FICTION WRITING IN WATTPAD AS A LEARNING MEDIA FOR IMPROVING THE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING DEPARTMENT UNU PURWOKERTO

Dinar Faiza[1], Meilina Haris Mayekti[2]

[1] *English Language Teaching Department, Faculty of Social, Economics and Humanities, Nadhlatul Ulama University of Purwokerto, Purwokerto, Indonesia.*
dinarfaiza1689@gmail.com
[2] *English Language Teaching Department, Faculty of Social, Economics and Humanities, Nadhlatul Ulama University of Purwokerto, Purwokerto, Indonesia.*
meilina.haris@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Not all graduates of English Education Department, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Universitas Muria Kudus work as teachers or in the field of education. The objectives of this research are: 1) to explore the motivation of the students in choosing English Education Department Universitas Muria Kudus, 2) to test the significance of the difference between the academic achievements of integrative-motivated students and those of instrumental-motivated students. The design of this research is qualitative-quantitative with motivation as the independent variable and academic achievement as the dependent variable. Questionnaire was used to collect the data from 81 students as the subjects of the research. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to achieve the first objective and t-test was used to achieve the second objective. The results of the research show that: 1) the dominant motivation of the students in choosing English Education Department Universitas Muria Kudus is integrative; 2) there is a significant difference of academic achievement of the instrumental-motivated students and that of integrative-motivated students, that is, the academic achievement of the students who have integrative motivation is better than that of the students who have instrumental motivation.

Keywords: instrumental motivation; integrative motivation; intrinsic; extrinsic; academic achievement

Social media and various digital platforms have become a place of expression for every individual, especially for the younger generation who are often referred to as *Z Generation* or well-known as *Zoomer Generation*. One of digital platforms that has potential as a learning media is *Wattpad*. *Wattpad* is an online reading application as well as an online writing media that can be accessed and read for free by anyone, anytime and anywhere. *Wattpad* is an application created by Allan Lau and Ivan Yuen in December 2006 and based in Toronto, Canada. *Wattpad* is dominated by young people because the target market is the millennial and Z Generation who have an age range between 15-35 years old. Most of *Wattpad*'s contents are fiction stories such as romance, thriller, mystery, fanfiction, fantasy. According to Syaharani in the Global Communications Journal (2017) *Wattpad* supports more than 50 languages in the world,

but 77% of the content is in English. *Wattpad* has 15 million users in every month and owns more than 400 million stories. It is expected to expand 500 million users per month. *Wattpad* that is accessible and offers useful features to write and read in minutes is the reason of the popularity (Ulfa, 2020).

In academic, *Wattpad*'s existence has been acknowledged and verified by many researches (Wilson et al., 2012). *Wattpad* is used for writing and can be a channel for writers to publish their works. *Wattpad* is also a platform to the readers who are interested in literature, social media and the convenience of online reading. People can get satisfaction from this brand-new reading and writing style. According to Andriani T (2015), there is motivation that encourages someone to enjoy reading stories on *Wattpad* because of learning and emotional satisfaction.

Wattpad has many advantages in promoting many written stories and growing literacy interest. *Wattpad* is a fairly popular and efficient application for writing and reading short stories and can provide comment directly within the short story paragraphs and *Wattpad* has many advantages in promoting reader-response theory to EFL college students (Anggitasari et al, 2020). Through *Wattpad*, student can improve his or her writing ability. Students can learn some word choices that are appropriate for the text they are writing. They also can get information in their event writing of the class. According to Rahman (2009), writing is the most focused but the least developed English language skill among the university learners.

The limited media of practicing writing skills often becomes obstacle in online class and it needs to be found a solution. It affects to the lack of motivation and confidence which experienced by many students including the students of English Language Teaching Department, UNU Purwokerto. Furotus (2021) stated that *Wattpad* gives more confidence when it comes to sharing their work or stories on the internet. Without seeing the readers' faces, they can get feedback, remark or criticism. This application can assist students who are interested in creating a novel or sharing their stories (Adiningtyas, 2020). It is important to student get confidence and motivation in writing activity. Philip and Lindsay (2016) stated that Motivation and self-confidence are one of the internal factors that are considered very important in the teaching and learning process.

