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CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION

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Semester-II : (G-1 DSE-4)

Research Methodology : British Literature

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Research Methodology : New Literature

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Unit-1

Research in Literature : Key Issues

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1.0 Objectives:

The objectives of the present unit are as follows

1. To study the meaning and definitions of research.
2. To understand the types of research
3. To study the types of literary research.
4. To understand the key issues in research such as Research questions, hypothesis and its types, hypothesis testing, research design and research ethics
5. To understand the meaning of plagiarism and ways to avoid it.

1.2 Definitions and Meaning of Research:

The word research has been coined from Latin word *Circare*, which means to go about or search. It has been coined by adding the prefix *Re* to English word *Search*. But it does not mean like the words like *redo*, *reunite* or *re-examine*. Research is a systematic investigation in a field to discover new facts, theory or principles.

Oxford English Dictionary defines research as "a search or investigation directed to the discovery of some fact by careful consideration or study of a subject, a course of critical or scientific inquiry." Webster's International Dictionary defines research as "a studious inquiry or examination; especially critical and exhaustive investigation or experimentation having for its aim the discovery of new facts and their correct information, the revision of accepted conclusions, theories, or laws in the light of newly discovered facts, or the practical applications of such new or revised conclusions, theories or laws." Thus research is a systematic and critical investigation for the discovery of new facts. It may lead to the revision of accepted laws or theories. Research can also be the practical application of new or revised conclusions, theories or laws.

The above definitions of research bring out the following characteristics of scientific research.

1. Research is systematic enquiry or investigation. The researcher has to follow objective and methodical procedure to carry out research. The researcher should not be prejudiced or biased in observation, analysis or interpretation of results. Scientific principles should be followed in investigation of any problem. The researcher should adopt a critical approach while doing research. The researcher should take in to account both kinds of facts, one that favours his hypothesis and the other that goes against his/her assumptions.

1.3 Aims and Objectives of Research

1. The aims and objectives of research are closely linked. Aims specify what is to be achieved by research and objectives specify how these aims are to be achieved. The general aim of any research is the discovery of new facts and knowledge.
2. The discovery of new knowledge may lead to the revision of accepted conclusions, theories, or laws.

3. The practical applications of such new or revised conclusions, theories or laws become applied research and results in development of new technologies.
4. The ultimate aim of scientific research is to generate measurable and testable data. The accumulation of human knowledge is the result of systematic research carried out over the years.
5. Every occurrence in the universe has a reason behind it, and the aim of research is to understand and assess what is happening. Research also aims to generate logical answers to all the questions posed by our curiosity. The scientific research demands rigorous testing for a truth to be accepted.
6. Research aims at describing accurately all the events in universe and establishing cause and effect relation among the events.
7. Literary research is different from research in natural sciences or social sciences. Literature is the product of the mind of creative writer. Literary research cannot confine itself to either the literary text or the writer of the text; it has to study both.
8. Literary research aims at advancement of knowledge. Research means going from the known to the unknown. The researcher should have an in-depth knowledge of what has been done in the past and what is the present status of knowledge in the field. If the researcher wants to do research on a particular author, the researcher must study all the works of the poet along with the views of different critics. Such an approach leads to creation of new knowledge and is an addition to existing knowledge.
9. Literary research aims at developing the critical insight of the researcher. A researcher should understand and evaluate a work of literature and should apply different approaches to analyse it. A researcher should be familiar with interdisciplinary approach and should apply the principles of sociology, psychology, anthropology, history, Marxism, feminism, new historicism, and all the relevant fields to study a work of literature.
10. Literary research creates a sense of belonging to community of like-minded scholars. Thousands of scholars are dedicated to the enrichment of culture, to better understanding of man's feelings, emotions and problems through literature.

1.4 Types of Research

Research can be classified into several categories according to the nature and purpose of the study and other features.

1. Quantitative research:

Quantitative research involves the process of collecting and analysing numerical data. It is generally used to find patterns, averages, predictions and cause-effect relationships between the variables being studied. It is also used to generalize the results of a particular study to the population in consideration. Quantitative research is widely used in natural science and social sciences. Quantitative research Describes, infers, and resolves problems using numbers. Emphasis is placed on the collection of numerical data. The collected data is summarized and the inferences are drawn. Quantitative research works with numerical data whereas qualitative research uses more conversational or linguistic data.

2. Qualitative research:

Qualitative research is the process of collecting and analysing non-numerical data such as text, video, and audio. The data is used to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. It can be used to gather in-depth insights into a problem or generate new ideas. Qualitative research is based on words, feelings, emotions, sounds and other non-numerical and unquantifiable elements. The 'information is considered qualitative in nature if it cannot be analysed by means of mathematical techniques. Qualitative research focuses on obtaining data through open-ended and conversational communication.

3. Descriptive research:

Descriptive research is defined as a research method that describes the characteristics of the population or phenomenon studied. It usually involves surveys and studies that aim to identify the facts. It mainly deals with the "Description of the state of affairs as it is at present" and there is no control over variables. The descriptive research method primarily focuses on describing the nature of a demographic segment, without focusing on “why” a particular phenomenon occurs. It describes the subject of the research, without asking why it happens.

4. Analytical research:

Analytical research is a specific type of research that involves critical thinking skills and the evaluation of facts and information relative to the research being conducted. In Analytical research the researcher has to use facts or information already available and analyse these in order to make a critical evaluation of the material and draw conclusions. The researchers use analytical research during studies to find the most relevant information. From analytical research, the researcher finds out critical details to add new ideas to the material being produced.

5. Fundamental research:

Fundamental research is also known as basic research or pure research. This type of research is driven by curiosity and the desire to enlarge knowledge in a specific research area. It aims at improving scientific theories for better understanding and prediction of natural or other phenomena.

6. Applied research:

Applied research deals with the scientific research that aims to solve practical problems. It can be used to find cure of illness or solve any practical problems. It is the application of theoretical research to real life situations. Applied research is fuelled by fundamental or basic research. Applied research uses scientific theories to develop technology or techniques which can be used to intervene and alter natural or other phenomena. Fundamental and applied research are often practiced simultaneously in coordinated research and development.

7. Action research:

Action research is a philosophy and methodology of research generally applied in the social sciences. It seeks transformation through the simultaneous process of taking action and doing research which are closely linked. Action research is an approach to educational research that is commonly used by educational practitioners and professionals to examine their pedagogy and practice. Action research represents an extension of the reflection and critical self-reflection that an educator employs in their classroom. Action research offers one path to more critical reflection that can be documented and analysed to improve.

8. Exploratory research:

Exploratory research is conducted to have a finer understanding of the current problem, but it does not provide conclusive results. A researcher begins with a general idea and uses this research as a channel to recognize issues that can be the focus for future research.

1.5 Types of Literary research

Literary research means finding something new within a work of literature. The researcher simply takes what is already there and finds a new way to interpret the literature. The researcher may agree or disagree with the author, or expand on author's idea. Literary research is not a book report or summary of the book. The researcher has to apply different theories of literary interpretation and come up with some new interpretation of the text. The researcher can also contradict the interpretations offered by other writers.

Literary research studies the text as well as the author of the text. Therefore, there are four types of literary research: 1. Bibliography and textual, 2. Biographical, 3. Theoretical and 4. Interpretive.

1. Bibliography and textual research

The aim of bibliographical research is to establish authoritative text, correction of past editions, chronology and authenticity of the text. It also seeks to verify whether the text was really authored by the person to whom it is attributed. The readers and critics may be misled by errors in the published texts; this may lead to misinterpretation of the text by the critics. Bibliographical research prevents these problems by establishing the correctness and authenticity of the published books. It also helps readers and critics to identify the pirated editions of the books and avoid them.

2. Biographical research

Biographical research is very important to understand the authors and their time. A work of literature is the product of author's mind and their time and society. The task of a biographer is to uncover an author's life and times. A biographer collects material from different sources, study the author's published works and unpublished writings. He should interview the author if he is alive. He has to gather information from the people close to the author. The biographer has to differentiate fact from

fiction and present the life story of the author. A biographer of a literary author should lay emphasis on the literary side by correlating the important events of his life and time. APA Dictionary of Psychology defines biographical research as “the systematic use of personal histories—gathered through such means as interviews, focus groups, observations, and individual reflections and other narratives—in psychological research and analysis. This method emphasizes the placement of the individual within the context of social connections, historical events, and life experiences.”

3. Theoretical Research

Theoretical Research in literature is similar to basic or fundamental research in science. The objective of theoretical research in literature is to put forward a theory of literature. In ancient times Aristotle and Longinus proposed theories of literature. The scholars during renaissance repeated the classical theory of literature. Some important poets of English have also taken interest in literary criticism. Sir Philip Sidney, John Dryden and Alexander Pope are few examples of poet critics. But most of them have followed or supported classical theory of literature. During 19th century, Coleridge and Wordsworth propounded a theory of literature and they were followed by Matthew Arnold. In the twentieth century, developments in psychology, anthropology, linguistics and sociology changed perspective to literature. These new perspectives are being used to analyse literary texts and evaluate writers on the basis of the new theories. The researchers and students of literature in 21st century have to be familiar with different schools of criticism like New Criticism, Myth Criticism, Psycho-analytic Criticism, Hermeneutic Criticism, Marxist Criticism, Structuralism and Poststructuralism, Deconstruction, Feminist Criticism, Post-colonial theory and new historicism. These modern schools of criticism help the students and researchers to interpret works of literature and relate these works to society.

4. Interpretive Research

Interpretive Research in literature is similar to applied research in science. The researchers use the principles of literary theories to interpret, analyse and evaluate a work of literature. In modern times, multiple theories of literature have been propounded by critics. The researchers can apply one or more theories to interpret literary text.

1.6 Research Design

The research design is the strategy that the researcher uses to integrate different components of the study in a logical way. It ensures the research problem is effectively addressed. The research design constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. The research problem determines the type of design that the researcher can use. After formulating the research problem, the researcher is required to formulate the research design. A research design is conceptual structure within which research is conducted. The research design depends on the purpose of the research being conducted. A good research design provides maximum output in minimum efforts and expenditure. A good research design minimises bias and maximises the reliability of the data collected for research.

Depending on the purpose of research and nature of the research problem, the researcher has to choose from a number of research designs available, or the researcher may modify an available research design to suit the purpose of research. The available research designs include: Action Research Design, Case Study Design, Causal Design, Cross-Sectional Design, and Descriptive Design, Experimental Design, Exploratory Design, Longitudinal Design and Observational Design. A good research design involves following steps:

1. Identifying the research problem and justifying its selection.
2. Reviewing earlier published literature about the research problem selected.
3. Specifying hypotheses [i.e., research questions] central to the problem selected,
4. Describing the data which will be necessary for an adequate test of the hypotheses.
5. Explaining the method of data collection.
6. Describing the methods of data analysis.
7. Determining whether or not the hypotheses are true or false.

Research design aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. It helps the researcher to take Decisions regarding what, where, when, how much, by what means etcetera. A good research design answers the questions like what is the study about? Why is the study being made? Where will the study be carried out? What type of data is required? Where can the required data be found? What periods of time will the study include? What will be the sample

design? What techniques of data collection will be used? How will the data be analysed? In what style will the report be prepared?

1.7 Research Question

The research question is a question that a research project aims to answer. This question addresses an issue or a problem, which, is answered in the study's conclusion. Research questions serve as a guiding framework for research. Research questions reveal the boundaries of the study. It also ensures cohesion of the study. The research question has significant impact on the rest of the study by influencing the research methodology, sample size, data collection, and data analysis. The researcher can modify or refine the research question after reviewing related literature. A good researcher must know how to create a precise research question. a good research question should be relevant, precise and meaningful. The researcher should make the research question specific and concise to ensure clarity. He/she should avoid words or terms that don't add to the meaning of the research question. Developing the right research question is a significant step in the research process.

A researcher should start with the broad topic of interest. Then he/she should do preliminary research to learn about topical issues. The researcher should discover issues that are currently being discussed by scholars. He/she should get up-to-date knowledge on the selected topic. The researcher should try to spot existing gaps in existing knowledge of topic. After reviewing the relevant literature in the field, the researcher should Narrow down topics and determine potential research questions. The research questions thus framed should be interesting, viable, feasible and relevant to the research topic. They should bring new insights to the field of study. The research question may confirm or extend previous findings on the topic.

Research questions can be classified into different categories, according to the type of research to be done. The type of research can be quantitative, qualitative or mixed-methods studies. The type of research determines the best type of research question to use.

Following are common types of research questions

1. Quantitative research questions:

Quantitative research questions are not answerable with yes or no response. Such questions are precise and they establish a link between the research question

and research design. These questions are framed at the start of the study and they seek to establish precise relation between dependent and independent variables.

2. Qualitative Research Questions

Like quantitative research questions, qualitative Research Questions are also linked to research design. These questions are also answered by collection and analysis of data. However, qualitative Research Questions are adaptable, non-directional and more flexible. The aim of qualitative research questions is to explore, explain or discover.

