

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methodological approach used to investigate reading preferences among fifth-semester English Education students at Siliwangi University in Tasikmalaya. The chapter describes the qualitative case study design that guided data collection and analysis, the research setting and rationale for participant selection, and the specific procedures used to gather and interpret interview data. Detailed explanations of the thematic analysis process demonstrate how raw interview transcripts were systematically coded and organized into meaningful themes that address the research question. The chapter also outlines the research timeline and ethical considerations, including how participants' confidentiality was protected throughout the study.

A. Research Design

The research design used was the descriptive case study method. According to Creswell (2018), case studies developed an insightful analysis of a case, activity, or process. In addition, Yin (2018) stated that case studies were used to describe a phenomenon and context that happened in real life. Furthermore, Yin (2018) added that case studies allowed you to focus in depth on a “case” and to maintain a holistic and real-world perspective such as in studying the life cycle of individuals, small group behavior, organizational and managerial processes, environmental changes, school performance, international relations, and industrial development. This study focused on the preference that students in the fifth semester chose for the media of reading. As it turned out, this method was suitable for detailed analysis of specific phenomena.

B. Research Setting and Participants' Research Object

This research was conducted in the English Education Department at a university in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia. This university had been chosen because fifth-semester students in the English Department liked to read either

fiction novels, articles, or other. Besides, this proximity made it easier for me to collect data from fifth-semester students university. Then this research was estimated to take place for three months, starting from December 2024 to February 2025. This research lasted for three months, and it was carried out while the participants were still studying in the English language education department at one of the universities in Tasikmalaya.

These participants were selected purposively, with a total of three students. They liked to read such articles as fiction, non-fiction, or other readings, with an age range of 19-21 years. They were registered as fifth-semester students in the English language education department, precisely at one of the universities in Tasikmalaya. They had also studied English as a foreign language in kindergarten and elementary school. These participants were chosen because they liked to read and had followed the research statement that discussed reading preferences, so that they could better understand and analyze a reading text that they had liked. Because in the fifth semester, many students liked to read something. Participants in this study found out about reading preferences, motivation, and what factors could have been involved in their reading preferences. Therefore, the selection of participants was based on several criteria.

This study considered several understandings that were the same as those in previous studies. Still, this study was more specific because it was directly aimed at participants who were fifth-semester students in the English language education department at one of the universities in Tasikmalaya. Following the selection of participants, a joint talk was held to explain the goals and methodology of the study. In addition to agreeing to engage in the data collection process, participants were asked to fill out and sign a consent form. Additionally, participants' confidentiality was protected since participants' names were replaced with pseudonyms.

C. Data Collection

The technique used in this research was semi-structured interviews from participants' experiences regarding their constraints in reading preferences. The

semi-structured interview was flexible and did not have limited questions. The versatility of such semi-structured interviews led to their employment. When conducting this type of interview, the interviewer was free to express their opinions and direct the participants toward particular interests and abilities they perceived the participants possessed. Moreover, semi-structured interviews were also conducted using Deci and Ryan (1985) and focused on three indicators such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness. To avoid confusion among participants, the interview was conducted in Bahasa Indonesia.

D. Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to examine the collected interview data. Thematic analysis was a qualitative research technique utilized to organize, explore, and conduct a detailed study of the data. It encompasses whole new things and goes beyond simply counting the words or sentences in a book. The technique from Braun and Clark (2006) used the steps below: get acquainted with your data, create preliminary codes, search for themes, define and name themes, and produce the report.

According to Braun and Clark (2006), there are six steps to thematic analysis, and they are as follows:

1. Get acquainted with the Data.

During this phase, researchers themselves, based on the interview results, read multiple times and take notes on early findings. This process involves determining the significance, theme, or structure.

2. Creating Preliminary Codes (Generating Initial Codes).

The researcher begins coding in this stage by identifying the type of situation and marking it with various colors. In this stage, the researcher additionally coded every single piece of data, determined if any of the codes overlapped, and determined whether or not the data were important.

