

MAENG 1.7



**M.A. ENGLISH
SEMESTER - I**

**(REVISED SYLLABUS
AS PER NEP 2020)**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
IN LANGUAGE AND
LITERATURE**

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Programme Name: **M.A. (English)**

Course Name: **Research Methodology in
Language and Literature**

Total Credits: 04

Total Marks: 100

University Assessment: 50

College Assessment: 50

Pre requisite: Intermediate level proficiency in English language

Preamble:

This course aims to familiarize the learners with the essentials of academic research in literature and language. It offers a thorough introduction to the concept of research, the terminologies associated with research activity and its systematic planning and execution. Through extensive practice, the course would develop in learners an ability to identify research problems and to use various tools and techniques of research to write a dissertation/thesis/research proposal using the latest referencing and bibliographic style manual.

Objectives of the Course:

1. To introduce students to the philosophy, concepts and mechanics of research
2. To train students in the use of language, style and discourses suitable for dissertation- writing
3. To expose them to theories of literature, and help them acquire both a theoretical thrust and hands-on experience in writing research proposals before they embark on the execution of the dissertation proper
4. To acquaint them with the process of thesis writing
5. To acquaint them with the techniques and conventions of documentation in research

Course outcomes:

By the end of the course, the learners will be able to

1. Demonstrate their knowledge about the terminologies associated with research activity
2. Analyze linguistic/generic aspects of a research paper
3. Use relevant critical concepts and theory in order to effectively analyze and evaluate literary texts
4. Select study material, review and develop theoretical and conceptual frameworks for their research
5. Write a research proposal/paper independently

Semester I - Course No. – VI

Title of the Course: Research Methodology in Language and Literature

Unit I: Introduction to Research in Language and Literature:

(Lectures-08)

- Philosophy and Paradigms of Research Inquiry
- Research and Development
- Research and Global Competition
- Literary Research
- Language Research
- Types of Research
- Difference between Research Methods and methodologies
- Qualities of a Good Researcher

Unit II: Theoretical Approaches and Research Methods

(Lectures: 20)

A) Theoretical Approaches:

- **Text-oriented approaches:** Philology, rhetoric, formalism and structuralism, new criticism, semiotics and deconstruction
- **Author-oriented approaches:** Biographical criticism, psychoanalytic criticism, phenomenology
- **Reader-oriented approaches:** Reception theory, reception history, reader-response criticism
- **Context-oriented approaches:** Literary history, Marxist literary theory, feminist literary theory, new historicism and cultural studies

B) Research Methods:

- Oral History as a Research Methods
- Visual Methods
- Use of Ethnographic Methods
- Interviewing
- Quantitative and Qualitative Methods in Language and Literature research
- Case Study Method for language Research

Unit III: Tools, Language and Research Ethics

(Lectures 14)

- Collection of data: Primary data and secondary sources: Library (Print and Online), Field Archives, Documentaries, E-Resources (UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium, N-LIST, INFLIBNET and ERNET), Online Repository and Preparation of Working Bibliography
- Data collection measures for language research
- Research variables, validity and reliability of data
- Research language: clarity, correctness and coherence
- Ethical considerations in language and literary research
- Documenting Sources: Avoiding plagiarism, Giving Credit: paraphrasing and quoting
- Intellectual Property Rights

Unit IV: Writing a Research Proposal and Dissertation, Compiling, Documentation and Referencing for Research:

(Lectures 18)

- A) Research Proposal:** Selection of a topic, preparing an outline or abstract, aims and objectives of the study, hypothesis, review of literature, research methodology, chapter scheme, scope and limitations, conclusion, keywords
- B) Structuring a Dissertation:**
Steps to be followed for writing a dissertation; the drafting, editing and revision process; Key Issues and Arguments; Discussions of the findings and conclusion drawn; Contribution of the project to the existing body of research; Direction for future research; Citing Sources in the text: Intext citation, parenthetical citation, run -in quotation, Citing print, web, film and archival sources; Footnotes/endnotes; Works Cited/Bibliography
- C) Mechanics of Writing:** Spelling and punctuations; ellipses, note taking, indentation, margins, font, spacing, text formatting, title, running head and page number, internal headings and subheadings, placement of the list of Works Cited, tables and illustrations, and proof correction

Recommended Style Guide:

MLA Handbook. Modern Language Association of America; 9th Edition, 2021.

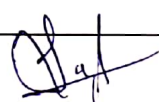
Evaluation Pattern:

College Assessment = Total Marks: 50			
S. No.	Nature of Assessment	Marks	
1	Classroom Participation (Student led discussions/activities) & Attendance	10	
2	Mid-Semester Written Test (on Unit I & II)	20	
3	Written Assignment	10	
4	Oral Presentation	10	
University Assessment (Semester End) Total Marks: 50			
S. No.	Pattern of Question Paper	Marks	Unit
Q.1	MCQ (10 Questions)	10	I, II, III & IV
Q.2	Short notes on ANY TWO out of four	10	I & II

References:

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INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH IN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Unit Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Philosophy and Paradigms of Research Inquiry
- 1.3 Research and Development
- 1.4 Research and Global Competition
- 1.5 Let's Sum up
- 1.6 Important Questions
- 1.7 References

1.0 OBJECTIVES

1. To make the learners aware of what research is and its significance in human life
2. To make them understand the contribution of research in human progress
3. To make them aware of the importance of the research in language and literature
4. To make them understand the research process and different methodologies used in research
5. To familiarize them specifically with the research methodologies used in the research in language and literature
6. To introduce research paradigms to the learners

1.1 INTRODUCTION

If we take a look at human history, we understand that humans have been curious all the time about the environment around them. They have been researching and experimenting with the things available in the surroundings. This has led to many inventions and discoveries. During the Stone Age, humans manufactured tools made of stone like axes, hammers, spears, etc. to help them in their daily activities like hunting and gathering. The use of these tools and instruments evolved and more and more sophisticated versions of tools came in use. The inventions of metals like

copper, tin, lead and gold during the Bronze Age and iron in the Iron Age brought remarkable changes in tools and weapons used by the humans.

The invention of fire not only made cooked food available for humans but it also protected them from predators. Later the creation of wheels gave birth to many other things including carts that helped in transportation of the agricultural produce and made it easy for people to travel to different places. The invention of the compass helped in giving direction during navigation on the sea at any time. The light bulb invented by Thomas Edison brought light in human life during the night time also. Alexander Graham Bell's telephone made it possible for distant people to communicate with each other. The inventions like concrete used in architecture, magnifying glasses used for better vision, batteries for storing energy, airplanes, refrigerators, nuclear energy, vaccines, x-rays, and advanced computers in the world of artificial intelligence have revolutionized human life. This has brought changes in all aspects of human life. The instinct of experimentation and a continuous search for new things since the origin of human species have enriched human life with all kinds of advanced science and technology that we have today. This was possible only because of research.

1.2 PHILOSOPHY AND PARADIGMS OF RESEARCH INQUIRY

As they say, 'necessity is the mother of all inventions', the growing needs of human beings made them carry out research which gave birth to new technologies. The way we live today, the clothes that we wear, the food items that we eat and the houses that we live in, are completely different from the early humans of thousands of years. These are the outcomes of all the research that was conducted in various fields for years. At the base of our modern scientific and technological revolution lie the inventions of the earlier generations. Research lies at the core of these scientific and technological progress that humans have made. This confirms how significant research is in human life.

Inventions come from research which is a careful, focused and sustained study of a subject. Experimentation with trial-and-error methods is an integral part of research. Thomas Edison used the trial-and-error method of research many times for his various creations. Edison was questioned about his errors while working on the inventions. Erica R. Hendry quotes Edison about his errors, "I have not failed 10,000 times –I've successfully found 10,000 ways that will not work." He (Edison) documented how working in certain ways will not be fruitful to come to the expected invention. This itself is great research.

Like invention, discovery is also a result of research. One must understand the difference between the two. When new things are created which did not exist before the research, they are inventions. For instance, the German inventor, Johannes Gutenberg invented a printing machine which did not exist before. When people come to know things for the first time which have been there in the world but they were out of people's knowledge,

they are discoveries. For instance, the Italian explorer, Christopher Columbus discovered America. The world did not know the country before that. Columbus actually was in search of a sea route to The Far East countries like India, China and Japan but he reached America. Thus, he started the action of exploring the route and discovered America. Therefore, research is an action, and discovery is the product. Discovery is a crucial part of research.

1.2.1 What is Research?

Let us understand what research is. The various definitions of research given below clarify the concept of research.

1. The **Cambridge** online dictionary defines research as: ‘a detailed study of a subject, especially in order to discover (new) information or reach a (new) understanding’.
2. **The Oxford Learners’ Dictionary** also defines research almost in the similar way. It says research is, ‘a careful study of a subject, especially in order to discover new facts or information about it.’
3. **Webster’s Twentieth Century Dictionary** defines research as ‘a careful, patient, systematic diligent inquiry or examination in some field of knowledge undertaken to establish facts or principles’.
4. **Random House Dictionary of the English Language** defines research as, ‘a diligent and systematic inquiry or investigation into a subject in order to discover or revise facts, theories, applications etc.’.
5. The entry in the **Merriam-Webster** online dictionary says, research is, ‘studious inquiry or examination’ and ‘investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, or practical application of such new or revised theories of laws’.

To sum up the above definitions, we can state that:

1. Research is a serious, systematic and scientific study of a subject, facts or a phenomenon.
2. It is a critical investigation into a subject.
3. It tries to find answers or solutions to specific questions or problems.
4. It is based on empirical evidence and observational experience.
5. It revises, verifies, tests and reestablishes the earlier theories and principles.
6. It establishes a fact, theory or principle or application.
7. It gives us information that we didn’t know before.
8. It adds into the pool of knowledge of the subject.

The definitions also bring out the following qualities of a researcher:

1. A researcher primarily has to be inquisitive.
2. He/she has to be interested in the topic of the research.
3. He/she must be serious and diligent in the research work.
4. He/she must have the ability to think critically by asking questions to the established facts or knowledge.
5. He/she must be an open-minded person.
6. He/she must follow objectivity in the research work keeping aside personal preferences and biases.
7. He/she should have the ability to think creatively or out of the box for novel solutions.
8. He/she should be good at communication skills like listening, speaking, reading and writing.

1.2.2 Research in various fields:

The research in the sciences like physics, chemistry, astronomy, biology, zoology, botany, astronomy, etc. is a part of **natural sciences**. Physical sciences that study non-living matters and energy, and life sciences or biological sciences that study living things, are the parts of natural sciences. In these sciences, human beings have been researching to get solutions to problems through observations, experimentations and by using cause and effect analysis and trial and error methods. The research in these sciences has led to the great development of the branches of science and has given birth to many research theories. Newton's Law of Gravitation, Einstein's Theory of Relativity, Dalton's Atomic Theory, Chemical Bonding Theories, Cell Theory, Gene Theory, Theory of Evolution of Plants are the pioneering examples of research in natural sciences.

The **research in social sciences** deals with human beings. It studies human life and patterns of human behavior occurring due to the impact of biological, psychological, social, cultural and environmental factors. It studies social and personal relations, social processes, human beings' educational, psychological, political, economic and other issues as a part of the society. The subjects like psychology, history, political science, economics, commerce, etc. come under social sciences. Studying systematically the economic empowerment of the office going women in a particular city is a topic of social science research. Conducting research to verify the actual birth date of Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj by referring to historical documents is a part of the subject, history which falls under Social Science. The research in social sciences has brought new developments in the respective areas.

The field of education is a part of social sciences. **The research in education** is a systematic and scientific study of teaching learning processes and their outcomes. It is primarily conducted to solve pedagogical problems. Pedagogical means connected with ways of teaching. The research is undertaken to improve and develop educational practices which includes classroom instruction, classroom management, classroom practices and interaction between the teacher and the learners. This research is conducted to improve teaching learning methods and understanding of the learners and to update curriculum. For instance, one can conduct research to verify whether teaching aids really help the learners in understanding a subject in a better way. The researcher divides the students in a control group and an experimental group. The learners in the control group are taught a particular lesson without any teaching aids whereas the learners in the experimental group are taught the same lesson by using audio-visual aid like a smartboard. The learning outcomes of both the groups are compared, analyzed and conclusions are drawn. The research in education helps to develop student-oriented methods and techniques that make the teaching learning process interesting and enjoyable.

1.2.3 Research in language and literature:

Research in language and literature also plays an important role in the field of knowledge creation. The detailed structural study of a language from the smallest units of sounds to larger units like rules of sentence construction is a part of linguistics. Linguistics is a scientific study of language. It studies phonology, sound system; morphology, the structure and formation of words; syntax, structure of sentences; semantics, study of meaning; etc. of a language. The language research can also be conducted by investigating how one language affects another. For instance, one can study the impact of Indian regional languages on English and vice versa. These various aspects of a language create wide scope for research in language.

The language research can also be conducted by analyzing the literary texts. The researchers look for linguistic elements in the text that give aesthetic effect to the literary work. They study the effect of the language on the readers. This application of linguistics to the analysis and interpretation of literary texts is called stylistics. Language research can also be undertaken by studying the use of a language in specific social contexts. The researcher studies how different individuals use a variety of a language in different situations. This study comes under sociolinguistics.

In literature, there are different genres like poetry, novel, drama, short story, essay, etc. The literary texts like a novel or a drama or poetry are interpreted and analyzed through several perspectives or by application of various theories. To understand the above point in a better way, let us take an example. Imagine a teacher is standing in front of the students in a classroom. He/she is holding out a globe, a spherical model of earth in his/her hand. Every student in the class is able to see a specific part of the globe. If the students sitting at the center can see the continent of Africa

completely, they cannot see North or South America or even Australia. The students who are on the right side of the teacher can see both the continents of America but cannot see Africa and Australia. The students on the left side of the teacher can see some part of Asia and the full part of Australia. The students who can see a specific part of the continent, cannot say that the other continents do not exist. When the teacher moves the globe, the students can see the other parts of the world. Similarly, literary texts like novels, dramas and poetry could be interpreted and analyzed from different theoretical perspectives. A critic cannot say that only his/her perspective is right or the best and the other interpretations are meaningless.

A novel can be studied from feminist point of view by analyzing issues of the women in the novel. The researcher looks at the topic from the view of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The same novel can be studied from a psychoanalytical perspective by studying the thoughts, plans, intentions and feelings in the conscious and unconscious minds of the characters. The novel can also be studied by applying Marxist theory which analyses the class conflicts and power relations between the capitalists and the working class. Similar theories can be applied to drama and poetry also. The study based on the characters in the literary texts also can be undertaken. The researcher can analyze the characters of the literary works from realistic, symbolic or historical point of view. The authors or the literary works can be compared and contrasted on the basis of themes as a part of research. The researcher can compare a work based on some myths with the original myths as a part of the research study. Thus, research in literature can be conducted through the application of various theoretical perspectives. The research develops the critical thinking and the objective attitude of the researcher.

1.2.4 Process of Research in Language and Literature:

In research in literature, the researcher does a literature survey of the area of his/her interest and finalizes the authors and the literary texts for his/her study. These texts are called primary sources of the research. After finding some research gap meaning a topic or an area that needs to be researched, the researcher formulates a **research problem** or **question** and fixes the **objectives** of the study. Then the researcher writes the **hypotheses** i.e. tentative explanations or predictions or assumptions. The objectives and hypotheses of the research topic delimit the research area and keep the researcher on the right track of the study. After this, he/she needs to decide the **research methodology** i.e. process, strategies, techniques and methods to be used for carrying out the research. It involves collecting, analyzing and interpreting the data. The researcher identifies and collects material related to the research topic from reference books and journals i.e. secondary sources and makes a list of them which is called **bibliography**. The focused and extensive discussion of the secondary sources with reference to the research topic forms the part of **review of literature**. It discusses the present theories, concepts, and earlier studies related to the topic. The collected data is analyzed and interpreted systematically and conclusions are drawn. These are called **research findings**. In this, the

researcher answers the research question and shows how the hypotheses are proved or disproved by writing a detailed research report or thesis. In the **conclusion** or **summary**, the researcher also recommends future research possibilities in the area of research.

1.2.5 Research Methodology in Language and Literature

Research methodology is the systematic process of identifying, selecting, processing and analyzing information to solve a research problem. As per Paperpal Editage, research methodology is ‘a structured and scientific approach used to collect, analyze, and interpret quantitative or qualitative data to answer research questions or test hypotheses.’ It is a plan for conducting research which keeps the researcher on the right track while carrying out the research. It stops the him/her from getting diverted from the research topic. In the research process, determining the methods and procedures of conducting research is very important before one start studying the topic. Research has to be conducted in a systematic and scientific way. Therefore, the standard methods of data collection need to be used. The interpretation and analysis of data has to be done by using the standardized statistical techniques.

In the **research in language and literature** the researcher identifies primary sources i.e. the authors and their literary texts for the study, first. Then, he/she starts collecting secondary data i.e. critical material written on the authors and their texts. It includes research articles published in journals and books, newspaper articles, e-articles, personal correspondences of the authors, their speeches, biographies, reports of various committees and commissions, etc. As a part of research, the researcher can conduct interviews with the authors keeping in mind the selected theoretical framework. The primary sources are studied closely by the researcher. They are discussed and textual analysis is done. The hypotheses are proved or disproved with the support of the secondary sources. In language research, surveys are conducted through questionnaires and by interviewing people personally. The language behavior of the target group of the research is observed closely and recorded systematically by the researcher and it is discussed, analyzed, compared and conclusions are drawn.

1.2.6 Paradigms of Research:

The questions like what should be the areas to conduct research, what should be valued and counted as knowledge needs to be addressed at the beginning of the research process. Research paradigms explain how is reality perceived, what is valued in research and what knowledge is. It guides the researcher to plan the research question, aims and objectives of the research, instruments or measurements to be used, and methods of analysis for the research. Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines paradigm as “a philosophical and theoretical framework of a scientific school or discipline within which theories, laws, and generalizations and the experiments performed in support of them are formulated.” A research paradigm includes ideas, beliefs, and biases that guide the research

process. It determines the manner in which the research will be conducted. Some of the common research paradigms can be identified as below.

i. Positivism or Quantitative Paradigm: This paradigm believes that there is a single reality and it can be objectively observed and quantified. The researchers use the statistical and quantitative method in their studies in this paradigm. Quantitative relationships between variables are examined. Knowledge is generated through empirical observation, measurement and logical reasoning. The paradigm believes that research should be value-free. This paradigm is used frequently by physical scientists.

ii. Post-positivism Paradigm: This paradigm is related to Positivism. However, it says that in research, complete objectivity is unattainable. The research outcomes can never be totally objective. The research cannot be entirely free from value judgements. Therefore, it insists that efforts must be taken to minimize the researcher's influence and biases which cannot be completely removed from the research results.

iii. Constructivism Paradigm: This paradigm believes that reality is subjective, so there are numerous realities. It says that people construct their own understanding of the world through experiencing and reflecting on the experiences. Reality is constructed in the minds of the individual people through social interactions. Constructivism studies how reality in the minds of the people is influenced by social, cultural and historical contexts. Qualitative techniques like interviews and case studies are used to carry out research under this paradigm. The paradigm accepts the value-laden nature of research. It believes in contributing positively towards social change.

iv. Interpretivism or Qualitative Paradigm: Like Constructivism, this paradigm also believes that reality is subjective and is constructed in the minds of the individual people. Therefore, it says that there are multiple realities. It argues that individuals are experts in interpreting and understanding their own experiences. It says that knowledge can be created only by interpreting the meanings that people put on behaviors and events. Therefore, the researcher should try to get a deep and empathetic understanding of the individuals' experiences and perspectives. This paradigm is based on qualitative studies and is used in social sciences.

v. Pragmatism Paradigm: This paradigm understands that reality is constantly changing and is seen differently by different people. It does not commit to a single reality or method of enquiry. Therefore, the pragmatists think that both the qualitative and quantitative methods should be used in research. It recommends the blend of both the positivist and interpretivist or the subjective and objective perspectives in research. It values both the objective evidence as well as the participants' values and perspectives in understanding the reality.

vi. Critical Realism Paradigm: This paradigm accepts the existence of objective reality but believes that there are different levels of reality and all of them cannot be observed. It seeks to understand the world as it is

and attempts to make it better. It insists that the researchers should critically reflect on and disclose their values and its impact on their research.

1.3 RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Why do we need to do research at all? Research and development contribute significantly to the advancement of knowledge in various fields. It brings unknown things to the knowledge of the public and gives birth to new theories and concepts related to the fields. In short, it broadens the horizons of human knowledge and creates scope for further research. It makes an addition into established knowledge. Research helps make human life better and better. As we have seen in the introduction of this chapter, research satisfies human curiosity and the instinct of experimentation. Research and development create new knowledge to develop new products, services or processes. It improves the existing techniques. In the corporate sector, companies manufacture different goods and products have their Research and Development (R & D) departments. They study the market and the demands of the consumers and develop the products and services as per the requirements of the buyers.

Research and development in physical and life sciences has made us understand the facts and truths about the world around us. It is because of the research that we have come to know the earth is not flat but spherical. The sun does not rotate around the earth but vice versa. It made us aware that the earthquake does not occur due to the shaky movements of the snake called Sheshnag on whose head the earth is situated as per traditional Hindu belief, but due to the movement of the tectonic plates of the earth when they release the stored energy. Research attempts to solve the challenges posed by nature. It tries to minimize the losses caused by the natural disasters. The weather forecast technology informs people about possible natural disasters well in advance because of which precautionary actions are taken and human loss is prevented. Research in medical sciences have found remedies on once incurable diseases. The research on Corona has invented vaccines to stop the spread of the infectious disease. This is how research has not only made human life more enjoyable and comfortable, but healthier and longer also.

Research and development in social sciences deals with human activities, human behavior and its interactions with the environment. It brings out the facts how social institutions like family, marriage, religion, education, government, economy, law, etc. function and how they can be improved for the betterment of the society. It makes us understand the social reality. This research deals with serious social issues like poverty, unemployment, economic inequality, social and economic injustice, communal disturbances, etc. and tries to find solutions to them. It helps in eradicating the evil practices present in the society. For instance, the research on child marriages and female feticide opens our eyes to the seriousness of the problems. It identifies the causes of the social evils and suggests remedial actions. The outcome of research makes the government to make stringent laws to stop the bad practices. Research in history sometimes brings out

untold history. It exposes the false history that is written by the powerful and dominant class. Research in sociology based on gender, caste and racial issues has brought out the hierarchical structure of the Indian social system. It has sensitized people to the exploitative and inhuman discriminatory practices present in the society for generations. Research and development in psychology has made us understand human nature and psyche in a much better way to understand human behavior and social relations. Research in social sciences predicts the future advancement of society. It can help in planning the welfare schemes and programs for the people. This underlines the significance of research in social sciences. Research in political science and public administration helps the government to make better policies for public welfare and implement them.

The invention of television, radio, computers including other home appliances and all kinds of machines used in factories and industries and vehicles like two-wheelers, cars, bullet trains, etc. are the outcomes of research and development in science and technology. The modern-day gadgets like smartphones, smart watches, laptops, tablets, and computers are the fruits of the hard work and research contribution of the generations of the scientists. This is how research and development has helped to make human life easy and luxurious. However, it does not mean that the research and inventions have solved all the problems in human life. In fact, the progress in the field of science and technology has posed other serious challenges. These challenges also can be solved only through research.

Research in language and literature not only provides higher degrees to the researchers but it enriches them linguistically and intellectually. Research in language enhances language skills like listening, speaking, reading and writing of a researcher making him/her an effective communicator. The researcher studies various traits of the language under research. It improves his/her syntactic and semantic understanding of the language. He/she not only learns the grammatical rules of the language but his/her vocabulary also improves. The researcher understands the importance of the selection of appropriate words in writing as well as speech while communicating with others. It makes the researcher aware of various registers of language i.e. levels of formality used in different social contexts. He/she understands how the language should be used in different situations in written as well as oral form.

Language research develops the ability of critical thinking and expressing ideas effectively. The researcher learns to make powerful arguments logically and convincingly with supporting evidences. In the research in language, comparative study brings out the differences between the varieties of a language or different dialects of the same language. It also familiarizes the researcher with the origin of languages and dialects. The researcher learns how the languages and dialects change and evolve with time with reference to sociological and geographical contexts.

Language research in pedagogy brings out the effective ways and methods of language learning and teaching. The researcher looks for learner-friendly techniques and tools of language learning. Specially, if it is a foreign or second or third language for the learners, the innovative methods and strategies achieved through research can help in the acquisition of the language. For instance, it has been tested and proved by research that the effective use of language labs in language learning can help in the enhancement of language skills. Research can be conducted on the strategies of developing each of the language skills. Thus, research in language, studies language comprehensively.

Research in Literature studies literary texts by analyzing the thematic elements as well as applying various literary theories. It increases the understanding of the researcher about the literary and cultural conventions, folktales and myths reflected in literature. It also studies the texts from a linguistic point of view by performing stylistic analysis. It enhances the ability of critical thinking and interpretational skills of the researcher. The critical attitude of examining a text from different perspectives is developed in the researcher. It also makes him/her respect the views of the other researchers who bring out the other aspects of the literary works.

The comparative research of literary works makes the researcher understand literatures of various linguistic, cultural and historical backgrounds by examining the similarities and dissimilarities in them. It familiarizes him/her with other cultures. The comparative study also makes the researcher refer to other cultural forms like films, music, dramas and other media. He/she has to take the references from the field of philosophy, history, politics, sociology, etc. It develops in the researcher the ability of appreciation for literature across the world.

The research in literature sensitizes the researcher towards human issues. The biographical approach of research brings together the experiences of the fictional world and the real world and inspires the researcher to understand human nature in a better way. It teaches him/her lessons for life and makes him/her ready to face the challenges in life. In short, it makes him/her develop and grow intellectually.

1.4 RESEARCH AND GLOBAL COMPETITION

In today's globalized world, knowledge has become the foundation of economic, social and political power. Therefore, knowledge creation has become very important. The higher education and research institutes which include research-intensive universities and colleges across the world have been increasingly giving importance to research in various fields. They have been playing a key role in the creation of knowledge, inculcation of research culture and educating people. These institutes not only offer research degrees like M.Phil. and Ph.D. to the research scholars but also conduct various major and minor research projects. The genuine research scholars become a part of the research culture, grow intellectually and contribute significantly to the field of knowledge.

Research brings international recognition and prestige to the scholar or the team of the scholars, the research institute and the country to which the researcher belongs. Earlier, there was a competition amongst research institutes nationally but today many of them compete internationally. The significant global research contributions help the institutes achieve international acknowledgement. The global competitive spirit provides opportunities to the research scholars to work on international developmental challenges. Therefore, many global research institutes organize research project competitions in various fields for the young research aspirants to build their research interests and motivate them to think creatively for innovative ideas.

Research contribution of a country to the world of knowledge is measured by how many patents and copyrights the country has achieved in a year and what milestones the country has achieved in various fields. For instance, there is an intense competition amongst the countries to conduct research in space science. Research grants of crores of rupees are made available for research in developed countries. Even the developing countries provide research grants to the research scholars. In India, UGC has been providing Fellowships for M.Phil. and Ph.D. scholars as well as for undertaking various research projects. This reveals the importance of research in today's time.

1.5 LET'S SUM UP

Research is an outcome of the human instinct of experimentation and human needs. It is a systematic and scientific study that has made huge additions to the various fields of knowledge like physical and social sciences, technology, education, language, literature, etc. To conduct research, the researcher has to identify a problem, collect information, process and analyze it to solve a problem. He/she has to conduct research by following the research process. The researcher formulates a research problem, frames the hypotheses, fixes objectives, reviews literature from the field, applies appropriate methodology, points out the findings and draws conclusions. Finally, he/she prepares the bibliography of the literatures used in the research work. The research process is guided by research paradigms. Research paradigms determine the manner of conducting the research. It determines the framework of research and delimits the research areas. They help to choose qualitative and quantitative techniques to conduct research.

There is a great advancement in knowledge because of research. Research has revolutionized human life by making it better than the life of the early human beings. The research develops critical thinking and objective attitude of the researcher. The scientific study of language and literature not only takes us to the origin of the languages across the world but widens the worldview of the researcher. It enriches the researcher linguistically and intellectually and makes him/her an effective communicator. Research in pedagogy helpsteachers and educators to bring out innovative student-friendly methods of teaching and learning. Research in literature sensitizes the researchers towards human issues and

develops the ability to appreciate the cultures across the world. Finally, we can say that research helps in the progress of human life by making it happier and healthier.

1.6 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Long answer questions:

1. How has research changed modern human life from the life of the early human beings?
2. What is research?
3. How is research carried out in natural and social sciences?
4. What are the areas that can be researched in language and literature?
5. State in detail the process of research in language and literature.
6. What are the various paradigms of research?
7. How does research help in the development of human being?
8. Does research in language and literature help the researcher grow linguistically and intellectually? How?

Short answer questions:

1. Differentiate between invention and discovery.
2. What are the qualities of a genuine researcher?
3. How is research conducted in language?
4. How is research conducted in literature?

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LITERARY RESEARCH AND LANGUAGE RESEARCH

Unit Structure:

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Literary Research: An Overview
- 2.2 Literary Research: Definition and Characteristics
- 2.3 Literary Research: Its Importance
- 2.4 Components and Essentials of Literary Research
- 2.5 Types of Research Methods Used in Literary Research
- 2.6 Literary Research: Process
- 2.7 Language Research: An Overview
- 2.8 Major Areas of Language Research
- 2.9 Research Methods Used in Language Research
- 2.10 Important Questions
- 2.11 References

2.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit aims to impart the learners with the basic techniques and methods of literary research and language research. Another objective is to familiarize the students with characteristics, types and processes of literary and language research.

2.1 LITERARY RESEARCH: AN OVERVIEW

When one thinks about research, the immediate picture that comes to mind is Scientists, Lab Coats and experiments conducted with an aim to find something new. While this is true of science and related fields, do we ever pause to think whether such studies (experiments) can be conducted for the ever-evolving subject of literature? The field of literary research is a dynamic one and at a very basic level involves understanding historical context in which the work was created, understanding the text and finally critical analysis to develop an argument which will eventually be of help in writing a research paper. At the university level, students are often requested to conduct literary research. This course is intended to provide guidance to beginners and postgraduate students for literary research and to address existing and potential research queries.

2.2 LITERARY RESEARCH: DEFINITION

Some of the essential skills for a literary researcher include an understanding of the text, knowledge about historical context and analytical prowess which will enable him to reach a new '*eureka*' moment whilst analyzing the text.

Literary research has evolved as a formal discipline as it involves a 'Distinct Methodology'; 'Specialized knowledge about historical context' and 'Critical analysis' and hence it becomes imperative to formally define it.

As one deep-dives into the subject, we realize that while there is no specific definition on the topic there are a number of perspectives, some authors look at literary research with a view to analyze discourse surrounding the text (Michael Foucault), while others like to challenge the fixed meanings and controversies surrounding the interpretation of text (Jacques Derrida) and yet there are others who emphasize the importance of semiotics in literary research (Roland Barthes).

Thus, the essence of Literary Research can be summarized as under:

Literary research is a systematic investigation of literary texts and their contexts to uncover new insights, interpretations, or understandings. It involves a thorough study of the literary work exploring everything from the life and times of the author to the cultural, historical and geopolitical influences which form the core of the work under scrutiny.

One can analyze the above definition:

- 1. Literary research is a systematic investigation of literary texts and their contexts:** Literary research through close reading involves analyzing the text itself for its language, structure and underlying meaning.
- 2. ... to uncover new insights, interpretations, or understandings:** Literary research as a discipline is undertaken to uncover new insights, interpretations and understandings. It is intended to provide new, different perspectives to the existing works so as to enable a willing student and researcher to arrive at his one unique perspective. Literary research **demands critical thinking** to arrive at new perspectives and insights.
- 3. It involves a thorough study of the literary work:** Literary research involves a thorough study of literary work. This implies that the researcher will have to engage deeply with the literary work going beyond superficial reading to delve into intricacies. He will have to focus on language, structure, themes, characters and will have to be aware of the context in which the text is written.

4. **...exploring everything from the life and times of the author to the cultural, historical and geopolitical influences which form the core of the work under scrutiny:** Literary research cannot be undertaken in isolation and involves interdisciplinary studies incorporating historical, cultural and geopolitical elements. It is only then that the research can be well rounded and covering all aspects of the text under scrutiny.
5. **Emphasis on Context:** Thus, literary research involves giving due consideration to the historical, social, cultural, and political contexts in which the literary work was created and how these contexts shaped author's perspectives.
6. **Communication and Argumentation:** Research will be effective only when it clearly and effectively communicates the research findings based on well -supported arguments based on available evidence.
7. **Ongoing dialogue and debate:** Finally, we have to recognize that research cannot be conducted in silos, on the contrary it thrives on diverse perspectives and interpretations which can only be understood through scholarly debates and discussions about the meaning and significance of literary works.

To sum up, characteristics of literary research are as under:

- Close reading and Textual analysis
- Interdisciplinary approach
- Critical Thinking and Interpretation
- Emphasis on Context
- Communication and Argumentation
- Ongoing dialogue and debate.

2.3 LITERARY RESEARCH: ITS IMPORTANCE

As a subject, literary research is not just about analyzing texts; it's about unlocking their deeper meanings, expanding our understanding of the human experience, and fostering a lifelong appreciation for the power of literature.

