

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In the current era of globalization and technological development, students' literacy skills are becoming increasingly crucial to develop as reading ability is not only about text comprehension but also expanding knowledge, improving critical thinking, and strengthening language skills. Extensive reading is one of the methods believed to improve reading skills. In this method students are encouraged to read a large amount of reading material that matches their interests and ability levels, thus increasing their motivation and engagement in reading (Bamford & Day, 2004, as cited in Savitri et al., 2024). However, along with technological advances, a new approach is needed that is more relevant to today's students.

In the modern educational context, students are more familiar with digital technology. Therefore, educators began to apply digital technology in reading activities, one of which is the use of reading logs. A digital reading log is an activity to record and track students' reading activities to keep a written record of information such as title, author, and also a reflection of their reading results integrated with online media. It helps facilitate students to reflect, organize their thoughts, and engage critically with the texts they read (Lyutaya, 2011). Digital media as a platform for writing reading logs is a response to developing information and communication technology that allows students to integrate their reading experience into a digital environment. That way students can develop their digital literacy while improving their reading, writing, and critical thinking skills when implementing digital reading logs activities (Aliponga, 2013, as cited in Salsabila et al., 2021). Digital reading logs also provide space for personal expression because when students write their reflections they are pushed to think critically about their reading results. In addition, during digital reading logs in extensive reading activity, students are encouraged to read independently outside of the classroom, and they are given the freedom to choose reading texts according to their

preferences, it helps to promote students' autonomous learning and increases students' motivation and interest in reading (Fatimah et al., 2020). Digital reading logs can also help students develop consistent reading habits outside of the classroom (Aulia, 2019). When students track the number of pages and time spent reading each day, they can gradually establish a regular reading schedule. This is important for developing effective reading skills and building a solid literacy foundation.

The integration of digital reading logs is found in the Extensive Reading course, through a blog platform where students are expected to regularly upload their reading logs. The use of digital reading logs offers a tool that is more in line with students' lifestyles, allowing students to access, reflect, and discuss their reading on a digital platform. In the context of extensive reading courses in one of the universities in Tasikmalaya, the lecturers assign weekly tasks requiring students to complete digital reading logs. These logs document the date and time of reading, the title, reasons for choosing the text, a summary, new vocabularies, and comments, all based on their extensive reading activities. Moreover, since extensive reading activity is reading for pleasure, students are given the freedom to choose the reading they like. However, each week the lecturer determines the topic that must be read by students. For instance, in the first week, the topic was comics. Students are asked to read one or two chapters of comics every day outside of class hours, and then report the results on their digital reading logs. In the following week, the reading topics can be short stories, biographies, novels, and so on. In uploading the results of digital reading logs, blogs are utilized as digital media that support this learning process. Despite reporting their reading results and uploading them on their blog account, the lecturer also instructs students to review and interact with each other through the blog. This interaction is expected to encourage students' collaboration and reflection on their reading. Then, at each class meeting, the lecturer and students discuss their weekly reading logs. Randomly, some students will be selected to present their reading logs to the class each week.

Many studies have investigated the use of reading logs for extensive reading activity (Dincer, 2020; Gabriella & Diptoadi, 2019; Kalsum et al., 2023). Reading logs for extensive reading activities provide some benefits, such as a medium to reflect on students' reading (Gabriella & Diptoadi, 2019), significantly improve student critical reading skills (Kalsum et al., 2023), reading comprehension, and motivation to read more (Dincer, 2020). Reading logs are also believed to have characteristics that support the success of extensive reading practices. Based on previous research, there are a lot of advantages that we can get regarding the implementation of reading logs for an extensive reading activity. In line with previous studies, this study also aims to explore the benefits of reading logs in extensive reading activities. However, this study seeks to fill the gap by focusing on the use of reading logs, which is usually done conventionally, in a digital format in the context of an extensive reading course. Specifically, this study examines how the digitization of reading logs affects students' engagement and learning experience in extensive reading courses. This research uses a descriptive case study approach and semi-structured interviews to collect data. Moreover, this study provides new insights into students' perceptions of using digital reading logs in extensive reading courses.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

What are students' perceptions of the use of digital reading logs in the Extensive Reading Course?

1.3 Operational Definitions

The researcher provides three definitions related to this study to avoid misunderstanding about the terms set out in this study as follows:

1.3.1 Students' Perception

Student perception refers to students' understanding or interpretation of digital reading logs that they have experienced in the Extensive Reading course. In this research to find out students' perceptions are sought based on students' beliefs or opinions, feelings, and knowledge (Patton, 2002).

1.3.2 Digital Reading Logs

A digital reading log is an online tool that students use for keeping written records as a reflection on their reading. In this Extensive Reading course, the utilization of digital reading logs has been integrated through a blog where students are expected to regularly upload their reading logs detailing their reading results based on the criteria set by the lecturer.

1.3.3 Extensive Reading Course

Extensive Reading is one of the compulsory courses at Siliwangi University that must be taken by English education students in semester 2. This course involves reading for pleasure and encourages students to read large amounts of easy and interesting reading material and log it into a blog.

1.4 Aim of the Study

Based on the research question, this study aims to investigate students' perception of digital reading logs in an Extensive Reading course.

1.5 Significant of the Study

1.5.1 Practical Significant

Theoretically, this study will complement the previous research about digital reading logs in the ELT context.

1.5.2 Theoretical Significant

Practically, this research can be a reference or provide a model for teachers-related digital reading logs activity in reading courses in the ELT context.

1.5.3 Empirical Significant

This research will provide empirical insight into an overview of how to obtain data and analyze it related to digital reading logs in extensive reading activity