

The Effect of the Double Entry Journal Strategy on Ninth-Grade Students' Attitudes Toward it in Creative Reading

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Abstract:

This study aimed to investigate the ninth-grade students' attitudes toward using Double Entry Journal strategy (DEJ). The researchers chose a school purposefully. Two ninth grade sections were chosen randomly to be the sample of the study. They were 60 students. The sample was divided into two groups; the experimental group and the control group. Each group consisted of 30 students. The researchers developed a questionnaire in order to achieve the purpose of the study. The questionnaire was applied to the experimental group, which was taught through using the DEJ. The results of the study showed that the ninth grade responses were high and positive toward using the DEJ. Based on the results of the study, the researchers recommended using this strategy (DEJ) in teaching reading skills.

Key Words: Double Entry Journal Strategy, creative reading, EFL students' attitudes.

أثر استراتيجية المفكرة ذات المدخل المزدوج على اتجاهات طالبات الصف التاسع في القراءة الابداعية

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ملخص:

هدفت الدراسة الى معرفة اتجاهات طالبات الصف التاسع لاستخدام استراتيجية مجلة المدخل المزدوج. فقد قام الباحثان باختيار المدرسة بشكل قصدي. تكونت عينة الدراسة التي تم اختيارها عشوائياً من 60 طالبة. وقد قسمت العينة الى مجموعتين، مجموعة ضابطة مكونة من 30 طالبة ومجموعة تجريبية مكونة من 30 طالبة. وقد طبق الباحثان الاستبانة على المجموعة التجريبية التي تم تطبيق الاستراتيجية عليها. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن اتجاهات الطالبات نحو استخدام استراتيجية مجلة المدخل المزدوج كان ايجابياً وعالياً. وبالاعتماد على هذه النتائج، يوصي الباحثان باستخدام هذه الاستراتيجية في تدريس مهارات القراءة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مجلة المدخل المزدوج، القراءه الابداعية، اتجاهات الطلاب.

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Introduction

Reading is a pivotal building block in all life's shapes and an introductory skill for other learning skills. Reading today is more free and available than it was in the past due to the speed developments of technology and electronic books (Hoss, 2017). Koda (2004) assured that reading is considered as a compound process, which needs specific demands and consequences. Habbiallah (1997) stated that creative reading is a skill, which forces the reader to think in a new way. Lubdi (2003) stated that the process of creative reading needs from the reader to do a deep interaction with readable text in order to get up with new ideas and meanings. Harithi (2014) claimed that using different strategies in order to develop creative reading skills (fluency, flexibility, originality, details literacy) have a noticeable effect on these sub-skills.

Choosing the appropriate strategy inside classrooms is still a problem for many Jordanian teachers. USAID (2016) pointed out the challenges that face students in reading skill in general. One of those challenges is that students lack the chance to do high skills like problem-solving and critical thinking. As a result, Double Entry Journal strategy (DEJ) has to turn into a proposed strategy in order to cover the needed issues. Using different strategies in the classroom may make the learning process more interesting, attractive and to some extent solve the problems that teachers face. The variation in using strategies may raise students' motivation, performance and understanding and students may try a new style of thinking and deal with language correctly and differently. So, strategies should be taught clearly to students. Teachers' role here is to make sure that all students know how to use these strategies inside the class and outside.

Journals are the holders of what is written over time. They have many functions such as register experience, ease the learning process, provide understanding, and support group work. Journals also have a variety of shapes; written notebooks, tapes, videos, and the electronic forms. Each shape serves a certain goal. The strategy in this study focuses on pen and paper shape. The advantages of using journals are varied; they are fixable, helpful, useful, and easy to apply. Journals give students the opportunity to express their feelings without any regards to the form; the focus is on the meaning which followed the communicative competence. As an example of the idea of journals, there is Double Entry Journal strategy (DEJ) (Moon, 2010).

DEJ is a strategy which is concerned with enhancing reading and writing skills. Buhel (2009) defined it as a strategy which students use it to think in a deferent way, in an imaginative way, and in a creative way. It also allows students to make connections with their real lives and their background knowledge. The ultimate goal of DEJ strategy is to give students full freedom in expressing their feelings and the way they want to reflect their thoughts and opinions. In addition, it gives students a chance to choose any interested or unclear sentence or phrase and ask about it (Litwiller, 2003).