3. Mixed-methods studies

Mixed-methods studies generally include both quantitative and qualitative research questions. Separate questions are used if the study focuses on the significance and differences in quantitative and qualitative methods. The researcher can also develop a single mixed-methods research question. The qualitative and quantitative aspects of the study can be integrated in a single research question.

1.8 Hypothesis

Research questions and hypothesis are integral parts of research design. Hypothesis performs the basic function of assuming final outcome of the investigation. A hypothesis can be tested against reality, and can then be supported or rejected. Hypothesis provides a link to the underlying theory and specific research question. From the research question researcher constructs one or more hypotheses. Hypotheses are the Assumptions that are made on the basis of some evidence. It is the initial point of any investigation. Hypothesis translates the research questions into predictions. It includes constituents like variables, population and the relation between the variables. Hypothesis is used to test the relationship between two or more variables. Hypothesis helps in making an observation and experiments possible. It is the starting point for the investigation. Hypothesis helps in verifying the observations. It helps in directing the inquiries in the right direction. Researchers use hypotheses to put down their thoughts

A hypothesis should be clear, precise and reliable. A relational hypothesis should state the relationship between variables. The hypothesis must be specific and should have scope for conducting further tests. The hypothesis must be simple and the simplicity of the hypothesis should not be related to its significance.

The hypothesis are formulated on the basis of the resemblance between phenomenon, observations from past studies, present-day experiences, general patterns that influence the thinking process and scientific theories. Hypotheses are generally classified in to following types:

1. Simple Hypothesis

Simple Hypothesis shows a relationship between a dependent variable and a single independent variable. For instance regular exercise leads to physical fitness. Here regular exercise is an independent variable, while physical fitness is the dependent variable.

2. Complex Hypothesis

Complex Hypothesis shows the relationship between two or more dependent variables and two or more independent variables. For instance, Eating fruits and regular exercise leads to weight loss and reduces the risk of many diseases. Here two independent variables are linked to two dependent variables by cause and effect relationship.

3. Null Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis is a statement which is contrary to the hypothesis. It is a negative statement, and there is no relationship between independent and dependent variables. The null hypothesis states that there is no relationship between the two variables being studied. It assumes that there will be no changes in the dependent variable due to manipulation of the independent variable. It assumes that the results are due to chance.

1. The Associative and Causal Hypothesis

Associative hypothesis arises when there is a change in one variable resulting in a change in the other variable. The causal hypothesis states a cause and effect relation between two or more variables.

1.9 Research Ethics

Research ethics means the application of basic ethical principles to research activities. It includes the design and implementation of research, the use of resources and research outputs. Ethics of the planning, conduct and reporting of research must be followed at all the stages of conducting research. The researcher should follow

strict ethical principles in collection and use of research data, reporting of research plans or findings and relationships among researchers with one another. The aim of research ethics is to foster research that protects the interests of the public, the subjects of research and the researchers. The ethical research requires the researcher to avoid plagiarism.

Plagiarism can simply be defined as stealing of someone else's words, idea or design. It means including someone else's intellectual content into your writing or work without proper citation and pretending it to be your own contribution. Plagiarism is unethical and may lead to legal consequences for the person doing it. Different authors have defined plagiarism differently. In online Etymological Dictionary, Brown defines plagiarism as "...appropriating another person's ideas or words (spoken or written) without attributing those words or ideas to their true source." The Oxford English Dictionary defines plagiarism as the "wrongful appropriation or purloining, and publication as one's own, of the ideas, or the expression of the ideas (literary, artistic, musical, mechanical, etc.)." The Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) explains plagiarism as a deliberate use of "someone else's language, ideas or other original (not common knowledge) material without acknowledging its source"

1.9.1 Types of Plagiarism

Depending on the method and extent, plagiarism can be classified into following types.

1. Total or Copy and paste plagiarism or word to word plagiarism: This type of plagiarism occurs when someone makes an exact copy of another's published work without citing it.
2. Disguised plagiarism: it occurs when the contents of another's work are retained and only slight modification is made by changing few words and phrases to alter the appearance.
3. Paraphrase plagiarism: This type of plagiarism occurs when the writer simplifies and paraphrases the original work to make it simple and does not credit the original author for the original work.
4. Translation plagiarism: It occurs when someone translates another's work into other language and claims it to be his/her own work.

5. Style plagiarism: When someone copies another's writing style, it results in style plagiarism
6. Idea plagiarism: Presenting another's ideas as one's own without giving the person credit for original idea.
7. Self-plagiarism: It is use of one's own previous work for a separate assignment or work. Self-plagiarism can be a problem for professional writers. When content is written for a client, the client owns that work. Recycling same words for subsequent clients is plagiarizing own work.
8. Source-based plagiarism: It occurs when the writers cite their sources correctly but present the sources in a misleading way. The writers sometimes reference a secondary source in their work but only credit the primary source. Citing an incorrect source and making up fake sources also leads to Source-based plagiarism.
9. Accidental plagiarism: it occurs when the writers don't realize they are plagiarizing another's work. Forgetting to cite sources in work, not citing sources correctly and Failing to put quotation marks around cited text can lead to accidental plagiarism.

1.9.2 Preventive Measures against Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious offense and may lead to severe consequences for the person doing it. Therefore, all preventive measures should be taken to prevent plagiarism. Some important preventive measures are discussed below.

1. Generating awareness about Plagiarism: The students should be provided with the thorough knowledge about plagiarism. They should know how it is committed unintentionally. They should also know that it is an ethical offence and can have serious consequences. They should understand that plagiarism is unjust to those whose work is used for plagiarism. If the researchers are well acquainted with the concept of plagiarism, they attempt to avoid it.
2. Plagiarism Detection: Plagiarism can be detected by using anti-plagiarism software like Turnitin, iThenticate, Crosscheck, Copyscape. These software can find out the percentage of plagiarism and can also identify the text that has been plagiarized. They also point to the source from which the text has been copied. However, there are limitations of plagiarism detecting software. Even with the

help of such software, plagiarism cannot be brought to Zero. These software are a means to detect plagiarism and not a remedy. Such software can act as a threat against plagiarism and can act as a deterrent. If the volume of database with which the work is compared is not strong, it shows low percentage of similarity, which may not be correct. Most of plagiarism detection software do not support Indian languages like Marathi and Hindi. Therefore, it is not possible to detect plagiarism in research papers and thesis written in these languages.

1.9.3 Avoiding Plagiarism:

The researchers should follow these rules to avoid plagiarism:

1. They must use their own words and Ideas
2. They should cite appropriate sources to give credit for copied, adopted or paraphrased work. Before beginning the first sentence of quotation, paraphrase or summary, it should be clear that what follows is someone else's idea.
3. They should get sanction from the publisher of the original work for extensive quotations. They should also take permission from the publisher of the previous article authored by them to avoid self-plagiarism.
4. Permission for use of published drawings or other illustrations should be taken.
5. The academic and research institutes should effectively implement plagiarism prevention techniques in their institutes.

1.10 Summary

In this unit we studied the meaning and definitions of research, the types of research and various types of literary research. We also discussed the key issues in research such as Research questions, hypothesis and its types, hypothesis testing and research design. We also discussed about research ethics, meaning of plagiarism and ways to avoid it. A thorough study of these topics will help you to become a good and ethical researcher. Along with this study material, you should also read the reference books listed at the end of this unit. You should also prepare in detail the answers to the questions given in the exercise section of this unit.

1.11 Exercise

Answer the following questions in about 800 words each.

1. Discuss the importance of research design.
2. Which questions are answered in a research design?

3. Define the term Research. What are the characteristics of scientific research?
4. Discuss various types of research.
5. Discuss various types of literary research.
6. How is literary research different from research in science and social sciences?
7. Discuss the aims and objectives of Research.
8. Discuss the significance of research question in research design.
9. Discuss the types of research questions.
10. Define Hypothesis. How is hypothesis related to research question and research design?
11. Discuss different types of hypotheses.
12. Discuss the importance of ethics in research.
13. What is plagiarism? Discuss some types of plagiarism.
14. Discuss the preventive measures to avoid plagiarism.
15. Discuss the importance and limitations of plagiarism detection software.

Answer the following questions in about 400 words each.

1. What is the difference between quantitative and qualitative research?
2. What is fundamental research?
3. What is descriptive research?
4. Explain analytical research.
5. Discuss the relation between fundamental and applied research.
6. What is Bibliography and textual research?
7. How does biographical research help to understand the authors and their time?
8. Discuss the importance of literary theories in literary research.
9. How is Theoretical Research in literature similar to fundamental research in science?
10. How is Interpretive Research in literature similar to applied research in science?

11. Discuss the steps involved in research design.
12. How do Research questions serve as a guiding framework for research?
13. Discuss some common types of research questions.

1.12 Books for further study:

Correa, Delia da Sousa and W.R. Owens, (ed.) *The Handbook to Literary Research*. London: Routledge, 2010.

Eliot, Simon and W. R. Owens, (ed.) *a Handbook to Literary Research*. London: Routledge, 1998.

Griffin, Gabriele, ed. *Research Methods for English Studies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007.

Harner, James L., ed. *Literary Research Guide: An Annotated Listing of Reference Sources in English Literary Studies*. 2nd ed. Texas: MLA, 2008.

Sinha, M. P. *Research Methods in English*. New Delhi: Atlantic, 2007.

Schwartz B M, Landrum, R. E, Gurung, R. *An Easy Guide to APA Style*, Easy Guide Series Edition 3. SAGE Publications, 2016.

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 8th Edition, Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

The Chicago Manual of Style. University of Chicago Press, 2017.



Unit-2

Place of Theory in Literary Disciplines

Index :

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Subject Matter
- 2.3 Exercises
- 2.4 Books for further study

2.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Make distinction between primary and secondary sources
- Understand different modern critical theories
- Analyze the primary sources with the help of the various critical perspectives
- Explain the relation between various modern critical theories

2.1 Introduction

Friends, in the earlier unit, you have studied some basic terms in literary research. You now know the exact meaning of such terms as hypothesis, research questions and review of literature. These are the basic terminology with the help of which a literary research is carried out. By this time, you might be knowing that in a literary research, a selected text(s) is analyzed with the help of an approach. Here, the selected text means any text like a collection of poems, a collection of short stories, a novel, a play or any other such text. The selected text has to be analyzed with the approach that you have finalized in consultation with your guide. For example, if your title is 'Modernism in *The Waste Land*'; the selected text for analysis is a poem by T. S. Eliot - *The Waste Land*. This poem, as the title suggests, has to be analyzed in the light of the various tenets of modernism. To do this activity, you need to know what is modernism. That is to say, 'modernism' is your approach. As a researcher,

therefore, you have to read many books and research articles about modernism. These books and articles are called secondary sources. After reading these secondary sources you will understand various basic tenets of modernism, various literary and linguistic features of modernist literature. On the basis of your knowledge of these basic tenets and features of modernism you have to read the poem and identify the places in the poem where these tenets and features are reflected. After identification, you will have to critically and systematically analyze the identified part. Your analysis will lead to your research findings and conclusions.

In the present unit, various modern critical theories are discussed which are used as approaches to investigate the selected text. For the purpose, the following two books are prescribed:

Chapter 7 from *The Handbook to Literary Research* Edited by Delia da Sousa Correa and W.R. Owens, New York, Routledge, 1998.

Chapters 7 to 12 from *A Handbook to Literary Research* edited by Simon Eliot and W.R. Owens, 1998.

Many of these modern critical theories are included for study in paper called 'Critical Theories' prescribed at MA II. In the present unit, we shall discuss the theories that are prescribed for you. The prescribed theories are:

1. New Criticism
2. Structural Criticism
3. Gender Studies and Feminist Criticism
4. Deconstruction
5. Reader Response Criticism and Reception Theory
6. New Historicism
7. Post-colonial Theory

All these theories have been developed during the 20th Century. However, at your TYBA also you have studied a paper entitled 'Literary Criticism'. This paper basically deals with the ancient Greek and Roman literary criticism of critics like Aristotle and some literary theories proposed by critics from the time of Renaissance to the end of the 19th Century. You might be aware of Aristotle's theory of imitation,

catharsis, tragedy, Wordsworth's preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, T. S. Eliot's some critical essays, etc. Instead of individual critic's contribution, in the 20th Century, there are schools of critical theories. You are studying these schools here.

2.2 Subject Matter

1. New Criticism

The school New Criticism, variously called twentieth century criticism or Chicago school, was emerged in America during the 1930s. The important critics associated with this school are I. A. Richards, William Empson, F. R. Leavis, John Crowe Ransom, Kenneth Burke, Cleanth Brooks, Robert Penn Warren, W. K. Wimsatt and Wayne Booth. Unlike the earlier critics, who tried to interpret a literary text in terms of factors outside the text like the biography of the writer, the historical context of publication, etc, the New Critics emphatically proposed to read and interpret the text in itself. That is to say, for the New Critics, the text is self-sufficient to provide meaning. Therefore, they propagated Close Reading of the text as the key to its interpretation.

