

The Effect of Using Wattpad as an ICT Tool on EFL Students' Writing Skill

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Abstract—The advancement of technology in the current world is leading to the changing of the learning process in the educational field. This study aimed to explore the use of Wattpad to enhance the writing skills of EFL learners following the integration of ICT for educational purposes based on the effect of the application and the student's perceptions. The study used a mixed method to examine the data provided both numerical and non-numerical. The samples of this study were 80 participants at a state university in Central Java, Indonesia. The investigation conducted was related to EFL. The data of this study were collected through tests and a survey which was distributed online. This study revealed that there was a significant difference between students who were taught using Wattpad and those who were taught using paper-based writing ($\text{sig. } 0.016 < \alpha$). Moreover, there were positive perceptions from the participants toward the use of Wattpad to enhance writing skills. Wattpad was perceived as a pleasurable media of learning where students could express various emotions, ideas, and thoughts. It gave chances to students to develop their writing. Further, this study is expected to give insight into future research related to the investigation of the use of Wattpad in developing writing skills.

Index Terms—EFL students, ICT, Wattpad, writing skill

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, technology has advanced many fields of life for various purposes, including fulfilling educational needs (Henderson, 2020). Technology is undeniable for its presence in daily situations. In education, particularly, technology has impacted and shifted the teaching approaches and students' learning strategies (Nnaekwe & Ugwu, 2019). There are no more classroom boundaries, and textbooks are turned to mobile devices, computers, and the internet. The concrete building of the school does not again limit the classroom. Resources for learning are accessible at any time and place through the Internet to enhance the learning process (Al-Muwallad, 2020). Technology is an integral and important component of improving performance in the English language learning context (Arochman & Yosintha, 2020; Azmi, 2017). Textbooks, manuscripts, worksheets, and any resources for learning are provided in the Internet database. In addition, such audio and visual learning materials are now growing. Besides, the learners must be able to be informative and maximize internet use. Therefore, to meet modern society's requirements which are advanced in information, education should now apply in line with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the contemporary education situation.

The utilization of ICT in education is nowadays a primary source and tool. ICT has impacted the learning process of writing skills of EFL learners. The shifting strategy from a conventional learning style to a modern one is implemented in developing the writing skill of EFL learners since, in the process of English language learning, writing is a basic essential skill (Liu & Lim, 2021; Thongchalem & Jarunthawatchai, 2020). Writing is beneficial in the self-improvement and self-evaluation process besides building a reasonable opinion (Klimova, 2013). It is a process of

embedding ideas within the writing where it should be appropriately constructed and logically to deliver the meaning from the author to reach the readers (Harmer, 2004). Therefore, writing skills are mentioned to be complex to master by language learners, particularly in an academic context (Jiang et al., 2022).

Technology advancement is leading to the shifting of students' learning strategy to technology-mediated learning strategy. Learning tools and applications are encouraged to be integrated into the learning process, including writing. However, based on the researcher's preliminary observation, there were still many students who found it difficult to write. This situation was a challenge for lecturers or instructors in choosing the appropriate media for writing. Wattpad appears as a media which can be helpful in the EFL writing environment. There are many new opportunities and chances to use Wattpad positively in their language learning process. Therefore, this study investigates the use of Wattpad to enhance students' writing skills. The following research questions were addressed:

1. How do students perceive ICT tools and their applications?
2. Is there any significant difference in using Wattpad on EFL students' writing skills?
3. What do students' perceptions of using Wattpad and its benefits on writing skills?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Information Communication Technology (ICT) Tools

ICT can help learners improve their learning process of all four basic skills of English language learning with complete information, opportunities, and learning media (Simbolon et al., 2020). ICT tools positively assist language learning and teaching (Paudel, 2021). ICT and online education are implemented to develop students' language and professional skills (Samoylenko et al., 2022). Students should be responsive and resourceful in the current digital development. Students are expected to know Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools and applications since ICT is argued to be impactful in the EFL learning process (Mudra et al., 2022; Pardede, 2020). ICT tools and applications perceived as a deconstruction of morality need to be perceived as the civilization proven by the proper utilization of ICT in the learning process. It is better to focus on how far the learning process can be carried out by the presence of ICT rather than focusing on the opposing sides of it.