Wattpad can be adopted as an alternative learning media in the Writing class. Combining *Wattpad* platform with writing fiction story can be a fun and useful way to improve writing skill. In addition, since pandemic teaching and learning activity have to be internet-based and demand digital skill to adjust. Therefore, a teacher must provide the digital use and media in the learning activity, including in writing class. *Wattpad* is expected to be a new medium to increase motivation, interest and self-confidence to build students' writing habits. *Wattpad* is chosen because it is one of the biggest and popular online writing media these days and most students in English Language Teaching Department are more familiar with *Wattpad* than other writing blog. The use of various learning media in writing class during pandemic has been urgency in English Language Teaching Department, UNU Purwokerto because the students overcame boredom and lack of motivation in online class activity.

This study was conducted to analyze the role of *Wattpad* in improving the writing skills of English Language Teaching Department, UNU Purwokerto through a writing project of fiction story in the class. It also found out about students' perception of the use of *Wattpad* as a learning media in writing class. The research object is *Transactional Writing* class in second semester. This research focused on the use of *Wattpad* in writing practice. Students were asked to write fiction story with free themes and genres. The data were taken from their writing product in pre-test and post-test, questionnaires and interview.

METHODS

The researcher used the mix methods by combining two research approaches, descriptive qualitative and quantitative. Sugiyono (2013) stated that mix method approach is combining qualitative and quantitative method in research. This study can be categorized as the research term Web 2.0 because the implementation of technology and social in teaching learning process. Web 2.0 technologies are widely used by millions of people across different fields and for variety of purposes. Faizi (2015) stated that the research 2.0 have demonstrated that these platforms have educational benefits.

Qualitative descriptive was used to analyze the results of the pre-test and post-test as well as interviews, while the quantitative method was used to analyze the results of the questionnaire. The data were taken using purposive sampling by taking sampling with certain considerations. Tongco (2007) stated that the purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling, is the deliberate choice of an informant due to the qualities the informant possesses. The researcher took data from 37 students in the Transactional Writing class, A and B class. Before taking the data, the research sought a prior permission to the students and provided the confidentiality and anonymity in the result of pre-test, post-test, questionnaire and interview. It ensured to avoid undue influence or impact in their grade in the course.

The treatment was given by giving a writing project to write a fiction story with a free genres. Writing practice was carried out by using *Wattpad* . Primary data came from the results of pre-test and post-test to test to analyze the improvement of students' writing skills after the treatment was given in each meeting. Interview data and questionnaires were taken to determine students' perspectives in writing using the *Wattpad* media. The data analysis technique was carried out by processing the results of the pre-test and post-test, interview transcripts and questionnaires. Researchers analyzed the data using the data analysis step by Mckernan (in Utami, 2012). The steps are: collecting data, coding the data, comparing the data,

building interpretations, and reporting the results. The researcher collected the data from pre-test and post-test from students' fiction story to show the improvement of writing skill. Then, interview and questionnaires data were taken to show the students' perspective of the use of *Wattpad* as new learning media.
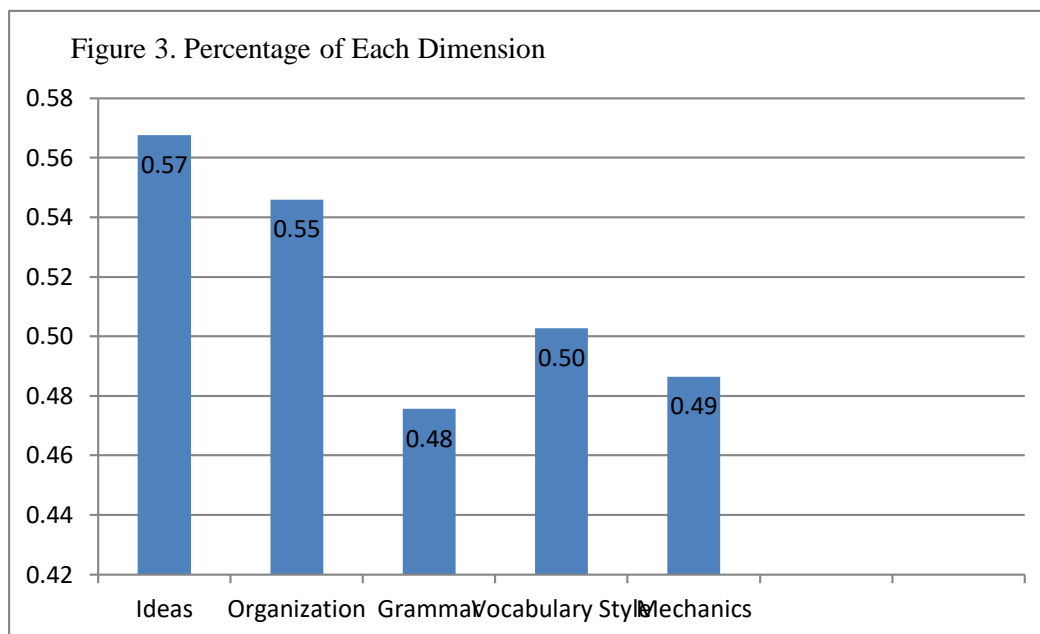
FINDINGS
1. The Result of Pre-test

