
USING DOUBLE ENTRY JOURNALS TO IMPROVE READING COMPREHENSION AND DESCRIPTIVE WRITING ACHIEVEMENTS

DIAN KHAIRANI, ISMAIL PETRUS, & DINAR SITINJAK

*SMPN 1 Indralaya Utara
FKIP Sriwijaya University*

dian.khairanii@gmail.com

ismailpetrus@yahoo.com

magiedinar@yahoo.com

Abstract

This research aimed at investigating whether or not there were significant differences in reading and writing achievements between the eighth graders who were taught by using Double Entry Journals and those who were not. Sixty students were purposively chosen as the subjects and divided into experimental (N= 30) and control groups (N= 30). The data were collected by means of tests and questionnaire and statistical analysis. The results showed that the t-value of the students' reading comprehension achievement in the experimental group was 11.575, and the t-value between the two groups was 5.982. Meanwhile, the t-value for writing achievement in the experimental group was 4.429, and the t-value between the two groups was 1.345. The contributions of each aspect of reading comprehension and writing were also presented. The results indicated that Double Entry Journals were mostly effective for improving reading comprehension achievement but were not effective for writing.

Keywords: reading, writing, double entry journals.

1. Introduction

Adolescents entering the adult world in the 21st century need literacy to cope with the flood of information. If a student is good at reading and writing, it is easier for him/her to learn other academic subjects (Vacca, Vacca, & Mraz, 2014).

Based on the data from World's Most Literate Nations (Miller, 2016), Indonesia was in 60th rank out of 61 countries. Moreover, In Indonesia, there were still 441,045 illiterate people aged 15-24, and 11,254,788 illiterate people aged 15

years and older (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2015). It means that, even in this global era, illiterate people do still exist for both younger and older generation. In other words, literacy is still an issue in Indonesia.

Reading skill, as one of the literacy skills, is very important for the success in school and work. It is the basis of nearly all learning, and a basic requirement to progress in life since it is not only necessary for students to learn language and study literature, but also to learn other subjects (Geske & Ozola, 2008, p.71). The main purpose for reading is to comprehend the ideas in the material. Without comprehension, reading would be empty and meaningless (Gunning, 1996).

Unfavorably, the fact shows that reading proficiency level of the Indonesian students is still low. Based on the survey conducted by Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2012, the reading proficiency level of the Indonesian students was at 60th place out of 65 (OECD, 2012). The score of the students' ability for the overall reading scale was 396 that was below the OECD average score which was 496 (OECD, 2012).

A study conducted by Yani (2010) at SMA Negeri 21 Palembang found that 89% students had difficulties in English reading comprehension because they lacked of vocabulary, 65% of the students had problems in comprehending the texts because they only knew little about English Grammar, 45% of the students had difficulties in finding specific information, and 41% of the students had difficulties in making summary. Moreover, Diem and Novitasari (2012) found that reading comprehension achievement of fifth graders in Palembang was still low. The mean score of the English reading comprehension achievement test was only 30.30 These conditions lead to a serious problem as literacy increases job opportunities and access to higher education

Writing skill is also important; it is closely related to reading skill. It is through reading students get the ideas about what need to be explored and help them to

become better writers (Kingwell & Clark, 2002; Krashen, 1993, p. 32). Glazier (1994) contends that being able to write in English is essential in college, and it probably will be an asset in the career. Furthermore, the 21st century is regarded as a period called the Age of composition (Yancey, 2009, p. 5). In other words, writing has become the core of communication in this era. It allows people to participate fully in today's society. It is a complex process that is essential for extending learning, thinking and communicating with others (Dunsmuir & Clifford, 2003). It means that through writing, students can broaden their knowledge, be more critical, and get more engaged with others .

However, writing is considered as the most difficult skill of the four skills. For numerous EFL learners, English writing appears to be challenging (Harmer, 1992). In terms of fluency, Nunan (1999) maintains that producing a coherent, fluent, extended writing piece is likely the most difficult thing in language since the reader has to comprehend what has been written without asking for clarification or relying on the writer's tone of voice or expression. Additionally, Richards (1999) conveys problems in writing as follows: students have a hard time to get started and feel overwhelmed by the task, they struggle to organize and use mechanics of writing, to keep track of their thoughts, besides they also have to struggle to develop their ideas fluently. As the results, students' writing achievement becomes low.