ICT tools and applications offer new challenges in language learning, especially for higher education or tertiary students (Ngo & Eichelberger, 2019). ICT in tertiary education is greatly encouraged to establish a communicative, interactive, and resourceful environment. ICT facilitates writing practically and effectively (Nee et al., 2019). The integration of ICT as a strategy for improving writing skills has been proven effective by many other researchers for its accessibility, interactive, and communicative aspects (Bachiri & Oifaa, 2020; Bakeer, 2018; Yermekkyzy, 2022).

B. Writing Skill

There are many issues revealed as hardships or challenges in writing skill development, such as limited vocabulary knowledge, grammatical knowledge, the learners' passive attitude, students' motivation, feedback, etc. (Alsalami, 2022; Ansarin & Khabbazi, 2021; Zohra & Hamitouche, 2022). Writing demanded a stiff and strict convention of grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, and orthographical aspects. Vocabulary knowledge is argued to be a significant factor related to productive language skills, especially in writing (Kiliç, 2019). The limited vocabulary will affect the students in delivering their thoughts through words of a target language. Another factor which is claimed to be one challenge in writing is orthographical aspects. English language learners are faced with a distinction in writing and spelling of the language since English words in written form are different in spelling (Miller, 2019).

Besides, more work is required in writing as it is a process of expressing ideas and thoughts through sentences and paragraphs. Writing involves a lot of brain work, including metacognitive and critical thinking (Murtadho, 2021; Said et al., 2022). In the current situation where anyone easily access the information at any time, students become vulnerable to misleading, false information and invalid news spreading. The credibility of the information they receive is now neglected. Critical thinking becomes an urgent skill to be integrated into their learning process (Suhirman et al., 2021). Moreover, writing is a skill which requires a high rate of thinking process where students should be able to generate ideas for their writing (Al-Jarf, 2021). Writing is not simply a process of wording or diction realized on paper. Instead, students must communicatively express their thoughts to reach an understanding from the opposite sides.

Writing is a major skill in language learning that is challenging for the learners, particularly related to word translation and, even beyond the language barrier, is sometimes the meaning delivery itself. The challenges mentioned before are argued to be affected by various factors, including the teaching methods and the learners themselves (Thi & Anh, 2019). Considering the various challenges faced by the students in developing writing skills, an effective strategy is urgently needed by the learners. They should further overcome the problems recognizing the significance of writing for various purposes in academic and professional needs. One proposed strategy is using the ICT application Wattpad in the learning context.

C. Wattpad

Wattpad is a widely known application where one can write, publish, and read stories without any certification or previous publication requirements. Wattpad gives opportunities to early writers and anyone who desires to be an author. Wattpad is argued to positively impact developing youths' reading and writing habits since Wattpad is a free and

accessible application using gadgets (Başoğul, 2021). The use of Wattpad also increases students' appreciation of literary works, builds a meaningful reading where moral values are encouraged from the stories, and primarily provides a medium to enhance writing skills in EFL (Arochman et al., 2023; Rahman & Iwan, 2019). However, there seem to be opposite views of Wattpad. For the freedom of writing, authors are liberated to construct any scenes in their stories. It is seen as a risk following crime scenes or violence written by authors for the youth's readers (Yılmaz & İpek, 2021). Another arguable reason is stated from a psychological perspective which mentioned that Wattpad impacts suicidal tendencies and risk behaviours of the readers (Kaya et al., 2019).

Related to the issue, some previous studies have been conducted following the use of Wattpad to assist the language learning process, for example, the study by Aytan (2017) mentioned that the use of Wattpad is, in fact, beneficial to increase writing skill of students. Bal (2018) reported positive student perceptions toward the issue in line with the prior study. The study revealed that the students love writing on Wattpad as they feel no pressure to write anything they wish to. Students can write any of the genres according to their favourites. Another study also investigated the given issue before concluding that Wattpad can be one strategy that can enhance writing performance in ESL classrooms (Rahman et al., 2018). It was also reported by Jusmaya (2020) that there is a significant increasing point in using Wattpad to improve students' writing skills. The positive perception of the issue has been mentioned by a study that reveals the view of teachers and students on the use of Wattpad in their writing performance (Faqih et al., 2022). The display of Wattpad can be seen in Figure 1.