At the first meeting in class, the researcher explained about the fiction writing project that would be carried out and also the *Wattpad* media that would be used in the Transactional Writing class. Most students are familiar with *Wattpad* and some have used it but mostly they used *Wattpad* only for reading. For students who are not familiar with *Wattpad*, the researcher explained how to create a *Wattpad* account and the use of *Wattpad* features. Students were instructed to create a *Wattpad* account first and learned the function of each feature.

.The project of writing fiction stories using *Wattpad* was conducted after the mid-semester. The researcher gave a pre-test to the students by asking them to write short fiction story based on their imagination and basic abilities. Pre-test was carried out as a first step to collect data before treatment. The pre-test and post-test assessment techniques used a writing rubric adapted from J.B. Heaton (in Tahrun, 2020) that consists of 5 assessment aspects, namely ideas, organization, grammar, vocabulary style and mechanics. Students must write their original work and not be allowed to open dictionaries or browse other media. The story was uploaded to the student's *Wattpad* account that was previously created. Most of the students only wrote at most 2 paragraphs in their story.

Based on Figure 1 below, the results show that the lowest score is 40, which is obtained by 4 students, namely student 2, student 3, student 21 and student 26. While the highest score is 72, which is obtained by student 24.

Figure 3. Percentage of Each Dimension

Dimension	Percentage
Ideas	0.57
Organization	0.55
Grammar	0.48
Vocabulary Style	0.50
Mechanics	0.49

Based on Figure 3, it shows the percentage of 5 aspects or dimensions in the rubric of writing assessment. The highest percentage, which is 0.57, is in the idea aspect where most students are able to build relevant story ideas according to the instructions and have quite varied topics. Even though there were still some sentences that were not accurate or detailed in expressing their ideas.

The lowest percentage is grammar aspect, which is 0.48. Most of the students' writings still have many errors in grammar, especially in the use of tenses, pronouns, word orders or subject-verb agreement. Grammatical errors have always been the biggest challenge faced by students in learning English and this also happened in this activity. Students still have difficulty in adjusting the use of tenses in their story plots and they also sometimes experienced confusion in vocabulary changes (regular & irregular verbs).

According to Hafizh (2013) grammar is an aspect that makes it difficult for students to write sentences. Especially in making fiction stories where students must be able to develop a plot or storyline. According to Azzar (via Noviana, Rufinus, Bunau: 2015), Grammar is needed for comprehension in the natural of a language. Students who have poor grammatical knowledge would have difficulties in writing. Grammar is a basic requirement in understanding a language. One of the important elements in grammar that used in writing narrative texts such as fiction is tenses, especially the use of the past tense. Noviana (2015) stated that narrative tenses are the tenses we use to talk about past events and to tell the stories. The common tense of narrative is the past tense.

Another aspect is the organization aspect which has a percentage of 0.55 and put into the second. Even though the result was quite good, there were still many students who had not written the storyline coherently or effectively. In writing aspects of the organization or the ideas has an important role. Ideas or information must be arranged logically, clearly so that it can be delivered to the reader. Lundh (via Jusmaya, 2019) stated that writing is a skill that guides students to produce and to develop information and ideas for reader. Therefore it needs high degree accuracy, required systematic and well-ordered.

