

## **Students' Perception in Using Daily Activities Diary to Improve Writing Ability of the Tenth-Grade Students of SMA Negeri 1 Mamuju**

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### **Abstract**

*This study analyzed the use of a daily activities diary to improve students' writing ability. The study aimed to determine students' perceptions of using daily activities diary to improve the writing ability of the tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Mamuju. This study used a quantitative research method with quasi-experimental design. The population of this study was the students of SMA Negeri 1 Mamuju. The samples of this study were students of class X B who used the daily activities diary continuously. The researcher used interviews as the research instrument. The results of this study showed that students' perceptions of using daily activities diary to improve their writing ability were positive perception. This illustrates that the use of a daily activities diary could improve the writing skills of tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Mamuju.*

**Keywords:** *Daily activities diary, writing ability, perception.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

McGoldrick and Caffrey (1985) stated students' perception can be understood as the students' ability to justify their own opinions and distinguish it from research being presented in the class. Students' perception of teaching and learning is absolutely dependent on the fact that they have been taught in the class and how they experience it. In this research, students' perception refers to what students experience about oral corrective feedback in the class.

According to Akande (2009) "perception is the cognitive impression that is formed of "reality" which in turn influences the individual's actions and behavior towards that object". This means that someone can receive something as a good or bad perception depends on what they feel in facing the object. Not every person can have exactly the same perception about particular things, even though the object is the same. It is because people percept something based on their feeling of subjectivity and their experience in the past.

Writing ability is one of the output English skills. It is often considered an output skill because it involves producing written language as an output of one's thoughts, ideas, and communication. When writing, individuals translate their internal knowledge, thoughts, and messages into written form, conveying information to others through the written medium.

There was study that examine the improvement of writing ability. Syarifah, N (2020) conducted research aimed to find out the improving of diary writing technique in students' writing ability in recount text. The results of this research revealed a significant improvement in writing, particularly in recount texts. Additionally, students showed increased interest in learning to write recount texts. These findings indicate that diary writing positively impacted students' writing ability during the second semester of the eighth grade in MTS Istiqlal Kubuhitu, Lampung.

Writing ability is a crucial output skill in language learning, with Syarifah's (2020) study demonstrating the effectiveness of diary writing in improving students' writing skills, particularly in recount texts. These findings emphasize the importance of innovative teaching methods in enhancing language proficiency and student engagement. Based on the discussion above, the researcher wants to conduct research on writing skills using media. The title to be studied, namely, Students' Perception in Using Daily Activities Diary to Improve Writing Ability of the Tenth-Grade Students of SMA Negeri 1 Mamuju.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Writing**

J. B. Heaton (1988), writing is the capacity that allows writers to put their thoughts into meaningful language. Writing is a complex and sometimes difficult talent to teach since it requires mastery of not only grammatical and rhetorical methods, but also conceptual and judging aspects.

Writing ability refers to the proficiency and skill of an individual in expressing their thoughts, ideas, and information through written communication. It encompasses various aspects, including grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, clarity, coherence, organization, and style. Writing ability involves the capacity to convey information effectively, engage the reader, and convey ideas with precision and creativity.

### **Theory of Perception**

According to the Huffman (2010), perception is the process of selecting, organizing and interpreting sensory information. Santrock (2011) describes perception as the interpretation of what is sensed. Generally, there are two kinds of perception: they are positive and negative (Rahayu, 2018). Positive perception is when someone sees something or the world in a positive way, usually, someone with positive perception will bring many positive things to come in their life and they always feel happy and enjoy their life. While negative perception is a negative point of view of a person towards something or the world that they see. Someone with negative perception usually sees the world in a pessimistic way, so they will not enjoy their life (Rahayu, 2018).

### **Daily Activities Diary**

According to Ihsan, D., and Ardithyawan, D. (2016), writing a diary is when students record their thoughts, feelings, reactions, and responses to anything that happened. This is classified as self-writing, or writing with only the self in mind as an audience. Curtis and Bailey (2007) stated that a journal or diary is a record, often kept daily, of one's life, a kind of personal account book. The similar description also proposed by Fitzpatrick (2005) stated that a diary is a personal record of a writer's life experience and is usually private. According to Harmer (2004) diary has some benefits. They are the value of reflection, freedom of expression, developing writing skill, and student-teacher dialogue.