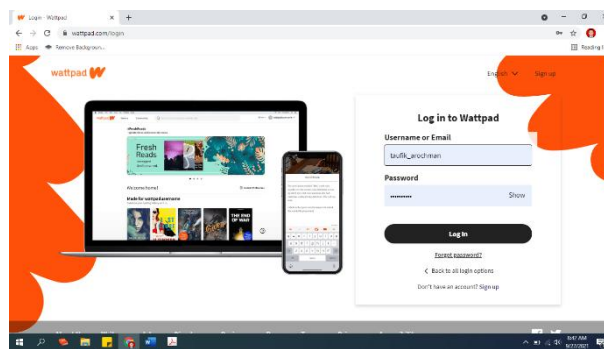


Figure 1. A Screenshot of Wattpad Display

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study aims to determine the effect of using Wattpad on EFL students' writing skills, both practically and from students' perspectives. The researchers implemented a mixed method to know the use of the Wattpad in enhancing writing skills. A mixed-method study reported that data are in both words and numbers (Creswell, 2009; Leavy, 2023). A mixed method was implemented using qualitative and quantitative studies. The researchers needed to analyse the data statistically using a quasi-experimental, after that they asked a smaller sample of participants so that they got greater depth about their findings.

B. Population and Sample

In this investigation of the effect of using Wattpad on EFL students' writing skills, the population was all English Education Department Students at a state university in Central Java, Indonesia. There were 746 students. 80 participants were chosen as the sample in this study using purposive random sampling. The participants were divided into two groups. One group was an experimental group, other was the control group. They contributed practically in writing and revealed their perceptions toward the issue. The participants were first-year students. A purposive random sampling method was applied to allow an equal probability for each individual to participate in the study (Creswell, 2009).

C. Instruments

Data in this study were collected using writing tests and a survey using an online questionnaire. The tests were implemented at the beginning and the end of the study. The test was done to measure students' writing skills in Introduction to Paragraph Writing. The writing tests have been reviewed by the quality assurance unit at the university. The writing question required participants to choose one of several topics provided and to write paragraphs in 100 minutes. However, between both of the tests, there was a treatment using Wattpad to help them with writing. Then, a survey was distributed online with voluntary samples. The questionnaire in this study was a modified instrument rather than an intact instrument where the researchers designed the survey, particularly for the study (Creswell, 2009).

TABLE 1
EXCERPT FROM SURVEY SCHEME

No	General questions	Specific statements/questions
1	Please indicate your perceived knowledge and understanding of Information Communication Technology tools and applications based on the following item statements by clicking on one of the scale options (Excellent/Good/Fair/Poor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I know ICT tools such as computers, laptops, and LCD projectors. ▪ I know ICT applications such as the Internet, Search Engines, Websites and Social Media. ▪ I know and understand various ICT tools and applications accessible in learning English. ▪ I know how to use social media applications (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Messenger, What's app) for language learning purposes. ▪ I know some online learning/ICT applications that I can use to learn writing
2	Do you know what kinds of online learning/ICT applications you can use to learn writing?	▪ (if they say yes) What are they?
3	Have you ever tried to use Wattpad so far?	▪ (if they say yes) What for?
4	Have you ever used Wattpad for learning?	
5	Do you know the kinds of features which you can use on Wattpad?	
6	Do you think that Wattpad can be used for learning writing?	▪ (if they say yes) Please give me your reason!
7	What are the benefits of using Wattpad for learning writing?	▪ Explain briefly!

The survey was developed based on the given context to aim for detailed answers from the participants where the data obtained from the study were examined by descriptive analysis method.

D. Procedure

This study was conducted for eight weeks, with one hour and 40 minutes each week. The first week was used to measure students' data before the experiment was implemented. After both of the groups were done with the pre-test, the control group (n=40) were given writing instruction using an exercise book (paper) in a class during weeks 2–7. Meanwhile, the experimental group (n=40) were given writing instruction using Wattpad for week 2-7 as well. The eighth week was the post-experiment test, where students once again received a post-test of writing. The posttest aims to know the effect of treatments on the dependent variable. The general overview of this study is summarized in Table 2.

