Wattpad: A Strategy for Improving The First-Graders' Descriptive Text Comprehension

by Eka Mayasari

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ABSTRACT: *This research was motivated by the lack of students' interest in English lessons, especially in writing descriptive texts. The purpose of this research was to determine the extent to which the use of the Wattpad application could influence students' ability to write descriptive texts. This research was conducted at MA Miftahul Ulum Tanjungpinang in the first-grades students in the second semester of the academic year 2022-2023. This research was a quantitative study using an experimental method. The sample of this research was 50 students. The research method used was a true experiment with a post-test only control design. The result of the research, there is a significant difference between the writing scores of the experimental class and the control class where the post-test scores of the experimental class are higher. It can be seen that the mean value of the control class is 62,12 while the experimental class is 75,64. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant effect of using the Wattpad application on the ability of the first-grade students at MA Miftahul Ulum Tanjungpinang to write descriptive texts. based on student's feedback using Wattpad application, the results show a strong positive trend across all questions related to Wattpad. Respondents tend to strongly support the statements provided. Mostly showed a positive "Strongly Agree" toward each statement, with only a few being neutral, disagreeing, or strongly disagreeing suggesting that the students had a favorable perception to the Implementation of the Duolingo application on the writing skill of the eleventh-grade students at MA Miftahul Ulum Tanjungpinang.*

Kata Kunci: Wattpad, writing skill

INTRODUCTION

Mastering all the language skills is essential for complete acquisition of a language. Students must possess a mastery of four fundamental skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing to achieve proficiency in the English language. It emphasizes the need for students to develop a comprehensive set of language skills to achieve proficiency in English.

Descriptive text aims to provide detailed descriptions so that readers can experience the subject as if they were directly involved in it. This type of writing focuses on describing specific objects, people, animals or other beings, including acquaintances or pets. Effective descriptive writing includes rich sensory details that engage all senses—sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste—when relevant. It can also convey the emotions associated with people, places, or objects as described by the writer.

Based on preliminary research conducted in high schools during September and October 2023, it was observed that students often found traditional teaching methods uninteresting and unmotivating. Additionally, students frequently faced difficulties in writing descriptive texts, such as lacking vivid vocabulary, struggling with sentence structure, and being unable to create coherent and detailed descriptions. The problem identification in this study reveals several key issues: Student writing proficiency is still low, and the level of

students' motivation for writing remains insufficient. Many students are unaware of the benefits of technology for learning the English language, and most students demonstrate a limited interest in writing. These challenges highlighted the need for more dynamic and interactive learning experiences.

The importance of writing descriptive texts for English language learning necessitates students to enhance their interest in reading literary works. Be it novels, short stories, poems, drama scripts, or other literary works, to increase students' imagination and creativity. In today's era, where technology is developing rapidly, reading a literary work is an easy thing to do. With the help of applications on a gadget, students can already read various kinds of literary works. One of them is Wattpad, an application that is currently popular among teenagers.

Wattpad is an online social network that provides a platform for writers to publish their work directly. Readers can also access stories for free, directly connecting readers and writers (Lueke, 2013: 1). This application provides a variety of reading materials such as novels, short stories, poetry, or reference books. In addition, the Wattpad application is also used as a medium for the community to develop their full potential in writing. With this application, it is easier for students to get references for reading literary works.

Based on the explanation above, that writing descriptive texts requires a high imagination and the importance of learning media in the descriptive text learning process, one of which is the Wattpad application, has attracted the researcher's interest.

Hemus in Julie Ann (2015: 310) Wattpad is world's largest community for discovering and sharing stories. Wattpad manages to continuously attract and get reader, having 16.9 million visitors all over the world per month and recording and average of 30 minutes spent in reading per visit.

Considering the background that has been explained above, this research is conducted to know whether there is a significant effect of using Wattpad application toward students 'writing ability in descriptive text and to find out the students' feedback to the implementation of Wattpad Application on the students' writing skills of the tenth-grade students of MA Miftahul Ulum Tanjungpinang.

