



## Wattpad's Role in Motivating Secondary School Students to Write a Narrative Text: A Case Study

Dwi Agustina<sup>1</sup>; Rahmad Hidayat<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>English Language Education Department, Universitas PGRI Adi Buana Surabaya, Indonesia

<sup>1</sup>Corresponding Email: [dwiagustina2981@gmail.com](mailto:dwiagustina2981@gmail.com), Phone Number: 0895 xxxx xxxx

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**Abstract:** This study aims to investigate Wattpad's role in motivating secondary school students to write narrative texts. As an online application, Wattpad offers several benefits for students, particularly those with low motivation in writing due to difficulties learning vocabulary and a lack of ideas or inspiration when composing a narrative text. Therefore, exploring the efforts of students who utilize Wattpad to develop their writing skills is interesting, specifically by using narrative texts as the application's content. This research employed a qualitative case study approach, in which the researcher conducted interviews with three 11th-grade students from SMA Negeri 1 Wringinanom during the academic year 2022/2023. The data obtained from the interviews were then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. The study findings revealed that Wattpad significantly motivates secondary school students to write narrative texts. The platform aids students in nurturing their imagination and discovering new vocabulary through the narrative stories on the Wattpad application. Furthermore, the study suggests that students with writing talent can further develop their skills on this platform, allowing their work to be recognized and read by a wider audience.

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan peran Wattpad dalam memotivasi siswa sekolah menengah untuk menulis teks naratif. Sebagai aplikasi online, Wattpad menawarkan beberapa manfaat bagi siswa, khususnya mereka yang memiliki motivasi rendah dalam menulis karena kesulitan dalam mempelajari kosa kata dan kurangnya ide atau inspirasi saat menulis teks naratif. Oleh karena itu, menarik untuk mengeksplorasi upaya siswa yang memanfaatkan Wattpad sebagai media untuk mengembangkan kemampuan menulis mereka, khususnya dengan menggunakan teks naratif sebagai konten dalam aplikasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, dimana peneliti melakukan wawancara dengan tiga siswa kelas XI SMA Negeri 1 Wringinanom pada tahun pelajaran 2022/2023. Data yang diperoleh dari hasil wawancara kemudian dianalisis dengan menggunakan model Miles dan Huberman. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa Wattpad memainkan peran penting dalam memotivasi siswa sekolah menengah untuk menulis teks naratif. Platform ini membantu siswa dalam mengembangkan imajinasi mereka dan menemukan kosa kata baru melalui cerita naratif yang tersedia di aplikasi Wattpad. Selain itu, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa siswa dengan bakat menulis dapat mengembangkan keterampilan mereka lebih lanjut di platform ini, memungkinkan karya mereka untuk mendapatkan pengakuan dan dibaca oleh khalayak yang lebih luas.

## A. Introduction

The Wattpad application is one of the most well-known literacy platforms among millennials and Generation Z, aged between 15 and 35 (Faiza & Mayekti, 2022). It was created in 2006 by the founder Allen Lau and Ivan Yuen, headquartered in Canada (Al Falaq et al., 2021). Wattpad application is also very popular among novel lovers because many novels are based on stories on Wattpad (Basri & Tamrin, 2020). It is an online literacy platform that anyone can access and read for free anytime and anywhere. It is also a platform for readers interested in literature, social media, and the convenience of online reading. Bal (2018) mentioned that the Wattpad application paved the way for new trends in reading and writing habits. It provides the features to create a story as well as give feedback. That is why the Wattpad application has become one of the biggest platforms to be downloaded for the reading platform because of its branding, accessibility, and features. The platform reaches more than 90 million users around the world and has more than 565 million original stories uploaded and offers 20 story genres, including; fantasy, romance, action, horror, humour, adventure, fanfiction, general fiction, historical fiction, teenage fiction, nonfiction paranormal, mystery/thriller, spiritual, werewolves, classics, vampires, science fiction, fandom, and young chick lit (Bal, 2018).

