

## “Tell me about your Day”: Portraying Student’s Reflective Practice through Diary Writing

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### Abstract

Although commonly understood that diary writing benefits language learners in many ways, the use of diary writing as a medium for reflective practice in higher education is still rarely considered. The study aimed to portray the student's reflective practice through diary writing - to display how the student made meaning of her daily life and learning experiences. Employing qualitative case study, we observed one of our students' reflective practice through her diary entries. Our study employed Rodger's summary of Dewey's reflective practice (2019) as the theoretical framework. The data of this research was a handwritten diary of a student named Lana containing 30 diary entries written from September 6, 2018, to October 22, 2018. The entries were written in the period when she joined a Creative Writing class. The diary writing activity was mainly aimed to help the students in the class to build their writing habits by writing reflections of their daily activities. The result showed that diary writing provided room for Lana to carry out the reflective practice. This practice helped her to see and to understand herself as a learner. Also, Lana specifically expressed that diary writing helped her to have ideas for writing easily. Based on the findings, we argue that in the Indonesian higher education context diary writing needs to be incorporated in the learning process to benefit learners in their personal development and their language learning process.

**Keywords:** diary, reflective practice, creative writing

### INTRODUCTION

The nature of diary writing as a medium to write freely and independently provides room for the students to build their habits and confidence in writing. It is also believed that diary writing supports students' personal development. However, the use of diary writing especially in the context of Indonesian higher education for language teaching and learning tool is still neglected (e.g., Jarvis, 2001). The practice of diary writing is still considered a personal activity that

cannot be shared. Some language teachers that aim for accuracy may not prefer diary writing in their classes. Moreover, diary writing also takes time and discipline. This may not be easy for busy teachers and students.

This study explored the possibilities of using diary writing as a medium to build student's writing habits and reflection for personal development, especially in the Indonesian higher education context. It is important to conduct such a

study as higher education students have more potential to practice writing and reflection independently. This study attempted to answer the following questions (1) how does the student perform reflective practice through diary writing? and (2) how does she perceive diary writing in the context of creative writing class?

This study showed that it is important to equip diary writing in the teaching and learning process especially in the higher education context in Indonesia in which students are considered adult learners and are considered as more independent in learning. Students not only can get an opportunity to build their writing habits which in turn will develop their writing skills but also can perform reflective practice for both their personal and their academic development.

Despite its popularity that diary writing supports students learning in various ways, the use of diary writing seems to be neglected as one of the effective tools especially in the higher level of education. Jarvis (2001) argued that journal writing, often referred to as a learning diary, is a teaching and learning technique that has not received a great deal of attention in the literature of higher education, even though diary writing is an old and established practice.

In line with the above discussion, Hiemstra (2001) also explained that in spite of more than three decades of use and attempts by a few adult educators to encourage personal reflection in various ways, journaling remains underused as a teaching or learning tool.

In the higher education context, and possibly in any other level of education, it is understood that keeping a journal on daily basis can be not an easy task both for teachers and students. Both teacher and the students are busy and have their responsibilities of finishing their tasks. However, if planned and conducted very well, diary writing not only can become a learning tool but also can help both teachers and students make sense of the learning process. Jarvis (2001) mentioned that journaling can be used more widely than as reflective practice; it can be a teaching, learning, and research instrument in the fields of higher

education. Few studies, however, had attempted to explore the possibilities of reflective diary in the context of the higher education (see. Colomer, 2013; Glaze, 2002; Lew, 2011; Wong 2019).

Specifically, in the field of writing, diary writing also receives very little attention. This is so contradictory as diary writing should be closely associated with writing itself. Dincel and Savur (2019) stated that in the literature, there has not been any other research conducted other than the learning journals and teacher journals. Although the importance of other types of diaries kept daily regularly in the development of writing skills cannot be denied, there is no research done on the role of diary keeping on the development of writing skills.

Meanwhile, some studies showed the potential of diary writing beyond a teaching and learning tool. Hiemstra (2001) argued that in the adult education classroom, this learning method becomes a tool to aid learners in terms of personal growth, synthesis, and reflection on new information that they acquire. He added that there also is the potential for a journaling technique to promote critical self-reflection where dilemmas, contradictions, and evolving worldviews are questioned or challenged.