The importance of Literary research as a discipline can be understood through the points detailed below:

1. **Enhances Understanding:** Literary research by its very nature allows for a more nuanced and insightful reading of literary works. Close reading and textual analysis help in understanding the historical, social and cultural contexts in which the work was created which in turn leads to richer appreciation for its significance

2. **Fosters Critical Thinking:** As explained earlier Literary research demands critical thinking. It encourages the development of well supported arguments and interpretations based on the text being researched. It also leads us to question existing interpretations and form our own conclusions about works. While it is not explicitly intended, literary research can shed light on the author's intentions and the influences which shape their writings.
3. **Broadens Perspectives:** Literary research draws from interdisciplinary approach and takes into account insights from other fields such as history, philosophy, psychology and sociology which broadens our literary perspective and encourages scholarly dialogue.
4. **Preservation and Promotion of Literature:** Literary research helps to identify and preserve important literary works for future generations. The debates and discussions which revolve around various literary works help contribute to its ongoing relevance and appreciation.
5. **Personal Growth:** Studying literature through lens of literary research enhances our empathy, understanding of human behavior and appreciation for diverse perspectives. It improves our ability to communicate complex ideas effectively through writing and presentation.

To sum up, importance of Literary research is as under:

- Enhances understanding
- Fosters critical thinking
- Broadens perspectives
- Preservation and promotion of literature
- Personal Growth
- Ongoing dialogue and debate.

2.4 COMPONENTS AND ESSENTIALS OF LITERARY RESEARCH

Literary Research involves:

1. **Information Acquisition:** This involves an investigation into the themes, style, contexts, setting, era, characters etc of a literary text. This is also about gathering the primary sources which are mostly in the forms of poems, plays, novels, biographies, essays and travel narratives. Accessing the secondary sources which includes research articles, critical studies, interviews of authors and literary theories is another point in data collection.

2. **Analysis of the Information:** This is about employing an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary approach (psychoanalytical, eco-critical, new historicism), to analyze information, followed by rigorous revision and editing to derive meaningful conclusions.
3. **Presentation of the Information:** This is largely about synthesizing information from diverse sources into a literary research essay that articulates a well-defined claim about a literary work, and ultimately constructing a persuasive argument with support of evidences collected during research.
4. As discussed earlier, literary research deals with study and analysis of literary texts to arrive at novel interpretations and research outcomes. Analysis forms an important component of literary research, and like any research field, analysis is carried out using theories.
5. **Theory:** It is a notion about literature in general, i.e., understanding what things are and why they are as they are, how and why they function.

Literary researchers employ theories to shape their perceptions on literary works. Each theory is comparable to a distinct "lens" through which one observes a literary work, and shifting lenses results in quite diverse perspectives on the same piece.

As per the research paper on “Literary Criticism and Contemporary Critical Theories” by Saadatullah Safi and Saeedullah Rahmatzai, “Literary theory refers to any principles derived from internal analysis of literary texts or from knowledge external to the text that can be applied in multiple interpretive situations” they further state that “... a literary theory, is a set of rules or principles used to appraise works of literature and on its own, tries to explain the assumptions and values upon which various forms of literary criticism rest” (Safi and Rahmatzai 2797).

Prominent literary theories construct approaches such as Cultural studies, Ecological studies, Feminist studies, Marxist studies Psychological studies, Queer studies, New Historicism, Post-colonialism, and the list goes on.

6. **Methodology:** It is the 'how-to' guide for research within a specific theory. Methodology tells researchers what to believe about the world and how to go about studying it. For example, a psychological study of a literary work would involve unearthing aspects which are not directly conveyed to the reader but indirectly it is presented before the reader through imagery, symbolism, metaphor. Similarly, Marxist literary study examines literature through methodologies that foreground the role of material forces, such as labor, ownership, and technology. They emphasize how these forces shape both the author's life and work, rejecting the notion of the author as an isolated genius."

7. **Method:** A research method comprises the entire set of techniques, strategies, and tools that a researcher utilizes to conduct their study, designing the experiment to collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data to arrive at a solution or conclusion. Survey, interview, accessing archives, performing close readings, or reviewing existing scholarship are various research methods.

2.5 TYPES OF RESEARCH METHODS IN LITERARY RESEARCH

Types of research methods often used in literary research are:

- **Archival Research:** Archival research often necessitates visits to special collections housing original documents like diaries, letters, and photographs. These unpublished materials provide invaluable insights into an author's life, the creative process, and the socio-historical context of their work. For example, national libraries have collection of such document like the papers of James Baldwin are kept in New York Public Library. This method is mostly used by advanced researchers.
- **Discourse Analysis Methods:** Discourse analysis is a qualitative research method that investigates how language is used to construct and shape social reality. It goes beyond merely examining words and investigates how language is utilized in specific circumstances to transmit meaning, build power dynamics, and form social identities.

Key Concepts of Discourse Analysis and Applications:

Language in Use: Discourse analysis focuses on how language functions in real-world situations, considering the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which it is used.

Example: Analysis of political speeches to understand how politicians use language to persuade voters and construct their own image.

Meaning-Making: It explores how language is used to create and share meaning, both for individuals and within social groups.

Example: Probing how online communities use specific jargon and memes to create a sense of shared identity and belonging.

Power Relations: Discourse analysis investigates how language is used to exert power, establish dominance, or challenge existing power structures.

Example: Analyzing how language is used in job interviews to assess candidates and reinforce hierarchical structures.

Social Identities: It explores how language contributes to the construction and performance of social identities, such as gender, race, sexuality, ethnicity, class, and nationality.

Example: Analyzing how language is used in advertising to target specific demographics and reinforce gender stereotypes.

- **Qualitative Research Methods:** Qualitative research investigates and delivers greater insights into real-world challenges. It seeks to understand the "why" and "how" of social phenomena rather than merely measuring them. It involves collecting descriptive data (non-numerical) such as interview transcripts, field notes, and observational records. It is flexible because research methods can be refined and adjusted as the research progresses. While striving for objectivity, qualitative research acknowledges the subjective nature of human experience and the researcher's own interpretations. The subjective element is an unavoidable aspect of literary research, owing to its inherent focus on the exploration of psychological, emotional, and attitudinal dimensions of characters, writers, and works

The qualitative nature of literary research is intrinsic to its methodology. It necessitates an in-depth exploration of the distinctive qualities and features that characterize the research approach, the selected authors and literary texts, the identified sources, the historical context, and the specific literary genres under consideration.

- **Theoretical Research:** This method involves developing a new literary theory or modifying an existing one. For instance, psychoanalytical theory Sigmund Freud when first used in literary analysis, it was a pathbreaking theory. However, this theory was further modified by the Jungian and Lacanian theories wherein the research itself became an attempt to challenge and extend the available theoretical paradigms.
- **Interdisciplinary Research:** In recent years, Literary Research has taken an Interdisciplinary Turn.' Consequently, it is not uncommon to see the tenets and tools of other disciplines such as psychology, history, political science, environmental studies, sports studies, food studies, queer studies, culture studies, trauma studies, zoocriticism, phytocriticism, etc, impacting literary analysis. Such interdisciplinary initiatives are often considered as a part of 'New Humanities' under which Literary Research has seen new meanings to famous literary texts.

2.6 PROCESS OF LITERARY RESEARCH

- **Formulating Research Question:** First step is to know one's research question. It is the central question that the research will try to answer. For that one needs to start with a broad topic for example a literary work of one's choice or an author or a literary movement that triggers one's interest. Then one narrows down on the topic and become more specific in finding our research question. For example, instead of considering Shakespeare's tragedies in general, one can focus on theme of ambition and guilt explored in his tragedies. One should keep in mind that research question is specific, and answers one is seeking to find is possible through research and analysis and the results add

something new to the current knowledge and bring forth new inquiries. For instance, one can consider the following research questions – How does the environment shape the behaviour of Thomas Hardy's characters? How can one consider Shakespeare's plays and sonnets as significant documents of Elizabethan Botany?

- **Preliminary Research:** One should start with background reading i.e., to make oneself familiar with the topic by exploring some introductory text related to the topic, reading biography of the author or literary criticism, then one can identify authors who have already worked on the topic and try to interpret their work. Further one can also look for articles available on academic databases such as JSTOR, Google Scholar. This stage would also entail a study of existing body of knowledge in the selected area of research.
- **Collecting and Examining Information:** Data collection in literary research involves accessing the literary texts which form the primary sources and the critical studies which form the secondary sources. This is often followed by a close reading of Primary sources like original literary text itself and authorial sources (collected through archival research) like letters, diaries, manuscripts, interviews as well as secondary sources like critical essays and articles that analyze the literary text of one's choice.
- **Developing a Thesis:** Thesis is the core idea behind one's argument about the chosen topic; it explores what a researcher claims about the topic and how he will explain, explore or prove his claim. Hence it gives a structure to the research. After developing the thesis, one should organize the collected data and start analyzing it critically and then interpreting it.
- **Writing a Research Paper/ Report/ Dissertation:** Writing a research paper generally includes introduction, literature review (overview of previously published works), analysis, conclusion, citing sources, plagiarism checking, revising and editing.
- **Presenting and publishing research paper:** One can present his/her paper in conferences and can publish them in peer reviewed journal like and be ready for feedbacks. In case of dissertation, the document/thesis can be printed and sent for evaluation.

2.7 LANGUAGE RESEARCH: AN OVERVIEW:

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (1989) defines Language as a, 'system of sounds, words, patterns, etc., used by humans to communicate thoughts and feelings. Language research is broad area of investigation which aims at studying human language and its various aspects scientifically. It includes various dimensions and subfields, all with the common objective of explaining how language operates, how it is acquired, and the way it influences how people think and behave. When

one talks about studying English language in particular there are various areas to be examined:

- How English developed throughout the years as a first, second or foreign language.
- An analysis of standard form English, including its phonology, morphology, syntax, and grammar
- The multifaceted uses of English across various domains, including media, literature, education, administration, and its role as a lingua franca or contact language.
- Approaches to English language teaching and learning.
- Exploring how English has shaped other languages and how, in turn, other languages have contributed to the evolution of English.
- Position of English as a language being used in the administrative work(policies) of a country.

2.8 MAJOR AREAS OF LANGUAGE RESEARCH:

Linguistics: Linguistics is the academic discipline that employs scientific methods to examine language. It is the core discipline which encompasses many other disciplines within its framework. *Ferdinand de Saussure* in his book *Course in General Linguistics*, says that scope of linguistics should include reconstruction of the history of all observable languages by tracing the evolution of language families and attempting to identify their common ancestral languages. Also, he maintains that Linguists should strive to identify the universal forces that shape all languages and deduce general laws that can explain all specific historical linguistic phenomena. Further he says Linguistics continuously intersects with other disciplines like ethnography, anthropology, sociology, psychology, historians, and all subjects that gives importance to the text, as there is continuous exchange of data. Simply put, linguistics is the descriptive, historical, comparative, and explicit study of the origin, organization, nature, and evolution of language. It also establishes general principles for language.

Branches of Linguistics

- **Phonology:** Phonology is the grammar of sounds or branch of Linguistics which studies sounds. Phonology is about figuring out how sounds interact together to form meaningful words and how those sounds are structured inside a specific language. Phonemes are the fundamental units of sound that distinguish one word from another in a given language. Hence, one can say, phonemes are studied under phonology. The principles of phonology have significant implications for speech pathology and technological innovations such as speech recognition. By applying these principles, systems can be developed to translate spoken language into text,

mirroring the human brain's processing of sounds. A prominent example of this is the intelligent system, 'Alexa'.

- **Morphology:** It is the study of word formation. Smaller units that form a word are **morphemes – the smallest meaningful units within a language**; they are larger than a syllable (cluster of sound having a vowel) but smaller than a word. Hence, Morphology is branch of Linguistics that studies morphemes. It seeks to explain how words are formed in a specific language, correct form of word according to its given location in a sentence, and what determines the use of that correct form.
- **Syntax:** The study of sentence structure. In any language it is the word order that gives meaning to the sentence; hence, we can say syntax studies the systematic arrangement of words in a sentence, phrases and, clauses. Words are the smallest unit of syntax and there are eight categories of words in parts of speech-noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, preposition, adverb, interjection and conjunction.
- **Semantics:** Semantics is the scientific study of meaning in languages. This includes the meanings expressed by individual words, phrases, and complete sentences. Semantics seeks to grasp the basic laws of meaning by carefully investigating how words and phrases are used in certain settings. In essence, Semantics investigates how language organize and communicate meaning.
- **Pragmatics:** It is the study of how language is used in a context - social, cultural, situational; as context contributes to the meaning. It helps understand how language is used to reach communicative goals.
- **Psycholinguistics:** This field studies intricate relationship between mind and language. It explores cognitive process involved in language acquisition, its use, language comprehension and language production. Moreover, psycholinguists utilize their understanding of the human mind to investigate enduring questions about the nature of language. These inquiries encompass the evolutionary origins of language, its exclusivity to humans, the precise relationship between language and thought, and the extent to which language functions independently of general cognitive processes or shares commonalities with them.
- **Sociolinguistics:** This area investigates the relationship between language and society, examining how language varies across social groups, how it reflects social identities, and how it shapes social interactions. Language cannot exist or evolve independently of society. Just as lyrics are integral to music, language is inextricably linked to society. Their relationship is characterized by mutual interdependence. Ignoring the influence of language on society or vice versa provides an incomplete understanding of their intricate connection. The primary focus of sociolinguistics is to meticulously examine this complex interplay between language and society. It aims at the answers for the following questions:

1. To what extent language is static or is it subject to change?
 2. how social factors contribute to the diversity observed in language?
 3. What are the distinguishing characteristics of standard languages in comparison to dialects?
 4. What is the significance of analyzing each social context independently in the study of language?
 5. Does the concept of a completely homogeneous society exist in reality, or is linguistic and social diversity inherent to human societies?
 6. Can language serve as a means of exerting power and potentially contributing to social inequities across various domains, including education, religion, and administration?
 7. Does language possess the capacity to instigate and drive social transformation?
- **Computational Linguistics:** This is an interdisciplinary field which uses computational methods to analyze and process human language. It incorporates Linguistics, Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence to comprehend human language with help of computers. Its focus area is NLP (Natural Language Processing), machine translation of text, speech recognition and its conversion into text, analysis of emotions within the text, text summarization and chatbots. It is very useful in social media analysis, search engines, medical tests, customer service.
 - **Applied Linguistics:** This broad area of study focuses on practical applications of language research, such as language teaching, language assessment, and language policy. It draws upon various branches of Linguistics, such as Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics, Pragmatics, and Sociolinguistics.

2.9 RESEARCH METHODS USED IN LANGUAGE RESEARCH

Typically, 'methods' refer to the instruments and techniques utilized for data collection and analysis. This may be obtained by experiments, surveys, and/or statistical tests. In language research one generally uses the following methods:

- **Library Research Method (LRM):** The term 'library research method' (LRM) has a longstanding presence in research. George (2008) characterizes LRM as a research method that employs computer-assisted searches or the examination of physical books to acquire knowledge and information relevant to the research question. Research that relies on sources such as books, manuscripts, journals, dictionaries, reports, newspapers, and audiovisual materials falls within this category. It is crucial to note that LRM primarily pertains to data collection rather

than data analysis. The collected textual data can subsequently be analyzed using theories within the field of Linguistics like Discourse Analysis Method and Conversation Analysis Method.

Discourse Analysis (DA) Method: This method analyzes language patterns in written or spoken texts to uncover underlying ideologies and power dynamics within society.

Conversation Analysis (CA) Method: According to Jack Sidnell, “Conversation analysis is an approach to the study of social interaction and talk-in-interaction that, although rooted in the sociological study of everyday life, has exerted significant influence across the humanities and social sciences including linguistics”

- **Empirical Research Method (ERM):** The term 'empirical' refers to information obtained via observation (Direct or Indirect) and experience. “Two major approaches of ERM are deductive and inductive. According to Wilson (2010) a deductive approach is concerned with “developing a hypothesis based on existing theory, and then designing a research strategy to test the hypothesis” (7). It follows the system of reasoning from specific to general. Goddard and Melville (2004) state that the inductive approach commences with observations, and theories are formulated towards the conclusion of the research process as a result of these observations. This approach allows researchers to adjust the direction of their study as the research progresses. As Empirical evidence can be analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively, it brings before us **two major methods in language research -qualitative and quantitative method.**

Qualitative Research employs an inductive approach, aiming to derive general principles and theories from in-depth investigations or documentation. While not reliant on statistical tools, it may utilize simple tabulation and calculation for data analysis. This research focuses on qualitative data, which is non-numerical in nature. An example of such data is an interview transcript.

Quantitative research uses statistical tools to assess data and draw conclusions about the research question. These methods include Chi-Square, T-tests, correlation and regression analyses, and variance analysis.

Note: What is a variable? In research, a variable represents any 'thing, person, place, object, or phenomenon' that the researcher seeks to investigate. It signifies an element that is susceptible to change or capable of inducing change. two primary categories of variable are: dependent and independent variables. An independent variable remains unaffected but may influence observable changes in other variables, whereas a dependent variable undergoes changes as a result of the influence of independent variables.

Types of Quantitative Method Used in Language Research

Literary Research and
Language Research

How does quantitative analysis contribute to language research? Answer is by employing data-driven methods, we can identify, describe, and classify linguistic features through the use of various statistical tools. This approach facilitates the validation of research hypotheses. Some of the types of research that falls under this category are:

1. Experimental Research: Within language studies, experimental research primarily investigates language learning and teaching. By manipulating learning environments, this approach aims to understand differences between and within groups of learners. Experimental research necessitates rigorous control over conditions to minimize error and enhance the validity of interpretations. Example of Experimental Research in Language Studies:

Research Question: Does explicit grammar instruction lead to significantly higher accuracy in English writing compared to implicit instruction among high school students?

Experimental Design:

Participants: A large group of high school students (e.g., 100 students) with similar English proficiency levels.

Random Assignment: Randomly divide the students into two groups:

Experimental Group: Receives explicit grammar instruction (e.g., clear explanations of grammatical rules, focused exercises).

Control Group: Receives implicit grammar instruction (e.g., exposure to authentic language, communicative activities).

Intervention: Both groups receive the same amount of English instruction over a set period (e.g., 10 weeks).

Pre-test: Administer a standardized writing test to both groups before the intervention begins to measure their initial writing proficiency.

Post-test: Administer the same standardized writing test to both groups after the intervention period.

Data Analysis: Compare the pre-test and post-test scores of both groups using statistical tests (e.g., t-test) to determine if there is a significant difference in writing accuracy between the two groups.

Expected Outcomes:

If explicit grammar instruction is more effective, the experimental group should show significantly higher improvement in writing accuracy compared to the control group.

If there is no significant difference, it would suggest that implicit instruction may be equally effective or even more effective than explicit instruction for these particular learners.

Key Characteristics of this Example:

Controlled Environment: The researcher manipulates the independent variable (type of instruction) and attempts to control other factors (e.g., teacher experience, learning materials) that could influence the outcome.

Random Assignment: This helps to ensure that the two groups are comparable in terms of their initial language proficiency and other relevant characteristics.

Data-Driven Analysis: Statistical analysis is used to objectively determine the significance of the observed differences between the groups.

This example demonstrates how experimental research can be used to investigate the effectiveness of different teaching methods in language learning. By carefully controlling the conditions and analyzing the data, researchers can gain valuable insights into the factors that contribute to successful language acquisition.

2. Survey method: Survey research is a method for gathering information by asking a selected group of individuals questions. The most common tool for this is a questionnaire. This method can be used to collect factual information, as well as data on behaviors, attitudes, and opinions. Surveys are particularly useful for understanding how a specific group (such as a learner community or speech community) feels about particular issues. They effectively reveal trends, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes within a target group. A crucial concept in survey research is sampling. Sampling involves selecting a representative subset of a population to study, allowing researchers to draw inferences about the entire population.

Example:

Research Question: "What are the attitudes of university students towards the use of technology in English language classrooms?"

Methodology:

- **Target Population:** All undergraduate students enrolled in English courses at a specific university.
- **Sampling:** A representative sample of 200 students is selected using a random sampling method.
- **Survey Instrument:** A structured questionnaire is designed with a mix of question types: like-

Multiple-choice questions: "How often do you use technology for English language learning outside of class?" (Options: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always)

Likert scale questions: "Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Technology can enhance my English language learning experience." (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree)

Open-ended questions: "What are the biggest challenges you face when using technology for English language learning?"

"What are your suggestions for improving the use of technology in English language classrooms?"

Data Collection: The questionnaire is distributed online through a platform like Google Forms or SurveyMonkey. Students are invited to participate voluntarily and are assured of anonymity.

Data Analysis:

- Data is collected and analyzed using statistical software (e.g., SPSS; R).
- Descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies, percentages, means) are calculated to summarize the data.
- Inferential statistics (e.g., chi-square tests, t-tests) may be used to analyze relationships between variables (e.g., relationship between student attitudes and their use of specific technologies).
- Open-ended responses are analyzed thematically to identify common themes and emerging patterns.

Expected Outcomes: The survey will provide insights into students' attitudes towards technology-enhanced language learning. It will identify the most commonly used and preferred technologies among students. It will reveal the perceived benefits and challenges of using technology for English language learning. The findings can inform the development and implementation of more effective and engaging technology-integrated language teaching practices.

- 3. Longitudinal Study:** According to the *Encyclopedia of Research Design*, Longitudinal Research method can be defined as "one that measures the characteristics of the same individuals on at least two, but ideally more, occasions over time. Its purpose is to address directly the study of individual change and variation". In language studies, longitudinal research tracks the evolution of specific linguistic features or usage patterns within a relatively stable speech community over time. This method involves re-examining the same speech community that was the subject of prior research, with a deliberate effort to replicate the sampling and data collection methods used in the initial study.

Types of Qualitative Method Used in Language Research:

1. **Case study:** Case study, a prominent qualitative research method within language studies, particularly in applied linguistics, focuses on in-depth investigations of specific individuals or small groups. These cases may include teachers, learners, speakers, writers, interlocutors, families, classrooms, work teams, or communities of practice (e.g., nurses, drivers). This method emphasizes intensive study of individual experiences, challenges, developmental stages, and linguistic performance within specific language use contexts. The primary objective is to gain a deep and nuanced understanding of individual experiences, rather than focusing on large samples, hypothesis testing, or quantitative analysis. Consequently, case studies provide rich and detailed contextualized human profiles. Some key areas of case study can be
 - An investigation into the linguistic experiences of students from rural and tribal backgrounds pursuing higher education in urban colleges.
 - Desire to learn and cultural factor in learning English as a second language.
2. **Ethnography:** Ethnography is a qualitative research method that involves collection of data by conducting interviews and direct observations of people (such as language learners, second language speakers, and language teachers) in their natural social settings. The fundamental goal of this method is to get a thorough understanding of how these people behave, interact, and respond in their social environments. Direct observation, participant observation, diary entries, video recordings, and interviews are all possible data gathering approaches in ethnographic research. Ethnographic research can last anywhere from one day to several months, depending on the extent and complexity of the investigation.
3. **Mixed Method Approach:** This method uses both qualitative and quantitative method. According to Tashakkori and Creswell (2007), “Research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study or programme of inquiry” (04). In English Language Teaching (ELT) research, Action Research Method uses mixed method approach. According to the *Glossary of Education Reforms*, “Action Research refers to a wide variety of evaluative, investigative, and analytical research methods designed to diagnose problems or weaknesses-whether organizational, academic, or instrumental- and help educators develop practical solutions to address them quickly and efficiently”. In ELT, teachers use this method in school/college to understand the effectiveness of their teaching methods. For example – a teacher when observes that learners are not showing interest in his class, he can think upon the issue and try to look for reasons that led to such a situation and later after drawing conclusion through observation, reading, discussion with

co-teachers and his own experience, the teacher can proceed with a plan to address the issue. Further, he can document the action taken and preparation done by him and also the results (change in student's behaviour). If results are not up to the mark, then plan can be changed and new plan should be devised. This link will help one understand how two English (as a second/foreign language) teachers helped student improve their speaking skills by initiating games in the schools.

2.10 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the components of Literary Research.
2. Discuss features and techniques of Language Research.
3. Discuss in detail the qualitative methods used in Language Research.
4. What are the quantitative methods used in Language Research? Discuss them in Detail.

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Unit Structure :

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Types of Research
- 3.3 Difference between Research methods and Methodologies
- 3.4 Qualities of a good researcher
- 3.5 Let's sum up
- 3.6 Important Questions
- 3.7 References

3.0 OBJECTIVES

Dear students,

This unit gives you information on types of research, difference between research methods and methodologies and qualities of a good researcher.

Studying this unit will enable you to -

- i. understand the types of literary research
- ii. know the difference between research methods and methodology
- iii. recognize qualities of a good researcher

3.1 INTRODUCTION

With the introduction of New Education Policy 2020, research has gained a place of importance in graduate as well as postgraduate studies. Doing research carefully and responsibly is hard work. It requires clear understanding, meticulous planning and timely execution at every stage. Therefore, it is advised that we comprehend the complex nature of research process and identify its characteristics.

Some significant aspects of research that are discussed for your benefit in this unit include types of literary research, differences between research methods and methodology with respect to researching literature and the qualities of a good researcher. It is believed that clear conceptual understanding of these areas will help produce good quality research. Please note that the discussion presented in this unit is limited in scope

owing to the requirements and nature of the research methodology course. But evolution of various types of research, approaches to it, research methods and methodology needs to be situated in its historical context for better comprehension. If you are interested in knowing why a particular type, approach or development of methodology took place in literary research you should read extensively. The references given below this unit will help you in that endeavor to some extent.

It should be noted that when compared with other disciplines and fields of knowledge such as science or the social sciences, literary research stands out in some aspects. Unlike science or the social sciences, it is equally interested in appreciation of beauty and human values as it is in truth and facts. Similarly, while science may be concerned more with improving the material quality of life, literary research can be said to work on developing perspective towards life. Explaining the types of research, H V Deshpande (2018) elaborates: 'Scientific research develops our civilization, our material life while literary research enriches our perception of nature and of human life.' It engages more with the emotional and cultural world of human beings. The result of literary research is not necessarily reproducible, like those of pure sciences. Literary research requires believable evidence and comprehensive arguments. These main characteristics build a separate and unique identity for literary research. In the light of this difference, let us now attempt to understand the types of literary research.

3.2 TYPES OF RESEARCH

Before we discuss specific types of literary research it is necessary to be aware about two basic aspects of the nature of any research:

- i. Since research implies new contribution to the body of knowledge, it cannot begin from nowhere. It has to have a prior reference which includes not only the previous research attempts in the field but also the evolution of ideology and theory that supports the field.
- ii. Research is done for various purposes and with various methods of data collection, of analysis, and with different theoretical orientation. Therefore, it gets classified into different kinds and receives different names owing to its application, objectives and mode of inquiry.

A word of caution here. The novice reader may get confused to find that different reference books not conforming with similar nomenclature for types of research, or else he/she may be overwhelmed by sheer variety of nomenclature and sometimes the confusion may occur due to swapping places between main and sub types of research. In such a situation, the researcher requires to clearly understand meanings of terms such as method, methodology, approach and theoretical origin. He/she should also consider subject specific requirements (work in laboratory or library), and also possess knowledge of stages of research.

Thus, why and how the research under consideration has been undertaken in the first place plays a greater role in its classification as a particular type. The purposes may be different. For instance, sometimes a research project may either aim at solving a pre-existing problem (e.g. grammatical mistakes made by students while learning English language), or strive for inventing new knowledge in the form of description (e.g. analysis of language used in Shakespearean plays), or attempt to explain some aspect of the human life (e.g. role of literature in bringing out social change).

The manner of collecting data and analysis would render the research different names like case study, bibliographical study, survey, archival work, quantitative or qualitative study etc; while theoretical framework used for analysis would provide the research names from another category, such as Marxist or Feminist study. The factor of data collection time is responsible for some other categories of research, for instance historical, present and futuristic research. Whether the data is qualitative or quantitative in nature, provides us with a different nomenclature namely, qualitative or quantitative research. Quantitative results can be generalised because of larger sample size, and it happens to be a time efficient approach. Qualitative research takes care of detailed information regarding events or feelings etc., and can explain social realities better or address complex issues efficiently. But its results cannot be generalised.

Suppose a research project primarily aims at finding an application or practical usefulness for solving a problem, it would be called applied or action research. For example, a research study is designed to find out ways of assisting school children to learn the English language quickly and effectively, it would be described as applied research and it would apply perspective from within a single discipline. If no such application is kept in mind while designing the research, it would be called as pure/fundamental/basic research as it would be more interested in ideas and concepts and would take a multi-disciplinary approach. For example, the research project attempting to comprehend characteristics of post-colonial writings, would be known as pure research. Talking about the various objectives of research, they form another scheme comprising of observation, exploration, finding co-relation, or giving explanation. Based on these objectives research is categorised as descriptive, exploratory, correlational and explanatory. For instance, finding out the different meanings of colonialism from a body of literature can be presented as an example of exploratory research. Descriptive research explains situations and events in their current status. It uses observation to define attitudes. Correlational research focuses on the relation between two or more variables. It may progress to show strong correlation between factors or may inverse the relation, depending on the situation.

However, these types are neither specific to literary research, nor are they completely mutually exclusive. Different types/names of research can be used together. When a study gets described together as pure, descriptive, qualitative, archival research, it explains its nature, purpose and manner of data collection. This point needs to be explicated specifically to eliminate

possible misunderstanding of using a single term to describe a type of research.

Speaking about literary research, it is classified according to its nature for a long time now. This classification broadly refers to the textual, bibliographical, theoretical and interpretive type of research -

i. Textual research: This type of research studies a text very closely to understand and examine its ideological, cultural assumptions to know how the text makes possible meaning/s. Here, text does not or should not necessarily mean a book, even though in many instances of literary research, it can be a book, a novel, a poem etc. Any object from which we make meaning can ideally be called a text in textual analysis. Textual analysis is interested in revealing how a text is made, circulated, evaluated and received. Texts written by authors and thinkers such as Edward Said, Daniel Defoe, Arundhati Roy can constitute objects of textual research.

ii. Bibliographical research: Bibliography means a list of works on a given subject. This kind of research gathers information from existing literature about material objects, volumes or publications related to a specific topic. It is popularly called as the grammar of literary research. A major purpose of bibliographical research is said to be approaching both literary and printing history through investigation (Thelma Eaton: Bibliographical Research, pp. 42-53, <https://core.ac.uk/search/?q=thelma+Eaton+AND+authors%3A%22Thelma+Eaton%22&page=1>) Suppose some researcher searches for versions of ancient Indian texts in order to establish the authenticity of one of them, it would constitute an example of bibliographic research.

iii. Theoretical research: Theory helps us know the logic, assumptions, explanations, conceptual understanding and structures of the subject chosen for research. Literary theory provides ways of 'reading' texts, of critical thinking and reading of literature. It is like providing a big canvas to situate the research object. Theoretical research helps create theoretical models to gain insights into the topic of research. By theoretical research, the researcher can achieve intellectual history and moral philosophy of the subject as an edge over other kinds of literary research done on the same topic. It is important to remember that the academia acknowledges that theories like Marxism, structuralism, reader reception, psychoanalysis, feminism, phenomenology, critical race theory etc., shape and influence the study of literature, as well as its practice. An inquiry, for instance into S T Coleridge's formulation of theory of imagination could constitute an example of theoretical research in literature.

iv. Interpretive research: Also called qualitative research, this kind of research assumes that social reality is shaped by human experiences and social contexts and therefore renders importance to meaning or sense making processes. It doubts objective and theory ridden research. Interpretive methods are used for theory building. In literary field, an author or a particular text may be studied in this manner to ascertain the validity of some important claim made about it. Shakespeare's proposition

that there is method in madness in case of Hamlet can offer itself as a good example to this kind of research.

Today, these types of literary research look old, though in use. Among various perspectives on literary research, there is a view that over decades, the field of literary research has not seen overwhelming changes. As David Leon Higdon (2002) writes in his article, *Ancient Madness or Contemporary Wisdom? A New Literary Research Methods Course*:

'In many ways, the fields of literary research have not been as drastically reconfigured since 1962 as literary criticism has been. They still engage enumerative bibliography, textual study, lexicography, source and influences, documentation protocols, and history of the book; however, the methods have undergone massive transformation, largely because of technology and the demands that poststructuralism, new historicism, gender and orientation studies, and the other isms of the last twenty-five years have posed for literary research.'

Higdon makes his point about static conditions by distinguishing methods from the nature of research. He acknowledges that the methods of doing literary research have changed today as new tools became available and as the new ideological developments started placing new demands for the analytical gaze. There is no need now to look at quantitative data with suspicion, in case of literary research.

However, this view is now contested as technological advances not only change methods but also impact conclusions derived from the research. How does this happen? The internet, online archives, algorithm, machine reading and big data make it "suddenly possible to see more and learn faster" (Lohr 2013: 7), thereby rendering new insights into the object of research. The big data seem to prove that we know very little yet about literary activity in the past. They enable a researcher to comprehend a bigger and distant picture of literature, full of several hitherto neglected or unnoticed details which ultimately lead to different conclusions. It is seen that literary research that uses large data consequently questions validity of older notions about literature, such as definite nature of literary genres or canon. For example, Franco Moretti (2005, 30), the well-known big data literary scholar shows that "the novel does not develop as a single entity . . . but by periodically generating a whole set of genres, and then another, and another". This insight qualitatively changes our understanding, idea and appreciation of the genre. Such revelations subsequently ask for revisiting the idea of literary criticism. As Mario Aquilina states in the article, *The Work of the Literary Critic in the Age of Big Data*:

'The argument is that since literature is now extensively available as digital data, literary criticism has to reinvent itself and aim to be exhaustive and definitive.'

