OVERCOMING SOME CHALLENGES OF DAILY DIARY WRITING

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Abstract: *Daily diary writing is widely recognized as an effective method to enhance learners' writing skills, encourage self - reflection, and support personal development. However, maintaining a consistent diary writing habit presents several challenges that hinder learners from fully engaging in the practice. This article explores these difficulties in depth and proposes practical strategies to overcome them. Drawing on both international and Vietnamese research, the study identifies four major obstacles commonly faced by learners: limited time due to academic and personal responsibilities, difficulty generating ideas to write about, a perceived lack of immediate benefit or value from diary writing, and concerns about privacy and confidentiality. These issues often result in decreased motivation and irregular writing habits. To address these challenges, the article offers several actionable solutions, including adopting micro - journaling techniques to make writing less time - consuming, using writing prompts to stimulate creativity, leveraging digital tools such as apps and online platforms for convenience and security, and emphasizing the role of teachers in creating a supportive, judgment - free writing environment. By presenting these strategies in a coherent framework, the article aims to empower educators and learners to overcome barriers to daily writing. Ultimately, it highlights how consistent diary writing can become a powerful tool for long - term academic improvement and personal growth when implemented with thoughtful support and guidance.*
Keywords: *Challenges, Daily, Diary writing, Overcoming, Writing*

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the field of second language acquisition, writing is widely recognized as one of the most demanding yet essential skills for learners to master. Unlike listening or speaking, which can often be improved through daily interaction and exposure, writing requires deliberate effort, structured thinking, and a solid grasp of grammar and vocabulary. Developing effective writing skills is not only vital for academic success but also plays a significant role in enhancing critical thinking and self - reflection. As language learning becomes increasingly focused on practical application and learner autonomy, educators and researchers alike have paid growing attention to strategies that can foster writing fluency in a sustainable and learner - friendly way.

Among these strategies, daily diary writing has emerged as a promising and accessible tool for both teachers and learners. With its low cost, flexible format, and high degree of personalization, diary writing provides learners with a space to express themselves freely, practice writing regularly, and engage meaningfully with the target language. Learners who write diaries consistently often experience improved fluency, more confidence in self - expression, and heightened awareness of language structures. Beyond linguistic gains, diary

writing also encourages emotional expression and introspection, which can increase learners' motivation and investment in the language learning process.

Despite its many benefits, however, daily diary writing remains underutilized in many educational settings, especially at the university level. A significant number of learners struggle to maintain the habit, even when they are aware of its potential advantages. Common barriers include lack of time, uncertainty about what to write, a belief that diary writing is not academically relevant, concerns about privacy, and a general lack of motivation. These challenges can prevent learners from developing a consistent writing routine and, as a result, from fully experiencing the benefits of reflective writing.

Given these realities, it is important to examine the current state of diary writing as a pedagogical tool and consider how it can be better integrated into language education. There is a clear need for practical and learner - centered approaches that address learners' difficulties while making the writing process more engaging and achievable. Understanding the reasons behind learners' reluctance to write and identifying strategies that respond directly to these issues can provide valuable guidance for both educators and curriculum designers.

This article aims to explore the significance of diary writing in the development of learners' writing skills, particularly within the context of second language learning. It highlights the urgency of addressing common obstacles that hinder learners from writing regularly and outlines general directions for supporting learners through realistic and adaptable methods. By contributing to the broader discussion of writing pedagogy, the article seeks to reaffirm the value of diary writing and promote it as a meaningful, enjoyable, and effective practice for language learners.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. International perspectives on diary writing in language learning

Diary writing has gained widespread recognition in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) as a reflective and autonomous learning tool that fosters language development beyond the classroom. Numerous international studies have emphasized the pedagogical value of regular journaling in helping learners enhance their writing fluency, improve grammatical accuracy, and cultivate self - expression. According to Polyglossic (2023), journaling enables learners to use the target language in a meaningful and personalized context, thereby deepening emotional engagement and aiding long - term retention of vocabulary and structures. This personalized use of language transforms writing from a purely academic task into an authentic communicative experience.

