

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Reading motivation is a necessary factor in successful literacy development and academic achievement (Kuşdemir & Bulut, 2018). When individuals are motivated to read, they are more likely to engage with reading materials they want to read, better comprehend and gain information, and develop critical thinking skills (Indrayadi, 2021). Several factors can influence EFL reading motivation, including personal interests, teacher support, and the quality of reading materials (Fuad et al., 2021). However, sometimes traditional reading materials fail to attract the interest and motivation of EFL students. It makes them feel bored. Therefore, it is necessary to explore alternative approaches that can build EFL students' reading motivation. There is a need for reading strategies that can motivate students to read, one of which is extensive reading activity.

Extensive reading is an effective strategy as providing learners with a strong desire to read more, a strong foundation in vocabulary recognition, and the ability to discover on their own reading strategies (Dixon, 2016). It is because ER allows students to read texts that interest them. Also, extensive reading has been shown to increase students' reading motivation and interest because it is an activity of reading several simple texts (Fatimah et al., 2022). Reading material that can be used in extensive reading activities can be in the form of novels, comics, magazines, etc. Therefore, students must read books they love, easy to access, and find simple to read throughout the process to represent their language proficiency. Thus, students would be motivated to read and learn more.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in using technology-based approaches to promote reading motivation, particularly among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students (Al-Jarf, 2022). Wattpad, a popular digital reading platform, offers a unique opportunity to engage EFL learners with reading

material that aligns with their interests and motivations. There are many stories and poems from various genres, for example, romance, fantasy, thriller, etc. Therefore, Wattpad can be an option as a digital reading platform for reading for pleasure activities because it is easily accessible online, free, and has many types of story reading material, for example short story, fanfiction, e-novel, etc. These are types of narrative text, as the study conducted by Sari et al. (2020) states that teaching reading using narrative text can increase the reading motivation of learners because most EFL learners choose narrative text as the reading material they want to read, one of the types of digital reading material is from Wattpad. Djamdjuri et al. (2022) stated that reading through Wattpad can increase motivation and vocabulary. After all, it is easy to access because students only need a cellphone, they do not need to buy printed books, it is free, and there are many reading materials that they like. It is also related to the reason the researcher conducted this study because there were several participants in this study of the EFL students who used Wattpad for extensive reading activities. When the researcher conducted preliminary interviews, they stated that reading using Wattpad motivated them to read more because the texts they read are exciting so it is easy to understand and Wattpad is easier to access because it is online and free.

Many more studies have found the positive impact of using Wattpad, for example, the previous study conducted by Rodiatun & Harpain (2020) has shown that using Wattpad in extensive reading courses can enhance EFL students' English vocabulary. Another research conducted by Apriyani (2020) has shown the Wattpad application can help students sharpen their literacy skills. Pido et al.'s (2022) study concluded that using Wattpad can improve reading comprehension. However, only a few of these previous studies have examined the topic of reading motivation using Wattpad, although motivation is necessary for the learning process. The researcher found in a study conducted by Putri et al. (2023) that Wattpad is an effective medium to make students motivated to read. However, their study used a systematic literature review and suggested for future research to be conducted using other research designs to explore more about Wattpad for students' reading motivation. Based on previous research findings, this study addressed the gap in research by

exploring the perceptions of EFL students who use Wattpad for reading motivation in extensive reading activities using a descriptive case study and using semi-structured interviews for collecting the data. Moreover, it will provide new insights into how the use of reading digital media, which is Wattpad, will make students motivated and enjoy reading.

## **1.2. Formulation of the Problem**

The question of the research is “What are students’ perceptions of using Wattpad for reading motivation in extensive reading activities?”

## **1.3. Operational Definitions**

### **1.3.1. Students’ Perception**

Students' perception is how students see or perceive a specific component of their educational experience. It includes their knowledge, beliefs, and feelings towards using Wattpad in extensive reading activities in building reading motivation. It will be divided into two perceptions, namely positive and negative perceptions.

### **1.3.2. Wattpad**

Wattpad is a free online platform that allows users to read and publish original stories. There are a lot of types of reading material such as fiction, poetry, fanfiction, non-fiction, etc. However, Wattpad is popular among fiction readers who have many genres such as romance, action, fantasy, thriller, science fiction, etc.

### **1.3.3. Reading Motivation**

Reading motivation is a person's drive to read and continue to develop interest and passion for reading which can be influenced by factors such as interest, reading experience, reading goals, values and culture, as well as the influence of the social environment.

### **1.3.4. Extensive Reading**

Extensive reading is a method of reading that includes reading for pleasure and students can choose reading material based on their interests. The reading materials chosen are usually simple texts.

#### **1.4. Aim of the Research**

The aim of this study is to explore the perceptions of EFL students who use Wattpad for reading motivation in extensive reading activities.

#### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

##### **1.5.1. Theoretical Uses**

This study contributes to the development of a theory regarding students' perception of using Wattpad for reading motivation. This research can be the basis for the development of further research in the field of reading motivation and the use of digital reading media.

##### **1.5.2. Practical Uses:**

This study provides useful insights for educators and researchers who are interested in increasing EFL students' reading motivation. By understanding how literary works on Wattpad affect students' reading motivation, educators and researchers can develop more effective learning strategies to choose appropriate and interesting types of reading for students in increasing EFL students' reading motivation.

##### **1.5.3. Empirical Uses**

This study provides new insights into how the use of digital reading media, particularly Wattpad, can influence EFL students' reading motivation. The results of this study can provide empirical data for researchers interested in investigating the role of digital media in developing reading skills, as well as provide an overview of how the reading experience on Wattpad (a digital fiction platform) can motivate readers to read.