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METHODS

This researcher uses experimental research methods. In this research, researcher uses two classes. The first class as an experimental group has received special treatment implementing Wattpad Application in learning writing. The second class is the control group that does not receive treatment. She used Quasi Experimental Design, type Non-equivalent Control Group Design. This design was explained by Sugiono. Design as follows:

Table 1 Quasi Experiment Design

Classes	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental class	O1	X	O2
ControlGroup	O1		O2

The population in this research were all the tenth-grade students of MA Miftahul Ulum Tanjungpinang in the academic year 2022/2023 which consists of 2 classes and 110 students. Moreover, the sampling technique used in this research was purposive sampling. Purposive sampling or judgmental sampling is technique for choosing particular persons purposely to deliver information that cannot be achieved using other choices. The experimental class is assigned to class X1, and the control class is assigned to class X2. The total number of the sample is 50.

Researcher use the written test as a method of data collection to measure Wattpad Application to students' writing skills. The data collection approach in this research utilized a writing skills test technique, specifically through a descriptive text writing test conducted on the sample being studied, which included both the experimental and control classes. The test consisted of essay question requiring students to write descriptive paragraphs. Before further processing, the initial step taken by the researcher was to gather data. The following techniques were used in data collection:

a. Conducting writing skills tests on the involved sample, including pre-tests before starting the learning process and post-tests after completing the learning process.

b. Collecting the students' test results.

c. Evaluating the students' test results.

d. Processing the students' test data into tables or tabulating them.

e. Analyzing the students' test data to draw conclusions from the research.

The questionnaire or survey method is a research technique that involves compiling a series of structured written questions with the objective of eliciting information from respondents about key issues of interest. This questionnaire is aimed at the experimental class to know the students' perceptions using Wattpad application on writing skills. In this research, Likert scale is used. The Likert scale uses several question items to measure individual behavior. For each question item there are five scoring options: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree.

The data collection technique in this study used a written test as a data collection tool or instrument. Before the written test was used in the research, validity testing was conducted first. The validity test used was construct validity, where the test would be consulted with experts. Then, the experts were asked for their opinions on the instrument that had been compiled. (Sugiyono, 2016: 177).

After obtaining data from the sample, the next step was data analysis. The data analysis technique used in this study was the normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the homogeneity test using One-Way ANOVA, and the hypothesis test using the t-test.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted at MA Miftahul Ulum Tanjungpinang. The sample consisted of 50 the tenth-grade students, with 25 students in the experimental group and 25 in the control group. The experimental group received treatment using the Wattpad application as a learning medium, while the control group used conventional learning. The learning material was delivered in four meetings, including a post-test. Each group had two meetings. In the experimental class, students were introduced to the Wattpad application as a learning medium for writing descriptive texts. From the beginning, students showed enthusiasm. Many of them were already active users of the Wattpad application. After knowing this, the researcher asked students about what they could do on the Wattpad application. Then, the students explained that they enjoyed reading literary works on the Wattpad application and began to develop their interest in writing on the platform.

Based on reading Wattpad short stories, students began to compose a descriptive text. The Wattpad short stories were developed based on the students' own imaginations. Students in the experimental class actively expressed their opinions about the form of descriptive text they would create. The use of the Wattpad application as a learning medium for descriptive writing has resulted in an improvement in the descriptive writing skills of students in the experimental class compared to before. This is because Wattpad offers a variety of stories that

can stimulate students to develop their imagination and vocabulary through previous reading experiences. In addition, the writing style of Wattpad authors in each story quote is different and has its own characteristics.

Unlike class X-2 as the control group, the descriptive text writing learning process was not given any treatment. The process of creating descriptive texts was done based on the students' own experiences and examples of stories in the English textbook. While students in the experimental group developed a story idea and diction from the Wattpad short stories they had previously read, the control group relied on their own experiences which were then arranged into a descriptive text. During the post-test, students were less enthusiastic about exploring their story ideas, diction, and imagination, due to the lack of previous stimulation. They were also more passive in expressing their opinions about the descriptive text to be created. In addition, students lacked understanding of the elements found in a descriptive text. As a result, students found it difficult to compose descriptive texts.

A. Data description for Experimental and Control Class

This research aims to determine the effect of using the Wattpad application on descriptive text writing skills. The experimental class was given a treatment in the form of using the Wattpad application in the final activity of writing descriptive texts, while the control class was not given any treatment using the Wattpad application. To determine the frequency distribution of the experimental and control classes, the following table is presented.

Table 2 Data description for Experimental and Control Class

Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. error Mean
Class X1	25	75.64	6.676	1.335
Class X2	25	62.12	6.064	1.212

The table show that Class X1 has a higher mean writing score (75.64) compared to Class X2.