According to Nabhan (2021), today's learners are considered digital natives with the ability to use digital technology. They are growing up in a techno-centric world with ubiquitous digital tools and texts. Generations Z worldwide use computers, mobile phones, or tablets for communication, exploration, play, and study (Shinas & Wen, 2022). On the other hand, reading is a communication tool needed in social life. By reading, generation Z can gain knowledge in written form. Reading is a routine positive activity. Training the brain to absorb all the information it has read at a certain time is recommended. Generation Z can use digital literacy media to find the readings they are interested in to develop their writing through some of the reading references they read. Technically, Wattpad is a platform where users can create and read a story. The writer can upload their books, both finished or in progress. Book uploads are done per chapter and not a single file (Jusmaya, 2019). They also can select the language of the stories based they prefer. Therefore, Permatasari et al (2020) mentioned that students could learn the language they want to master through the Wattpad application because it supports more than 50 languages for users to access, but 77% of the content is in English. Some popular stories not written in English have also been translated into English to attract more readers.

Besides, writing is one of the basic skills which is the most challenging skill that students usually complain about during the learning process. Many students need more motivation in writing because they need help learning vocabulary and more ideas or inspiration when writing a narrative text (Rahman & Iwan, 2019). In this case, the Wattpad application can be used as an alternative learning media to increase motivation in writing. Motivation is a factor that is considered to cause someone to be enthusiastic about doing something, and it is very important in the writing process (Faiza & Mayekti, 2022). It is the core of human aspirations and accomplishments. Motivation is also the force that drives a

person to face all challenging situations. It is defined as initiating, guiding, and maintaining goal-oriented behaviour.

In addition, narrative text is one of the four basic essay writing to be learned and developed among Generation Z (Adam, 2015). It is the most interesting type of essay writing among students because it is about writing a story. Using narrative text in language education promotes thoughtful and purposeful language learning because students can become critical thinkers (Keshavarzi, 2012). Developing narrative text will help students to develop imaginative thinking and participates in literary understanding as a whole. Writing narrative stories is very important for students because they naturally tend to write stories about their interests more than other types of writing. It allows students to express their emotions and feelings. It also can make learning more meaningful because they are rich in moral and social values (Rahman & Iwan, 2019). Therefore, the short story is a literary genre that improves students' narrative writing skills because it can provide and introduce students to the important elements and essential elements of a narrative text (Keshavarzi, 2012). It can also develop students' imagination by introducing them to fictional characters and imaginative stories. Sari (2016) mentioned two benefits of using narrative stories. First, it provides fun activities that bring joy and relaxation to our students while learning English. Second, it encourages students to think critically and easily remember the story's context. Using stories gives students a new experience while practising reading without getting bored.

Meanwhile, the narrative has four generic structures; orientation, complication, resolution, and reorientation. Orientation is the opening paragraph that introduces the story's characters, the atmosphere, or the setting of the place. The complication is a problem that arises and develops in the middle of a narrative text. Resolution is part of the text that tells the problem-solving. Reorientation or coda contains statements about the story or lessons learned from the story in the narrative text.

Wattpad can also become a social media platform where students can read and write outside school hours because students are more interested in learning English using digital media than textbooks (Sari, 2016). Using the Wattpad application can attract students' attention to read more narrative stories so that their imaginations can develop and their vocabulary increases. After that, they will easily write their own narrative stories. Besides exploring their imagination, Wattpad can also enrich their vocabulary. Students can use their smartphones or laptops in learning, which most of them recently owned, to open the Wattpad application (Tanjung, 2020). Therefore, students may be more creative when using this application because they can explore many stories to use as references when writing their narrative texts (DwicaHYO, 2020). It means that the Wattpad application is a great place where students can practice writing and allows them to analyze their writing through this application tool.