The brief overview of the role of big data simply presents a glimpse of the new, latest avenue for literary research, made available by big data.

The discussion below turns to explaining difference between methods and methodology.

3.3 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RESEARCH METHODS AND METHODOLOGIES

What constitutes good research? Valid, new, reliable knowledge ideally constitutes good research. In other words, quality research should produce reliable and new knowledge. New knowledge depends on the kinds of questions we ask and the manner in which we get answers to them. Here comes the role of research methods and methodology. Methods and methodology are required to be discussed since research basically provides qualitative (observe/interpret) and quantitative (measure/test) types of insights into the object or topic. Research observes, co-relates and experiments. The following discussion explains the concept of research method and methodology, elaborates on differences between the two and presents some examples.

Method in research means the technique or strategy used by researcher to collect and analyse information. Therefore, method/s is/are expected to be scientific in nature, value neutral and they require planning before put into execution. Method needs to be a thoughtful choice on part of the researcher because data collected using different methods may vary in quantity and quality. Methods are driven by the type of data the researcher requires and the questions he/she asks. Literary research methods happen to be different from research methods in the hard sciences, because literary research does not have to solve a problem like hard sciences encourage to do. It rather provides different yet logical and valid answers to the same research problem. They are particular devices which help you to gain answers to your specific research questions, for instance taking interviews, visiting archives for references, or doing surveys, observations and case studies. Usually, literary research involves a combination of methods such as archival research, discourse analysis, and qualitative research methods.

Based on the design of research, research methods are divided in two types: exploratory and conclusive. The conclusive research are structured well, and apply formal methodology. The test hypothesis and usually findings have applications

On the other hand, methodology is a broader, umbrella term that refers to overall approach and perspective to research and explains methods used in a research project. It is a way to systematically solve the research problem, and it helps us to understand the product as well as the process of research. It guides the researcher to proceed from observations and findings to inference about some truth related to the topic chosen for research. It reveals what inferences can possibly be made from the data collected by specific methods. It enables the researcher to defend conclusions, to understand philosophical and political issues of his/her research. A better understanding of methodology helps the researcher to use right methods effectively and gather useful data. Usually contentions occur more in case of methodology than methods. Research methodology provides the ground

between theory and its application. We need to keep in mind that not every methodology will work with every theory. For example, Marxist literary criticism is concerned with the role literature plays in social class struggle. Trotsky's book, *Literature and Revolution* (Haymarket, 2005 [1925]), for instance, talks about the relation of social revolution with literary styles and forms in Russia. It explains how social phenomenon impacted literary output.

3.4 QUALITIES OF A GOOD RESEARCHER

Every task or job demands a specific skill set. For example, a radio jockey should have good communication skills, and cultured voice. Similarly, IT professionals should be update with new developments in their field. A mechanic should be physically fit and be able to use tools with dexterity. Similarly, a good researcher should understand the demands of his or her knowledge exercise. To comprehend the qualities of a good researcher it is necessary to remind ourselves of the nature of research which is understood as valuable, valid and new contribution to the reservoir of knowledge. Further, we also need to believe that the qualities are not innate or given, but can be earned through practice.

i. Good reading skills

Reading skills help a researcher at every stage of his/her research. First of all, it is difficult to arrive at a potential topic for research unless the researcher is a good reader. This is because fruitful reading awakens curiosity and brings forth the context or relevance of the subject. After the choice of research topic, the researcher needs to be equipped with literature review that gives a brief sketch of the existing body of knowledge about the chosen topic. Here too, the researcher should employ his/her reading skills to separate chaff from the grain and to build a comprehensive prior knowledge about his/her topic which then will also support the need and usefulness of the research undertaken. It is absolutely necessary that the researcher must first know the scholarship or conversation that exists prior to his or her attempt. At the stage of analysis, the researcher should be able to pick on relevant and strong data to fortify his/her argument. Good reading skills prove helpful to the researcher's writing as he/she gets introduced to various academic styles and language skills such as brevity, clarity, and figurative use of language that assist subtleties of interpretation.

A book is not like a poster, we cannot take in all at a glance. A good reader is be able to 'read between the lines', to contextualise the reading and to interpret it as per the requirement. To read 'intelligibly' is not to apprehend but to comprehend the book, and to know the conditions under which that book is written.

ii. Critical thinking

In the present age of information, A good researcher knows the difference between information and knowledge. To create knowledge from

information, we need to navigate through vast amount of details, separating fact from fiction. We also need to be assured of validity and reliability of information, its varied context, and required detailing. Similarly, we should be able to question, interpret, analyse and evaluate it for arriving at judgement or conclusion. These skills together are known as critical thinking which can also be summed up as informed judgement.

iii. Persistence

Since research can be a long procedure, and often a lonely journey, the researcher absolutely requires to be patient and energetic till the end. Adapting new technology, facing challenges, adjusting timeline or plans help the researcher to complete the research in a fulfilling manner.

iv. Curiosity

Curiosity leads a researcher to find out connections and to know more about his/her topic. It thus helps to increase the scope and depth of research. Curiosity also creates questions which are very important for the progress of research.

These are some important qualities assumed to form attributes of good research. Some other qualities such as time management, determination, collaboration and communication skills are also desired in a good researcher. Try to inculcate these qualities and your research process will become smoother and will lead you to positive results.

3.5 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed some important concepts in research that actually constitute the grammar of research. Comprehending them well can help in producing good quality research. We hope that you may recognised their significance for your research and understanding. As we cautioned you earlier in this unit, the discussion made here is limited in scope because it cannot delve into the evolution of methods, approaches and theories. We hope that after reading this unit you would become interested in knowing more about types of research, difference between methods and methodology and expectations from a good researcher.

3.6 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

A) Short answer questions

- i. What are research methods?
- ii. What is meant by research methodology?
- iii. State the different types of literary research.
- iv. Explain any one qualification of a good researcher.
- v. How does big data impact the result of a research?

B) Long answer questions

- i. Elaborate on the concept of interpretive research.
- ii. Write a note on theoretical research.
- iii. What does exploratory research mean?
- iv. What are the differences between quantitative and qualitative research?
- v. How are types of research devised?

C) Tasks

- i. Prepare a note on the specific requirements for literary research by assuming that you want to study an author from remote past.
- ii. Write a very basic outline of an imagined theoretical research topic.
- iii. Illustrate your observations about how research has transformed due to technological advances.

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THEORETICAL APPROACHES PART - I

Unit Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Text-oriented Approaches: Philology
- 4.3 Text-oriented Approaches: Rhetoric
- 4.4 Text-oriented Approaches: Formalism and Structuralism
- 4.5 Text-oriented Approaches: New Criticism
- 4.6 Text-oriented Approaches: Semiotics and Deconstruction
- 4.7 Let's Sum up
- 4.8 Important Questions
- 4.9 References

4.0 OBJECTIVES

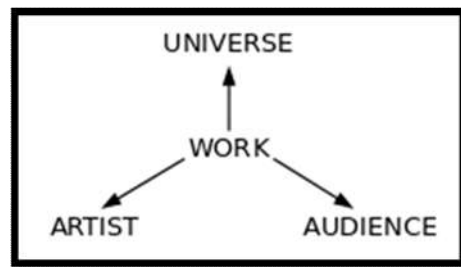
Dear learner, in this chapter, you will be familiarized with the key methodological approaches employed in literary research. This unit will introduce to you some of the relevant theoretical trends that are used for researching literary texts. The subsequent units will also add to your awareness of many other significant theoretical trends in literary research. After reading these units, you will be able to understand the defining characteristics of these theoretical trends and how they can be applied to your own research. After studying the unit, you will be able to evaluate and decide upon the appropriate approaches and theoretical trends for textual and contextual analysis in your chosen literary research.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

To begin, let us define what is literary research. To put it very simply, literary research is the scholarly and critical study of one or more literary texts for the purpose of analysis. To undertake a critical study of one or more literary texts, it is crucial for the researcher to identify and select and use one or more specific critical/theoretical approach/es and then to use this theoretical approach as a tool to comprehend and analyse the text or texts that is the subject of research.

In order to understand the possible approaches to literary research, we may look at the diagram, made by noted literary critic M.H. Abrams, of the

possible connections between the literary work or text with the three coordinates or categories that intersect with it. Abrams states that any literary work is connected to the artist or the author of the text, to the audience or the reader of the text, and to the universe or the contexts that the text is situated in.



Based on this diagrammatic representation by Abrams, there can be four types of approaches to literary research:

- Text-oriented
- Author-oriented
- Reader-oriented
- Context-oriented

When we are undertaking research of one or more literary works, we tend to choose our research methodology from these four possible approaches. Our chosen research methodology equips us with critical concepts, research-specific vocabulary and theoretical framework/s to answer the specific research questions that arise from the connection between the literary text and our chosen theoretical approach.

As we can see, Abrams' diagram inter-relates the work, artist, audience and universe. Thus, the four approaches to literary research are also interlinked and have significant overlaps. Using one specific approach does not preclude referring to—or even using—the other approaches. This interconnectivity is important to remember when we are selecting one or more specific theoretical approach and deploying it for our research and analysis.

In this unit, we will become acquainted with some important text-oriented theoretical approaches to literary research, namely, philology, rhetoric, formalism and structuralism, new criticism, and semiotics and deconstruction.

4.2 TEXT-ORIENTED APPROACHES: PHILOLOGY

Philology is the study of the history of languages. Since philology deals with the study of language from both oral and written sources, in literary criticism, philology also refers to the historical study of literary and canonical texts. Specifically, philology studies the authenticity and historicity of a literary text, traces the original forms and development of the language and vocabulary of a text, and determines the meaning of the text.

Since philology studies the origin, history and development of language, philological criticism as a method of literary research usually focuses on ancient or medieval languages. For instance, it is a widely accepted research method in Biblical criticism, where it is used to study scriptural and non-scriptural texts written in languages the Bible was originally composed of, namely, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Hellenic Greek. It is also used to translate and analyse manuscripts written in ancient languages such as Sanskrit, Pāli, Chinese and Prakrit. Philology can also be used in more modern contexts, for instance, to study the vocabulary, especially the loan-words, used in post-colonial texts to discern how the empire (the colonized) writes back to the colonizer.

To adopt a philological approach means that the researcher has a particular interest in the words that constitute a literary work. Their research would start with the words and how they are put together. However, a philological approach is not necessarily restricted to studying the history of the words of a literary text. Such an approach is also open to interrogating the themes of the literary text, for instance, how the text represents gender or class relations. A philological approach would interrogate the meanings of the words of a literary text in order to understand its broader themes and symbols. It would mean studying a text in its cultural-historical context, along with a linguistic perspective, through an interdisciplinary methodology.

Friedrich Nietzsche defined philology as the art of reading slowly, and a philological approach would be useful in investigating research questions like:

- What historical period does a text belong to?
- What are the verbal evidences of the cultural-historical period within the language of the text?

4.3 TEXT-ORIENTED APPROACHES: RHETORIC

Rhetoric is the study and uses of spoken, written or visual language. In literary criticism, rhetoric often refers to the literary devices (or figures of speech, like metaphor, simile, paradox, antithesis, oxymoron, metonymy, etc) used by the author to emphasize the ideas, themes or emotions of the narrative. Through the study of rhetoric, we can investigate how language is used to construct meanings and identities, organize and control social groups and their behaviour, mediate power among and between individuals and groups, create knowledge and even produce change. According to rhetoricians, language is constitutive (which means that we shape and are shaped by language) and dialogic (which means that language exists in and through the interactions between the self and others). They also conceive of language as being closely connected to thought, since mental activity is a kind of inner speech, and they believe that language is integrated with social, cultural and economic practices.

The study of rhetoric began over 2500 years ago in ancient Greece. Since then, it has evolved into a complex discipline with diverse pedagogies.

While rhetoric can imply a stylistic analysis of the figures of speech used by an author, it can also mean the several practices involved in Ronald Barthes' concept of "metalanguage" (we shall learn this in more detail in section 4.6 below).

According to Bizzell and Herzberg, "Rhetoric has a number of overlapping meanings: the practice of oratory; the study of the strategies of effective oratory; the use of language, written or spoken, to inform or persuade; the study of the persuasive effects of language; the study of the relation between language and knowledge; the classification and use of tropes and figures; and, of course, the use of empty promises and half-truths as a form of propaganda. Nor does this list exhaust the definitions that might be given. Rhetoric is a complex discipline with a long history: It is less helpful to try to define it once and for all than to look at the many definitions it has accumulated over the years and to attempt to understand how each arose and how each still inhabits and shapes the field" (1).

In literary research, a study of the rhetoric of a text would be useful to answer questions like:

- What are the rhetorical devices used by the author in the text? What is the purpose and significance of these devices?
- Does the author deploy rhetoric to inform or persuade? If so, what is their purpose for doing so?

4.4 TEXT-ORIENTED APPROACHES: FORMALISM AND STRUCTURALISM

Formalism is a literary theory that focuses exclusively on the structural purposes of a literary text. It disregards all cultural, historical or biographical influences on the text. Formalism began with the Russian scholars, led by linguist Roman Jakobson, who established the Moscow Linguistic Circle in 1915. They considered form and linguistics to be foundational elements of literature and wanted to produce a "science of literature." Russian Formalism was a reaction against the biographism and psychologism that pervaded literary scholarship in nineteenth century Russia. Formalists also opposed symbolism and subjective interpretation of literature.

Formalists study a literary text as an isolated verbal entity, and ignore outside influences like societal and historical contexts and even authorship. They analyse how the structure and language of a text create its meaning, and they focus on structural elements like textual modes, genres, language, and forms. Their primary, or even sole, concern is with the "literariness" of a text, rather than with any extraliterary element. In poetry, specifically, the Formalists regarded language as operating both synchronically and in an "autotelic" manner, as Tzvetan Todorov stated. Viktor Shklovsky's concept of "ostranenie" (defamiliarization or estrangement; literally, it means 'to make strange') is central to the production of the "literariness" of a text. Ostranenie refers to the

techniques used by writers to transform everyday language into poetic language, which is a language that induces a heightened state of perception in the reader.

According to Shklovsky, poetic language is defamiliarized language, and this defamiliarization is produced and understood through the primacy of form and technique over content. Once a particular technique or form becomes familiar to readers, it loses its value as a tool for producing *ostranenie*. In his 1919 essay, "On the Connection between Devices of *Siuzhet* Construction and General Stylistic Devices", Shklovsky writes, "a new form appears not in order to express a new content, but in order to replace an old form, which has already lost its artistic value" (53). In what can be regarded as the final phase of Formalism, critics like Mikhail Bakhtin and Boris Tomashevsky began theorizing about other formats of fictions like the narrative and motif.

Structuralism is a theoretical and critical movement that became widespread in the 1950s and 1960s, across a range of disciplines like anthropology, linguistics, and literary theory. Based primarily on the linguistic theories of Ferdinand de Saussure, structuralism considered language as a system of signs and signification. According to Saussure, the elements of these signs and significations are understandable only in relation to each other and to the system. [We will learn more about Saussure's semiotics in Section 4.6 below.] In the domain of literary theory, structuralism denied that a work of literature reflected a given reality. Instead, it suggested that a text was constituted of linguistic conventions and was situated among other texts. The core belief of structuralism is that "things cannot be understood in isolation, they have to be seen in the context of larger structures they are part of", and that these structures are formed by our way of perceiving the world. To put it simply, structuralist theory is a way of understanding culture and meaning in literary or artistic texts by relating the individual text to something larger.

The four basic ideas underlying Structuralism as a general movement are: one, every system has a structure; two, the position of each element of a whole is determined by this structure; three, these relationships are understood through structural laws which deal with coexistence rather than changes; and four, structures are the "real things" that lie beneath the surface or the appearance of meaning. Thus, structuralists suggest that there is a close interrelationship between "units" (surface phenomena) and "rules" (the ways in which units can be put together). In Ferdinand de Saussure's terminology, this would refer to the relationship between *Langue* (language as a system) and *Parole* (an individual utterance in that language). Structuralist critics analyse a text by examining underlying structures, such as characterization or plot, and aim to trace how these patterns are universal. They use these patterns to develop general conclusions about both individual texts and the systems from which they emerge. attempted to show how these patterns were universal and could thus be used to develop general conclusions about both individual works and the systems from which they emerged.

Anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss and linguist Roman Jakobson are two very influential structuralists. Jakobson developed a model of the functions of language which distinguishes six elements (factors of communication) that are necessary for communication to occur: (1) context, (2) addresser (sender), (3) addressee (receiver), (4) contact, (5) common code and (6) message. Levi-Strauss uncovered the structure of culture through his tracing of patterns in binaries and opposites, like raw vs cooked, nature vs culture, male vs female. He explores myths from various cultures to reveal unconscious mental structures that shape human thinking and produce human culture.

Structuralist theories are foundational in the study of questions like:

- How are myths, rituals and folk-tales based on systems of recurrent patterns?
- What such patterns may be identified in a chosen text or texts? What do these patterns reveal about the language and culture that produced the text/s?

4.5 TEXT-ORIENTED APPROACHES: NEW CRITICISM

New Criticism is a later Euro-American counterpart of Russian Formalism that gained popularity in the first half of the twentieth century, with the claimed scientific approach of I.A. Richards. I.A. Richards, in his book *Practical Criticism* (1929), which is considered a seminal text of New Criticism, discussed the results of how his students analysed poems he had assigned to them without revealing the poets' names or backgrounds. Following Richards' approach, his student William Empson wrote *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930), where he focused on unpacking the complex and multiple meanings of poems, without any reference to historical setting of his chosen texts. The British critic F.R. Leavis, who is often associated with the New Critics although he himself never identified as part of the American group, also used close analysis of, and singular focus on, literary texts in order to test its sincerity and moral seriousness, for instance in his work *New Bearings in English Poetry* (1932).

Both New Critics and Formalists prefer a method of close reading of the text through which formal elements such as rhyme, meter, vocabulary, setting, characterization and plot are used to identify the themes of a text. Additional elements such as irony, paradox, ambiguity and tension are also identified to analyse the text, which is considered to be a self-contained, autotelic aesthetic object disassociated from any external context.

Decontextualizing a text from the cultural, socio-economic, historical and biographical influences that shaped it is often considered to be a partial and flawed approach in contemporary research. However, the methods of close reading and formal analysis that Formalists and New Critics deployed can be useful in answering research questions such as:

- How does the structure of a text reveal its meaning?
- How does the use of vocabulary, imagery, and other literary devices produce the meaning of a text?
- What are the techniques used to make a text “literary” and how to these techniques separate the text from everyday life and language?

These methods especially equip researchers to examine and critically understand extracts from poems or other literary works. When we master this skill of critical appreciation and analysis, it is useful as a preparatory step before undertaking research on larger and complete bodies of text/s.

4.6 TEXT-ORIENTED APPROACHES: SEMIOTICS AND DECONSTRUCTION

Semiotics is the study of signs and of the behaviour of using signs. The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure defined semiotics as the study of “the life of signs within society.” In the early 20th century, Saussure developed a science of signs based on linguistics, which became known as semiotics or semiology. He believed that any language is just a complex system of signs that express ideas, with rules which govern their usage. He called the underlying abstract structure of a language, “langue”, and the concrete manifestations or embodiments, “parole”. He concluded that any individual sign is essentially arbitrary, and that there is no natural relationship between a signifier (e.g. the word “tree”) and the signified (e.g. the mental concept of the actual tree).

Another seminal figure in semiotics is American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce. He defined a sign as “something which stands to somebody for something.” He categorized signs into three main types: icons, which resemble their referents (such as a No Smoking sign which has an actual image of a cigarette); indexes, which are associated with their referents (such as smoke which is a sign of fire); and symbols, which are related to their referents only through convention (such as H₂O being a sign for water). Peirce also suggested that signs can never have fixed or definite meanings, as their meanings must be continuously qualified.

The study of semiotics has impacted several theoretical and critical movements like structuralism (as we saw in section 4.4 above), deconstruction and post-structuralism.

Deconstruction is a theory that arose in the 1960s, from post-structuralism (and hence from structuralism, which came before that). Jacques Derrida is the originator of the term ‘deconstruction’. Although Derrida refused to define deconstruction, he admitted that it is “antistructuralist gesture” because structures needed to be “undone, decomposed, desedimented”. Simultaneously, though, deconstruction is also a “structuralist gesture” because it is concerned with the structure of texts.

Deconstruction is the process of dismantling language to expose the relational quality of meaning. Deconstructive criticism aims to reveal how conflicting forces within the text undermine the stability of the text’s

structure, and how meaning is an array of unstable and undetermined possibilities. Hence, the meaning of any word or object is endlessly deferred because it is not possible to define them in any fixed or certain way. Deconstruction focuses on closely analyzing the binaries in a text, such as good/evil, male/female, presence/absence, natural/artificial, etc, and it exposes how one aspect of the binary is privileged while the other is suppressed. Derrida viewed deconstruction as a technique for exposing and subverting many assumptions of Western thought in a variety of texts. Deconstructive readings treated works of art and literary texts not as a harmonious, unified fusion of literal and symbolic meanings, but as sites where meanings of different types conflicted intractably. Deconstruction studies texts not as isolated artifacts, but as a product of their interrelations with other texts or discourses. Deconstruction also emphasizes how these works or texts implicitly critique and even unravel the categories that are used by critics to analyze them. As a research methodology, deconstruction identifies the central meaning and marginalized meanings of a text, subverts and alters the positions of those meanings, and thereby exposes how the marginalized meanings could just as easily become the central meaning.

A deconstructive approach would address foundational questions such as:

- What binary oppositions or tensions operate in the text?
- How does the text uphold or resolve the contradictory meanings, binary oppositions or tensions?
- How do textual features such as dialogue and imagery subvert the binary tensions in the text? How does the text invite ambiguity versus certainty?

4.7 LET'S SUM UP

Dear learner, let us sum up what we have learned in this unit. We discussed M.H. Abrams diagrammatic representation of the relation among a literary text, the author, the readers, and the contextual world it is situated in. Then, we explored the various critical and literary theories and methods that are connected to a text-oriented approach. We briefly looked at philology, rhetoric, formalism and structuralism, new criticism, semiotics and deconstruction, and learnt about how these could be useful for literary research. In the next unit we will be dealing with author-oriented and reader-oriented approaches to literary research.

4.8 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Here are some important questions to think about from this chapter:

1. How did M.H. Abrams diagrammatically represent a work of literature and its various intersecting categories? What are the different approaches for literary research that arose from this diagram?
2. What is philology? How will a philologist read and understand a literary text?

3. What are the different meanings of rhetoric? How does a rhetorical analysis help us to understand a text?
4. What are the common features of Russian Formalism and New Criticism?
5. What are the basic ideas underlying Structuralism?
6. How did Semiotics help in developing Structuralism and the methodology of Deconstruction?
7. What are some research questions that can be addressed through a deconstructive approach?

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THEORETICAL APPROACHES PART-II

Unit Structure :

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Author-oriented Approaches: Biographical Criticism
- 5.3 Author-oriented Approaches: Psychoanalytic Criticism
- 5.4 Author-oriented Approaches: Phenomenology
- 5.5 Reader-oriented Approaches: Reception theory and Reception history
- 5.6 Reader-oriented Approaches: Reader-response criticism
- 5.7 Let's Sum up
- 5.8 Important Questions
- 5.9 References

5.0 OBJECTIVES

Dear learner, in this unit, we will be expanding upon M.H. Abrams' diagrammatic representation of the interrelationships among a literary text and its author, the readers and the world it is contextualized in. You will be familiarized with some key methodological approaches in literary research that are derived from an author-oriented and a reader-oriented focus. The next unit will explore some theoretical trends derived from a context-oriented approach. After reading these units, you will be able to understand the basic features of these prevalent theoretical trends and how they can be applied to your own research. After studying the entire unit, you will be able to evaluate the usefulness of these trends in relation to your own research, and you will be able to decide upon the appropriate approaches and theoretical trends for textual and contextual analysis in your chosen literary research.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As we have already learnt, literary research is the scholarly and critical study of one or more literary texts for the purpose of analysis. To undertake a critical study of one or more literary texts, the researcher needs to use one or more theoretical approaches for critically analysing the

selected literary texts. They may select one or more theoretical approaches having an author-oriented, text-oriented, reader-oriented or context-oriented focus. It is possible to use a singular theoretical approach, and it is also possible to combine more than one theoretical approach. Our choice of theoretical approaches depends upon the research questions we want to answer through our research, and the way in which our research hypothesis is framed.

In this unit, we will become acquainted with some important author-oriented theoretical approaches to literary research, namely, biographical criticism, psychological criticism and phenomenology; as well as some significant reader-oriented approaches, like reception theory and reception history, and reader-response criticism. In both these theoretical approaches, the researcher's focus goes beyond the literary text itself to the producer of the text (the author) and the consumer of the text (the reader).

5.2 AUTHOR-ORIENTED APPROACHES: BIOGRAPHICAL CRITICISM

Biographical or historical-biographical criticism is one of the earliest and most traditional critical approaches for studying a literary text. Using this approach, we study a literary work or text as predominantly being a reflection of the author's life and times. We analyse the text by reading it in tandem with the author's life, looking for clues in the text that reveal what the author meant within the words of the text and life events. Simply put, biographical criticism uses information about an author's life experiences to help understand their works. Biographical criticism has been prevalent since the Renaissance, and has been the preferred approach of literary scholars till the beginning of the twentieth century. There have been many eminent scholars using this methodology extensively, for instance, Samuel Johnson did in his *Lives of the Poets* (1779-81).

From the 1920s, however, the biographical approach was increasingly viewed as limited and other alternative approaches in literary research began gaining ground. In the 1920s, the New Critics coined the term "biographical fallacy," which they used to indicate how biographical criticism often neglected the vital role of imagination in the genesis of a literary work. However, for texts where the author chooses to represent their own life experiences either through an autobiographical or a fictional mode, biographical criticism is obviously an important approach towards understanding. It also is necessary to take a historical approach in order to place allusions in a text in their proper classical, political, or temporal background. Despite its shortcomings, historical-biographical criticism continues to be an important mode of inquiry, and it may be effectively used in literary research to answer research questions like:

- Does the text reflect the writer's lived experiences and concerns. If so, how?
- How is the text shaped by the author's chosen ideologies and beliefs?

- How would you describe the author's intent?
- How does reading the poet's biography change or impact your understanding of the text?

With the increasing popularity of genres such as autobiographies, memoirs and other types of self-writing and confessional literature (both in print and online), biographical criticism will continue to be a necessary and relevant trend in literary research.

5.3 AUTHOR-ORIENTED APPROACHES: PSYCHOANALYTIC CRITICISM

Although originating in the nineteenth century, when Romantic literature delved deep into the individual's thoughts and feelings, psychological or psychoanalytical critical theory became popular in the early decades of the twentieth century, with the works of Sigmund Freud. To put it simply, psychoanalytic criticism is a research approach where the researcher uses psychological theories to analyse literature. Psychological criticism can be applied to study:

- The author's life and experiences and how these have shaped their writing.
- The characters in a literary text: their emotions, actions, motivations, desires, and conflicts.
- The symbols, motifs and imagery that is used in a text, and how these may represent psychological concepts or emotions.
- Readers' responses to a text, and how these may vary depending on individual identities and experiences.

Freud often based his theories on analyses of literary texts: for instance, his theory of Oedipus complex is developed through his analysis of Sophocles' tragic play, Oedipus Rex. Freudian psychological theories are most often applied to literary analysis. Other notable psychoanalysts whose works are often referred to in psychoanalytical criticism are Carl Jung and Jacques Lacan.

A Freudian approach often includes unravelling the influences of a character's id (the instinctual, pleasure-seeking part of the mind), superego (the part of the mind that unhealthily represses the id's impulses) and the ego (the part of the mind that controls the id's impulses in a healthy way). A Freudian approach also often focuses on the overt or covert sexual implications of symbols and imagery, because Freud insisted that sexuality is a primal factor governing all human behaviour. For instance, concave images such as caves, cups, and flowers are regarded as female symbols associated with the womb, as is water, which is associated with birth, the maternal and the death wish. Freudian literary criticism may also use Freud's psychology of child development, which includes the oral stage, the anal stage, and the genital stage.

The Jungian influence in literary criticism is most often seen in the use of Carl Jung's theory of archetypes, which are images and themes deriving from the collective unconscious. Jung is an influential figure in myth (archetypal) criticism. Psychological criticism also uses Jung's concept of the process of individuation. Jung divided the self into three parts: the shadow, or the darker, unconscious self (critics often study the villain figure as a parallel of this aspect of the self); the persona, or a man's social personality (paralleled in the hero); and the anima, or a person's "soul image" (often paralleled in the heroine).

Jacques Lacan's theory of the three stages or orders of identity formation—imaginary order, symbolic order and the real order—has also been influential in studying characters in literary texts, or sometimes even the authors of texts. Lacan also developed a model of psychoanalysis on the basis of structural linguistics which he utilized to critique literary texts and also to formulate a theory of unconscious through literary expressions. In Lacan's post-Freudian model of psychoanalysis, the theory of unconscious and the theory of literature define each other. Through this model, we can analyse a literary text through its language in order to examine the unconscious of both the writer and the reader.

In *The Ego and the Id* (1923), Freud theorized that a literary text is an external expression of the author's unconscious mind. This theory supports an author-focused approach, and would help in answering research questions such as:

- How has the author's life experiences and unconscious processes shaped their emotional development, and how is this evidenced in the writing of the literary text?
- What unintended meanings has the author embedded in their text?

Psychoanalytical criticism is also used by researchers to analyse the characters in a literary text. For this purpose, the foundational research questions would include:

- What are the conscious and unconscious motivations of the protagonist and/or antagonist?
- How is the emotional development of a character charted in the text?
- What is the role played by dreams, unconscious desires and psychological disorders in the literary text?
- What universal archetypes or stages of identity formation may be traced in the characters of the text?

5.4 AUTHOR-ORIENTED APPROACHES: PHENOMENOLOGY

Phenomenology is a philosophy which posits that the ultimate source of all meaning and value is the lived experience of human beings. Phenomenologists aim to describe the structures of experience, especially consciousness, the imagination, relations with other persons, and the situatedness of the human subject in society and history. According to Phenomenology, works of art are mediators between the consciousnesses of the author and the reader. Works of art or literature are attempts to disclose aspects of the being of humans and their worlds. Phenomenological literary theory describes reading as a set of intentional acts by which the literary work comes into existence as an emerging phenomenon.

Edmund Husserl is regarded as the modern founder of phenomenology. He wanted to make philosophy "a rigorous science" by focusing on foundations on which philosophers could ground their knowledge with certainty, and without all unprovable assumptions. According to Husserl, a presuppositionless philosophy was possible through a process of epoché, or "reduction," where we focus our attention on what is immanent in consciousness itself, without presupposing anything about its origins or supports. Pure description of the phenomena given in consciousness can provide a foundation of necessary and certain knowledge necessary for such a philosophy.

These foundational principles of Husserl's theory are significant in the development of phenomenological literary theory. Phenomenology studies the relationship between human experience and creative expression. Phenomenology is used in literary theory to understand the essential structures of consciousness as they appear in a text, and it is used to understand the complex relationships between author and reader as well as between reader and texts.

Extending Husserl's description of consciousness, Martin Heidegger posits that understanding has a 'forestructure' of assumptions and beliefs that projects expectations and guides interpretation. Heidegger's conception of the anticipatory structure of understanding is significant for later versions of phenomenology that deal with interpretation and reading. For instance, the phenomenological theories of textual reception (like those held by the "Constance School" of scholars like Hans Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser) investigate how literary works are understood differently by readers who have different interpretive conventions (as we shall see in sections 5.5. below).

Like Heidegger, Roman Ingarden (who is regarded as the founding father of phenomenological aesthetics) also rejects Husserl's idealism. In his works *The Literary Work of Art* (1931) and *The Cognition of the Literary Work of Art* (1937), Ingarden tries to resolve the opposition of the real and the ideal. According to him, works of art and literary works are not autonomous, fully determinate objects, but they depend for their existence

on the intentional acts of their creators and of their readers. Ingarden describes a literary work as "an intersubjective intentional object" (Cognition 14). A literary work originates in the acts of consciousness of its creator; it is then preserved in writing or through other physical means, and then reanimated by the consciousness of the reader. Yet, a literary work is not limited to the consciousness of the writer and the readers, it has a history and existence that transcends both. According to Ingarden the literary work has an "ontically heteronomous mode of existence" (Work 362), because it is neither autonomous nor completely dependent. He considers a literary work to be a stratified formation, but he distinguishes the reader's "concretization" of the work from the work itself. The author creates an "artistic object" while the reader produces an "aesthetic object" which is correlated to, but different from it. Readers with different experiences will respond differently to the possibilities left open by the indeterminacies of the different strata of a literary work so that it is only partially (and never fully) grasped.

Thus, it is clear that phenomenological literary criticism is both author-focused and reader-focused. In the next sections (5.5 and 5.6) we shall delve deeper into reader-oriented approaches.