### **METHOD**

This research used qualitative research method with descriptive qualitative. According to Creswell & Poth (2016) stated that qualitative research is complex because it requires extensive fieldwork, a description of the process and the data, and the inductive analysis of the data while concentrating on the participants' perspectives.

This research was conducted in January 2024, from data collection until all data was gathered. The research took place at SMA Negeri 1 Mamuju, located at Jl. Kumbang Lollo, No. 1, Kec. Mamuju, Kab. Mamuju, West Sulawesi. This study's population consisted of tenth grade students from SMAN 1 Mamuju. There were 11 classes. There were X A, X B, X C, X D, X E, X F, X G, X H, X I, X J, and X K. The number of populations was 425 students. The researcher requires a technique to facilitate sampling. Purposive sampling was the technique used by researcher. The researcher chooses nine students at X B class.

The instrument used for data collection was interviews. In analysis the data with qualitative method, the researcher used theory by (Miles & Huberman, 2014) which involves data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/ verification.

### **FINDINGS**

This section contains students' perceptions in using daily activities diary to improve writing ability. The researcher conducted interviews with students to find out how students' perceptions of using daily activities diary to improve writing skills. The students interviewed were students who used the daily activities diary continuously during the study. There were five questions that were given. The researcher summarized the answers in the following five topics.

#### **The Use of daily activities diary**

The use of daily activities diary can improve the writing ability of SMA Negeri 1 Mamuju students. This data was obtained from the following interview results:

##### **Extract 1, (Student 1) (22/02/2023)**

*"...saya dapat meningkatkan kemampuan menulis saya karena kata-kata yang saya tulis lebih terstruktur, dan lebih menyenangkan untuk dibaca ulang..."*

[...i can improve my writing ability because the words I write are more structured, and it's more fun to reread...]

**Extract 2, (Student 2, Student 6, & Student 7)**  
**(22/02/2023)**

*"...sangat membantu untuk menambah kosakata dan meningkatkan kemampuan menulis...."*  
[...very helpful to increase vocabulary and improve writing ability...]

**Extract 3, (Student 3)**  
**(22/02/2023)**

*"... dengan menulis buku harian kita dapat mengetahui apa yang belum kita ketahui, contohnya kata "selalu", awalnya kita tidak tahu bahasa Inggris dari kata "selalu", tapi kita ingin tahu kemudian kita mencari tahu dengan menerjemahkan kata tersebut, lalu dari situlah kita menambah kosa kata baru lagi...."*  
[... because by writing a diary we can know what we don't know, for example the word "selalu", initially we don't know the English of the word "selalu", but we want to know then we find out by translating the word, then that's where we add new vocabulary again...]

**Extract 4, (Student 9)**  
**(22/02/2023)**

*"...dapat meningkatkan kemampuan menulis saya karena adanya konsistensi yang saya lakukan.*  
[...can improve my writing ability because of the consistency that I do...]

The first student stated that daily activities diary can improve writing ability, the writing is more structured and this activity is fun especially in reread part. The second student stated that daily activities diary is supportive in learning English, especially to increase vocabulary. It can improve writing ability. The third student stated that daily activities diary can improve writing ability and then in writing, when we did not know some vocabulary, we have a desire to know it, and that is a learning process. Meanwhile, the ninth student stated that she can improve her writing ability because of her consistency in writing daily activities diary.

From the three statements above, it can be concluded that the use of daily activities diary can improve the writing ability of the students. We can see that all went through the process of learning using the daily activities diary and they learned new vocabulary in the process, and the consistency is needed.