Wattpad application is very popular among novel lovers because many novels are based on stories on Wattpad (Basri & Tamrin, 2020). Through this application, anyone with a writing talent can become a writer. Using Wattpad applications outside the classroom can

also produce successful creative writers in the bright future. The reason is that Wattpad allows writers to promote and reach a wide range of their stories, even to overseas readers (Jusmaya, 2019). The Wattpad application also has various features, such as like and comments (Tanjung, 2020). Students can like a story on Wattpad that they think is good, and they can communicate with each other in the comment column. They can share their ideas, critics, and suggestions or express their feelings after reading the Wattpad story. The authors of the stories on Wattpad can also get feedback from their readers, which motivates them to be better and more enthusiastic in creating a work or writing that many people can enjoy. In addition, students must be careful in choosing readings on the Wattpad application because it has some unsuitable stories for reading by a certain age (Lestari & Hasanudin, 2019).

According to Sari et al (2019), there are ten steps to applying the Wattpad application, as follows; (1) Download the Wattpad application on your smartphone or PC, or you can open it via the web; (2) Register if you do not have a Wattpad account yet; (3) Write about personal data in the profile; (4) Go to the main page. At the bottom of the screen are icons for home, search, library, write, and updates. The pencil-shaped icon is a place to write; (5) Click Create a new story; (6) Add a cover, and write the title and story description of the story you want to write; (7) Select language, rating, and start writing; (8) Publish stories for everyone to read; (9) Access your books in your profile; (10) Write more chapters by returning to the pencil-shaped icon and clicking the Continue writing option. To start writing a new chapter, click the + icon.

However, much research examines Wattpad's role in motivating students to write a narrative text. As mentioned by Indriani et al (2022), the Wattpad application plays an important role as a supporting media to improve students' abilities and creativity in writing a narrative story. Sari (2022) also explained that using the Wattpad application can increase students' motivation to write a narrative text. Therefore, the study wants to prove the role of the Wattpad application in motivating secondary school students to write narrative text, especially 11th-grade students at SMAN 1 Wringinanom. The study results are expected to provide benefits for teachers as a source to help them improve, develop, or innovate good writing learning activities using the Wattpad application. Then, it is expected to increase students' motivation to learn English, especially in writing skills using the Wattpad application. Moreover, it is expected to be a reference for other researchers to research the topic.

## B. Method

This research used a qualitative case study approach. The data were taken from the interview as primary data and documents as supporting data. The documents were in the form of students' writing which they uploaded to their Wattpad accounts. The participants were three students in 11th grade in SMA Negeri 1 Wringinanom in the academic year 2022/2023. The participants were selected based on the teacher's recommendation and their experience using the Wattpad application.

The data collection was taken using semi-structured interviews. It was conducted through interviews with open-ended questions that allowed new questions based on participants' responses (Creswell, 2013). They were asked more deeply about their opinions about Wattpad's role in motivating secondary school students to write a narrative text. The data were collected through audio recordings that have been transcribed.

After then, the data was analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. Collecting data was carried out interactively and took place continuously until completed. According to Miles et al (2014), data analysis has three activities; data reduction, data display, and conclusions (drawing/verifying). The following were the steps for analyzing the data. (1) First, the researcher simplified or abstracted the data from the interview transcripts with the three students. Then, the researcher wrote a summary so that the researcher could find several themes. (2) Next, the researcher presented the data in a neater and more systematic form. The display form was expanded text. In this case, the data was presented as descriptions. (3) Finally, the researcher drew conclusions based on data compiled in a neater form. The following is the research flow.