Close Reading: Literary critics before the New Critics, used to ask the following kinds of questions to the text:

Who wrote it?

How do we know?

When was it first published?

When first written?

Is there a manuscript version?

Who are the characters in the text?

Are they historical figures or fictitious? Etc.

As these questions show, the interest of these critics is mostly in the issues outside the text. They thought that the writer and his / her biography provide important details for the interpretation of the text. Similarly, these critics were also interested in the dates of writing and publication of the text, for such details guide us regarding the historical and cultural context that might have forced the writer to write the text. Moreover, the comparison between the manuscript and the published

versions(s) made the critics ask questions regarding the editing of the text. As the last two questions show, these critics were also of the opinion that the characters in the text are borrowed from the reality.

On the contrary, the New Critics are more concerned with the issues of *meaning* and *form* of the text. It doesn't mean that the earlier critics were not concerned with meaning. But their concern with meaning was related only to philosophical and moral ideas and about the influence on the writer. New Critics put the issues of meaning and form at the centre of their literary investigation.

In this connection, Graham Martin (p.83) writes:

One key assumption of New Criticism is that the poem's meaning resides in the words actually appearing on the page, in the order in which they appear, set out in lines of that particular length, metrically arranged and (in this case) with rhymes. The poem is, in effect, conceived as a unique 'word' naming a unique experience. All other accounts of the poem's meaning, however useful they might be in helping us to understand it, amount to no more than an approximate paraphrase of the actual words arranged as the author arranged them.

Whatever that Martin says here is called Close Reading by the New Critics. As the quote shows, the readers are expected to interpret the text on the basis of the actual words of the poem, their ordering and the length of the lines. The meaning of the words changes in the context of its arrangement, which needs to be focused upon. Similarly, the New Critics argued that the use of the pronoun 'I' in the poem does not necessarily means the poet. Rather, it is a fictional character, different from the author, existing only in the poem. Therefore, Martin further says 'The poem . . . is a fiction, invented, made up and its relationship with actual events in the authors life is complex, indirect, perhaps not tracable . . .'. This is an important assumption of the New Criticism that helped them study literature independent from the biographical information of the poet. Similarly, the New Critics thought that the poem is complete in itself, it has unity. It means that the poem itself is able to provide meaning to the different relations established in the poem.

Regarding their concern with 'form' of a text, the New Critics are also distinct in their views from that of the traditional critics. The traditional critics in their concern with the form of a text were studying the predominance of a particular form of a text in different literary periods. Such form include epic, pastoral, satire, sonnet,

heroic couplet, blank verse, Sepencerian stanza, etc. The analysis of ‘form’ provided by the New Critics is closer and more specific where they argued that ‘form’ contributes to ‘meaning’ of the text. That is to say, for the New Critics, ‘poem’s meaning derives from the arrangement of a particular set of words in particular order’.

The New Critics have also applied the concept of ‘textual autonomy’ for the analysis of the genre ‘novel’. For this they made a key distinction between the ‘author’ as the biographical entity as independent from the teller of the tale. To finalize the latter role, they have identified various kinds of narrators – the ‘omniscient’ narrator, the first person narrator and the ‘unreliable’ narrator.

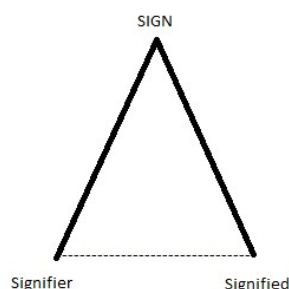
2. Structural Criticism

Like New Criticism, Structural Criticism also opposed the interpretation of a literary text as cultural or intellectual history or the biographies of authors. Structural Criticism was developed by French critics who were influenced by Ferdinand De Saussure’s views about language. Similarly, the structuralist critics are also influenced by the Russian formalist, for the later concentrated on the form of the text. The Russian Formalist sought to define literature in formal terms. Their focus was on the ‘literariness’ of the text, i.e. the formal properties of the text that make it ‘literary’ as opposed to a non-literary text. They tried to identify and analyze the discernible formal properties of text that constitute the ‘literariness’. These formal devices, the Russian Formalists claimed, are highlighted by the author. These highlighted devices attract the attention of the readers, that provide it the effect of ‘foregrounding’. The foregrounded devices are highlighted, noticeable devices that make the text distinct from the earlier written texts of the similar kind. For them, in writing a text, the intention of the writer is not to communicate the reader, but it is his / her reaction against the earlier styles of literary practice. With these views, the Russian Formalists attempted to make the study of literature objective.

Saussure: Language and the World

Saussure thought of language as a closed system which is governed by its internal rules. Language consists of words. Saussure says that the words signify (mean something). However, this meaning of the word has nothing to do with the outside real world. Rather the words in language have their internal relationship and their meaning is derived from this relationship. In this context, Martin writes: “The

individual words in each particular language are inextricably related to each other, and it is these relationships that enable each word to ‘mean’ differently from another word. According to Saussure, a word is a sign, which is further divided into two parts:



The signifier is the spoken or written form of the language. The signified, on the other hand, is the concept associated with the word. This concept is related to the word in language and not with the object in the real world. Take for example, a word ‘tree’. The signifier here is the four alphabets – t-r-e-e. The signified is the concept associated with ‘tree’, but it is not the object ‘tree’ in the real world. The concept of tree as a signified can be contrasted with the concept of ‘bush’. It is therefore said that the relation between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary.

Saussure’s above views about language have greatly influenced structural criticism. They applied the idea of language as a closed system to a literary text. As words in language achieve their meaning through the interrelations with other words, so also words in a text achieve their meaning. The texts, therefore, are ‘analyzed for the underlying rules governing the correct interrelationships of signs. Thus structuralist critics thought of a literary text as a ‘second-order’ language system. This theory is also applied to the study of novels. Here it becomes an analysis for searching an underlying **grammar of narratives**, i.e. a set of rule with the help of which all narratives are constructed. As we have rules of grammar that help produce all the sentences in the language, so also the grammar of narrative help us produce all the narratives of novels. Such a grammar of narrative can be prepared by studying the narrative of all the novels so far produced. The task of a structural critic is to interpret a particular narrative and to analyze its structure as an example of general grammar of narratives.

Roland Barthes, a French Structuralist critic, has tried to analyze the grammar of narratives. By his times, the inductive approach to grammar of narrative was popular. In this inductive approach, an empirical analysis of large number of actual stories is carried out with a view to arrive at a sound generalization about their structure. Instead of this approach, Barthes proposed the deductive approach, in which a hypothesis has to be tested against a variety of cases. That is to say, in this approach an individual narrative is tested in the light of available knowledge and information. These individual narratives are called variants. This model is proposed by Barthes in his *Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives* (1966). To further clarify his views, Barthes uses Saussure's distinction between *la langue* and *la parole*. Whereas *la langue* is the storehouse of language consisting of its rules and words, *la parole* is the actual instance of language use. Barthes' analysis seeks to 'identify the common langue on which each specific act of narration (i.e. parole) is depended'.

Pierre Macherey (b. 1938) is a French Structuralist critic whose important work in this tradition is *A Theory of Literary Production* (1966). Here he expresses his views on literature and ideology. For Macherey, the author of a text is not a creator, in the sense that a potter is a creator of pots out of clay. He, on the other hand, prefers to call the author 'a producer' or 'labourer' who assembles the pre-existing material like literary conventions, language, ideologies to produce a literary text. Such a text, he further asserts, is a production meant for consumption. The important task of a traditional critic is to get as much close to the text as possible for reproducing its meaning. Macherey, on the other hand, like the New Critics, asserts that the critic should stand away from the work and explore the 'production' for 'signs of its origin'. For the traditional critic, the meaning of a text is derived from its individuality. On the contrary, Macherey thinks that the meaning of the text can be derived not from what it explicitly says, rather from what it doesn't say, like its 'silence, fractures and absences'. Macherey thinks that a literary text seeks to conceal the signs of its origin as a part of cultural production. This concealment is thus the result of ideology. Macherey's focus on ideology as a governing principle separates him from both the Russian Formalists and Structuralist critics. For him ideology is 'a set of imaginary beliefs about reality endlessly produced and reproduced by the conditions of life and the institutions (legal, educational, familial) of the capitalist state.'

3. Literature, Gender and Feminist Criticism

Feminist criticism as a critical theory is now accepted as one of the most influential discourses that shaped the way literary texts and society at large are understood. As the term suggests, the theory is based on the concept of 'sex' and 'gender'. The French philosopher and novelist Simone de Beauvoir wrote a book entitled *The Second Sex* in 1949. In this book she used a sentence – 'one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman'. The sentence clearly shows that the categories like 'man' and 'woman' are socially constructed. To understand this, we have to make a distinction between two terms: 'sex' and 'gender'. Sex is a biological matter and one is born with his or her sex. That is one is either a male or a female. But the concept of 'gender' is something different. It refers to the expectation of the society from an individual of any of these sexes. For example, in a patriarchal society like our own, women are mostly put at a secondary place and they are expected to behave in a particular manner, both inside the home and outside in the society. Similarly, 'man' is also expected to carry out certain responsibilities both inside the home and outside in the society. These expectations make the people of each of these sexes behave in a particular manner and not in any other way. That is why the above opinion expressed by de Beauvoir is appropriate for both the sexes.

I said that in the patriarchal society women are placed at the secondary level. If women are at secondary level, who is at the primary level or at the centre. The feminist critics argue that the 'man' is at the centre with different roles like a father, a husband, a brother, etc. In each of these roles, the social, economic and political power is enjoyed by the 'man' in contrast to a mother, a wife, a sister, etc. This unequal distribution of power makes feminists to engage with such issues as gender politics, with difference and with discrimination.

Here we have to make another crucial distinction. The word 'feminism', of course, stands for the liberation of women, their equal status with men and their empowerment. But there are feminist or feminist activists who are working in society for the betterment of women. And there are feminist critics who are concerned with the marginalization of women in literary discourse. As for the first, i.e. the feminist activists, it is divided into waves. The first wave of feminism is said to be during 1830 to 1920. This wave is best known for the suffragette movement. The word 'suffrage' means the right to vote in parliamentary or general elections. In many democratic nations also women were not given the right to vote. But the campaign

started by the first wave feminist ‘vote for women’ in which they used art, debates, propaganda and attack on public property led to their getting right to vote in 1918. The second wave of feminist is organized on the issue of women’s liberation and it started in 1960s and is in existence even today.

Literary feminism or Feminist literary criticism has borne out of the concerns of the second wave. The feminist critics challenged the established ideas about literary study. They thought that literature can be used as a means to create and perpetuate belief system of the society. For example, the feminist critics argued that up to 1970 the so called ‘great works’ were authored by the male writers. Of course a few names of women writers like Jane Austen, George Eliot and Charlotte Bronte were also included in the list. As these names are included in the list of great works, it was argued that the list is gender-neutral. That is the established norms for judging the quality of works is fair and objective. Therefore, if a woman writer produces a work of highest quality, it will attain place in the list or great works. The first task of the feminist critics, they thought, is to challenge this assumption regarding the criterion of writing.

Phallocentric Criticism

This practice of criticism is associated with the early second wave critics. In this, the literary texts authored by male writers were studied from feminist perspective with the object of expressing the masculine bias of these texts. Their primary focus was the analysis of representation of female characters in the text authored by male writers. De Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* provided an early example of this approach. In this book de Beauvoir tried to identify the patterns of subordination of women characters. On the basis of her analysis, she argued for the first time that all literature is ‘subject to implicit social ideas about the roles of men and women’ (Fiona Tolan, 320). Kate Millett is another writer who in her book *Sexual Politics* (1969) addressed the issues of the construction of women’s identity in male writings. She argues that the man-woman relationship has to be understood as a deeply embedded power structure having political implications. She further asserts that patriarchal society has identified many covert means of inculcating male supremacy. These means (like politics, biology, society, family, etc.) make women internalize their own inferiority until it is psychologically rooted. Literature is one of these means that re-creates the sexual inequalities. Thus Phallocentric criticism sought to identify the special imagery and language used that show the concealed

attitude to femininity. Germaine Greer also examined literature as the outcome of patriarchal culture in *The Female Eunuch* (1970).

Gynocriticism

The term ‘gynocriticism’ was used for the first time by the renowned feminist critic Elaine Showalter. She is known for her famous book *A Literature of Their Own* (1977). As we saw, phallogocentric criticism tried to reveal the misrepresentation of women characters in the male-authored text. However, it did not try to increase the literary output by the female authors. This gap is filled by gynocriticism. The gynocritics developed an alternative of female-centered criticism and their basic pre-occupation was with the female voice. To do this, the gynocritics employed two techniques: First, they tried to increase the number of texts written by women writers. For this they encouraged the new-female writers. Secondly, they tried to recover the forgotten texts as texts considered invaluable and made them available for fresh reassessment. This practice of gynocriticism was based on the assumption that ‘the established male literary tradition had suppressed an alternative female tradition, which remained hidden and waiting to be discovered’ (Tolan, 328). Both Showalter and Millett challenged the criterion of deciding upon the classic novel and showed that the male finalized so called objective value-judgments are in reality the artificial and subjective. Showalter, further argues that the female authors not only write in a different manner but they also needed to be read differently. She also argues that women writing is a sub-culture within the literary traditions in general. Similarly, this sub-culture has its own individuality in terms of characteristic patterns and themes. Phallogocentric criticism focuses on ‘women as reader’, gynocriticism focuses on woman as writer. Gynocriticism examined the women’s experience reflected in women’s writing, and placed women’s literature in the context of female experience. Women’s texts produce such recurrent themes as imprisonment, hidden room, fantasies of mobility, image of madness, etc.