The second lowest percentage after grammar is mechanism. It is about whether students show good mastery in punctuation, capital letters and spelling. The pre-test showed 0.49 in terms of the mechanism, which means that many students' writings had

not paid attention to punctuation, capital letters and spelling. In the opinion of Kantor (2012), "Writing would be hard for students because it combined some components that was considered such as grammar, vocabulary, had a clear understandable idea and appropriate mechanic." Inaccuracies in the mechanic aspect are often found in writing learning. Student scores in the mechanism aspect are almost the same, between points 2-3. Most of them make errors in punctuation and capital letters.

2. Result of Post-Test

After the pre-test was carried out at the 8th meeting or the first meeting after mid, the researcher gave material about narrative text in general, such as elements in narrative text, tenses used in narrative text and types of narrative at the next meeting or the 9th meeting. The researcher provided the material of the fictional story in the 10th meeting and conducted a discussion session as well as a brief review of the fictional story they had made for the pre-test. At the 11th meeting, students were asked to read a fiction story written by their friends on *Wattpad* and tried to analyze it based on the material they have learned. Students were also asked to write comments as feedback in the comments column. In the end of the meeting, the researcher asked the students to practice writing fiction story for an assignment on their *Wattpad* account. Some students chose to write a new story and many also continued their pre-test story into a series.

At the 12th meeting, the researchers provided detail feedback on several samples of fictional stories that students had made. The researcher provided corrections regarding grammar such as the use of inappropriate tenses, the use of incorrect pronouns, subject-verb agreements and also punctuation, spelling or capital letters. The researcher motivated the students to keep writing fiction stories on *Wattpad*. Harwood (2019) stated that feedback is the part of writing program which is either underused or misunderstand. Feedback needs to be limited to the overt correction of errors and the provision of comment by teacher. At the 13th meeting, the researcher gave additional material of the fiction story in terms of plot, depicting characters, building conflict and writing sentences in dialogue and narration. Students were also asked to to give feedback on their friends' stories through the comments column.

In the last meeting, the researcher gave a post-test to the students by asking them to write a new fiction story. The theme and genre of the story was still free according to their interests. Students were prohibited from using dictionaries or browse other media in the post-test writing process.

Figure 4 below shows the findings of the post-test scores that have been analyzed using J.B. Heaton's rubric.

It shows that the highest post-test score is 84, which is obtained by student number 24, the student who also got the highest score during the pre-test. While the lowest post-test score is 56 obtained by 2 students, student 1 and student 31. It shows an improvement from the previous pre-test results. There is an increase score about 16 points from the average post-test results.

Meanwhile in Figure 5, students made improvements in every aspect of writing skills such as ideas, organization, grammar, vocabulary style and mechanics. In the aspect of ideas, which during the pre-test had the highest percentage of 0.57, it increased to 0.73 point. Students experienced an increase in conveying story ideas in more detail and coherently in their sentences. Students who previously only wrote 1 paragraph or no more than 100 words were able to write longer and had more comprehensive stories.

The lowest percentage in the pret-test which used to be in grammar (0.48), in the post test the lowest score was achieved in mechanism aspect (0.65). However, both still increased at 0.18 for grammar and 0.16 mechanisms. After the researcher provided feedback and material enrichment on grammar aspect, the error of tenses, pronouns and subject-verb agreement were not too often found in their fiction stories. Students

were also more careful in capital letters, punctuation and spelling after receiving corrections. They edited and corrected their story on *Wattpad* after getting feedback.

Another aspect that got improved is organization at 0.73. The students' writing structure become clearer, orderly, coherent and no vagueness so that it is easier to understand. The last aspect is vocabulary, it becomes more varied than before. The increase point in vocabulary reached 0.68. The last improvements showed in the use of conjunctions. Students usually only use such as common conjunctions like *but, and, or, next, because, before, then*. However, in the post-test they used more varied conjunction such as *however, therefore, secondly, previously, since, due to, accordingly* and so on.

There is a graph in Figure 6 below which shows the progress of each aspect improvement.