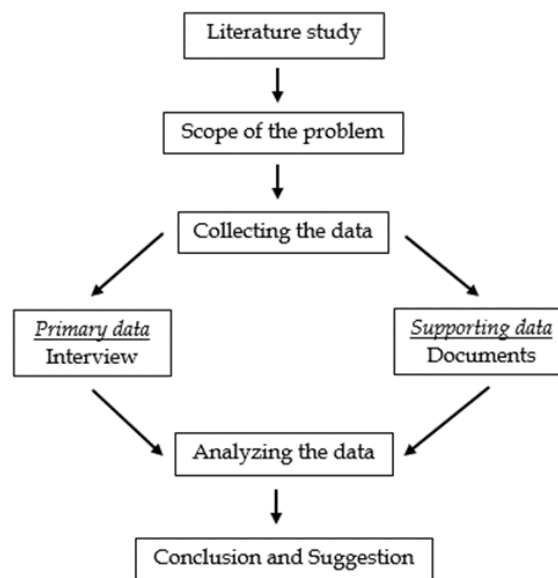


Figure 1. Research Flow

## C. Result and Discussion

### Result

The study result was collected through semi-structured interviews with three 11th-grade students at SMAN 1 Wringinanom with shadow names; Jasmine, Daisy, and Rose after they wrote and uploaded narrative texts on the Wattpad application. On average, all three students had heard of the Wattpad application when they were 15. This aligns with Faiza & Mayekti (2022), which noted that young people dominate Wattpad because the target market is millennials and Generation Z, aged between 15-35 years old. The following are photos of interviews conducted by the researcher.



**Figure 2.** Interview with Three Students

Data analysis showed that Wattpad's role is very influential in motivating students to write a narrative text. As mentioned by [Indriani et al \(2022\)](#), the Wattpad application plays an important role as a supporting medium to improve students' abilities and creativity in writing a narrative story. [Faiza & Mayekti \(2022\)](#) pointed out that Wattpad can be an alternative learning media for increasing motivation in writing. [Sari \(2022\)](#) also explained that using the Wattpad application can increase students' motivation to write a narrative text because it can help students to develop their imagination and find new vocabulary through Wattpad stories.

### **1. The Wattpad application helps students to develop their imagination.**

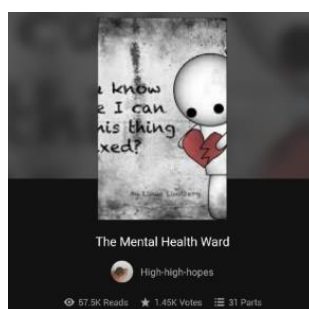
The following data set shows that students can develop their imagination to write a narrative text after they read a story on the Wattpad application. As explained by Jasmine, students can be imaginative after learning stories in the Wattpad application because, in this application, there are lots of narrative stories that are easy to reach.

*"We can learn a lot of narrative texts there, and we are more imaginative to write or compose a narrative story in the future." (Jasmine, semi-structured interview)*

Based on the interview above, the researcher asked about the narrative story she had read on the Wattpad application, and here is the answer.

*"A few weeks ago, I read a story titled "The Mental Health Ward". It tells the story of a 15 year old girl. Her name was Matilda. She had a mental illness called schizophrenia. Matilda's life was said to be very bad, because her friends bullied her at schools. From the story, I was inspired to make my own story about a person with schizophrenia too, but of course, the storyline was different." (Jasmine, semi-structured interview)*

According to the results of interviews with Jasmine, she got the inspiration after reading a story from the Wattpad application. Many ideas arise when she reads a story that she is interested in, which can be developed into a new story with the same topic but a different storyline. The following is the cover image of the story "The Mental Health Ward".



**Figure 3.** The story of "The Mental Health Ward"

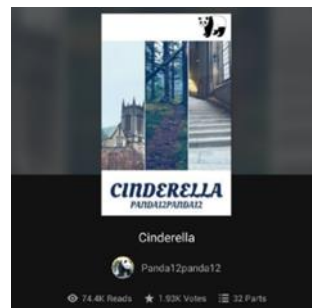
Meanwhile, Daisy explained that the Wattpad application allows her to learn imaginary stories without boredom. In general, learning in class causes students to be sleepy and bored; by reading through the Wattpad application, students can read the story they want to read in a fun way. In addition to entertaining themselves, it can also be used to understand narrative text material.

*"When I read or write stories on Wattpad, unconsciously, I also learn narrative text material from there. Lots of imaginative stories can be learned. Certainly not as boring as learning in class. I can learn from the stories I have read before, then I can use my imagination to write my stories." (Daisy, semi-structured interview)*

Based on the interview, the researcher asked about the narrative story she had read on the Wattpad application, and here is the answer.