**The Benefits of daily activities diary**

There are benefits of daily activities diary especially in learning English, for example increase vocabularies, train students in writing using English, making students accustomed to writing and composing words in English. This data was obtained from the following interview:

**Extract 5, (Student 1)**  
**(22/02/2023)**

*"...saya dapat meningkatkan kemampuan bahasa Inggris saya, selain itu, saya bisa mempraktekkan ilmu yang sudah saya pelajari dan mengaplikasikannya dalam tulisan saya di buku harian. Seperti penggunaan bahasa yang tepat, penggunaan past tense, penggunaan tanda baca, dan beberapa hal dalam kemampuan berbahasa Inggris yang meningkat secara tidak langsung..."*

[...I was able to improve my English skills, in addition, I can practice the knowledge that I have learned and apply it in my writing in the diary. Such as the use of proper language, the use of past tense, the use of punctuation, and several things in English language skills that improved indirectly...]

**Extract 6, (Student 3)**  
**(22/02/2023)**

*"...selain menambah kosakata, saya juga bisa lebih memahami struktur bahasa yang baik dalam menulis, yang tadinya kacau menjadi lebih teratur..."*

[...In addition to increasing my vocabulary, I can also better understand the structure of good language in writing, which was previously chaotic, can become more organized...]

**Extract 7, (Student 4, Student 5, & Student 6)**  
**(22/02/2023)**

*"...Manfaat menggunakan buku aktivitas harian dapat meningkatkan kemampuan bahasa seperti peningkatan pemahaman tata bahasa, kosakata, kreativitas..."*

[...The benefits of using daily activity diary can improve language skills such as increased understanding of grammar, vocabulary, creativity...]

The first student stated that the benefits of daily activities diary is increasing their writing ability. The third student stated that with the daily activities diary she can increase her vocabulary, good language structure, and train to write more organized. The fourth, fifth, and sixth students stated that through daily activities diary they can improve their language ability such as grammar, vocabulary, creativity, and many more unexpected things.

It can be concluded that the daily activities diary has many benefits such as increasing vocabulary, increasing creativity, can train to write using English with a good structure and more organized.

**Students feeling before and after writing the diary**

Before writing using the daily activities diary, students felt empty, alone, and only kept in their heads the story of their daily lives. But after using the daily activities diary they have a place, a friend to tell many things about their daily lives. This data is obtained from the following interview results:

**Extract 8, Student 2**  
**(22/02/2023)**

*"...sebelum terbiasa menulis saya merasa sendirian, tapi setelah menulis buku harian saya merasa punya teman. Ternyata secara psikologis menulis bisa membuat perasaan lega, karena jika ada cerita random, sekecil apapun, saya bisa menuliskannya di buku harian..."*

[...before getting used to writing I felt alone, but after writing a diary I felt I had friends. It turns out that psychologically writing can make you feel relieved, because if there is a random story, no matter how small, I can write it all down in the diary...]

### **Extract 9, Student 3**

**(22/02/2023)**

*"...sebelum menulis buku harian, jika ada cerita sehari-hari, biasanya saya hanya menyimpannya di kepala dan membiarkan cerita itu berlalu begitu saja. Tapi setelah melakukan kegiatan menulis ini, saya bisa menuangkan cerita saya dalam buku harian tentang bagaimana keseharian saya..."*

[...before writing a diary, if there is a daily story, I usually just keep it in my head and let the story pass. But after doing this writing activity I can pour my story in a diary about how my daily life is...]

### **Extract 10, Student 8**

**(22/02/2023)**

*"...sebelumnya, saya merasa kehidupan sehari-hari saya berantakan, setelah menulis saya bisa melihat apa yang saya lakukan sebelumnya dan bisa mengubahnya menjadi lebih baik dari sebelumnya..."*

[...before, I felt my daily life was a mess, after writing I can see what I did before and I can change it to be better than before...]

### **Extract 11, Student 9**

**(22/02/2023)**

*"...sebelum melakukan kegiatan menulis buku harian saya sangat malas menulis, setelah menulis saya menjadi lebih rajin dan merasa produktif, dan semoga ini akan terus berlanjut..."*

[...before doing diary writing activities, I was very lazy to write, after I wrote I became more diligent and felt productive, and hopefully it will continue...]