The Third Wave

The ideas about feminism so far expressed by phallogocentric criticism or Gynocritics are said to represent the view and experience of a privileged minority of western women and they cannot be universally applied. These views do not apply to black, lesbian and working-class women. Similarly, the early traditions in feminism did not pay attention to the differences that existed among women. Black women, for

example, protested against the division of race and gender in feminist discourse. That is to say, for the feminists of first two waves, their fight was only with patriarchy and its assumptions. But for the Black women, their fight is against both racial and gender oppression. For them, therefore, the categories of race and gender are inseparable. Similarly, the women from the Third World challenged the 'racist hierarchy of the privilege'. For example, the notable Indian post-colonial critic Chandra Talpade Mohanty argued that the white women considered the Third World women as other. Therefore, image of average third world woman is created as uneducated, poor, religious and victimized. Lesbian feminist also challenged the ideas proposed by early schools of feminism. The radical lesbian feminist like Daly was of the view that 'by refusing heterosexuality, women could fatally undermine patriarchy'.

In recent times, feminism has taken varied directions. For example, the new school called New French Feminism is formed. The important critics in this school include the psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva and Luce Irigaray and creative writer and philosopher Helen Cixous. Similarly, psychoanalysis also has its impact on feminism. For example, the British Marxist feminist Juliet Mitchell wrote a book *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*. Here she argues that psychoanalysis is not a defence of patriarchy, but its examination.

4. Deconstruction

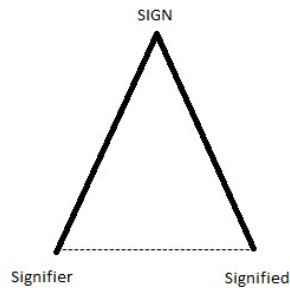
The theory called 'Deconstruction' is proposed by a French philosopher Jacques Derrida. This is one of the most remarkable and revolutionary theories and is considered to be the beginning of post-structuralism. The major tenets of the theory are to be found in two important essays published in the book *Writing and Difference*. The essays are – 'Force and Signification' and 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences'. Of course the traces of the theory can also be found in the other books written by Derrida, like *Of Grammatology*, *Margins of Philosophy*, *Positions*, *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond* and *The Truth in Painting*. The most notable thing about Derrida is that in all his writings he has not changed his stand regarding the theory, but went on broadening its scope. Besides Derrida, a number of critics belonging to the Yale school have followed the deconstructive line of thinking and have contributed to the theory in their own way. The Yale critics associated with Deconstruction are – Geoffrey Hartman, Harold Bloom, Paul de Man and J. Hillis Miller.

Both for Derrida and his followers, Deconstruction is not a method of analyzing the text or a way of its interpretation. Rather, it is a 'textual practice' and the most important aim of the deconstructive school is to demonstrate that both language and its meaning is inherently unstable. That the meaning of the language is always in a state of flux. Similarly, Derrida is also considered as the most radical exponents of philosophical skepticism. This tradition, which is represented by Derrida, seeks to undermine the time-honoured assumptions of western philosophy – assumptions like 'truth is not a relative notion' and 'words have determinate meanings'.

Both structuralism and deconstructive theory have their roots in semiotics and Saussurian linguistics. Therefore, the best way to understand deconstruction is to compare it with structuralism. Deconstruction is sometimes said to be a form of anti-structuralism. This is so because the two major assumptions of structuralism are challenged in deconstruction – its 'systemic approach to texts' and the 'methodical forms of analysis'. As we have discussed before, the structural criticism works on Saussurian notions of signifier / signified and *la langue* / *la parole* for systematically and methodically approaching the text,. Deconstructive practice argues that a text cannot be systematically and methodically approached with the help of the binary oppositions like the above ones. Therefore, Deconstruction rejects the 'commitment on binary oppositions in structuralism'. The important objection of Deconstruction to these binary oppositions is that 'such oppositions always privilege one term over the other'. For example, structuralism in particular has worked on such binaries as *la langue*/ *la parole*, signifier / signified, nature/culture, etc. In each of these binaries, the first term is said to be more important than the other term. The deconstructions argue, on the contrary, that the hierarchy can be changed upside down or both the terms in the binary can be called equal.

Out of the two essays said to be crucial in the understanding of Deconstruction, the first 'Force and Signification' is an attack on the essentialist position proposed by Structuralist criticism. For example, the structuralist assumed that there is 'an essential structure at the heart of all discourse'. In other words, the structural criticism assumes that there is a definite meaning to the discourse. This belief of meaning of language as always already present is challenged by Derrida using the same concept of sign-signifier-signified.

In order to understand this position of Derrida, we have to reassess what Saussure said about these concepts. Saussure divides the sign in two properties as below:



It is said that the relation between the signifier (the form of the word) and the signified (i.e. its meaning) is arbitrary. It is because the words do not actually represent its meaning directly. For example, take the word 'tree'. Here the form of word is the four alphabets – t-r-e-e. How are these alphabets related to the meaning communicated by them. We cannot say that the alphabet 't' stands for the trunk of tree, 'r' for its branches and 'e' 'e' for its leaves. If it is so, the form and meaning will have direct relation with one another. But the words झाड़ in Marathi and पेड़ in Hindi communicate the same meaning. It means there is no direct relationship between the form and meaning of a word. Saussure conceives of this relation in different way. He argues that every language is a system in its own right. He thinks of words in language in terms of the board of chess, where each pawn has its own meaning. Similarly, if there are 100 words in a language, we have to understand the meaning of each of these words in contrast to the other words in the language. In order to know the meaning of the word 'A', we have to contrast it with the meaning of the other words. Thus we get the following kind of meanings:

The meaning of 'A' is what the meaning of 'B' is not.

The meaning of 'B' is what the meaning of 'C' is not.

The meaning of 'C' is what the meaning of 'D' is not.

The meaning of 'D' is what the meaning of 'E' is not. Etc.

If we observe the process carefully, we can identify that there are two processes taking place simultaneously – that of 'difference' and 'deference'. Every time we

want to know the meaning of 'A' we have to show how it is different from the meaning of 'B', 'C', 'D', etc. It also means that the meaning of 'A' is postponed every time. The second process is called 'deference'. Moreover, even after comparing the meaning of all other words in the language, is it possible for us to claim that we know the meaning of the word 'A'. That is, we cannot with guarantee say that we know the meaning of the word. Therefore, Derrida says that the meaning of the language is not there. It is in this connection, a critic says that 'half of the sign is what it is not, and the other half is, what it is not there'. To refer to this free play of meaning, Derrida uses the word 'Differance' that includes both the processes, that of difference and deference.

The structuralist's position is that there is meaning, i.e. the 'essential presence', but Derrida thinks that the meaning is absent. Technically, this is called Derrida's attack on 'logocentricism'. 'Logo' means words; and the belief in the essential presence of meaning is 'logocentrism'. Derrida attacks this logocentricity.

In another of his essays – *Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences*, Derrida attacks the renowned structural anthropologist – Claude Levi-Strauss. Strauss argued that South American Indian myths (and myths belonging to all cultures for that matter) are the variations of the central myth. In this argument, Strauss is assuming the presence of the 'Central Myth'. This is proposed in the context of 'nature/culture' binary. Here again, as stated earlier, Derrida challenges the privilege of the first term and argues that they can be studied on equal terms.

After the discussion of the above stands of Derrida, we need to ask the question – How is the theory relevant to literary studies? As we have seen, for Derrida, the meaning is not present in text. Meaning, for him, is allusive and transitory phenomenon experienced by the individual reader. It is not fixed. Every reader may experience the different meaning. Here Derrida's concepts of 'words under erasure' and 'traces left on the page' are important. In the absence of the 'essential presence' of the meaning of words, they have to be seen as written and erased by the writer. What the reader has thus is the traces. From them the reader can reach to the approximate, but not fixed, meaning of them. And this experience may vary from reader to reader.

Regarding the work of deconstructionist critic, Derrida says that the theory of Deconstruction does not seek to explicate. That is to say, it does not seek to interpret

the obscure meaning of the text for the puzzled readers. Rather, what a deconstructive critic is engaged in is writing the supplements to the original text. These supplements thus are meant for asserting the strengths of both the signifier and the signified and the possibility of deriving a fresh meaning every time the text is read.

5. Reader Response Criticism and Reception Theory

By this time, as a reader of this unit, you have seen the development of critical theories. You saw that the arrival of New Criticism has made the entity of the author unimportant. It is said that the text is a unified whole and it can communicate everything that needs to be communicated. For this the technique of close reading has to be employed. However, as we saw in the earlier unit on Deconstruction, that the text cannot communicate anything, for the words in language do not have meaning. Thus the positions of New Critics and the Deconstructionists are totally opposite to each other. However, in Deconstruction, it is argued that the reader can look at the words in the text as ‘traces’ under ‘erasure’ and reach to the approximate meaning. That is to say, in the process of interpreting the text, the role of the text and that of the reader are equally necessary.

In reader-response criticism, the focus of attention is on the text and the reader rather than on the author and the text. That is to say, once the text is written, the role of the author is complete. Thus from 1960s onwards it is said that in the process of interpretation of the text, the role of the reader and the audience is more decisive. The reader is not the passive receiver of the text, but the active interpreter of the text who creates its meaning. Similarly, the way the text is seen also underwent a considerable change. Earlier, the text was seen as an object with single, determinate meaning, but now it is seen as having a fractured, unstable entity with plural and perhaps indeterminate meanings. This preoccupation with the interpretation of the text is referred to as *hermeneutics*.

Reader Response Criticism is a school developed in the USA and is associated with such critics as Stanley Fish, Norman Holland, David Bleich and others. The majority of the basic concerns of Reader Response Criticism overlap with that of Structural Criticism as proposed by critics like Jonathan Culler and Michael Riffaterre. A more rigorous and well established philosophical tradition of reader centered criticism is found in Germany which is referred to as Reception Theory or

Reception Aesthetics. Two important critics are associated with this school – Wolfgang Iser and Hans Robert Jauss.

Though it is difficult to present a single consistent theory in Reader Response Criticism, these critics were basically concerned with the following areas of investigation:

- The kinds of readers that various texts seem to imply
- The codes and conventions to which readers refer in making sense of texts
- The mental processes that occur as readers move through a text
- And the sociological and historical differences that might distinguish one reading response from another

Stephen Regan

As these areas of concern shows, the Reader Response Critics focus on the reader and the text. Moreover, the interpretation of the text made by the reader is not in arbitrary manner. Rather the process of interpretation is guided by the codes and conventions that the reader has internalized. Similarly, in the process of reading, as the readers move through a text, certain mental processes also take place, in which the reader's assumptions and expectations from the text are challenged and renewed. Moreover, the interpretation of the same text may differ considerably from society to society and from time to time.

In Reader Response Criticism it is assumed that the author can never fix the meaning of a text. Rather, the meaning is 'activated' or 'realized' through the active involvement of the reader in the reading process. It is further assumed that the texts have 'gaps' or 'blanks', which the reader is supposed to fill and decipher the meaning of the text.

Definitely in Reader Response Criticism the active participation of the reader is considered to be very important. It means, among other things, that every reader is free in reading the potential meaning of text. However, if every reader is free, the meaning realized by different readers may be different. Therefore, it is argued that the realization of the potential meaning of a text is 'a matter of endlessly free variation'. In this context, a couple of questions are asked, they are:

- Is there a limit to the range of possible meanings that might be produced?

- Does the text itself govern the legitimate scope of interpretation?
- Are some meanings more valid or more correct than others?

These questions, as stated before, are asked due to the possibility of infinite meanings produced by different readers.

Stanley Fish, one of the important Reader Response Critics, who has constantly changed his stand regarding the nature of Reader Response Criticism answers the questions in some ways. Fish thinks that the readers' developing response to a text can be considered as his/ her 'set of interpretative strategies'. These strategies are nothing but the shared rules and conventions about reading a text. These rules and conventions change from one situation to another and they all are internalized by the reader. These rules and conventions are nothing but the linguistic and literary competencies. The one who internalizes them is called 'an informed reader', who can find out the potential meaning of the text. To define the actual process of reading, Fish uses the word 'affective stylistics'. In this process, words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, chapters, novels, plays, poems affect the reader which makes us available his / her responses to these units. Fish defines the term affective stylistics in the following way:

"an analysis of the developing responses of the reader in relation to the words as they succeed one another in time."