Farooq, Hassan, and Wahid (2012) who conducted a study in four colleges in Pakistan and involved 245 students found out that the students got difficulties in writing English due to lack of vocabulary, poor spelling, L1 interference and a poor understanding of grammatical structure. These then hinder them when they are asked to write. In addition, Kartini (2010) who did a study at SMPN 1 Palembang, Indonesia, showed that the mean score of students' writing achievement was 30.60 categorized as low.

According to the 2013 Curriculum, the students are required to be able to use language as a means of communication in oral and written form (Mendikbud, 2014). It means that writing should be given an equal priority as speaking. But the fact is,

writing is often neglected. Alwasilah (2009) claims that writing is the most neglected skill in language education in Indonesia. The instruction only focuses on grammar and theories of writing, and the students do less practice. The instruction does not cover much for writing, the students do not practice enough and they are not aware of the importance of writing. Then they have problems when they are asked to write because they are not accustomed to it. As the result, the writing achievement of the students is low and far from expected.

Based on the facts presented above, English reading and writing skills are very important and the students need to master those skills in order to succeed in their life. The students need to get used to reading and writing and get trained with strategies for those two skills. Therefore, to solve these problems, good teaching media and strategies are needed by English teachers in teaching and learning process especially for teaching reading and writing skills.

2. Theoretical Background

Double entry journals strategy is one of the strategies that can be used for teaching reading and writing. It enables students to record their responses to text as they read. Students write down phrases or sentences from their assigned reading and then write their own reaction to that passage. The purpose of this strategy is to give students the opportunity to express their thoughts and become actively involved with the material (Joyce, 1997).

Double entry journals improve students' comprehension, vocabulary, and content retention. This interactive strategy activates prior knowledge and present feelings, and promotes collaborative learning. It fosters the connection between reading and writing as students are able to "reply" to the author as they write their responses (Weaver, 2004).

Some findings of previous studies showed that double entry journals strategy can enhance students' ability in reading and writing as this strategy integrates reading and writing skills (Tuan, 2010; Roltgen, 2010; Amin, 2012; Sarma & Rosa, 2014). This strategy has been found to be an effective and productive means of arousing interest in writing, which, at the same time, develops fluency of expression. It also helps students to become aware of why they wish to communicate their ideas and to regard writing not only as a means of personal expression, but also a dialogue in written language with the reader. Double entry journals strategy also provides students with good opportunities to improve their writing skill individually and good chances to record their thoughts and feelings (Spaventa, 2000).

The researcher chose the eighth grade students of SMPN 1 Indralaya Utara as the sample for some reasons. Firstly, based on the data of the English achievement on the students' final exam in the first semester of academic year 2015/2016 which was held in December 2015 for the eighth grade students, there were only 45 out of 130 students who reached the national standard passing score (2.67). It means that only 36% percent of the students at SMPN 1 Indralaya Utara reached the standard. Secondly, writing was also a problem for the eighth grade students of SMPN 1 Indralaya Utara. The results of the writing test that the researcher gave to the students showed that 82% of the students could not reach the passing score. Lastly, the results of interviewing two teachers at SMPN 1 Indralaya Utara revealed that the students still had problems in reading and writing. The teachers mentioned that the students had problems in comprehending short texts, even comprehending a single sentence. The same thing happened to writing. When the students were asked to write a simple descriptive text about a person, an animal, an object or a thing, they only wrote some words with inappropriate grammar and they mostly had limited ideas and had problems in organizing the ideas.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher was interested in conducting a research entitled "Using Double Entry Journals (DEJ) to Improve Reading

Comprehension and Descriptive Writing Achievements of the Eighth Grade Students of SMPN 1 Indralaya Utara”. This research was aimed to find out whether there was any significant improvement and difference in reading comprehension and writing achievements of students who were taught by using Double Entry Journals and those who were not. In addition, the researcher also wanted to figure out the students’ perception towards the use of double entry journals.