5.5 READER-ORIENTED APPROACHES: RECEPTION THEORY AND RECEPTION HISTORY

Reception-oriented literary theory and history are both reader-focused approaches that analyse the processes by which literary texts are received by the reader. It studies the reception of a text both at the time it is first published, and also much later into the future of the text: how texts are interpreted, adapted, appropriated, changed, circulated, canonized, controlled, and even forgotten, by different readerships. Studying the reception of a text gives us insights into the range of meanings, uses and values generated by the text, and also into how these might change across different time periods and socio-cultural locations.

Reception theory developed from the "reception-aesthetics" outlined by German literary historian Hans Robert Jauss in 1970. It emphasizes that meaning is created through the interaction between the work and its viewers, and that audiences are active participants in the process of meaning-making of a text. Jauss, who co-founded the University of Constance and the Constance group of literary studies, also developed the notion of *Rezeptionsgeschichte* (history of reception). He compared the original reception of a text to a later reception, revealing the evolution of different literary receptions and the changing paradigms of literary criticism that they were a part of.

Using the concepts of reception theory and reception history, a researcher may attempt to answer questions like:

- What was the immediate impact of a literary text and how has it changed over time?

- Why and how does the individual and collective effect of a text alter over the course of time?

5.6 READER-ORIENTED APPROACHES: READER-RESPONSE CRITICISM

Closely linked to phenomenological literary criticism and reception studies, Reader-response theory is a literary theory that originated in the 1960s and 1970s. It was a reaction to the dominant New Criticism approach that focused on the objective meaning of the text itself. In contrast, reader-response theory claims to be more inclusive and focuses on the reader's experience and interpretation of a text. According to this theory, the meaning of a text is not fixed, but is constructed by the reader through their own experiences, feelings, and beliefs. Steven Lynn writes in *Texts and Contexts*: “For people who rejoice in the diversity of experiences and responses and opinions, reader-response criticism will be especially interesting, not only because of our different orientations and abilities, but also because of the different ways that we partition and perceive our experiences” (86). Some main theorists of reader response theory include Stanley Fish, David Bleich, Wolfgang Iser and Louise Rosenblatt. Rosenblatt states: “There is no such thing as a generic reader or a generic literary work.... The reading of any work of literature is, of necessity, an individual and unique occurrence involving the mind and emotions of a particular reader” (x-xii).

According to reader-response theory, there are multiple—perhaps infinite—kinds of possible responses to a text. Readers’ understanding of a text is shaped by their own experiences and values. This means that, firstly, meaning is not inherent in a text; secondly, that each reader’s interpretation of a text is unique; thirdly, that this reaction and interpretation can change, based on factors like the reader’s socio-cultural locations or personal emotions; fourthly, that the reader’s personal response to a text is just as important as the author’s intention or the formal qualities of the text itself. This is called Subjective Reader Response. As a literary researcher, we can practice Subjective Reader Response (which is a process of engaging with a literary text in a personal and individual way) by allowing our own experiences, emotions, and beliefs to shape our interpretation of the text. We can read a text by paying attention to the formal qualities (language, structure, themes); then reflect on our own experiences and write down our responses to the text; then we can consider and compare our own responses to those of others; and finally, we can reflect on the process of how we shaped the meaning of the text and how this approach differs from other approaches to literary analysis.

Apart from Subjective Reader Response, there is another significant concept derived from reader-response theory: that of the Receptive Reader Response, which is based on the notion of the Implied Reader. The Implied Reader is a term that refers to the hypothetical reader that a literary text addresses and assumes. This does not refer to an actual

person, but rather to a constructed or ideal persona created by the text itself, that the text's author expects, anticipates and even addresses through the style, tone, language and themes. If as a researcher, we are practising Receptive Reader Response, we must engage empathetically with the text, without imposing our personal biases and expectations. In short, we must try to understand the text on its own terms. Receptive Reader Response considers the reader's emotional response to, as well as their intellectual engagement with a text. Thus, it is able to validate the diverse and complex range of responses that may be generated by a literary text, even as it emphasizes individuality and subjectivity in literary analysis.

Reader-response theory is radical because it destabilized the long-held notion that the core of the meaning of a text resides in the text itself. Instead, this theory contends that literary texts do not have stable meanings and it shifts the function of meaning-making to the reader/s, who function not as passive consumers of a text but as active "interpretive communities".

Using this theory may be beneficial if the researcher is aiming to answer the following research questions:

- Who is the intended reader of a text?
- What are the thoughts and memories that a text evokes in a particular reader and how are these shaped through cultural conditioning?
- What is the process through which interaction with the text creates meanings for the reader, and whether these meanings change when the reader re-reads a text over time?

5.7 LET'S SUM UP

Dear learner, let us sum up what we have learned in this unit. We continued our discussion of approaches to literary research based on M.H. Abrams' diagrammatic representation, and here, we focused on author-oriented approaches and reader-oriented approaches. The unit delved into various author-oriented approaches like biographical criticism and psychological criticism. Then, we moved to a brief discussion of phenomenology, which can be both author-oriented as well as reader-oriented in approach. After that, we shifted to discussion of reader-oriented approaches to literary research, like reception theory and reception history, as well as reader-response criticism. In the next unit we will be dealing with context-oriented approaches to literary research.

5.8 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Here are some important questions to think about from this chapter:

1. What is the most traditional approach to literary research? Why do you think it is still relevant?
2. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of biographical criticism.

- 3. How can psychoanalysis be applied in literary research? Discuss three psychoanalysts whose theories are popularly used in literary research.
- 4. Discuss the salient features of phenomenological literary theory.
- 5. What is reception theory in literary research? How does reception history change the way we critique a text?
- 6. Who are main exponents of reader-response theory? Briefly enumerate the significant concepts they developed.

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THEORETICAL APPROACHES PART-III

Unit Structure :

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Context-oriented Approaches: Literary History
- 6.3 Context-oriented Approaches: Marxist Literary Theory
- 6.4 Context-oriented Approaches: Feminist Literary Theory
- 6.5 Context-oriented Approaches: New Historicism
- 6.6 Context-oriented Approaches: Cultural Studies
- 6.7 Let's Sum up
- 6.8 Important Questions
- 6.9 References

6.0 OBJECTIVES

Dear learner, in this unit, you will be introduced to some relevant approaches in context-oriented literary research. In the previous units, you have been familiarized M.H. Abrams' diagrammatic representation of the interrelations among a literary text, its author, the reader and the world. You have also become familiarized with key theoretical approaches in text-oriented, author-oriented and reader-oriented literary research. In this chapter, you will be familiarized with several important context-oriented approaches to literary research. After reading this unit, you will be able to comprehend the salient features of various theoretical trends and how they can be applied to your own research. Also, you will be able to evaluate and compare these approaches, and then make an informed decision about which theoretical approaches for textual and contextual analysis would be the most suitable in your chosen literary research.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

By now you are already familiar with the definition of literary research as a critical and scholarly analysis of one or more literary texts. To undertake literary research, the researcher needs to apply one or more theoretical approaches to analyse their selected literary texts. These theoretical approaches may have either an author-oriented, or text-oriented, or reader-oriented or context-oriented focus, or it may be a combination of two or more approaches. This unit will acquaint us with the major context-oriented theoretical approaches to literary research, namely, literary

After learning about the various approaches and trends in literary research, we need to apply these approaches or theories to the textual analysis which is the core of our literary research. For this purpose, it is useful to look at the metaphors of “toolbox” and “lens.” Till the turn of the twenty-first century, the metaphor of the toolbox was used to explain the benefits of applying a particular theory to analyse a literary text. Each theory is like a toolbox, equipping the researcher with a set of specialized concepts and terminology to understand, investigate and explain the chosen literary text/s. In the twenty-first century, however, the metaphor of the lens started to come into prominence, gradually replacing the toolbox metaphor. A specific literary theory or approach is like a lens through which the researcher examines their chosen text or texts. This theoretical lens enables the researcher to focus on particular aspects of the literary text, while the other aspects become less visible. Another researcher using a different theoretical lens will focus on other aspects of the text/s. This allows different researchers using different theoretical lenses to study the same text/s and arrive at significantly different readings based on their chosen theoretical approaches. Hence, even old texts which already have a substantial body of critical research about them can be re-read and analysed in new ways, if a fresh theoretical lens is deployed by the researcher.

6.2 CONTEXT-ORIENTED APPROACHES: LITERARY HISTORY

Literary history is the study of how the different forms of literature—poetry, prose, drama, and others—have developed over time, and it includes studying the evolution of literary techniques and the writing process. Literary history also examines the connections between literary works of different time periods as well as studies how the broader socio-cultural settings in which a literary text is located impacts it. Such historical criticism researches a text through studying the context in which it has been written, including the historical and cultural events occurring during the time the text is situated in. An understanding of the events, ideologies, culture, and lifestyle of the time enables a more comprehensive understanding of the text to emerge. Literary history can include and focus on these areas:

- Development of national literatures in particular eras
- Emergence and obsolescence of literary genres over specific time periods
- The role of subordinated groups in literature and their changing representations in literary works
- The impact of socioeconomic forces of specific eras on literature

- The use of generic or thematic conventions by authors of a specific time period
- The use of chains of signs created by writers belonging to a particular time period
- The formation of a literary canon—which means the collection of works that are considered to be the best examples and standards of literature of a particular nation, language or era.

The study of literary history began in the 18th century, and it is closely linked to the practice of bibliographic cataloguing of antique and rare manuscripts. In the 19th century, literary history was significant in nation building. The nationalist movements in different countries were accompanied by the rediscovery and celebration of the literary texts that revealed and embodied the national spirit of that nation. In the 20th century, literary history was critiqued because it focused too much on the sources, influences and social forces shaping a literary text, while neglecting the unique and formal features of the text itself. Some well-known examples of studies in literary history include C. S. Lewis's *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century* (1954) and Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel* (1957).

Some foundational questions that researchers using literary history can focus on are:

- How is the chosen literary text representative of the social, economic and cultural setting that it is located in?
- What historical events influenced the author in the writing of the text?
- Is the text considered to be part of the literary canon of that era? Why or why not?

6.3 CONTEXT-ORIENTED APPROACHES: MARXIST LITERARY THEORY

Marxism is based on the philosophy of dialectical materialism which analyses how society and history progress through the struggle between opposing classes. Class struggle arises because of the continuing exploitation of one class by another. During the feudal period, the feudal landlords exploited the peasants; in the Industrial age, the capitalist class (the bourgeoisie) exploit the working class (the proletariat). According to Marxist philosophers, this class conflict will eventually lead to social transformation and result in replacing the oppressive capitalist system by a more equitable socialist system.

Karl Marx used the concept of dialectic materialism to explain how all mental (ideological) systems are products of the real social and economic interests of the dominant classes, and how these systems inherently contain internal dialectical contradictions, which are the primary cause of motion and transformation in the world. Another fundamental Marxist concept is that of the base and superstructure, where base refers to the

socio-economic relations and the material means of production, and superstructure refers to the world of art, law, politics, religion and ideology. This indicates that all cultural products are directly related to the economic base in a given society. Simply put, Marxist literary criticism aims to analyse the relationship between a literary text and the socio-economic conditions under which it was produced. According to Marxist critics, literature reproduces existing power relations and also offers a space where these relations can be contested and rewritten.

Under the totalitarian communist regimes in several countries in the twentieth century, many other aspects of Marxist criticism arose through the works of noted scholars. Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of Dialogism affirms plurality and variety and argues against the hegemony of absolute authorial control. Dialogism refers to the process by which meaning evolves through the interactions among the author, the work and the reader/listener. All these elements are affected by the social and political forces where they are located. Bakhtin's concept of polyphony suggested that language is not static; instead, it evolves dynamically and is affected by the culture that produces and uses it.

The Frankfurt School or Critical Theory studied mass culture and communication and their role in social reproduction and domination. More specifically, Critical Theory uses Marxist philosophy to interpret economic and political concepts like commodification, reification, fetishization and critique of mass culture.

Marxist scholars like Walter Benjamin and Bertolt Brecht considered art as a social production. A revolutionary artist should challenge the existing forces of artistic production, and try to develop and revolutionize those forces: this would create new social relations between artist and audience. Benjamin's concept of "shock" and Brecht's understanding of *Verfremdung* (estrangement)—which are strikingly similar—are crucial for this challenge.

Louis Althusser further extended Marxist criticism through his concepts of overdetermination and ideology. Overdetermination suggests that an effect arises from various causes rather than from a single factor. Ideology, according to Althusser, is a system of representations instituted by the state. As he says, "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence." Ideology naturalizes beliefs and promotes certain values through two apparatuses, Repressive State Apparatuses (RSA) (law courts, prison, police, etc) and Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA) (schools, media, churches, family, etc). Althusser states that As Althusser puts it, "the individual is interpellated as a (free) subject in order that he shall submit freely to the commandments of the Subject, i.e. in order that he shall (freely) accept his subjection, i.e. in order that he shall make the gestures and actions of his subjection 'all by himself'".

Antonio Gramsci introduced concepts like Hegemony and the Subaltern. Hegemony is the domination by the elite, and it works through manufacturing the consent of the dominated groups. Gramsci used the term subaltern to collectively describe a variety of different exploited groups who lack class consciousness. According to him, hegemony is a system of class alliance in which a “hegemonic class” exercises political leadership over “subaltern classes” by “winning them over.” The process of “winning over” the subaltern includes two moments of power relations—Dominio (or coercion) and Direzione (or consensus).

Raymond Williams, belonging to the New Left, developed the critical method, Cultural Materialism. Williams believed that culture was historically specific and inseparable from the material world. Culture is created and maintained through physical production; in turn, culture is a primary determinant of social behaviour. The literature of any age reflects the dominant values of the society of that age. Cultural Materialism is a Marxist approach based on four elements: Historical context, Theoretical method, Political commitment and Textual analysis.

A Marxist approach is useful in analysing the following research questions:

- How are the relations between the privileged and oppressed classes depicted in the text?
- How does the plot, characterization, language of the text reveal or erase the class struggles in the story?
- Does the text envision any kind of transformation of the existing class relations in the story?

6.4 CONTEXT-ORIENTED APPROACHES: FEMINIST LITERARY THEORY

Feminism began as a political movement of protest against male power and ideology. Extending this protest, feminist literary theory is an interdisciplinary interrogation of the role of gender in the writing, interpretation, reception and circulation of literary texts. It emerged from the struggle for women’s rights since the 18th century, and it was initially concerned with the politics of women’s authorship and representations of women in literature.

Feminist literary criticism re-examines canonical works to show the creation and perpetuation of gender stereotypes within them. It searches for an alternative literary voice through rediscovery of works by women for a possible alternative voice, works which were earlier suppressed. It tries to understand what produces ‘women’s writing’. It investigates how literary texts reveal that ‘woman’ is culturally or socially constructed. Inherently interdisciplinary, feminist literary criticism’s study of the difference between sexual and gender identities established alliances with gay and lesbian studies. Feminist criticism sometimes relates to

psychoanalysis and Marxism, criticizing their gender blindness while using their resources.

The first wave of feminism, in the 19th and 20th centuries, began in the US and the UK as a struggle for equality, voting and property rights for women. The second wave of feminism in the 1960s and '70s, was marked by an enquiry into how patriarchy constructed the acceptable cultural roles for women. "The personal is the political" is a motto of the second wave, and it reveals how women became aware of the false distinction between women's domestic and men's public spheres, and how they began to enter the male-dominated public sphere. Feminism began appearing in academic publications and scholarship.

Elaine Showalter's concept of gynocriticism is useful in constructing a female framework for the analysis of women's literature, and to put focus on female subjectivity, language and literary career. Gynocriticism aimed to legitimize the historical study of women authors as a valid academic field; to develop new models based on female experience to analyse women's literature based on the female experience; to recover "lost" or "neglected" women writers; and to understand how women construct textual meaning.

In the post-1980 third wave, feminism has attempted to become more interdisciplinary and inclusive and less Euro-American in its focus. Contemporary feminist theory is global, diverse and encompasses multiple variations like liberal feminism, radical feminism, black feminism/womanism, neo-marxist feminism, Islamic feminism, intersectional feminism, among others.

A feminist approach is necessary to investigate research questions like:

- How do the text/s depict the lives of the women characters and the relationships between men and women, and women and women?
- Do the characters and the plot reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes?
- How does the language of the text reflect gender biases?
- What is the role of patriarchy in the lives of the characters in the text?

6.5 CONTEXT-ORIENTED APPROACHES: NEW HISTORICISM

New Historicism is a literary theory and a critical approach criticism developed in the 1980s by Stephen Greenblatt. The term "new historicism", though, was coined by Wesley Morris in 1972. Rejecting the formalism of New Criticism, New Historicism focuses on the milieu or cultural context of a literary text rather than its formal structure. New Historicism suggests that the socio-cultural and historical conditions at the time of the production of a text form the "co-text". Hence, it theorizes the "textuality of history" (which means that history is constructed and fictionalized) and the "historicity of texts" (which means that texts are embedded in the historical and socio-political conditions of their

production and interpretation). Stephen Greenblatt's critical works on Shakespeare and other authors of the Renaissance are excellent practical examples of New Historicist theories. For instance, Greenblatt's *Hamlet in Purgatory* (2001) delved into Shakespeare's representations of ghosts against the background of the Protestant rejection of the Roman Catholic concept of purgatory.

Michel Foucault is a prominent shaping influence on the discipline of New Historicism. New Historicist theories are shaped by the Foucauldian observation that history is characterised by discontinuities and conflicts rather than continuity and coherence. Foucault's influence is also evident in the key New Historicist principle that literature and culture are never neutral or objective, but are always implicated in power relations and struggles. A text is not merely a formal literary product, but it is a product of the events, attitudes and ideologies of particular historical periods. Not just texts, New Historicists believe that even their own criticism and critical biases are shaped by their historical position and ideology. Since it is not possible for either the text or the reader or the critic to escape "historicity," the meaning of a text is fluid, not fixed. New Historicists examine literary texts both as products of a historical context and as the means to understand cultural and intellectual history of the period in which a text is set.

There are striking similarities between New Historicism and Marxist literary theory, especially that of Cultural Materialism. Both New Historicists and Cultural Materialists wish to examine the histories that shape texts, and in recovering histories that have been lost through repression and subjugation. The major difference is that, while New Historicists focus on the upper strata of the social hierarchy, Cultural Materialists study those who are marginalized and subjugated. New Historicism also aims to dissolve the boundaries between high and low culture. It does this through exploring the ways in which high literature and culture interact with other discursive forms like science, philosophy, and popular culture.

A researcher using New Historicist methodology to analyse a text would begin by identifying the other literary and non-literary texts available at the time of its production, and then would read and interpret the text in the parallel light of its co-text. The text and the historical context (the co-text) are perceived as expressions of the same historical moment. The researcher must consider and analyse all the factors that contribute to the historical background of a text: including social, economic, and political factors.

Some foundational questions that researchers using New Historicism theories can focus on are:

- How does the text represent the historical period and the culture it was produced in?
- What historical events influenced the author in the writing of the text?

- How does the text conform to or resist the dominant discourse of its milieu?

6.6 CONTEXT-ORIENTED APPROACHES: CULTURAL STUDIES

The discipline of Cultural Studies emerged in the latter half of the 20th century. It takes an interdisciplinary approach to analyzing literature. Instead of traditional critical approaches that are solely text-oriented, cultural studies explores the relationship between literature and culture. Like New Historicism, Cultural Studies examines, firstly, how literature is a product of the broader cultural, social, political, and historical contexts in which it is produced and consumed, and secondly, how literature influences these cultural, social, political and economic structures.

Stuart Hall is regarded as one of the founders of British Cultural Studies. In his influential essay, “Notes on Deconstructing the ‘Popular’” Hall explores how readers interact with a text through a process of encoding and decoding. Other significant contributors to Cultural Studies include Walter Benjamin and his ideas on media, Mikhail Bakhtin and his emphasis of context over text, and Roland Barthes who critiqued traditional biographical approaches to literary criticism.

The domain of Cultural Studies is very vast, and cultural studies scholars often analyse how literature intersects with issues such as class, gender, race, sexuality, and power dynamics. They use interdisciplinary methodologies, drawing from other disciplines like history, anthropology, and sociology. Their aim is to understand how literature participates in and shapes cultural discourses. Cultural Studies theory and critical practice acknowledge both the cultural and social implications of literary texts, and the various ways in which literature—which is regarded as a cultural artifact—can be a site of contestation and negotiation of socio-cultural forces.

Some of the key concepts in Cultural Studies literary criticism include identity, hegemony, representation, and the politics of culture. Cultural studies scholars deploy multiple (and often interlinked) theoretical perspectives, including Marxist theory, feminist theory, postcolonial theory, queer theory, critical race theory, and many other emergent theories, to examine literary works in their cultural context. We have discussed Marxist and feminist theory above (in sections 6.3 and 6.4 respectively). Let us briefly look at the other perspectives.

Postcolonial theory is used to study literary texts produced in countries that were once, or are now, colonized by other countries. It may also deal with literature written by citizens of colonizing countries about colonies or their subjugated peoples. Beginning in the 1970s, after the publication of Edward Said’s seminal book, *Orientalism* (1978), Postcolonialism is based on the concepts of otherness and resistance. Postcolonial scholars study how writers from colonized countries attempt to validate and reclaim their cultural identities from the colonizers. They also examine how the

literature of the colonizers justify colonialism, by dividing the world into mutually excluding opposites: the west represents order, reason, masculinity, goodness, self, while the east stands for chaos, the irrational, femininity, evil, and the other. The concept of postcolonial otherness is complicated, and it includes doubleness, both identity and difference, so that every “other” is dialectically created and includes the values and meaning of the colonizing culture even as it rejects its power to define. Postcolonial theory also focuses on resistance, and it recognizes that resistance can be subversion, or opposition, or mimicry. However, resistance always inscribes the resisted into the texture of the resisting: in this way, the colonizer’s presence persists in the society and literature of the colonized. The identity of the colonized is, thus, always changed, it becomes a reclaimed but hybrid identity. Hybridity is another significant concept in Postcolonial theory. It refers to the mingling or integration of cultural signs and practices from the colonizing and the colonized cultures, and it can be both enriching and oppressive. Postcolonial theory helps in investigating research questions such as:

- How does the text’s perspective—as seen through plot, characterization and language—validate either colonial oppression or the resistance of the colonized?
- How does the text affirm or contest colonial ideology, either actively or implicitly?
- How are some characters represented as the “other” and how are they stereotyped negatively?

Critical Race Theory (CRT) originated in 1989 in the United States, where White supremacism is prevalent, everyday fact of life. CRT is based on the premise that race is not a biologically natural, but a socially constructed (culturally invented) category that is used to oppress and exploit people of colour. Critical race theorists aim to apply their understanding of the institutional or structural nature of racism to the end-goal of dismantling race-based and other unjust hierarchies. Some of the basic tenets of CRT are:

- Race is not biogenetic, it is an artificial association or correlation between a set of physical characteristics—like skin colour, etc—and an imagined set of psychological and behavioural tendencies, conceived as either positive or negative, good or bad.
- Racism in the United States is the ordinary experience of most people of colour, often experienced through microaggressions.
- Despite legal advances in favour of exploited groups, the racial hierarchy in America is often unaffected or even reinforced through interest convergence.
- Popular media, culture and literature often attribute differential negative stereotypes to members of various minority groups.

- Looking through the lens of “intersectionality” makes us realise that no individual can be adequately identified by membership in a single group. A person of African American origin may also identify as a woman and a Christian, for instance.
- According to the “voice of colour” thesis, people of colour are uniquely qualified to speak on behalf of other members of their group/s regarding the forms and effects of racism.

Although it originated as an African American movement in legal studies, CRT has influenced scholarship in women’s and gender studies, education, American studies, and sociology, resonating with Asian American, Latinx, LGBTQ, Muslim, and Native American scholars as well. As a literary critical approach, CRT is a valuable aid when engaging with questions like:

- What is the significance of racial issues—implicit or explicit—in the texts examined?
- Are the voices of victims of racism included or excluded and how?
- How does the text reinforce or challenge systemic racism?

Queer theory is a critical lens established in the 1990s. It is used to investigate how gender- and sex-based binaries are constructed and perpetrated through literary and cultural texts, and it aims to undo gender binaries, hierarchies and inequalities. The term ‘queer theory’ was coined by Teresa de Lauretis. De Lauretis explains that queer theory signifies at least three projects—rejecting heterosexuality as the norm for sexual formations, challenging the belief that lesbian and gay studies is one single entity, and focusing on the multiple ways that race shapes sexual bias. A key concept of queer theory is “heteronormativity,” which is a worldview that promotes heterosexuality as the normal and privileged sexual orientation, and it is socially reinforced through institutions like marriage and others. Michael Foucault opines that sexuality was a discursive production rather than an essential part of a human. Foucault refused to accept that sexuality can be clearly defined, and instead, he focused on the expansive production of sexuality within governments of power and knowledge. Gayle Rubin demonstrates how certain sexual expressions are made more valuable than others, and how those who are outside its parameters are oppressed. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick argues that the standardized difference between homo and hetero is disjointed because of two reasons: that homosexuality is thought a minority, and how homosexuality is gendered to be either masculine or feminine. Judith Butler discusses how gender is repeated performativity, and also how gender performativity through drag or cross-dressing could be a strategy of resistance.

Using a queer perspective can help to undermine the base structure on which any identity relies on, and this can be useful in answering research questions like:

- What are the gender norms depicted in the text and how?
- Is there any resistance or subversion of these norms? How is that resistance expressed in the text and how, if at all, are the gender norms destabilized?

As Cultural Studies evolves, its scope broadens to engage with newer and emerging theoretical perspectives like ecocriticism, posthuman studies, food studies, diaspora studies, and many more.

6.7 LET'S SUM UP

Dear learner, let us sum up what we have learned in this chapter. We continued our discussion of approaches to literary research based on M.H. Abrams' diagrammatic representation, and in this unit, we defined and discussed about context-oriented approaches to literary research. The approaches discussed here include literary history; Marxist literary criticism, Feminist literary criticism, New Historicism and Cultural Studies.

Taken together all the units we have defined and discussed the four approaches to literary research—author-focused, text-focused, reader-focused and context-focused. The important theoretical trends applicable to each approach have also been introduced, along with research questions that each such theory can be used to examine and analyse. It has been emphasized that these approaches and trends are fluid and interrelated and that they may be used as a toolbox or a lens by the researcher.

6.8 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Here are some important questions to think about from this unit:

1. When did literary history emerge as a practice? Discuss some concerns that are addressed and investigated through a study of literary history.
2. How does Marxism evaluate the relationship between literature and its socio-economic context?
3. Discuss how texts and co-texts shape and influence each other according to New Historicism.
4. What are the basic focal points of feminist literary theory? Discuss in brief.
5. How does Cultural Studies study a literary text as a cultural artifact? Explain.
6. Discuss briefly the significant features of any of contemporary theoretical perspectives now included in the field of cultural studies.

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QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Unit Structure:

- 7.0 Objectives
- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Research Methods
- 7.3 Oral History as a Research Method
- 7.4 Visual Methods
- 7.5 Use of Ethnographic Methods
- 7.6 Case Study method for language Research
- 7.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 7.8 Important Questions
- 7.9 References

Having discussed three significant theoretical approaches in literary research, namely, text-oriented, context-oriented and author-oriented approaches, we will acquaint ourselves with various research methods, especially in connection with linguistic and literary studies. We discussed a few concepts related to language and literary studies research in Module I, Unit II. We will now discuss research methods that originated in disciplines other than humanities. Before we begin this journey, let us ask ourselves some questions:

- What do we understand by the ‘oral history method’?
- Is the ‘visual method’ relevant in language literature studies?
- What does the term ‘ethnography’ mean in research?
- How does one use the ‘case study’ method in carrying out research in language and literary studies?
- How the interdisciplinary research methods like the Oral history method, visual method and ethnography help us carry out research in the field of language and literary studies with specific reference to English.

While we will address these questions in this unit, you may like to explore online sources (such as the Google search engine) and/or offline sources (such as a book, an encyclopaedia or a handbook) so that we have a better understanding of the topic.

7.0 OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this unit is

1. To familiarise ourselves with the notion of the ‘oral history’ method, visual method, ethnographic method and case study in literary and language research
2. To understand the tools used in the ‘oral history’ method, visual method and ethnographic, case study method
3. To identify research areas in the English language and literary studies that can be explored using these methods

After studying this unit, we will better understand the literary and language research methods and be equipped to use the appropriate methods.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

With the recent curricular changes in light of the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Research has become an integral part of a postgraduate degree programme. As a student of English language and literary studies, you need to carry out research projects in an area or two. You must have a better understanding of various research methods in language and literary studies. In the previous units we have already discussed common research methods in literary studies. In this unit, we will concentrate on a few interdisciplinary research methods, namely, the ‘oral history’ method, the visual method, the ethnographic, and case study method.

‘Language and Literary Studies’ in general and ‘English Language and Literary Studies’ in particular is a broad area which intersects with disciplines such as Linguistics, Philosophy, Psychology, Pedagogy, Culture Studies, and Sociology. We may explore many dimensions when we are studying the English language. This may include but is not limited to studying

- the use and usage of English in different contexts such as media, literature, education, administration, or as a lingua franca or contact language
- learning and teaching of English Literature in a particular context or using a specific approach
- influence of English on other languages or how other languages influence English
- position of English in curricular/ administrative policies in a particular region/country

This, as mentioned earlier, is not an exhaustive list but helps us understand the expanse of language and literary studies.

7.2 RESEARCH METHODS

In the context of research methodology, as we learned earlier, ‘method’ is the particular tools and procedures that are used to collect and analyse data. According to Jankowicz (2013), Methods are "a systematic and orderly approach taken towards the collection and analysis of data so that information can be obtained from those data"(209). The data may be achieved by way of experiments, observations, interviews, surveys and/or statistical tests.

When we consider doing research in the English language and literature studies, we may be interested in various types of research such as theoretical research, empirical research and/or applied research. Though such research is predominantly qualitative, some areas of linguistic research may explore quantitative methods.

Please note that the above-mentioned classification of research is not exclusive to only language and literary studies. It is found in other fields of inquiry like Social Sciences as well. However, we will look at this range of research in the context of English language and literature studies.

Let us look at the possible research questions in language and literature studies:

1. What is the evolving role of literature in shaping cultural narratives and personal identities within a specific community?
2. How do the personal accounts of speakers contribute to our understanding of sociolinguistic variations and language change within a speech community over time?
3. What insights do the midlife experiences of immigrant women can offer in their diasporic existence?

You must have noticed that these research questions require you to use empirical evidence by way of observation or interview/interaction. You will need to use a range of tools for data collection. We will look at the research methods, which become relevant in such research.

7.3 ORAL HISTORY METHOD

Let us start by defining the Oral History Method. According to Library Guides: Oral History Research and Resources, oral history is a method of conducting historical research through recorded interviews between a narrator, who has personal experience of historically significant events, and a well-informed interviewer. The goal is to contribute to the historical record.

Let us observe Penny Summerfield’s remarks on Oral history as mentioned in her chapter on ‘Oral History as a Research Method’. According to her, oral telling of public and personal histories has gained recognition in academic and non-academic spheres. It is very much a part

of scholarly practices in a range of disciplines such as anthropology, education, history, and political science. When we think of oral history as a research method in the context of English studies, we notice that interviews with dramatists, poets, and fiction writers or recordings of their personal experiences such as reading practices and trends in theatre going can be insightful.

A brief look at the history of this method will show you that some scholars believed oral history could contribute to the recovery of histories that would otherwise remain unknown. Western Historians in the 1970s engaged themselves in recovering history by using cheaper and smaller recording technology to create records where that did not exist in the earlier system. The 'recovery' approach found takers in women and feminist historians like Elizabeth Roberts and Jill Liddington. In the 1980s and 1990s, historians used it to write the history of ethnic minorities to give voice to the voiceless, raising consciousness and empowering the subaltern.

In literary studies, the oral history method is particularly effective when focusing on individuals' lived experiences, memories, and voices. These accounts can provide critical insights. For example, suppose you want to explore the oral narratives of a marginalized community like the Banjaras. In that case, you can uncover their views on literature, culture, and society using the oral history method.

Reception studies is an emerging area in literary studies. It differs from the reader response approach because it is empirical and focuses on the reactions of real recipients rather than an imaginary or ideal reader. The oral history method proves useful. For instance, if you wish to investigate how specific works of literature, audiences received especially plays, over time, you can achieve this through interviews with readers, scholars, or performers.

Another area where the oral history method is suitable is examining the social or political impact of a literary movement or a specific author through first-hand accounts. Additionally, oral history can be valuable for conducting biographical research on an author. This involves collecting oral testimonies from family members and friends of the author, which can provide insights into their life, creative processes, and the context in which they wrote.

Understanding the historical and cultural context in which a literary work is produced can also deepen your appreciation of that work. For example, exploring the narratives of a diasporic or displaced community can help you understand their cultural memory. Given the rise of trauma studies, memory studies, and identity studies, oral history has become an effective research method for exploring the interplay between collective memory and literary depictions of specific historical events.

Having discussed various areas in which the oral history method can be applied, it is important to take certain precautions as a researcher.