In 1976, Fish altered his position and instead of the 'informed reader', he used the term 'interpretive communities'. The use of this term provided a warranty of the similar interpretation of a text. He thus argues that 'particular meanings are produced by particular communities of readers; the understanding of a text emerges from commonly established and historically determined interests and beliefs" (p.141). The readers in the community are equipped with similar interests and beliefs which are determined historically. This is the reason for their possible similar interpretation of the text.

So far it is clear that Reader Response Criticism emphasizes the shared rules and conventions as the warranty for similar interpretations of the text. In contrast to this, the German Reception Theorists emphasize the psychology and consciousness of the reader. For them, the proper object of philosophical investigation is the content of consciousness of the reader rather than the physical world. For example, an

important Reception Theorist, Wolfgang Iser, opines that the study of literature should include at least two things – (1) the study of the actual text, and (2) the study of the consciousness of the reader while responding to the text. For Iser, a text is an ‘unrealized potential for meaning’. Therefore, he states: “meaning in literature arises from the convergence or interaction of text and reader” (p.142). The gaps and blanks in a text, for Iser, have to be interpreted in the context of prevailing social and cultural norms. And in the actual reading process these social and cultural norms are continuously challenged, renewed and redefined.

Another Reception Theorist Hans Robert Jauss thinks ‘history as a key to the understanding of a literary text. That is to say, ‘history’ guides the interpretation of the text. He expressed these views in his essay ‘Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory’. In this connection, he writes, “A literary work is not an object that stands by itself and that offers the same view to each reader in each period. It is not a moment that monologically reveals its timeless essence.” The quote shows the firm understanding of Jauss regarding his belief that each era interprets the text in a different manner and that the same can also be seen changing from one structure to another.

In connection with the importance of literary history in interpreting the literary text, Jauss argues that the reader’s pre-understanding of literary genres and forms with which he / she is familiar guides the interpretation of the text.

By and large, in regard to Reader Response Criticism and Reception Theory, it can be said that they have made extraordinary developments in challenging the author-centered and text-centred theories to that of reader-centered ones.

6. New Historicism

Dear students, you might have noted that we have started this unit with the discussion of a school called New Criticism. In this school, the text is separated from the author, by saying that the text is an organic whole and it does not need the reference of the biography of the author or the historical conditions of its publication. The critic can best interpret the text by itself with the technique called Close Reading. Further directions in this viewpoint are also noted in the form of Structural, Formalist, Deconstructive and Reader-oriented criticism. After discussing all these topics, in this unit we are again talking about ‘history’ in a renewed dimension –

New Historicism. This might be seen as a complete U turn in the development of theories.

The New Historians argue that the ahistoricity of a text claimed by the New Critics is untenable, in that no text can be separated from its historical context in its complete understanding. Similarly, the New Historians objected to the old style literary history for its ignorance of the intricate history in which the text is surrounded. This is a kind of failure on their part. In fact, every work reveals fresh insights when it is read in the light of the intrinsic and complex history, they argued.

To solve this problems, some new critics argued that in case of some literary genres, like novel, the consideration of its history is highly important, for both inside the text and outside in the society the historical references are to be found. And these references have to be used for the proper understanding of the text. Therefore, it is argued that the true greatness of a novel resides in its ability to reveal the true history of its time. However, the New Historians reject both the claims that ‘a literary text can ‘reflect’ historical conditions’ and ‘there is a single historical narratives about which the text speaks. Graham Martin presents the stand of New Historicism in following words:

All texts, major and minor, whether great or trivial, are ‘historical’, which is to say they are events in the history of their time, as well as comments upon certain aspects of that history. Reading the texts therefore demands equal attention to both these dimensions.

The New Historicists, according to Graham Martin, focus on two different types of reading – Contextual Reading and Political Reading. For Contextual Reading, Martin cites the example of the book *The New Oxford Book of Romantic Period Verse* (1993) of Jarome McGann. In this book, McGann has included representative poems published from 1785 to 1832. The primary aim of McGann was to bring out the literary-historical context in which the poems were published and were read for the first time. McGann seems to assume that when the poems are written, they are written as a part of literary-historical context and their first reading was also guided by the same literary-historical context. Therefore, he has arranged the poems in the book not on the basis of the author but chronologically, according to the year of the first-publication of the poem. Martin sums up the position of McGann on Contextual Reading in following way:

The publication of a poem is as much a specific historical event as that of a declaration of war. Its author addresses it to a readership whose expectations, whether accommodated, challenged, or defied necessarily enter into its contemporary meaning.

It means that the poem's contemporary meaning (when it was read during its time) is more important, since it is written for those readers. Of course, the poem can be read and interpreted in the present times. But that interpretation will be or may be different from the interpretation drawn during the time of its first publication. Therefore, for the modern readers, it is necessary to know how the poem was first interpreted. The understanding of the past interpretation provides perspective and equips the modern reader with historical attitudes and assumptions.

As an example of Political Reading, Martin refers to the work of Stephen Greenbalt on Renaissance writing. In this work, Greenbalt discusses the works of Wyatt, Spencer, Marlow and Shakespeare in terms of their social and political function. He considers the relationships of these works with the despotic power of Tudor and Elizabethan monarchs and also the gradual emergence of 'modernity' during the 16th Century. Greenbalt challenges the distinction between text and context, for the context like social, political, religious, intellectual, economic, etc. are said to shape the text. Rather, for him, the texts are not mere reflectors of, but active contributors to the historical process. That is to say, the text themselves create the context. Such a discussion is seen as guided by the method called cultural anthropology. For Greenbalt, 'Elizabethan Literature' is only one kind of cultural practice of the age. The other cultural practices like political writing, religious sermons, state's promulgations (laws), traveler's accounts, etc together form the culture of the age. Greenbalt's interest, therefore, is in what the text can tell us about their own time. However, Greenbalt warns us that literature cannot give us the complete cultural insight of its age. It is rather one of the discourses that are produced during the age.

7. Postcolonial Theory

The term 'postcolonial' is generally understood in two different ways. One is 'post-colonial'. Here the hyphen between the two words indicates the temporal dimension and it indicates the time after the colonial rule is over or after Independence. The other meaning of the term 'postcolonial' (without hyphen)

indicates the ideological dimension and it generally means challenging the ideas and ideals proposed and propagated by the colonizer during the colonial rule. The second meaning thus covers both the colonial and postcolonial times and whatever resistance made to colonial rule in any mode.

Postcolonial theory as an important area of literary criticism and cultural studies came into prominence during the 1990s, particularly with the publication of the book *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature* by three Australian writers – Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin. Dennis Walder (p.157) argues that the Postcolonial Theory came into being as a response to (1) the post-war (World War II) upsurge in literary creativity in countries formerly under colonial rule, (2) the persistence of colonial, ‘neo-colonial’ or imperial influence in the modern world, and (3) by analogy, the use of such terms as ‘post-structural’, and ‘post-modern’ to generate a challenge to monolithic or universalist claims. The Postcolonial Theory is informed by and is largely based on the literary texts produced in the newly independent countries. The theorists like Homi Bhabha, Spivak, M. K. Gandhi from India; Franz Fanon, Wa Thiang’O from Africa, Edward Said, etc have influenced the trajectory of Postcolonial Theory. It is no longer a monolithic theory going in the same direction, but has become an umbrella term consisting of many related theories.

Postcolonial literature is said to begin with what is commonly called Commonwealth Literature. Postcolonial literature is the literature produced by writers from the countries having the experience of colonialism. These countries thus include both the colonizing countries like England, France, Portugal, etc and colonized countries like India, South Africa, Australia, Nigeria, etc. The literature thus produced by the writers from Britain, for example, is studied along with the literature produced by the writers from India and African countries. This juxtaposition of literature from these two groups of countries created another problem. This literature is produced in modern European languages and the writers from the colonized countries who have learned these languages as a second language. This fact made the writers from the colonized countries to compromise with the language, for however they try their best, they cannot bring the same emotional effect that they easily produce in the text written in their mother tongue. It is for this reason that the writers like Raja Rao (in his novel *Kantapura*) have said that English is the language of their intellectual make up and not their emotional expression. It

made many writers from the colonized countries to use many words and phrases from their native language to give expected emotional touch and express the desired context. This phenomenon is observed on a large scale in the writings of many writers from India, Africa and the West Indies.

Another issue that dominated the Commonwealth Literature is that of 'universalism'. It is argued that literature should be universal and only such a literature is considered to be of first grade. However, the literature produced by the writers from the newly independent countries talked about the local flora and fauna. This depiction of local prohibited them from the entry in the category of universality. Therefore, many writers from the newly independent countries criticized it as Eurocentrism. That, for the colonizers, the world exists from their perspective; i. e. the European countries are at the centre and the remaining world is at the periphery. It is for this reason that the famous Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe criticizes the concept of 'universality' as the narrow parochialism of Europe. This is the reason that made many writers from the newly independent countries to separate themselves from the banner of Commonwealth Literature. These writers preferred to call their writings as New Literatures in English or Postcolonial Literature.

So far we have made a distinction between postcolonial literature and postcolonial theory. We have seen what we mean by postcolonial literature. Let us now have some understanding of postcolonial theory as a critical practice. That is, what exactly the postcolonial critics do? As stated earlier, the Postcolonial Theory is said to have begun with the publication of the book *The Empire Writes Back* in 1989. The book acknowledges that due to colonial rule, English language has become the global language and it has changed the global power structure, since there is no escape from the use of English at international level. Ashcroft *et al* think that the term 'postcolonial' is used 'to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day'. It means that wherever there was the colonial rule, the culture of the place, country is affected drastically. And the effects of the institution of colonialism are studied in Postcolonial Theory. Moreover, it is argued by many critics that the colonizers were able to rule over different parts of the world not only with the power of the gun. Rather, they proposed and propagated an ideology based on binary oppositions, like the followings:

civilized vs. uncivilized/barbaric/savage

modern vs. traditional

teacher vs. student

doctor vs. patient

We vs. they

This process of creating ideological differences between the colonizing and colonized people is called the 'Othering' process.

From each of these terms, the first ones are said to be related to the colonizer and the next to the colonized people. Since the colonizers ruled, the colonized people were made to accept their inferior position and accordingly a deep rooted psychic development took place, which is reflected in the literature produced by the writers from the newly independent countries. Postcolonial Theory seeks to reveal the deep rooted impact of colonization present in the literary texts. Similarly, Postcolonial Theory seeks to challenge the Eurocentric assumptions about race, nationality, language and literature.

An important critic, Edward Said published his book *Orientalism* in 1978. The book details the way the 'other' i.e. the Orient is seen by the West. That the idea of the non-west is created, forged for it was not based on the reality of the non-west. Another important postcolonial critic Franz Fanon wrote two important books – *Black Skin and White Mask* and *The Wretched of the Earth*. In this book, Fanon narrates the psychic development of the colonized subject. He argues that colonial rule has thrown the colonial subject at the margin and has made him accept his inhuman/ marginalized / inferior position. The result is 'imitation' as a strategy followed by this subject. As I stated earlier there are many other critics who have tried to uncover the colonial ideology in many different ways. But the fact remains that all of them have tried to show how the colonial rule has suppressed the colonized people and they seek to change their predicament.

Summary:

In this unit, you have studied seven modern critical theories. The detailed discussion about the theories has already been provided in the earlier part of the unit. However, you need to remember that there are two papers that deal with research. One of them is descriptive paper, the present one. Here the hundred marks are divided into 80 + 20. Eighty marks are for written examination, which will be

centrally conducted by the university and 20 marks are for internal evaluation. Therefore, you are expected to read all these units carefully so that you can write proper answers in the written examination.

However, you need to remember that you have to prepare a research project for four credits. For preparing the project, you need to study the selected text using one of these and such theories. It means, the application of these theories becomes more important for you in preparing your research project. For example, in New Criticism, we have seen that these critics did not believe in outside the text details for its interpretation. For them, the text is complete in itself and it can provide the reader all the necessary information for its interpretation. Thus, if you are doing your research project using New Criticism as a theory, then you need not have to bother about outside the text details like its author, his biography, etc. On the other hand, you have to use Close Reading as a technique to read the text as many times as you think necessary for its proper interpretation. And then you can draw appropriate kind of results out of your project. This is called the application of the theory to a literary text.

2.3 Exercises:

1. Write a detailed note on New Criticism.
2. Bring out the important tenets of Russian Formalism.
3. Prepare a detailed note on the concerns of Structuralist Criticism.
4. Discuss the important stages in the development of Feminist criticism.
5. Bring out the contribution of Derrida to the theory of Deconstruction.
6. Write a detailed note on Reader Response Criticism.
7. Compare the basic concerns of Reader Response Criticism and Reception Theory.
8. Write a detailed note on New Historicism.
9. Discuss in detail the basic concerns of Postcolonial Theory.

2.4 Books for Further Reading:

Delia da Sousa Correa and W.R. Owens (Eds.) *The Handbook to Literary Research*. New York, Routledge, 1998.