TABLE 2
PROCEDURE OF STUDY

	Control Group	Experimental Group
Week 1	Pre-test	Pre-test
Week 2-7	Regular Teaching Activities (Paper-based writing practices)	Intervention (Wattpad writing practices)
Week 8	Posttest	Posttest, Questionnaire

E. Analyzing of Data

The data in the form of numbers was then analyzed using an independent sample T-test in the SPSS 22 program. Meanwhile, the data in the form of words were further analyzed using content analysis to draw a deep and exact interpretation of the answers given by the participants (Bengtsson, 2016). The results were tabulated in findings in some points represented by the sub-headings to ease readers' comprehension regarding the issue of students' perception of using Wattpad to enhance writing skills and the effect of using Wattpad on their writing skills.

IV. RESULTS

There were three subsections of results regarding the use of Wattpad as media to improve the writing skills of EFL learners. The first sub-headings focused on the awareness of students on the present, contribution, and integration of ICT tools, applications, and utilization in general view. The second heading focused on the effect of using Wattpad on EFL students' writing skills. The last one directed the focus of the study to students' familiarity with Wattpad, students' perception of the use of Wattpad in enhancing writing skills, and some benefits of Wattpad in the English language learning context.

A. Students' Awareness of ICT Tools, Applications, and Utilization

In this 21st century, with current modernization and digitalization, technology plays a great role in the educational field of English language learning. ICT facilitated the learning process of EFL learners. It was expected that students were habituated to the use of ICT. Perceived knowledge of the students' regarding ICT was revealed through the survey. It could be implied that students performed a good to excellent knowledge of ICT in various tools to utilize those tools in their learning process. Students were already familiar with the use of ICT tools such as laptops, computers, or LCD projectors since classrooms nowadays were mostly equipped with such tools, which created and demanded the

habituation of students to new classroom facilitations. Presentation and discussions were demonstrated using the screen projectors, allowing the whole class to carefully look through the activity together. With the help of ICT tools in the classroom, students received an equal chance of learning opportunities. Thus, it has been said that technologies enhanced the classroom and learning process.

Aside from visualization tools and documentation, ICT also be claimed to be a resourceful media to obtain and exchange information for various purposes, from academic to professional. ICT applications such as the Internet, Search Engines, Websites, social networking sites, and social media were emerging fast in contributing to social life. ICT applications mentioned before facilitated a database where tons of information and resources from the internet were loaded. Once ICT tools were connected to the internet, a magical thing occurred, abandoning the physical presence of students, classroom limitations, and the conventional learning process. In a snap of a second, learners could obtain unlimited knowledge and resources. Search engines such as Google, Bing, Browser, etc., were now becoming a primary option where students asked numerous questions with various themes. It might be arguable that the use of printed books in the classroom context compared to digital books or the issue of mentality degradation for constant results performed by students. However, the internet and search engines were free to access so that students could read, find, and gain more understanding effectively and efficiently. Students save time finding out particular information by typing keywords in search engines and saving money through the presence of digital books, websites, and journals.

Besides, ICT applications of social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Messenger, and YouTube hugely contributed to learners' language learning strategies. Social media was currently an alteration of authentic life into a screen. Social media summarized many events, trends, and situations of real-world conditions into a digital magazine that people can read from their chairs in a short time. It was a walk-through way to obtain information from the surroundings to an identifiable region of nowhere. However, social media was where all language speakers received an equal opportunity to interact and exchange information. In the English language learning context, social media bridged the communication of the EFL learners to native speakers of English as it was alright to reach out for learning purposes. English was a widely spoken international language and was now growing as fast as ESL and EFL in many other countries. Reaching out to native English speakers was normal communication in the digital world. Therefore, students wished to be able to comprehend and utilize social media related to language learning purposes.

In the given context of English language learning, the result of the study revealed a good understanding of how to utilize these social media to enhance their learning process. Students could try to communicate with people worldwide through social media using English. It was a self-practice method of implementing their language competence in real communication. Students could use written interaction features such as Direct Messages or WhatsApp text. In this type of communication, students should focus on grammatical features and aspects of politeness when interacting with foreign people. Even though spoken grammar was also performed in the type of text, the comprehension of grammar is still greatly proposed in interaction. However, these kinds of social media were advanced in their features, allowing audio, visual, and audio-visual interaction. For example, using Voice Note and Video Call features embedded in Instagram and WhatsApp applications. Audio and visual interaction was greatly promoted in English language learning. Students had to perform proper spelling and language of gestures.