You should:

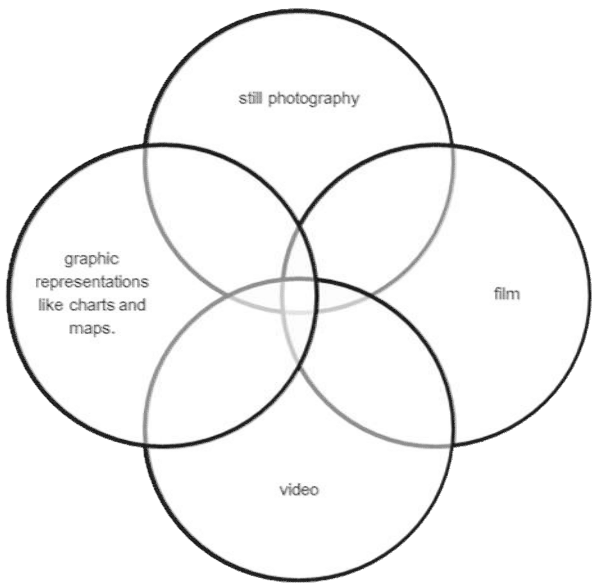
- 1. Have clear objectives.
- 2. Follow a structured approach when using interviews as a tool.
- 3. Seek proper consent.
- 4. Ensure adequate representation of the participants.

The above discussion illustrates that the oral history method promotes a dialogic and inclusive approach. It enriches literary studies by bringing personal and communal voices to the forefront, which are often absent in conventional textual analyses of literary works.

7.4 VISUAL METHODS

The term ‘Visual research method’ (VRM) has been around for quite some time. It is however not discipline-specific. According to the American Library Association (2021), Visual research methods comprise a collection of methods that incorporate visual elements such as maps, drawings, photographs, videos, as well as three-dimensional objects into the research process.

It is only since the 1990s that the use of visual methods has started gaining ground in social sciences questioning the monopoly of quantitative methods in academic sociology.



Forms of Visual Methods

According to Dalia Chakrabarti, Visual methods encompass different forms of visuals like still photography, film, video, and graphic representations like charts and maps. Some visuals are stationary as in photo albums, newspapers, billboards, handbills, advertisements on public walls, art albums, leaflets etc.; and some are moving as in cinema, documentary films, YouTube, blogs etc.

While still photographs reveal what is going on at a particular point in time, movies allow the study of processes and complex interactions in their natural course, which may not be fully evident from an interview with a subject.

We get both subjective and objective information through Visuals. The act of viewing and subsequent interpretation entails emotional engagement with a photo or a film. However, one can conceive the latter as an impersonal record of behaviour.

According to Dalia Chakrabarti, visuals usually appear in a package, with

- A frame signifying that the world of the depicted object continues beyond the frame;
- A caption, attributing specific meaning to it; and
- Written text contextualizing its meaning.

Visuals are polysemic, in that, their meanings differ.

- The photographer has their meaning.
- Those who have been photographed have their version of the event.
- The viewers, other than the photographers and the photographed subjects, may have quite a different take on the event.

You must remember that all these interpretations are subject to change over time and in different contexts and there is no question of primacy of one particular meaning over the other.

The analysis of visual images became the most popular approach among scholars in culture studies. Semiotics has been a major influence in using visual methods.

A chapter in Research Methods in Language and Education. Encyclopedia of Language and Education by Anne Pitkanen-Huhta discusses how visual methods have been adopted and used as a methodological tool in researching language practices and language learning. It looks at the materiality of language along with alternative and complementary strategies to study the experiences and meaning making of language users and learners. The researcher focuses on discourse ethnographic approaches in the contexts of language learning, multilingualism, and identity negotiations by using visual research strategies of looking, seeing, and designing.

The text under question may be analysed by using various analytical or theoretical frameworks in Linguistics. For example,

The researcher needs to engage in a field study or collect empirical evidence to draw conclusions.

Visual Methodologies in Literary Studies

In her discussion on Visual Methodologies, Gillian Rose highlights how disciplines like art history, visual anthropology, visual sociology, and geography have traditionally studied visual images. However, in recent years, these approaches have begun to cross-disciplinary boundaries.

Thanks to advancements in digital publishing, e-books now often include embedded still images, videos, and even audio. This shift has fueled what Rose terms Visual Culture.

What does this mean for English studies? Rose observes that scholars of literature and language are increasingly intrigued by the visual elements surrounding their primary object of study—the book. Images are no longer just decorative; they accompany books in diverse forms, such as cover designs, illustrations, publicity materials, and film adaptations.

The interplay between words and Images:

Images and written or spoken words share an intricate and intimate relationship. Yet, there is a notable hesitation to delve into how meaning emerges from images. Specifically, in English studies, some scholars argue that visual elements often get sidelined. As Rose points out, it is rare to find detailed analyses of imagery that exists in close connection with written texts. This oversight is surprising, given that understanding images often demands deep contextual knowledge, scholarly engagement, and a willingness to explore their ties to contemporary textual forms.

Methods for analysing text-image relationship:

Rose proposes three methods to tackle the relationship between text and image: **compositional interpretation**, **semiology**, and **discourse analysis**. Let us explore each in detail:

Compositional interpretation

Rose introduces the concept of compositional interpretation as a way to carefully examine how visual materials intersect with literary texts. This method focuses on how different elements of an image come together to form a cohesive whole. Visual compositions can reiterate identities and subject positions in complex ways, enriching our understanding of both the text and its associated images.

Semiology

Semiology, or semiotic analysis, investigates how an image is structured and what it signifies. This approach considers the social conditions that shape the production and reception of images, as well as the effects images can have on their viewers. However, semiology has its limitations—it often struggles with representativeness and replicability. Critics like Don Slater have also noted that semiology sometimes overlooks the social practices, institutions, and relationships that influence how images are created and interpreted.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis shifts the focus from deep structures within an image to the effects of texts and institutions in practice. Rooted in the work of Michel Foucault, discourse refers to a specific body of knowledge that shapes our understanding of the world and guides social practices. As

Lynda Nead explains, discourse is “a particular form of language with its own rules and conventions and the institutions within which it is produced and circulated.”

For example, art can be understood as a type of discourse—a specialized form of knowledge. Discourse analysis thus becomes a valuable tool for examining how verbal and visual forms together construct meaning. While traditionally centred on language, scholars like Fran Tonkiss have expanded discourse analysis to include visual imagery, showing how images construct particular views of the social world.

Based on the ongoing discussion you can conclude that by employing these methods, researchers can uncover how visual and textual elements interact to shape meaning. This is especially important as visual culture continues to influence literary studies, offering new perspectives on how texts and images co-create knowledge.

In summary, Gillian Rose’s work on visual methodologies provides a robust framework for analyzing the text-image relationship, encouraging us to think beyond words and appreciate the multifaceted ways in which meaning is constructed.

7.5 ETHNOGRAPHY AS A RESEARCH METHOD

Ethnography is a qualitative research method commonly used in the social and behavioural sciences. As mentioned in *Ethnographic Research*, it involves collecting data through observations and interviews, which are then analysed to draw conclusions about how societies and individuals function.

As stated in “Use Ethnographic Methods and Participant Observation”, this method focuses on studying people within their cultural contexts to produce a narrative account of that specific culture, framed by theoretical perspectives. As part of this research, you will examine:

- The actions people take as well as the words they use.
- Their interactions with one another and with their social and cultural environments.
- What remains unspoken, as much as what is expressed verbally.
- The language, symbols, rituals, and shared meanings that shape their world.

In short, this research method entails immersing oneself in a specific community or organization to observe their behaviour and interactions closely. You must have noticed that ethnography is a research method mainly associated with the social sciences. However, researchers in language and literary studies have been using this research method. Especially, literary studies that involve intersections of gender, race, class, caste, sexuality etc. encourage an ethnographic method to include the lived experiences of the participants. In the context of language studies, it will

involve ‘Interviews’ and ‘direct observations of subjects’ such as language learners, second language speakers, language teachers etc. during their social interaction in their natural environment. This method aims at getting a better understanding of how the subjects act, react and interact in such an environment. Researchers use these observations to draw conclusions. Instruments of data collection in such a method include direct observation, diary, video recordings, and interviews. The duration of observation in this type of research depends on the scope of the study. It may be as short as a day or may take several months.

You need to know that **two types of observation** involved in this research are passive observation and contextual interview.

Passive Observation:

The first type of observation is also known as ‘shadowing’. The researcher follows and observes the daily tasks of the subjects by using methods such as note-taking and audio/video recording. In such research, the number of researchers depends on the number of subjects. More than one researcher is involved if the number of subjects is more.

Contextual Interview:

In the second type of observation, i.e. contextual interviews, the researchers interact with the subjects while observing their daily actions/reactions and interactions.

You may have a question here. ‘Is everyone the researcher interacts with or observes a participant in such a study?’ The answer is NO. The participants are determined based on the type of information that is collected and how the data is recorded. Let us understand this with an example:

If you are talking to one or more English language teachers in a particular school about the New Education Policy, it may not qualify them as participants. However, if we talk to them about their experiences as teachers while teaching English under the NEP2020 framework, it will qualify them as participants.

The major advantage is using ethnography is that it allows first-hand observations of how subjects act, react and interact with a new approach/ curriculum/ syllabus/ textbook etc. However, such research is relatively more time-consuming and cost-heavy. Moreover, certain areas and/or situations may be risky for the ‘participants’. Hence, you as a researcher should have a well-designed consent form. Moreover, you should maintain ‘confidentiality’ to protect your participants from potential harm.

Self-Check Exercise

Let us summarize what we studied in this unit through ‘fill-in-the-black self-check activity.

Ethnography is a _____ (qualitative/quantitative) research method widely used in social and behavioural sciences to study individuals and societies within their _____ (economic/cultural) contexts through _____ (written records/ observations and interviews). Ethnography is also applied in language and literary studies, especially when examining intersections of _____ (geography and history/ gender, race, class, and other identities). Language-related ethnography often involves observing _____ (authors and critics/ learners, speakers, and teachers) in natural settings to analyze their interactions. Data collection methods include _____ (visiting libraries/ observation, interviews, diaries, and video recordings), with research durations ranging from a day to several months.

Two key observation types are _____ (active observation/ passive observation) and _____ (contextual Interviews/reported observation).

While ethnography offers deep insights through first-hand observation, it is _____ (time-saving/time-intensive), _____ (costly/inexpensive), and may involve risks for participants.

7.6 CASE STUDY

Case Study as a qualitative research method is widely used in language studies, especially in applied linguistics. This includes research on learning, teaching and use of English as a second language or foreign language. The ‘Case’ in this context is usually a person or a small group of individuals. This may include a teacher, learner, speaker/language user, writer or interlocutor. If it is a group, it may be a family, a class, a work team, a community of practice such as nurses or drivers etc. The approach used in this research method is intensive rather than extensive. The purpose of such research is an in-depth understanding of individuals’ experiences, problems, stages and ways of development or linguistic performance in various contexts of language use. The ultimate goal of such research is to provide us with a contextualized human profile. Hence, this does not include a larger sample or focus on hypotheses or findings in terms of quantitative analysis.

Now we will look at some of the key aspects in case study research which are discussed by Duff.

A major concept is a ‘qualitative’ or ‘interpretative’ case study. The researcher studies individuals/ groups of language users with a sociocultural, educational or political factor in the background, for instance, New Language Policy or education policy. The study views the reality of these individuals as co-constructed through the dynamic processes of interaction with others and the immediate social world. The researcher rather than seeking insights and perspectives from the ‘cases’ explicitly, attempts to understand the phenomenon by interpreting it.

Defining and delimiting the case is another significant aspect. It is important to understand that the selected ‘case’ is usually presented from the researcher’s perspective. Even if you as a researcher take the participant’s insider perspective or voice into consideration, it is the purpose for which you conduct the research, choose participants, select interview transcripts and include observations that become defining and delimiting factors.

Another aspect that you need to consider is the decision about the number of cases. It depends on the purpose of the research. You may select either a single case or multiple cases. Most single-case studies allow an explanation of the complexity and features of that one case. The choice of multiple cases depends on the logistic provisions available.

You need to be equally mindful of the duration of the case study and timescales. Some case study research is longitudinal in nature especially when the focus of the study is development or change in linguistic behaviour or attitude. However, not all case studies are longitudinal. There are case studies that involve interviews, and observations at one specific point of time and within a limited time-frame. Sometimes it may access retrospective life history through interviews or written narratives or any form of documents.

Moreover, critical reflexivity and ethics also play an important role. You need to reflect carefully on the social and context-loaded process of generating meaning. You need to maintain journals/ diary to register observations, research processes used, decisions made, issues that arose or areas for follow-up. As a researcher, you need to be very careful in carrying a nuanced reporting.

Now, let us look at some potential areas in which the case study research method can be useful.

- Impact of Continuous Assessment policy on English language learning and teaching
- Linguistic experiences of students from rural/tribal areas studying in urban colleges
- Motivation and cultural distance in learning English as a Second Language
- Perspectives on struggling English language learners

7.7 LET US SUM UP

Let’s recap what you learned in this unit.

You explored the Oral History method as a research approach involving recorded interviews with individuals who have experienced historically significant events. This method has gained recognition across various academic disciplines, including literary studies, where it provides critical

insights into people's lived experiences, memories, and perspectives. It is particularly useful for examining the reception of literary works, assessing the social or political impact of literary movements, conducting biographical research on authors, and understanding the historical and cultural context in which literary works are created. Additionally, you learned about the importance of following a structured approach, obtaining proper consent, and ensuring adequate representation of participants when employing the oral history method.

In your study of visual methods, you learned that this term encompasses a range of interdisciplinary techniques. By using these methods, researchers can uncover how visual and textual elements interact to shape meaning. Visual methods are especially relevant as visual culture continues to influence literary studies, offering new perspectives on how texts and images co-create knowledge. You also discovered that visual methodologies provide a strong framework for analyzing the relationship between text and image, encouraging us to look beyond words and appreciate the diverse ways in which meaning is constructed.

You then learned about ethnography, a qualitative research method predominantly used in the social and behavioural sciences. This method involves immersing oneself in a specific community or organization to closely observe their behaviours and interactions. Researchers collect data through observations and interviews with the individuals involved. This method is particularly useful in literary studies that focus on the intersections of gender, class, sexuality, race, and caste, as well as in language studies focused on language learners, educators, and second-language speakers.

Finally, you familiarized yourself with the case study method within the context of language studies. This method is intensive rather than extensive and may involve a single person or a small group of individuals. It helps create a contextualized human profile. You studied key concepts such as qualitative/interpretative case studies, defining and delimiting the case, the duration of a case study, as well as critical reflexivity and ethics.

7.8 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the oral history method in detail, outlining its main components in light of language and literary studies.
2. Evaluate the key precautions researchers must take when applying the oral history method.
3. Examine the application of the oral history method in literary studies.
4. Discuss the concept of visual methods and ways in which visual methods can be made relevant to the research in English Studies.
5. Compare and contrast different visual methods.

6. Which method/s according to you is most effective in exploring visual material in literary or verbal text? Justify your response.
7. How does ethnography as a method contribute to a better understanding of cultural contexts and social interactions? Discuss in light of English studies.
8. Analyse the advantages and limitations of ethnography as a research method. Illustrate where necessary.
9. Discuss the relevance of the case study method in qualitative research, particularly in Language studies.
10. Explain how the concept of a 'case' is defined and delimited in qualitative case study research
11. Describe the role of the researcher in qualitative case studies, especially regarding the interpretation of data and co-construction of reality.
12. Discuss how case study research can provide a nuanced understanding of language learning/teaching in specific sociocultural contexts.

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Answer Key:

Self-Check Exercise:

qualitative,

cultural,

observations and interviews,

gender, race, class, and other identities,

learners, speakers, and teachers

observation, interviews, diaries, and video recording

passive observation

contextual Interviews

time-intensive

costly



COLLECTION OF DATA, VALIDITY & RELIABILITY OF DATA, AND RESEARCH VARIABLES

Unit Structure

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Research Tool: Types of Data Collection
- 8.3 Primary Data
- 8.4 Secondary Data
- 8.5 Data Sources
 - 8.5.1 Knowledge Research Centre (Print and Online)
 - 8.5.2 Field Archives
 - 8.5.3 Documentaries
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8.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, you will learn about the important research tool i.e. data collection. After reading this unit, you should be able to:

- Differentiate between primary and secondary data.

- Identify various modes and sources for collecting primary and secondary data.
- Explore the use of library resources and e-resources effectively.
- Examine different methods of data collection.
- Assess the reliability and validity of data.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous units, we learnt to define our research problem and chalk out a research plan and method. In this unit, we will learn about data collection and its types (Qualitative and Quantitative, and Primary and Secondary Data). After listing a few modes and methods of data collection, we will highlight some key differences between Primary and Secondary Data and sources. Thereafter, we will focus on the various print and online sources of data, data collection measures for language research, types of research variables and validity and reliability of data.

8.2 RESEARCH TOOL: TYPES OF DATA COLLECTION

Data (singular datum) is the raw material with which we begin our research. In simple words, data refers to bits of information that we gather to investigate some problem or issue. In this section, we will learn about the three important questions about data collection. What is meant by data collection? What are the characteristics of data? What are the types of data?

Data collection is the process by which we gather, measure and analyse varied information using standard techniques. What is the aim of data collection? It helps us in making informed choices or decisions. For example, policymakers in language studies depend on linguists who collect data about the existing languages and the number of speakers of a particular language group. One advantage of such data collection is the National Education Policy (2020) which advocates the preservation, dissemination and education of learners in Indian Languages.

There are two types of data collection – qualitative and quantitative. When our data is based on numbers or is numerical, it is quantitative data. When our data is descriptive i.e. not only text or words but also photos, audio and video-recordings etc. then it is qualitative data. We can choose the method of data collection based on two factors. First, we must be clear about the nature, objective or purpose and the scope of the research design or plan. Second, we must consider the time and resources at our disposal. We can also classify data into Primary and Secondary Data and we will examine them in some detail in the following sections.

8.3 PRIMARY DATA

In this section, we will explain some of the characteristics of Primary Data and list the varied modes of collecting Primary Data. Then we will look at the features of Secondary Data and the modes of collecting Secondary Data. We will also take a quick look at some of the differences between Primary and Secondary Data.

Primary data is data that a researcher collects for the first time. The source of primary data is original. Primary data can be quantitative (numerical) or qualitative (descriptive). Based on the way we collect data, we can identify four kinds of primary data – measurement (numbers for instance votes, results, cooking temperatures), observation (recording events with a camera or tape recorder), interrogation (asking questions about likes/dislikes, interview) and participation (experiencing by doing).

For instance, speech samples can be primary data when we wish to study language acquisition by children. In this observational method (natural speech data collection), we can collect speech samples of a speaker in a natural environment. In the past, a researcher made notes of the speech samples in his/her diary. But we cannot rely completely on such diary notes because we cannot verify the intonation, pronunciation, context and structure of a speaker's language.

With the advent of technology, we can collect speech samples with the help of digital recorders and proceed to do an audio recording or a video recording. But we must take proper precautions while using technology. We must take the speaker's consent or permission, preferably in a written manner. It is very important to have the written consent of the school authorities or parents if we intend to take an audio recording or video recording of speech samples and images of children. There is no doubt that audio or video recordings help us in preserving raw data. One of the advantages is that we can reuse, re-analyse and re-verify such raw data. Video recordings are better than audio recordings. When we are doing a video recording of children, we must take due care to ensure the presence of an adult (parent or teacher) in addition to the written consent of the adult.

If we are using the experimental method, as researchers, we can ask questions to a speaker and record his/her responses. How is this useful? This method will help us in analyzing the speech patterns produced by a speaker and in explaining the linguistic principles. Let us now examine some of the modes or sources of collecting Primary Data in language studies and literature studies.

In language research, we can use different modes of collecting primary data, for instance, close observation, experimentation, survey and questionnaire, interview, or oral histories and focus groups.

In literature studies, primary sources consist of original manuscripts (hand-written notes, records, letters, diaries, documents, journals,

memoirs) and original texts/works (interviews, testimony, speeches, numerical data, surveys, official documents, video performance of a play, photographs, paintings, transcripts, government documents, empirical studies, court records, ephemera like postage stamps, posters, maps, advertisements, leaflets, trade cards and brochures etc.

Collection Of Data,
Validity & Reliability Of
Data, And Research
Variables

8.4 SECONDARY DATA

Secondary Data is not original for it is not first-hand information but second-hand information. As mentioned before, many researchers gather Primary Data with a specific objective or purpose. When such Primary Data is reused it becomes Secondary Data.

So, Secondary Data is data which already exists or is readily available. Let us look at the benefit of using Secondary Data. Researchers are hard pressed for time and it is not always possible to collect Primary Data. So, when we use Secondary Data, we can save both our efforts, time and money. We can use Secondary Data if we want to formulate a hypothesis for further research. If we wish to examine past and present trends then we can undertake a literature review and compare the findings from various research studies. What are the three advantages of using Secondary Data? First, Secondary Data enables us to understand the research problems in a better manner. Second, we will be able to identify the gaps and limitations of previous research. Finally, we will be able to indicate how our current research proposes to address the gaps or limitations of previous researchers.

Secondary Data sources can be any data that is published or unpublished. Among the published data are the numerous international publications by governments and institutions (research, commercial and financial) and reports put forward by different committees and commissions, newspapers and periodicals. In language research, when we collect audio or video recordings of oral histories it is an example of Primary Data but when we reuse the existing recording it becomes Secondary Data. In literature research, if the primary source is a literary work, then a critical journal article or review or summary of the literary work becomes a source of Secondary Data.

After understanding the characteristics of Primary and Secondary Data in the previous sections, we will now take a quick look at the differences between Primary and Secondary Data.

Since Primary Data is gathered for a specific purpose, it is original. When we reuse the Primary Data gathered and used by other researchers, it is called Secondary data. We can draw Secondary Data from journals, books, government agencies etc. The process of collecting Primary Data requires the help of experts and so it is an expensive process but Primary Data is more accurate and reliable than Secondary Data. We generally depend on Secondary Data for decision making and experts are not required for collecting Secondary Data. So, collecting Secondary Data is time-saving and less expensive but also less accurate. As good researchers, Primary

Data must be the foundation of our research paper and we can use Secondary Data as a supplement to our Primary Data.

8.5 DATA SOURCES: LIBRARY (PRINT AND ONLINE)

In this section, we will examine the innumerable resources available in our College/University libraries. Libraries [now known as Knowledge Research Centres (KRCs)] can offer both print resources and electronic resources for our research purposes.

8.5.1 Knowledge Resource Centre

The KRC is the most reliable place to get secondary data - published work related to our research. It is an important place where many sources of information available to researchers. The books a researcher requires to refer to for their research are well placed in the KRC. Other national and international publications like reports of foreign governments, Government of India, State governments, commercial and financial institutions, reports of various committees and commissions, newspapers, magazines, scholarly journals, unpublished theses and dissertations are also well stacked in a KRC. Apart from the reference materials in print form like field archives, there is collection of non-print sources like documentaries, audio and video recordings in a KRC.

A postgraduate student studying in regular or distance education / online programmes need to collect secondary data for their research by visiting KRCs. Nowadays KRCs are partly or fully automatized. Hence the researchers need training in collection of data from various types of databases. The effective use of Web Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) at KRC is also a skill to be developed by research students.

Web OPAC of University of Mumbai -
<https://mu.ac.in/knowledge-resource-centre#1622546417770-002b0565-375a>

8.5.2 Field Archives

Field archives are the various collections of primary data that researchers gather from their field research. Some examples of field archives in print or electronic form are raw data like surveys, manuscripts, interviews, oral histories, field notes, audio-visual materials etc. Why are field archives vital? They help researchers access original and first-hand accounts of experiences, languages and cultures.

In language research, we can use field archives in three ways. We can document endangered languages, understand the variations in dialects and understand the context of languages and cultures. We can create our field archives or get access to existing field archives. We can do our fieldwork and create field archives. While we are creating field archives, we must bear in mind three important aspects. First, we must be ethical. Second, we

must take informed consent from the participants. Thirdly, we must be sensitive to cultural nuances.

We can also access existing field archives by approaching Museums, Universities and Research Institutions that work to preserve and disseminate field archives for research purposes. ELAR (Endangered Languages Archive), DELAMAN (Digital Endangered Languages and Music Archives Network), British Library Sound Archive, SiDHELA (Sikkim-Darjeeling Himalayan Endangered Languages Archive) and SPARROW (Sound and Pictures Archive for Research on Women) are organizations that are useful to researchers.

8.5.3 Documentaries

A documentary is a film or video that relates stories based on real-life people, events, and situations. Why are documentaries made? They are made to maintain a record or to instruct and entertain people. Documentaries are of six types, namely poetic, expository, observational, participatory, reflexive and performative. In the context of language and literature research, documentaries help us understand the varied contexts, texts and writers. Documentaries on literary history give an overview of the historical milieu and socio-political and cultural influences on writers and literary works.

In tune with the National Education Policy 2020, we can preserve and promote Indian languages and literature and gain insights into the complex dynamics of languages and cultures. *Speaking in Tongues: Linguistic Heritage of India* (2003) covers the rich linguistic legacy and records both the evolution and status of classical and contemporary languages. *Unheard Voices* (2005) highlights the marginalization of tribal languages and cultural identities. *Babel in India* (2012) explores the coexistence of and tensions between the regional languages and the rising influence of Hindi and English in shaping identities and power structures. *Vanishing Voices* (2014) examines the impact of migration, urbanization and educational policies in endangering tribal languages like Bhil and Garasia. *The Last Script* (2016) records the initiatives taken to preserve The Great Andamanese languages.

In Search of Bilingualism: India's Linguistic Landscape (2017) documents the influence of the complex relations between English, Hindi and regional languages in Education and real life. *Children of the Konkani Language* (2018) portrays the linguistic efforts in reviving and disseminating Konkani in the coastal regions through educational, literary and cultural initiatives. *The Birth of a Language* (2019) examines elements like code-switching, diglossia and multilingualism in urban India and the evolution and influence of hybridization on the language of Bollywood. *Mother Tongues: The Journey of a Language* (2020) records the loss of languages and cultural identities in northeastern parts of India and the efforts taken for their revitalization. *India's Fading Languages* (2021) captures the endeavours to preserve oral traditions i.e. endangered

spoken languages like Tulu (Karnataka), Kodava (Coorg) and Konyak (Nagaland).

Let us list some documentaries that capture the diversity of oral, literary and performance traditions in India. *Tamas: A Literary Adaptation* (1988) is an insightful documentation of the 1947 partition of India. It is a cinematic adaptation of Bhishma Sahni's historical fiction *Tamas* that portrays the violence, trauma and displacement of people. *Mirza Ghalib: A Tale of Love and Longing* (1988) explores Urdu poet Mirza Ghalib's poetry and life during the declining Mughal Empire. *Ritwik Ghatak: Fragmented Memories* (2002) records Ghatak's films which portrayed the impact of Bengal Partition on literature and cinema. *The Speaking Hand: Zakir Hussain and the Art of Indian Percussion* (2003) documents the efforts of table maestro Zakir Hussain and the connections between classical Indian music and literary traditions (ghazals, devotional poetry and folk songs).

The Story of Indian English (2005) is a close examination of the evolution of Indian English literature and the role of English in the literary landscape of India. *The World of Apu: Satyajit Ray's Literary Adaptations* (2010) provides evidence of the relationship between literature and cinema through Bengali filmmaker Ray's visual story telling in his screen adaptations of Bengali literature. *Rabindranath Tagore: The Poet of Eternity* (2011) is a commemoration of Tagore's contributions to the Indian and global literary landscape and philosophy. *Kaavad Yatra: A Journey into Rajasthani Folktales* (2012) explores the connections between storytelling, music and performance in oral traditions (Kaavad) in rural Rajasthan. *Astitva: Indian Women Writers* (2014) addresses the gender gap in a predominantly male literary world and highlights the works of women writers in regional languages. *In the Footsteps of Mahasweta Devi* (2017) examines the literary works of writer-activist Mahasweta Devi who called for affirmative changes for the neglected tribal communities.

The above documentaries are available on Youtube, in Doordarshan archives, Prasar Bharati, media libraries of reputed Universities, Films Division of India, Film Study Centres, DVD Collections, Directorate of Film Festivals, Indian Streaming Platforms, regional broadcasting networks, BBC and Kanopy. We can also refer to critical reviews of the documentaries in academic journals.

8.5.4 E-Resources

E-resources in language research consist of many tools and databases like Linguistic Data Consortium (LDC), The Internet Archive, Project Gutenberg, HathiTrust, Ethnologue, The World Atlas of Language Structures (WALS), Corpus tools like Antconc, Sketch Engine, Language Learning and Teaching Resources like Duolingo and BBC, Academic journals like JSTOR, Project Muse and Google Scholar and ResearchGate, Software Tools like Praat, SPSS or R and online Communities and Forums like Linguist List, Sahitya Akademi and GoodReads.

In the context of research in Indian Languages, E-sources include Digital South Asia Library (DSAL), National Digital Library of India (NDLI), Saraswati Digital Library, Indian Language Corpora Initiative (ILCI), Bharatvani (multilingual resources), Language Learning Platforms like NPTEL (National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning) and IndiBhasha, Research Journals and publications like Indian Linguistics and Language in India, Tools like CLARIN-India and LinguaNet for linguistic analysis, Cultural and Historical Resources like Archive.org and Internet Archive's South Asian Languages Collection, online Communities and Forums like Linguist List, Facebook Groups and WhatsApp Communities, Government and Institutional Resources like Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Language Development Authorities, Social Media, Blogs (The Language of India, Bhasha Sangham, The Bookworm and The Indian Book Review) and YouTube Channels. We have online Tools for textual analysis like Voyant Tools and TaPoR and Citation Management Tools like Zotero and Mendeley. We can access many online courses and lectures through Coursera, edX, and MOOCS. Additionally, there are author-specific platforms and online journals like Indian literature.

Technological advances have enabled quick and easy access to many electronic resources. Some of the e-resources include UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium, N-LIST, INFLIBNET and ERNET). Now we may have a look at various e-resources which may help a researcher to collect data for their research. Some of the major initiatives taken by the Government of India have been briefly introduced here.

ERNET

Education and Research Network (ERNET) is a nationwide network located at the premiere Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and research institutions in India. It was established by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology with the objective of facilitating education and research institutions in the establishment of cutting-edge ICT infrastructure. Apart from providing connectivity, the focus of ERNET is on building an academic and research network and providing relevant information and education content to the users.

ERNET was started in 1994 with two aims. The first aim was to increase the potential and capability of education and research in India through internet connectivity. The second aim was to democratize education and research by providing easy access to digital resources. Some key characteristics of ERNET are as follows: It enhances communication and pooling and sharing of resources between educational and research institutes through high-speed internet access. With the help of various capacity-building initiatives, both teachers and learners are trained in digital literacy and technological skills. Researchers can get access to databases, journals and digital resources. Institutions can share knowledge and collaborate and look for innovative solutions. Teachers can create online courses, increase digital resources and enhance e-learning

opportunities. It has tools and services for protection of data and communication.

ERNET offers institutional membership to affiliated Universities and Colleges. ERNET bridges the digital divide and provides easy access to high-quality educational and research resources. Contact your librarian for login credentials. It trains researchers in the efficient use of its website. It provides access to digital libraries and databases and offers technical support if there are connectivity problems. Even independent researchers can use this facility by approaching any member institution of ERNET.

In tune with the rich linguistic diversity of our country and the principle of ‘think global and act local’, ERNET supports multilingual initiatives in India. We can refer to MeitY (<https://www.meity.gov.in/>) for a greater understanding of ERNET’s increasing role in promoting regional languages. It provides interfaces in Indian languages and creates an inclusive learning environment accessible to local and global learners and researchers. It offers training workshops to faculty and learners to use multilingual tools and resources. It works to increase the digital literacy skills of learners from varied backgrounds. It reduces linguistic barriers by encouraging translations of educational resources and digital content into Indian languages. It collaborates and partners with institutions for content creation relevant to Indian culture and context. It democratizes education and empowers Indians by using regional languages.

UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium

Many researchers found it difficult to access materials for research work. So, the University Grants Commission started the UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium with three-fold aims. They were to provide easy access to digital resources, support future research and promote collaboration among research institutions. UGC-INFONET provides subscription facilities to libraries. It organizes offline and online training workshops to enable faculty and learners to search digital resources. It gives regular technical support and has a feedback mechanism in place. These efforts help to bridge the urban-rural digital divide, increase research output and create healthy networking between research institutions.

INFLIBNET (<https://www.inflibnet.ac.in/about/index.php>)

Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) is one of the important projects of the University Grants Commission (UGC) in modernizing and linking academic libraries across India. The purpose is to promote scholarly communication among researchers. Its major activities include e-consortium like e-shodhsindhu and National Library and Information Services Infrastructure for Scholarly Content (N-LIST); open access initiatives like shodhganga and shodhgangotri and projects like e-PG Pathshala.

e-ShodhShindu (<https://ess.inflibnet.ac.in/about.php>)

This is a Consortium for Higher Education Electronic Resources. This e-resource provides access to higher education institutions (HEIs) in India to e-books, full texts, peer-reviewed journals, e-journal archives and bibliographic databases from a large number of publishers. Its advanced avatar is ‘**One Nation One Subscription**’ initiative. Here one may also note that the UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium has been merged in e-ShodhShindu. (<https://vcpjes.edu.in/vcplib/2017/03/01/ugc-infonet-digital-library-consortium/>)

N-List (<https://nlist.inflibnet.ac.in/vabout.php>)

National Library and Information Services for Infrastructure for Scholarly Content (N-List) is one more consortium by INFLIBNET. This was an initiative with the primary aim of providing easy access to many electronic resources to both Colleges and Universities. N-LIST promotes open access to resources through single subscription and aims at high quality research output. This consortium provides many e-resources like e-journals (full texts) and e-books from websites of reputed publisher’s like CUP, Sage, Springer, EBSCO, JSTOR to the HEIs across India. Visit <https://nlist.inflibnet.ac.in/veresources.php>. The researchers may get access to all these e-resources through their HEIs.