Eliot, Simon and W.R. Owens (Eds.) *A Handbook to Literary Research*. London, Routledge, 1998.

Barry, Peter ***Beginning theory: An introduction to literary and cultural theory***. 1995, 2002.

Wolfreys, Julian, ed. *The Edinburgh Encyclopedia of Modern Criticism and Theory*. Edinburgh University Press, 2002.

Leitch, Vincent, B. ed., *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Norton, 2001.

Newton, K. M., ed. *Theory into Practice*. Macmillan, 1992.

Newton, K. M., ed. *Twentieth Century Literary Theory: A Reader*. Palgrave, 2nd edn, 1997.

Rice, Philip and Waugh, Patricia, eds, *Modern Literary Theory: A Reader*. Arnold, 4th edn, 2001.

Selden, Raman, *The Theory of Criticism from Plato to the Present: A Reader*. Longman, 1988.

Waugh, Patricia. *Literary Theory and Criticism*. Oxford Uni. Press: India, 2006. Print



Unit-3

Literary Research and Interdisciplinary

Index :

- 3.0 Objectives
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3.0 Objectives:

After completing the study of this unit, you will

- learn what is literary research,
- know what is interdisciplinary studies
- know about various aspects related to literary research and interdisciplinary studies,
- know about use of linguistics and stylistics in literary research,
- know about literary research and translation,
- know about the role of ‘other media’ in literary research.

3.1 Introduction:

This unit strives to examine the way in which we shape and divide our knowledge into disciplines, how we transform or transcend these disciplines, and how we use these transformations to create new forms of knowledge. In recent years, ‘interdisciplinarity’ has become a key-term across many different academic subjects, but it is rarely interrogated in any great detail. Interdisciplinary study is ‘the most seriously underthought critical, pedagogical and institutional concept in the modern academy’. The unit also discusses various aspects related to linguistics and stylistics in literary research, literary research and translation, the role of ‘other media’ in literary research.

3.2 Subject Matter : Interdisciplinary Studies

3.2.1 Literary Research and Interdisciplinary Studies

This section aims to assess the ways in which ‘interdisciplinarity’ can be defined. It also tries to explore its meaning, purpose and practical applications. Moreover, specific aim is to introduce students working within the field of literary studies to interdisciplinary perspectives from other fields such as cultural studies, philosophy, psychoanalysis, history, sociology, anthropology, film studies and the sciences.

Joe Moran elaborately discusses the term ‘interdisciplinarity’ in his book *Interdisciplinarity*. According to him, we cannot understand interdisciplinarity without first examining the existing disciplines, because interdisciplinary approaches are always an engagement with them, and the modes of knowledge that they exclude by virtue of their separation from each other. The term ‘discipline’ has two principal modern usages: i) it refers to a particular branch of learning or body of knowledge, and ii) to the maintenance of order and control amongst subordinated groups such as soldiers, prison inmates or school students, often through the threat of physical or other forms of punishment. Interestingly, these two usages converged in some of the earlier uses of the term, from the first half of the fifteenth century onwards. ‘Discipline’ in this context suggested a particular kind of moral training aimed at teaching proper conduct, order and self-control. In fact, the very notion of the term as a recognized mode of learning implies the establishment of hierarchy and the operation of power: it derives from the Latin, *disciplina*, which refers to the

instruction of disciples by their elders, and it necessarily alludes to a specialized, valued knowledge which some people possess and others do not. The *Oxford English Dictionary* points out, one of the earliest uses of the term ‘Discipline’ in English to mean “a particular course of instruction to disciples”. From the beginning, the term ‘discipline’ was caught up in questions about the relationship between knowledge and power.

The idea of categorizing knowledge into disciplines can be traced as far back as Greek philosophy. Aristotle, for example, organized different subjects into a hierarchy, according to whether they were theoretical, practical or productive. i) The theoretical subjects were the highest form of knowledge, and comprised theology, mathematics and physics, in descending order of importance; ii) the practical subjects included ethics and politics; and iii) the productive subjects, which were the lowest in the hierarchy, included the fine arts, poetics and engineering. By constructing such a schema, Aristotle employed two guiding principles which have also been central to the subsequent development of the disciplines. First, he attempted to establish a clear hierarchy between the different academic subjects. Broadly speaking, the development of disciplines has not merely created self-contained bodies of knowledge, happy in their isolation; it has been accompanied by frequent attempts to assert the superiority of certain fields of learning over others. In particular, there has been a centuries old debate about the relative merits of ‘useful’ areas of knowledge that set themselves limited aims but clearly achieve them; and more vaguely defined areas of knowledge that are more ambitious and wide-ranging but not so obviously ‘useful’. Second, he recognized that the ordering of knowledge into disciplines was necessary but regrettable, and so he positioned *philosophy* as the universal field of inquiry which brought together all the different branches of learning, a notion of unity in difference which also influenced the formation of the disciplines within the modern university. The development and consolidation of disciplines in the modern era was fundamentally related to both the growth of universities and the increasing complexity of European societies.

The centrality of philosophy can be seen in its most sustained justification in the work of the German thinker, Immanuel Kant. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, Kant made a systematic effort to hierarchize the university’s disciplines and to show how this hierarchy reflected innate divisions in knowledge and the natural orderings of the human mind. He argued that the disciplines should thus be treated as

discrete and self-contained. In his 1798 essay, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, Kant argued that ‘reason’ functioned as an ultimate value which transcended disciplinary divisions.

Kant distinguishes between the three higher faculties of Theology, Law and Medicine on the one hand, and the lower faculty of Philosophy on the other. The three higher faculties have a vocational function – to train priests, lawyers and doctors – and it is the duty of the state to supervise how such vocational training should proceed. The lower faculty of Philosophy, however, has no such responsibility for vocational instruction; independent of state interference, it judges on the basis of Reason the teaching of the other faculties. Functioning correctly, the relationship between the higher and the lower faculties produces a universally grounded rationality – the state must protect the university in order to guarantee the rule of reason in public life, but at the same time, Philosophy must ensure the university does not become an unmediated instrument of state power. The effect is that the lower faculty of Philosophy ultimately turns out to be the higher. The ‘conflict of the faculties’ arises when the boundaries distinguishing the higher and lower faculties blur, either when the state or the higher faculties enter the field of Philosophy to challenge the free exercise of Reason, or when the faculty of Philosophy exceeds its jurisdiction and directly criticises the state or the higher faculties. Kant’s ideas on the university influenced a succeeding generation of German philosophers, including Friedrich Schiller, Wilhelm von Humboldt and Johann Fichte.

Up until the nineteenth century, however, most scholarly efforts to determine the relationship between the disciplines took the Aristotelian view that philosophy both integrated and transcended more specialized forms of knowledge. As it has developed over the last few hundred years, philosophy has incorporated many different disciplines that have since become autonomous, such as psychology, sociology, science and mathematics. This notion of philosophy as undisciplined knowledge is retained today in the name of the higher degree of Doctor of Philosophy (the Ph.D.), which is gained through the completion of a research thesis in any subject.

The term ‘interdisciplinary’ emerged within the context of the anxieties about the decline of general forms of education, being first used in the social sciences in the mid-1920s and becoming common currency across the social sciences and

humanities in the period immediately after the Second World War. Interdisciplinarity – the study of knowledge – tends to be centred around problems and issues that cannot be addressed or solved within the existing disciplines, rather than the quest for an all-inclusive synthesis.

As Geoffrey Bennington points out, ‘inter’ is an ambiguous prefix, which can mean forming a communication between and joining together, as in ‘international’ and ‘intercourse’, or separating and keeping apart, as in ‘interval’ and ‘intercalate’. This ambiguity is partly reflected in the slipperiness of the term, ‘interdisciplinary’. It can suggest forging connections across the different disciplines; but it can also mean establishing a kind of undisciplined space in the interstices between disciplines, or even attempting to transcend disciplinary boundaries altogether. The ambiguity of the term is partly why some critics have come up with other terms such as ‘post-disciplinary’, ‘anti-disciplinary’, and ‘trans-disciplinary’. Although these terms are often not defined closely and are sometimes used interchangeably, they all suggest that being interdisciplinary is not quite enough, that there is always another intellectual stage where disciplinary divisions can be more radically subverted or even erased. The value of the term, ‘interdisciplinary’, lies in its flexibility and indeterminacy, and that there are potentially as many forms of interdisciplinarity as there are disciplines. Within the broadest possible sense of the term, we can take ‘interdisciplinarity’ to mean any form of dialogue or interaction between two or more disciplines.

The conviction that bringing different academic disciplines into dialogue with each other would rejuvenate not only the study of literature but all disciplines was widely shared in the late 1960s and 1970s. In the decades since, the study of English Literature has been changed dramatically by exchanges with the disciplines of history, psychology, anthropology and philosophy, to name but a few.

However, it might be helpful to distinguish between ‘interdisciplinary’ and ‘multidisciplinary’; these words have sometimes been seen as synonymous. The latter term (‘multidisciplinary’) tends to refer to the simple juxtaposition of two or more disciplines. Here the relationship between the disciplines is merely one of proximity; there is no real integration between them. By contrast, as Roland Barthes suggested that ‘interdisciplinarity’ is always transformative in some way, producing new forms of knowledge in its engagement with discrete disciplines.

Interdisciplinarity is not the calm of an easy security; it begins *effectively* ... when the solidarity of the old disciplines breaks down ... in the interests of a new object and a new language neither of which has a place in the field of the sciences that were to be brought peacefully together, this unease in classification being precisely the point from which it is possible to diagnose a certain mutation.

(Barthes 1977: 155)

Barthes suggests that interdisciplinarity has the potential to do more than simply bring the different disciplines together. It can form part of a more general critique of academic specialization as a whole, and of the nature of the university as an institution that cuts itself off from the outside world in small enclaves of expertise. Interdisciplinary approaches often draw attention, either implicitly or explicitly, to the fact that what is studied and taught within universities is always a political question.

Cultural studies:

There is a sense in which the contemporary field of 'cultural studies' could be said to be synonymous with interdisciplinarity itself, given that it draws variously on sociology, anthropology, history, linguistics, philosophy, textual criticism, visual culture, the philosophy of science, geography, politics, economics and psychology, among other areas. Now we can position cultural studies at the intersection between the social sciences, particularly sociology and anthropology, and the humanities. One of the effects of this has been to challenge the disciplinary identity of literary studies by dissolving the category of 'literature' into the more inclusive notion of 'culture'. More broadly, it has meant that cultural studies has been characterized by its critical reflection on the confining nature of disciplines and the possibilities for interdisciplinary knowledge.

First of all, it should be noted that cultural studies is about far more than challenging the divisions between individual disciplines. So, Cultural studies tend to be suspicious of those interdisciplinary programmes that merely adopt an inclusive approach to the study of culture without engaging with the concerns about the politics of knowledge and representation.

Since 'cultural studies' is a vast area, it is difficult to provide a comprehensive survey of its interdisciplinary survey of its interdisciplinary possibilities. So, we will

discuss the works of a few key figures: Raymond Williams, Richard Hoggart, and Stuart Hall.

The first institutional foothold for cultural studies had been established at Birmingham University in 1964, with the founding of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) under Hoggart's directorship. His *The Uses of Literacy* (1957), which is often seen as inaugurating the field, opens up whole new areas of working-class culture to critical scrutiny: allotment-keeping and gardening, brass bands, dancing, gambling, working men's clubs, pigeon-fancying and pub-singing. This is an undisciplined text not only in its choice of subject matter but in its methodology, since it combines social history, anthropology and cultural criticism with a series of autobiographical reflections on the author's working-class childhood. So, in *The Uses of Literacy* (1958), Hoggart applied the techniques of literary analysis sympathetically to the working-class cultural products and practices of 1930s Britain – newspapers, magazines, music and popular fiction – and contrasted them with the US-influenced mass culture of the post-war years.

The work of Raymond Williams represents a more sustained critique of the conventionally narrow definition of 'literature' which has been central to the formulation of English as a discipline, and which he sees as a suppression of "the actual multiplicity of writing". As Williams points out, the original meaning of 'literature' was interdisciplinary, since up until the end of the eighteenth century it referred to all types of writing: scientific, autobiographical and historical as well as fictional. The notion of literature as a specialized, highly valued kind of writing which deals with the imaginative or creative as opposed to the factual or practical, is largely an invention of the post-Romantic period. In fact, there was still a residue of the earlier, expansive notion of literature in early courses in language and rhetoric at universities in the nineteenth century, which tended to group together all kinds of text – fiction, poetry, speeches, memoirs, history and philosophy – as exemplary pieces of 'good writing'. Williams makes a similar argument about an even more complicated term, 'culture', which was also broadly defined until, from the eighteenth century onwards, it acquired associations with class, gentility and value. Williams's work is thus centrally concerned with tracing the changing use of significant 'keywords' and the way that these meanings have been used to reify the divisions between potentially integrated concepts.