The analysis also evaluated the student's knowledge of ICT applications in learning writing. In the survey, the students were asked to mention ICT applications relevant to their current authentic situation. Various web-based ICT applications were mentioned by the participants, who were perceived as useful in learning writing. Some of the ICT applications stated by the participants were Wappad, JotterPad, GoodNovel, Popplet, Inkitt Writing, etc. The emergence of ICT applications was not unpredictable, considering the rapid advancement of digitalization and modern life. Education should be able to adapt and adapt to the fast-changing world in the process of teaching and learning to meet the needs of qualified learners in many professional areas. From this particular item, it could be implied that this study's participants better understand writing media and their positive manner in utilizing ICT applications in a learning context.

B. The Effect of Using Wappad on EFL Students' Writing Skill

In this section, there will be shown the result's comparison of both groups. The comparison of results included numbers, lowest score, highest score, range, mean, standard deviation, and mean error. The statistics of the two groups are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE PRE-TEST'S AVERAGE SCORES FOR THE TWO GROUPS

Group	Numbers	Lowest Score	Highest Score	Range	Mean	SD	Mean Error
Experimental Group (EG)	40	56	84	28	67.050	6.304	0.996
Control Group (CG)	40	55	83	28	67.475	5.866	0.927

Table 3 presents the comparison of the pre-test's mean scores for both groups. Although there was a difference in mean scores between the groups (EG: 67.050; CG: 67.475), it was not significant. The difference was only 0.425 and it could be said that both of the groups are similar. Then, the researchers needed to make sure that the distribution of the

data was normal. The researchers tested the data of the pre-test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov in SPSS. The result of the test is presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4
RESULT OF NORMALITY TESTS OF PRE-TEST DATA

Group	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Interpretation
	Statistics	df	Sig.	
Experimental Group (EG)	0.116	40	0.189	Normal
Control Group (CG)	0.074	40	0.200	Normal

The data of pre-tests were considered as a normal distribution if the sig. was higher than 0.05. In Table 4, the value of sig. of EG (0.189) was higher than 0.05. Meanwhile, the value of sig. of CG (0.200) was also higher than 0.05. Thus, both of the groups in the pre-test were in a normal distribution. Further, the researchers presented the result's comparison of the post-test scores in EG and CG. The descriptive statistics of the post-test average scores for both of the groups are in Table 5.

TABLE 5
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE POSTTEST'S AVERAGE SCORES FOR THE TWO GROUPS

Groups	Numbers	Lowest Score	Highest Score	Range	Mean	SD	Mean Error
Experimental Group (EG)	40	62	87	25	75.050	6.017	0.951
Control Group (CG)	40	60	84	24	71.725	6.017	0.951

Table 5 presents the comparison of mean scores in the post-test for both of the groups. According to data in Table 5, the mean score of EG was 75.050 while the mean score of CG was 71.725. The difference mean between the groups was approximately 3.325. However, the standard deviation of both of the groups indicated that there was no difference. Further, researchers also did a normality test in post-test data. The result of the test can be seen in Table 6 as follows.

TABLE 6
RESULT OF NORMALITY TESTS OF POST-TEST DATA

Group	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Interpretation
	Statistics	df	Sig.	
Experimental Group	0.094	40	0.200	Normal
Control Group	0.104	40	0.200	Normal

Table 6 shows the result of the normality test of the post-test data using Kolmogorov-Smirnov. According to data in Table 6, sig. in EG was 0.200 while sig. in CG was also 0.200. It meant that both of the data were considered as a normal distribution. Since both of the data were normal, the next step was to do a homogeneity test using Levene statistics. This test was done to know whether both of the groups were homogenous or not. The result of the Levene test is in Table 7.

TABLE 7
THE RESULT OF HOMOGENEITY TESTS FOR THE TWO GROUPS

Group	Levene Statistics	df	df2	Sig.	α	Interpretation
Pre-test	0.321	1	78	0.573	0.05	Homogenous
Post-test	0.057	1	78	0.812	0.05	Homogenous

The results of the homogeneity test were considered homogenous if sig. was higher than 0.05. From the data in Table 7, sig. in the pre-test (0.573) was higher than 0.05 while the value of sig. in the post-test (0.812) was higher than 0.05. Thus, both of the data in the pre-test and post-test were homogenous. Because all of the data were normal and homogenous, the next step was to do a parametric test. The test was done using an independent t-test in Table 8.