Atwell (1984) assured that using DEJ strategy in classrooms has a positive effect on understanding and dealing with readable texts. Grates (1989) stated that there were three types of interactions in DEJ strategy; interaction with the teacher, interaction with the text, and interaction with the writer. Wells (1992) assured that DEJ strategy serves all types of responses whether the personal, social responses or the formal responses. This strategy gives students full freedom to express what they have inside in the way they like. Gonzalez (2016) indicated that DEJ strategy has the ability to build a tight relationship between the student and the teacher through entries. In addition, it increases self-confidence since it focuses on meaning not form.

The researchers claim that this study takes a further step in investigating students' attitudes toward using DEJ strategy in teaching reading skills. In addition, the researchers aimed to see more work on creativity since our students have the ability of imagination but they lack the chances.

Statement of the Problem

From the researchers' experience, they have noticed that students suffer in reading classes; in expressing their feelings and in reflecting life experience into the readable text. Furthermore, the researchers have noticed that students need more personal space to reflect on the way they like how they understand the passages and point out to the points which make them feel surprised, agreed, wondered and so on. Therefore, the researchers tried to find out students' attitudes toward using DEJ strategy in teaching reading skills.

Purpose and Question of the Study:

This study aims to investigate students' attitudes toward using Double Entry Journal Strategy in creative reading for ninth grade students.

This study attempts to answer the following question:

1. Does DEJ strategy affect students' attitudes?

Significance of the study

The significance of the study governs the fact that it addresses an important issue of FLL, which is developing students' communicative competence. Moreover, the results of the study may be significant for language teachers as they provide them with a strategy for developing reading skills' performance. This study is also significant for students since it gives them the chance to understand the passages in a new way by using their imagination and creativity.

Previous relevant studies

Roe (1995) investigated the using of DEJ strategy and response journals in a graduate class. The sample of the study was 17 students; they were divided into two groups. The first group used the DEJ strategy and the second group used the response journals. At the end of 5 weeks, the groups switched to another format. The instruments in the study were a Likert-scaled questionnaire and interviews. The results presented that students reaction toward both types were totally satisfied. They touched full freedom in expressing their feelings and thoughts.

Talbur (1995) conducted a study to investigate the effect of using the DEJ strategy on exploring and creating possibilities for adults ESL learners. The participant of the study was one student; the experiment was as a case study. The instrument was an interview. The results showed that DEJ strategy reflected in a positive way on the student's attitude and performance. The student found the strategy as an opportunity to reflect what he had inside in a good manner, plus telling personal opinions without hesitation.

Lee (2004) conducted a study which aimed at investigating the effect of using DEJ strategy on pre-service students teachers. The sample of the study was 18 students-teachers in the post-grade diploma in China. The instruments of the study were questionnaire and interview. The results showed that the sample was totally agreed with the positive effect of this strategy, they found it as a chance to express their feelings and to enhance the reading skills. The differences highly appeared between the control and the experimental group.

Miller (2007) conducted a study which aimed to present the effect of DEJ strategy on ESL students. The sample of the study was 10 students. The instruments of the study were interview and observation. The findings showed a great effect on students' attitudes. They felt positive and willing to

use this strategy in their classes. In addition, they found a space to express what they hide inside.

Lee (2008) investigated the effect of DEJ strategy on pre-service teachers. The sample of the study was 13 female students at Hong Kong University. The instruments of the study were pre- test and post- test, and interview. The findings showed that the students liked this type of journals and found it as a chance to reflect what they want to be reflected. Plus, the sample's attitudes toward the strategy were totally positive and satisfied.

Lorrotta (2009) conducted a study which aimed at finding the effectiveness of DEJ strategy on literacy programs. The sample of the study was 17 students. The instruments of the study were interview and observation. The findings showed that the effect of this strategy strongly appeared on the sample's performance and attitudes.