Table 1. Generating Initial Codes

Extracts	Initial codes
<p>“For me online reading saves money and space compared to offline reading. E-books are usually much cheaper than printed books. I also don’t need to carry thick printed books if an e-book is available on my phone.”</p>	<p>Convenience of Online Reading</p>
<p>“...the options are more numerous and varied than offline reading sources. Also, online reading is more flexible and practical.”</p>	<p>Variety of Online Materials</p>
<p>“There is influence from lecturers when I’m assigned to find references from journal websites like Google Scholar... recommendations from friends and lecturers influence my choice.”</p>	<p>Peer/Lecturer Influence</p>
<p>“For academic tasks I always rely on online... one task may require more than one reading, so to save money and space I prefer online reading. Online readings like journal articles are easy to cite; apps like Mendeley help me.”</p>	<p>Academic Task Requirements</p>
<p>“When reading online I’m often disturbed by notifications, mostly from social media apps... if I can’t turn off the internet I set my phone to mute.”</p>	<p>Distractions in Online Reading</p>
<p>“To mark important information, I usually use the highlight feature in PDF/EPUB readers... if highlight isn’t available I can screenshot the page.”</p>	<p>Digital Annotation and Search Tools</p>
<p>“How easy is it to access printed and online materials? Quite easy. For journal articles it’s fairly easy because many journal websites are accessible.”</p>	<p>Ease of Access to Materials</p>
<p>“A limitation of accessing online formats is restricted access to older book editions. Sometimes the required reading is not available at all or is incomplete.”</p>	<p>Limitations of Digital Resources</p>

“I prefer printed or offline because I like the smell of books... reading offline reduces screentime and makes me calmer.”	Value of Printed Reading
“Sometimes I feel my eyes are tired or sore, especially at night. I usually limit online reading at night to reduce screentime.”	Eye Strain / Screen Fatigue
“E-books are usually much cheaper than printed books, so they're more affordable.”	Cost-effectiveness of E-books

The researcher identified 11 initial codes, each representing different aspects highlighted in the participants' interview transcriptions. These codes encapsulated various themes and patterns observed in the data, providing a comprehensive framework for further analysis and interpretation of the participants' experiences and insights.

Table 2. Calculating initial codes

NO.	Initial Codes	Total
1.	Convenience of Online Reading	7
2.	Variety of Online Materials	5
3.	Peer/Lecturer Influence	6
4.	Academic Task Requirements	8
5.	Distractions in Online Reading	6
6.	Digital Annotation and Search Tools	4
7.	Ease of Access to Materials	7
8.	Limitations of Digital Resources	5
9.	Value of Printed Reading	7
10.	Eye Strain / Screen Fatigue	5
11.	Cost-effectiveness of E-books	6

3. Searching for Themes

The researcher examines the topic that emerged from the data that was emphasized in the previous stage in the third stage. This is the method of arranging the data transcribed by choice to find things intriguing or important about the research topics.

Table 3. Searching for themes

Initial Codes	Sub-Themes	Potential Themes
Convenience of Online Reading	Ease and Efficiency	Practicality and Accessibility of Online Reading
Cost-effectiveness of E-books	Economic Benefit	
Ease of Access to Materials	Searchability of Content	Social and Academic Influences
Variety of Online Materials	Content Diversity	
Peer/Lecturer Influence	Social Influence	
Academic Task Requirements	Academic Demands	Digital Reading Experience and Engagement
Digital Annotation and Search Tools	Interactive Features	
Distractions in Online Reading	External Distractions	
Limitations of Digital Resources	Digital Access Barriers	Digital Constraints and Appeal of Print
Value of Printed Reading	Print Preference	
Eye Strain / Screen Fatigue	Screen-Time Concerns	

4. Reviewing themes

The fourth step involves reviewing the themes by assessing how well they correspond to the coded extracts and the overall dataset. During this phase, the researcher revisited the previously identified themes from the previous

phase. The researcher carefully evaluated the themes to determine their appropriateness for this study. If any themes were deemed unsuitable, the researcher either rejected them or modified them until the most suitable and acceptable themes were established.

5. Defining and Naming Themes

In this step, the researcher consolidates relevant codes into cohesive themes that align with the research questions. Simultaneously, any codes that were unrelated or irrelevant to the identified themes and research questions were eliminated.

Table 4. *Defining and Naming Themes*

No.	Themes
1	Practicality and Accessibility of Online Reading
2	Social and Academic Influences
3	Digital Reading Experience and Engagement
4	Digital Constraints and Appeal of Print

6. Producing the Report

The final step, after the researcher has got the theme. The researcher created a report on the research findings.

E. Research Schedule

This research was conducted from October 2024 to March 2025 in one of the universities in Tasikmalaya, with three students as participants, with the research schedule as follows:

Table 5. Research Schedule

Description	Oct/ 2024	Nov/ 2024	Dec/ 2024	Jan- May/ 2025	Jun/ 2025	Jul/ 2025	Aug/2 025
Research Proposal Writing							
Research Proposal examination							
Data Collection							
Data Analysis							
Report							
Thesis Result Seminar							
Thesis Examination							