MA ENGLISH

SEMESTER - IV (CBCS)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

SUBJECT CODE - 91645-J

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KEY CONCEPTS-I

Unit Structure

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit the researcher will be able to:

1.   Understand and use the techniques like investigation, exploration, examination and analysis to begin the research project and use them whenever needed in the process of research.
2.   Formulate a problem statement and hypothesis
3.   Understand the methods and modes of research

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims at an introduction to the basic structure of research. Irrespective of its volume or quantity, in terms of word count, research entails investigation, exploration, examination and analysis. After deciding upon a research project the researcher has to start with the background research. The cluster of processes mentioned above begins with a research problem or a research question or to make it simple a question emerging out of the curiosity of the researcher. This research question has to be followed with a hypothetical answer/s and the researcher has to arrive at these hypothetical answers using a method or several methods and modes of research. What follows in this chapter is an attempt at getting acquainted with these technical terms and processes of undertaking a research project.

1.2 INVESTIGATION

Research in literary studies particularly depends more on the researcher's involvement in finding out the answers to her/his curiosities or the research problem. There is no specific method or way in which research can be undertaken in literary studies. It is like a treasure hunt and one has to come up with novel ways of finding out answers to satiate academic curiosity. Research is undertaken with the purpose of fulfilling curiosity or acquiring knowledge in a specific field and pursuing investigation for a well-informed action. As a researcher when one begins to define the research problem one has to take important decisions at the initial stages of the research. The first thing the researcher has to do is to investigate the feasibility of the research problem and the entire research project. Now this investigation operates at various levels like is it possible to conduct research in the given material conditions for example the availability of research material and other resources.

Imagine that a researcher wants to study GirishKarnad's plays and is curious about the role of myths in his writings. If the researcher has to have access to these myths and to be more precise in Kannada language it becomes a point to be investigated. The researcher has to investigate the availability of myths in English or has to find a translator who can translate the myths available in Kannada into English. The feasibility of the research problem is one more important aspect. The possibility of finding answers to the research problem has to be there. In fact, it is possible to say that the formulation of a research problem and the investigation of the research problem go hand in hand. The research problem is shaped by the investigation. Once the researcher decides upon a research project s/he has to do background research. Background research helps the researcher to be more familiar with the topic and field of research. The researcher has to conduct primary research which involves the study of the subject or field using first-hand observation and investigation techniques. Observation and investigation would be used throughout the research process but at the beginning, it is important while conducting primary research particularly when there isn't much previously published material is available.

The investigation at the beginning has to look out for the already existing body of research on similar research questions or the topics that come close to your research question. Again, to explicate this point further let us have a look at the example cited above. There is ample material available, already conducted research or research papers and books written, on GirishKarnad's writings. Whereas an author as new as MajaLunde who has written this interesting novel, *The History of Bees* may not have lot of already existing body of literature. The possible theoretical frameworks also need to be verified as they become the research project's major defining aspect. "The History of Bees" for example can be studied from the point of view of ecocriticism. One also has to investigate the best possible method or combination of methods to be used for undertaking the research. For example, a student of literature wants to study the film

adaptations of William Shakespeare's plays. While working on this research project the student has to first investigate the feasibility of this idea. Shakespeare's plays have been adapted into various cultures and languages. The researcher has to focus on one particular culture, language or country and choose film adaptations from that focused area. The researcher also has to investigate similar kinds of attempts at writing research projects, research papers, and theses written for the M.Phil or Ph.D degrees by other researchers.

This investigation becomes important for the researcher to use an approach or a theoretical framework to study the film adaptations and issues of concern to be addressed in the film texts. For example, it is possible to study film adaptations of Shakespeare's plays by the filmmaker Vishal Bharadwaj. The treatment of female characters in his films can be studied using feminist literary theory. The adaptation process itself can be studied using frameworks like translation theory, film theory and linguistic approaches. This investigation needs to be carried out.

While describing the approach of the book Michael Pickering in the Introduction to *Research Methods for Cultural Studies* (2008) states, "Its general philosophy is pluralist in that it advocates using mixed methods taking an eclectic approach to research topics rather than confining research activity to any single avenue of investigation." (4). Thus, first-hand observation and investigation are important for primary research at the beginning of research project.

1.3 EXPLORATION

Exploratory research or exploration refers to systematic data collection to maximize the discovery of generalizations based on the description and direct understanding of the subject under study. As Robert Stebbins puts it, for social sciences it is both a special methodological approach that is distinct from, "…verification or confirmation, and a pervasive personal orientation of the exploratory researcher." (327).

A researcher has to explore when s/he possesses little or no scientific or detailed knowledge about the subject of study but believes that it contains elements that are worth studying. While exploring the subject the researcher has to have an open mind and flexibility in looking for the outcomes. Now, this exploration can be looking for primary sources or secondary sources in various libraries or it can be focused on close reading of the texts and looking for new dimensions of the issues that are central to the study. For example, the categorization of books according to the genres in libraries or bookshops can be studied better with the help of exploration. The first step in exploration would be acquiring an intimate firsthand understanding of the primary texts, data, or sources. The most effective approach for this would be to use any ethical method to explore to reach a certain understanding of the research topic.

The goal of the exploration is the inductively derived generalizations about the text or the field of study. These generalizations are then by

researcher weaved into theory. The example we brushed upon earlier of the categorization of genres and books in libraries can be studied using inductive methods and the generalizations can be weaved into the theory of cultural capital and habitus propounded by Pierre Bourdieu. The reading practices of a certain social group can be analyzed using exploration where the record of the readers and books they read can be explored. Such records are easily available with the libraries or the bookshops from which the books are bought. These readers can be interviewed for the genres they like to read. The same can be done for a particular author and the texts s/he has written. A close reading of his/her literature would reveal a lot about the writing style of that author. The stylistic analysis of literature too can be an outcome of the exploration. For literary and language studies exploration can work the way it works for social sciences. The importance of the English language for a certain social group can be studied using exploration.

1.4 EXAMINATION

The Oxford Learner's Dictionary defines the word examination as, "the act of looking at or considering something very carefully". In the research process, one has to examine many aspects. To begin with, one has to examine the potential of the research topic the research question; whether it is possible to conduct research on the given topic. One would also want to examine the availability of the primary data as well as secondary data and that would be the availability of books and reading material in the libraries and online resources. Apart from this, the researcher has to examine the hypothesis throughout the research process. The study's findings may prove the hypothesis right or go against it.

As far as the study of literature is concerned examination means having a closer look at the theme, characters, language (literary devices) and structure of the literary text. One might also want to examine carefully the socio-economic context of the narrative as well as the time of the publication of the book. The life of the author is also examined for a better understanding of the text. Charles Dickens' novels for example have been studied using autobiographical as well as Marxist approach. For the study of language or in a specialized branch like linguistics and pragmatics examination would cover many aspects. It is possible to examine the influence of the first language on the speaker of English as a second or third language. The methods of language teaching and learning in classroom situations can be examined. Examination, as an element of research, is important and has to be used throughout the research process.

1.5 ANALYSIS

The Oxford Learner's Dictionary defines the word analysis as, "the detailed study or examination of something in order to understand more about it; the result of the study". While conducting the research analysis is used by a researcher to reach the findings. The methodologies and methods of research impact the ways of analysis. In the study of literature, it becomes imperative to accentuate the difference between interpretation

and analysis. While interpretation is more driven by an individual's belief system, an analysis of a literary text can be considered to be a more scientific way of explicating a text. However, it is possible to say that the results of the analysis help the researcher to make interpretive statements that follow the line of the hypothesis or go against it. The results of the analysis, for example as a result of close reading of a text, can be treated as data that has to be further analysed using various methodologies or the methodology that one wants to adopt to reach the findings.

There are various methodologies and approaches that we can use for the analysis; Marxist, Feminist, Structuralist, Post-Structuralist to cite a few examples. However, close reading of the text remains a common method to undertake literary research. The novel series Harry Potter can be analysed using structuralist approach. The binary of good and evil is manifest in the characters that allow the muggles to enter the world of magic and the characters that hate the common human beings and want the pure blood magicians to have the world of magic for themselves. Now there are other binaries that exist in the novel series. Master and slave is one binary that is prominent through the magical human beings as masters and house elves as slaves. Now this analysis can easily be interpreted as a reference to the racism that exists in the western countries or a country like United States of America. An interpretative risk can be taken here to stretch this metaphor to the caste system that exists in India.

1.6 HYPOTHESIS AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Problem statement is the main idea of the research project a question to which you look for answers through the process of research. Your research project attempts to find ways of answering the problem statement. Usually, the answers to the problem statement would have sub questions and the answers to all these questions would be stated in the conclusion of the research project. The problem statement has to be worded carefully mostly using technical terminology. The questions are related specifically to the research project and include what is to be studied and ways of study. These ways of study are known as research methods and theories. The problem statement describes the research problem or research question as well as entails explanation of the problem.

The research problem operates as a guiding tool for the research process. The problem statement helps to focus and define the data collection, primary research and methods to be used. It helps in focusing on the essential tasks and saves you from going off the track. There is always a possibility of revising the problem statement as you may come across new information that adds new dimension to the research undertaken. There has to be a certain relationship between the problem statement and your conclusion the answers to the problem statement. Your research between the problem statement and conclusion is the exercise of looking for the answers to the problem statement. You have to make sure that the answers to your problem statement should add something to the academic subject or field. You should make sure that your problem statement is relevant.

Hypothesis

A theoretical explanation of a problem statement is called hypothesis. The hypothesis is a causal explanation or a tentative and preliminary answer to the problem statement. It is derived from the preliminary observations of the already existing literature on problem statements or the field of research. It can be tested through the preliminary study or analysis and experiment. The hypothesis can be rejected or confirmed. A hypothesis can also be treated as a prediction of the findings you would state in the conclusion of your research. In the case of qualitative research, a hypothesis is presented when there is prior research available in the same field or the same topic and it enables you to make predictions. While developing a hypothesis one should take the following steps:

a. the research question should be the focus of the hypothesis and an attempt at finding a possible tentative answer should be made.
b. the tentative answer should be based on what is already known about the topic.
c. you should formulate the hypothesis with some idea of what you might find.

1.7 METHODS AND MODES OF RESEARCH

A research method, to put it simply, is how we do what we do and why. Generally, the term 'methods' is used interchangeably with methodologies. Here we are concerned with "methods" that is strategies, techniques or processes used for data collection and analysis to unearth new information or create new ways of comprehending a topic.

Gabriele Griffin states, "Whilst research methods are concerned with how you conduct a given piece of research, methodologies are concerned with the perspectives you bring to bear on your work such as a feminist or a postcolonialist one" (6). He points out the difference between research skills, research methods and research methodologies. Being able to read medieval script or the ability to use computers, and being able to conduct interviews are important research skills. In this section our focus is on research methods.

Research Methods are roughly divided into two sections that are quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative research deals with numbers and statistics. Quantitative methods measure variables and test hypotheses systematically. Qualitative research deals with meanings and words and allows us to explore experiences and concepts in greater detail.

Quantitative research uses methods from natural sciences that produce numerical data and hard facts and establish a logical relationship between variables. It uses mathematical, computational and statistical methods to do so. It is also known as empirical research as it can be precisely measured. With quantitative research tables and graphs can be constructed of raw data.

Qualitative research on the other hand is unstructured and exploratory and studies complex phenomena that are difficult to explicate with quantitative

research methods. However, it can generate ideas for quantitative research later. It is generally used to get a detailed understanding of human operations in society, behaviour, experiences, motivations and attitudes to get insights into the way humans feel and think. The basis for this understanding is observation and interpretation.

Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
• Scientific and empirical research method • generates numerical data and uses logical, statistical and mathematical technique.	• Method of inquiry that helps to develop an understanding of human and social sciences.
• Particularistic in nature	• Holistic in nature
• The researcher is neutral or less involved and precise observations and analysis are expected on the topic.	• Uses a subjective approach as the researcher is intimately involved
• Quantitative research is conclusive	• Qualitative research is exploratory
• Uses deduction	• Uses induction
• Random sampling with a large representative sample is chosen to deduce the results	• Purposive sampling with a small sample size to get a thorough understanding

Observation, Participant Observation, Systematic and Structured forms of observation, Interviews, and multimedia documentation are some of the other methods that are prominently used in humanities in general.

Antconc

'Antconc is a freeware corpus analysis toolkit for concordancing and text analysis.' (Lawrence Anthony's Website). As a tool, Antconccan be used to find out how many times a certain phrase or a word appears in a literary text. For example, in J.K. Rawling'sfirst novel, "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" the word 'master' appears eight times. But the word 'master' appears more frequently in the consequent novels in the series. It is possible to analyse quantitatively with which other words the word master is associated. Various word clusters and their frequency can be measured using Antconc and can be further analysed using any other methodology. It is mostly suggested to use a mixed method approach to undertake research. As we have seen at the beginning, research is an evolving process till one reaches the findings. Thus, all the terms that we have tried to explore in this unit have to be tested by the researcher with

their own unique research problems and with an attempt to find answers to them.

1.8 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. What is investigation in the research process and what is its importance?
2. How does exploration helps to shape the research project?
3. Describe why examination and analysis are important to reach the findings of the research.
4. What care should be taken while formulating a hypothesis?
5. Why is hypothesis an important aspect of research?
6. Is it possible to state that problem statement makes the research what it is?
7. What is a method in the research process?
8. What is the difference between tools, methods and methodologies in the research process?

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- https://libraryguides.mcgill.ca/text-mining/AntConc
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2

KEY CONCEPTS-II

Unit Structure :

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE UNIT

1. To acquaint students to some key concepts in research methodology.

2. To orient them to the skills of data collection and data analysis.

3. To develop their academic reference skills (research skills).

4. To acquaint them to the ways of documenting sources.

5. To develop their academic writing skills.

2.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit - **Key Concepts I** - you were acquainted to

1. Investigation, exploration, examination, analysis

2. Hypothesis and Problem Statement

3. Methods and Modes of Research.

In this unit we will see the following key concepts.

4. Data Analysis (Collection and Classification)

5. Reference Lists and Footnotes

6. Quotations and Citation

7. Bibliography / Appendix / Appendices

The postgraduate students are new to university libraries which are different from their college libraries. They visit libraries in search of reference books for their research projects. The students may have difficulties while using open access academic libraries. They have to locate books and journals with or without help of the support staff at the Knowledge Resource Centres (KRCs). The students also need some training in writing their research projects at the post-graduation level. The students seeking education through distance mode also need to visit libraries during and after their post-graduation, if they pursue research degrees. This unit tries to cater to their present and future needs. The purpose of this unit is to enhance their academic reference skills (or research skills).

The academic reference skills can be broadly divided into two parts, viz. using a library and giving references in a research work. The skills required in using a library are understanding classification system in a library and using a library catalogue (subject and author) and Online Public Access Catalogues (OPAC) to find out required information quickly. The skill of giving references in a project report / research paper / thesis includes referencing – citation / acknowledgement of sources, writing footnotes, writing a bibliography, etc. (also see Jordan, 1997).

2.2   DATA ANALYSIS (COLLECTION AND CLASSIFICATION)

Data Collection

a)   Visit to a library:
The postgraduate student or research scholar needs to collect relevant data for their research projects by visiting academic libraries (KRCs). Nowadays the KRCs are partly or fully automatized. The researchers need to be trained for the retrieval of information from bibliographical databases and effective use of OPAC.

Fig. 2.1 – Web-OPAC at Osmania University Library
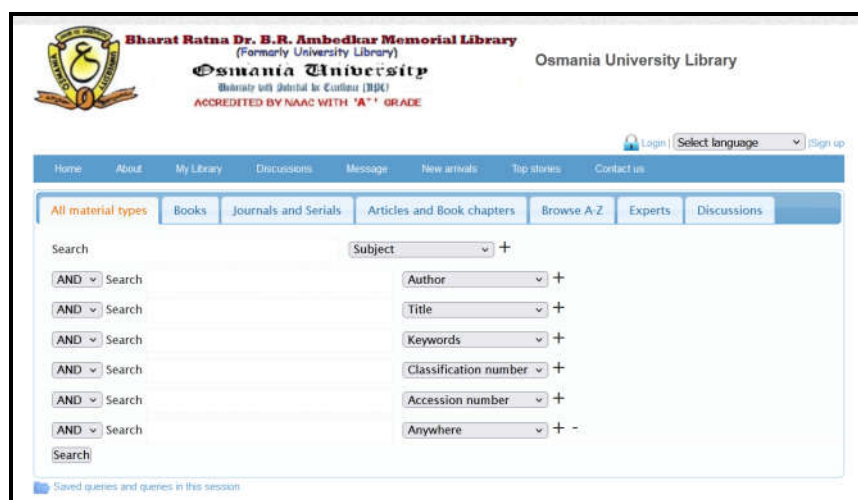
(Source: http://14.139.82.46:8080/newgenlibctxt/)

In the open access libraries to search physically and find the reference books and journals required for the research topics, the postgraduate teachers and research supervisors may guide the students. The director and support staff (knowledge

workers) at KRCs also help library users to locate the required references. A user needs to know how reference materials are arranged and cataloged. S/he should try to understand the classification system used at the KRC like Dewey Decimal system and the Colon system. Besides, there are different sections in a library – catalogues, new arrivals, lending section, reference section, periodical section, stack room. Periodical section and reference section are more useful to a researcher. These sections of a library generally have reference sources like dictionaries, thesauruses, glossaries, encyclopedias, compendiums, bibliographies, indexes, journals, theses and dissertations and other reference books in print forms. Some of these reference sources are not for home-lending. A researcher has to refer to them in the reference section of the KRC, read and make notes. They should record author's surname and first name; title of the book, journal, research paper and publication details – year and place of publication and the publisher.