A study conducted by Dincel and Savur (2019) involving teacher education students showed that candidates who regularly keep a diary begin to question their lives and try to manage them better. Moreover, it was shown that diary keeping, which is regular writing, has an important role in the development of writing ability. They added that the diary-keeping made the participants realize it has an essential role in personal growth in many ways. By diary-keeping some of the participants realized that they were wasting their days, some of them felt relaxed when writing, some felt it is therapy or a friend to whom they express their thoughts, help them put their lives in order. Other studies involving teachers and reflective practice are also commonly conducted (see. Azizah, 2018; Clegg, 2000; Kuswandono, 2012; Lakshmi, 2014; Trif & Popescu, 2013)

Specifically, for language learning, the use of a diary is strongly recommended for some reasons. Ni'ma (2019) argued that students' perceptions showed positive impact of reflective journal to promote writing skills.

Klimova (2015) explained diary writing is a very effective and natural tool for both students and teachers since this informal writing enables students to reflect on what they have learned, how they have learned it, what kind of difficulties they have when they have to write in formal English or what helps them to overcome these and other difficulties in the process of learning English. Citing Rubin in her article, Klimova (2015) further explained that more successful learners are in control of their learning; they know what they are doing and what they want to achieve; they know when they make mistakes, and they know how to go about correcting them. And in this process teachers can help their students provided that students allow them to see their diaries, comment on them and make relevant suggestions.

The emphasis of writing using diary that makes students feel more comfortable and confident as they write to express what they mean without thinking much about the grammar accuracy is also discussed in Taqil et.al (2015). They explained that diaries usually focus on meaning rather than the form where learners send a message about a topic of interest to them. Similarly, teachers do not correct linguistic errors but respond to the message in a meaningful way.

In line with the above idea, Dincel and Savur (2019) explained that the participants of their research described diary keeping has been meaningful as they shared a lot of things that cannot be told to others, sharing a connection with oneself in a comfortable and reliable environment, chatting with it as a friend, writing a secret onto it, diary as a secret friend, a reminder of the past, putting the person's past into chronological order, and so on.

The freedom of using different kinds of languages in writing the diary can surely help students to just practice writing. Fulwiler cited by English & Gillen (2001) elaborated the language

used in diary writing. The characteristics of diary writing are that students can write in everyday language, use the first-person point of view with informal punctuation, and experiment with their writing such as using specific rhyming.

Some studies elaborate more about the use of diary writing as a teaching and learning tool. Boud (2001) citing Moon in her discussion of using journals in learning through reflection identifies many purposes of writing journals in addition to those already mentioned—for example, to deepen critical thinking, to enable learners to understand their learning process and most of all to free-up writing and to promote reflective practice.

Meanwhile, according to Hiemstra (2001) diary writing helps students to do the following: 1) Personal growth and development, 2) Intuition and self-expression, 3) Problem solving, 4) Stress reduction and health benefit 4) Reflection and critical thinking.

Diary writing can be one effective tool in teaching and learning. It can even function more than that. From the above arguments, the personal growth and development of the students who write diaries are strongly stated. Therefore, it is recommended for teachers and students to utilize diary writing in their teaching and learning process.

It has been discussed that diary writing is very useful in the teaching and learning process. One of the aspects that are discussed is diary writing for reflective practice. Cited in Klimova (2015), Race explained: Reflection deepens learning. The act of reflecting causes us to make sense of what we've learned, why we learned it, and how that particular increment of learning took place. Moreover, reflection is about linking one increment of learning to the wider perspective of learning – heading towards seeing the bigger picture. Reflection is equally useful when our learning has been unsuccessful – in such cases indeed reflection can often give us insights into what may have gone wrong with our learning, and how on a future occasion we might avoid it now.

Diary writing is suitable as a medium of reflection as it involves some aspects of reflective practice. Rogers (2001) explained that reflection as a cognitive and affective process or activity that (1) requires active engagement on the part of the individual; (2) is triggered by an unusual or perplexing situation or experience; (3) involves examining one's responses, beliefs, and premises in light of the situation at hand; and (4) results in the integration of the new understanding into one's experience.

To relate diary writing and reflective practice Boud (2001) explained that journal writing can be viewed through many different lenses: as a form of self-expression, a record of events, or a form of therapy. It can be a combination of these and other purposes. He further elaborated that as a device for working with events and experiences to extract meaning from them. This perspective views the various forms of journal writing as ways of making sense of the world and how we operate within it. Journal writing can be used to enhance what we do and how we do it. As a vehicle for learning, it can be used in formal courses, our professional practice, or any aspect of informal learning.