Moreover, journaling is strongly associated with increased metacognitive awareness. Learners are encouraged to reflect not only on the content of their writing but also on how they write, which promotes greater autonomy and self - regulation (ResearchGate, 2023). It serves as a tool for learners to track their linguistic progress over time, develop self - assessment skills, and identify areas that need improvement, thus complementing formal instruction in the classroom.

Despite these pedagogical advantages, diary writing is not without its challenges. A significant number of learners struggle to maintain the habit due to a lack of time, uncertainty about what to write, or worries about privacy and evaluation (EA Journals, 2013). To mitigate these obstacles, educational researchers and practitioners have introduced various supportive strategies. Micro - journaling, for instance, involves writing short, focused entries that reduce cognitive load and time pressure, making the habit more accessible and sustainable (Riviera Publishing, 2023). The implementation of writing

prompts or thematic guides can help spark ideas and reduce writer's block (Texthelp, n.d.). Digital tools such as Journaly provide interactive platforms for learners to write, receive peer feedback, and track their development - creating a sense of community and accountability (Journaly, n.d.).

2.2. Vietnamese context

In Vietnam, diary writing has increasingly gained attention as an effective pedagogical approach for students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Several studies have confirmed that consistent engagement in journaling activities can lead to noticeable improvements in both writing fluency and grammatical accuracy among Vietnamese learners, particularly at the high school level (HSE University, 2020). Writing diaries allows learners to reflect on their daily experiences using English, thereby reinforcing language structures and vocabulary in a meaningful and contextualized manner.

Despite its recognized benefits, the adoption of diary writing in Vietnamese classrooms faces several obstacles. Similar to global trends, learners often struggle with time constraints due to a heavy academic workload and exam - focused curriculum. Motivation is also a recurring issue, especially when learners perceive diary writing as disconnected from academic performance or formal assessments. Cultural perceptions may also play a role, as Vietnamese learners are often hesitant to express personal emotions or thoughts in writing due to concerns about privacy or fear of being judged.

To address these challenges, Vietnamese educators have introduced microlearning techniques, breaking down writing tasks into small, manageable parts that are easier to complete on a daily basis. This approach not only reduces the pressure of writing long texts but also sustains students' attention and encourages gradual progress (Canadian Journal of Educational and Social Studies, 2021). In addition, the integration of digital diary platforms - such as mobile apps and cloud - based journaling tools - has shown promise in motivating tech - savvy learners by offering convenience, customization, and privacy. Tools like Journey. Cloud provide user - friendly interfaces that allow learners to track their progress and reflect privately, making the practice of diary writing more engaging and sustainable in Vietnamese educational settings.

2.3. Research gap and opportunities

While existing literature highlights the benefits of diary writing in language learning - such as improved fluency, enhanced self - expression, and increased metacognitive awareness - significant gaps remain in the practical application and long - term sustainability of this approach among learners. Many current studies emphasize the outcomes of diary writing but give limited attention to the diverse challenges learners face when trying to maintain this habit over time. These challenges include not only external factors like time constraints and academic pressure but also internal factors such as individual motivation, personal writing preferences, and confidence in language use.

There is a clear need for more in - depth research into personalized strategies that can help sustain diary writing as a daily routine. Specifically, future studies should investigate how learners with different personalities, learning styles, and language proficiency levels respond to various approaches, such as micro - journaling, thematic prompts, peer feedback, or teacher - guided reflection. Tailoring the practice to individual needs could help increase both the effectiveness and the appeal of diary writing, particularly for learners who struggle with self - motivation or anxiety around writing.

Moreover, the increasing role of digital tools in education presents a promising yet under -researched avenue. While some platforms like Journey. Cloud or Journaly have