Besides films, CDs and DVDs, the above mentioned resources are available in electronic forms on databases like N-List and DELNET. Apart from soft copies of books and journals, one may also get Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs) on web portals like *Shodhganga* and ProQuest, to name a few. Here it is necessary to keep the record of downloads like date of retrieval and web address.

b)   Locating reference books and journals

When the researchers locate the required reference source, they should be aware of how to search the specific references. For instance, their acquaintance with the parts of a book like the title page, rear page of the title page with publication details, table of contents, preface, foreword or introduction, glossary, appendix, index and the jacket. Here it is essential to know the difference between 'contents' and 'index'. The former is in the beginning of a book whereas the latter is at the end of a book.

Self-Check

1. A list of topics arranged in a sequential manner given in the beginning of a book is _____.

   a) index
   b) contents
   c) appendix
   d) glossary

2. State the print reference sources you will use to get the following information:

   a. To know the frequency of words used in Annual Union Budget
   b. To find out the date of Birth Anniversary of William Wordsworth

   c. To know the causes of the French Revolution
   d. To know the meaning of the word 'style' in Marathi
   e. To know the edition of a book

3. Where would you find the following information about a book?

   a) The year of publication of the book
   b) The purpose for which the book has been written
   c) The page number of a chapter of the book

d) A list of explanations of words used in a book

e) Extracts of the reviews about the book

Classification of Data

The data collected by visiting a library are from secondary sources. It helps mainly to review the previous studies on the area of research topic. The data collected and published by authorities other than the researcher is found in secondary sources like books, journals, periodicals, theses, newspapers, reports, records, publications, etc. It helps a researcher to support arguments in the research report. It is known as secondary data. It is in print and electronic forms. In addition to library visits, data is also collected through websites, social media and personal communication.

In the researches related to language, based on the secondary sources, a researcher collects data through classroom observation, pre-tests and post-tests, questionnaires and structured interviews. This data is known as primary data. In the studies related to literature, the literary works selected for the research, autobiography of the author selected for the study, his / her letters form the primary sources of data collection. Thus, experimental and survey methods are used for data collection in language studies.

Data Analysis

The data collected through online and offline, primary and secondary sources, is to be classified and analysed systematically as per the chapters of the project. For the convenience of research the data can be classified into different groups on the basis of chronology, geographical location, attributes like gender, major and minor characters, etc. For instance, the previous studies on the topic are to be reviewed in the section 'Literature Review' can be arranged according to their year of publication or country of publication.

The analysis of data is the main part of a research report. The results of the research work are based on analysis of the data. In literary studies, it is interpretation of the select literary texts. In a research based on language studies, the data collected is to be presented in a tabular form. It helps researcher to analyze it with the help of appropriate statistical techniques, if needed. The next stage in research is to write / present the research report.

2.3 REFERENCE LISTS ANDFOOTNOTES

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.

Footnotes

The sources like books, research papers and theses are quoted in the main text of the research report by the researcher, in support of their arguments. In order to help the reader of the research report, the details of the reference quoted 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 source, place of publication and page number(s) are also mentioned. If there are more references on the same page these are numbered and in the footnotes the sources are mentioned sequentially. There is single spacing used in the footnotes. Some researchers also use endnotes. Endnotes are given at the end of the research paper or chapter of a thesis. Microsoft word has provision for the both.

Fig. 2.2 – Difference between Footnote and Endnote
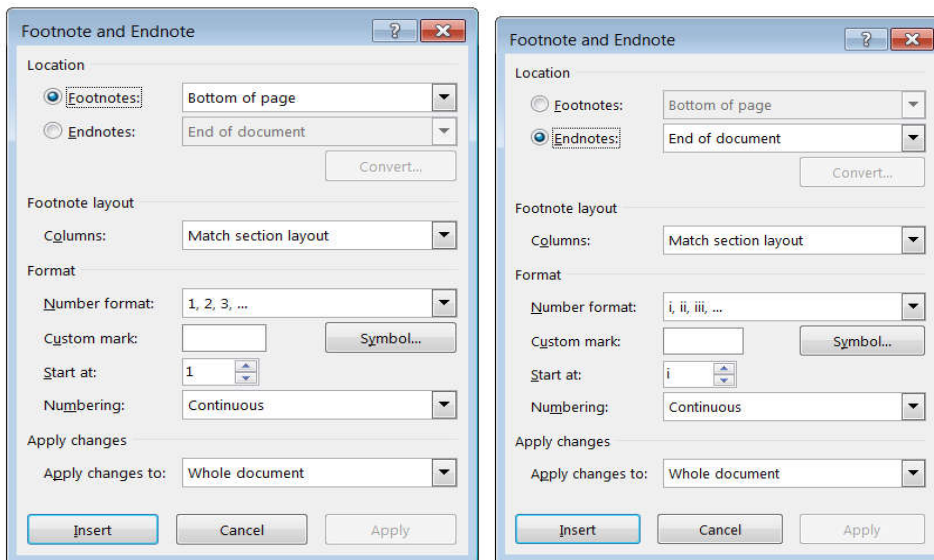
Reference Lists

Some researchers avoid footnotes and prefer to provide full details of the sources referred to in the reference list given at the end of the report / paper / thesis. References are arranged in alphabetical order with the first mention of the surname of the author followed by the initials or his/her first name and year of publication. The difference between a footnote entry and an entry in a reference list can be seen in the following table.

Table 2.1 Difference between a footnote entry and an entry in a reference list

Footnote	Reference List
S. Krishna Bhatta, *Indian English Drama: A Critical Study* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1987), p. 186.	Bhatta, S. K. *Indian English Drama: A Critical Study*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1987.

Abbreviations used in footnotes and reference lists

A researcher has to use abbreviations in their research project / paper / thesis. Along with the main text, abbreviations are used in footnotes and references. Two examples have been given below.

a) 'Ibid' is a Latin abbreviation which means 'the same'. It is used in footnote to refer to the same work and reference that precedes it.
3 S. Krishna Bhatta, *Indian English Drama: A Critical Study* (New Delhi: Sterling

Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1987), p. 186.

6 Ibid. p. 186 (This means the same work and the same page as above i.e. '4').

8 Ibid, p. 189 (This means the work is same as above but the page number is different).

b) We may see one more Latin abbreviation – 'Op. cit.'. It means another reference has been made to the same work on the same page but not consecutively.
4 Joseph, Gibaldi. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. (New Delhi: East- West Press, 2000), p. 64.

5 S. Krishna Bhatta, *Indian English Drama: A Critical Study* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1987), p. 186.

7 Gibaldi, op. cit p. 96.

In the second example 7 refers to the same reference as 4, only the page numbers are different.

Table 2.2 Some Common Abbreviations used in research

Abbreviations	Full forms	Abbreviations	Full forms
Anon	anonymous	op. cit.	in the work cited
ed.	edited by	pp.	pages
et al.	and others	trans.	translation
ibid	in the same place	sic.	inaccuracy in the source work
loc. cit.	in the place cited	viz.	namely
n.p.	publication not known	vol.	volume

Here we have seen use of conventions related to references and footnotes in a research report. We will see what bibliography is in 2.5.

2.4 QUOTATIONS AND CITATION

In-text references and reference list

During and after their library visit, a researcher makes notes to quote the passages / points that s/he feels relevant to the area of his / her study. While writing the research report a researcher has to cite the points / views of others to support the researcher's argument. These borrowings are mainly of three kinds. Firstly, a researcher generally reproduces the view of the other researcher and it is kept within quotes. Secondly, a researcher paraphrases the view of the other researcher. Thirdly, they make a brief summary of a lengthy passage from a source they come across.

When the points or quotations are mentioned in the main text of the research report it is called 'In-text reference' and the full details of the source quoted are given at the end of the research paper / thesis in the form of 'reference list'.

In the main text of the report the surname of the author and the year of publication of thesource is given in the round brackets, e.g. (Gibaldi, 2021). When few sentences are quoted from a source, the page number(s) are also noted, e.g. (Bhatt, 1987:186). Deshpande (2007) mentions,

when the quotation is less than four typed lines it is usually given in the usual running matter, but if it is more than four lines it is typed with indent, that means rather away from the left margin in order to make it distinct to the eye. ... In such a case the passage is typed double space without quotation marks. The long quotation is indented ten spaces from the left margin (Deshpande, 2007: 129).

The reference list given at the end of a research report is arranged alphabetically. The entries begin with the surname of the authors cited in the main text of the report. Along with the title of the source, the year and place of publication and the name of the publisher are given in the list. We will 'references' in 2.5.

Style manuals

There is a system to cite views of others. It is known as referencing. Three style manuals are mainly preferred for referencing. The first is by Modern Language Association of America (MLA), the second is by American Psychological Association (APA) and the third is Chicago Manual of Style (CMS). These are not the only style manuals used to cite borrowings of others in research reports. The styles of citation are subject-specific, university-specific and journal-specific. The MLA style sheet is mostly used in Humanities whereas APA is followed in Social Sciences. In literary studies MLA style of referencing is used while in language studies and studies related to education APA style is used. There are differences in these styles in 'in-text references' and 'reference list'.

'In-text references' in these style manuals are given below.

MLA – (Deshpande 129)

APA – (Deshpande, 2007, p. 129)

CMS – (Deshpande 2007, 129)

The following examples are of entries in the 'References' of a research report.

MLA –

Chindhade, Shirish and Ashok Thorat.*An Introduction toResearch: The Rudiments of Literary Research*. New Delhi: Foundation Books, 2009. Print.

APA –

Chindhade, S. and Thorat, A. (2009).*An Introduction toResearch: The Rudiments of Literary Research*. New Delhi, Foundation Books.

CMS –

Chindhade, Shirish and Ashok Thorat.*An Introduction toResearch: The Rudiments of Literary Research*. New Delhi: Foundation Books, 2009.

The researchers may refer to the Purdue OWL citation chart to know the similarities and differences in style manuals. The web link is given in the references of this unit.

The styles of citations are different for different sources. The way in which books with single author are cited, same is not the way to cite journal articles. There are different ways to cite newspapers, television programmes, personal e-mails and non-print sources like interviews, to name a few. To know how to cite online sources also see the 'References' of this unit.

Table 2.3 Citing Electronic Sources

Article in an online journal	An online book
Dawe, James. "A Study of Female Characters in Jane Austen's Novels." Literary Review. 31:2 (1998). 81-89. 15 May 1998. <http://nyquist.ee.ualberta.ca/~dawe/ austen.html>	Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice.* http://www.pemberley.com/janeinfo/ pridprej.html, 1998. Web. 10 Sept. 1998.

However, sometimes there are constraints in citing the sources, if these are not mentioned in these style manuals, for instance, a postgraduate student may have to give a thought if they have to cite SLMs or guides (*kunjis* in Hindi) as the latter may not be available in academic libraries and the year of publication is not printed and even the names of authors are imaginary / pseudo.

Self-check

4. _____ is not a reference style.

   a) APA
   b) ABP
   c) MLA
   d) Turabian

2.5 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND APPENDIX / APPENDICES

In research studies in English language and literature 'Appendices' and 'Bibliography' are the important sections in the final part of a project report / research paper / thesis.

Appendix / Appendices

At the end of the project report / research paper / thesis the researcher has to provide data / information which is part of the research work but could not be included in the main text. This section is known as 'Appendix'. Its plural form is 'Appendices'. The section is generally placed after the conclusion and it precedes the bibliography or list of references or works cited.

Appendices includes the information / data that is relevant and supplementary to the main text. Sometimes the information which is lengthy and not fit in the main part of the research report, finds a place in the Appendices. So as to avoid any distraction or break in the narrative flow of main text of the research report, it is necessary to shift non-essential information to the Appendices. The material included in this section helps to understand the research work properly. In case, the supporting material is removed it doesn't hinder the comprehension of the research work.

Appendices include the letters used to seek permission to conduct research project, emails sent for the purpose of data collection, schedule of visits for data collection, places visited to collect data, notes of visits, tools of data collection like interview scripts and questionnaires. Supporting materials like figures, diagrams, tables, graphs, charts, maps, photographs, etc. are presented in the sequence in which they appear in the main text of the research report but are numbered separately. Each supporting document is mentioned on a new page. The researcher has to prepare a table of contents of the appendices. See the example of appendices of a PhD thesis given on the next page.

Table 2.4 Appendices of a PhD Thesis

APPENDICES

Contents	Page No.
Papers offered for BA (Special English) course study during 1993-94 to 2007-08 in the universities selected for present study	287
Table 4.1 Papers offered in the University of Mumbai (UoM) for B.A. English	
(Major) during 1993-94 to 2006-07)	287
Table 4.2 Papers offered in the University of Pune (UoP) for B.A. (English	
Special) during 1993-94 to 2007-08	288
Table 4.3 Papers offered in Shivaji University, Kolhapur (SUK) for B.A. English	
(Special) during 1996-97 to 2006-07)	288
Documents of existing syllabi in the universities selected for present study	289
Papers offered for BA (Special English) course in other universities in Maharashtra, states neighbouring Maharashtra and in other Indian states	365
Table 4.4 B.A. (English) course in other Universities in Maharashtra	365
Table 4.5 B.A. (English) course in Universities from the states neighbouring M.S.	366
Table 4.6 (A) B.A. (English) courses in some Indian universities	367
Table 4 (A) The frequency of imperative words used in the objectives of papers	

Questionnaires

(Source: Tasildar, 2013)

Bibliography

Any research work ends with 'References' or 'Bibliography'. Though in both resources are arranged in the alphabetical order, there is difference in 'References' and 'Bibliography'. Microsoft Word can help a researcher to know the difference.

Fig. 2.3 – Difference between References and Bibliography
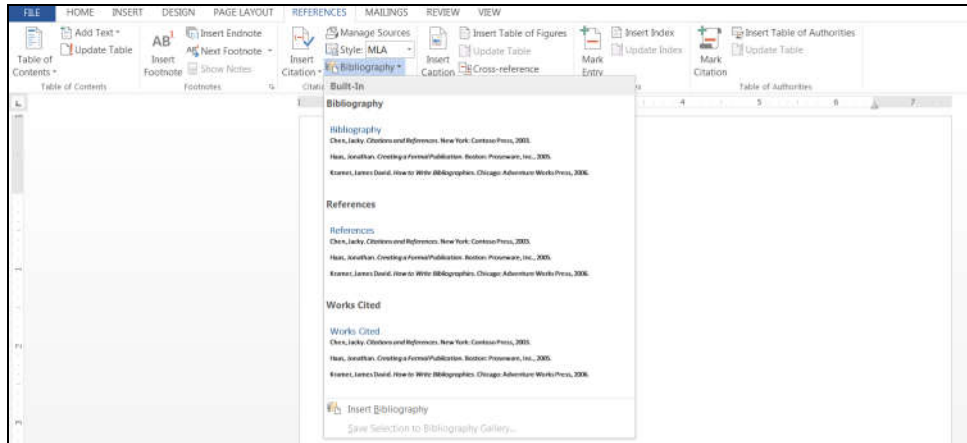
'References' includes only those print and non-print reference sources like books, research papers, conference presentations, various reports, websites, e-mails, films, newspaper articles, radio and television programmes, interviews which have been referred to in the main text of the project report / research paper / thesis. The other title for 'References' is 'Works Cited'. A 'bibliography' is a list of all the published and unpublished references like books, research papers, conference presentations, various reports, interviews, websites, e-mails, 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 a research includes (not all but) only some of the works consulted for the study in the list it is known as 'Select Bibliography'.

A researcher can use Microsoft Word to write a bibliography.