Qasem (2009) conducted a study which aimed at finding out the effectiveness of DEJ strategy on reading skill. The sample of the study consisted of 61 freshman female at university of science and technology (Yemen). The instruments of the study were test and questionnaire. The results of the study were totally agreed with the important role of using this strategy. In addition, students' attitudes toward DEJ strategy were positive and supportive to be used in reading classes.

Rogelton (2012) conducted a study to explore how DEJ strategy plays an important role in reading developing reading skill. The sample of the study was 20 students from 7th- grade level. The instruments of the study were test and observation. The results gave a great impression toward the strategy; students' ability to work with the team was high, plus students' attitudes were also positive and students felt free and flexible to use it inside the classroom.

Method and Procedures

Design of the Study

This study followed the quasi-experimental design to investigate students' attitudes toward the DEJ strategy. The researchers chose a school purposefully, which is Yarmouk University Model School. Two ninth grade classroom sections were chosen randomly and assigned into two groups; the control group which had (30) students, and the experimental group which had (30) students. The two sections in this school had almost the same background and the same living conditions. In addition, all the students in both groups used the same textbooks. Ninth- grade female students during the second semester were selected to achieve the purpose of the study. The

experimental group was taught through the DEJ strategy while the control group was taught according to the teacher's book.

Variables of the Study

- a. the dependent variables
 - the traditional teaching
 - the DEJ strategy
- b. the dependent variables
 - students' attitudes

Instruments

In order to achieve the purpose of the study, the researchers developed the following instrument:

A Questionnaire

The researchers developed a questionnaire in order to measure students' attitudes toward using DEJ strategy. The questionnaire consisted of 15 items to cover the EFL students' attitudes toward using DEJ strategy. It contained five point of Likert scales. The questionnaire items covered the EFL students' attitudes toward using DEJ strategy, merits and demerits of DEL strategy. The questionnaire was applied at the end of the study to the experimental group which was taught through DEJ strategy. It was not applied on the control group because the students did not receive any teaching through DEJ strategy.

Teaching methods

The following two methods were used in this study:

- a. The regular teaching method: is a method in which a lesson is designed by the teacher of the material. The teacher applies the traditional way of creative reading. In the traditional teaching strategy, the teacher presents the reading passages by asking certain questions about the pictures and the concept of the title. She asks pre-reading questions just to make sure that students had a general idea about the topic, vocabulary, and pictures. Then the teacher gives students a limited time to read the passage silently. During this process, the teacher writes some questions on the board. Then she asks students to work in pairs for example to answer the needed questions. The teacher is expected to give direct feedback to students' responses. In the end, the teacher asks students to answer the comprehension questions.
- b. The DEJ strategy: after reading the passage, the teacher asks her students to fold up a piece of paper into half –lengthwise- to have a right column and a left column. Then asks them to choose any sentence, phrase, or

word and write the line number of it in the left side, and in the right side write their reflection by using one or two of the six types (question, reflection, connection, evaluation, prediction, and clarification). For example, students may use the connection type; which means that they have to make text connection with their real lives. They might choose the prediction type which means that they have to predict an action, an ending or a solution to the readable text or sentence. Then the teacher collects all the entries and writes indirect feedback then gives them back to students.

Validity

To ensure validity, the instrument was given to a jury of EFL and linguistics professors in Jordan universities. All their comments were highly appreciated and taken into consideration.

Reliability

To ensure reliability, the instrument was piloted to 20 students outside the actual sample of the study using the t-test method. The reliability of the instrument was .76 which is scientifically accepted.

Data Collection Procedures:

1. The researchers had permission from Yarmouk University to apply the study in its school.
2. The researchers met the principal of the school to decide about the sample.
3. The researchers talked about the aim of the study to the ninth grade students and the trained teacher who will be as a part of the implementation.
4. The researchers trained the teacher on how to implement DEJ strategy.
5. The researchers themselves applied the pre-test and the post-test.