3. Method

Research Design

In conducting the study, the researcher used quasi experimental research method and the research design was non-equivalent control group design. The experimental group and the control group were administered pretests and posttests but the treatment was only given to the experimental group. The students of experimental group got the treatment intensively by using the Double Entry Journals through 20 meetings of teaching and learning activities.

Population and Sample

The population of this study was all the eighth grade students of SMPN 1 Indralaya Utara in the academic year 2015/2016, with the total number 127 students from 4 different classes. Two classes were involved in this study, the VIII.D was the experimental, and VIII.C was the control group. They were selected based on the following criteria: the class was taught by the same English teacher, the students have similar or closely similar in terms of total numbers of students (30 students for each class), and third, the mean scores of English achievement in students’ report were almost the same.

Data Collection

To collect the data, two kinds of instruments were used: tests and a questionnaire. Both experimental and control group were given pre- and post-tests of reading comprehension and writing tests. The students were given a reading comprehension test to measure their ability in reading comprehension. For the writing test, they were asked to write a short descriptive text with the topics provided. There were two raters who evaluated writing tests by using scoring rubric. Then, the questionnaire which was in the form of semi-closed- ended question was administered to the experimental group after giving the post-tests to get their feedback concerning the use of double entry journals in teaching reading comprehension and writing.

Validity and Reliability

The content validity for reading and writing tests were used. In this research, to know whether the topic of reading and writing tests given were valid or not, the 2013 curriculum and experts judgment were considered.

To check the validity and reliability of the reading comprehension test, the reading test had been tried out. The researcher then took 40 valid reading comprehension items for the pretest and posttest.

To check the reliability of the students' writing test, inter-rater reliability was used. It is the extend to which two or more individuals (rater) agree with the consistency of implementation of rating system. There were two raters involved in scoring the writing test. The raters were chosen based on some criteria: 1) a graduate from Strata two of English study program; 2) having more than three years teaching experiences, and 3) achieving TOEFL score above 525. The result showed that there was a significant correlation which means that the measurement was reliable.

The students' reading and writing tests were checked by the raters. Then, the paired sample t-test was applied to see whether there was significant difference in the

pre-test and post-test of reading comprehension and writing achievements of experimental group. Independent sample t-test was used to see the significant difference in post-test between experimental and control group in both reading comprehension and writing achievements. In addition, stepwise regression was conducted to analyze the contribution of each aspect of reading comprehension and writing to the reading comprehension (total) and writing (total). The computation was conducted by using SPSS 20.0. Then, to analyze the data from the questionnaire, simple percentage analysis were applied

4. Result and Discussion

The findings consist of descriptive statistics and statistical analyses of the reading comprehension and writing tests, and the results of questionnaire.

Table 1
Results of Reading Comprehension and Writing Achievements

Variables	Score Interval	Level of Achievement	Control		Experimental					
			Pretest f	Posttest %	Pretest f	Posttest %				
Reading Comprehension	86-100	Very good	1	3	1	3	1	3	6	20
	71-85	Good	2	7	3	10	2	7	6	20
	56-70	Average	3	10	2	7	8	27	14	47
	41-55	Poor	16	53	18	60	13	43	4	13
	0-40	Very Poor	8	27	6	20	6	20	0	0
	Mean		49.067		51.200		54.467		71.900	
	Std.Deviation		13.352		13.689		12.910		13.522	
Writing	86-100	Very good	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	71-85	Good	2	7	4	13	3	10	3	10
	56-70	Average	5	17	8	27	3	10	11	37
	41-55	Poor	7	23	9	30	11	37	12	40
	0-40	Very Poor	16	53	9	30	13	43	5	17
	Mean		43.312		50.792		43.500		56.000	
	Std.Deviation		16.144		17.697		16.055		11.685	