Fig. 2.4 – Writing a Bibliography
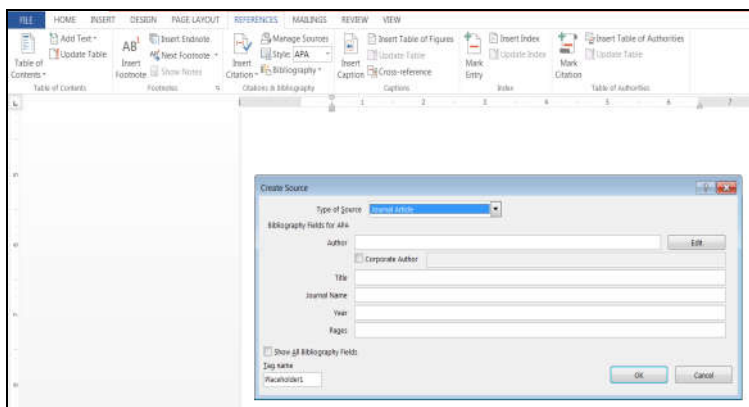
Here is an example of a bibliographic entry of a book in MLA style sheet.

Rengachari, S. and SulochanaRangachari. *Research Methodology for English Literature*,

Bareily, Prakash Book Deport, 2001.

Self-check

5. _____ is not included in the 'Appendix' section.

   a) Letter of permission to collect data for the research
   b) Questionnaire used for the research project
   c) Bibliography
   d) Tests used for the research work

6. _____ is the section consisting of a list of books consulted for the research work.

   a)
   b) Bibliography
   c) Compendium
   d) References

7. A list of sources on the subject of an article, not just the ones that have been cited in a

research paper is _____.

   a) footnote
   b) references
   c) bibliography
   d) endnote

8. Name the style sheet used in 2.7 References of this unit.

2.6 TO SUM UP

In this unit some key concepts useful for documenting research were discussed. These included how to use an academic library effectively and how to cite references in a research work. These concepts are to be used according to the sections of a research report, e.g. 'References' or 'Bibliography' should be placed at the end of the project work/ research paper / thesis. It is better to follow the latest edition of the style sheet. However, it is better to avoid 'Select Bibliography' from the books on research methodology as these books violate the norms mentioned in the book itself.

2.7 REFERENCES

Deshpande, H.V. (2007). *Research in Literature and Language: Philosophy, Areas and Methodology*.Pathan: SukhadaKaurabhPrakashan.

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Tasildar, Ravindra. (2013). *A critical evaluation of the special English papers offered at UG Level in select universities of Maharashtra State*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, SavitribaiPhule Pune University.

The Modern Language Association of America.(2016). *MLA Handbook Papers*.Eighth Edition. New York: The Modern Language Association of America.

2.8 QUESTIONS ON THE UNIT

A] Short Answer Questions

i) Bring out the difference between the following.

   a) Thesis and dissertation

   b) Contents and Index

   c) References and Bibliography

ii) Write a bibliographic entry of a journal article in the MLA and APA styles of referencing.

B] Tasks

1.   Refer to the syllabus document of the paper 'Research Methodology' offered in Semester IV of MA English Part II at the University of Mumbai and identify the style of referencing used   in 'References' section of the syllabus document. Rewrite the list of resources in any other style of referencing of your choice.

2.   Identify the style of referencing of the following entry in the 'References' and rewrite it in at least other two styles of referencing.

Anderson, Jonathan, Berry, Durston and Millicent Poole.(1970). *Thesis and Assignment Writing*. New Delhi: Wiley Eastern Limited.

3.   Use web OPEC of your university library and find out the books on the sub-unit – Reference Lists and Footnotes.

Title of the sub-unit	Author /s	Title of the book	Accession number of the book	Location in the university library
Reference Lists and Footnotes				

4.   Refer to the syllabus document of the paper 'Research Methodology' offered in Semester IV of MA English Part II at the University of Mumbai and make a list of at least five books on the   Unit I, sub-unit 7 – Bibliography / Appendix / Appendices.

        Author / s. (Date of publication).*Title of the Book*. Place of publication: Publisher.

        i.
        ii.
        iii.
        iv.
        v.

Answers To Self-Check :

1.   (a) Newspaper

        (b) Encyclopedia

        (c) Encyclopedia

        (d) Marathi–English Dictionary

        (e) Rear page of the title page

2.   (a) Title page / Rear page of the title page

        (b) Introduction

        (c) Contents

        (d) Glossary

        (e) Jacket

3.   (b) contents

4.   (b) ABP

5.   (c) Bibliography

6.   (b) Bibliography

7.   (c) bibliography

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

RESEARCH: TOOLS, LANGUAGE AND PLAGIARISM

Unit Structure

3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we will learn about the three important aspects of research, namely, the tools, use of language, academic integrity in research and plagiarism. After reading this unit, we should be able to:

- Understand the difference between primary and secondary data
- Identify the modes and sources of primary and secondary data.
- Use research language effectively
- Identify some forms of plagiarism and measures to avoid plagiarism

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters, we learned to define our research problem and chalk out a research plan and method. In this chapter, we will learn about the two main types of data collection, namely Primary and Secondary Data. We will elaborate on the different modes and/or methods of primary and secondary data collection and also differentiate between primary and secondary data and/or sources. Then, we will gain an understanding of the three elements of research language i.e. clarity, correctness and coherence. Finally, we will learn about plagiarism, some forms of plagiarism and some measures to avoid plagiarism. With the help of the illustrations and self-assessment exercises, we will be able to sharpen our research skills.

3.2 RESEARCH TOOL: DATA COLLECTION

In this section, we will learn the three essential questions involved in data collection – what, why and how in addition to the types of data collection.

Data collection is the process of gathering, measuring and analysing different kinds of information with the help of standard techniques. The aim of data collection is to help us to take informed decisions. In the context of language studies, when we gather information about the number of speakers of a particular language group, such information will help policy makers. The decision to preserve, disseminate and educate children in Indian languages is the result of such data collection.

There are two types of data collection – qualitative and quantitative. Quantitative data is numerical while qualitative data is descriptive – not only text or words but also photos, audio and video-recordings etc. We decide on 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.

3.3 PRIMARY DATA

In this sub-section, we will explain some features of Primary Data and list the different modes of Primary Data Collection. Primary data refers to data that is collected for the first time by a researcher. It is considered as an original source. It can be quantitative (numerical) or qualitative (descriptive).

3.3.1 Language Studies

At present, the implementation of National Education Policy 2020 is under way. NEP has called for School Education in Indian Languages and/or mother-tongues and bilingual mode of Education at under-graduate and post-graduate levels. If we want to study how children acquire language, then speech samples can be a means of primary data. We can use the observational or the experimental method of data collection.

In the observational method i.e. 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. Such diary notes are less reliable for we cannot verify the intonation, pronunciation, context and structure of language.

Today, we can collect speech samples with the help of digital recorders - an audio or video recording. Note that, we will need to take the consent/permission of the speaker or the school or parents (in case of children) to record the speech samples and images of the speaker in a video-recording. Audio or video recordings are useful in two ways. First, this raw data can be preserved. Second, it can be analysed again and reverified. Video recordings are better than audio recordings but an adult must be present if we are recording videos of children.

In the experimental method, questions are asked to a speaker and his/her responses are recorded. The aim of experimental method is to understand how a speaker produces different speech patterns and understands the principles of the language. In the next section, we will list the modes of Primary Data in language studies.

3.3.2 Modes of collecting Primary Data

The following mind map captures the different ways of collecting primary data in language studies:
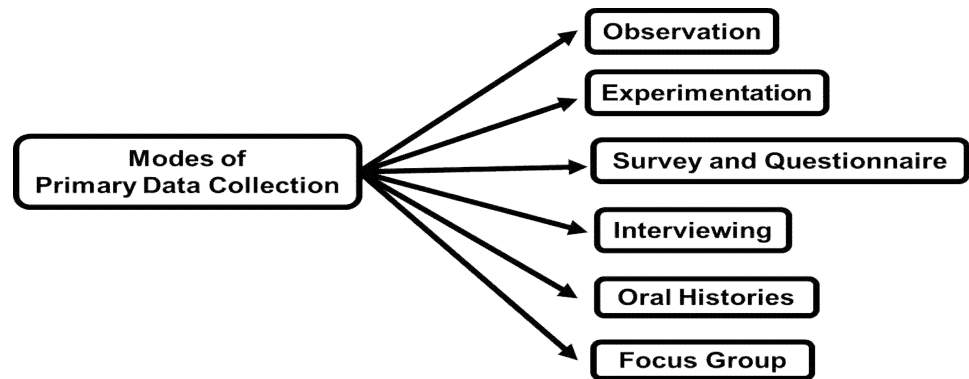
Figure 1: Modes of Primary Data Collection

3.3.3 Literature

In the context of English Literature, primary sources include original manuscripts like hand-written notes, records, letters, diaries, documents, journals, memoirs; literary works/texts i.e. original works, interviews, testimony, speeches, numerical data, surveys, official documents, the video performance of a play, photographs, paintings, transcripts, government documents, empirical studies and court records etc. Some more examples of primary data are ephemera like postage stamps, posters, maps, advertisements, leaflets, trade cards, brochures etc.

Self-Check Exercise 1

1.   What is Data Collection?
2.   Why are diary notes not reliable?
3.   What precautions must one take while taking a video recording of a child?
4.   How does the observational method differ from the experimental method?
5.   List the different modes of Primary Data Collection.
6.   Name any sources of Primary Data in English Literature.

3.4 SECONDARY DATA

Secondary Data is not original but it is second-hand information. It is data which already exists. A previous researcher may have collected the primary data for a specific purpose but such data can be reused for another purpose. Primary Data which has been used once becomes Secondary Data.

Such secondary data is readily available. We, as researchers, can save our efforts, time and money when we use secondary data. We can use it for putting forward a hypothesis for more research, and for examining trends by comparing findings from different research studies. When we refer to secondary data, we can understand the research problems better. We will also be able to explain the gaps and limitations of previous research and our current research.

3.4.1 Sources of Secondary Data

The sources of Secondary Data can be published or unpublished data. The published sources of Secondary Data include international publications by foreign governments, Central Government, research, commercial and financial institutions, reports of various committees and commissions, newspapers and periodicals.

3.4.2 Secondary Data in Language and Literature

In language studies, the collection of audio or video recordings of oral histories is an instance of Primary Data which is a difficult process but reusing the audio or video recordings is an example of Secondary Data which is readily available.

In literature, if a novel, poem, prose or play is a primary source, then any critical journal article or study written on that particular literary work is a secondary source.

Secondary sources in literature encompass biographies, research articles, commentaries, websites etc. The summaries given in textbooks, magazines, journals, newspapers, and blogs can be secondary sources. Tertiary sources include Encyclopaedias, Guide books, Text Books, index, bibliography, chronologies and almanacs. Some other secondary sources in literature consist of textbooks, dictionaries and encyclopaedias, biographies of famous leaders and authors, political commentaries, critical articles and/or studies based on any author's literary works.

Do visit websites like the Indian Language Data Centre (ILDC) andthe *Ek Bharat Shresta Bharat* and BhashaSanghamwebsites launched by the Government of India for a better understanding of the initiatives taken to create cooperation between the multilingual states of India and increase awareness regarding the 22 official languages of India at School Levels.

3.4.3 Difference between Primary and Secondary Data

We have listed the characteristics of Primary and Secondary Data in the previous sections. We will reinforce the differences in this section.

Primary Data is original. It is collected for the first time for a specific purpose. Secondary data is data already used by previous researchers and is drawn from secondary sources like journals, books, government agencies etc. Expertise is needed in collecting Primary Data and the process is expensive but Primary Data is more accurate. Secondary Data is generally used for making decisions and doesn't need much expertise. The process is less expensive and less time-consuming, but Secondary Data is also less accurate.

When we are writing a research paper, use Primary Data as foundational materials and use Secondary Data as a supplement to the Primary Data.

Self-Check Exercise 2

1. What is Secondary Data?
2. How is Secondary Data useful to researchers?
3. List some sources which provide Secondary Data.
4. Give two points of differences between Primary and Secondary Data.

3.5 RESEARCH LANGUAGE

In this section, we will learn how to use language effectively so that we can easily record or document our research study in the form of a thesis, dissertation, 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 research process, 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) has pointed out. As second-language writers, we spend a lot of time in the mechanics of writing. We pay more attention to sentence construction, grammar and in findingappropriate words. These aspects are necessary but we also must focus on meaning-generation at a higher level. The following discussion on features of research language like clarity, correctness, and coherence will enable we to use language effectively.

3.5.1 Clarity

Clarity in research language means writing clearly and understandably. Our writing must inform the reader about the purpose of our research and they must be able to respond in an understanding manner. 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 2: Aspects of Clarity in research writing
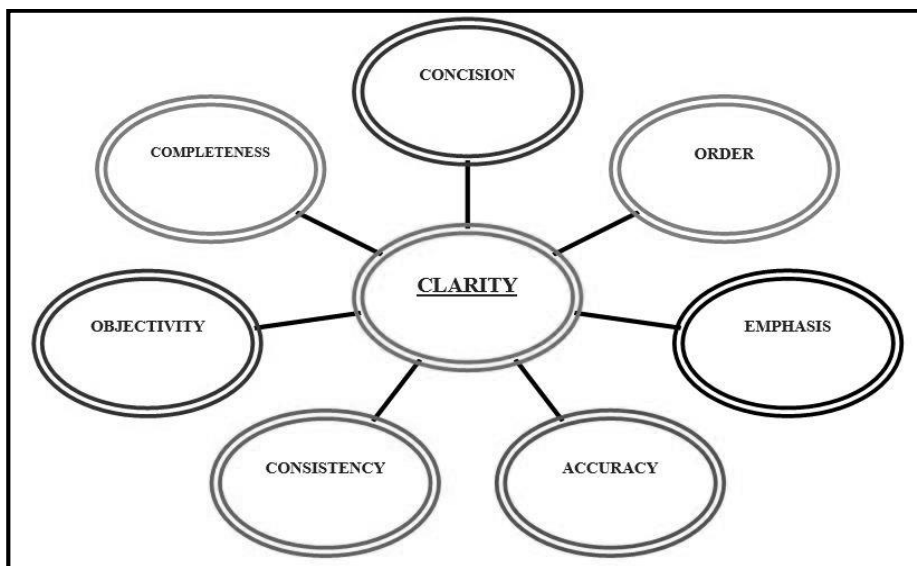
We can achieve clarity in our research with the following list of dos and don'ts:

Dos	Don'ts
Incorrect spellings	Spell the words correctly
Grammatical errors (wrong use of verbs, nouns, adjectives etc)	Use correct grammar
Using jargon (technical or unfamiliar language) or slang words	Use familiar language or define unfamiliar terms or words
Lack of focus in the topic	Know what we want to write
Lack of organization and sequence	Organize our ideas in sequence
Too many ideas in a paragraph	Tackle one idea in a paragraph

We must take care to put our ideas in a logical order so that the readers can understand what our ideas through our writing. We will confuse the reader if we use words that are ambiguous or if our suddenly insert a new topic without giving the context or background. Know the rules of grammar well. Sum up, elaborate or condense ideas without losing their meaning. Let us ask ourselves – should we use lesser number of words or should I elaborate further on the topic? Polish our ideas by drafting and re-drafting 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

Principal
Manjunatha College of Commerce
Kanchangaon, Khambalpada,
Thakurli (E) - 421 201.

the lines. Writing clearly means making the meanings clear. Let us now look at the second aspect of research writing – correctness.

3.5.2 Correctness

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 thesis/dissertation/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'* thenthe 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 spelling 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.

3.5.3 Coherence

The following discussion regarding coherence in language is based on the ideas of Jack Richard (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 the 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.

We can increase coherence by employing 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 walk*ing*, runn*ing*, and skat*ing*.

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 paragraph. 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 thesis/dissertation/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 3

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?

3.6 RESEARCH ETHICS AND PLAGIARISM

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, get informed consent from the participant.
*   Assure the participants of the confidentiality of the information received.
*   Avoid any kind of bias or prejudice
*   Avoid 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.

3.6.1 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

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.

3.6.2 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/diary. Using a notebook or diary will help we in two ways. We will grasp the ideas 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 our 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.

3.6.3 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 we 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 4

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.

3.7 LET US SUM UP

In this section, we learnt about data collection and its types. We listed the
characteristics and modes of primary and secondary data. We also
reinforced the differences between primary and secondary data. Then, we
enumerated on the three significant aspects of research language – clarity,
correctness and coherence.

Finally, 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'.

3.8 SUGGESTED READING

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Books. 2006. 2003.

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Blume, Maria and Lust, C. Barbara.Research Methods in Language
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American Psychological Association; Berlin/Germany: Walter de Gruyter
GmbH. 2017

Crystal David, 2008, *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, Sixth
edition, Blackwell Publishing, USA.