Study Procedures:

The study followed the following procedures:

1. The instrument of the study was prepared according to the content of the topic, plus the literature review.
2. The random sample of 20 students participated in the pilot study to check the reliability measures.
3. The instrument was given to students who were selected randomly
4. The data were analyzed using SPSS in order to answer the research question

Results of the Study:

To answer the question of the study, which is: What are the ninth grade students' attitudes toward using DEJ in teaching reading skills? Means and standard deviations were calculated. Table (1) below presents the results:

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations of the Students Responses

	item	Mean	Std. Deviation	Degree
1	Double Entry Journal(DEJ) strategy was helpful in developing my reading skill	4.07	.980	High
2	DEJ strategy was easy to use in the class	4.00	.871	High
3	I was interested in using DEJ strategy as a tool to enhance the reading skill	3.67	1.322	High
4	I liked DEJ strategy because it enlarges my imagination	3.77	.935	High
5	I liked answering the questions of the passage by using the types of reflection	3.97	.718	High
6	I felt that DEJ strategy helped me to express my feelings	3.63	1.129	Moderate
7	I felt that using DEJ strategy to save time	3.00	1.313	Moderate
8	I felt free while using DEJ strategy	3.87	1.106	High
9	I liked DEJ strategy because it touched my emotions	3.97	.964	High
10	DEJ strategy gave me the chance to make connections with my thoughts	4.10	.923	High
11	I enjoyed using DEJ in understanding the passage	3.87	.973	High
12	I enjoyed using DEJ strategy in reading classes	3.60	1.303	Moderate
13	DEJ strategy gave me the chance to share responses with others	4.07	.828	High
14	I felt that Dealing with DEJ strategy was flexible	4.17	.913	High
15	DEJ strategy supports group work	4.37	.809	High
	Total	3.87	.486	High

The means of the students' responses were divided into three categories: 1 – 1.33 = low; 1.34 -3.6 = moderate; and means higher than 3.6 = high.

The students' attitudes in general were high and positive. The students' attitudes were high and positive for items 1,2,3,4,5,8,9,10, 11, 13 14 and 15. Their attitudes were positive and moderate for items 6, 7, and 11.

The table shows that the highest mean score was (4.37) for item number (15) " DEJ strategy supports group work", followed by item items:

(14) " I felt that Dealing with DEJ strategy was flexible". The lowest mean was for item 7 " I liked DEJ strategy because it touched my emotions". The total mean score for students' attitude scores was (3.87).

Discussion and Recommendations

The question of the study explored the students' attitudes toward DEJ strategy on Jordanian EFL ninth grade students reading skill. The results showed that the students' attitudes were positive and DEJ strategy had a significant effect in improving students' attitudes toward DEJ strategy. The findings showed that students enjoyed having this strategy in their classrooms. Students' attitudes showed that DEJ strategy helped them to express their understanding and feelings in a flexible way. This result agreed with Qasem (2009) study which indicated that this strategy gave the perfect chance to students to reflect what they have inside and express it on paper. Students were encouraged to choose any statement or phrase and did a reflection on it. They were able to put their personal experiences and opinions. The researchers believe that the result of the question appeared that students need more space in the regular classes to reflect how they understand the passage by their own ways. Plus to ask indirectly about unclear points or vocabulary items.

The result of the study also agreed with Rogelton (2012) study which revealed that students' attitudes toward DEJ strategy were positive and useful. In Lorrotta (2009) study, students liked the strategy and felt strongly free to say and express what they had inside. In conclusion, students' attitudes toward DEJ strategy might have a good sign about the effectiveness of using DEJ strategy on Jordanian EFL ninth grade students creative reading.

In the researchers' point of view, students were completely encouraged and willing in DEJ classes. Students had more chances to analyze the reading passages in the way they want due to the existence of full freedom in class, in choosing the part they want to be expressed, and in choosing the preferable type of reflection. The researchers pointed out that the students' positive attitudes toward DEJ strategy could have been a finding of the flexible and helpful environment which is DEJ strategy presented.

Conclusions

This study found that there was a statistically significant difference between students' attitudes before and after using DEJ strategy, as the experimental group who studied using DEJ strategy, attitude enhanced significantly. From the positive results, the researchers believe that DEJ

strategy was useful. It improved students' reading skills and trained their imagination in a good manner.

Recommendations

In light of what has been reached from the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are suggested:

- It is recommended to conduct more studies using DEJ strategy in teaching for other grades and materials.
- This study lasted for 8 weeks. Therefore, further research that lasts for a longer time is recommended.

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