In terms of reading comprehension, Table 1 shows that in the pretest of the experimental group, 6 students (20%) were in very poor category, 13 students (43%) students were in poor category, 8 students (27%) were in average category, 2 students (7%) were in good category and one student (3%) were in very good category. In the

posttest, none of the students were in very poor category, 4 students (13%) were in poor category, 14 students (47%) were in average category, 6 students (20%) were in good category, and 6 students (20%) were in very good category. Meanwhile, in the pretest of the control group, 8 students (27%) were in very poor category, 16 students (53%) were in poor category, 3 students (10%) were in average category, 2 students (7%) were in good category, and 1 student were in very good category. In the posttest, 6 students (20%) were in very poor category, 18 students (60%) were in poor category, 2 students (7%) were in average category, 3 students (10%) were in good category and 1 student (3%) was in very good category.

In terms of writing, in the pretest of the experimental group, there were 2 students (7%) in good category, 5 students (17%) were in average category, 7 students (23%) were in poor category and 16 students (53%) were in very poor, category. In the posttest, 4 students (13%) were in good category, 8 students (27%) were in average category, 9 students (30%) were in poor category and 9 students (30%) were in very poor category. Meanwhile, in the pretest of control group, 3students (10%) were in both good and average categories, 11 students (37%) were in poor category, and 13 students (43%) were in very poor category. In the posttest, 3students (10%) were good category, 11 students(37%) were in average category, 12 students (40%) were in poor category, and 5students (17%) were in very poor category.

The questionnaire consisted of 10 open-ended questions which aimed at investigating the students' perception towards the use of double entry journals in learning reading and writing. To answer the questions, the students were asked to choose the options and reason for the option they had chosen.

Table 2
The Results of Open-Ended Questionnaire

			Questions
	F	%	
			1. Do double entry journals improve your motivation in learning English? Choose the reason or write your own!
Yes	30	100	a) Because by using double entry journals I enjoy learning English more than before b) Because double entry journals make me eager to learn English. c) Other : _____
No	-	-	a) Because double entry journals are not interesting b) Because double entry journals make me bored and tired c) Other : _____
			2. Do you have more fun in learning English by using double entry journals? Choose the reason or write your own!
Yes	30	100	a) Because I can learn any words I want to learn about b) Because I can share my thought or comment with others. c) Other : _____
No	-	-	a) Because DEJ are boring. b) Because Double entry journals are not easy. c) Other : _____
			3. Do double entry journals help you in remembering the materials better? Choose the reason or write your own!
Yes	30	100	a) Because I can remember the ideas of the text better. b) Because I can better organize what I have learned from the text. c) Other : _____
No	-	-	a) Because I cannot recall what I have learned from the text b) Because DEJ are boring. c) Other : _____
			4. Do double entry journals help you in comprehending the text? Choose the reason or write your own!
Yes	30	100	a) Because double entry journals help me in finding the main idea of the text easily. b) Because double entry journals help me in answering the comprehension questions easily c) Other : _____
No	-	-	a) Because double entry journals do not help me in getting the main idea of the text easily. b) Because double entry journals do not help me in answering the comprehension questions. c) Other : _____
			5. Do double entry journals encourage you to look for personal meaning in what you read? Choose the reason or write your own!
Yes	27	90	a) Because I can relate the ideas in the text with my experience. b) Because I can engage with the text better. c) Other : _____
No	3	10	a) Because I cannot find the connection between the text and my experience. b) Because Double entry journals are too difficult. c) Other : _____
			6. Do double entry journals help you enhance your vocabulary? Choose the reason or write your own!
Yes	30	100	a) Because I can find a lot of new vocabulary in double entry journals that I never find before. b) Because I need vocabulary to understand and to write a text.