*"I have read a story called "Cinderella" because the story was a remake of the Cinderella story. After reading the story, I wanted to remake the story 'Cinderella' into my own story and with my own style. I would like to make the story different but the point remains the same." (Daisy, semi-structured interview)*

It can be explained that she was inspired to remake the story that she read into her own stories, which have their characteristics. It is interesting because it means that students have good imaginations after reading the stories on the Wattpad application. Students can develop their ideas or imaginations as wide as possible by reading various stories in the Wattpad application. After that, students can write stories with their writing style. The following is the cover image of the story "Cinderella".



**Figure 4.** The story of "Cinderella"

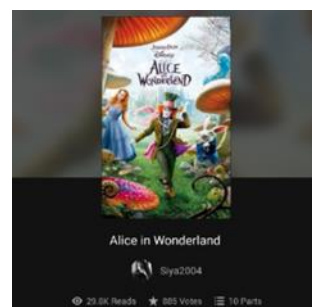
The last is the interview with Rose, who said that Wattpad is an application to express their writing talents for everyone to read. Even so, Rose did not care what other people thought about her story; the important thing was that she had poured her thoughts out.

*"I only use the Wattpad application as a place to express my imagination in written form, without having to care whether this person likes my writing or not." (Rose, semi-structured interview)*

Based on the interview, the researcher asked about the narrative story she had read on the Wattpad application, and here is the answer.

*"I have read a story called "Alice in Wonderland". The story is about a girl named Alice. She got lost in a magical world filled with strange creatures. I was inspired to make fantasy stories like "Alice in Wonderland" from that story. However, my story was different from that story. Only the storyline was the same." (Rose, semi-structured interview)*

Rose's interview inspired her to create her own story in her preferred genre. Many genres in the Wattpad application make students feel happy because they can choose and read stories from the genre they like. The stories can motivate students to write stories in their style. The following is the cover image of the story "Alice in Wonderland".



**Figure 5.** The story of "Alice in Wonderland"

According to the interviews above, it can be concluded that the three students wanted to create their own stories after reading narrative stories on the Wattpad application.

This application has many interesting stories that can motivate students to write their own stories because they have a lot of inspiration or imagination from the stories they read. This can happen because they enjoy a story they read; basically, people who are good at writing often read.

## 2. Students find new vocabulary through Wattpad stories

The following data set shows that students can find new vocabulary after they read narrative stories on the Wattpad application, as mentioned by Daisy below.

*"I can learn new vocabularies in English that I did not understand before. The word 'step-sister' means 'saudara tiri', 'horrible' means 'mengerikan', 'faded' means 'pudar', 'pretend' means 'pura-pura', and 'pity' mean 'kasihan'." (Daisy, semi-structured interview)*

According to the result of an interview with Daisy, she found five vocabularies from the story she read. Daisy also agrees that students can explore English stories from the Wattpad application, indirectly learning new vocabulary that they did not know before. In addition to learning English, this vocabulary can motivate students to use it in their own stories. Meanwhile, the same thing was explained by Rose as follows.

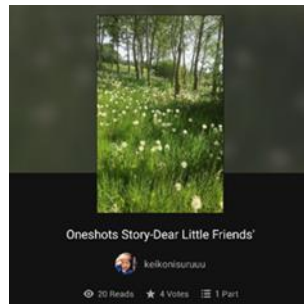
*"I learned a lot of new vocabulary that is not used in everyday life. If there is an English word that I don't know the meaning of, I can immediately look up its meaning on Google Translate. Vocabulary like 'tunnel' means 'terowongan', 'shore' means 'beach', 'odd' means 'aneh', 'caterpillar' means 'ulat', 'daydreaming' means 'melamun', then, 'extraordinary' means 'luar biasa'." (Rose, semi-structured interview)*

Based on the interview, Rose found six vocabularies from the story she read. In line with Daisy, Rose agreed that when she read English stories from the Wattpad application, indirectly, their vocabulary improved. She uses a translator application to see the meaning of the words she does not understand. This is very good because it means she can learn new vocabulary through this application. Then below is an interview with Jasmine.