TABLE 8
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST FOR THE TWO GROUPS (POST-TEST)

	t-test for equality of means						
	t	df	Sig.	Mean Difference	Standard error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
						Lower	Upper
Post-test	2.471	78	0.016	3.325	1.345	0.646	6.004

The result of the t-test was considered as a significant difference if the value of sig. was lower than the significant level of 0.05. Table 8 presents the result of the independent t-test of post-test data. According to the data in the table, the value of sig (0.016) was less than 0.05. Therefore, the conclusion was there was a significant difference between EFL students who taught using the Wattpad application and those who taught using paper in writing.

C. Students' Perception of Using Wattpad in Enhancing Writing Skill

Related to the positive perception of the presence of ICT as learning media, this section explained further the Wattpad utilization by the participants. From the survey, the participants reported their aim in using Wattpad. Several participants revealed their need to use Wattpad for their assignments. Indeed, the teachers assumed the effectiveness of using Wattpad integrated into a teaching strategy. In addition, the survey results also showed that most participants habituated to Wattpad as mobile reading media. Wattpad allowed readers to find any category of stories and set no limitation on regional or international borders. Stories written on Wattpad by the authors varied in more than ten genres and were provided in many languages following the account's user. Still, primarily English was used as the alternative language to reach a wider range of readers. In line with the reading opportunity, students participating in the study also argued for using Wattpad as writing media. Some participants revealed that they have attempted to write and publish stories in this application considering the ease of the features and liberation in writing. Overall, students expressed their familiarity with using Wattpad for reading and writing various stories as Wattpad provides media for authors and readers to find a free space for their hobby. The following figures were a comparison of writing using paper and Wattpad.

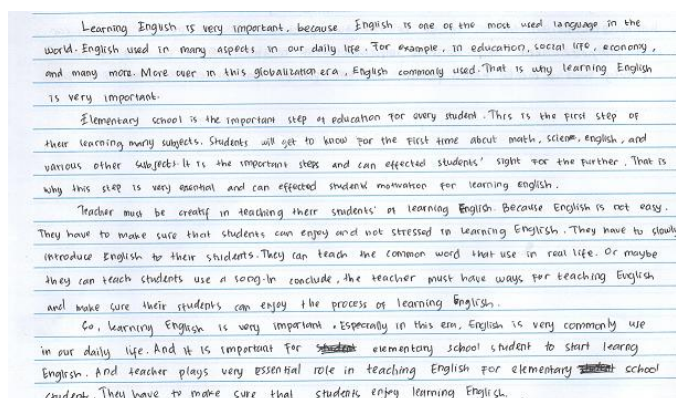


Figure 2. An Example of a Student's Paper-Based Writing

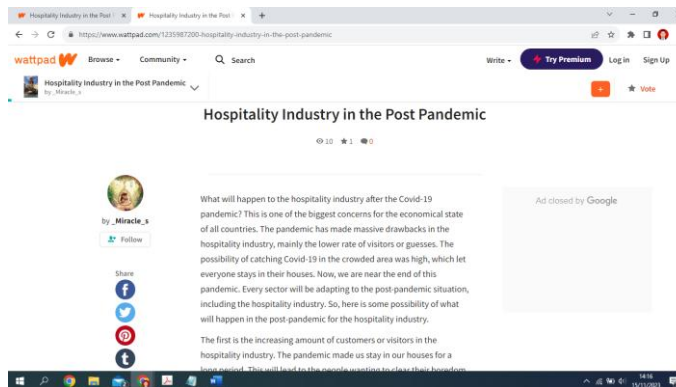


Figure 3. An Example of a Student's Wattpad-Based Writing

The next item revealed from the study focuses on using Wattpad as a learning media. Most participants in the study agreed on the notion of Wattpad as a learning media for some reason. Wattpad was accessible for students since there were no special requirements to be a user of the application. The accessibility of Wattpad included country or regional borders. In Indonesia, Wattpad was a legal application with no special features designed for a certain region, unlike some other ICT social media of Instagram. Equal opportunity, media, and features were offered to every user. Another accessibility of Wattpad was that the application took a small storage download. It meant students could install the application on their smartphones. It was beneficial since a smartphone was a portable gadget that allowed students to use the application anytime and anywhere.