The second student stated that before doing the habit of writing he felt alone but after doing the habit of writing using the daily activities diary, he felt he had a friend to tell everything even though it was random. The third student stated that before writing using the daily activities diary she just kept the story in her head and left it at that. But after doing self-habituation writing he can pour his story into a book, not just in memory. The eighth student stated that through daily activities diary she can change the things better than before. Meanwhile, the ninth student stated that she more productive on the use of daily activities diary.

From the three statements above, it can be concluded that before using the daily activities diary, students felt that they did not have a place to tell stories, felt lazy, and did not productive. But after using the daily activities diary, students felt they have a place or friend to tell stories, they more productive and better than before. And when they wrote a story, they can pour into a daily activities diary, without being judged by people.

### **The obstacles when using daily activities diary**

In using the daily activities diary, students experience obstacles, namely the lack of vocabulary which causes them to stop writing to find out first, besides that the daily activities that students write are monotonous so the coverage is not broad enough, there are also students who do not understand the use of past tense. This data is obtained from the following interview results:

**Extract 12, (Student 1, Student 4)**  
**(22/02/2023)**

*"...saya kesulitan menulis karena kurangnya kosakata, jadi saya harus mencarinya terlebih dahulu dan butuh waktu untuk menyusunnya menjadi kalimat yang baik. Selain itu, saya biasanya sibuk sehingga tidak memiliki kesempatan untuk menulis setiap hari, jika saya sibuk saya menulis di ponsel saya terlebih dahulu, dan akhirnya lupa memindahkannya ke buku harian..."*

[...I have trouble writing because of my lack of vocabulary, so I have to look it up first and it takes time to organize it into good sentences. In addition, I'm usually busy so I don't have the opportunity to write every day, if I'm busy I write on my phone first, and eventually forget to transfer it to the diary...]

**Extract 13, Student 2**  
**(22/02/2023)**

*"...sebenarnya, hambatannya datang dari diri saya sendiri, karena kegiatan yang saya tulis setiap hari biasanya monoton, jadi menurut saya kurang kompleks dan kurang luas..."*

[...the obstacle comes from myself, because the activities I write about on a daily basis are usually monotonous, so I think they are less complex and less extensive...]

**Extract 14, Student 6**  
**(22/02/2023)**

*"...hambatan yang paling signifikan adalah menjaga konsistensi, kurangnya motivasi, dan kebingungan tentang topik apa yang harus ditulis..."*

[...the most significant obstacles were maintaining consistency, lack of motivation, and confusion about what topic to write about...]

The first and the fourth students stated that she has difficulty in writing a diary because of their lack of vocabulary, and their busy schedule makes their neglect to write a diary every day. The second student stated that the activities she writes about on a daily basis are monotonous, so the scope of what she covers in the diary is less broad and complex. The sixth student stated that the most significant obstacles were maintaining consistency, lack of motivation, and topic selection.

From the three statements above, it can be concluded that the obstacles experienced by students in using the daily activities diary are the busyness that makes students sometimes neglect to write every day in the diary book and maintaining consistency was more significant obstacles that student has. In addition, the use of grammar that still requires deeper understanding. And also, the monotony of daily activities makes students constrained in writing in diary books.

**Worthiness of daily activities diary**

Daily activities diary is worth recommending to students to improve their writing skills. This data was obtained from the following interview:

### **Extract 15, (Student 1 & Student 7)**

**(22/02/2023)**

*"...buku kegiatan harian sangat tepat digunakan sebagai tempat untuk meningkatkan kemampuan menulis, selain sebagai tempat untuk menuangkan cerita keseharian buku kegiatan harian juga dapat meningkatkan kemampuan menulis kita yang dilakukan secara terus menerus..."*

[...diary books are appropriate to be used as a place to improve writing ability, in addition to being a place to pour daily stories diary books can also improve our writing ability that are continuously doing it...]