2. The Result of Questionnare

Disagree (TS) and Strongly Disagree (STS). The results of the questionnaire are listed briefly in the graph below. The Graph 6 shows that 25 students have known *Wattpad* before but still never used it while 22 students have used it to read fiction stories.

There are 31 students felt that the practice of writing using *Wattpad* media was more interesting and could decrease boredom in online writing class while 6 students disagreed with this opinion. The use of *Wattpad* also improves confidence in writing. This statement was chosen by 30 students because they felt that their writing was not as bad as they had previously worried after writing fiction stories on *Wattpad*. Meanwhile, 7 students disagreed with this.

In the aspect of motivation, enthusiasm and interest in writing, 28 students felt that *Wattpad* has grown their interest and enthusiasm in writing. They also got motivated to practice English writing. The effect of *Wattpad* in improving writing skills such as enriching vocabulary, mastering

Figure 7. Questionnaire of Wattpad
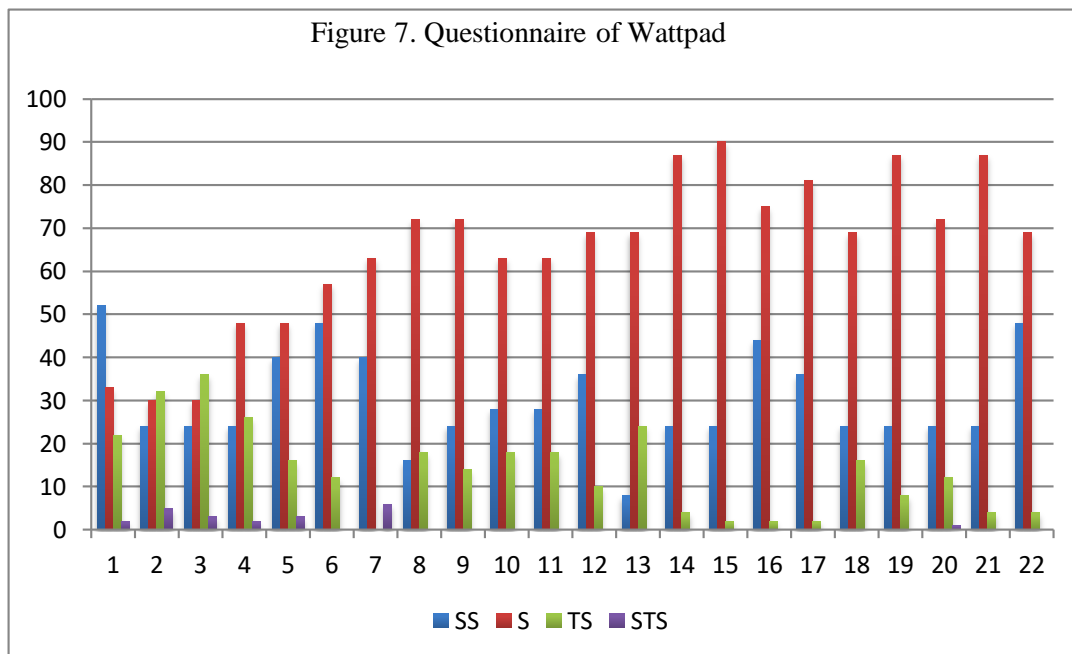
The researcher gave a questionnaire and analyzed with a quantitative approach to find out how the students' perspective of the use of *Wattpad* as a learning media. The questionnaire consists of 22 question items. The answer choice items consist of 4 levels, namely Strongly Agree (SS), Agree (Agree),

grammar and developing imagination. *Wattpad* is stated to have a significant role of learning for students. Most of students agreed on this statement, instead of 1 student disagreed.

Wattpad has also accessible features that are able to apply easily in the learning activity. According to 33 students, they had

no difficulty accessing *Wattpad* to upload their fiction story. *Wattpad* can be used as a fun learning media in writing class and an alternative online learning media. This is approved by 35 students. Jusmaya's (2019) stated that *Wattpad* could give new experience in writing. It happened because it was being more instantly accessible to readers by online and also more attractive with visual elements such as page layout, graphics and animation .