Halliday, M. A. K., and Hasan, R., 1976, Cohesion in English, Longman,
London.

Jack Richardset al., 1985, Dictionary of Applied Linguistics, Longman,
London.

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Delhi: New Age International (P) limited, Publishers. 2004, 1990, 1985.

MLA Handbook. 2021. New York: The Modern Language Association of America.

Oberoi, Pawan Kumar. Research Methodology. New Delhi: Global Academic Publishers & Distributors. 2013.

Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb and Joseph M. Williams, 2008, *The Craft of Research*, Third edition, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

3.9 WEB RESOURCES

https://www.simplilearn.com/data-collection-methods-article> 16 November 2022

https://laverne.libguides.com/c.php?g=34942&p=222059> 16 November 2022

https://guides.temple.edu/english/primarysources_us> 16 November 2022

https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/bhasha-sangam-celebrating-linguistic-diversity-india> 16 November 2022

https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/ek-bharat-shreshtha-bharat> 16 November 2022

https://www.ed.ac.uk/literatures-languages-cultures/english-literature/undergraduate/current/academic-matters/plagiarism> 16 November 2022

https://www.bowdoin.edu/dean-of-students/conduct-review-board/academic-honesty-and-plagiarism/common-types-of-plagiarism.html> 16 November 2022

https://integrity.mit.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-handbook> 16 November 2022

https://nmu.edu/writingcenter/plagiarism> 17 November 2022

3.10 HINTS FOR SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

Self-Check Exercise 1

1. Refer to 3.3
2. See 3.3.1
3. See 3.3.1
4. See 3.3.1
5. Refer to 3.3.2
6. Refer to 3.3.3.

Self-Check Exercise 2

1. Refer to 3.4
2. See 3.4
3. See 3.4.2
4. See 3.5

Self-Check Exercise 3

1. Refer to 3.5.1
2. See 3.5.1
3. See 3.5.2
4. Refer to 3.5.3

Self-Check Exercise 4

1. Refer to 3.6
2. See 3.6.1
3. See 3.6.2
4. Refer to 3.6.3

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METHODS IN LANGUAGE RESEARCH

Unit Structure:

4.0 Objectives

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Research in Language Studies

4.3 Research Methods

4.4 Library Research Methods

4.5 Empirical Research Methods

4.6 Let Us Sum Up

4.7 References

Having discussed various tools of conducting research, use of research-appropriate language and research ethics such as anti-plagiarism, we will acquaint ourselves with various methods in language research. We discussed a few concepts related to research in language studies in unit I (**1.7 Methods and Modes of Research**), Unit II (**2.2 Data Analysis**) and Unit III (**3.3.1 Language Studies**). We will expand upon some of these concepts in the present unit. Before we begin this journey, let us ask ourselves some questions:

- What do we understand by 'language studies'?
- Is 'language studies' a singular field of research or there are different dimensions to the language studies?
- What does the term 'method' mean in research?
- What different methods can help us carry out research in the field of language with specific reference to English?

While we will address these questions in this unit, you may like to explore online sources (such as 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.

4.0 OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this unit is

1. To familiarize ourselves with the notion of 'language studies';
2. To understand various methods used in language research
3. To identify research areas in English language that can be explored using these methods

After studying this unit, we will not only have a better understanding of methods in language research but also be equipped to use the appropriate methods for the same.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

We already know that with the recent curricular changes, research has now become an integral part of a graduate or post graduate degree programme. We as students of language and literary studies need to carry out research projects in one or two areas. This demands that we have a better understanding of various research methods in language and literary studies. As the Unit V focuses on research methods in literary studies, we will concentrate on language studies in this unit.

4.2 RESEARCH IN LANGUAGE STUDIES

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

- the historical development of English as a first or second or foreign language
- the structural properties of a standard variety of English such as its phonology, morphology, syntax grammar
- the use and usage of English in different context such as media, literature, education, administration, or as a lingua franca or contact language
- learning and teaching of English 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 studies.

4.3 RESEARCH METHODS

Let us first revisit the basic question: What does the term 'methods' in the context of research methodology mean? A commonly accepted understanding of 'methods' is the particular tools and procedures that are used to collect and analyse data. This may be achieved by way of experiments, surveys and/or statistical tests. 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).

When we consider doing research in English language we may be interested various types of research:

- **Library research** such as studying specific aspect/s of language in a text by using books and related published material (print and electronic) as primary sources of secondary data.
- **Theoretical research** such as theorising and/or defining underlying principles of the structural or functional properties of language;
- **Empirical research** (also known as field research) such as drawing conclusions about the use of language on the basis of empirical evidence (using observation, survey, interview or experience)
- **Applied research** where a specific problem such as learning or teaching of English is addressed by applying certain theoretical/conceptual framework of language learning/acquisition. Some research, for instance action research could be applied as well as empirical. We will discuss this type of research method later in detail.

Please note that the above mentioned classification of research is not exclusive to only language studies. It is found in other fields of inquiry like Social Sciences, History, and Economics as well. We will, however, look at this range of research in the context of English language studies. Let us take a look at the possible research questions in language studies:

1. What is the nature and frequency of Indian loan-words in a specific Indian newspaper/literary text in English?
2. Why do Indian speakers of English code-switch/mix in certain speech situations and events?
3. What kind of English courses would students be most interested in studying at the undergraduate level?
4. Do students learn English better with direct method than bilingual method?
5. What role does a literary canon play in shaping language curriculum in primary/secondary education in India?
6. How to bridge the gap between the expected proficiency and the actual proficiency in English as second language learners in rural areas?

You must have noticed that research question **1** requires you to refer the books and other published material to carry out the research, questions **2-5** need empirical evidence by way of observation or experiment; while question **6** requires application of a language learning theory to address problem. Each of these research methods will have a range of tools of data collection and data analysis. Let us explore these methods in detail.

4.4 LIBRARY RESEARCH METHOD

The term 'library research method' (LRM) has been around for quite some time. It is however not defined by a specific discipline. George (2008) defines library research method as a research method that conducted by computer engine searching or practical books reading to find the knowledge and information, to be answered the research question. The

research that relies for its data on the sources such as books, manuscripts, journals, dictionaries, reports, newspapers, audio/video tapes, CDs would fall under this category. It must be noted that this method is defined as a method of data collection rather than data analysis. The text under question may be analysed by using various analytical or theoratical frameworks in Linguistics. For example,

- Stylistic Study of Language in *Amul* Advertisement
- Study of the Frequency of English loan-words in Select issues of *Maharashtra Times*
- Study of Concordance of 'only' and 'itself' in Select issues of *Times of India*
- A Comparative Study of Politeness Principles in G.B.Shaw's*Pygmalion* and P.L Deshpande's*Ti Phulrani*

The researcher does not need to engage in field study or collect empirical evidences to draw conclusions. There are different methods of linguistic analysis that are used by researchers using library method. The following are some of these:

Discourse Analysis (DA) Method:

It is used to reveal ideologies and social relations of power by studying language patterns found in the given written/spoken text. Literature (print/ audio visual text) produced by institutions, social groups or individuals become the primary source in such research. Discourse analysis of newspaper articles/ advertisement/films/public speeches/ media posts is an example of research study that involves this method.

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". Though this method is usually used the empirical studies for the analysis of the spoken and unscripted text, it may as well be used for the scripted speech texts. Hence, we have included it under library research.

Let us now take a look at the empirical research methods.

4.5   EMPIRICAL RESEARCH METHODS

The word 'empirical' means something that is based on observation and/or experience. This then makes it easy to understand the definition of Empirical Research Methods (ERM). ERM can be defined as a way of gaining knowledge by means of direct and indirect observation or experience.Like LRM, these methods are also not limited or exclusive to research in language studies alone. However, we will discuss it only in the context of language studies.

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Thakurli (E) - 421 201.

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There are two major approaches to ERM, namely deductive and inductive approach. Let us understand it with the help of the following diagrams.

According to Wilson (2010) a deductive approach is concerned with "developing a hypothesis (or hypotheses) based on existing theory, and then designing a research strategy to test the hypothesis" (7). It follows reasoning principle of reasoning from the particular to the general.

Process in Deductive approach

Process in Inductive approach
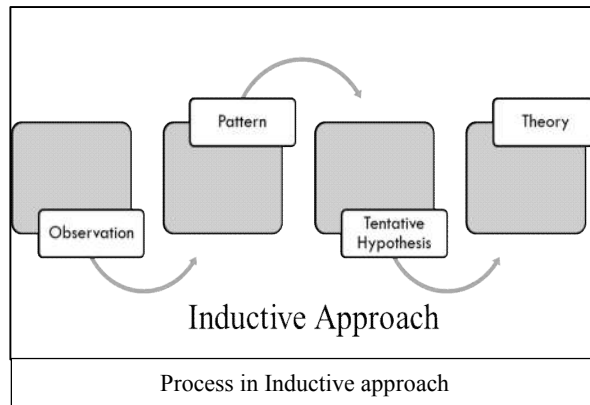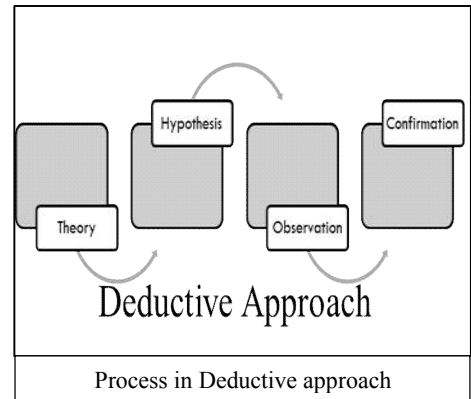
According to Goddard, W. & Melville (2004), Inductive approach starts with the observations and theories are proposed towards the end of the research process as a result of observations. The researcher is free change the direction for the study after the research process has begun.

Empirical evidence can be analysed quantitatively or qualitatively.Two major concepts you need to know in doing research in language studies then are Qualitative research and Quantitative research. Though we briefly discussed these methods in Unit I, let us expand a little more on it. The well-known English linguist **David Nunan** in his book *Research Methods in Language Learning (1994)* remarks that qualitative and quantitative research methods are quite distinct and are guided by two different conceptions. Let us therefore first understand these two concepts.

- **Qualitative Research:**

Qualitative research can be defined as the research that uses inductive method that intends to draw general principles, theories from an investigation or documentation. Though this research does not use any statistical tool, it may use simple tabulation and calculation in the analysis. It uses qualitative data which is in non-numerical form. The transcript of an interview is an instance of such data.

- **Quantitative research**

Quantitative research method relies on suitable statistical tools to analyse the data and make inferences and conclusions about the research question at hand. Tools such as Chi-Square, T-test, Correlation and Regression, Analysis of variance are just a few tools to mention.

David Nunan (1994) provides us with a comprehensive description of terms commonly associated with quantitative and qualitative research which he adapted from Reichardt and Cook (1979).

Qualitative research	Quantitative research
• Advocates use of qualitative methods	• Advocates use of quantitative methods
• Concerned with understanding human behaviour from the actor's own frame of reference	• Seeks facts or causes of social phenomena without regard to the subjective states of the individuals
• Naturalistic and uncontrolled observation	• Obtrusive and controlled measurement
• Subjective	• Objective
• Close to the data: the 'insider' perspective	• Removed from the data: the 'outsider' perspective
• Grounded, discovery-oriented, exploratory. expansionist, descriptive, and inductive	• Ungrounded, verification-oriented. confirmatory, reductionist, inferential, hypothetical, and deductive

• Process-oriented
  o Valid: 'real', 'rich', and 'deep' data
  o Ungeneralisable: single case studies
  o Assumes a dynamic reality
	• Product-oriented
	  o Reliable: 'hard' and replicable data
	  o Generalisable: multiple case studies
	  o Assumes a stable reality

Variable

Whether one uses Qualitative or Quantitative research methods, the concept of **Variable** is of critical importance in both types of research. In research, a variable is a 'thing, person, place, object or phenomenon' that the researcher is interested in studying. It is an element that liable either to change or to cause change. There are many types of variable; however we will take into consideration only two major types: dependent and independent variable. An independent variable is that element which does not receive change but may be the cause of an observable change; whereas

a dependent variable is that element that gets affected by an independent variable.

Let us understand this through an example. If we hypothesise that Students who practice English using language software do better on their oral tests then, we notice that language software is an independent variable while the performance of students in oral tests is dependent variable as it is hypothetically affected by the use of software.

Types of Quantitative research methods

Some of us may wonder 'what is the use of quantitative analysis in language research?' We can identify and describe features of language by using the data. We can count and classify these features using various statistical tools. This helps in validation of hypothesis. Let us take an example to understand this. If a study hypothesises that Indian users of English prefer using present progressive where Standard British users use Simple Present tense. To check the validity of this statement, a questionnaire based survey may be conducted where the informants are asked to tick mark sentences they consider appropriate. The statistical analysis of their responses will show us as to how many of these informants select sentences with present progressive tense. The validation or invalidation of the hypothesis will depend on the numeric analysis. There are various statistical tools that can be used for the analysis of the data collected empirically. Some of the frequently used statistical methods used in language research include T Test, Chi Square Test, ANOVA, Correlation and Regression Analysis. Let us now see a few research methods that use quantitative data analysis.

Experimental research

In the context of language studies, Experimental research is used mainly in the field of language learning and teaching. Experimental research aims at understanding differences between or within groups of learners under manipulated environments. It requires strict control of conditions, enabling interpretations with a low factor of error. Let us try and understand it through a hypothetical situation:

- We wish to see whether the use of customized material is more effective than the non-customised material in developing comprehension skills among a group of learners.
- We divide learners in two groups: Group A and Group B
- We call group Aexperimental group, also known as treatment group, as this group will receive treatment who effect we as researcher are going to study. This group will be taught reading skills using customised material.
- We call group B control group. This group will be given non-customised material rather than the customised material.
- After both the groups have been given training, a test will be conductedto measure the impact of the experiment.

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- The test performance will be analysed and compared by using statistical tools.
- On the basis of the results we can either validate or invalidate the hypothesis that we set for our study.

Quasi-experiment research method

The prefix 'quasi' means resembling. Hence quasi-experiment means something that resembles experiment but is not exactly an experiment. Let us see the definition now. According to Cook and Campbell (1979) it is a 'research that resembles experimental research but is not true experimental research. Although the independent variable is manipulated, participants are not randomly assigned to conditions or orders of conditions. Here, the researcher studies groups that already have pre-existing differences. The groups differ on the independent variable, but the researcher doesn't control this difference between the groups. For instance, the study of language proficiency test performance of two groups of first year B.A. students, where the first group has studied in regional language medium schools and the second group has studied in English medium school. Here, the medium of instruction hypothetically becomes an independent variable while the performance of students in the test becomes a dependent variable. This research method like experimental research falls under quantitative research method as results are quantifiable and analysed using statistical tools.

Survey method:

Survey research, in simple words, is a method used to collect data/ information from a sample of individuals/informants through their responses to questions. The most frequently used tool or instrument for such a research is questionnaire. The information that is sought in this method could be factual, behavioural and or attitudinal. Survey is useful in describing how a certain group (learner community/speech community) feels about one or more variables. Trends, opinions, beliefs and attitudes of a specific group of individuals can be described effectively by using survey method.

One of the key concepts in this method is sampling. It is defined as the act or a process or a technique of selecting a suitable sample of a population in order to determine characteristics of the whole population. For example, if we wish to study the attitudes of Marathi users of English about code mixing in English, we will select only a sample of the target population which will be representative enough. The entire population is neither desirable nor feasible as an option. In the similar way, a sample size of ten or twenty individuals is not an acceptable. Moreover, there are many types of sampling methods that one may use depending on its suitability to address the research question. This includes the convenient sample (where the more convenient basic units are chosen from a sample population for observation), the judgement sample (where the sample is obtained using the judgment of someone who is familiar with the relevant features of the sample population), and the random/probability sample (where each

sample has an equal probability of being chosen). We should note that this is a very basic discussion. We may further explore this by referring to reliable sources.

Let us now see the steps of carrying out a survey based research. There are many models of the steps of carrying out a survey. The following is one of the possible ways that uses questionnaire. We may explore more options by referring to online and offline authentic sources such as books, university portals, encyclopaedia etc.