			c) Other : _____
No	-	-	a) Because double entry journals are making me confused b) Because I do not need vocabulary. c) Other : _____
			7. <i>Do double entry journals improve your writing skill? Choose the reason or write your own!</i>
Yes	30	100	a) Because I can write better. b) Because I can get ideas to write. c) Other : _____
No	-	-	a) Because writing is always hard to do. b) Because I still have no idea what to write about c) Other : _____
			8. <i>Do double entry journals encourage you to write more? Choose the reason or write your own!</i>
Yes	30	100	a) Because Double entry journals give me more chances to practise writing not only at school but also outside the class. b) Because I can get ideas what to write about c) Other : _____
No	-	-	a) Because I am still unfamiliar with double entry journals. b) Because Double entry journals are too difficult to be applied c) Other : _____
			9. <i>Do double entry journals give you opportunity to express your ideas? Choose the reason or write your own!</i>
Yes	30	100	a) Because I can write whatever I thought about the text. b) Because I can use my own words. c) Other : _____
No	-	-	a) Because I have problems in vocabulary. b) Because I do not know what to write about c) Other : _____
			10. <i>Do double entry journals help you in developing your creativity in writing? Choose the reason or write your own!</i>
Yes	30	100	a) Because I can write any ideas that come into my mind b) Because DEJ lead me to think of new ideas c) Other : _____
No	-	-	a) Because I have problems in interpreting the ideas b) Because DEJ are not challenging. c) Other : _____

In questions number one to four, all the students chose positive responses. For question 1, 17 students (57%) chose option a, and 13 students (43%) chose option b. In question number 2, 22 students (73%) chose option a, and 8 students (27%) chose option b. Next, for questions number 3, 21 students (70%) chose option a and 9 students (30%) chose b. For question number 4, 18 students (60%) picked option a and 12 students (40%) picked b. For question number 5, 27 students (90%) chose positive responses and 3 students (10%) chose negative responses. These 3 students gave negative response and chose option a, meaning that they still have problems to

make connections between the text and their experience. For questions number 6 to 10, all the students answered yes and they mostly (59%) chose option a. In general, it means that most of the students perceived Double Entry Journals strategy as a useful strategy in learning English. All the students agreed that Double Entry Journals could improve their motivation and give them more fun in learning English. In terms of reading comprehension nearly all the students gave positive responses. Through the activity of choosing phrases from the text and writing their comments in double entry journals, it helped the students remembering the materials better, comprehending the text, encouraging the students to look for personal meaning, and enhancing vocabulary. In terms of writing, all of the students agreed that Double Entry Journals could improve their writing. Through Double Entry Journals they could get ideas on what to write about, express their feelings or ideas, and encourage them to write more.

Before analyzing the data, the researcher measured the normality and the homogeneity of the test. since all the p-values of the normality and homogeneity tests were higher than 0.05, it could be concluded that all the data of reading comprehension and writing tests were normal and homogeneous.

Table 3
Results of Paired and Independent Samples t-test of
Reading Comprehension and Writing

Variables	Paired T-Test								Independent T-Test		Gain
	Experimental				Control				Mean Diff	T-value and sig. post-test (exp and cont)	
	Mean		Mean Diff Pre and Post Exp within	T-value and sig. (pre- and post cont within)	Mean		Mean Diff Pre and Post Cont within	T-Value and sig. (pre- and post exp within)			
	Pre-test	Post test			Pre-test	Post test					
Reading_{Tot}	54.467	71.900	17.433	11.575000	49.067	51.200	2.1333	1.409169	20.700	5.892000	7.179
Writing_{Tot}	43.500	56.000	12.500	4.429000	43.312	50.792	7.480	2.333027	5.208	1.345185	1.179

Table 3 indicates that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest of the students' reading comprehension achievement in the experimental group. The results of paired sample t-test showed that the t-value was 11.575 and sig.value (2tailed) was lower than 0.05. It means that there was a significant difference in reading comprehension achievement before and after the students were given the treatment. On the contrary, there was no significant difference in reading comprehension achievement in the control group because the t-value was 1.409 and sig.value (2tailed) was higher than 0.05.

Furthermore, the results of independent sample t-test in the reading pretest showed that there was significant difference between the posttest experimental and control groups in reading total since the t-value was 5.892 and sig. value (2tailed) was higher than 0.05. It means that there was a significant difference in reading comprehension achievement between the eighth grade students of SMPN 1 Indralaya Utara who were taught by using Double Entry Journals and that of those who were not.