### **Extract 16, Student 2**

**(22/02/2023)**

*"...Sangat layak untuk direkomendasikan, karena selama ini siswa acuh tak acuh terhadap bahasa Inggris namun dengan adanya buku harian kegiatan harian siswa dapat memperhitungkan waktu mereka, dan tentu saja dapat melatih kemampuan bahasa Inggris mereka seperti kosa kata dan cara menulis yang baik dan benar..."*

[...it is worth recommending, because students have been indifferent to English but with the daily activities diary students can consider their time, and of course can train their English skills such as vocabulary and how to write well and correctly...]

### **Extract 17, Student 3**

**(22/02/2023)**

*"...layak untuk direkomendasikan kepada mahasiswa lain. Karena dalam belajar bahasa Inggris kita tidak selalu hanya mengandalkan kemampuan berbicara saja, kemampuan menulis juga tidak kalah penting, terutama dalam dunia perkuliahan dan pekerjaan..."*

[...worth recommending to other students. Because in learning English we do not always only rely on speaking skills, writing skills are no less important, especially in the world of lectures and jobs...]

The first and the seventh students stated that daily activities diary was worth recommended to students to be used as a platform to improve writing ability. The second student stated that daily activities diary was very appropriate to be recommended to students, because students can practice their English skills, especially writing skills. The third student stated that daily activities diary was worth recommended to other students because writing skills are important skills to learn, especially in the world of college and work.

From the three statements above, it can be concluded that the daily activities diary deserves to be recommended to other students to be used as a forum or learning media in improving students' writing ability.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

In this part, the researcher discusses the students' perception on the use of daily activities diary to improve writing ability. Those perception analyze in to five aspect; a) the use of daily activities diary, b) the benefits of daily activities diary, c) students' feeling before and after

writing the diary, d) the obstacles when using daily activities diary, and e) worthiness of daily activities diary.

### **The use of daily activities diary**

From the analysis result, the researcher found the students gave various answers but the points they conveyed were the same. From the three students' answers, they said that daily activities diary can improve writing ability. We can see that all three of them went through the learning process of using the daily activities diary and they learned new vocabulary in the process.

Based on the theory of Curtis and Bailey (2007) stated that a journal or diary is a record, often kept daily, of one's life, a kind of personal account book. The similar description also proposed by Fitzpatrick (2005) stated that a diary is a personal record of a writer's life experience and is usually private.

Based on the theory above, the use of diary is to write down personal experiences by the students. And related with the findings of this study, the researcher found that the use of diary on the students of SMA Negeri 1 Mamuju have an effect to their writing ability. The students write down their personal experiences, their daily activities on diary, and what they feel on that day. So, the researcher conclude that the use of daily activities diary can improve writing ability of students.

### **The benefits of daily activities diary**

On the second question the researcher talked about the benefits of daily activities diary. From the three students interviewed, they said that the daily activities diary has many benefits, especially in improving their writing skills. The first student said that with the daily activities diary he can apply his knowledge into writing, such as using the vocabulary he knows into writing even though there are still some who need help with goggle translate, but it can improve his writing skills. The second student feels that by using the daily activities diary, it can increase creativity, besides that the diary also makes his English vocabulary increase. The third student said that he became more structured in writing. All students who have been interviewed feel there are benefits after using the daily activities diary.

Based on theory from Harmer (2004) diary writing benefits students in various ways. It encourages reflection, helping them delve into their learning processes and gain valuable insights. Diaries also provide a safe space for self-expression, allowing students to articulate their thoughts and emotions freely. Regular writing enhances their writing skills, making them more proficient communicators. Moreover, diaries facilitate meaningful communication between students and teachers, transcending language barriers and promoting mutual understanding through responsive interactions.

Based on previous findings, Hardiwatiningsih, R (2019) discovered that diary writing plays a significant role in vocabulary acquisition. It aids students in improving their vocabulary and recalling words they may have forgotten. The researcher outlines various ways in which students utilize their diaries to learn vocabulary, including listening to teacher explanations, translating their diary entries into English, selecting appropriate vocabulary, and identifying difficult words for further understanding. Through diary writing, students can practice spelling and modify their vocabulary usage based on the content of their diaries.