In his book, *The Long Revolution* (1961), Williams claims that the ultimate aim of cultural analysis is to “reveal unexpected identities in hitherto separately considered activities”. He identifies three ways of defining culture: the ‘ideal’, which represents the notion of a ‘selective tradition’ of high art and literature; the ‘documentary’, which means the different ways in which human experience and intellectual life are recorded through various media; and the ‘social’, which refers to a ‘particular way of life’ expressed through institutions and everyday practices.

Thus, in *Culture and Society 1780–1950* (1958) and *The Long Revolution*, Williams insisted that the understanding of ‘culture’ should be extended beyond its association with elite literary and artistic achievements to include its anthropological or social meaning: “culture is a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour”.

Under the directorship of Stuart Hall between 1968 and 1979, the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) started to draw more extensively on sociological notions of culture. Sociology is a branch of the social sciences that deals with the study of human society and social relations, and its advantage from a cultural studies perspective is that it is necessarily extremely wide-ranging, and perhaps more than any other social science is receptive to the theories and methods of other disciplines such as philosophy, history and politics. In *The Popular Arts* (1964), Hall (and co-author Paddy Whannel) rejected Hoggart’s nostalgia for bygone working-class cultures, and sought to analyse popular cultural forms (including popular literary works) in their own terms.

Anthony Easthope’s retrospective study *Literary into Cultural Studies* expresses the developments of the 1970s and 1980s, and he contrasts how literary studies constitutes itself as:

“a coherent, unified and *separated* discipline [as opposed to] cultural studies, which draws on a range of knowledges conventionally discriminated into disciplines: semiotics, structuralism, narratology, art history, sociology, historical materialism, conventional historiography, poststructuralism, psychoanalysis, deconstruction”.

(Easthope 1991: 171-72)

Easthope's list of 'conventionally discriminated' disciplines might be disputed but what his survey captures is the excitement promised by transgressing the disciplinary boundaries of literary studies.

In his influential work, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Michel de Certeau further expands the interdisciplinary possibilities of cultural studies by aiming to "bring scientific practices and languages back toward their native land, everyday life" (de Certeau 1984: 6). This book explores the ways in which everyday cultural practices, such as walking, playing games, reading, shopping and cooking, slip through the extensive power and surveillance networks in contemporary culture, precisely because of their perceived triviality and banality. These activities can then be used as a way of subtly resisting the dominant culture from within, appropriating it for subversive purposes. For de Certeau, literary texts are worthy of study because they provide the basis for a transformative practice of reading, and because they are able to mop up the 'leftover', undisciplined elements of experience. His work could thus be said to be interdisciplinary for two reasons: it opens up the study of culture to previously neglected material, and it connects this material to more traditional concerns within literary studies such as language, reading and narrative.

3.2.2 Linguistics in Literary Research:

The students are advised to read Unit 2 of this SIM to know more about the theoretical aspects related to structuralism and its role in interdisciplinarity.

Structuralism, a movement that gathered momentum amongst French literary and cultural theorists in the 1950s and 1960s, has its roots in the discipline of linguistics, and specifically Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics*. In this book, de Saussure proposes a science of sign systems, which he calls 'semiology' and defines as "a science that studies the life of signs within society" (de Saussure [1916] 1966: 16). He argues that language does not have a direct relationship to reality but functions as a system of differences: words (signifiers) have no inherent relation to the concrete things that they describe (signifieds), but generate meaning as a result of their differential relationship with other signifiers. The derivation of structuralism in linguistics, and in particular this notion of language as a relational system of signs, opens up a number of interdisciplinary possibilities for literary studies. In particular, it challenges two of the determining categories of English as a discipline: the author and the canonical literary text. Structuralist approaches tend to emphasize

‘intertextuality’, the notion that texts are formulated not through acts of originality by individual authors but through interaction and dialogue with other texts, and so they question the attempt within literary studies to regard certain kinds of authors or texts as more valuable or worthy of study than others. In structuralist analyses, literary texts tend to be positioned as part of the overall sphere of language and discourse, and thus as one type of text among many, including non-linguistic forms such as cinema, photography, music and fashion. These texts are then analysed ‘structurally’, emphasizing the form that they share with other texts rather than their specific content.

The early work of Roland Barthes demonstrates some of this interdisciplinary potential. Barthes’s *Mythologies* (1957) is a key work of early structuralism and also an important text of cultural studies in its pioneering discussion of popular culture. It deconstructs a whole range of cultural phenomena from 1950s France, such as wrestling matches, Blue Guides, soap powders, children’s toys and Citroën cars. Barthes shows how these phenomena generate a kind of ‘metalanguage’ – a series of secondary connotations alongside their more obvious meanings.

Structuralism is interdisciplinary because all kinds of artefacts and phenomena can be interpreted as ‘texts’: for Barthes, a text is simply a vehicle for the production and dissemination of cultural meanings, “a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture” (Barthes 1977: 146).

One area of structuralist criticism that has provided a particularly fruitful area of interdisciplinary textual study has been narratology. Critics such as Gérard Genette and A. J. Greimas, for example, have taken narratives apart and shown how they work in extraordinary detail, by examining such elements as temporal order, duration, frequency, perspective and point of view. Narratologists specifically focus on narrative *as narrative*, independent of its content and of the medium in which it is produced; a narrative, for them, is simply any structured series of events that occurs in chronological time. This emphasis on form over content has been partly corrective, a challenge to the traditional emphasis within literary studies on the text as a discrete entity. As Genette puts it, “literature had long enough been regarded as a message without a code for it to become necessary to regard it for a time as a code without a message” (Genette 1982: 7).

Although the general impetus within structuralist theory is towards texts and narratives rather than more narrowly literary formulations, other elements have been specifically concerned to distinguish between the literary and the nonliterary. In the first decades of the twentieth century, for example, Russian formalist critics such as Viktor Shklovskii, Iurii Tynianov and Roman Jakobson attempted to define the formal elements of literariness', defining it as a product of the 'defamiliarization' or making strange of normative language. Many of the formalists came to the eventual conclusion that 'literariness' was always a social effect determined by historical and cultural forces, and therefore not an unchanging constant. However, this concern with the specific nature of the literary distinguishes Russian formalism from the interdisciplinary concern with text and narrative in other schools of structuralism. Jakobson, for example, made it clear that the objective of formalism was to create a science with its own specific areas of inquiry and to exclude interdisciplinary practices.

3.2.3 Literary Research and Translation:

Every nation, society and culture communicates through a system of signs that shapes the way we view the world, the way we think, and even the way we feel and live. Language is a unique endowment, essential to our experience as human beings. Understanding its crucial role in constructing knowledge and facilitating communication brings us one step closer to comprehending human nature. The task is complex enough when the focus is on the same linguistic community, and becomes next to impossible when communication across different languages is brought to the fore. The wide range of languages humans use to communicate with one another is overpowering; but the fact that each language differs from the next in numberless ways is almost insurmountable.

Since language is an inevitable aspect of global movement, it is not surprising that there should also be unprecedented interest around the world in translation, conceived of both as a linguistic process and as a metaphor for explaining the flow of creative ideas. Literary theorists such as Homi Bhabha have developed a notion of 'cultural translation' which expands the idea of translation as linguistic transfer to describe the processes and the condition of global migration and exchange. Bhabha defines translation as "the performative nature of cultural communication", and points out that translation continually reminds us of difference, for there is always in

translation a starting point and a point of arrival that are never the same. Translation, as he sees it, reflects the intrinsic condition of the millions of people flowing around the world, for they are engaged in a constant process of translating and being translated, taking their own languages with them, learning new languages, striving to make contact with people from other cultures who have other communication systems.

One of the tools humans have developed to bridge over these differences is translation. Translation grows out of the human urge to communicate and provides us with a way to negotiate meaning while threading our way through linguistic and cultural differences. Despite beliefs in cross-linguistic differences in the way we think and notice the world, translation still makes provision for strategies to get at least part of the meaning across. In such a process of negotiation, losses are unavoidable and the ideal of a translation identical to the original is indeed unattainable. Between a source text and its translation, there will always be invisible cracks, unavoidable fissures that the translator endeavours to cover. But in the same way as readers assume and enjoy the breach between the real world and its fictional version, we should also understand and accept the gap between an original text and its translation. It is high time we all stop focusing on the loopholes and start reflecting on the joints between source and target text. Because those connections are the master key to successful communication; they have opened the door to technological and scientific advances and still keep it wide open to progress.

Even if speakers of different languages pay attention to different things, translators must be skilful enough as to direct their attention to the relevant aspects of meaning so that they have the adequate information to include in their translations. From a translational point of view, the question is not so much whether people think or feel differently when speaking different languages; rather, the crucial question is whether the translation manages or not to transmit the message, employing the necessary strategies to communicate in the target language as much as possible about the events, ideas and feelings rendered in the source language. Even if the speakers of different languages attend to different aspects of the world and use their linguistic resources differently, the meaning they construct is still transferable to another language. A share of the source language worldview may be lost or domesticated in translation or, alternatively, may be rendered to foreignise and enrich the worldview of target language speakers. But despite the alien losses or imported gains, the

relevant shades of meaning, the essential function of the message, will be communicated in successful translation.

Communication sits at the heart of translation. Thus, understanding translation gets us several steps closer to decipher communication processes. Reaching such understanding has been the endeavour of Translation Studies since its origins as an academic discipline. But the problem lies in the extreme complexity of the task. Translation encompasses many different activities, each involving different goals, agents and types of texts. To decipher the mechanisms of such a complex activity, translation scholars have turned to neighbouring disciplines in search of help. Initially they drew upon linguistics and literature, the two disciplines that at the time defined the linguistic nature of the activity and the most frequently translated types of texts.

But gradually scholars were realising that the study of language on its own was not enough to account for the complexity of the translation process and started to look to other disciplines – e.g. psychology, bilingual studies, neurology, sociology – that could also provide useful insights to decipher the cognitive and social processes involved in translation. Meanwhile, translation also got further consolidated as a profession, engaging in new types of activities and texts. The development of specialised areas – e.g. medical, legal, financial or technical translation, translation for the film or the computer game industry, localisation, etc. – drew the attention of scholars to other potentially useful academic fields, such as documentation or terminology studies, semiotics, discourse studies, genre studies, or even to those disciplines relating to the subject matter of the translated texts, for instance, law, medicine, finance, film studies, etc.

This array of disciplines has a meeting point in the study of human communication, and finds a common goal in exploring translation as a complex type of mediated interlingual and intercultural communication. Translation is at the interface between all these disciplines, tentatively finding its way through the different methods and theories while borrowing the most valuable ones. Such an interdisciplinary approach provides a wealth of points of views that can undoubtedly help to enlarge and enrich the study of translation. However, to make the most of such an interdisciplinary panorama, Translation Studies still need to shape the different interdisciplinary inquiries into a common agenda that merges data and results and make them converge into a unified theory.

Susan Bassnett discusses various aspects of translation in her chapter, 'Literary Research and Translation'. According to her, translation involves the transposition of a text that has come into being in one context into a different one, a process that necessarily involves reshaping that text, indeed, rewriting it. So, it is easy to see why cultural theorists like Bhabha should choose translation as a metaphor through which to discuss the linked issues of originality and hybridity. Translation involves intercultural transfer, it implies negotiation between the original, the *source*, and its destination, the *target*, to use the terminology current among translation studies scholars.

The task facing any translator is how best to render a work produced for one set of readers for another, totally different set of readers, who may (almost certainly will) have different expectations, different tastes, different aesthetic concepts, different needs. It is an extremely demanding task, for the translator has first to read the original with the utmost care, and then has to take decisions on how to set about reconstructing it in the target language, for since no two languages are identical, no translation is ever going to be identical to its original. Moreover, because a language is embedded in a cultural context, the translator has to take into account not only the linguistic dimensions but the problem of diverse layers of meaning that come from acquired cultural knowledge extraneous to the text itself.

Translation Studies

In the 1970s a distinctive field of research into translation practices began to emerge. James Holmes, an American poet and translator wrote a seminal paper entitled 'The Name and Nature of Translation Studies' where he argued that after centuries of desultory interest in translation as a literary activity, the subject of translation had grown in importance in the aftermath of the Second World War. Holmes and a group of young researchers with an interest in interdisciplinary studies came together, and Translation Studies came into being as a distinct area, linked in different ways to literary studies, sociolinguistics and other emergent fields such as cultural and media studies, gender studies, postcolonial studies. What all these fields shared was a dissatisfaction with more traditional modes of studying texts, and a desire to challenge established ideas of canonicity. Significantly, all embarked in different ways on a review of literary history: where feminist critics brought to light hundreds of neglected women writers, translation studies researchers worked on showing how significant translation had always been in the shaping of literary

systems. Far from being a marginal literary activity, what was proposed was that translation had been a major shaping force in literary and cultural history, a means of bringing in new forms, genres and ideas.