3. Result of Interview

The last data collection was interviews to support the findings of the questionnaire regarding students' perspectives on using *Wattpad* to write fiction stories in Writing class. Basically the interview is a process of proving the information that has been obtained previously (Rahardjo, 2011). The researcher used a guided-interview technique, the researcher has prepared the concept of questions that are asked to students. Interview was conducted online via Zoom and the implementation was divided into 4 groups in each class. The number of questions that asked in the interview were 11 main questions with more comprehensive explanations.

Based on student interviews, almost 90% of students are familiar with *Wattpad*, but not all of them have a *Wattpad* account and used it to write. Most of them used *Wattpad* to read various genres of fiction story. After the students were given treatment by using *Wattpad*, most of them thought that the use of *Wattpad* was quite interesting for new learning media. They said that the use of *Wattpad* can reduce boredom in learning because writing class usually only uses media such as Whatsapp, Zoom, Google Classroom and for writing assignments, they only used Microsoft Word as writing media. Learning media such as LMS or Learning Media System has also not available yet in English Language Teaching Department of UNU Purwokerto. *Wattpad* has features that are quite easy to use and students feel it is fun because their stories can be read directly by others and even given comments. It stimulates them to write more.

Some of the shortcoming experienced by students are when they operated *Wattpad* for the first time. The features were still unfamiliar and they found it difficult to upload stories so that their story was not published properly. Some stories were not able to be accessed because they had several steps that they missed. Another obstacle was to arrange a story series in parts. These problems were solved by giving tutorials by researcher, having discussions with friends and also some of them were looking for tutorial video on Youtube. Most of the students thought that they did not overcome big problem in the use of *Wattpad* but they often had difficulties in writing fiction stories such as grammar, vocabulary, translation.

Instead of being motivated to write, the use of *Wattpad* also improves the students' confidence in English. Before the students did this activity, most of them were not confident or afraid to write in English. They were worried that their writing would be difficult to understand or have many grammatical errors such as tenses, vocabulary choice, organization and others. However, after doing this activity on a regular basis, students get used to writing and the self-confidence increases because they get positive feedback in the comments as well as corrections of their stories at each meeting.

Meanwhile, students also have improvement in terms of grammar, vocabulary choices, translation, imagination development and story ideas, character depiction and plot or conflict arrangement. This project builds a better writing habits because they are unconsciously encouraged to learn these aspects of writing in order to produce a good fiction stories. Based on several student interviews, when they had difficulty to write, they tried to find out through dictionaries, lecture materials or looked for things that were not understood on various media. According to the interview findings, vocabulary mastery was the aspect that experienced improvement mostly.

The use of *Wattpad* can also be used as an alternative media for fun learning, especially online class. The Covid-19

pandemic has resulted online class have to be implemented. It causes boredom in learning. Various media and learning methods are needed to overcome this problem. *Wattpad* is an online platform that is easily accessible for online class. *Wattpad* features such as the comments column, can be used as a medium for providing feedback on student writing. The fiction stories that are available on *Wattpad* can also be a source of reference for English fiction stories.

Rukun (2019) stated that "*Wattpad* as a teaching and learning medium can improve the students' writing skills." *Wattpad* can be used as a promising alternative media for writing practice. It can be concluded that students enjoy learning process in Transaction Writing class by using *Wattpad* as a medium of writing practice.

DISCUSSION
1. *Wattpad* for Improving Writing Skill
a. Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary has an important correlation in writing because vocabulary is a bridge to express what is in the writer's mind and wants to be conveyed to the reader. A writer does not just produce words but must be able to connect these words logically and according to grammar. Hasan and Subekti (2017) in their journal stated that there is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and writing. Writing involves more than just producing words and sentences. To be able to produce of a piece of writing, the student should be able to write a connected series of words so that the purpose they have in their mind will be delivered by readers.