*"I found some new vocabularies such as the word 'schizophrenia' which is a mental illness that causes hallucinations. Then, 'weirdo' means a strange person. We're not on the same page of a book, which means we disagree. Then there is the word 'bandage' which means 'perban', 'engraving' means 'ukiran'." (Jasmine, semi-structured interview)*

Jasmine found five vocabularies from the story she has read. From the interviews above, it can be concluded that the three students agreed that their vocabulary had increased since reading narrative stories on the Wattpad application. They can learn much new vocabulary when reading stories on the Wattpad application. This is their guide to creating their writing with a diverse vocabulary.

Based on these findings, students can write their own narrative stories. It is in line with Jasmine's document that she had written 1480 words of narrative text in the Wattpad application titled "Dear Little Friends".

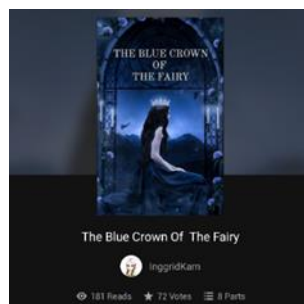


**Figure 6.** Cover of Jasmine's Story

20 Wattpad users have read the story and have received four votes. Jasmine has told the synopsis of the story in the following interview.

*"The narrative story I made is called "Dear Little Friend". The story only has one chapter. The story tells of a 16-year-old boy who has limitations regarding his mental health, so he imagines he has friends and I describe his friends as little kids, but actually they do not exist." (Jasmine, semi-structured interview)*

Besides, Daisy's document shows that she had written 3661 words of narrative text in the Wattpad application titled "The Blue Crown of the Fairy".

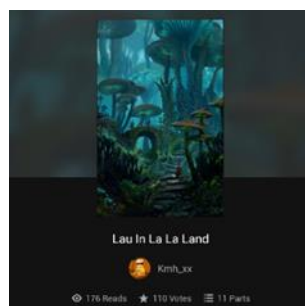


**Figure 7.** Cover of Daisy's Story

181 Wattpad users have read the story and have received 72 votes. Daisy has told the synopsis of the story in the following interview.

*"The narrative story I made a few days ago is called "The Blue Crown of the Fairy" inspired by the story "Cinderella". There are 8 chapters in the story. The story is about a girl named princess Lexana who has complete parents. But when in the middle, his mother died because of illness, then his father remarried to his stepmother, but during a business trip, his father died attacked by wolves." (Daisy, semi-structured interview)*

Moreover, Rose had written 4774 words of narrative text in the Wattpad application titled "Lau in La Land".



**Figure 8.** Cover of Rose's Story

176 Wattpad users have read the story, and it has received 110 votes. Rose has told the synopsis of the story in the following interview.

*"The narrative story I created is called "Lau in La La Land" inspired by the story "Alice in Wonderland". There are 11 chapters in the story miss. This is the adventure of the main character named Lau. He felt a lack of academics in his academy. Then, he had a magic exam and he suddenly had high determination and ambition for it. He walked into the forest and headed to another dimension. However, the path he walked was originally wrong." (Rose, semi-structured interview)*

Besides that, Jasmine and Daisy also implemented the vocabulary they found on the Wattpad stories that they made. On the other hand, even though Rose does not use the vocabulary she gets when reading stories on the Wattpad application, she can develop her stories because of her imagination when reading stories on the application. It proves that reading Wattpad motivates students to write their own narrative stories.

Does mom have schizophrenia too? Yes, she does. But it can be healed. Because schizophrenia is genetic, Norman is a schizophrenic like his mom was before.

**Figure 9.** Jasmine's Story

The bodyguard brought stepsister princess Lexana and her mother who pretended to be a maid in the kingdom. They were taken to prince Dave's royal meeting room, to be courted by prince Dave.

**Figure 10.** Daisy's Story

In essence, the Wattpad application has a big role in motivating students because it has been proven that students can write their own narrative stories and upload them on the Wattpad application.

## Discussion

Based on the study results above, Wattpad's role is very influential in motivating narrative writing for secondary school students. This is in line with Al Falaq et al (2021), which stated that the Wattpad application is useful for increasing students' motivation in giving better engagement in reaching the reading and writing competencies. Sugiarti (2021) added that using the Wattpad application effectively improves students' writing skills.