Shodhganga (<https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/>)

This is a reservoir of doctoral theses in Indian universities. As unpublished PhD theses are stacked in the university libraries, this initiative of the INFLIBNET tries to give open access to the academic community worldwide. Here the research work in various subjects is easily available online for the research students in the form of electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs).

Shodhgangotri (<https://shodhgangotri.inflibnet.ac.in/>)

This is a repository of research in progress in Indian universities. Here the research scholars may deposit approved synopsis of their research submitted to the universities. It also now includes research projects.

e-PG Pathshala (<https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/Home/About>)

This is one more initiative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development of the Government of India. Here a researcher is able to access high quality interactive e-content [texts (pdfs) and videos] across all disciplines like arts and humanities, social sciences, language and linguistics and natural and mathematical sciences, to name a few.

Shodh-Chakra (<https://shodhchakra.inflibnet.ac.in/>)

This is an INFLIBNET initiative to provide digital space to the researcher, research supervisor and the university to manage the research lifecycle of a research scholar. A research scholar can collect, store and organize their research work. A researcher can join it through the affiliating university.

Vidya-mitra (<https://vidyamitra.inflibnet.ac.in/index.php/about>)

It is an online learning portal for the e-content projects where a learner has access to audio/video learning material, textual material, etc.

In addition to the above mentioned INFLIBNET initiatives a researcher can visit the following web portals for e-resources related to the topic / subject of their study.

DELNET (www.delnet.in/)

This library network is an attempt to modernize KRCs and it connects HEIs in India. Its focus is to storing and sharing of resources among the teachers, researchers and students. The scholarly content can be accessed through institutional login.

Digital Dictionaries of South Asia

(<https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/collex/collections/digital-dictionaries-south-asia/>)

Duke University – South Asia- Dictionaries and Terminology

(<https://guides.library.duke.edu/c.php?g=289257&p=1929107>)

Open Access Resources (<https://tnou.ac.in/oar.php>)

Edinburgh Research Archive (<https://era.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/1256>)

Delcon (<https://www.delcon.gov.in/delcon/index.php>)

National Digital Library of India (NDLI), the digital repository started by the Ministry of Education, promotes a culture of learning and research and enables professional growth. It has a user-friendly interface. It has a vast collection of digital resources which are the efforts of pooling of resources from various educational and research institutions. It promotes the sharing of knowledge and collaborative research. It encourages inclusion by providing multilingual resources. If we have internet access, NDLI encourages open education by providing free access to learning resources. It is convenient for we can access it even on our mobiles, smartphones and tablets. (https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in/ndl_he)

NDL -e-gyankosh

(https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in/he_browse/sourceOrganization?sourceOrganization%5B%5D=egyankosh)

8.5.5 Online Repository and Preparation of Working Bibliography

In the current era of technological advances, there are many online repositories to ease a researcher's work. In this sub-section, we will first define an online repository and list its types. Then we will elaborate on the availability of online repositories in the context of language and literature research. Then, we will highlight the steps in preparing a working bibliography.

8.5.1 Online Repository

An online repository is any digital platform that helps to store, sort and provide access to information, documents and resources like academic papers, datasets, multimedia files and many other resources.

Online repositories can be Institutional (universities and research centres for access to PhD theses, dissertations and publications), disciplinary (subject-specific), data (store datasets like Figshare and Dryad) and general content (ResearchGate and Academic.edu). The advantages of online repositories are fourfold. First, they help to preserve the academic work of researchers. Second, they increase the visibility of research work and the potential of citations. Third, they result in networking and collaboration among researchers. Finally, all the research can be easily accessed by all researchers.

For language research, examples of data repositories are Linguistic Data Consortium (LDC), OpenSLR, ELRA (European Language Resources Association, Tatoeba, Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), The Syntax of English (TSE), The CHILDES Database and Linguistic Annotation and Analysis (LAA) which help in examining languages from multiple perspectives.

There are many online repositories dedicated to Indian Languages too and they enable researchers to access and understand India's vast linguistic diversity. They are Indian Language Corpora Initiative (ILCI), CDAC (Centre for Development of Advanced Computing) Language Resources, Bhasha Resources, Sanskrit Heritage Site, Mahatma Gandhi International Hindi University (MGIHU) Corpus, Indic NLP Library and IIT Bombay's Spoken Tutorial Project.

In the context of English Literature, we can refer to Project Gutenberg, The Internet Archive, HathiTrust Digital Library, The British Library Digital Collections, The Folger Shakespeare Library, The Poetry Foundation, The Literature Online (LION), Early English Books Online (EBBO) and The Victorian Web. Additional examples of data repositories related to Indian Literature in English are Sahitya Akademi, the academic journal Indian Literature, Digital South Asia Library (DSAL), The Open Library, The Centre for Studies in Social Science, Calcutta (CSSSC), The Literature Resource Centre and National Digital Library of India (NDLI). NDLI (National Digital Library of India) is a repository maintained by IIT Kharagpur and sponsored by the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT).

The research student may also visit the following repositories.

<https://eprints.soas.ac.uk/>

<https://sia.libguides.com/repositories/recommended>

<https://www.mendeley.com/>

8.5.2 Preparation of a Working Bibliography

With the innumerable e-resources that are available, we can easily lose track of the various websites or repositories from which we gather our research materials. Hence, it is important to prepare a working bibliography. In other words, we need to note down our references. A working bibliography is useful in tracking our resources, both print and online and helps to organize our research materials. We can follow some steps in preparing a working bibliography as below:

1. **Identification of Sources:** Our working bibliography begins with the research question or topic. Next comes our use of various academic databases, library catalogues and online repositories.
2. **Selection of a Citation Style:** We can refer to citation styles as required by our research institutions or as per our subject, for example, APA (American Psychology Association), MLA (Modern Language Association) and others. We must remember to use the latest edition of the citation style.
3. **Gathering Citation Information:** We must collect details of the authors, title, publication date, name of the publisher, page numbers and DOI or URL with date of access in case of online resources.
4. **Organization of Entries:** We must arrange all our resources alphabetically. We begin with the author's last name. If there is no author, we can write the title of the book or journal. We must be consistent in the citations.
5. **Annotations:** Brief annotations in our entries will prove useful in research. Herein, we can give the gist of the content, its importance and need for our research work.
6. **Review and Revise:** We must regularly revise our working bibliography as we find more resources in the process.

Two significant aspects of our research are using online repositories properly and creating an apt working bibliography. They are beneficial in three ways. They help to increase the quality of the research work. They simplify the process of getting access to sources. Finally, they provide a pathway for researchers to pursue their study.

8.6 DATA COLLECTION FOR LANGUAGE RESEARCH

How can we choose data collection tools? It depends on the research question, the target learners and the available resources. In this section, we will look at some data collection tools in the context of language research.

We need various data collection tools when we are required to gather information about the way language is used, comprehended and produced. Some examples include surveys and questionnaires, interviews, observational studies, experiments, corpus analysis, language assessments,

diary studies, digital linguistic data. Let us look at some of them in greater detail.

Surveys and questionnaires can be online or offline, structured or unstructured. In the offline mode, we use the usual paper and pen but it is expensive, time-consuming and has less reach. We can conduct online surveys by using a QR code or Google forms or free (SurveyMonkey, SurveyPlanet) and paid websites. The online mode is cheaper, quicker and can reach many people. But we cannot survey those who do not have internet. Telephonic or mobile and face-to-face surveys help in quick clarifications but are costly and time-consuming. Our surveys can be structured (questions with fixed questions and choice of answers), semi-structured (questions are both fixed and open-ended) and unstructured (open-ended questions). They can be cross-sectional (tracking the attitudes or behaviour or aspects of learners towards a language) or longitudinal (track changes in language acquisition of the same learners surveyed many times over a given period).

Similar to surveys, interviews can help collect varied experiences and perspectives in the context of language acquisition but can be time-consuming. Observational studies help detect patterns in natural language use but informed consent and confidentiality are crucial. Experiments can be repeated, and controlled with independent variables but do not reflect real use of language. In corpus analysis, researchers collect and analyse huge samples of corpora (spoken and written texts) and examine patterns, use and other features. The corpus must be accurate and researchers must have the know-how of software and methods. Formative or summative standardized tests help in assessing language skills. They can be valid and reliable but may differ from real-world language use in different contexts and backgrounds.

In Diary studies, a learner records the use of language and experiments during a period. It helps in longitudinal studies and shows the impact of use, motivation and attitudes. The learners must be consistent in writing diaries and not leave anything incomplete. Digital Linguistic Data can be collected from social media, blogs and discussion forums. This method helps to understand how language is used spontaneously, covers recent trends in language use and aids in accessing varied linguistic use and populations. The demerits are a breach of privacy (unless accompanied by informed consent) and the question of accuracy in online platforms.

8.7 RESEARCH VARIABLES, VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF DATA

In this section, we will first learn about research variables, their significance and types. Then we will understand the features of a method or specific test, namely, reliability and validity.

8.7.1 Research Variables: Types

Research Variables refer to the factors, characteristics or conditions that may alter or differ in a study. Why are research variables important? They are important for two reasons. They help us in testing our hypotheses and in drawing relevant conclusions. Research is a systematic investigation aimed at discovering new information or validating existing knowledge. Central to any research process are its variables, and the quality of the data collected is determined by its validity and reliability.

There are different types of variables: Independent Variables, Dependent Variables, Controlled Variables, Extraneous Variables, Moderator Variables, and Mediator Variables.

Let's understand the variables by definitions and examples. Independent are the variables that researchers manipulate to observe their effect on the dependent variable. For example, in a study on the effect of exercise on weight loss, "exercise" is the independent variable; whereas, Dependent Variables are the variables being tested and measured in an experiment. For example, in the same study, "weight loss" is the dependent variable. Controlled Variables are kept constant to ensure that the effect on the dependent variable is solely due to the independent variable. For instance, Diet and sleep patterns can be controlled variables in the above study. Extraneous Variables are variables other than the independent variable that could affect the dependent variable. For example, stress levels or medical conditions may act as extraneous variables in a weight loss study. Moderator Variables influence the strength or direction of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. For example, age may moderate the relationship between exercise and weight loss. And finally, Mediator Variables explain the mechanism through which the independent variable affects the dependent variable. The example is: increased metabolism could mediate the relationship between exercise and weight loss.

8.7.2 Validity of data

Validity refers to how a research study is successful in measuring what it aimed to do. It helps in getting relevant and accurate results. Internal validity a casual link between independent and dependent variables. External validity refers to the way we can give general findings to settings, populations and times beyond the samples. Construct validity refers to the extent to which tools or tests measure theoretical constructs with accuracy.

As language researchers, we need to focus on four kinds of validity-internal, external, construct and content. We can increase the internal validity of a test by considering the learner's prior knowledge and motivation in task-based learning and by giving random assignments while experimenting with language learning apps. External validity refers to studies that concentrate on two aspects, namely generalization and context. For construct validity, we depend on measurement tools and validity of a survey validity. The tools to measure linguistic proficiency

must be compatible with standard tests. If we are surveying the motivation levels of language learners, we must focus on both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects. We can measure content validity by assessing curriculum encompassing LSRW skills and test development covering relevant knowledge and skills.

8.7.3 Reliability of data

Reliability refers to the process of measurement that remains consistent and stable over a period. In other words, when we say that a measurement is reliable, we get similar results in stable conditions.

There are varied types of reliability. Test-retest reliability means that we get similar results when we administer the same test to the same group of people at varied times. Inter-rater reliability refers to the agreement among different when they measure in similar conditions. Internal consistency means the degree to which items in a questionnaire or test measure similar constructs.

Validity and Reliability are significant for two reasons. First, we can trust the research findings and higher validity and reliability makes the findings more credible. Second, reliable and valid data enable researchers to make better decisions about further research in the acquisition of language the effectiveness of teaching methodology and the desired outcomes or policy-making.

If reliability deals with consistency, then validity deals with accuracy. When we use a specific method or test and it gives us similar results, the test is said to be reliable. If a specific method or test can measure accurately, then the test is said to be valid.

8.8 LET US SUM UP

We have delved into the important aspect of data collection and its types such as qualitative and quantitative methods, as well as primary and secondary data. Data collection serves as the foundation for any research It enables researchers to gather relevant information to address their research questions. We have then categorized data into primary data and secondary data. The former is directly collected from original sources, and the later is obtained from existing resources. We then shifted to the diverse print and online sources available for data collection, especially in language research. Libraries, databases, and e-resources have been discussed as vital tools for accessing reliable data. Further we discussed the types of research variables, which help in organizing and interpreting data systematically. And finally, we highlighted the concepts of validity and reliability, which play vital roles in verifying the accuracy and consistency of data.

8.9 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. Explain the different types of data collection methods used in research. Highlight their importance and application in academic studies.
2. Compare and contrast primary and secondary data in research.
3. Discuss the role of KRCs, both print and online, in research. How have digital platforms like UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium and INFLIBNET transformed access to information?
4. Examine the significance of field archives and documentaries as data sources in research. How do they contribute to the authenticity and depth of a study?
5. Analyze the relevance of e-resources and online repositories in contemporary research. Explain the steps involved in preparing a working bibliography using these tools.
6. Outline the key measures involved in data collection for language research. How do these measures ensure the quality of research findings?
7. Discuss the concepts of validity and reliability in research. Why are these factors critical to the credibility of a study?

8.10 SUGGESTED READING & WEB RESOURCES

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- <https://www.elararchive.org/>
- <https://sustainableheritagenetwork.org/community/endangered-languages-archive-soas-university-london>
- <https://www.delaman.org/>
- <http://14.139.206.50:8080/jspui/>
- <https://www.sparrowonline.org/>
- <https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in/>
- <https://www.britannica.com/art/documentary-film>
- <https://www.premiumbeat.com/blog/6-types-of-documentary-film/>
- <https://www.surveymonkey.com> <https://surveyplanet.com>
- <https://ugc.ac.in/>
- <https://lingthusiasm.com>
- <https://fluentin3months.com>
- <https://mezzoguild.com>
- <https://multilingualliving.com>
- <https://languageofindia.com>

Research Methodology

- <https://bhashasangam.in>
- <https://nlist.inflibnet.ac.in/>
- <https://www.inflibnet.ac.in/>
- <https://ernet.in>
- <https://gutenberg.org>
- <https://archive.org>
- <https://jstor.org>
- <https://hathitrust.org>
- <https://muse.jhu.edu/>
- <https://voyant.tools.org>
- <http://tapor.CB>
- <https://zotero.org>
- <https://www.mendeley.com>
- <https://www.coursera.org/>
- <http://www.online-literture.com>
- <http://saraswatidigitallibrary.com>
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- <https://ernet.in/>
- <https://www.meity.gov.in/>



RESEARCH LANGUAGE, PLAGIARISM AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Unit Structure:

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Research Language: Clarity, Correctness and Coherence
- 9.3 Ethical Considerations in Language and Literary Research
- 9.4 Documenting Sources: Avoiding plagiarism, Giving Credit: Paraphrasing and Quoting
- 9.5 Intellectual Property Rights
- 9.6 To Sum up
- 9.7 Suggested Reading
- 9.8 Web Resources
- 9.9 Hints for Self-Check Exercises

9.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we will learn about some important aspects of research like use of language in research, academic integrity in research, plagiarism and intellectual property rights (IPR). After reading this unit, we should be able to:

- use research language effectively
- identify some forms of plagiarism and measures to avoid plagiarism
- understand intellectual property rights.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous units, we have tried to understand the concept of research and theoretical approaches and methods of research. And after understanding the nature of research and types and sources of data collection, and validity and reliability of data, we will now learn about the three elements of research language i.e. clarity, correctness and coherence; some forms of plagiarism and some ways to avoid plagiarism and intellectual property rights (IPR). With the help of the illustrations and

self-assessment exercises, we will be able to sharpen/hone our research skills. The unit will focus on providing some tasks / exercises to develop your essential language skills for research.

9.2 RESEARCH LANGUAGE: CLARITY, CORRECTNESS AND COHERENCE

In this section, we will learn how to use language effectively so that we can easily record or document our research in the form of a project, dissertation, thesis, or research paper in a scholarly journal. We can use language in a variety of ways. The language can be descriptive, analytical, persuasive and/or critical. In the process of research, our language must be precise, objective, explicit, formal and accurate.

As second-language users of English, we face some challenges, as Biggs et al. (1999) have pointed out. As second-language writers, we spend a lot of time on the mechanics of writing. We pay more attention to sentence construction, grammar and in finding appropriate words. These aspects are necessary but we must also focus on meaning-generation at a higher level. Taking into account the prospective readers of our research output — the research supervisor, external examiners and researchers — we need to pay attention towards effective use of language and ways of documenting sources. The discussion that follows here is on features of research language like clarity, correctness, and coherence. It will enable us to use language effectively.

9.2.1 Clarity

Clarity in research language means writing clearly and understandably. Our writing must inform readers about the purpose of our research and they must be able to understand what we have written. Clarity means writing in an easy manner so that the readers can understand the contents of our research and not be confused. The following figure illustrates the varied features of clarity.

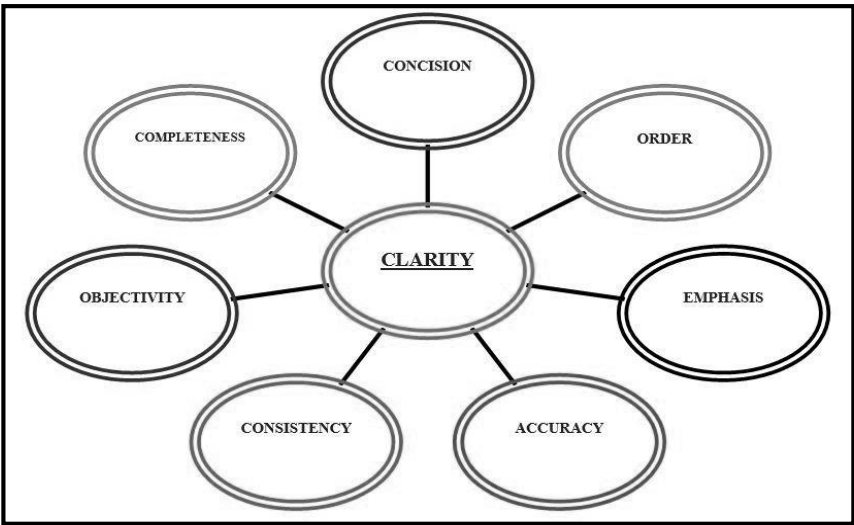


Figure 9.1 Aspects of Clarity in Research Writing

We can achieve clarity in our research with the following list of dos and don'ts.

Dos	Don'ts
Spell words correctly	Use incorrect spellings
Use correct grammar	Make grammatical errors (incorrect use of verbs, nouns, adjectives, etc.)
Use familiar language or define unfamiliar terms or words	Use jargon (technical or unfamiliar language) or slang
Stay focused on the topic	Lack of focus in the topic
Organize our ideas in a logical sequence	Present ideas without proper organization or sequence
Address one idea per paragraph	Include too many ideas in a single paragraph

We must take care to put our ideas in a logical order so that the readers can understand our ideas through our writing. We will confuse the reader if we use ambiguous words or if we suddenly insert a new topic without giving the context or background. We should know the rules of grammar well. We need to condense, elaborate or sum up our ideas without losing their meanings. Let us ask ourselves – should I use a lesser number of words or should I elaborate further on the topic? We should polish our ideas by drafting, redrafting and thorough proofreading.

Clarity means communicating clearly and logically. It means not forcing readers to guess what we are saying or not requiring them to read between the lines. Writing clearly means making the meanings clear. Let us now look at the second aspect of research writing – correctness.

9.2.2 Correctness

As researchers, we not only need to verify the spellings and meanings of words like 'chapterization', 'dividation', and 'enlist' through standard dictionaries but also learn to write terms like 'coursework' and the full form of 'PPT' correctly. Besides, we must be cautious when choosing suitable sentence patterns and using appropriate pronouns while reporting our research output. Should we report using active or passive voice? Should we use the first-person pronoun? Let us undertake two tasks related to research terminology.

1) Write the phonemic transcription of the following words.

- a) Archive
- b) Brochure
- c) Plagiarism
- d) Springer

2) Refer to a standard (print / online) dictionary and find meanings of the words given in the table below and complete the table.

Sr No	Words	Meanings of the words	Name of the resource	Address of the website (if visited)
1	a) contents			
	b) index			
2	a) bibliography			
	b) references			
3	a) thesis			
	b) dissertation			

(Based on Tasildar, 2024:147)

Correctness refers to the correct use of grammar, punctuation and spelling in our writing. In other words, our writing must be free from errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling. Why are these aspects of correctness important? First, correct punctuation can convey the exact meaning of our research. Second, accurate grammar will make our writing easier to read and increase our credibility as a researcher.

We will have to use proper punctuation marks to indicate the pauses and to highlight the ideas or thoughts that we have discussed in our writing. We will just highlight some significant punctuation marks that we must attend to as follows:

- Use periods / full stops (.) for statements, conditional sentences and commands.
- Use question mark (?) for interrogative sentences
- Use exclamation mark (!) for exclamations
- Use commas (,) in compound sentences, after introductory phrases, to set off nonessential words and between equal adjectives.
- Do a spell check and also capitalize the first letter of the first word of every sentence and capitalize proper nouns (names) etc.

In short, by using correct punctuation we will be able to strengthen our arguments in our research project / dissertation / thesis / paper. By using incorrect grammar, we can misrepresent our research ideas. So, observe ‘the rules’ of grammar. We must follow basic subject-verb agreement

rules while writing. We should know that a singular subject takes a singular verb and a plural subject takes a plural verb. For instance –

The President of India plans to speak with the stakeholders of Education. (President is singular and so the third person singular form of the verb plan = plans)

But

The stakeholders of education plan to speak with the President of India. (Stakeholders is plural and so the third person plural form of the verb plan = plan)

We must use a plural verb with compound subjects joined by ‘*and*’. For instance,

Sachin *and* Rohit work during the day.

When compound subjects are joined by ‘*or*’ then the verb should agree with the subject which is closer to it. For instance,

Sachin *or* Rohit works during the day.

New employees *or* the Manager helps during the lunch hour.

We must form the plurals of most nouns by adding s to the singular form.

We must be aware of words that have special plural forms - child = children or mouse = mice. Do check the use of commonly confused words such as bring or take; fewer or less; it’s or its; than or then; lay or lie; lend or borrow; there or their; to or too etc.

Our writing will become reader-friendly when we use correct spellings and punctuation and the reading becomes faster, easier and smoother. We must see to it that the sentences are structured, logically formulated and connected. By using correct punctuation and grammar, our writing becomes error-free, objective and reliable. Let us now move on to the third aspect of research writing i.e. coherence.

9.2.3 Coherence

The following discussion regarding coherence in language is based on the ideas of Jack Richards (1985) and David Crystal (2008). Coherence refers to the links between the meanings of utterance in a discourse or of the sentences in a text. These links may be based on the speaker’s shared knowledge. For example:

A: ‘Could you give me a lift home?’

B: ‘Sorry, I’m visiting my sister.’

We will notice that in the above dialogue, there is no grammatical or lexical link between A’s question (‘Could you give me a lift home?’) and B’s reply (‘Sorry, I’m visiting my sister.’) but the exchange/conversation

has coherence because both A and B know that B's sister stays in the opposite direction to A's home.

Our paragraph is said to be coherent if it is a series of sentences that develop a main idea/argument supported by topic/key sentence and other supporting sentences which relate to it. According to Crystal David (2008), coherence refers to the 'main principle of organization postulated to account for the underlying functional connectedness or identity of a piece of spoken or written language'. He opines that coherence is related to factors such as the knowledge of the world of the language user, the inferences they make, and the assumptions they hold.

We must know that another term related to coherence is 'cohesion' (cohesiveness).

Cohesion is the syntactic or semantic connectivity of linguistic forms at a surface-structure level of analysis. Cohesion means the grammatical and/or lexical relationships between the different elements of a text. This may be a relationship between sentences or parts of a sentence. For example:

A: 'Is Gita coming to college?'

B: 'Yes, she is.'

In the above dialogue, there is a link between 'Gita' and 'she' and also a link between 'is' and 'she'.

We can use cohesion and coherence to show how a discourse/text joins together to make a unified whole. But the terms cohesion and coherence are not the same. In the context of research writing, cohesion relates to the micro level of the text, i.e. the words and sentences and how they join together while coherence relates to the organization and logical connection of ideas/arguments. Coherence in research writing is related to the macro-level features of a text, such as topic sentences, thesis statement, summary, conclusion and major and minor sections used in writing. A researcher must also have the skill of organizing their ideas in a paragraph coherently. They should not only know the structure of a paragraph but also need to use linkers (like and, but) and reference items (like pronouns) effectively.

We can increase coherence by employing a scheme of chapters with sections and sub-sections before writing our thesis. We can also check whether the ideas/arguments are logical and organized systematically. We can take the help of our research supervisor or fellow researchers to check if our writing makes sense or is coherent.

Coherence is the logical relationships between words, sentences, and paragraphs (and in overall text /content of our thesis). It can be achieved by parallel structure between words, sentences and paragraphs. Parallel structure is the use of similar grammatical constructions between words in sentences. For example

Sachin likes *walking*, *running*, and *skating*.

and **NOT**

Sachin likes to walk, running, and skate.

We can achieve coherence through parallel structure by using all the verbs in the gerund form (*ing*). We can develop coherence between sentences/paragraphs through repetition of certain words across sentences and by using transitional words such as '*first*', '*later*', '*then*' or '*thus*', '*therefore*', '*however*', etc.

Coherent writing connects ideas/arguments put forward with the help of words, sentences and paragraphs. So, we must read the sub-section, section and whole chapter of our thesis to see if it is consistent (coherent). Further, we should read/re-read the entire thesis to see if it is consistent, coherent and meaningful.

Summing up, research language may be considered effective if it is concrete and not vague, concise and not verbose; familiar and not obscure; precise and not ambiguous; formal and not casual. Our language in the research project / dissertation / thesis / research paper must accurately represent our thoughts without confusing the readers. Finally, our writing must have characteristics such as clarity, correctness, and coherence.

Self-Check Exercise 1

1. How can one achieve clarity in research writing?
2. List down the reasons for lack of clarity in research writing.
3. Explain the concept of 'correctness' in research writing.
4. Explain the importance of 'coherence' in research writing
5. How can one achieve 'coherence' in their research writing?
6. Make a list of linkers and reference items required in writing a paragraph.

9.3 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN LANGUAGE AND LITERARY RESEARCH

Research Ethics is part of the academic integrity of a researcher. As an ethical researcher, we can do the following:

- Whenever we are collecting any data, obtain informed consent from the participant/s.
- Assure the participants of the confidentiality of the information received.
- Avoid any kind of bias or prejudice

- Refrain from incorrect reporting of the results and inappropriate use of information
- If any agency is sponsoring our research, we must clearly mention that and not provide any misleading information to the agency.

Plagiarism means using another person’s ideas, words, phrases, statements, data, reports, figures and pictures as one’s own without giving credit to the actual author. We should discuss with our research supervisor regarding the detailed guidelines for plagiarism as laid down by our university.

The most important aspect of research ethics is taking the informed consent of the target audience who are responding to our data collection methods while using primary data.

9.3.1 Forms of Plagiarism

If we have done any of the following that will mean that we have plagiarised:

1. We present our research using someone else’s ideas as our own
2. When we download a research paper and submit it as our own paper
3. When we cut, copy and paste from a published or unpublished primary or secondary source without citing the source
4. When we are summarizing or paraphrasing scholarly ideas or arguments or original words without giving credit to the scholar
5. When we pay someone to write our research paper
6. When we try using our own research paper without necessary permissions or citations

9.4 DOCUMENTING SOURCES: AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

Documentation

A researcher uses different print and electronic sources during their research work. In the support of their argument, they refer to or cite quotations, opinions or observations of other researchers. The researchers should not present others' thoughts and ideas as their own.

A researcher needs to acknowledge the sources and other researchers they have referred to in the form of reference list and footnotes. Reference lists and footnotes are nothing but a faithful record of others’ findings and observations. The acknowledgement of borrowing of concepts, ideas and words by a researcher is known as documentation. Documentation is a vital component of a research report. It saves the researcher from plagiarism.

Avoiding plagiarism

Why should we avoid plagiarism? If researchers detect plagiarism in our work, it will lead to professional embarrassment, loss of trust and our credibility as a researcher will suffer. It may also lead to losing our jobs.

9.4.1 How to avoid Plagiarism?

Plagiarism can be intentional or unintentional. In this section, we will learn how to avoid the general pitfalls of plagiarism. Use the following steps as a general overview to avoid plagiarism:

1. Begin with the latest edition of the Citation style Handbook (MLA Handbook for instance) because we will grasp the essential research skills with the help of detailed tips on how to cite print and digital resources and how to maintain a bibliography or works cited list.
2. Use effective note-making skills while reading primary or secondary sources.
3. Remember to note down the details like the name or title of the chapter, the name of the book, the author/editor, page numbers and publication details. Otherwise, we may find it difficult to track our sources.
4. Note down points in a research notebook or diary. Using a notebook or diary will help us in two ways: it will improve our clear understanding of the ideas and enhance our ability to grasp them better.
5. We may also create a word file on our desktop or laptop but avoid the habit of googling and CCP – cut, copy, paste technique. If we are techno-savvy we should use apps that help us to take notes.
6. We should use quotes that are brief, selective and relevant to the idea that we wish to discuss. If we are quoting, use original words or sentences within quotation marks. If we are paraphrasing, we will have to restate a scholar's ideas in our own words. If we are summarizing, we will have to sum up the scholarly ideas in brief. We may quote, paraphrase or summarise but give credit to the scholars whose ideas are helping we to build our own research.
7. Give in-text citations (i.e. name of the scholar, publication and/or page numbers) when we are quoting, summarising or paraphrasing. In-text citations help in two ways. Our research becomes more reliable. Future researchers can refer to these sources as they get the exact location of the ideas.
8. We may plagiarise unintentionally if we fail to use citations and references.
9. Discuss with our research supervisor or guide and our librarian about plagiarism and the availability of tools to detect plagiarism.

9.4.2. Plagiarism Checker Tools and Websites

Meet the librarian of our College or University and inquire if the institution has plagiarism checker tools. Institutions value academic integrity and may invest in the relevant tools.

At the beginning stage, we can use free online plagiarism checker sites like <https://www.quetext.com/plagiarism-checker>, <https://smallseotools.com/plagiarism-checker/>, and <https://www.duplichecker.com/> which will help us to detect if we have unintentionally plagiarised. We can also download the free version of Grammarly.

Our College or University may also have invested in tools that check plagiarism like Grammarly, Turnitin and Urkund.

Self-Check Exercise 2

1. What is plagiarism?
2. Give any two instances of plagiarism.
3. Who are the two people who can help us avoid plagiarism?
4. Name any two tools available for checking plagiarism.

9.5 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

According to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Intellectual Property refers to anything created by minds (inventions, works of literature and arts, logos, brand names, images etc). The legal system protects human creations/creativity or innovations resulting from intellectual labour. While individuals provide intellectual labour by devoting their time, energy and efforts to innovate, many organizations also invest time and money and provide the necessary support and financial help to their employees who are innovating or creating. IPR helps both creators and organizations to gain revenue and recognition for their innovations.

Types of IPR

Let us now learn about the six types of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) as defined by WIPO: Patents, Trademarks, Copyright, Industrial Designs, Geographical Indications, and Trade Secrets, which protect creations or innovations of the human mind. We will briefly explore some of these.

Patents show a new way to do something or provide technical solutions for existing problems. They give rights to the creators to protect their creations or inventions. We cannot use, distribute, sell or import these inventions without the written permission of the creators. The public receives information about such creations through publications. The creators can permit, and give a license to others to use their creations based on mutual agreement or even sell their creations. Some patented

inventions are unique kitchen utensils, new chemical compounds or new technology.

Patents are valid only in the country or region where they are filed and granted. A creator or owner can go to court if anyone violates patent rules. A patent is valid for twenty years. Thereafter, the validity ends and the creation enters the public domain. Then, anyone can commercially use the creation without violating patent rules.

Copyright provides authors of written works (books, novels, poems, plays etc) and translators (with the consent of the original author) the right of ownership. Copyright gives authors the right to reproduce, distribute or adapt their works. It is especially useful for new authors whose works can otherwise be exploited. It also covers academic research papers, current forms (blogs, digital literature and screenplays), adaptations (audio-books, theatre, movies, video games, graphic novels and digital retellings), annotated editions (scholarly versions or critical editions of texts), software codes and oral and written expressions. In the context of language studies, copyright offers protection to linguistic resources like dictionaries, thesauruses, corpora, language databases, translation software, language-learning tools, Apps, platforms and language-learning materials like books, e-resources, multimedia resources like podcasts, audiobooks and instructional videos.

The validity of copyright is for the entire life of the authors or 60 to 70 years as per a country's law. When the validity of the copyright expires, all works enter the public domain (digital libraries like Project Gutenberg). When works are available in the public domain, they result in increased academic research and enhanced creativity. As researchers, we can explore classics without restrictions and also reinterpret and reimagine classics in modern and postmodern settings.