Regarding the features of Wattpad, some participants performed an excellent understanding of the features of Wattpad, such as the comment section, offline reading, and writing section. By clicking on the feature of writing, Wattpad provided a blank space for the authors to write a draft. It was also mentioned that the authors could insert various pictures and music links online to support the story's nuance building. Wattpad also allowed readers and authors to set up their mobile reading page in dark and light mode with adjustable fonts. It could be said that Wattpad offered sufficient features to address the comfortability of the users in using the application. Besides, Wattpad also embedded a feature of a comment section which was very helpful for students in learning writing. The comment section was free for the readers to express their honest reviews and opinions. Moreover, a critical feature for students with limited mobile data and limited access to Wi-Fi was addressed by Wattpad. Users could download their favourite stories while

connected to the internet. These downloaded stories would be loaded into the library section in the user's account. However, there were a maximum number of offline stories in a library section.

The next item in the survey asked the students' perception of using Wattpad as a medium for learning and improving writing skills. Participants were also asked for their reasons related to their answers. Almost all participants agreed on using Wattpad to enhance their writing skills. The survey mentioned that Wattpad was perceived as a useful medium for writing and checking the understanding of English. Wattpad facilitated authors from many different countries. Thus, it became an opportunity for EFL learners to learn English and write from native speakers. The prior reason for enhancing writing skills was closely related to the learners' grammar practice, vocabulary knowledge, and writing competence. A complex process of word choice in sentence construction to deliver meaning occurred when attempting to write any piece of writing. A set of grammatical rules as a convention should be strictly applied. Moreover, by using Wattpad as a learning media, students also developed their knowledge of different genre stories and writing styles. During a period, learning writing through Wattpad affected their writing competence supported by the development of knowledge of various topics.

There were many benefits mentioned in the use of Wattpad in learning writing. According to the participants, Wattpad was a beneficial media for improving writing skills since Wattpad provided a comment section where students could receive feedback on their writing. Writing involves putting words, constructing sentences, and integrating ideas among paragraphs to form a coherent text. However, students as learners were certain of errors and mistakes. Thus, feedback was important as a way of upgrading writing skills. Concerning writing skill development, Wattpad following students' statements on the survey also affected grammatical knowledge, vocabulary improvement, and writing style. It was probably related to Wattpad's wide range of authors, which allowed EFL learners to find native speakers of English and look thoroughly at their writing since language learning had culture as one of its variables. The participants also stated that a trivial but critical aspect of writing was comprehending punctuation as one of the benefits of habituating writing activity through Wattpad.

One of the benefits of Wattpad has been touched on in the previous paragraph regarding the accessibility of the application. For this particular reason, the accessibility of Wattpad allowed the students to begin and continue their writing in other places rather than being stuck in the room with their computers. Students' depiction of writing as a boring room activity could be solved with the liberation to write in their favourite, interesting, and refreshing spaces. Such conditions could help in the idea-generating and creative thinking processes in writing. In line with the prior reason, Wattpad provided various stories from many authors and genres. By reading these stories, students' knowledge and experience in reading contributed to their writing skill development. In addition, Wattpad as writing media was argued as a fun way of learning rather than pressuring one, where authors were liberated to express their thoughts, ideas, or experiences supported by features of images and music. The comment section in Wattpad also gave the authors reviews, critiques, or suggestions on their writing. The comment section was also assumed to give motivation and inspiration to authors. Wattpad allowed a creative thinking process in its written meaningful stories to express the authors' emotions.

Another benefit of writing on Wattpad besides academic purposes was commercial purposes. Authors could charge the readers to read their stories by paying a certain amount to get a full written story. In a better situation, high-ranked stories or top stories written on Wattpad were attracting the publication company's interest. This publishing house allowed authors to publish their work in books. Realizing the benefits of Wattpad in earning, students were encouraged to write either as a hobby or pursue their desire to become a book author.

V. DISCUSSION

The objectives of this study were to examine students' awareness of ICT tools, applications, and utilization and how students perceive Wattpad in enhancing writing skills. Moreover, researchers also examined the effect of using Wattpad on EFL students' writing skills. The discussion of this study was as follows.