Nine phase model of conducting a survey using
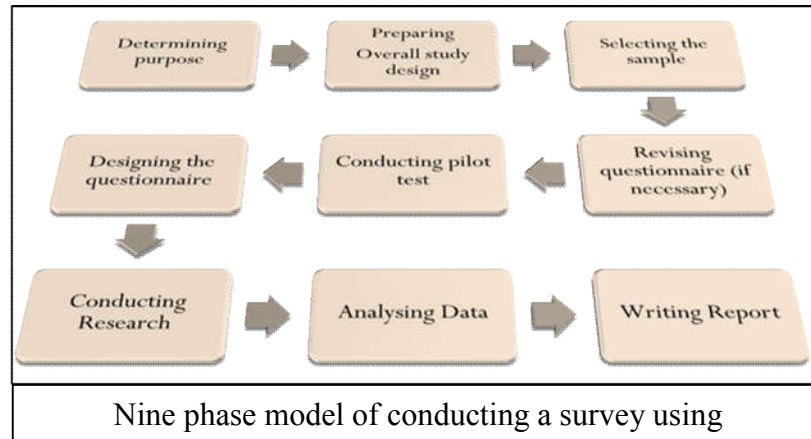
As mentioned earlier, Questionnaire is an important instrument in Survey research method. There are certain dos and don'ts that we should keep in mind while designing a questionnaire. We should

- Write a short questionnaire
- Use simple words and sentences
- Assure a common understanding
- Start with interesting questions
- Balance rating scales
- Use Close-ended questions rather than Open-ended ones.
- Put questions in a logical order
- Pre-test our survey.

What we must avoid

- writing leading questions
- using double negatives
- making the list of choices too long
- Using difficult concepts
- Asking difficult recall questions

Having read this, some of us may be wondering as to what a **leading question** is or what a **double barrel question** is. Answer to this can easily be found by a search engine. Another term that we came across above is **rating scales**. They help us in collecting qualitative and quantitative data. Rating scale according to Garrett is a device for obtaining judgments of degree to which individual possess certain behavior traits and attributes not easily detectable by objective test. For example, the following question using a specific rating scale

There are two major types of scaling used in such questionnaires: Likert and Guttman.

Likert or **Summative Scaling**is a question has a five-point or seven-point scale. The example illustrates this scale. There are a variety possible response scales: such as 1 to 7, 1 to 9, 0 to 4, and 1 to 5. Another scaling is **Guttman** or **Cumulative Scaling**. It is representative of the extreme attitude of the informant unlike the Likert scale. The answering term in this scaling is **yes or no.**

Longitudinal study

This type of research falls well within Survey method. According to the *Encyclopaedia 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 the field of language studies, longitudinal research method is used to study the development or change of certain linguistic features or patterns of usage over time in a speech community which is relatively stable. Here, researchers re-study the same speech community that has been the subject of earlier study. A deliberate attempt is made as far as possible to use the sampling and data collection methods which used in the earlier study. In 2020, McManus, Mitchell and Tracy published their research on a longitudinal study of advanced learners' linguistic development before, during and after study abroad. The report of this study is available online for further reading. 10.31219/osf.io/5b2fu.

Types of Qualitative Research methods

After our initial discussion on the definition and features of qualitative research methods, let us study two major types, namely, case study and ethnography.

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 a research is provide us with a contextualized human profile. Hence, this does not include larger sample or focus on hypotheses or findings in terms of quantitative analysis. (Duff, P.).

Some of the key concerns in case study research as discussed by Duff are as follows:

1. Qualitative/ Interpretative case study: Individuals/ groups of language users are studied in the backdrop of a sociocultural, educational or political factor such as New Language Policy or education policy. Reality of these individuals is viewed 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.

2. Defining and delimiting the case: It is important to understand that the selected 'case' is usually presented from the researcher's perspective. Though the participant's insider perspective or voice is taken into consideration, it is the purpose for which the research is conducted, participants are chosen or interview transcripts are selected and observations that are included become defining and delimiting factors.

3. Case Selection: The decision about the number of cases depends on the purpose of the research. Either a single case or multiple cases may be selected. Most single-case studies allow explanation of the complexity and features of that one case. The choice of multiple cases depends on the logistic provisions available.

4. Duration of 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, 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.

5. Critical Reflexivity and ethics: Researchers need to carefully reflect on the social and context loaded process of generating meaning. The researcher needs to maintain journals/ diary to register observations, research process used, decisions made, issues that arose or areas for follow up. One needs to be very careful in carrying a nuanced reporting.

Let us not take a look at some potential areas in which case study research method can be useful.

1. Linguistic experiences of Students from rural/tribal areas studying in urban colleges
2. Impact of Continuous Assessment policy on the English language learning and teaching
3. Motivation and cultural distance in learning English as a second Language
4. Perspectives on struggling English language learners

Ethnography

Ethnography is a qualitative researchmethod of data collection. It is based on *interviews and direct observations* of subjects (such as language

learners, second language speakers, language teachers etc.) social interaction in their natural environment. The **aim** of this research method to get *a better understanding of how the subjects act, react and interact in such environment*. These observations are used to draw conclusions. *Direct observation, diary, video recordings, and interviews* become **instruments** of data collection in this research method. The **duration** in such research may vary *from a day to several months* depending on the scope of study.

There are **two types of observation** involved, namely, *passive and contextual interview*. The first type of observation is also known as 'shadowing' the researcher/s follow and observes the daily tasks of the subjects by using methods such as note taking and audio/video recording. In such research usually more than one researcher are involved if the number of subjects is more. In the second type of observation, i.e. contextual interviews, the researchers interact with the subjects while observing their daily actions/reactions and interactions.

We may have a question if everyone the researcher interacts with/ observes is a participant in such a study. The answer is NO. The *type of information* that is collected and *how the data is recorded* determines the participants. For example if you are talking to one or more English language teachers in a particular school about the government's continuous assessment policy, it may not qualify them as participants. However, if we talk to them about their experiences as teachers while implementing this policy in English as Second Language Classroom; 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.

Mixed Method Approach

So far we have been discussing Qualitative and Quantitative research methods. We may wonder if the researchers use only one of these methods at a time. The answer is not all researchers engage exclusively in qualitative or quantitative research. In social sciences as well as in humanities, there has been a trend of find a method that combines instruments/tool and strategies from the qualitative as well as quantitative research methods in order to address their research questions. Though there are many definitions, we will see the definition that gives us a comprehensive understanding of mixed method approach. 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 education studies, especially in English Language Teaching research, Action research method uses mixed method approach more prominently and frequently than other methods, hence we will briefly discuss this method.

Action research

We will begin with a basic question: What is action research? 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. The following is an illustration of the process involved in any action research.
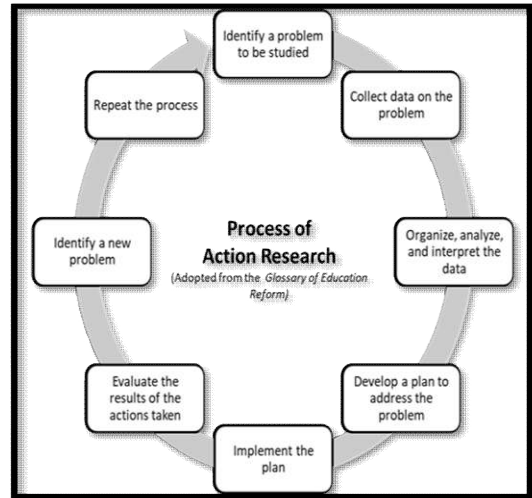
In the context of language teaching, action research is a form of investigation that is carried out by teachers at their work place (school or college). This research helps language teachers to explore if and how their teaching methods/strategies/approaches are effective. What we need to understand is that action research is cyclical in nature. It can be a continuous/on-going process

1. As a language teacher when you **observe** that your learners are not showing interest/motivation/ results as expected in learning the language or specific aspects of language such as writing skills, reading skills or pronunciation
2. You **reflect** on the issue and try and find possible reasons behind it
3. You then start **planning** to address the issue with the help of your observation, experience, reading, discussion with other colleagues
4. And then you put your plan into **action** by offering the learners a special training.
5. You **document** the preparations you did, actions you carried out, and changes that you noticed among learners and thus offer a new understanding as a result of this practice.
6. If the result of earlier action is not satisfactory, you reflect on it and prepare another plan and put it into action.

We consider action research as a mixed method approach because we collect data by means of tools used in quantitative method (such as questionnaire, pre-test, post-test) and qualitative method (such as interview, classroom observations, assignments etc.). When it comes to data analysis, we use tools for quantitative data analysis as well as qualitative data analysis. In 2010, two English as Foreign Language teachers, Urrutia and Cely published their action research "Encouraging Teenagers to Improve Speaking Skills through Games in a Colombian

Public School". To get more details of this project we can access to this research article by using the link given at the end of this unit.

4.6 LET US SUM UP

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

First, we familiarized ourselves with the notion of _____.
The unit then helped us understand that 'language studies' is a not _____ but has many dimensions. Some of the important areas in language research include _____, _____, _____. We then studied various methods in language research such as _____, _____, _____.

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5

TRENDS AND APPROACHES IN LITERARY RESEARCH

Unit Structure

5.0   OBJECTIVES

In Unit IV, we studied methods in language research. In this unit, we will familiarize ourselves with the key methodological approaches in literary research. We will get introduced to many of the relevant theoretical trends that are used for researching literary texts. After studying this unit, we will not only have a better understanding of the appropriate approaches and theoretical trends for textual and contextual analysis in their literary research, but also will be equipped to use the same.

5.1   APPROACHES IN LITERARY RESEARCH

Literary research is the scholarly and critical study of one or more literary texts for the purpose of analysis. To understand the possible approaches to literary research, we may look at the diagram, made by M.H. Abrams, of the connections between the literary work or text with the three coordinates or categories that intersect with it: the artist or the author of the text, the audience or the reader of the text, and the universe or the contexts that the text is situated in.
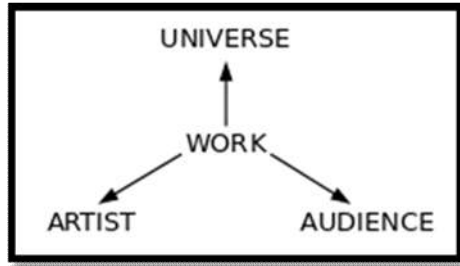
Based on this diagrammatic representation, there can be four approaches to literary research:

- Author-focused
- Text-focused
- Reader-focused
- Context-focused

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, vocabulary and theoretical framework to answer specific research questions.

Abrams' diagram inter-relates the work, artist, audience and universe. Thus, the four approaches to literary research are also interlinked. Using one approach does not preclude referring to—or even using—the other approaches.

5.2 TRENDS IN AUTHOR-FOCUSED LITERARY RESEARCH

Biographical Criticism

Biographical or historical-biographical criticism studies a literary text as predominantly being a reflection of the author's life and times. Prevalent since the Renaissance, many notable critics using this methodology extensively, for instance, Samuel Johnson in his *Lives of the Poets* (1779-81).

From the 1920s, however, the biographical approach was increasingly viewed as limited. The New Critics of the 1920s coined the term "biographical fallacy" to indicate how biographical criticism often neglects the vital role of imagination in generating a literary work. Despite its shortcomings, historical-biographical criticism may be effectively used to answer the following research questions, especially in genres like autobiographies, memoirs and self-writing:

- 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?

Psychological Criticism

Psychological or psychoanalytical critical theory became popular in the early decades of the twentieth century, with the works of Sigmund Freud. Freud often based his theories on analyses of literary texts, for instance, his theory of Oedipus complex is developed through his analysis of *Oedipus Rex*. Other than Freud, psychological criticism often refers to the works of Carl Jung (especially his theory of archetypes, which are images and themes deriving from the collective unconscious), and Jacques Lacan (especially his theory of the three stages or orders of identity formation—imaginary order, symbolic order and the real order).

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 the 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?
- 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?

5.3 TRENDS IN TEXT-FOCUSED LITERARY RESEARCH

Formalism and New Criticism

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 Formalists in 1916, who considered form and linguistics to be foundational elements of literature and wanted to produce a "science of literature."

New Criticism is a later Euro-American counterpart of Russian Formalism that gained popularity in the mid-twentieth century, with the claimed scientific approach of I.A Richards. 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 may be a flawed approach, but the method of close reading and formal analysis are 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?

5.4 TRENDS IN READER-FOCUSED LITERARY RESEARCH

Reader Response Theory

Reader response theory is a phenomenological reading approach that gained popularity in the 1960s. The main proponents of this theory are Wolfgang Iser, Stanley Fish and David Bleich, among others. It destabilizes 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 that readers are not passive consumers of a text but are actively involved in making meaning. Since each reader will engage with a text differently, there are potentially as many meanings of a literary text as there are readers. Readers are "interpretive communities" who make meaning through their personal responses to a text or through their inherited and culturally conditioned ways of reading.

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 with re-readings?

5.5 TRENDS IN CONTEXT-FOCUSED LITERARY RESEARCH

Historical Criticism and New Historicism

Historical criticism researches a text through studying the context in which it has been written, including relevant details of the author's life (biographical criticism) and the broader 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.

New Historicism is a form of historical criticism developed in the 1980s by Stephen Greenblatt. This theory suggests that the socio-cultural and historical conditions at the time of the production of a text form the co-text. A researcher using this 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.

Some foundational questions that researchers using historical criticism 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?

Comparative Literary Criticism

This field of research has a very vast scope, as researchers studying comparative literature critically compare and consider literature from different genres, locations, and time periods simultaneously. Beyond that, comparative literature may also include thinking across different disciplines, like literature and music or literature and anthropology. Comparative literary studies are closely tied to Goethe's concept of world literature and is also necessarily dependent on translation studies.

A comparative research approach is trans-national, trans-medial, and transcultural, and it enables the researcher to make connections across borders, to find commonalities and respect differences.

Using a comparative method would lead a researcher to inquire into questions such as:

- How are the texts being compared connected to common themes?
- How are they differentiated through their locations in separate socio-cultural contexts?
- What has been gained or lost in translating a particular text?

Structuralism

Structuralism became widespread in the 1950s and '60s and is based primarily on the linguistic theories of Ferdinand de Saussure. Structuralism considered language as a system of signs and signification, the elements of which are understandable only in relation to each other and to the system. In literary theory, structuralism suggested that a text was constituted of linguistic conventions and 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."

Structuralism suggests the interrelationship between "units" (surface phenomena) and "rules" (the ways in which units can be put together);

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what Saussure termed at 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.

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/s?

Deconstruction and post-structuralism

Post-structuralism is a theory that is both built upon and rejects ideas established by structuralism. Post-structuralists may critique structuralism in different ways, but they all reject the self-sufficiency of structuralism, and interrogate the binary oppositions that constitutes its structures. Post-structuralism challenges the structuralist assumption that all definitions and signs are fixed and valid.

Deconstruction is a theory that arose from post-structuralism, and Jacques Derrida is the originator of the term. 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 undetermined possibilities. It focuses on binaries in a text, such as good/evil, male/female, natural/artificial, etc, and exposes how one aspect of the binary is privileged while the other is supressed. Derrida viewed deconstruction as a technique for exposing and subverting many assumptions of Western thought in a variety of texts.

A post-structuralist, 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 invite ambiguity versus certainty?

Marxist Literary Criticism

Marxism is a materialist philosophy 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). This class conflict will potentially lead to social transformation.

Karl Marx used the concept of dialectic materialism to explain how all ideological systems are produced by the socio-economic interests of the dominant classes. These systems contain internal dialectical

contradictions, which ultimately cause transformation. 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.

Under the totalitarian communist regimes, however, other kinds of Marxist criticism arose.

- Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of Dialogism affirms plurality and variety and argues against the hegemony of absolute authorial control.

- Louis Althusser further extended Marxist criticism through his concepts of overdetermination and ideology. Effects are overdetermined and arise from various causes rather than from a single factor. Ideology is a system of representations instituted and promoted by the state through Repressive State Apparatuses (RSA) (law courts, prison, police, etc) and Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA) (schools, media, churches, family, etc).

- Antonio Gramsci introduced concepts like Hegemony and the Subaltern. Hegemony is the domination by the elite, which works through manufacturing the consent of the dominated groups. Subaltern collectively describes a variety of exploited groups who lack class consciousness.

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

- How are the socio-economic class relations depicted in the text?

- How does the plot, characterization, language of the text reveal or erase class struggles?

- Does the text envision any kind of transformation of the existing class relations in the story?

Feminist criticism

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.

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 the motto, "The personal is the political," which indicates awareness of the false distinction between women's domestic and men's public spheres. Feminism began appearing in academic publications and scholarship. Elaine Showalter's concept of gynocriticism is a useful female framework for analysing women's literature, and puts focus on female subjectivity,

language and literary career. In the post-1980s third wave, feminism has become more interdisciplinary, pluralized and inclusive, and less Euro-American centric. Contemporary feminist theory is 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, plot and language reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes?
- What is the role of patriarchy in the lives of the characters in the text?

Postcolonialism

Postcolonial theory deals with literature produced in and about countries that were once, or are now, colonized by other countries. Beginning in the 1970s with Edward Said's seminal book, *Orientalism*, postcolonialism is based on the concepts of otherness and resistance.