Geographical Indications (GIs) protect products that are linked to a particular region. For instance, cultural expressions (folklore, oral traditions, traditional storytelling forms and theatre practices), language-specific poetry, calligraphy, dialectical or regional expressions or regional storytelling traditions (Harikatha in India, Haiku in Japan and Ballad in Ireland) are linked to Geographical Indications. The main purpose of GI is to preserve linguistic and cultural identity and avoid cultural exploitation or misappropriation.

IPR creates awareness regarding the business aspects of literature through collaborations, publishing rights, contracts and licenses and income generation. It encourages the role of translations (both horizontal and vertical) that result in cross-cultural exchange. It eases the process of royalty-sharing and fixes licensing fees for distribution in varied regions. It helps organizations to create a brand for themselves. With the increase in innovations, organizations focus on research and development. With increased Foreign Direct Investments and industrial growth, a country becomes stronger. Innovators get recognition and income. Consumers feel protected with the assurance of quality goods. It attracts more FDI. It

boosts competition among organizations in the open global markets. IPR helps in the preservation of language and literature through multiple media and increases the scope of research in critical analysis of the different adaptations and translations. IPR uses Digital Rights Management (DRM) and techniques like watermarking and encryption to protect digital resources.

As ethical researchers, we must not illegally share resources. We must attribute our sources, get consent for commercial use, and avoid plagiarism.

Self-Check Exercise 3

1. What does IPR refer to?
2. How do individuals and organizations benefit from IPR?
3. Give three examples of initiatives in India’s IPR policy.
4. What are the six types of IPR?
5. How long is a copyright valid?
6. Explain the benefits of a copyright book being available in the public domain.
7. Briefly explain the challenges in implementing IPR.

9.6 TO SUM UP

In this unit, we learnt about three significant aspects of research language – clarity, correctness and coherence. We explained the importance of research ethics or academic integrity, plagiarism, some forms and tools. Do go through the web resources and suggested reading list and refer to them. Remember, skill development needs a lot of practice. So, the key to mastering the art of research writing is ‘Practice.’

9.7 SUGGESTED READING

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9.9 HINTS FOR SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

Self-Check Exercise 1

Refer to 9. 2

Self-Check Exercise 2

Refer to 9.4

Self-Check Exercise 3

Refer to 9.5

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RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Unit Structure

10.0 Objectives

10.1 Meaning and Importance of Research Proposal

10.2 Selection of Topic for Research

10.3 Outline of Research Work

10.4 Aims and Objectives of Research Work

10.5 Hypothesis in Research Work

10.6 Review of Literature in Research

10.7 Research Methodology

10.8 Scope and Limitations of Research Work

10.9 Chapter Scheme of the Research Work

10.10 Conclusions of Research Work

10.11 Abstract of Research Work

10.12 Important Questions

10.13 References

10.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you will be able to understand the significance of a research proposal, how to select a research topic, and how to structure your work. You will also gain the skills for creating hypotheses, literature reviews, methodology sections, draw conclusions, write references as a researcher.

10.1 MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

To understand the foundational aspects the research proposal, it is essential to ask, what exactly is a research proposal, and why is it so important? A research proposal acts as a roadmap for your research process. It's a document that outlines your plan to explore a particular topic or answer a specific question.

Why does a researcher need to prepare a research proposal? The following are some important reasons. A research proposal ensures that all necessary

steps of research are followed systematically. It is meant for an academic committee or a funding agency which will evaluate if your work is worth pursuing. It gives them confidence that you have a clear and achievable plan. It acts as a blueprint for the research. It specifies the methods used, the objectives to be achieved, and the timeline to be followed. In essence, the proposal answers who, what, when, where, and why of the research.

A research proposal serves several purposes. It helps clarify the research focus, and makes sure that the researcher does not stray into unrelated areas. For example, instead of aiming to study “Victorian literature” broadly, the researcher might narrow the focus to “The Depiction of Women in Victorian Novels.” This specific focus ensures that the research remains on track and relevant.

Moreover, a research proposal demonstrates the feasibility of the project. It considers whether the research can be conducted within the available time and resources. By planning ahead, the researcher can determine whether the proposed research topic is realistically achievable.

Additionally, a research proposal justifies the significance of the research. It explains why the work matters and how it fills gaps in existing scholarship. For instance, if the research centers on postcolonial themes in Indian literature, the proposal could argue that it addresses a gap in the current body of academic work. This justification strengthens the case for seeking approval or funding.

In summary, a research proposal is more than just a formal document; it serves as the backbone of any academic investigation. By organizing thoughts, outlining the research design, and clearly communicating the significance of the work, the researcher sets the stage for successful and impactful outcomes.

10.2 SELECTION OF TOPIC FOR RESEARCH

A well-chosen research topic is a cornerstone of impactful and innovative study. It not only sustains the researcher’s motivation but also provides direction and focus throughout the process. On the contrary, a poorly selected topic can lead to frustration. The choice of a research topic shapes the research question, guides objectives, and influences the selection of methods, tools, and techniques. It also establishes the scope and limitations of the study.

The significance of choosing wisely becomes important when one considers the time and effort dedicated to research. Investing months and months on a single topic that is either too broad or too narrow can be a challenging experience or sometimes frustrating. Therefore, careful consideration is essential.

Key factors must be evaluated or considered while selecting a topic. First, interest and passion play a critical role. A topic that excites the researcher can sustain motivation even during difficult phases. For example, a researcher might explore the contributions of women to the development

of the English novel. While much has been written about prominent figures like Dickens, exploring the lesser-known women writers of the same era could bring out fresh insights.

Relevance is another crucial aspect while selecting a topic. A good research topic addresses current trends, fills gaps in existing knowledge, or offers new perspectives. For instance, examining “Language and Gender” within the context of political discourse presents a specific and contemporary area of inquiry.

Equally important is the feasibility of the topic. It must be manageable within the constraints of time, resources, and data availability. A broad subject such as “Language and Gender” can be narrowed down to “Language and Gender in Political Discourse in India” so as to carry out a more focused and achievable study.

The availability of resources is also very important. Sufficient material—books, articles, journals, and databases—should support the chosen topic. For instance, a study on Gertrude Stein would require access to scholarly articles and primary materials. If such resources are scarce, it then becomes difficult or sometimes hinder the research work.

The process of selecting a research topic typically involves several steps. Researchers often begin by identifying general areas of interest. In literary studies, for example, a researcher might start with Postcolonial Literature as a broad theme, then narrow it to Feminist Theory, Narrative Techniques, or the Impact of Digital Media on Language. This refinement helps make the research more precise and manageable. Reviewing existing studies within the chosen area helps avoid redundancy and highlights gaps to address.

Thus, selecting a research topic is a pivotal step in the research process. It requires careful deliberation, a review of existing literature, and a focus on topics that are exciting, relevant, and feasible. By taking the time to make a thoughtful choice, researchers can make a valuable contribution to their field.

10.3 OUTLINE OF RESEARCH WORK

An Outline is a crucial tool in maintaining focus and organizing thoughts coherently. Among its key benefits, the Outline provides clarity of direction and it structures arguments and ideas logically. It often keeps the researcher on track. The Outline typically consists of several essential components which are discussed as follows:

The Title Page is the first page which includes details such as the researcher's name, the supervisor's name, the research title, institutional affiliations like the department and university, and the submission date. It is kept clear and concise to provide a professional introduction to the work.

The Abstract offers a summary of the research which covers the main objectives, methods, findings, and conclusions.

The Introduction sets the stage for the study by introducing the topic, stating the research question, and explaining its significance. It is in a way an invitation for readers to engage with the research journey.

The Literature Review demonstrates awareness of existing studies on the topic. It involves summarizing and critiquing previous works while identifying gaps that the current research intends to address.

The Objectives section consists of the specific questions the current research aims to answer.

The Research Methodology explains the approach used to conduct the study. Whether it involves textual analysis, comparative studies, or content analysis, this section also discusses the theoretical frameworks employed to analyze the research materials.

The Findings and Analysis section presents the outcomes of the research. It also offers critical insights and interpretations.

In the Conclusion, the researcher summarizes the findings and discusses their broader implications. Suggestions for further research are often given for future inquiries.

A comprehensive References or Bibliography not only establishes credibility but also is a resource for readers interested in further study.

Thus, a well-crafted Outline is the backbone of any successful research project. It enables the researcher to organize their thoughts, maintain focus, and deliver a clear, structured, and impactful study.

10.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH WORK

The Aims and Objectives of research are central to its success. It is like a clear roadmap that defines the direction and approaches. Aims represent the broad, overarching goals or purposes of a study which consists of the “why” behind the research. They are general in scope and articulate the primary focus of the investigation. Objectives, on the other hand, delineate the specific steps or actions required to achieve the overall aim. They are measurable and consists of the "how" of the research process.

For instance, in research examining the portrayal of women in Victorian literature, the Aim might be to understand how female characters are represented in the 19th century novels. The Objectives, however, would include more precise tasks, such as one, analyzing the roles of female characters in *Jane Eyre* and *Pride and Prejudice*; two, examining the influence of Victorian societal norms on literary portrayals of women; and three, exploring feminist interpretations of these texts in contrast to traditional readings. Here, the Aim provides the direction, while the Objectives breaks it down into actionable or doable tasks.

Both the Aims and Objectives must align with the research methodology. Objectives in Qualitative Research may emphasize understanding and interpretation, while Objectives in Quantitative Research focus on measurement and analysis. The Objectives should always contribute directly to achieving the Aim. Any unrelated objectives, such as evaluating the economic impact of Victorian novels when analyzing their portrayal of women, would only dilute or defeat the purpose of the research.

Thus, the Aim defines the big picture of the research, while the Objectives map out the detailed steps required to reach that picture. Together, Aims and Objectives create a coherent framework for a successful study.

10.5 HYPOTHESIS IN RESEARCH WORK

A hypothesis is a crucial element in academic research. It provides a foundation for the investigation and guides the researcher's investigation. In language and literature research, a hypothesis serves as a testable proposition or assumption as to how language functions or how literary texts convey meaning. Let us understand the role of hypotheses, its formulation, its types, and its significance.

To begin with, what is hypothesis? Some definitions of it are given below:

“A hypothesis is a clear and unambiguous statement that suggests a relationship between the independent and dependent variables in a study.” (Grinnell, 2015, p. 58).

“A hypothesis is an informed guess or proposition that is rigorously tested by research to determine its validity.” (Creswell, 2014, p. 97)

It is a clear, specific, and testable statement about the relationship between variables. It can address various issues such as the influence of language on thought, the interpretation of a literary work, or the understanding of cultural phenomena through texts. For instance, in literary studies, a researcher may formulate hypothesis that a particular work of literature reflects the social and political realities of the particular time. Whereas, in linguistics, a hypothesis might investigate how certain linguistic features can reveal aspects of a speaker's identity.

There are two major types of hypotheses: Null Hypothesis and Alternative Hypothesis. Null Hypothesis (H_0) is a statement that assumes no significant relationship exists between the variables being studied. In literary research, a null hypothesis might state that a particular theme does not affect the interpretation of a text.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1) proposes that a significant relationship does exist. In language studies, it may suggest that specific linguistic elements have a clear impact on language acquisition or understanding. Shakespeare's use of irony in *Macbeth* contributes significantly to the

reader's understanding of power dynamics is an example of Alternative Hypothesis.

When a researcher formulates a hypothesis, a general process of hypothesis formation involves identifying a gap in existing research, posing a question, and then constructing a testable statement. The hypothesis is both specific and measurable, and it should be based on existing theoretical frameworks or literature or corpus of knowledge. For example, a researcher may hypothesize that postcolonial theory provides a better understanding of the themes in *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad.

After formulating the hypothesis, the next step is the testing the hypothesis. It involves gathering data and applying methods of analysis to support or refute the proposed statement. For example, if testing the hypothesis that Feminist Theory influences the interpretation of *Jane Eyre*, the researcher may examine how critical approaches that focus on gender roles in the novel influence its interpretation. Testing the above hypothesis may involve examining textual evidence of how the portrayal of women characters aligns with feminist themes. About the significance of the testing of hypothesis, Bordens and others note, "The process of hypothesis testing is essential to ensuring that research findings are valid and meaningful." (Bordens & Abbott, 2014, p. 134)

Thus, in language and literature research, hypotheses are used to guide empirical studies as well as to challenge and refine theoretical perspectives. By formulating hypotheses based on critical readings and established theories, researchers contribute to the broader understanding of language use, literary production, and the relationship between language and society at large.

10.6 REVIEW OF LITERATURE IN RESEARCH

The Review of Literature is an important component of any research. It involves reviewing and analyzing existing research, theories and scholarly works related to the topic. This step helps to establish the theoretical foundation for your study, identify gaps in existing research, and highlight the significance of your work. Review of Literature is like a conversation with other scholars. Just like how you would listen to various perspectives in a discussion, the literature review allows you to understand what has been said about your topic and how your research will contribute to the ongoing scholarly dialogue.

Now, let us look at how to conduct a literature review for the literary and language research. Your literature review must align with the specific questions or hypotheses of your research. The more focused your research question, the more targeted your review will be. For example, if you are researching gender representation in 19th century English novels, your review would primarily focus on literature that discusses gender roles, stereotypes, and feminist readings of novels from this period.

When you are searching for and collecting the relevant literature, you can use academic databases such as JSTOR, Google Scholar, and others to find peer reviewed articles, books, and conference papers. You may also visit the university or research Centre libraries for locating the literature on reference sections, and journal sections. After the literature or material relevant to your area is collected, the researchers read, analyse and summarise the key studies from the following point of views: What is the central argument? What methodology was used? What were the findings? How does this study relate to your research?

While writing the Literature Review section, the researcher has to structure in a three-phase formula namely, introduction, body and conclusion. In the introduction, the researcher briefly introduces his research topic and states the purpose of the literature review. In the body section, the researcher summarizes and synthesizes the literature. And in the conclusions, the researcher summarizes the key findings from the literature as well as points out the gaps, controversies, and locates areas for future research which in some way may be related to your area.

A literature review should be more than just a summary. It's an opportunity to engage with existing work and critically analyze it. Therefore, it is advised to stick to the most relevant studies, and not to include every and every work just for the sake of it. A good literature review highlights what's missing or lacking or incomplete in existing research. To conclude, the Review of Literature is an essential step in any research journey. It helps you build a strong foundation, identify gaps, and refine your research methodology.

10.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As you have learned so far that research methodology refers to the strategies or techniques used by researchers to collect, analyze, and interpret data in a systematic way. It provides a framework for conducting research that is logical, organized, and reliable. In language and literature research, methodology helps researchers choose the right tools and approaches to investigate linguistic phenomena or literary texts. For instance, a researcher or a linguist studying language change may use statistical methods to analyze spoken language over time, while a literary scholar might use textual analysis to study themes in novels.

There are two main research methods or approaches in language and literature: the qualitative and the quantitative methods. The qualitative research method focuses on understanding experiences, meanings, and phenomena through nonnumerical data through close reading, interviews, or observations. For example, a researcher who analyzes Shakespeare's Hamlet to understand its themes of revenge, madness, and moral ambiguity would focus on interpretation of the text, symbols, and characters rather than any numerical data. Similarly, a researcher or a sociolinguist in language studies may study how dialects in a particular community influence social identity by interviewing speakers and analyzing their use of language in different contexts.

Quantitative research method focuses on numerical data and statistical analysis. It often involves surveys, experiments, or other forms of data collection that can be quantified. In literary research, a researcher could count the frequency of certain themes, motifs, or words in a novel or compare the use of specific literary devices across different periods. While in language research, a study might count occurrences of certain grammatical structures in different languages or dialects to analyze linguistic patterns, such as the use of the past tense in English versus Hindi or Marathi.

The specific methodologies commonly used in language and literature research include textual analysis, historical analysis, comparative analysis and so on. Textual analysis is a primary method used in literary studies. It involves analyzing the text itself, looking closely at words, phrases, structures, and themes. For example, while conducting research on Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*, the researcher might analyze the language used by characters like Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy to understand how societal norms, gender roles, and personal values are portrayed. For Historical analysis, researchers often consider the historical context in which a text was written or a language was spoken. It helps them understand the cultural, social, and political influences on the text or language. Here, a researcher might look at Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* in the context of medieval England, exploring how it reflects social classes and religious ideologies of the time. Comparative analysis involves comparing texts, languages, or literary traditions. It is often used to explore similarities and differences across cultures or genres. For instance, a researcher might compare George Orwell’s *1984* with Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* in terms of how both the dystopian novels critique government control and social conditioning.

10.8 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH WORK

The scope of research is nothing but an extent or range of the study being undertaken. It determines what will be included and excluded. It sets the boundaries of the research. In literary and language research, the scope might center on a particular genre, author, theme, or theory. When exploring the theme of “identity” in the poems of T.S. Eliot, the research scope could involve a detailed analysis of identity in his poems, such as *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* and *The Waste Land*, while deliberately excluding his plays or essays. This focused approach makes the study more manageable and precise.

A well-defined scope provides clear direction for research. Defining the scope helps in selecting the right questions, methods, and frameworks for presenting findings. When the researcher is preparing a research paper on language acquisition, scope of the study is crucial. Without a defined scope, the study might attempt to cover everything from early childhood language development to second language learning in adulthood. However, by focusing specifically on the impact of bilingualism on

children's language acquisition, the research becomes more focused and in-depth.

All research comes with limitations. These are not flaws but practical boundaries such as time, resources, methodologies, or the availability of data. Deadlines may prevent an exhaustive exploration of every aspect of a topic. So is access to resources. Restricted access to archives, texts, or linguistic data could limit the depth of research. A lack of critical studies on certain authors or topics may narrow the focus. Some approaches might not suit the research objectives, particularly in qualitative or experimental studies. For example, a study on postcolonial themes in Indian literature might be constrained by the lack of primary texts in translation or limited secondary sources in the researcher's language. These factors shape the research's depth.

Thus, in a research proposal clearly articulate both the scope and limitations. Scope specifies the theories, authors, texts, or time periods under investigation, whereas Limitations acknowledge constraints such as time, resources, or methodologies.

10.9 CHAPTER SCHEME OF THE RESEARCH WORK

A Chapter Scheme outlines what each chapter will cover and how the information flows from start to end. Chapter Scheme is important for many reasons. First it systematically organizes the ideas logically. It also helps readers follow argument of research and understand the progression of your ideas.

Generally, the following is the structure of chapter scheme in language and literary research: Introduction, Literature Review, Theoretical Framework, Research Methodology, Analysis and Discussion, Conclusions, References, Appendices etc.

Look at the following sample of Chapter Scheme on research on *The Impact of Colonial Literature on Indian Writers*:

Chapter 1. Introduction

Research Background

Objectives of the Study

Research Questions

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Colonialism and Literature

Role in Colonial Education

Postcolonial Indian Writers

Chapter 3. Theoretical Framework

Postcolonial Theory (Homi K. Bhabha, Edward Said)

Concepts: Hybridity, Subalternity, Otherness etc

Chapter 4. Research Methodology

Data Collection: Literary Text Analysis

Qualitative Methods: Literary Criticism

Analytical Approach: Close Reading

Chapter 5. Analysis and Discussion

Colonial Influence in English Literature

Postcolonial Themes in Indian Literature

Comparative Analysis of Indian Writers

Chapter 6. Conclusion

Summary of Findings

Research Implications

Recommendations for Further Study

7. References

8. Appendices (if applicable)

Thus, a well-planned chapter scheme ensures smooth progression, keeps the work organized, and makes it easier for readers to follow the research arguments.

10.10 CONCLUSIONS OF RESEARCH WORK

The Conclusions of any research are the final word of researchers. It covers main findings, implications of the research and potential areas for future investigation.

A well-organized Conclusion typically includes the following elements:

1. Restating the Research Problem: A brief restatement of the research question or problem addressed.
2. Summary of Major Findings: A concise recap of the study's key results.
3. Implications of the Research: An explanation of how the findings contribute to the field.

4. Limitations: Acknowledgment of any constraints in the research, such as scope or methodology.
5. Recommendations for Future Research: Suggestions for further exploration building upon the current work.

The conclusion brings the research full circle. Whether exploring literary themes or linguistic phenomena, it should have a lasting impression, importance, and implications of the research. It is not only complete but impactful also.

10.11 ABSTRACT OF RESEARCH WORK

In research, Abstract serves as the preview of the study. It offers readers a concise yet informative snapshot of research work. It summarizes the purpose, methods, findings, and conclusions. It makes the readers to grasp the core aspects of the study quickly.

The Abstract, typically ranges between 150–250 words, includes the following key components:

1. Purpose explains the research objective and the problem addressed therein.
2. Methods describes the approaches or tools used in the research.
3. Results summarizes the main findings.
4. Conclusion highlights the implications and contributions to the field.

Thus, the Abstract is a brief, focused summary of a research study that outlines its purpose, methods, findings, and conclusions. It serves as the reader's first introduction to the research.

10.12 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. What is a research proposal and why is it essential in the research process?
2. What are the challenges involved in selecting a research topic, and how can they be overcome?
3. Explain how does an outline help in organizing your research efficiently.
4. Discuss the key components of an Outline for a research project.
5. How do the aims and objectives contribute to the overall structure of the research proposal?
6. Why is a hypothesis important in both qualitative and quantitative research?
7. What is the role of the literature review in a research proposal?

8. What are the differences between qualitative and quantitative research methodologies?
9. Define the Scope and Limitation of a research. What is difference between them?
10. What is the purpose of the Chapter Scheme in a research proposal? Discuss the importance of Chapter Scheme in research.
11. How do the researchers summarize the findings and implications of the research in the conclusion?
12. What is the purpose of an abstract in a research proposal?

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STRUCTURING A DISSERTATION

Unit Structure

11.0 Objectives

11.1 Introduction

11.2 Steps to be followed while writing a dissertation

11.3 Drafting the dissertation

11.4 Editing and Revising

11.5 Key Issues and Arguments: Discussions of the findings and conclusions

11.6 Contribution of the project to the existing body of research

11.7 Directions for future research

11.8 Limitations

11.9 Citing Sources

11.10 In-text citation

11.11 Run - in Quotation

11.12 Works Cited/Bibliography

11.13 Citing print, web, film and archival sources

11.14 Styling of Notes

11.15 Let's Sum up

11.16 Important Questions

11.17 References

11.0 OBJECTIVES

In the previous unit we learnt about how to write a Research Proposal. We understood that the process involves compiling, documentation and referencing which are key aspects in the process of research. We also learnt to outline the Aims and Objectives of the study, frame the Hypothesis, write the Review of Literature, which will include details of all books, journals reference materials that we have studied for the dissertation, Research methodology, and how to write the Scope and Limitations and the Conclusion.

After studying this unit, you will be able to go a step further and learn how to structure a dissertation by using drafting, editing tools, project key issues and arguments, outline findings and conclusion and try to identify the contribution of the project to the existing body of research. We will also learn different ways of citing sources both while writing the Dissertation and in the Works Cited.

11.1 INTRODUCTION

After finalising the topic of the Dissertation, investigating the feasibility of research problems, planning research questions and specific objectives, outlining a literature review with observed gaps, contextualising research methodology and research design as a framework and preparing the matter to be presented in chapters, the researcher begins to write the first draft.

This is a challenging process and cannot be completed in one go. A well analysed and clearly written dissertation is important as your findings are meant to be a significant and original contribution to the world of research even if it is at the post graduate level. Initially the researcher attempts to bring in everything that he has collected. The process of writing is time consuming and confusing too as in the process of compiling the initial draft, the researcher feels everything is important. This is why a systematic, logical and time bound approach is required. By the time the researcher is satisfied, s/he would have edited and polished the draft numerous times. Only then it will be considered ready to be submitted to the research supervisor. The researcher should attempt to clearly and cohesively present the data in the following way.

11.2 STEPS TO BE FOLLOWED WHILE WRITING A DISSERTATION

1) Title Page: In the Title page add the title of your dissertation, subtitle if any, the name of the University and name of the discipline, your full name, qualification, name of the supervisor and the month and year of thesis submission. It goes without saying that your title should reflect your topic.

2) Abstract: This offers a summary of the research and also includes the review of Literature and research gaps. The research methodology and the outcome of the research which contains the findings and conclusions are also presented.

3) Acknowledgments: In this section the researcher conveys thanks to all those people who enabled him to do this work. S/he can also thank the Libraries and Institutes which s/he used in the course of his research.

4) Contents Page: This includes a detailed and sequential list of chapters and sections with page numbers. Your chapter should have sections with clear subheadings. This will enable you to cover all aspects systematically and project your arguments well.

5) Appendices: Questionnaire/s List of respondents, Interview, Plagiarism report

6) References: As per the recommended style (MLA, APA, Chicago, Harvard) Cite your sources here both theoretical and conceptual.

11.3 DRAFTING THE DISSERTATION

Kothari advises, while drafting a dissertation care must be taken to see that it is based on a logical framework as clarity defines the process (419). Accordingly, while writing your draft, remember the following details about the process of writing.

Begin by writing rough drafts of each chapter. Some researchers prefer to write the Introduction chapter in the end, as it encompasses many things at once. Focus on getting your ideas down without worrying about perfection. You should be very clear about the purpose of your writing, your research questions and use strong verbs to express, analyse, state, comment, compare, recommend, assert and so on. This initial draft will serve as a foundation for further refinement. Have clarity of thought and an ability to express clearly. Lack of clarity in thought will bring in confusion in expressing what you want to say. Sometimes this happens if you have a casual approach to your research, your writing is weak, you are biased about something or emotional about what you are articulating. Plan your structure or the sequence you will follow to arrange the sequence of your argument. The information given should relate directly to the research topic and should be topical and objective. The process of writing will not be effective immediately, so you need to practice what you want to say clearly, revise, edit, read and revise again. Maintain a clear and error free style. It is important that your content embraces a specific language, has cohesiveness and clarity and your message reaches out. Be careful in your choice of words. Use words like regardless, in spite of, on the contrary, nevertheless, however and such words to show a contrast to what you have stated before. Elaborate, using words like - to illustrate, for instance, to explain and to show emphasis. Emphasise using words like undeniably, essentially, moreover, without question and so on. Remember to keep a consistent citation style throughout. Online tools like Zotero, EndNote, or Mendeley will help to organize citations. Although MLA style is preferred in research of language and literature, your research supervisor will clarify if you need to use MLA, Chicago or APA which are the citation styles commonly used while writing a thesis in literature. Regularly ask for feedback from your supervisor or peers. All this will improve your writing and mark you out as a serious researcher.

11.4 EDITING AND REVISING

Good writing includes rewriting. So, revising and rewriting go hand in hand, but one has to be objective and ready to rethink and rephrase, reorganize and reset. After the process of writing is over, step away from your thesis for some time and give time for reflection. We love to use certain words and phrases and find ways and means to use them all. So,

edit ruthlessly. Proofread carefully and systematically. Look for spelling, grammar, punctuation and stylistic errors in each draft. Do not use obscure abbreviations, keep a glossary if required. Communication becomes clear with the use of correct punctuation. Learn again from good grammar books or websites where and how to use commas, semicolon, colon, apostrophes, ellipsis points, parenthesis and hyphens. Learning the rules of basic punctuation marks will enable you to write correctly always. In the same way you must be very clear about the rules for Subject Verb agreement, tenses, phrasal verbs, articles and prepositions. You should be aware of certain basic abbreviations which are commonly used in academic writing. Some of them are given in the table at the end of this section. You can incorporate them in your writing if required. Sometimes, you miss out the flow of your arguments and are unable to differentiate a correct sentence or argument from an incorrect one. Read aloud if required. Listening, might help you to understand the errors you cannot identify on the page. See that you check the spellings, grammar and the factual arguments which you want to incorporate separately and in the final revisions take them together. In this way paragraphs will flow effortlessly maintaining a cohesiveness and each chapter will move seamlessly into the next. Consider using editing tools like Grammarly and Quillbot and if possible, have someone else review your writing. Then apply your skills for a final polish. Your argument should be clearly emphasised. Often in the exhaustive process of presenting all our sources we tend to miss out some arguments. So, time and again one must read, revise, edit and move on. This will make our writing error free, consistent and objective.

Some of the key abbreviations frequently used in research are as under:

et al.	and others (used while citing multiple authors)
Eg	for example
col.	for column
Pp	Pages
etc.	and so forth
vers.	for version
trans.	for translation
anon.	for anonymous

MLA Abbreviations - Purdue OWL® - Purdue University

11.5 KEY ISSUES AND ARGUMENTS: DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The discussion section of the thesis details the findings, interprets them in the context of previous work, and offers suggestions for future research. So, the findings should be presented with supporting evidence and not exaggerated. This part of your dissertation is extremely important as there is a systematic end to your research and your originality comes through here. Your interpretation and analysis must be connected to your hypothesis, research questions arising from your primary sources and then justified. It is important to understand at the end of the study if the findings support your argument or contradict it. The findings should mention if your research complements/fills the gaps which you have elicited from your review of literature. What researchers have said in the past should not be brought in, as your understanding of the findings is to be aimed at. Does the analysis of your findings supplement the theories and methodology chosen or contradicts it? What comes out from the analysis made?

The conclusion summarises the discussion and presents why your research is relevant as you logically try to bring all arguments to a close. It must highlight and justify your arguments and research questions. To emphasise again, your conclusion should emphasise the key argument, summarise the answer to the research question as indicated in the introductory part, and reinforce the main themes/issues. With absolute clarity the research problems, findings and important key-takeaways should be stated. They should be definite, clear and realistic and also measurable. You can present your recommendations here to address the issues which you have identified during the processing of data. The recommendations should respond to findings which you have collected through analysis and interpretation or even data collection.

You can also outline the limitations which you have identified in the course of your research.

11.6 CONTRIBUTION OF THE PROJECT TO THE EXISTING BODY OF RESEARCH

No research should be done casually or in a vacuum. Any good research should contribute responsibly to some new, innovative finding and mandate a significant addition to different fields of study. It should empower and further the existing knowledge, theories, or practices present. This then will bring about improvement in the existing knowledge systems, additional discoveries, original ideas, innovative methods or insightful interpretations. All this will contribute to the positive enhancement, understanding, development or improvement of a specific research area. When you present your research and explain both the contribution of your work and potential areas for future research, you position your project as a stepping stone in the broader scholarly

conversation, helping others to understand its significance and inspiring continued exploration of the topic.

11.7 DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Any good research should always be conducted with the intention of adding something new to the existing body of research and pointing out directions for further research. When you identify research gaps in the review of literature, try to address those gaps. It might not be possible to address all of them but you as a researcher can state them in your limitations. This can enable the interested researchers to take it ahead, develop insights about new avenues of research. Attempt to bring in inclusivity at all levels. Refer to reputed academicians and always work on up to date, well researched articles.

Think innovatively, think differently. You must work around the latest topical issues and trends in literature for instance working on digitized archives, animal fiction, climate narratives, literature with virtual reality and augmented reality experiences, post humanism to name a few. Today, it is a data driven world. Critically attempt to connect theories, genres, writers, methodologies which have not been worked on before. Point out varying aspects of your methodology and present how it can be applied to texts in other periods, translated texts or other genres. Has your focus included a social, historic, cultural or political perspective? Broadly bring out how future research could cover this in different ways and suggest contemporary issues which could be taken up. Research should be topical even if your primary sources do not belong to the present age. Try to use in cross disciplinary, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary methods and aspects in your research. NEP also recommends bringing in and connecting your research to the Indian Knowledge systems.

As a researcher you will be abreast with new and developing research methodologies. Recommend how they can be merged with your findings and promoted by new researchers. The abundance of digital tools available are overwhelming and can make research a different experience. Today, you cannot negate or deny their existence but do take informed decisions if you are using them. More and more empirical research is happening everywhere fuelled by accessible and almost free data computing apps. Google forms, questionnaires which can be even sent in Whats App groups and other investigative procedures are also enabling quantitative research in literature and language to understand patterns, trends, and themes. Recommend how these aspects can be used to further research.

11.8 LIMITATIONS

Even at the Post graduation level it is important to address the limitations in your research. This not only marks you out as a serious researcher but defines your dissertation. There may be limitations in your scope, sample size, the number of primary sources identified and the resources you are using. While you need to identify the limitations, try to see they do not

limit your research. The capacity to identify your limitations demonstrates scholarly rigor and might enable another researcher to take it up.

11.9 CITING SOURCES

To strengthen or support your argument, you must refer to or cite quotations, opinions or observations of other researchers, critics or authors. Whether it is a book, a journal or newspaper, websites, YouTube videos, whether the source is online or offline, details of the reference must be given either by quoting or paraphrasing. This is not only to validate your writing, enable other readers to consult the source themselves but also to give due credit to the writer of the referenced material. You should not present these thoughts and ideas as your own. Academic research demands that the researcher credits the sources and mentions the exact details thereby giving greater credibility to the research. Giving due credit to the source makes your research free from plagiarism and your research an authentic, scholarly one. There are many plagiarism detection tools like Turnitin, Scribbr, Grammarly where you can audit your dissertation. It is a good idea to write chapters and then check them for plagiarism. You will get an idea about what checks you should be taking as sometimes you might cite something and not be aware that it is plagiarized. The same tools mentioned can be used for citing sources and sites like Free MLA style sheet generators can help to create different types of citations.