In terms of writing, it indicates that there was a significant difference in students' pretest and posttest writing achievement in the experimental group. The results of paired sample t-test show that the t-value was 4.429 and sig.value (2tailed) was lower than 0.05. Meanwhile, there was also a significant difference in writing achievement in the control group. The t-value was 2.333 and sig.value (2tailed) was lower than 0.05.

Moreover, the results of independent sample t-test in the writing posttest showed that there was no significant difference between the experimental and control groups in writing (total) since the t-value was 1.345 and sig. values (2tailed) was higher than 0.05. It means that there was no significant difference in writing achievement between the eighth grade students of SMP N 1 Indralaya Utara who were taught by using Double Entry Journals and that of those who were not.

In addition, stepwise regression was conducted to analyze the contribution of each aspect of reading comprehension and writing to the reading comprehension (total) and writing (total).

Table 4
Summary Statistics of Stepwise Regression Analysis of Each Aspect of Reading Comprehension and Writing

READING ASPECTS	R	R ²	Change Statistics	
			R ² Change	Sig. F Change
1. Inference	.907 ^a	.823	.823	.000
2. Inference, Details	.974 ^b	.948	.125	.000
3. Inference, Details, Cause Effect	.987 ^c	.974	.026	.000
4. Inference, Details, Cause Effect, Vocabulary	.994 ^d	.988	.015	.000
5. Inference, Details, Cause Effect, Vocabulary, Main Idea	.999 ^e	.999	.011	.000
WRITING ASPECTS				
1. Grammar	.898 ^a	.806	.806	.000
2. Grammar, Content	.952 ^b	.906	.100	.000
3. Grammar, Content, Mechanics	.979 ^c	.959	.053	.000
4. Grammar, Content, Mechanics, Organization	.992 ^d	.985	.025	.000
5. Grammar, Content, Mechanics, Organization, Vocabulary	1.000 ^e	1.000	.015	.000

The results of stepwise regression analysis showed that *inference* (82.3%) gave the highest contribution to the students' reading achievement, followed by *details* (12.5%), *cause effect* (2.6%), *vocabulary*(1.5%), and *main idea* (1.1%).

In terms of writing, the five aspects of writing were also improved. *Grammar* (80.6%) gave the highest contribution to the students' writing achievement, followed by *content* (10%), *mechanics* (5.3%), *organization* (2.5%), and *vocabulary* (1.5%).

Discussion

This section presents the interpretation of the study based on the findings of the study. Based on the results of paired sample t-test in reading comprehension achievements, there was a significant difference in reading comprehension between the students' pretest and posttest results in the experimental group. Six students were in very good and good category, respectively, and 14 students were in average category. Unfavorably, four students (13%) were still in poor category. It needed all the extra effort to improve these four students' reading achievement as they had the lowest ability in English reading comprehension and at the same time, they were reluctant to learn and were not paying much attention during the treatment. But in general, the results indicated that the use of double entry journals in teaching reading comprehension to the students of SMPN 1 Indralaya Utara had improved the students' reading comprehension achievement.

Furthermore, based on the results of independent t- test, there was a significant difference in reading comprehension achievement between the students who were taught by using Double Entry Journals and those who were not. It indicates that double entry journals strategy is an effective strategy to be used in teaching reading comprehension. It is supported by Miller and Veatch (2011) that state "Double entry journals are ideal for the students". The strategy offers flexibility to the students that the students can interact with the text in a way that is relevant to the students.

In terms of writing, based on the results of paired-samples t-test, it showed that there was a significant difference in writing after the students were given the treatment. Three students were in good category, and 11 students were in average category. Unexpectedly, There were still 17 students in poor and very poor category. This might happen because they needed extra time to catch up with writing. The lack of vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics hindered them in writing. But in general, the results indicated that the use of double entry journals in teaching writing for the experimental group had improved the students' writing achievement.

However, there was no significant difference in writing achievement between the students who were taught by using double entry journals and those who were not. It means that double entry journals strategy was not effective for teaching writing. This could happen because of some reasons. First, both groups are in the same school level. There is a chance that the students in the experimental group unintentionally shared what they learned during the treatment with their peers in the control group. Second, it takes more time to improve writing skill as it is the hardest skill for the learners. Cali and Bowen (2003) explain that the only way to develop students' writing ability is ask them to always practice. Since the researcher only had a chance to teach for 20 meetings (6 weeks), the time for the students to practice were very limited. Third, students still have a very limited knowledge in writing aspects. This limited knowledge troubles them when they are asked to write. As the researcher had limited time, the researcher did not have much time to get them practice with writing aspects in details.