Postcolonial scholars explore how writers from colonized countries articulate and reclaim their cultural identities from the colonizers. They also examine ways in which the literature of the colonizers justify colonialism through perpetuating the notion of the colonized are inferior. The concept of postcolonial "otherness" includes doubleness, both identity and difference. Typically, the colonizer divides the world into mutually excluding opposites: the west represents order, reason, masculinity, goodness, and the east stands for chaos, the irrational, femininity and evil. 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, thus, becomes a reclaimed but hybrid identity. Hybridity refers to the mingling 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 resistance to it?
- How does the text affirm or contest colonial ideology, either actively or implicitly?
- How are some characters represented as the "other" through stereotypes?

Postmodernism

Postmodernism is a socio-cultural and literary theory that originated in the late 1950s, after the dehumanizing impact of World War II and the rise of consumer capitalism. It is both a continuation of and a shift away from Modernism. Both Postmodernism and Modernism share these features:

- Rejection of boundaries between high and low art.

- Employment of self-reflexive modes like pastiche and parody, reminding the reader of the constructed-ness of texts.

- Fragmentation, decentred subjects and unreliable narrators, open to multiple interpretations.

However, while Modernism regards contemporary fragmentation as tragic, Postmodernism embraces fragmentation. Both Poststructuralism and Postmodernism recognize the impossibility of having a coherent centre. According to Jacques Derrida, this postponement of the centre, of any coherence or unity of meaning is called *difference*. Modernism works through metanarratives or grand narratives of order and centrality, while Postmodernism questions and deconstructs metanarratives, which conceal and negate inherent contradictions. Postmodernism favours "mini-narratives" of small practices and local events, without pretending universality and finality.

Baudrillard conceptualizes the Postmodern surface culture as a simulacrum, which is a fake reality simulated or constructed by the media or other ideological apparatuses. Baudrillard suggests that we have lost the capacity to discriminate between the real and the artificial.

Postmodern theory may be used by researchers to study questions like:

- How does the text create and defer meaning through language?

- What are the metanarratives dismantled in the text? What mini-narratives are validated?

- How does fragmentation and irony affect the construction of characters and plot in the text?

Queer criticism

Queer theory is a critical lens established in the 1990s. It investigates 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. Queer critiques can be applied to deconstruct naturalized epistemic frameworks in language, gender, sexuality, history, and power.

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 refused to accept that sexuality can be clearly defined, and instead focuses 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. Judith Butler discusses how gender is repeated performativity, and also how gender performativity through drag or cross-dressing could be a strategy of resistance.

Analysing with a queer perspective has the potential 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?

Critical Race Theory

Originating in 1989 in the United States, Critical Race Theory (CRT) is based onthe premise that race is not a biologically natural, but a socially constructed and culturally invented category that is used to oppress and exploit people of colour. Critical race theorists aim to dismantle race-based and other unjust hierarchies.

Some of the basic tenets of CRT are:

- Race signifies an artificial correlation between a set of physical characteristics—like skin colour—and an imagined set of behavioural tendencies, conceived as either positive or negative.

- Most people of colour in America experience racism daily, often through microaggressions.

- Popular media, culture and literature negatively stereotype minorities.

- "Intersectionality" reveals how each individual is a member of several identity categories.

- As per the "voice of colour" thesis, people of colour are uniquely qualified to speak on behalf of their group members regarding the impact of racism.

As a literary critical approach, CRT can be used to engage 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?
- How does the text reinforce or challenge systemic racism?
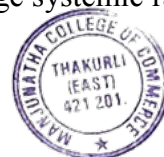
Eco-criticism

Ecocriticism investigates the relation between humans and the natural world in literature. It studies how individuals in society behave and react in relation to nature and ecological aspects. The notion of "Deep Ecology" is at the core of ecocriticism, and it prioritizes the inherent interconnectedness of all life forms and natural features, and presents a symbiotic and holistic world-view of the ecosphere.

Beginning in the 1970s, ecocriticism has grown in relevance because of multiple ecological crises that we face. Ecocriticism includes ecopoetics and environmental literary criticism which analyse how literary treatment and representation of nature influence our actions on nature. Ecofeminism argues that all western thought and action are not just anthropocentric but also androcentric.

This theory is useful for researchers to understand questions like:

- How is nature represented in text/s?
- How do our metaphors of nature influence the way we treat it?
- How is science—especially science that intervenes in ecology—open to critical scrutiny?

Posthumanism

Posthumanism is a contemporary theoretical trend that primarily indicates a series of breaks from humanism—one of the foundational assumptions of post-Renaissance western culture. Posthumanism offers a new epistemology that is not anthropocentric and is not centred in Cartesian mind-body dualism. Posthumanism regards the boundaries between the human, the animal, and the technological as porous and unfixed. Related terms include the transhuman and the antihuman.

Donna Haraway's concept of the cyborg embodies the transhuman/posthuman nature of human beings. It symbolizes the multiple ways technologies are modifying and altering how humans think, act and interact.

Posthuman theory can be fruitfully applied to study texts—in the genre of science fiction or having any kind of human-machine interaction—in the light of the following questions:

- How does the human-machine interaction shape the characters and the plot?
- Is the text anthropocentric? How would it change if the perspective is biocentric?
- How is the text located in the realms of the Anthropocene and the Symbiocene?

Although we have defined various trends and theories in literary research, many scholars argue against attempts to arrive at rigid definitions. All literary theories are fluid and open to multiple interpretations. They are

interconnected with other approaches and theories. Researchers need to acknowledge this and adapt their research to the shifting and intermeshing of literary trends.

5.6 LET US SUM UP

This unit has defined four approaches to literary research—author-focused, text-focused, reader-focused and context-focused. The important theoretical trends applicable to each approach have been introduced, along with research questions investigable by each theory.

5.7 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

The questions in this unit shall be asked in the short notes therefore you need to understand each theoretical trend and approach in literary research clearly.

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PROCESS OF RESEARCH

Unit Structure

6.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit we will be able to:

1. comprehend the process of selecting the research topic
2. prepare the scheme of chapters with sections and sub-sections
3. understand the process of enlisting the findings and drawing the conclusions

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear students, by this time, we do understand the key concepts regarding 'research' as discussed in the earlier units. In this unit we will discuss the process of selecting the research topic, preparation of scheme of chapters (popularly known as 'chapterisation') and the process of enlisting findings and drawing the conclusions in the course of research.

Students, conducting a research is a systematic journey. Most of the times this research journey begins with a problem/issue to be solved. The research solves some particular problem/issue. Once we desire this journey of research then we must consider the questions such as:

- What is the problem/issue to be solved?

- Who cares about this problem and why?

- What have others done?

- What is our solution to the problem?

- How can we demonstrate that our solution is a good one?

In order to answer these questions we need to read/review the existing literature on the issue. It will help us to find what is already known about the issue and thus our problem identification process will be triggered. The other sources to find out the answers may be the discussion with subject experts/ colleagues/ professor.

Gradually we will understand the need of converting the problem/issue in particular or specific statement/topic. Therefore, our research begins with the selection of research topic which is in fact the first significant step in the research process. It is advisable that first we should concentrate on our interest areas in order to have a researchable topic. We should start reading the interested areas rapidly but with a purpose of finding potential and relevant overview of probable topic for our research study. Thus, while reading on the interested areas, we should consider the questions such as:

- What are some of the key studies in this area?

- What kinds of approaches have been taken to this area?

- What are the key issues and questions in this area?

- Are there any possible gaps or approaches yet to be explored in this area?

Let us always bear in mind when it comes to literature as our interested area we may explore some undiscovered aspects of the works of literature of a well-known or budding author/s. We may study the dominant interdisciplinary themes/issues from the works of literature of author/s. Further, we may deal with some issues or problems such as social, historical, economical etc. from the works of literature of author/s. Furthermore, we may apply particular theory/theoretical approach to the works of literature of author/s. In this light, the selection of a good research topic is the significant milestone in the journey of the research. The following section of this unit discusses the process of selection of a research topic.

6.2 SELECTION OF RESEARCH TOPIC

Generally, in research study selection of a feasible and clearly defined topic is a successful beginning. However, it may not be very easy to select a good research topic. We must understand that there is a difference between subject (general, broader area) and topic (specific, pin-pointed area, a particular issue for investigation).

Students, in our graduation we have general understanding of broader areas i.e. subjects for examples: Indian Literature, American Literature, British Literature, Commonwealth Literature etc. Now, while doing research we must be able to pin point and concentrate in one of them by

considering the genre, the age, the period, the author/s, particular work/s of the author/s as shown in the figure below:

(published between 1990-2010)

(AnuragMathur, Arundhati Roy, Bharati Mukherjee, JhumpaLahiri, Kiran Desai, ManjuKapoor)

(*'The Inscrutable American', 'The God of Small Things', 'Desirable Daughters', 'The Namesake', 'The Inheritance of Loss', 'The Immigrant'*)

(Male or Female)
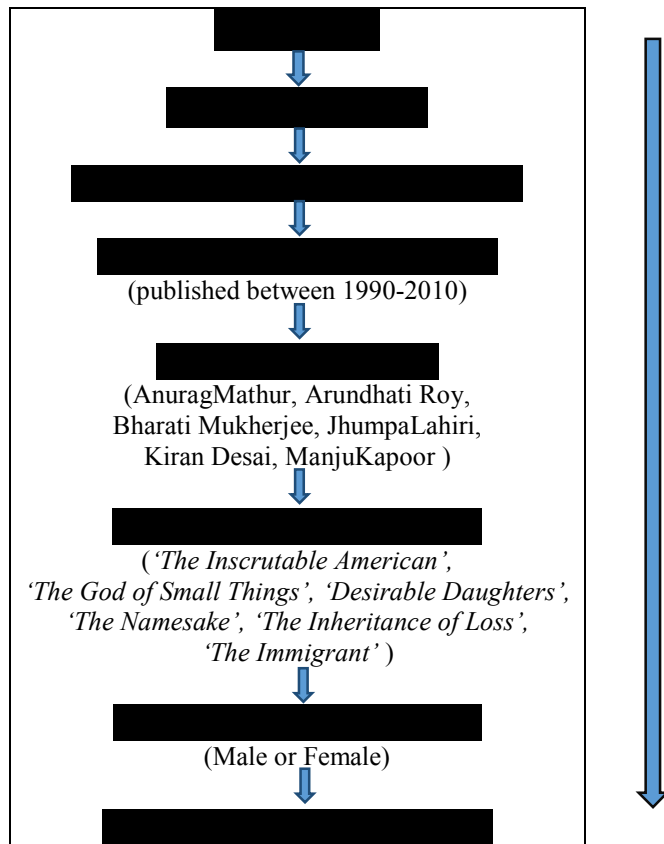
The selected topic should be new and researchable. So students we need creative thinking so as to have new, original and unique ideas. Further, we must know that there are some sources or strategies that help in the selection of research topic. These strategies are discussed by Wang and Park (2016), Roberts (2010) as:

i. Review of Literature: The review of literature helps in deciding and resolving about what is known and not known about the selected topic. It also clears up the need of further research related to he selected topic. Students while having the review we must pay attention to the "Recommendations for future research", and 'Limitation of the Study' form the theses, journals and other secondary sources of data.

ii. Brainstorming: Organizing few brainstorming sessions or building a network so as to interact with friends, students, seniors and professors who can guide, direct and discuss ideas for research topic. In all, it can be used to generate ideas regarding the topic.

iii. Participation in Seminars: Attend seminars/ conferences /presentations/ discussion sessions on the selected topic can help in having new ideas or fresh insights for the topic.

iv. Attending Viva-voce/Oral Defense: This may provide fresh insights or potential topics for future research.

v.   Use of Online Databases: Students we can also search information regarding the selected topic on the Internet systematically. Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) is an autonomous Inter-University Centre of the University Grants Commission where we can find theses repository system (*Shodhganga, Shodhgangotri*) and websites of renowned universities can also be helpful. Students, we may use thesaurus, reference books, textbooks, notes etc. to find different keywords related to our topic in the databases.

vi.   Use of Internet: The encyclopaedias, Google News/Scholar and other online sources help in topic ideas or for selection of the topic. Students, we can compare our interest area or topic with the past ones. Further, reading the abstract or summary from these sources can support we to form basic overview of our topic. Students, we can search for the concepts or keywords when reading the articles on encyclopaedia. After the search, further, we can perceive how our idea relates to broader or narrower, and related issues therein.

In all, the research topic needs to be very precise, interesting and also broad enough to have sufficient data/information. Hence, choose topic of our interest. Talk about research ideas with friends, colleagues, professors, and guide. It will help focus our topic by discussing issues that did not occur to us at first. Students, see to it that the topic is appropriate to our discipline. Narrow down the broad topic to a specific one so as to make it manageable and focused. Think about the social, scientific and personal relevance of the topic. Further, also think about the feasibility of the study on the topic. The feasibility can be checked while pondering over the available resources, time-frame, and human-power, financial and other constrains, ability of the researcher etc.

Let us understand it may be not be desirable if we select a particular topic that requires years of searching for primary or secondary sources. In general, much studied or familiar topics may be avoided. However, considering the freshness of the approach, or fresh insight, such topics could be made fresh again. Students, we must understand that, at the end of our research journey, our thesis must be a contribution to the sum total of human knowledge; it must add something new to the existing knowledge. Thus, our thesis must be meaningful by illuminating an aspect of literature or language which was unknown to the world. In this regard, the guidance a researcher obtains from his professors, research guide is requisite.

To sum up, let us understand that the selection of research topic forms the base whereby a researcher constructs the building of the research. We have discussed that the selection of the research topic is mainly directed by the desire and interest of the researcher. The shortlisted area then must be narrowed down to the specific or focused topic. Simultaneously, the focused area must be scientifically, socially or personally relevant. The essence of selection of the research topic should also further be examined from the point of view of feasibility of the study. Here, the strategies that are discussed above can help us further in the selection of research topic.

6.3 CHAPTERISATION: SECTIONS AND SUB-SECTIONS OF CHAPTERS

After going through this part of the present unit, we will be able to prepare the scheme of chapters with sections and sub-sections of our research study. In all we will be able to understand the structure of thesis which in fact is the basic step in planning a thesis writing process. In general, considering the scope of research study, it is marked that a (non-technical) thesis has at least five major partitions in the form of chapters. This process is popularly known as 'chapterisation' or scheme of chapters. This process or scheme helps us to categorise and present data (primary and secondary), findings, conclusions etc. systematically in our thesis.

So in order to frame effective scheme of chapters for our research we must be aware of exiting guidelines/rules of the university; the nature of our research study as technical or non-technical and the general format of thesis; the nature and length of data to present in the thesis etc. Then accordingly the chapters are formed so as to give the reader an idea of what to anticipate in each chapter. The names of chapters must be short and informative about the content of thesis.

We must understand that the thesis structure will vary considering the factors such as rules of the university, our subject/topic (technical or non-technical), scope of research, nature of data (qualitative or quantitative) etc. In general, non-technical subject like literature or cultural studies are seen more concentrated on theory, concepts, and cases while technical subjects like computer sciences or engineering concentrate more on programming.

Non-technical subject, like literature, has following widely used format i.e. the scheme of chapters. The non-technical thesis has

1. a background to the problem (Introduction),

2. followed by the review of literature,

3. research methodology,

4. data analysis and

5. the conclusion.

This scheme of chapters is seen accepted by many universities for non-technical subjects. However, the technical subjects required more chapters as they concentrate more on exploration and development of data (e.g. primary data if collected from surveys, interviews and focus group discussions then researcher can devote different chapters to different types of data). Hence, technical subjects need more than one chapter devoted for data analysis and they concentrate more on methodology and results as well.