Based on the theory and previous findings, it offers numerous benefits for students. It fosters reflection, provides a platform for self-expression, enhances writing skills, and facilitates meaningful communication between students and teachers. Additionally, it plays a significant role in vocabulary acquisition, empowering students to strengthen their language skills. Overall, diary writing emerges as a valuable tool for enriching learning experiences and promoting linguistic development.

### **Students' feeling before and after writing the diary**

On the third question, the researcher talked about the students feeling before and after writing daily activities diary. All said there were changes before and after writing the daily activities diary. Before writing the diary, they felt empty, felt alone, and had no place for stories. But after using the daily activities diary they feel relieved and happy because any activities, feelings, and even small things can be told into the diary book.

Based on the findings, the researcher found that through daily activities diary that was often used in everyday life to write daily life, many students felt that they have a place to tell their stories without judgment from others. The findings relate with the previous findings by Pragya (2018) she found that the practice of diary writing significantly improved the level of mental health of adolescent girls.

Based on the findings and previous findings we can see the relation with the use of daily activities diary and mental health. When students wrote their thought in diary, they can release their emotion, creativity, and feelings, wherever and whenever they want. It proved that the use of daily activities diary not only improve student's writing ability, but also improves their mental health.

### **The obstacles when using daily activities diary**

On the fourth question, the researcher talked about the obstacles when using daily activities diary from the three students they have each obstacle. The first student said that he had time constraints, but usually he would write on his cellphone first if he had the opportunity, then he would transfer it to the diary book. The second student said that he felt the writing he wrote was monotonous, because his activities at home repeated as usual. The third student said that he had problems in using past tense. From the three students, it can be concluded that the use of daily activities diary can indeed improve writing skills, but writers need to take the time in between their busy schedules.

Based on the previous findings, Ramadhani (2015) found two weaknesses at the first cycle those were students often handed in their diaries late, and they tended to use the same basic words and simple sentences. To help with this, the researchers came up with solutions. They gave out different stickers with emojis as rewards to students who were on time and showed creativity. The researchers also conducted a pair work writing activity in the second cycle in order to make the students learn from their friends. The researchers provided different emoticon stickers that rewarded the students' punctuality and creativity.

The previous findings above have related with this study. There were obstacles in writing diary, one of the main obstacles was time. The students forget or late in wrote a diary, but based on the previous findings the researcher gave students rewarded when student wrote the diary on time. It can be followed by teachers who have the same constraints. The researcher concluded

that there will always be obstacles in the learning process, but it is up to the teacher or learner to be more creative in dealing with the obstacles.

### **Worthiness of daily activities diary**

On the fifth question, the researcher talks about the worthiness of daily activities diary. From the three students who have been interviewed, they said that the daily activities diary is appropriate to be used as an independent learning media at home to improve students' writing skills. We can conclude that the use of daily activities diary can be used by teachers as a project to improve students' writing skills. Because its use requires time and sustainability, this project can be done at home and teachers can monitor students' performance every week.

There were studied that related with this study. Firstly, Yulianti (2014) conducted interviews in her study, unveiling students' positive perceptions toward diary writing. The interviews illustrated students' keen interest and eagerness to improve their writing abilities. They expressed contentment with the chance to refine their writing skills through composing texts based on their personal experiences.

Secondly, Marlia (2020) found the majority of the students have a positive attitude on affective, cognitive and behavioral aspect towards writing diary in writing skill due to writing diary can express their idea and increase their writing skill anywhere and anytime.

Based on the previous findings, their studies show positive perception and attitude towards diary. The student show interest on daily activities diary, when student interest, it makes learning process more easy and enjoy to do it. The researcher concluded that daily activities diary worth to use to improve students writing ability.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The students' perception on the use of daily activities diary to improve writing ability was positive perception. It was evidenced by interviews that were conducted with nine students, they argue that in using the daily activities diary, they learn new vocabulary in the process, their vocabulary, creativity increase, and their writing is more organized. Through the use of a daily activities diary, the students felt they had a place or friend to tell stories, without being judged by people. But the students still have obstacles such as chance, grammar understanding, and monotony in writing. Meanwhile, a daily activities diary deserves to be recommended to other students to be used as a learning media in improving students' writing ability.

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