Table 3 Independent Samples Test

Independent Samples Test Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means			
F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the

										Difference
Lower						Upper				
Writing Score	Equal variances Assumed	.081	.777	7.495	48	.000	13.52000	1.80388	9.89305	17.14695
	Equal variances not assumed		7.495	47.563	.000	13.52000	1.80388	9.89219	17.14781

The table showed that the probability number Sig. (2-tailed) was 0.000. The probability or Sig number (2-tailed) was < 0.005, rejecting the null hypothesis Ho and accepting the alternative hypothesis (Ha). It suggests that utilizing Wattpad Application has a positive and significant effect on the writing skills of the tenth-grade students at MA Miftahul Ulum Tanjungpinang.

B. Result of Questionaire

Table 4 The Results of Students' Answer of Questionnaire

No	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strong Disagree (1)	Total
Q1	5	17	1	1	1	25
Q2	11	10	3	1	0	25
Q3	5	11	4	3	2	25
Q4	15	9	1	0	0	25
Q5	14	7	4	0	0	25
Q6	16	7	2	0	0	25
Q7	6	13	6	0	0	25
Q8	11	10	3	1	0	25
Q9	11	13	0	1	0	25
Q10	14	10	1	0	0	25

The results show a strong positive trend across all questions related to Wattpad. Respondents tend to strongly support the statements provided. Mostly showed a positive

"Strongly Agree" toward each statement, with only a few being neutral, disagreeing, or strongly disagreeing suggesting that the students had a favorable perception of Wattpad's role in improving their writing skills.

In general, before conducting the research, the researcher administered a pre-test to measure the students' prior understanding of writing skills before providing treatment. After treatment, the post-test outcomes for the experimental and control groups differ significantly.

Based on the results of the Independent Sample T-Test with the help of SPSS IBM Statistic Version 21, it can be seen that the average experimental class is 75.64. Higher than the control class, namely 62.12. Furthermore, the probability or Sig number (2-tailed) is 0,000 which is smaller than α (0.005), so that the null hypothesis Ho is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. That is, there is a positive and significant effect on the use of Wattpad application on the writing skills of class X students of MA Miftahul Ulum Tanjungpinang.

This research observed the writing skills of class X students of MA Miftahul Ulum Tanjungpinang. Their difficulties stemmed from a lack of understanding about proper writing procedures. Additionally, students exhibited shyness and disinterest when practicing writing independently or with peers. To address these issues, the researchers introduced Wattpad application to enhance students' sentence and paragraph writing abilities.

The validity test results showed questionnaires amounted to 10 items. Determining the R-table to identify a valid item of the validity test. Using the formula to find out R-table is df=N-2 with 25 respondents, df=23 and the r-table for the number is 0,396. Furthermore, based on the reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.855. This indicates that the instrument can be trusted to measure the intended construct.

Based on student's feedback using Wattpad application, the results show a strong positive trend across all questions related to Wattpad. Respondents tend to strongly support the statements provided. Mostly showed a positive "Strongly" "Agree" toward each statement, with only a few being neutral, disagreeing, or strongly disagreeing suggesting that the students had a favorable perception to the Implementation of the Wattpad application on the writing skill of the tenth-grade students at MA Miftahul Ulum Tanjungpinang.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the findings, it can be concluded that the use of Wattpad application has a positive and significant impact. In other words, using Wattpad application enhances students' writing skills at the tenth-grade students of MA Miftahul Ulum Tanjungpinang.

Through the findings, it can be seen that there is a significant difference between the writing scores of the experimental class and the control class where the post-test scores of the experimental class are higher. It can be seen that the mean value of the control class is 62,12 while the experimental class is 75,64. Hence, the average score of the experimental class is higher than that of the control class. That means that there is a positive and significant influence of using Wattpad application on students' writing skills.

Additionally, based on student's feedback using Wattpad application, the results show a strong positive trend across all questions related to Wattpad. Respondents tend to strongly support the statements provided. Mostly showed a positive "Strongly Agree" toward each statement, with only a few being neutral, disagreeing, or strongly disagreeing suggesting that the students had a favorable perception to the Implementation of the Duolingo application on the writing skill of the eleventh-grade students at MA Miftahul Ulum Tanjungpinang.

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