### 1. The Wattpad application helps students to develop their imagination

The Wattpad application is a literacy platform with many narrative stories where students can read and learn imaginary stories. Based on the findings, students get imagination or inspiration after reading a story from the Wattpad application. As Faiza & Mayekti (2022) mentioned, the Wattpad application helps students understand how to express their ideas in writing and encourages them to explore their imagination.

Students can develop their ideas or imaginations as wide as possible by reading various stories in the Wattpad application. After that, students can write stories with their writing style. This is in line with Sari et al (2019), who pointed out that the Wattpad application is not only designed to publish stories but aims to satisfy their reading habit. Because the stories of Wattpad are imaginative, students can increase their reading interest, and then they are motivated to find new ideas in writing a story in English. This also refers to Dwicahyo (2020), which explained that students might be more creative when using Wattpad because they can explore many stories to use as references when writing their narrative text.

Some students are sometimes motivated to write because they like the genre of stories they read. Then, they were inspired to create their own story in the genre they liked. It has been explained by Bal (2018) that Wattpad offers 20 story genres, including action, general fiction, paranormal, mystery/thriller, spiritual, horror, werewolves, fantasy, humour, young chick lit, romance, classics, vampires, science fiction, adventure, teenage fiction, fandom, fanfiction, historical fiction, and nonfiction. Students can read stories from the genre they like on the Wattpad application; then, indirectly, they will find inspiration to create their own stories. Essentially, they will not feel bored and enjoy the storyline when they read something they like. As explained by Ramadhanti et al (2021), the use of the Wattpad application, especially in reading, is effective for the students; the students do not feel bored and enjoy when reading a story.

So, students are motivated to create their own stories after reading narrative stories on the Wattpad application. This can happen because they enjoy a story they read and find an imagination or inspiration to write their own story. People who are good at writing are people who often read.

## 2. Students find new vocabulary through Wattpad stories

Reading ability greatly influences writing skills because a student will have a more varied vocabulary (Indriani et al., 2022). According to the findings, students can explore English stories from the Wattpad application, which indirectly they can find and learn new vocabulary they did not know before. Fadillah & Amin (2022) recommended using the Wattpad application in reading because it can enrich students' vocabulary. Faiza & Mayekti (2022) pointed out that narrative stories that students often read for inspiration also enrich their vocabulary. This can stimulate students' motivation and confidence to learn English, especially in terms of writing. Sari (2016) also noted that students could get much new vocabulary from the stories they read from the Wattpad application.

Permatasari et al (2020) mentioned that students could learn the language they want to master through the Wattpad application because it supports more than 50 languages for users to access, but 77% of the content is in English. Some popular stories not written in English have also been translated into English to attract more readers. So, this application makes it easier for students to learn English vocabulary.

The researcher can conclude that having a large vocabulary is what a writer needs so that when students write a narrative story, the words used are varied. More variations of words will make a story more interesting and in demand by other Wattpad users.

## D. Conclusion

Based on the result of the study and discussion, there are two findings from this study. First, the Wattpad application helps students to develop their imagination as widely as possible by reading various stories in the Wattpad application. After that, students can write stories with their writing style. It can happen because they enjoy a story they read. Second, students can find new vocabulary through Wattpad stories. They can explore English stories from the Wattpad application. They can indirectly find and learn new vocabulary they did not know before so that when students write a narrative story, the words used are varied. More variations of words will make a story more interesting and in demand by other Wattpad users.

Furthermore, this study proves that the three students have written narrative stories on Wattpad, with the title; Dear Little Friends, the Blue Crown of the Fairy, and Lau in La La Land. Their narrative stories were inspired by the story they read on the Wattpad application. Therefore, this application has a big role in motivating secondary school students to write a narrative text.

The researcher also would like to suggest to students as Generation Z that Wattpad is expected to be a medium to increase motivation, interest, and confidence in building students' writing habits. Therefore, students with writing talent can develop their talents in this application so that they can be recognized and read by many people out there.

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