In his study, Jarvis (2001) explained that the journal serves two reflective purposes. First, it helps students to become reflective learners, recording data about reading, study habits, and attitudes. Students are also invited to write about their personal development; that is, they can record information about their increasing knowledge and their increasing ability to identify and articulate issues, and they can reflect on important decisions that they have taken since they enrolled in the program. Second, students can examine their self-development and their feelings of empowerment.

This study is a qualitative case study that focuses on how diary writing helps one of my students in Creative Writing class build her daily habit of writing and how she also practices reflection through writing regularly. By following one of our student's diary, we expect to be able to unfold her reflective practice through her journal

entries and how she perceived diary writing to support her learning, especially in the creative writing context.

This study is an attempt to enrich studies in diary writing in the context of creative writing class in which in our case, we have not ever been equipped with before. It is also an attempt to fill the gap of the lack of research on diary writing as a teaching and learning tool in the higher education context in Indonesia. This study is expected to show the potentials of diary writing in supporting students' reflective practice as well as writing habits.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This qualitative case study involved a single participant namely Lana (pseudonym) who wrote a daily diary with one prompt for the whole semester: tell me about your day. Lana joined a creative writing class taught by the first author of this study. Creative writing is one of the subjects taught in our English literature study program for the 5<sup>th</sup>-semester students. In this subject, students are required to produce works of fiction in the form of a short story or short novel.

Based on Rodgers' (2019) summary of Dewey's reflective thinking, this study explored the reflective practice of the students through diary writing. The diary reflected her daily life and her learning activities through narration, opinion, and thoughts.

In doing so, the participant wrote the journal entry, as many as she can, every day - one entry for one day. She mostly wrote in the evening to tell how her day was. She wrote everything about her journey during her day, especially about her personal and academic activities, with the feelings and the thought she had. She narrated events or incidents that happen during the day. In a certain period, once or twice a week, she handed her diary to the lecturer and allowed him to read and to comment on the entries she had written. She sometimes replied to his comments or just continued with her entry.

At the end of the semester, Lana submitted her diary with all of the entries. This "final" diary was our main data for this study. We read again the

entries and coded them to figure out the patterns to gain the answer to the research question. Then, we conducted a semi-structured interview to gain a deeper understanding from our sole research participant. All the patterns gained from the diary entries and interview were the findings that were discussed in this study.

This study was based on Rogers' (2019) who summarized these four criteria of Dewey's reflective practice. She conceptualized that reflective practice was 1) a meaning-making process, 2) a systematic, rigorous, disciplined way of thinking, 3) happen by interacting, and 4) requires attitudes that value the personal and intellectual growth of oneself and others.

We used those criteria while coding the journal entries to make the categories of my findings. We grouped the entries with similar themes and labeled them based on those themes. Later to further understand her ideas and perspective towards diary writing, we conducted a semi-structured interview. Lana's answers were recorded, transcribed, and grouped into themes.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

#### *Kinds of reflections that Lana had in her diary*

Based on the criteria of reflective practice by Rodgers (2019), from the 30 (thirty) entries written between September 6, 2018, to October 22, 2018, I selected entries that fulfilled the criteria of reflective practice. The finding showed that most of the diary entries depicted Lana's reflective practice.

Twenty-four out of 30 entries (80 %) were considered involving reflective practice. In the rest of 6 entries (20%), Lana only recounted some events and those entries are considered lack of any reflective practice.

After making broad categories by separating those that depicted reflective practice and those that did not, I categorized those with reflective practice into 5 (five) more specific categories showing that Lana displayed her reflective practice in her diary entries by:

1. Reflecting her feeling (26.7 %).
2. Reflecting what she learned after having specific experiences (23.3%).
3. Reflecting her hopes and dreams (13.3%).
4. Reflecting how she identified herself (10%).
5. Reflecting her determination to write the entries though confused (6.7%).

Based on the above findings, diary writing does help my student to practice writing regularly and performing reflective practice. These findings are relatable with the previous studies that mentioned the benefits of diary writing as a teaching and learning tool, especially, in this case, is the practice of reflection by the student. The following is the further elaboration of the five categories depicting Lana's reflective practice:

#### *Reflecting her feeling*

Lana's entries were populated mostly by the expressions of various feelings that she had after going through some experiences. Lana mostly used her diary entries to express her feeling like sadness, boredom, disappointment, comfort, feeling blessed, or even feeling of her missing someone. This is I believe the nature of diary writing. As it is suggested at the beginning of the assignment that she might write freely any of her feeling, thoughts, ideas, or experience that made Lana seemed to feel free to express her feeling. Lana found a place to express her feeling without worrying about being embarrassed or without worrying other people to get offended. This part of some entries showed how she expressed her feelings:

I felt so sad because my friends in a group made me felt annoyed. I didn't know it was because of my fault or just because of their habit. (Entry # 02)

I felt blessed today because I had a new experience. I helped Professional Marketing on their event in Semarang. I was tired but I was happy. (Entry #03)

You know what? I miss my senior (of course he is a man) But don't tell anyone about this (smiley sign) (Entry #05)

Lana expressed what she felt about her friends concerning a group work that she did with them. After telling her experience, by recounting the events, Lana explained why she had such feeling as she had to go through all the process that was supposed to be a group work by herself. In other situations (Entry # 03 and Entry # 05) she expressed her feeling of being blessed after she felt successful to get a new experience. So, the feelings she expressed are not always negative.

As suggested by the theory, reflection occurs in a community. Entry # 02 showed that Lana recounted how the incident unfolded and resulted in such feelings after she interacted with her friends. Lana did not experience this event and tried to make meaning out of it without involving other people. Also, she did not suddenly express her feeling out of nothing. She had facts as the base of her reflection. Before she finally ended up expressing her feelings, she recounted some events happening in her days. In some situations, she tried to make herself understand the problem first before she finally stated that she had certain feelings in her days.

In the other situations, she expressed her feelings first and later explained the reasons why she has such feelings. This showed that she did not express something without making herself understand why she should express her feelings. From her entries, it can also be seen that although they expressed Lana's personal feelings, the reasons why she had the feelings were often caused by her encounter with others. Reflection requires the person to experience something and Lana fulfills the requirements.

In the interview, Lana mentioned that expressing what she saw (her experience), what she thought (her ideas) and what she felt (her feeling) as "self-reflection". It means that she realized that diary was the 'right' place to express all that she mentioned above. She also stated that besides used as a place to express her feelings, she used the diary to make some plans and as a support to motivate herself. She stated:

I usually write my feelings, experiences, stories, opinions, and dreams. Most entries of mine are about what I see, think, and feel. I can say that it's all about self-reflection. I share my happiness, anger, anxiety, thoughts or ideas, some things I want to do next, and even support myself by writing good quotes in my entries.

#### *Reflecting what she learned after having specific experiences*

One of the points in the theory suggested that reflection should involve attitudes that value the personal and intellectual growth of the person who makes the reflection and of others, some of Lana's entries showed that attitudes. In her entries, Lana implied that she took valuable lessons from some events that she experienced in her days. The followings are parts of her entries showing the case:

I taught Ivan today. It was time to learn about the universe. I tried to teach him how to pronounce it and the meaning of the words. He was so excited! And last, I asked him to draw and put the name of the picture. He did it well! Even there were some mistakes but he did a good job. From it, I know that children have an amazing imagination. We shouldn't limit them. Let them imagine everything. We only need to make it perfect by tell them the other information or maybe help them to imagine some objects or others. (Entry #9)

... I went back to campus at 10.30 from home by BRT. I felt so sleepy. So, I fell asleep on the bus. I arrived at 11 at the bus stop. ... At the traffic light, I met an old woman that bring an umbrella. That time was so hot, honestly but I did not bring an umbrella or hat. I just wore a jacket. I was surprised because that woman, suddenly, protects me from the sun with her umbrella. I directly said "thank you, mam" Then we walked together, by chance she had the same way as me. I learned from what happened to me that kindness does not depend on who and where. You can help everyone wherever you are and wherever you can. Maybe it is just a little thing, but it will be precious for

others. I'm trying to become a helpful person. Hope I can do that. (Entry #13)

Lana wrote these entries after she had "special" experiences as she implied or directly stated that she learned lessons from them. In Entry # 9, Lana, who gave private lessons to some children, learned from one of her students that they did have potentials. This knowledge was not uncommon to Lana. She could presumably know this idea very well. However, by having direct experience and by having direct interaction with her student, Lana could make such a conclusion. As the theory suggests that reflection should allow the person to appreciate others' potential. In this case, Lana valued her students' imagination as one of his potentials to help him learn. Later Lana suggested to herself (or she may refer to everyone) what to do with children's imagination.