So, whenever you are referring to either a Primary or Secondary source, remember to jot down the following:

- Author, Editor of the book or article
- Title of the book, article, magazine, journal
- Place of Publication and Publisher
- Publication Year and Volume Number
- Page/s from where the source is taken

If you are sourcing something from an electronic source, the information which you must present is a little different.

- Author's name if available
- Title of the article
- Date and location of original publication of material published in print
- Date of electronic publication and date when the article was accessed
- Page, paragraph, section numbers if available
- URL in angle brackets <>

11.10 IN-TEXT CITATION

The researcher often has to cite a reference while writing and point out the source in the Works Cited list. In parenthetical citation when the author's name is mentioned in the body of the research, a part of the author's name, usually the surname and the page number should be mentioned in parenthesis. This is known as '**In-text reference or citation**'. No punctuation mark is given between an author's name, the title and the page number. Providing both the author's name or title of the work in both parenthesis and in the body of the text should be avoided. The details of the source quoted are given at the end of the research paper or thesis in the form of 'Reference list' or Works Cited.

In Text citation can be done in different ways. Refer to the examples given below:

While referring how to overcome difficulties in pronunciation Dey stated that "the first thing that we need is a good 'ear training' (28)."

The author or title can also be presented along with the page number and other location markers in parenthesis.

Parenthetical Citations

In order to overcome difficulties in pronunciation, "we need a good ear training." (Dey 28)

Dey focussed on the importance of ear training while learning pronunciation. (28)

In order to avoid the difficulties in pronunciation and increase understanding the auditory memory, "we need a good ear-training." (Introduction to English Language 28)

In Works Cited

Dey, Sadhan Kumar. *Teaching of English*, Pearson, 2013.

Remember

In order to overcome difficulties in pronunciation, "we need a good ear training." (Sadhan Kumar Dey) is Incorrect

To make the reference clear, parenthetical citations should be placed at the end of a sentence. However, if there are more quotations than page numbers, place the citation in such a way that it specifies the quotation it pairs with.

Depicting the battle for water in *Solar Storms* Linda Hogan writes, "The year-round creeks and streams had dried up" (271), as she describes "The lives of the people who lived there would cease to be, a way of life would end in yet another act of displacement and betrayal" (54).

You should be extremely careful to see that your remarks or ideas are not mixed up with those of a writer or critic. So, cite carefully.

Work by Co-authors/ Multiple Authors

Sometimes there might be two authors. So the in-text citation will have both names. But the parenthetical citation will include surnames only. Detailing about research hypothesis the authors state, “The research hypothesis is a predictive statement that relates an independent variable to a dependent variable. (Kothari and Garg 33)

Works Cited

Kothari, CR, and Gaurav Garg. *Research Methodology Methods and Techniques* New Age International (P) Ltd, 2019.

When the source has more than three authors, the entry in the works-cited list begins with the first author’s name followed by *et al.*

Parenthetical citation

Anderson et al. state that the faculty of critical thinking can be developed by adopting critical thinking practices. (2) After this, when you need to quote again from the same source you just need to quote the page number.

Works Cited

Anderson, Marilyn. *Critical Thinking, Academic Writing and Presentation Skills*. Dorling Kindersley, New Delhi, 2012.

When the name of the author is not given

In case the author is not given, provide the first one, two, or three main words from the title, in either *italics* or in "quotation marks". For example, In-text citation would be “Transform your Reading Habits.”

Works Cited

Transform Your Reading Habits: How to Become a Better Reader accessed 13 November 2024.

There are different ways of using in text citations and you can easily refer to MLA Handbook Ninth Edition, 2021 for the same.

Shortened titles should be given in parenthetical citations:

<u>In Prose</u>	<u>In Parenthetical citations</u>	<u>In Works Cited List</u>
<i>Teaching Communication</i>	<i>Teaching Oral Communication</i>	<i>Teaching Oral Communication: A methodological Framework</i>

11.11 RUN - IN QUOTATION

The Chicago Manual of Style systematically mentions how to use a run in quotation in different situations. The Associated Press Style book mentions that a run in quotation is a short quotation, not more than fifty words or five lines long integrated into sentences. When we introduce a run-in quotation, we have to link the source’s name with a communication verb or phrase followed by a comma.

The Minister said, "Prospects for growth are not good."

In addition, the introduction, can come after the quotation.

"I hate the way you talk about your married life, Ajanta," said Cyrus Anderson.

If the sentence normally ends in a period, replace the period with a comma; but don’t replace question marks or exclamation marks.

"When can I expect your answer?" the teacher asked.

Use colon marks to introduce a run in quotation.

The teacher stated quite clearly: "Publish or Perish!"

Note that the longer quotations should be set in block format.

11.12 WORKS CITED/BIBLIOGRAPHY

It is important to note that each source cited or notes in your dissertation should appear in a list at the end of the paper, after any endnotes. This is titled as Works Cited or References.

However, if you want to record works you merely consulted but did not cite, give the list a different title, such as Works Cited and Consulted.

The list of works cited is made up of core elements which should be cited in a particular way as shown in the diagram below. First record which elements apply to the source, list it in the order of the template. If you don’t have a clear title, use your own description of the work as the title. Each element is followed by a punctuation mark which should be used accordingly and always end your entry with a period. If you wish, additional information about the source can also be given.



Fig. 5.1. The MLA template of core elements.

Bibliography: A bibliography provides a list of all the published and unpublished references. References can be taken from books, research papers, conference presentations, reports, interviews, websites, films, newspaper articles, radio and television programmes that were consulted for the research work but not cited in the project report / research paper / thesis. Hence bibliography is also known by titles like ‘**Works Consulted**’. When research includes only some of the works consulted for the study in the list it is known as ‘Select Bibliography’.

11.13 CITING PRINT, WEB, FILM AND ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Begin the entry with the surname of the author so that the entry can be alphabetized under this name. Use a comma and the rest of the name as presented by the work. End with a period.

Print

Alexie, Sherman. *Ten Little Indians*. Grove Atlantic Press, 2004.

Madsen, Deborah L. *The Routledge Companion to Native American Literature*. Routledge, 2023.

Website

Author Last Name, First Initial. (Year). Title of the Article. *Website Name*. URL

It is important to note that Periodicals (journal, magazine, newspaper article), television episodes, and songs should be within quotation marks. Use DOIs if they are available. A DOI or digital object identifier is important as it remains unchanged and helps to retrieve online journals, articles, books and other works quite easily. DOIs remain attached to their sources even if the URLs change, and DOIs are often more concise and therefore necessary.

Mariyam, Humaira, and V. K. Karthika. "Graphic Assemblages for Storytelling: A Posthuman Perspective from an English Language Classroom." *Journal of Applied Learning & Teaching*, vol. 7, no. 2, Canadian Philosophy of Education Society, Aug. 2024, <https://doi.org/10.37074/jalt.2024.7.2.21>. Accessed 9Nov. 2024.

Films

When documenting a work in film or television, you should generally cite the production company that made the show or the network that broadcast it as they are often produced and distributed by several companies performing different tasks.

- Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Dark Pearl. Directed by Gore Verbinski, Walt Disney Pictures, 2003.

Archives

As a researcher you might come across important documents which have been archived. Archiving is important as the material is maintained and preserved for future access. Let us see how the MLA handbook cites such documents.

- Auden, W. H., and Klaus Mann. Prospectus. Decision magazine papers, Yale U Library, Manuscripts and Archives, MS 176, box1, folder 20.
- *The Constitution of the United States: A Transcription*. National Archives, U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, 28 Feb. 2017, www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitutiontranscript.

If there are two or more authors

When a source which you need to quote has two authors, present them in the order in which they are mentioned in the work. Reverse only the first name and follow it with a comma and the word and, and mention the second name in the normal order. To include a label such as editors or translators, add a comma after the second author's name and then add the label.

Print

- Gilbert, Sandra M., and Susan Gubar, editors. *The Female Imagination and the Modernist Aesthetic*. Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1986.

- Bala, I., & Mitchell, L. (2024). Thematic exploration of education of educational research after the COVID pandemic through topic modelling. *Journal of Applied Learning & Teaching*, 7(1), 26-34. <https://doi.org/10.37074/jalt.2024.7.1.40>

11.14 STYLING OF NOTES

When you are in the process of writing you can cite your references either in the form of Footnotes or Endnotes. If the citations are detailed and continuous it might make you feel you are digressing from what you set out to say. You can have a section at the end which you title as Notes or Endnotes. Endnotes and footnotes in MLA format are indicated in-text by superscript Arabic numbers after the punctuation of the phrase or clause to which the note refers:

The MLA style sheet recommends Endnotes. The details of the reference given, are provided by the researcher at the bottom of the same page. It is called as footnote. In the footnote the full name of the author is given with first name followed by the surname and year of publication. The title of the source, place of publication and page number(s) are also mentioned. If there are more references on the same page these are numbered with Arabic numerals 1,2,3 and mentioned sequentially in the footnotes.

Single spacing is used in the footnotes. Some researchers also use endnotes. Endnotes are given at the end of the research paper or chapter of a thesis before the list of Works Cited. Microsoft Word enables both endnote and footnote.

Like parenthetical citations in the text, citations in notes are generally placed at the end of a sentence, but they may be placed mid-sentence, or at the end of a sentence. Do not use an abbreviation like *ibid.* in a note to convey to the reader that the information is contained in the note above.

Examples

- They arrived after a thorough investigation of the autopsy.³
- Studies recommend that teachers find creative ways of engaging learners in learning the language that is fun and exciting and, at the same time, not very difficult for the learners to carry out (Lile, 2002; Hussin et al., 2001)⁴

Remember that if your note requires a dash, it must be placed after the note number.

A historian by training, Sarkar focuses on artefacts of art⁵ – both oral and visual – as a possibility of developing the idea of India abroad.

11.15 LET'S SUM UP

In this chapter you gained an idea how to structure your dissertation and the importance of editing. We also understood how research should contribute effectively to the existing body of research. We also understood different ways of documenting research and citing sources both while writing the dissertation and in the Works Cited.

11.16 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. Which key concepts do you think you should use for documenting research?
2. Discuss the importance of structuring a dissertation and elaborate on the key steps involved in writing an effective dissertation.
3. Explain the significance of drafting in the dissertation process. How does a well-organized draft help refine the final work?
4. How does the process of editing differ from revising, and why are both essential in dissertation writing?
5. Discuss the importance of presenting key issues and arguments in the findings and conclusions of a dissertation.
6. Evaluate the role of proposing future research directions in extending the scope of the dissertation findings.
7. How should a researcher identify and present the limitations of their dissertation, and why is it important to do so?
8. Discuss the various citation styles and their relevance to different disciplines in dissertation writing.
9. What are in-text citations, and why are they crucial in academic writing? Provide examples of different formats.
10. Compare and contrast the *Works Cited* and *Bibliography* sections in a dissertation. When should each be used?
11. Explain the role of footnotes and endnotes in academic writing. How does their styling impact the readability of a dissertation?
12. Do you think there is a difference between Discussion and Conclusion in research. Elaborate.
13. What care should you take while drafting findings and conclusion in research?
14. Write a note on In Text Citation and Endnotes.

1. Bolker, Joan. *Writing Your Dissertation in Fifteen Minutes a Day: A Guide to Starting, Revising, and Finishing Your Doctoral Thesis*. Henry Holt and Company, 1998.
2. Booth, Wayne C., et al. *The Craft of Research*. 4th ed., The University Of Chicago Press, 2016.
3. Bui, Yvonne N. *How to Write a Master's Thesis*. 3rd ed., Sage, 2019.
4. Creswell, John W. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 5th ed., Sage, 2018.
5. Dawson, Catherine. *A Complete Guide to Research Proposals and Dissertation Writing*. How to Books, 2007.
6. Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*. 3rd ed., Modern Language Association, 2008.
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10. Lunsford, Andrea A. *The Everyday Writer*. 6th ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2019.
11. MLA Handbook. 9th ed., e-book ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2021
12. Modern Language Association of America. *MLA Handbook*. 9th ed., Modern Language Association, 2021.
13. Mullen, Harold. *Citing Sources: A Student's Guide to Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
14. Murray, Rowena. *How to Write a Thesis*. 4th ed., Open University Press, 2017.
15. Purdue University Online Writing Lab. "MLA Formatting and Style Guide." *OWL Purdue*, 2021, <https://owl.purdue.edu>.
16. Silverman, David. *Interpreting Qualitative Data*. 6th ed., Sage, 2020.
17. Thomas, Gary. *How to Do Your Research Project: A Guide for Students*. 4th ed., Sage, 2022.

18. Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 9th ed., University of Chicago Press, 2018.

19. “MLA Handbook [9 Ed.] 2020039581, 2020039582, 9781603293518, 9781603295611, 9781603295628, 9781603293525 - DOKUMEN.PUB.” Dokumen.pub, 2021, dokumen.pub/mla-handbook-9nbsped-2020039581-2020039582-9781603293518-9781603295611-9781603295628-9781603293525.html. Accessed 9 Nov. 2024.



MECHANICS OF WRITING

Unit Structure

12.0 Objectives

12.1 Introduction

12.2 Spelling and Punctuations

12.3 Note-Taking

12.4 Margins and Indentations

12.5 Font, Spacing and Text Formatting

12.6 Title Heading and sub heading

12.6 Running head and page numbers

12.7 Citation

12.8 Tables and Illustrations

12.9 Proof Correction

12.10 Let's Sum up

12.11 Important Questions

12.12 References

12.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, learners should be able to:

- Understand the Importance of Writing Conventions
- Master Spelling and Punctuation Rules
- Develop Effective Note-Taking Skills
- Apply Guidelines for Margins and Indentations
- Utilize Appropriate Font, Spacing, and Text Formatting
- Structure Documents with Titles, Headings, and Subheadings
- Incorporate Running Heads and Page Numbers
- Implement Accurate Citation Practices
- Integrate Tables and Illustrations Effectively
- Perform Proof Correction with Precision

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Mechanics writing refers to the rules of the written language, such as punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. One must have an understanding of both grammar and mechanics to communicate ideas in their paper. In theory, it includes spelling, hyphenation, use of italics, and conventions like how to abbreviate and when to capitalize. Hence, writing precise and grammatically correct sentences is the goal of the mechanics of writing.

Furthermore, word choice and language are other aspects of writing mechanics. One must use formal and objective language while writing a research works. To convey specific and clear meanings, the researcher should avoid slang, colloquialism, casual expressions, vague terms, and technical jargon.

In addition to the mechanics of sentence construction, there are three common writing styles for formatting and citing sources in research.

Modern Language Association, or MLA was established in 1833 in the United States. Initially, it was to support modern language studies and to provide standards for scholarly publishing. MLA Style was then formalized in the 1950s as a response to the growing need for standardization in academic writing and citations, particularly in the humanities. The MLA Handbook was first published in 1977 and has become the primary guide for writers, providing rules for formatting papers and citing sources. Over the years, the handbook has undergone numerous revisions to adapt with the changes in publishing technology and media, including the rise of digital sources. It is currently used in the humanities, literature, and media studies.

First established in 1892, American Psychological Association, or APA was formed in the United States to advance psychology as a science and profession. APA Style was first introduced in 1929 in an article in the journal *Psychological Bulletin*. This article consisted of guidelines to standardize the presentation of research findings in psychology. The APA Publication Manual, first published in 1952, has become the definitive resource for formatting papers, citations, and references in the social sciences. It has evolved to include digital sources, ethical standards, and research data presentation. APA style is widely used in the social and behavioural sciences, education, and sociology.

The University of Chicago Press founded the Chicago Manual of Style in Chicago, Illinois, USA during the early 20th Century. The first edition of the Chicago Manual of Style (CMS) was initially published in 1906. It was created for typesetters and editors at the University of Chicago Press. Over the decades, the CMS has become one of the most comprehensive style guides, covering grammar, punctuation, formatting, citations, and manuscript preparation. Chicago Manual of Style has been regularly updated to address new publishing practices and source types, including electronic and multimedia resources. One observes its uses in business, history, and the fine arts.

Hence, these styles are designed to ensure academic integrity by avoiding plagiarism, making it easier for readers to understand and verify sources, and allowing scholars and researchers to focus on the content of research.

12.2 SPELLING AND PUNCTUATIONS

Spelling is considered a significant mechanical aspect of a research writing. Firstly, it conveys professionalism and credibility. Research papers are formal documents, and spelling errors can diminish the value of the research paper. Furthermore, such errors can lead readers to question the accuracy and quality of the work. Secondly, incorrect spelling or misspelled words can confuse readers resulting in misunderstanding of key concepts. For example, spelling errors in technical terms, such as 'principle' instead of 'principal' or 'affect' instead of 'effect,' can alter the intended meaning and confuse readers.

Academic writing follows specific conventions, including correct spelling, to maintain consistency and standardization. In digital formats, correctly spelled words improve the searchability of a research paper. Researchers and other readers often rely on search engines or databases to locate relevant studies.

Thus, spelling is a key element in the mechanics of writing as it ensures that a research paper is professional and succeeds in communicating its message. Attention to detail in this aspect reflects the broader commitment to rigor and quality expected in academic research.

Punctuation is an essential element in the mechanics of writing a research paper. It helps to clarify the meaning of sentences, ensures proper flow, and aids in effectively presenting complex ideas. Proper punctuation enhances readability and demonstrates that the writer is attentive to details. It further shows adherence to academic standards. In a research paper, where precision and clarity are paramount, incorrect or inconsistent punctuation can lead to ambiguity and misinterpretation.

The following are the key punctuation marks and their usage.

The comma (,) separates elements in a sentence to avoid confusion and improve readability.

Examples in Research Writing:

Listing items: The study focuses on biology, chemistry, and physics.

Introducing clauses: Although the results were inconclusive, further research is necessary.

Full Stop (.) marks the end of a declarative sentence, providing a pause and a clear separation of ideas.

Examples in Research Writing:

The experiment yielded unexpected results. Further analysis is required.

Colon (:) introduces lists, explanations, or examples.

Examples in Research Writing:

The following factors were considered: temperature, humidity, and light intensity.

The conclusion is clear: the hypothesis is supported.

Semicolon (;) is used to link closely related independent clauses or separates items in a complex list.

Examples in Research Writing:

The results were inconclusive; however, the data provided valuable insights.

The participants were from New York, USA; London, UK; and Tokyo, Japan.

Ellipsis (...) indicates omission in a quote or a pause for emphasis. Ellipsis should not be used at the beginning or end of a quote unless omitting material. The formatting of ellipses differs across style guides. The Chicago Manual of Style recommends spacing the dots (. . .), whereas the APA Stylebook prefers no spaces between the dots (...). When a sentence ends with an ellipsis, some style guides, including Chicago and APA, recommend using four dots:; three for an ellipsis and one for a period.

Examples in Research Writing:

Omission: The author states, 'The results were...significant in many ways.'

Pause: The implications of these findings are vast...and yet, much remains unexplored.

Hence to conclude, punctuation in a research writing is vital for conveying ideas. Each punctuation mark serves a specific function that, when used appropriately, enhances the paper's overall quality and academic precision. Scholars and researchers should pay close attention to punctuation to ensure their work is precise and polished.

12.3 NOTE-TAKING

Note-taking is a critical step in research writing. It systematically records information, insights, and references during the research process. When note-taking, one needs to focus on key points, arguments, and evidence rather than transcribing entire texts. It is necessary to include authors, titles, page numbers, and publication details for all notes, as this helps when the researcher is citing sources for their paper. A researcher must be consistent and review and revise their notes regularly.

One can highlight or annotate text to directly mark key points, arguments, or definitions in articles or books. Adding brief comments or summaries in the margins can also be effective for quick reference. Summarizing and

paraphrasing condense information into brief text. It can aid comprehension and integration while writing a paper. Label notes with headings, keywords, or topics, and writing ideas or information on a card or digital note helps for easy sorting. Creating a structured framework of the main ideas and supporting points helps the researcher visualize the organization of the research paper. Mind mapping is a new note-taking tool where one can use diagrams to represent relationships between concepts. Studies have proven it effective for brainstorming and connecting ideas.

Note-taking can be an effective tool for the researcher. Firstly, note-taking helps to organize thoughts and structure the research paper by categorizing information into relevant sections. It enables the development of a logical flow of ideas in a paper. Secondly, it ensures that critical points and supporting data are remembered by the researcher and that key concepts in the paper are identifiable. Thirdly it provides a record of all references used, making it easier for researcher to keep track of sources and their contributions to the paper. Furthermore, researchers can avoid plagiarism by noting the sources of direct quotes, paraphrases, and ideas. Lastly having organized notes to refer to saves time as the researcher doesn't have to revisit sources repeatedly.

Hence, note-taking is an essential part of the research paper writing process. It ensures that information is effectively organized, and utilized, laying the foundation for a well-structured and credible research paper.

12.4 MARGINS AND INDENTATIONS

Margins and indentations in a research paper are crucial for maintaining visual clarity and readability. Consistent margins on all sides create a neat and organized presentation, ensuring adequate space for binding and making the paper visually appealing. Indentation, typically applied to the first line of each paragraph, helps to distinguish paragraphs and visually guide the reader through the flow of ideas.

Margins are the amount of space at each border of a page. Microsoft Word offers several default margins or one can set their custom margins according to the purpose of the document. Indentation refers to the space left between the margin and the beginning of an indented line. The formatting requirements for indentation and margins in a research paper vary depending on the style guide being used.

The APA Style (7th Edition) sets its margin to 1 inch (2.54 cm) on all sides of the page. According to this style, the first line of each paragraph is indented by 0.5 inches (1.27). Text alignment is to the left and no justification is applied to the text. Similarly, MLA Style (9th Edition) and Chicago Style sets their margins to 1 inch with an indentation of 0.5 inches (1.27) inches at the start of each paragraph.

12.5 FONT, SPACING AND TEXT FORMATTING

Font, spacing, and text formatting enhance the readability and clarity of the research paper. It helps the researcher to structure information and highlight key points. Consistent formatting also conveys professionalism and attention to detail. The font is a set of text characters that follow a specific style and size. When writing a research paper, one usually follows the APA, MLA, or Chicago style of formatting for font.

APA style uses legible and accessible font such as Times New Roman in 12 pt font size. Other fonts used are Arial, Georgia, and Calibri in 11 pt font size and Lucida Sans Unicode in 10 pt font size. MLA Style (9th Edition) uses Times New Roman in 12 pt font size. This style doesn't recommend any alternative fonts. Chicago Style follows the other two and uses Times New Roman in 12 pt font size. Arial and Calibri are acceptable but less common alternative fonts are allowed in this style.

Double spacing is used throughout the entire document, including the title page, headings, block quotations, and reference list. Italics are used for titles of books, journals, and other standalone works. Quotation marks are added for titles of shorter works, such as articles and essays. Section headings are applied in bold formatting.

These formatting standards ensure, consistency, and professional presentation of research papers. However, one must always consult the latest edition of the respective style guide for any updates or exceptions.

12.6 TITLE HEADING AND SUB HEADING

The title, headings, and subheadings of a research paper serve as organizational and navigational tools for both the researcher and the reader. The title encapsulates the central theme of the paper, providing a clear and concise overview. Headings and subheadings further break down the paper into distinct sections, each focusing on a specific aspect of the research. This hierarchical structure enhances readability and guides the reader through the logical flow of arguments. A well-defined system of headings and subheadings can create a clear and organized framework for research.

The title in the APA Style (7th Edition) is centered, bold, and in the title case meaning all the major words are capitalized including the first and last words. It is positioned on the first page of the paper and no underline, italics, or quotation marks are applied.

Example: **The Impact of Climate Change on Global Agriculture**

APA uses five levels of headings, formatted as follows:

Level 1 (Main Heading): The title is centered and is in bold probably title case.

Level 2 (Subheading): Title is left aligned, bold, and in title case

Level 3 (Sub-subheading): Title is left aligned, bold, italics, and in title case

Level 4 and Level 5: Here the title is indented, bold, title case, and ends with a period. The text follows immediately on the same line.

Example: **Mitigation Strategies.** Policies need to be implemented...

The title in MLA Style (9th Edition) and Chicago Style is centered, in plain text (no bold, italics, or underlining), and in title case. The title is placed on the first page and above the first line of text. MLA or Chicago style does not have a formal system for headings, but researchers can use a consistent style to organize their work.

Hence one observes that APA is more structured with specific rules for headings and subheadings. MLA is simpler, with less emphasis on a rigid heading hierarchy. Chicago allows flexibility, but clarity and consistency are essential.

12.6 RUNNING HEAD AND PAGE NUMBERS

Running head refers to a line at the top of each page of a document. It is also called a header. It gives the reader the necessary information. The rules for the running head and page numbers vary depending on whether one is following APA, MLA, or Chicago style.

Professional papers for publication in APA style (7th Edition) include a running head which is a shortened version of the title in the uppercase letters. It is left-aligned and limited to 50 characters, including spaces and punctuation. Student papers for coursework in APA generally do not require headers unless instructed by the instructors. Page numbers in APA format are placed in top- top-right corner of every page, including the title page. Arabic numerals (1,2,3...) are used.

MLA does not use a traditional “running head.” Instead, it includes the last name and the page number in the header of every page. Example: Smith 1. As for page numbers they are placed in the top-right corner of every page including the Title page and Works Cited page. They are in the same font and size as the main text which is Times New Roman in 12 pt font size.

Chicago style does not require a running head. However, if necessary (e.g., for clarity or journal submission), it includes the paper title or a shortened version. It is left-aligned and typically formatted consistently throughout the document. Page numbers are placed in the top-right corner of the page or the bottom center depending on the preference of the researcher. Though Arabic numerals are used, the title page, preface, and table of contents may use Roman numerals (I, II, III).

Thus, running heads provide a concise title or topic identifier, while headers offer additional context within sections. Page numbers allow readers to easily locate and reference specific information, ensuring smooth flow and understanding throughout the document.

12.7 CITATION

The in-text citation is a brief reference to a source that provides information in academic writing. In-text citations are also known as parenthetical references. They help readers identify the source of ideas and give credit to the original authors.

In-Text Citations format under APA style (7th Edition) is author-date. It includes the author's last name and the year of publication separated by a comma. In-text citation for a direct quote also includes page numbers. Situation where there are three or more authors "et al" an abbreviation for the Latin phrase et alia which means "and others" is used. This is done to save space in academic writing and source citations. Title in quotation marks or italics is used when there is no author.

Example (paraphrase): (*Smith, 2020*)

Example (direct quote): (*Smith, 2020, p. 45*)

Examples for multiple authors:

Two authors: (*Smith & Jones, 2020*)

Three or more authors: (*Smith et al., 2020*)

Example for no author: ("*Climate Change*," 2020) or (*Climate Change*, 2020)

In-text Citation in MLA style (9th Edition) is an author-page system. It includes the author's last name and the page numbers in parentheses. Formatting for three or more authors includes the addition of "et al" with page numbers. The title or a shortened version of the title in quotation marks along with page numbers is used when there is no author.

Example (paraphrase): (Smith 45)

Example (direct quote): (Smith 45)

Example for multiple authors:

Two authors: (*Smith and Jones 45*)

Three or more authors: (*Smith et al. 45*)

Example for no author: ("*Climate Change*" 45)

Chicago style uses footnotes or endnotes for in-text citations. It includes a superscript number in the text that corresponds to a note at the bottom of the page (footnote) or at the end of the document (endnote). However, Chicago also allows an author-date system similar to APA.

Example: Climate change is a pressing issue. ¹

Footnote:

1. John Smith, *The Science of Climate Change* (Academic Press, 2020), 45.

A citation is a written reference to a source, such as a book, article, or website that is used in a research paper. Citation gives credit to the original creators of ideas, information, or images. They can add strength and authority to the writer's work and help other scholars explore or use the sources in their work. It can include the author's name, title of book, publisher, date of publication, and location of the publishing company. The APA, MLA, and Chicago style of citation influences the punctuation and the order of the information.

There is a "References" page at the end of the research paper, in an APA citation style. Here all sources are listed alphabetically using hanging indent. The format of the citation is the last name of the author followed by the first initial and middle initial. The publication date, the title of the book, city, state, and publisher is mentioned.

Example (Book):

Smith, J. (2020). *The science of climate change*. Academic Press.

Example (Journal Article):

Jones, R. A. (2019). Global warming effects on agriculture. *Journal of Environmental Studies*, 34(3), 123–134. <https://doi.org/10.xxxx/xxxxx>

MLA Style (9th Edition) includes a "Works Cited" page at the end of the paper, listing all sources alphabetically, using a hanging indent. MLA 9th Edition format begins with the author's last name, first name, and middle name. It is followed by the name of the book in italics, city, state, publisher, date published, and page number.

Example (Book):

Smith, John. *The Science of Climate Change*. Academic Press, 2020.

Example (Journal Article):

Jones, Richard A. "Global Warming Effects on Agriculture." *Journal of Environmental Studies*, vol. 34, no. 3, 2019, pp. 123–134.

Chicago style includes a "Bibliography" page at the end of the paper. Similar to APA and MLA style, all the sources are listed alphabetically in hanging indent. Chicago style starts with the first name of the author and then the middle name. It is succeeded by the book's title in italics, state, publisher, and the date published.

Example (Book):

Smith, John. *The Science of Climate Change*. Academic Press, 2020.

Example (Journal Article):

Jones, Richard A. "Global Warming Effects on Agriculture." *Journal of Environmental Studies* 34, no. 3 (2019): 123–134.

Hence to conclude APA focuses on the year of publication to highlight recent research whereas emphasizes page numbers to direct readers to specific parts of the source. One observes that the Chicago style of formatting offers flexibility with either footnotes or an author-date system, depending on the type of work.

Summary Table

Style	In- Text Citation format	Reference List Title	Reference List Format
APA	(Author, Year, p. #)	References	Author. (Year). <i>Title</i> . Publisher.
MLA	(Author Page #)	Works Cited	Author. <i>Title</i> . Publisher, Year.
Chicago	Superscript number; optional (Author Date)	Bibliography	Author. <i>Title</i> . Publisher, Year.

12.8 TABLES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Tables and illustrations play a crucial role in enhancing the clarity, impact, and effectiveness of a research paper. They are powerful tools for conveying complex information concisely and visually, making it easier for readers to understand and interpret the findings.

Tables effectively organize numerical data into rows and columns, making it easier to compare and analyze different variables. Illustrations, such as graphs, charts, and diagrams, visually represent complex information, trends, and relationships, aiding in the interpretation and comprehension of the research findings.

The title of the table, illustrations, graphs, charts, etc in APA Style (7th Edition), MLA Style (9th Edition) should be italicized, written in title case, and placed above the table or figures (e.g., *Table 1: Sample Data*). Tables are numbered sequentially (e.g., Table 1, Table 2) and placed close to their first mention in the text. Below the figure or table, one must include a brief explanation and, if applicable, a citation for the source of the figure. The font and formatting of the table should match the rest of the paper. In Chicago Style (17th Edition) the title of the table or figure is above the table in sentence case, and it may be bold or italicized depending on consistency.

12.9 PROOF CORRECTION

Proof correction in the mechanics of writing refers to the process of identifying and fixing errors or inconsistencies in a written document, particularly during the final stages of preparation before publication or submission. This step is crucial for ensuring that the text is polished, error-

free, and adheres to the required standards of academic or professional writing. Stages of proof correction include initial reading of the entire document to identify errors, followed by examining text line by line.

Proof correction addresses spelling errors by correcting misspelled words, including technical terms and proper nouns. It is concerned with fixing errors in sentence construction, verb tense agreement, and modifiers used. Furthermore, it focuses on identifying and correcting misplaced punctuation, formatting, and typographical mistakes like repeated words. Finally, proof correction verifies headings, subheadings, tables, figures, and references in a research paper.

Manual proofreading is popular among researchers. It follows careful reading of the text by the writer or an editor to catch subtle errors. Presently, digital applications like Grammarly, ProWritingAid, or MS Word's built-in tools also detect errors in the text.

Hence to conclude, Proof correction is a critical step in the mechanics of writing that ensures the final version of a research paper or any written document is polished, professional, and ready for submission or publication.

12.10. LET'S SUM UP

In this unit, we have learned that the mechanics of writing encompass rules for punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and word choice, essential for precise and grammatically correct sentences. Writers should adopt formal, objective language and avoid slang or jargon to maintain clarity and professionalism. Academic writing styles—MLA, APA, and CMS—offer standardized guidelines for formatting and citation: MLA suits humanities, APA is preferred in social sciences, and CMS is tailored for history and publishing. Mastering spelling and punctuation enhances professionalism, credibility, and clarity in research writing.

We also discussed the effective note-taking strategies like summarizing and paraphrasing which help organize ideas and ensure logical structuring while avoiding plagiarism. Proper margins, indentations, font, and formatting contribute to readability and professional presentation, with standard guidelines across styles. Clear titles and headings improve navigation, while running heads and page numbers vary by style. Citation systems like APA, MLA, and CMS differ in format but ensure academic integrity.

And finally, we learned that tables, illustrations, and proof correction refine research papers, providing visual clarity and error-free documents. Adhering to these principles ensures organized, professional, and impactful research writing that meets academic standards.

12.11 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Q1. Write short notes on the following:

1. The importance of spelling and punctuation.
2. Note-taking.
3. Proof correction.

Q2. Elaborate on the mechanics of writing and discuss three styles of academic writing and formatting.

Q3. Discuss in detail the rules for text formatting, margins, indentation, and titles in a research paper.

Q4. Critically compare the three citation styles used in research papers.

12.12 REFERENCES

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