The results of the questionnaire showed that most of the students were motivated to learn reading and writing through double entry journals. The students agreed that Double Entry Journals could increase their reading and writing achievements. It can be seen from the students' posttest of reading and writing in experimental group which improved significantly after the treatment. All of the students agreed that they were motivated to learn reading and writing in English class. It was in line with previous studies which said that double entry journals

encourage students' motivation and a sense of accomplishment (Miller & Veatch, 2011).

In addition, the results of stepwise regression analysis showed that *inference* gave the highest contribution to the students' reading comprehension achievement followed by *details*, *cause effect*, *vocabulary*, and *main idea*. This might happen because the students were trained more with *inference* through double entry journals. Readers who make inferences use the clues in the text along with their own experiences to help them figure out what is not directly said. Through reading and writing double entry journals, they practise to use ideas from the text and then added their own ideas. In other words, they practised to get involved actively with the text they read.

In terms of writing, All the five aspects of writing gave contribution to the students' writing achievement. Grammar gave the highest contribution to the students' writing achievement, followed by *content*, *mechanics*, *organization*, and *vocabulary*. Grammar could give the highest contribution to the students' writing achievement because during the treatment, the students were taught on how to make good sentences, with appropriate grammar. Because when they want to express their ideas, they need grammar in order to make their ideas meaningful and understood. As the genre was descriptive text, the students were highly engaged in how to describe something, how to use *be* and *have*, and *tenses* which unquestionably leading them to get in touch with grammar. It is in line with the theory that in order to be able to write effectively, writers need to know and understand the text structure and language features (New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 2007).

In short, double entry journals strategy was very effective to be used to improve students' reading comprehension achievement but was not effective to be used to improve students' writing achievement. Double entry journals helped students to recall the materials, make connection with personal experience, improve creativity and enhance the students' vocabulary. The students also get motivated to learn English more. While for writing, it takes more time for double entry journals strategy

to be effective to improve students' writing achievement. Roltgen (2010) reported that the students had a hard time understanding how to use Double Entry Journals effectively at the beginning, but after some times, they began to make noticeable gains. In other words, it takes time for the students to use double entry journals strategy effectively for improving writing achievement.

5. Conclusion and Remark

Based on the findings and interpretations above, some conclusions are drawn. First, double entry journals successfully improved students' reading comprehension. Through double entry journals, the students can see how language and thought work together to form meanings, the students can record their responses to text, have the opportunity to express their thoughts and become actively involved with the material they read. This strategy can improve students' comprehension, vocabulary, and content retention. Second, double entry journals strategy was not effective for teaching writing. It took more time and practice for the students to use double entry journals effectively to improve their writing achievements. The last, there was positive perception of the students about the use of double entry journals in learning reading comprehension and writing.

Based on the conclusions of this study, there are some suggestions offered for English teacher, students, and other researchers who are interested in conducting similar research.

Firstly, the researcher suggested the English teachers to implement double entry journals strategy to teach reading comprehension. Secondly, for the eighth graders, they are suggested to read a lot, not only in the classroom but also out of the classroom.

Lastly, there are some suggestions for other researchers. First, as the present researcher found out that there was no significant difference in writing achievement between the students who were taught by using double entry journals and those who were not, longer treatment is highly recommended. The researcher believes that if the

research was done longer, the results for writing would be significantly different. Second, have more and higher level of population, such as the senior high school students. Because with the higher level of the students, the results for writing might be different with the present research. Third, use other types of texts (narrative, recount, report texts) with this strategy. Fourth, modify the teaching procedure based on the needs. The last one, It is better not to focus only on a particular aspect of reading and writing. Give the students more chances to practice with all reading and writing aspects that will surely help them in reading and writing activities.

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