In Entry #13 Lana learned how to value a person's kindness. Before this event happened, Lana might have already known the concept of kindness in which people help other people in need. This concept is known to everybody. However, by writing the experience in her diary, Lana deliberately thought of what had happened as something valuable. In her reflection she wrote that even the lady's action of helping her might be considered a little thing, it might still be so helpful to others. This showed how an act of deliberate reflection such as writing an experience in a diary could help someone value someone else action as suggested by the theory.

In responding to an interview question Lana emphasized that she learned from her experiences and that made her be able to do things in better ways. Here is her response:

Journaling keeps me sane. I learned a lot from what happened. It makes me feel that I can control myself easily when something bad happens and feel grateful when something good happens. It helps me to become a better and wiser person. For me, the benefits of journaling are mostly for my mental health. However, it also gives benefit to my writing habit and skills.

### *Reflecting her hopes and dreams*

It is common for someone who writes a diary to express his/her hopes and/or dreams. It shows that someone who makes the reflection wants growth to happen in her life. Lana displayed her diary entries. Here are her entries showing the case:

I saw many children with low education today, especially this evening. I came to Kaligawe for youth worship. I was so happy to meet them. I've never met them before, so I was not surprised about their behavior, Their "bad words" and their "bad appearance". I gave them a picture with some words while the other (youth) did a game. They colored the picture and I tried to teach them about parts of the body. Some of them were happy. My friends and I also gave them biscuits and milk. I saw them very happy when it was time for snacks. I felt so pity for them because of their environment and their family. They are lack education (school and family), lack of material, and lack of knowledge about norms. I knew why they act like that. I think it is because of the environment (many thugs and uneducated people). I hope I can help my friends to serve the children there. I hope I can have time for it. (Entry #11)

I am so glad because I have good and friendly lecturers. So, I can share anything. Maybe for some of my friends or lecturer, I am so "complicated". I'll ask everything in detail until I understand. Today I also got an email from YSEALI that YSEALI opened the scholarship for spring 2019. I've already tried to fill in the form for fall 2018 but I was not ready with some requirements. I want to get an international scholarship one day. YSEALI is not so complicated but again I'm not ready for it. I always pray about YSEALI. Hope I can make it happen someday. (Entry #15)

These two entries showed Lana tried to make meaning of what happened in her interactions with others and to herself and later wanted to have a change happen. She wanted to grow personally (Entry #11) by being able to serve more and to grow intellectually (Entry #15) by trying to apply for the next scholarship.

Expression hopes and dreams do not mean that Lana imagined something that she wanted to happen. She expressed her hope and dream based on what she witnessed and what she did. Learning from those experiences made Lana hope to be able to do something more. The reflective practice in her entries so far involved more than just expressions of feeling and more than just taking lessons from an experience. These entries showed that Lana wanted to do the actions based on what she had experienced.

### *Reflecting how she identified herself*

Being able to see oneself through diary writing is an important part of reflective practice. Lana tried to see herself through some of her entries. In some cases, Lana's attempts to see herself may seem to be selfish or judgmental. This may not be alright if she did it, for example, in front of her friends. However, in the case of diary writing, comparing oneself with others is not a bad case at all. It should be kept in mind that in real diary writing, no one is supposed to read your entries. That is the freedom in the diary writing that may help Lana see herself as a person. She wrote:

I am a person who can't do anything in a little preparation. I thought that I have to do anything totally, even people didn't know about it. Maybe you can call me "perfectionist." That's me. I have tried to become a person who did not care about everything that becomes my responsibility. I can understand the subject well because I make efforts, I study hard because I know I don't understand the subject well. So, I study until I can. They didn't know the process. I don't know that my standard is too high or just because my friends (some of them) never try to become "well prepared" (Entry # 07)

I often feel I can't do those things. I can't give the best to my students. I am so nervous when I teach English to them. I always say to their parents that I also still learn English. So, I'll do my best when I teach them. Hope I can teach them well and give a positive impact on them. (Entry #8)

I am not interested in teaching. But, I don't know why I always fall into the education field. I don't know why my day is always busy (I'm not complaining). Sometimes, YES! Haha... But I thank God he still gives me a chance to do the positive things in my life. (Entry #25)

In Entry #07 Lana decided to identify herself as someone who prepared everything for the best result of her work. She implied that the idea of "being a perfectionist" might be bad in other people's views. On the contrary, in her view, that attitude helped her in handling her duties as a student. This is a bold perception that might not always be true. However, by doing it, Lana could see herself which would lead her to actions that she needed to do. This kind of self-identification, I believe is important to value one's personal growth.