In view of the above discussion, the general (typical) 'chapterisation' or scheme of chapters with sections and sub-sections for non-technical subjects is outlined below:

No of Section	Particulars: Section (Probable)	Particulars: Sub-sections (Probable)
1	**Title Page**	- Title of the Thesis - Name of University - Name of discipline/faculty/subject - Name of researcher - Name of supervisor - Study center - Month and year of thesis submission
2	**Abstract**	- A summary of aim and objectives of the research - Outcomes of review of literature - Research gap - Research methodology - Findings/conclusions.
3	**Acknowledgement**	- Expression of gratitude or thankfulness towards the supporters/contributors. - Names of the people and their role in the research study.
4	**Table of contents (Index)**	- Sequential listing of every important element (Section and Sub-section) of thesis. - It is indexing of Section and Sub-section with its corresponding page number as shown in the following table: <table><tr><td>**Content**</td><td>**Page No.**</td></tr><tr><td>Certificate</td><td>i</td></tr><tr><td>Declaration</td><td>ii</td></tr><tr><td>Statement by the candidate</td><td>iii</td></tr><tr><td>Acknowledgment</td><td>iv-v</td></tr><tr><td>List of Tables</td><td>vi</td></tr><tr><td>List of Figures</td><td>vii</td></tr></table>

		List of Graphs	viii
		List of Acronyms	ix
		Chapter 1. Introduction	**01 – 30**
		1.1 Research Outline	**02**
		1.1.1 The Reason/ Background for the study	04
		1.1.2 Objectives	05
		1.1.3 Hypotheses	06
		1.1.4 Statement of the problem	07
		1.1.5 Scope of the research	08
		1.1.6 Data	09
		1.1.7 Significance of the research	10
		1.1.8 Scheme of chapters/ Organization of study	12
		1.2 Introductory Remarks	**14**
		1.3 Conceptual framework (Brief history of …. /Definitions)	**19**
		1.4 Summary	**30**
		Chapter 2. Review of literature	**31-50**
5	**Chapter 1. Introduction**	- The Reason/Background for the study - Objectives - Research questions - Hypotheses - Statement of the problem - Scope of the research - Data - Significance of the research - Scheme of chapters/ Organization of the study - Introductory remarks - Conceptual framework - Summary	
6	**Chapter 2. Review of literature**	- Synthesis of recent research studies conducted on the topic - Critical review - Research gaps, - Theoretical framework - Summary	

7	**Chapter 3. Research methodology**	- Research philosophy/approach - Research methodology/ type of research - Research strategy or technique, - Type of data (Qualitative or Quantitative) - Sampling (plan for target population/selected texts, size of sample, type of sampling) - Process of data collection - Process of data analysis (validity, reliability and authenticity of data) - Summary
8	**Chapter 4. Data analysis**	- Introduction - Analysis of data collection - Analysis of Questionnaire - Analysis of Interview - Analysis of Survey etc. or - Textual analysis of selected texts - Thematic analysis - Inferential analysis and hypothesis testing - Summary
9	**Chapter 5. Discussion, findings, conclusions and recommendations**	- Introduction - Synoptic summarization - Findings - Discussion - Recommendations - Limitations of the study - Scope for further research - Conclusion - Summary
10	**Appendices**	- Questionnaire/s - List of respondents - Plagiarism report
11	**References**	As per the recommended style (MLA, APA, Chicago, Harvard)

In view of the above, students, we will discuss the basic idea or logic behind each major section (chapter) of the non- technical thesis.

The first chapter (major section) most of the times happen to be 'Introduction'. This chapter may deal with the outline of the research study, brief survey regarding the selected topic/area in order to register the introductory remarks, the overall organization of the study, conceptual framework, the key concepts, the (working)definitions, meaning, nature, scope of the selected terms/concepts and the other concepts associated with selected terms/concepts etc. This chapter can also deal with the aims and objectives of the research, the research questions and the importance of the research.

The second chapter 'Review of literature' aims at all-inclusive review of existing literature associated with our research. This chapter discusses the earlier relevant research studies and sort out the gaps in the existing research. Further, it may cover the open questions left from earlier research. In all, this section provides the synthesis of recent research studies conducted on our research topic, the overall critical review based on the identified gaps in research. Sometimes, this chapter can also provide theoretical framework for the research by describing different theoretical aspects of the selected topic or issue.

The third chapter 'Research methodology' provides the research procedure adopted for our research study. Research methodology is the precise process supported with techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyse information or data about the selected area of the research. This chapter deals with the research methodology, research technique, research procedures and design adopted to obtain data. It may focus in what way the research method is employed to analyse the primary sources (e.g. the select texts) or how the adopted research methodology enables the researcher to concentrate on the analysis and interpretation of the selected data. The very chapter thus deals with research philosophy/approach, the selected research methodology, type of research used, research strategy or technique used, how the data (qualitative or quantitative) is analysed etc.

The forth chapter 'Data analysis' provides an assessment of the data collected through qualitative and quantitative measures. This chapter deals with the analysis of data e.g. the analysis of select texts, of questionnaires, of structured or semi-structured interviews, of surveys etc. This chapter provides the textual analysis of selected texts, or the thematic analysis or the inferential analysis and hypothesis testing in literature. The chapter, in case of quantitative data, may contain figures and graphs for better assessments of the analysis.

The fifth chapter 'Discussion, findings, conclusions and recommendations' deals with the results (conclusions) of the conducted research. It provides synoptic summarization of our research study conducted so far. It also presents discussion and summary on the basis of the interpretations drawn from the analysis. It can deal with recommendations for future research. Students, after stating the limitations

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of the present research study a scope for further research may be provided therein.

The above was the general outline of scheme of chapters for the non-technical research study. Further, it is observed that some research study has a devoted chapter on the research methodology and others do not. Sometimes, a research study may have limitations of the words (minimum or maximum) hence depending upon the regulations and other needs (constraints) researcher can have more or less than five chapters in order to avoid the research presentation as repetitive, disconnecting, and boring.

Further, we must remember a rule of thumb to prepare the scheme of chapters with sections and sub-sections of our research study, that is, we should not skip the essentials. The number of chapters should not be the reason to skip the basic parts of research e.g. the background, review of literature, and the analysis and interpretation of data. The overall scheme of said basic parts of research must result into the foundation of our research study and the remaining chapters as the supportive pillars.

As discussed earlier the above 'chapterisation' or scheme of chapters with sections and sub-sections can be changed as per the rules of the university, our subject/topic (technical or non-technical), scope/type of research, nature of data/content (qualitative or quantitative) etc. However, scheme of chapters must aim at the overall presentation of thesis logically.

So to sum up, generally the organisation/planning comes first in order to set precedence regarding the overall thesis framework or chapter. This logical arrangement must be reflected in the scheme of chapters denoting major sections and sub-sections. Let us understand that the major sections (chapters) or sub-section of our thesis do not stand entirely alone. The content of our thesis, in a sense, is an argument in which each major section or sub-section goes one step, one move in the direction of conclusion. Hence, the 'chapterisation' say the scheme of chapters with sections and sub-sections must be in logical order. Each section and sub-section has a precise job to do in the overall scheme of chapters. Hence, each section and sub-section needs to be linked to the one before and one after sequentially. In all, students, our research study/ thesis must be presented in a systematic way or arranged in the given order if provided by the university and here scheme of chapters plays very crucial role.

6.4 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

It is important to know that the 'findings and conclusion'section in the non-technical subject like literary studies deals with the results/outcomes of the conducted research. The last chapter of the thesis delivers the findings and conclusion on the basis of the interpretations drawn from the data analysis from the earlier chapters of the thesis.

The findings are developed from the analysis of the data. The findings can be categorised into sections by thematic areas/themes, particular author/s

or character/s. For example, if we have conducted a qualitative research study and have identified key themes/issues while analysing the data from the works of literature of the author then we may highlight the themes/issues in findings section of our thesis. It may be appropriate way to proceed as we refer to the information that we have already documented earlier and now we are presenting them in a logical way. Another way may be to enlist our findings in relation to our research questions or our hypotheses. The findings can be categorised as per technical area e.g. age/gender/place-relevant findings in case of quantitative data obtained from questionnaire or survey.

When it comes to enlisting the findings of our research study then there should not exit any uncertainty or confusion for the readers. The findings essentially reveal the readers what they must know clearly about our research study. So, students we may present our findings section beginning with effective introduction that informs the readers our precise journey i.e. where we have started/come from in the research process and what is the outcome.

The section devoted to 'findings' is basically the descriptions of results/outcomes. Hence, before dealing with the findings we must be sure that we have evidently recognised the data that is related with the research questions, hypotheses, or themes/issues of our research. In this section, we are not expected to enlist what past researchers have said about our research area. Therefore, while dealing with 'findings' we should precisely exhibit our own contribution to the existing knowledge based on the analysis/interpretation of the data.

It is useful to remember that the recommendations, generally, stem from the findings. Hence, we must tie the recommendations to the finding that supports them. Recommendations put forward particular strategies to address the problems/issues recognised in the assessment of data. Students, we must see to it that the offered recommendations should respond to findings which we enlisted through data collection, analysis and interpretation accordingly. Students we should prioritise the findings in order to narrow down them and also line up them with the recommendations. Further, the recommendations should be feasible and in SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely) format.

Now, we will see the difference between a discussion and conclusion section of the thesis. Most of the times these two terms are used interchangeably. However, these two terms have different purposes in the thesis writing. The discussion section is employed to have comprehensive presentation of the findings. It also offers methodical support for our argument/s. In all, the discussion section of the thesis elucidates the findings, interprets them in the context of previous work, and offers suggestions for future research. The conclusion section of the thesis usually briefs or states the facts and main points of our thesis i.e. the take-home message or key-takeaways.

We must see to it that the conclusion section of our thesis must cover our main argument/idea and offer the reader with the key-takeaways or strong final impression. It may also restate the research problems and summarize our overall arguments or most important findings. The conclusion section may be consider as summary of our discussion and can state why our research is relevant. However, the conclusion is not a summary. The conclusion must transport our argument to a logical close. It must justify our argument to the readers. So, the conclusion may describe the significance of the argument and may brief 'why is my argument important?'

Generally, in research paper the purpose of a conclusion is to summarise the main points of our research study. Here, we can bring together

1. What we have been saying?

2. What is our opinion? and

3. What is our clear understanding of the topic?

Thus, our conclusion should emphasis the key argument, summarise the answer to the research question as indicated in the introductory part, and reinforce the main theme/issue. The conclusion must confirm researcher understands of and approach to the conducted research study.

While writing the conclusion we should not begin the sentence with the redundant phrases e.g. 'in conclusion' or 'to conclude' etc. Further, we just make a judicious final claim regarding our research and do not exaggerate the main finding/s. We must take exceptional care with the final sentence in the conclusion and draft it with maximum care so as to leave a strong final impression/ take-home message or key-takeaways to the readers. So, we must consult with our guide/supervisor while writing the final sentence of the conclusion.

6.5 DRAFTING 'DISCUSSION' SECTION

The following extracts discuss the care to be taken while drafting 'discussion' section in the light of findings and conclusion. The discussion section is a review of the findings. It aims at presenting researcher's understanding of the findings. It is usually written in the present tense. The discussion section can have sub-sections. In the discussion section researcher is expected to interpret and explain the results and link them with other research studies.

Here, the researcher can answer the research question/s and evaluate the study. The researcher, while drafting the discussion section, is expected to

• refer to the research questions,

• provide the answer,

• justify the answer with appropriate results and

- link the present research study with other works.

In all, the discussion section gives the researcher fine space to clarify the meaning of the results, therefore, while drafting this discussion section the focus must be to help the reader understand the research and that the highlight should be on the data.

Hence, the effective outline or framework of discussion section is fundamental in thesis writing. The outline of discussion section can differ as per the requirement of the discipline or subject. Though, the followingsteps and strategies as suggested by Hess Dean (2004) can be useful to create an outline of discussion section.

Step No	Strategy	Particulars of Strategy (Probable)
1	**Summarizing key findings**	Summarize the key findings from the research and link them to the initial research question/s. Pursue answers to the research question/s and ponder over 'What should readers take away from this research?' The discussion should begin with a statement of the major findings and it may form first paragraph in the discussion. It should be a direct, declarative, and succinct proclamation of the results of the research.
2	**Placing the findings in context and stating the relevance**	Place the findings in context. So there is a need to refer back to literature review and analysis sections and how the results fit in with past research. The discussion section should relate our research findings to those of other studies. The findings of other studies may support our findings, which strengthens the importance of our results. In all, explain the meaning of the findings and why the findings are important (relevant) in the given context.
3	**Considering alternative explanations or mentioning and discussing any**	Mention and discuss any unexpected results. Describe the results and offer a judicious interpretation of why they may have appeared. Additionally, if an unexpected result is significant to the

	unexpected result/s	research question, be sure to explain that connection. Let us understand that the purpose of research is to discover and not to prove hence we can discuss any unexpected result/s
4	**Acknowledging limitations or weaknesses in the research.**	Address limitations/weaknesses in the research so as to form the credibility as a researcher. The reader has clear idea about what our study does and does not cover. Even the best research studies can have limitations so just acknowledge the limitations or weaknesses.
5	**Making suggestions for further research or recommendations**	Recommend a few areas where further research/enquiry may be vital. Suggest potential area for follow-up research studies. But, do not go overboard with the suggestions.
6	**Restating/Reaffirmation of the most significant findings and their implications**	Conclude with a restatement of the most significant findings and their implications. Explain why the research is important and remind readers of the connections it has with outside material - existing literature or an aspect of the field that is affected by the study.

Hess Dean (2004) also suggests 'care' i.e. things to avoid in the discussion section as

- The interpretation of the results must not go beyond what is supported by the data (Avoid over-presentation of the results).

- There is little room for speculation in discussion and hence it should remain focused on the data (Avoid unwarranted speculation).

- The unjustified or undue importance of the research results can disgust reviewers and readers (Avoid inflation of the importance of the findings).

- The tangential issues (digression) into the discussion section distracts and confuses the reader hence need to focus on the hypothesis and results (Avoid Tangential issues).

- The discussion section cannot be utilized to criticize other research studies. Researcher can contrast the findings to other published research but in a professional way. Do not use the discussion to attack past researchers. (Avoid 'bully pulpit').

- Avoid the conclusions that are not supported by the data and save 'take-home message' for the conclusion section.

In short, while writing the discussion section, we should have outline; use subheadings as per the key points; continue with same tone, terminology (but not use jargon) and point of view; be logical and concise; cite all the sources and avoid the plagiarism. The discussion section is the final major section of the thesis whereby researcher explains the results, its importance and relates to the research question(s). We should lead the readers on a research journey and make sure that they stay on the track and arrive at the final destination with us through the discussion section.

6.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have discussed in what way we can select research topic, prepare the scheme of chapters with sections and sub-sections and enlist the findings and draw the conclusions of our research study. We have discussed the content of the thesis as reflected in the major sections or sub-sections that go one step ahead in the direction of conclusion. Hence, while pondering over the overall process of research or the organization of the thesis we need to answer the questions such as: What is the overall argument? What is the specific contribution each chapter makes to the argument? What order (sequence) should the chapters come in? What is the internal argument for each chapter? What meta commentary/meta data (data about data) should be provided to make sure the reader moves smoothly from one chapter to the next one?

In view of the above, the very selection of the research topic is the crucial as it forms the base upon which we being the researcher will construct the building of the research. The selection of topic is generally comes out of the interest of the researcher. This interest (area) needs to be narrow down to the specific/focused topic. The topic must be relevant and feasible. Students, the strategies that are discussed in this unit can be used for the selection of research topic.

The scheme of chapters with sections and sub-sections is really crucial in our research study. The process of categorisation or organization of data is popularly known as 'chapterisation' or scheme of chapters. It enables us to comprehend the overall structure of our thesis which is also considered as the fundamental step in planning of our thesis writing. We must have understood the difference between the scheme of chapters for technical and non-technical thesis. In general a non-technical thesis has five major partitions or sections in the form of chapters. In general, the non-technical subject e.g. literature has scheme of chapters as

- a background to the problem (Introduction),

- review of literature,

- research methodology,

- data analysis and

- Conclusion.

However, we have discussed that this scheme may vary as per the rules of the university, subject/topic, scope of research, nature of data being qualitative or quantitative etc.

Let us remember that the findings and conclusion section is a significant section of our thesis. We can categorise the findings into sections as per the thematic areas/themes/issues, particular author/s or character/s. or as per research questions/hypotheses. In case of quantitative data collected from questionnaire/survey, the findings can be written off as per age/gender/place etc.

The discussion section is also very important section in thesis writing and should have outline in order to be logical. The steps and strategies and 'care' as suggested by Hess Dean can be used to form an outline of the discussion section. It is good idea to show that we are aware of the limitations of our study in the discussion section. The discussion section should deal with both sides of our argument so as to give our conclusion more credibility.

6.7   IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

i.   Describe the process of selecting the research topic.
ii.   Illuminate on the useful strategies for selecting the research topic.
iii.   Prepare the scheme of chapters (chapterisation) with sections and sub-sections of for non-technical thesis.
iv.   Explain the chapter scheme in research.
v.   What is chapter scheme in research?
vi.   Clarify the probable differences regarding scheme of chapters for technical and non-technical thesis.
vii.   Write a note on process of enlisting the findings.
viii.   Write a note on drawing the conclusions.
ix.   What is the difference between a discussion section and conclusion in research?
x.   What care must be taken while drafting findings and conclusion?
xi.   Explain the probable steps and strategies to create an outline of discussion section.
xii.   Describe the mistakes/ things to avoid while drafting the discussion section.

