. Secondly, more detailed and creative ideas were generated in IBL class compared to the traditional class. This could be attributed to the emphasis on peer feedback and discussion sections. These interactive stages bolstered students' communication skills, critical thinking, and collaboration skills. In contrast, although the intervention could yield positive influence on students' creative writing in the control group, their writing appeared less compelling compared to their counterpart due to the product-oriented approach in which students only reproduce the sample text. Additionally, unstructured writing lessons were prone to neglect the vital role of cognitive and metacognitive skills in writing, impeding the development of creativity. Difficulties and long-term implementation of IBL in EFL classroom can be considered for further research.

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