Meanwhile, in entry #8, after Lana realized her weaknesses when she taught English to her private lesson students, she ensured herself to do the best that she could in teaching the students. Knowing her weaknesses and, at least, tried to do better could be beneficial for her personal development. In Entry #25, Lana saw herself as being in a situation that made her keep doing an activity that she claimed she did not interested in. However, she seemed to be doubtful about her claim. In this situation, Lana seemed to argue with herself. That means she made interaction with herself. This interaction, though only to herself, was a signal that there was a reflective practice that happened.

### *Reflecting her determination to write the entries though confused*

In these two entries, Lana tried to be honest with her confusion about what to write in her diary. However, she showed her determination to still write something in her diary even though she just wrote some lines including her confusion. In this kind of situation, it cannot be said that Lana did not want to fill in her diary with an entry. On the contrary, it showed her determination to keep



writing even when she thought that she had no idea. By writing her true situation of having no idea at all, she wrote something in her diary. She stated:

I don't know what I want to tell in this journal today. Maybe I'll tell you about my activity. I met my friend on campus. We discussed everything. (Entry #12)

Honestly, I don't know what should I tell this time in today's journal. (Entry #14)

In an interview, though sometimes she had nothing to write in her diary, Lana said that diary writing helped her have the habit to write without worrying too much about what she wrote. That was why she felt free to write whatever she wanted to write like what she mentioned below:

Diary writing helps me in having writing habits. Believe it or not, when I've finally written a daily journal in a week without jumping any days, I feel something's missing when I didn't write any entries the next day. I also feel that it helps me in improving my writing skills. For example, when I wrote my final project, I didn't think that write some paragraphs was that difficult. Yes, it was, but I felt that I could write it easier than before I know about journaling. I think the difference is just in the final project, I have to do proofreading after I write, while in diary writing, I don't need to do that.

### **Discussion**

Based on our above findings, Lana showed that she generally used her diary to do the reflective practice. This finding confirms the previous studies mentioning the similar case in which diary writing help learner do reflective practice (Booud, 2001; Dincel & Savur, 2019; Hiemstra, 2001; Jarvis, 2001; Klimova, 2015; Rodgers, 2001).

Specifically, the most dominant finding in this study is that Lana used the diary to express her feeling such as sadness, boredom, disappointment, comfort, feeling blessed, or even feeling of her missing someone. This may be one of the most common uses of diary writing. Despite its popularity as a self-expression medium, especially

personal feelings, only a few studies confirm this case. Boud (2001), for example, only mentioned that diary is used as a form of self-expression without mentioning specifically personal feelings. In our opinion, this special feature of diary writing needs to be addressed especially in the context of the creative writing class. Students' ability to express their feelings can be an essential tool to write fiction.

Our findings also mentioned that through the diary Lana could see herself deeper and therefore could take lessons from her actions. These two findings are strongly supported by some previous studies highlighting that diary writing help learners to be reflective learners. This means that they can see what they have achieved and what they need to do further (Jarvis, 2001; Klimova, 2015).

Some previous studies explained that diary writing helped learners' writing ability through building the habit of writing regularly (Dincel & Savur, 2019; Hiemstra 2001; Taqil et.al., 2015). The studies, however, did not mention particular abilities that helped learners in developing their writing skills. This is possibly because diary writing does not require learners to write accurately, for example, with correct grammar. The emphasis is in the making meaning as suggested by the theory (Rodgers, 2001)

### **CONCLUSION**

This study showed that diary writing provided an opportunity for our students to do self-reflection. She could reflect her feelings (boredom, anxiety, anger, etc.), her hopes, and her dreams. It also provides an opportunity for her to be able to see herself, to see her success and failures, and to plan what to do next. From there, she learned some lessons as her takeaway to decide her next steps. In short, diary writing provides room for the participant to do self-reflection.

Diary writing also helped my student to build a writing habit in which she was so determined to keep writing on daily basis. This process helped her improve her writing skills in terms of freely

expressing her feelings, emotions, and ideas. In turn, it helped her writing more creatively.

For future researches, using more structured prompts to help students write more even when they think they do not have ideas to write is suggested. It is to make sure the participants have a specific framework to write their entries. In response to the advancement of technology, diary writing that is facilitated with technology such as online journaling and online creative writing platforms (e.g. Penzu, Wattpad, etc) should also be explored. Particularly for the creative writing class, diary writing needs to be introduced to the students as a tool for the students to be able to express various kinds of feelings based on their own experiences. The ability to show emotions in fiction writing is essential.

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