The results of this study showed an improvement of the students' vocabulary. Most of the students mentioned that the impact that they felt mostly after doing this activity was in the vocabulary enrichment. Many new words they got in the process of writing fiction stories on *Wattpad*. English fiction stories that students often read for getting inspiration also enriched their vocabulary. They only used simple words in their writing before they did the activity. The findings of the post-test data showed an

increase in vocabulary reaching 0.68 points. It was proved that their vocabulary collection is more varied than before.

b. Grammatical learning

Students are categorized as novice writers in learning English. Therefore there will be a lot of grammatical errors. Based on the findings of this study, the lowest percentage on the pret-test was grammar which was 0.48. Grammar is the most important aspect in English. Swan (via Sribagus, 2018) that "Grammar is the rules that show on how words are combined, arranged or changed to show certain kinds of meaning." This statement emphasizes the importance of grammar in the arrangement of words in order to get a more understood meaning.

The combination of a word in a sentence must have the correct grammar so that the message is conveyed properly. This is supported by Watkin (2005, via Sribagus, 2018) who said, "Grammar refers to the underlying partners of the language. It looks at how unit combines to make bigger units." Through the projects, the grammar aspect got positive progress, which rose to 0.66. Students became more aware of the use of grammar, especially the tenses used in writing fiction or narrative texts. The results of the questionnaires and interviews also showed that students felt they got more knowledge about tenses, pronouns, subject-verb agreements, the use of articles and so on. Writing projects using *Wattpad* motivate them to learn and find out more about grammar.

c. Fiction Writing

Research shows positive developments in writing habits through this project. Based on the findings, it helps students understand how to express their ideas in writing, encourage students to explore their imagination, teach students to use proper and harmonious narrative forms. Students are encouraged to learn the elements of fiction story so that their stories can be conveyed to the readers. Based on several student interviews, when they have problem to write,

they are encouraged to find out by reading more fictional stories on *Wattpad* as references, reading materials or looking for topics that are not understood on various platforms.

Previously, students rarely wrote long and complex English writing. They only wrote in the class. According to the statements of several students, instead of writing in the class, sometimes they only write occasionally on social media such as *Instagram, Facebook, Whatsapp or Twitter*. It depends on their mood to write. Writing fiction using *Wattpad* opens up new media to explore and practice their writing. Meanwhile fiction itself has benefit in EFL classroom. Tsai (2012) found that fiction enhances students' ability to interpret and understand the target language. The study of Pinar and Jover (2012) showed novels or other fiction stories facilitate students to infer meaning and explain because they have more than one level of meaning.

2. *Wattpad* as Learning Media in Students' Perception

a. Motivation in Writing Habit

Motivation is one of the internal factors that are considered very important in the teaching and learning process. Motivation and self-confidence are interrelated and interacted with each other (Philips & Lindsay via Setyadi and Mastuti, 2014). The improvement motivation occurs in the research activity. The students' interest also increased to be more active in writing. There are 31 students stated that the practice of writing using *Wattpad* was more interesting and not boring. It increases their motivation and enthusiasm as well. More than 25 students felt that *Wattpad* had grown their interest and enthusiasm in writing. They are also motivated to practice English writing routinely.

b. Confidence in Writing Skill

The use of *Wattpad* also influences the confidence aspect. This statement was said by 30 students because they felt that their writing was not as bad as they had previously worried. Most of the students never wrote fiction story in English before. However, after they

practiced on a regular basis, students got self-confidence because they get positive feedback. Therefore, the students felt comfortable to express their stories. Yuniar (2019) stated "*Wattpad* can help students to improve the students' higher level of writing in terms of cognitive domain and some essential skills." This project created a positive atmosphere in the class for the sustainability of practicing writing skill.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded into several points. First, each student experienced an improvement in writing skills after treatment. Students understand more about the tenses used in writing fiction stories. The students also can choose the proper vocabulary to convey stories and show developments in the elements of fiction such as imagination, plot and conflict as well as characterization depictions. Second, this activity can stimulate the students' motivation and confidence to learn English, especially in terms of writing. Third, the atmosphere of classroom between lecturers and students becomes more lively and interactive. In the activity of feedback and discussion, each student actively shared their story or shared problems they overcame. When lecturers gave positive or critical comments, students also accepted well. The use of *Wattpad* can influence writing activity for students. Digital application like *Wattpad* can be used as an alternative learning media in increasing the enthusiasm, motivation, confidence and interest in writing. The finding of this research can stimulate future research to find out more about the variety of digital application in teaching-learning activity, the influence of digital media in the class or alternative media in improving writing skill.

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