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A PARADIGM SHIFT IN THE MODE OF EXAMINATION – STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract:

COVID-19 disease was declared a pandemic on 11th March 2020 by WHO. It resulted in a worldwide lockdown wherein the colleges had to be shut down. There was no other option rather than switching to an online mode of teaching-learning and assessment. The purpose of this study is to identify the student's perspectives on online exams during the pandemic. The objectives of the study are to understand the effectiveness of online exams, the benefits, and the problems faced by the students before and after the exam. The Google form questionnaire was prepared and circulated among degree college students of the Kalyan and Dombivli region. The fear of deterioration in the quality of education is a big challenge.

Keywords: Online exam, COVID -19, Students, Perspectives.

Introduction:

According to Kenton W. (2020), "The term paradigm shift refers to a major change in the worldview, concepts, and practices of how something works or is accomplished. A paradigm shift can happen within a wide variety of contexts from scientific research to industry."

Singh (2020) defined an online examination as it is an exam conducted on a computer with no physical question paper. Online exams are tests with Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) where candidates must select the right answer among the four available options and mark it on the virtual answer sheet. The offline exam is the traditional way of conducting tests with the offline question paper and Optical Mark Recognition (OMR)-based answer sheets. Students are provided with complete questions in the form of question papers and an OMR answer sheet for marking the answer. Many offline exams are descriptive where students need to solve the questions to arrive at a solution or questions which need descriptive, theoretical, or, essay as the answer.

Objectives of the Study:

The main objective of the study is to understand the student's perception of an online mode of exam and to identify the problem faced by the students during an online exam.

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Conceptual Framework:

The teaching-learning process has changed in many ways over the last few years. The COVID-19 pandemic urged the education sector to make changes in the mode of examination. Initially, most of the universities and institutions in India were using only traditional methods of teaching, learning, and assessment. However, the pandemic made us apply the digital mode of teaching-learning. The online mode of the exam shortened the timeline of examining the answers sheets and formulating the results besides its numerous other benefits and drawbacks. In the initial stage, the students were a bit stressed to cope up with the online exam. Slowly and gradually they understood the methodology and were able to attend the exam without any hurdles. Now universities and policymakers must think of a blended mode of teaching-learning to take advantage of technology and ICT tools as well.

Literature Review:

Elsalem et al., (2021) expressed that only a few percent of students from medical colleges preferred the online mode of the exam during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students might not attend the e-exam honestly and misconduct in exams may be a common problem in the online exam. It not only affects academic integrity but also increases the problems in students' careers.

Mahyoob (2020) said that the online learning process negatively influenced the learner's performance. Internet connectivity, the nonavailability of study materials, and technical itches in the online exam are the major challenges of online teaching and learning.

Khalaf et al., (2020) viewed that online exam was successfully implemented during the COVID pandemic. Students were able to score high grades as compared to the pen-paper offline exam. However, the main issue raised by the students against the e-exam was technical issues during the exam. The students who have previous experience with the online exam were more satisfied with the virtual mode of the exam as compared with the students who attempted the online exam the first time.

Tuah and Naing (2021) expressed that education institutions must assess the reliable method for online learning and assessment before the online examination. It is necessary to understand the readiness among students, exam cheating practices, learner diversity, and the impact of the adopted method of the examination on students and their outcomes.

Idnani et al., 2021 stated that scoring the highest marks in the online exam does not mean that the conduct of the online exam is correct. Students are not happy with the traditional method of assessment instead they wish to attempt case studies, open-book exams, and discussion-based tests. The traditional method only checks the memory of the learners and the modern method called e-exams tests the skill level.

Research Methodology:

This study aimed to understand the student's perception of the paradigm shift in the mode of examination due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The quantitative study used a questionnaire as an instrument to collect data. Data

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was collected from degree college students of different colleges in and around Kalyan and Dombivli city. The data collection procedure included the use of a questionnaire consisting of open-ended multiple questions through which respondents were asked about their experience with the paradigm shift in the mode of examination. The questionnaire consists of questions that helped to understand their attitudes and perspectives on the change in the mode of examination due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data Analysis:

Google form (survey questionnaire) was used for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of demographic questions such as gender, and age, and 12 open-ended questions related to change in the mode of examination. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the perceptiveness of students. All the data collected was organized and then analyzed properly by using simple statistical tools. The information retrieved from the analysis represents the considerations of a paradigm shift in the mode of examination in a pandemic. The quantitative data was then graphically represented in the form of tables and charts to illustrate relationships between various data elements.

Result and Discussion:

1. Out of 220 respondents, 92 were male participants and 128 were female participants.

2. 21 students belong to the age group of 18-19, 109 respondents belong to the age group between 19-20, 82 students belong to the age group of 20-21 and only 8 student respondents belong to the age group of above 21.

3. Out of 220 respondents, 211 students have their device to attend the online exam and 9 students borrowed the device from others to attend the exam.

The percentage for the response of the items from the student's perspective:

Table 1:

Questions	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %
1. Do you agree that an online exam is easier than an offline exam?	46.81	24.09	20.90	7.27	0.90
2. It was difficult to adapt from the offline to the online mode of exam	45.00	17.27	9.54	22.72	5.45
3. The grade obtained in an online exam is higher than the offline exam	51.36	31.36	6.36	6.81	4.09
4. The quality of education is deteriorated due to the online mode of exam.	46.81	26.36	10.45	11.81	4.54
5. The online mode of the exam may affect the student's career.	45.90	33.63	11.36	5.90	3.18

(Table 1: SA – Strongly Agree, A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree)
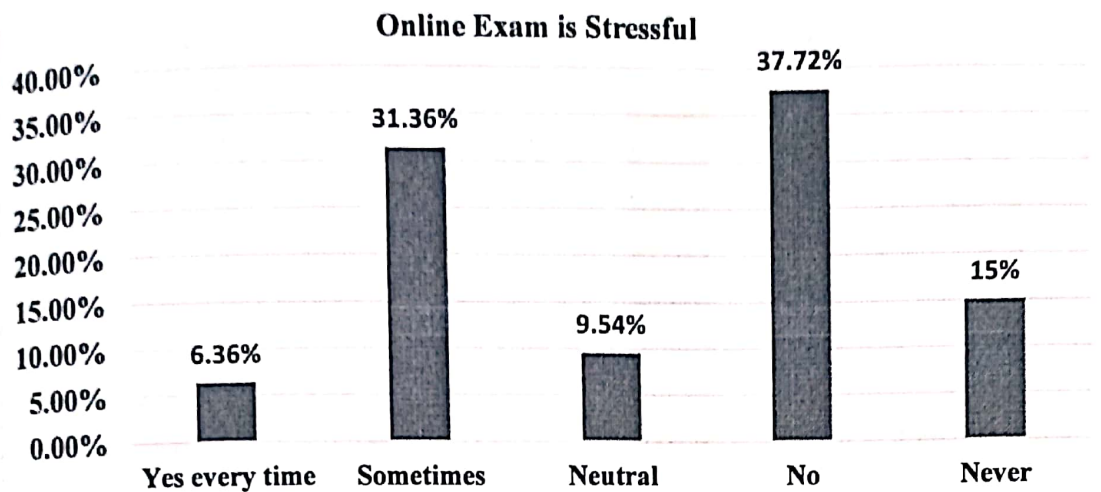
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4. The table is shown above (Table 1) is the percentage response of samples on the scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. It is clearly observed that on the scale of agreeableness (question no. 1), 46.81% of respondents strongly agreed and 24.09% of respondents agreed that the online exam is easier than the offline exam.

5. On the scale of difficulty level (question no. 2), based on the difficulty level of adopting offline to online mode of exam, 45% of respondents strongly agreed and 17.27% of respondents agreed that it was difficult to adapt from offline to online mode of exam.

6. On the scale of acceptability (questions no. 3, 4, and 5), it was observed that 51.36% strongly agreed and 31.36% agreed that the grade obtained in the online exam is higher than the grade obtained in the offline exam. Wherein 46.81% of respondents strongly agreed and 26.36% agreed that the quality of education is deteriorated due to the online mode of exam and 45.90% of respondents strongly agreed and 33.63% agreed that the online mode of the exam may affect the student's career.

Figure 1:

Faced Technical Issues During Online Exam
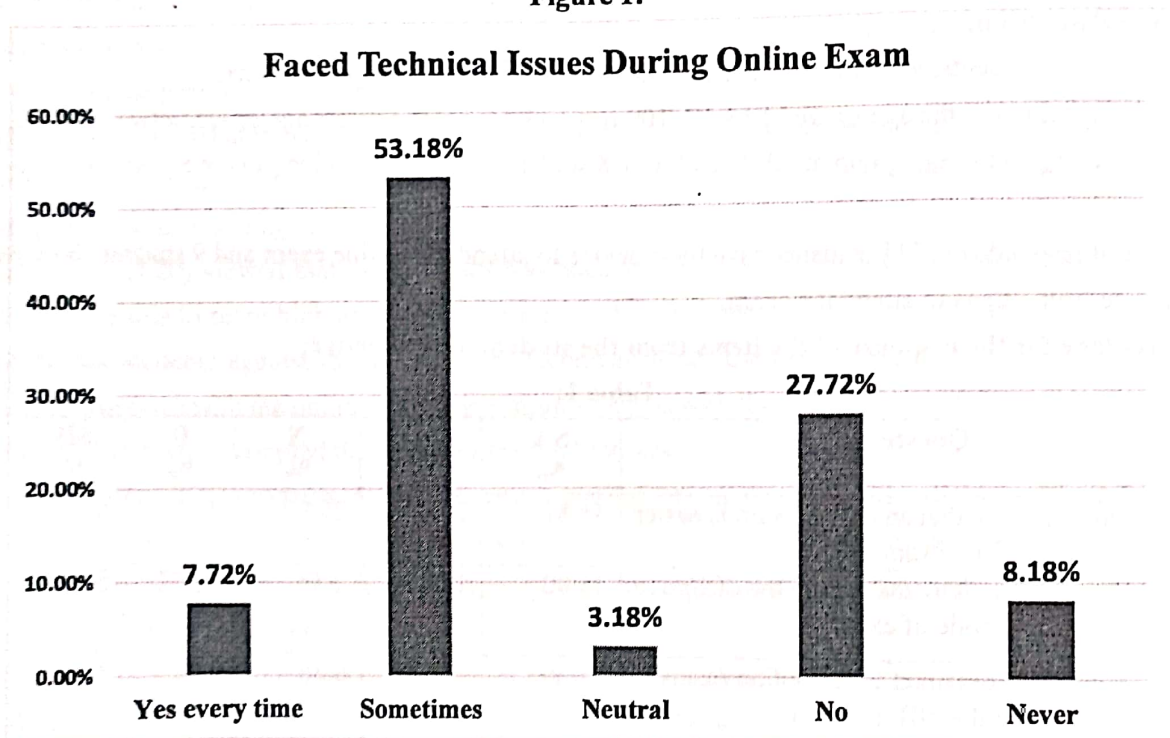
It is recorded in the above graph (Figure 1) that 53.18% of students expressed that only sometimes they have faced technical issues during the online exam and 7.72% of students agreed that every time they have faced the technical issue. Whereas, 35% of students have not faced any technical issues during the online exam.

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Figure 2:

Online Exam is Stressful

The above graph (Figure 2) shows that 52.72% of students never felt that online exam is stressful. Whereas, 31.36% of students sometimes felt it was stressful and 6.36% of students accepted that online exam is stressful in every attempt.
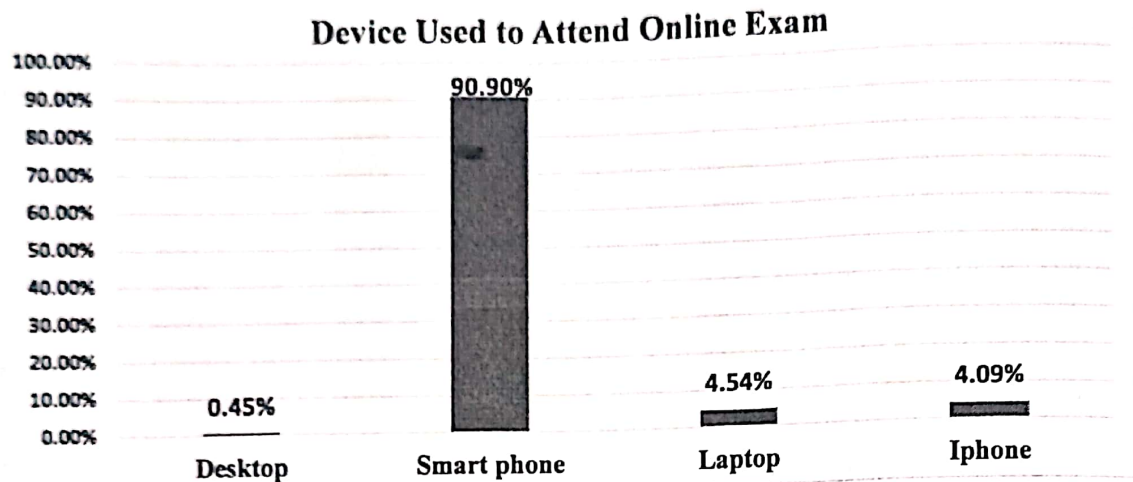
Figure 3:

Common Issues in Online Exam
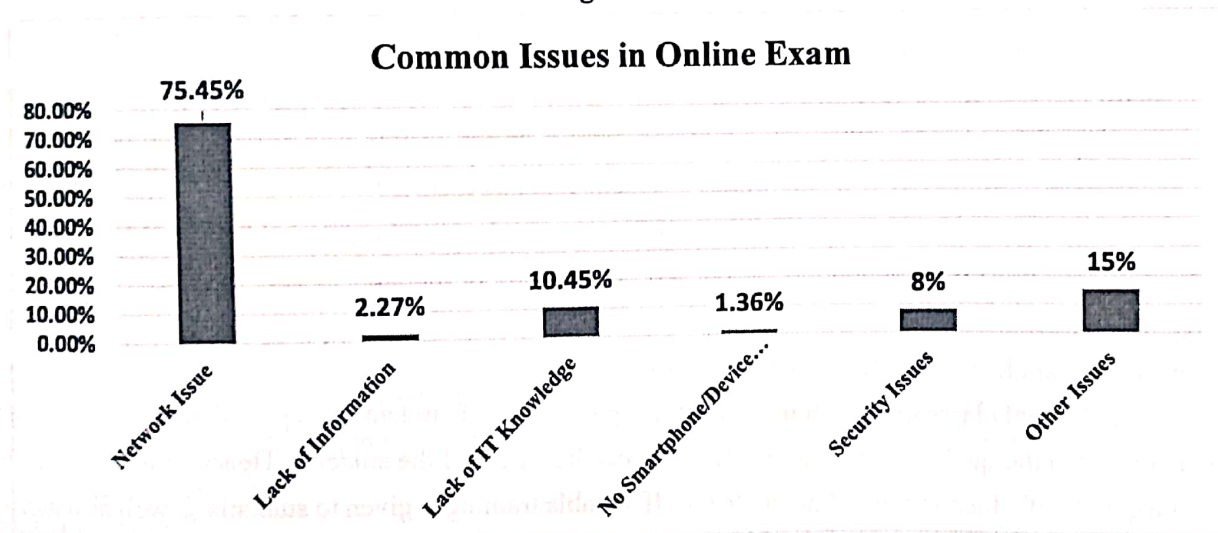
The above graph (Figure 3) indicates the common issues faced by the students in the online exam. The very common issue faced by most of the students were network issue. 75.45% of students agreed that network issue was the major problem faced during the online exam. Whereas, lack of knowledge and information, no smartphone or device to attend the exam and other security-related issues were the minor issues in the online exam.

Figure 4:

Device Used to Attend Online Exam

The above graph (Figure 4) shows the type of device used by the students in the online exam. The major percentage that is, 90.90% of students used a smartphone as a device to attend the online exam whereas the remaining 9% of students used a laptop, iPhone, and desktop as a device to attend the online exam.

Conclusion:

The paper does not conclude the significant fact from the results, it rather gives perspectives of students in terms of changes taking place in the mode of exams due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The author neither claims that good marks/grade guarantees the method of conducting online exams was correct. The paper shares students' experiences through the different modes of exams and discusses how students perceived them. Most of the time, the traditional pattern of exams does not test the thinking and analytical ability of the students. Students mug up the things in preparation for the test. The testing of memory instead of analytical skill and knowledge becomes important in today's world. Another fact that this paper concludes is the acceptability of online exams. Universities and policymakers need to be more focused now on online methods of teaching-learning with traditional classroom teaching. The major percentage of students accepted that the online mode of exam deteriorated the quality of education and it affects the career of the students. Hence, it is necessary to maintain the quality of education in online mode too. If suitable training is given to students as well as teachers in hybrid mode, unforeseen situations like the COVID-19 pandemic can be handled tactically and the career of the students also would be bright.

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