First, the result of the study showed that students performed a good to excellent knowledge of ICT in a range of tools to the utilization of those tools in their learning process. They were already familiar with using ICT tools such as laptops, computers, or LCD projectors. According to the students, with the help of ICT tools in the classroom, students received an equal chance of learning opportunities. In addition, ICT applications such as the Internet, Search Engines, Websites, social networking sites, and social media were emerging fast in contributing to social life. This was in line with a study that highlights the usefulness of ICT tools and ICT applications for educational purposes, enhancing learners' knowledge and improving learning stimuli and experience (Tochukwu & Hocann, 2017; Wong & Yunus, 2023). Thus, applying ICT in teacher professional development could partially solve the teacher professional development problems. Therefore, it could be said that technologies enhanced the classroom and learning process.

The second result of this study was that there was a significant difference between students who taught using Wattpad media, especially in their writing skills. The result indicated that the students who taught using Wattpad had better writing skills compared with those taught using paper-based writing. This result has been confirmed by some works that state the use of the Wattpad application could enhance students' writing skills (Furotun et al., 2021; Suhaeni, 2022). In addition, by using the Wattpad application, students were more creative in writing their short stories (Ganapathy et al., 2022; Indriani et al., 2022). Moreover, by implementing this application, the students' motivation was

improved. This is in line with the study done by Rukun (2019). Therefore, the use of the Wattpad application was recommended to be implemented by the students.

Third, in line with the student's awareness of ICT tools, applications, and utilization, participants argued for using Wattpad as writing media. They have attempted to write and publish stories in this application considering the ease of the features and liberation in writing. Overall, students expressed their familiarity with using Wattpad for reading and writing various stories. Wattpad provided media for authors and readers to find a free space for their hobby. This is in line with the study highlighting Wattpad's significant role in the creative writing process (Ayub et al., 2020). Most participants in the study agreed on the notion of Wattpad as a learning media for some reason. Wattpad was accessible for students since there were no special requirements to be a user of the application. The application took a small size of storage download. Wattpad had features of a writing section and a comment section. The authors could also insert various pictures and links of music in online mode to support the nuance building of the story. The use of Wattpad unconsciously improved students' writing, vocabulary mastery, speaking, and listening skills (Permatasari et al., 2020). This application facilitated authors from many different countries. Thus, it became an opportunity for EFL learners to learn English and write from native speakers. Therefore, realizing how beneficial Wattpad was in earning, students were encouraged to write either as a hobby or pursue their desire to become a book author.

VI. CONCLUSION

The advancement of technology is welcomed in education, especially in the EFL context, as tools to enhance, examine, and ease the learning process. The presence of ICT in the educational field is undeniable in the current situation. Learners should be able to make use of ICT effectively. This study revealed a high rate of student's awareness of the role of ICT in the language learning process. ICT allows a more effective, efficient, and meaningful learning process. ICT tools and applications played a great role in the language learning process. Internet, social media, and ICT application were affecting their learning strategy by providing a media for learning writing and serving more opportunities to access learning resources. ICT provided a wider and unlimited amount of knowledge which was important to students. ICT shifted the conventional learning style to a modern one, offering alternatives and solutions to the challenges in the language to increase the writing skills of students.

The use of Wattpad had a significant difference in students' writing skills. By implementing Wattpad, the students' motivation improved. In addition, this application could also be used to improve students' creativity. Moreover, it can also be implied from the discussion that students were already familiar with Wattpad as a writing medium for authors. One of the reasons was the accessibility of the application; most features were held free. Wattpad as an ICT application in this study was investigated regarding its use in developing the writing skills of EFL learners. Students expressed their perception of the issue positively and agreed on the hypothesis that Wattpad could assist in developing writing skills. Wattpad allowed students to write anything they wished to and express anything they wanted to despite the stories' ranks, likes, or downloads. Wattpad was argued to be useful in enhancing EFL learners' writing skills. It also argued that Wattpad could improve the students' grammatical competence and vocabulary knowledge. In addition, Wattpad gave freedom of any genre and stories written by the students, leading critical and creative thinking in generating ideas for the writing. However, there were always weaknesses and strengths performed by the application. Therefore, this study suggested a further investigation into the use of Wattpad in enhancing EFL learners' writing skills.

VII. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was conducted from participants of 80 students who participated in writing class. On the other hand, in this study, there was only one state university in Indonesia. By assessing the effect of using the Wattpad application on EFL students' writing skills, this study revealed the use of Wattpad has a significant difference in students' writing skills. However, there are always weaknesses and strengths performed by the application. Therefore, this study suggested a further investigation into the use of Wattpad in enhancing EFL learners' writing skills in other areas or countries.

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