Itamar Even-Zohar was the first of the translation studies group to pull together research in the history of translation and theories of culture. He devised the term ‘polysystem’ to describe all the elements that might be studied under the heading of ‘literature’, including what he called high or canonised forms, and non-canonised forms, such as children’s literature or detective fiction, and stressed the role played by translation in the development of a polysystem. He drew attention to the differing role of translation at different historical moments and in different cultures, asking why some cultures translate more extensively than others, why there are boom periods for translation, why translation is seen as a high-status activity at certain times, and as a marginal low-status activity at others. His hypothesis was that there are distinct social circumstances that affect the production of translations.

3.2.4 Literary Research and Other Media:

In this section, an attempt has been made to discuss how literary research might deal – at theoretical and practical levels – with connections between literary texts and works in other media. It offers a brief introduction to some of the ways such relationships can become relevant to a diversity of research interests. Multimedia works or adaptations of literary texts into other media are obviously important here. Please note that in DSE3 ‘British Literature and Interdisciplinary Studies’ or ‘New Literatures and Interdisciplinary Studies’, you are going to study several aspects of adaptation along with a few adaptations of a text.

In the chapter, ‘Literary research and other media’, Delia da Sousa Correa, Sarah Haslam and Derek Neale discuss several aspects of the topic. The title ‘literary research and other media’ covers research that investigates references not only to film adaptation of a text but also other media within literary texts. Such research can be undertaken for a variety of reasons and work on literature and other media has become an important facet of the growing interdisciplinarity of literary research. Please note that we have already discussed the term ‘interdisciplinarity’ in section 1.

In the chapter, ‘Literary research and other media’, Delia da Sousa Correa, Sarah Haslam and Derek Neale discuss the relationship between literature and other arts like music, film, painting and other media. They raise a pertinent question: what

happens when a book becomes an opera or a film? What is going on when writers invoke the visual arts or music? How shall we discuss Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, or the portrait described in Robert Browning's 'My Last Duchess'? The chapter considers how literary research might deal – at theoretical and practical levels – with connections between literary texts and works in other media. It offers a brief introduction to some of the ways such relationships can become relevant to a diversity of research interests. Multimedia works or adaptations of literary texts into other media are obviously important here, and this chapter ends with an account by Derek Neale of a film adaptation of a text by the twentieth-century writer Janet Frame. But the title 'literary research and other media' also covers research that investigates references to other media within literary texts. Such research can be undertaken for a variety of reasons and work on literature and other media has become an important facet of the growing interdisciplinarity of literary research.

The discussion of literary research and other media in this chapter is intended to inform your own current or potential research interests. It begins with a discussion of interdisciplinarity with an emphasis on what connections with other media might afford their writers and readers. It goes on to reflect on how different media have, variously, offered particular affinities with literature and concludes with three case studies illustrating some of the work that can be generated by a research interest in literature and other media (respectively music, painting and film).

For literary researchers, the study of other media offers new insights into literary texts and the cultures that produce them. So, allusions to other media within literary texts also tend to provide explicit or implicit commentary on the writer's own art. Whether invoking another art form or object, or drawing attention to the writer's own technique, arresting 'intermedial' moments within literary texts occupy a special place in our experience as readers. The relationships between literature and the visual arts, for example, is significant. This is an area that has received considerable attention, exemplified by the combined literary and art-historical analysis employed over the past few decades to provide new vantage points from which to understand the literature and painting of the Modernist periods. The relatively new but expanding field of literature and music has also explored ways of reading allusions to music and sound within literary texts. Work in this area ranges widely from, for example, analysis of the ways in which Modernist writers, such as Mansfield, Woolf

or Joyce, undertook structural and stylistic analogies with music, to investigation of how literary dramatisations of musical performance illuminate the social and ideological contexts for music-making during the Victorian period.

Enthusiasm flourishes for an ever-growing large amount of work on literature and other media with possibility of 'interdisciplinarity'. However, while opening up number of opportunities, research across different media raises practical as well as theoretical issues that suggest that there are reasons to respect as well as to challenge divisions between disciplines. The discipline-specific skills required for work in music or the visual arts, for example, bring the practical issues of interdisciplinarity into sharp focus. Some level of knowledge is clearly required for productive engagement with another discipline. The way in which the discipline of 'English' has expanded to include research on popular art forms or in electronic and multimedia production in our own day also requires us to look beyond disciplinary horizons.

Check your progress:

(5-10 Objective type questions/ true or false/ fill in the blanks/ match 'a' with 'b' etc.)

- i) What is the long form of CCCS?
- ii) As per Aristotelian division, which subjects are included in the productive subjects?
- iii) Who is the author of *The Conflict of the Faculties*?
 - a. Raymond Williams,
 - b. Gérard Genette,
 - c. Ferdinand de Saussure,
 - d. Immanuel Kant
- iv) As per Aristotelian division, which subjects are included in the practical subjects?
- v) Roots of structuralism can be traced in Ferdinand de Saussure's book entitled _____.
- vi) As per Aristotelian division, which subjects are included in theoretical subjects?
- vii) Cultural studies had been established at _____ University in 1964, with the founding of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS).
 - a. Birmingham,
 - b. Oxford,
 - c. Cambridge,
 - d. Edinburgh.

3.3 Summary:

Research conducted within English departments ranges across literature, cultural history, cultural studies, philosophy, psychoanalysis, politics, sociology, art history, linguistics, the philosophy of science and many other areas. There may even be people working within such departments who rarely or never study ‘literature’ as it is commonly understood.

Interdisciplinary approaches can challenge traditional, ossified, outmoded systems of thought and produce new, innovative theories and methodologies which open up the existing disciplines to new perspectives; they can help people to think more creatively about the relationship between their own subject and other ways of doing things both within and outside universities. There might be a problem with assuming that interdisciplinarity has all the answers, and that it can easily transcend the inadequacies and exclusions of the traditional disciplines. We can seek to transform the disciplines, encourage communication between them or use them to create new intellectual configurations or alliances, but we can never entirely dispense with them as means of organizing knowledge. Interdisciplinarity could therefore be seen as a way of living with the disciplines more critically and self-consciously, recognizing that their most basic assumptions can always be challenged or reinvigorated by new ways of thinking from elsewhere.

Interdisciplinarity has been a lingering issue in translation and Translation Studies since the very beginning of their existence. Much has been reflected on the interdisciplinary nature of translation and on the need to undertake an interdisciplinary research approach. And yet, many issues and questions remain unresolved.

Section 4 considers how literary research might deal – at theoretical and practical levels – with connections between literary texts and works in other media.

3.4 Answers to Check your progress:

- i. Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies
- ii. fine arts, poetics and engineering
- iii. Immanuel Kant
- iv. ethics and politics.

- v. *Course in General Linguistics*
- vi. theology, mathematics and physics
- vii. Birmingham

3.5 Exercise:

Short notes:

- i. Significance of Interdisciplinary approach in research
- ii. Interdisciplinarity and cultural studies
- iii. Linguistics and Interdisciplinarity
- iv. Literary research and translation
- v. Interdisciplinarity in Translation research
- vi. Interdisciplinary nature of translation
- vii. The role of other media in Literary research

3.6 References for further Study:

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Unit-4

Report Writing

Structure of Research Report and style manuals:

A) Writing Research Reports and Style Manuals

4.0 Objectives:

The objectives of the present unit are as follows

1. To define research report.
2. To study and understand the structure of research report
3. To study and understand the various types of research writing
4. To establish scope and depth of research project
5. To understand the key issues in drafting research report.
6. To Indicate how your project will contribute to existing knowledge
7. To provide facts and results of an enquiry.
8. To study the different style manuals
9. To study and understand the types of styles and documentation
10. To study the types of style manuals suitable for research in language and literature
11. To understand methods of documentation, referencing and citations

4.1 Introduction :

This chapter addresses the formal aspects of research report writing which is very crucial part of research activity. It should be noted that any research qualification or degree is awarded based on the truthful, valid, and precise account of your research write up. The report is expected to be grammatically correct or flawless and above it should contain brevity of writing. The research report is never an empty pattern or ‘cutting and pasting’ exercise. A research report is never a summary or plot of the book. It requires a necessary scientific register of writing incorporated

with appropriate references, sources, and arguments. There should be an overarching pace or logical connect from Introduction to Conclusion(s). After extensive reading of the primary and secondary sources you arrive at research report writing which is often a tedious task, in order to make your research reliable and original, you must engage your sources fairly and accurately. It should be noted that, any topic you select should have, at least an introduction, middle and conclusion. It is obvious that an introduction is important that deals with the fact of what the researcher is intended to do, and why. A conclusion is also important and it should briefly summarise your findings and if possible, relate further scope of your research. You can suggest how your topic can be extended.

4.2 Definitions and characteristics of Research Reports and Different Types of Style Manuals commonly used in research writing.

Definition of a Research Report:

Research report is usually known as a well-crafted document that outlines the processes, data, and findings of a systematic investigation. It is a vital document that serves as a first-hand account of the research process, and it is considered an objective and reliable and factual source of information.

4.3 Research Reports: definition and how to write them:

The art of report writing needs a careful and conscious way of practicing. The students who have been asked to write a research report or thesis are in a state of confusion in the beginning and they find it difficult to write a thesis because the report needs clarity and flawlessness of English language which is always a matter of ordeal for the students who learn English in a non-native context. The report demands appropriate scientific register of English language. The research report or the thesis demands objectivity, rational and balanced views, proper reference to sources of writing and presentation of facts. Hence the researcher has to take the cognizance of the following:

- a) Plagiarism
- b) Style
- c) Citation

d) Documentation

According to the Oxford **University Dictionary**, “Research reports present at least a review of the literature, the methods used, the findings and a discussion. They have some common elements but may vary in overall organisational structure.”

What are research reports?

Research reports are recorded data prepared by researchers after analysing the Research writing is writing that uses facts and evidences from journals, books, magazines, the Internet, experts, etc. in order to persuade or inform an individual scholar about a particular point. In academic research writing, emphasis is laid on bringing together insights and results by conducting organized research.

The Characteristics of research writing

1. Good research is scholarly, factual, clear, critical, unambiguous, and transparent.
2. It is Empirical as it is based on observations and experimentation.
3. It is systematic since it follows orderly and sequential procedure.
4. Controlled - all variables except those that are tested/experimented upon are kept constant.
5. It employs hypothesis - guides the investigation process.

The steps of the Research Process

Step 1: Identify and develop your topic.

Step 2: Explore literary reviews and background information.

Step 3: Use catalogues to find media, books with all primary and secondary sources.

Step 4: Use databases to find scholarly journals and book articles.

Step 5: Find internet and web-based resources.

Step 6: Read, summarise and evaluate what you find.

Step 7: Cite appropriate references and what you find relevant and contextual using a standard and appropriate style sheet or format.

Guideline(s) and tip(s) for writing research paper/project/thesis:

After the selection of research topic, it is important to make a comprehensive plan of writing first draft. The student can't go further without planning. The students get fairly good amount of time to chalk out plan for writing his draft. Once he gets sufficient primary and secondary data, he must start reading extensively and widely. During this crucial time, he must read carefully and extensively with a good sense of choice and selection of material. He must systematically conduct his research taking his notes carefully and making his arguments logically. Here, he is expected to write correctly and sincerely. In order to complete the project within stipulated time he must follow the time- schedule.

Format of a Research Project/ Paper/ Thesis/ Doctoral Dissertation

The research paper or thesis must have a proper beginning, a middle and an end. The researcher should be able to logically develop his argument or ideas and point of views through successive steps and stages. It should contain the aims objectives and purpose of research. The research scholar should explain the purpose, social, cultural and pedagogical implications of his research. Above all he must state the hypothesis/hypotheses and methods adopted in his research work. The following is the most commonly used format of a thesis or project.

- i) Preface
 - ii) Table of Contents
 - iii) Introduction
 - iv) Main Body of the Thesis
 - v) Conclusion(s)
 - vi) Appendix
 - vii) Notes/References/Works Cited/ Footnotes
 - viii) Bibliography/Webliography.
- i) **Preface.** The preface is meant for devising and sharing aims and objectives of research. The researcher intends to write the usefulness and purpose of his research work. Here he is supposed to acknowledge the sources he used in the

writing. The preface is precise and short. It ends with the researcher's signature, place and date.

- ii) **Table of Contents.** It contains division of the work into different parts and sections with page numbers, e.g., Introduction, Chapters with their titles and subtitles, conclusion(s), appendix and bibliography/webliography.
- iii) **Introduction.** This part contains biographical details of the author, review of relevant literature or the survey of literature, hypothesis/hypotheses, research needs and gaps. It can be numbered as an independent chapter. It functions as the initiation of research thesis.
- iv) **The Chapters.** This is considered as the main body or important and core part of the thesis or project work. It contains the arguments, sources of citations and references given in the Footnotes/ Works Cited / Notes and References. There is no fixed number of chapters but usually the project/ thesis is split into 3-4 chapters of moderate length. (Roughly around 25-30 typed pages)
- v) **Conclusion(s).** The conclusion should always be precise and short. This part summarizes the arguments and point of views propounded in the main body of chapters. Ideally it must be free from footnotes, citations and quotations. The conclusion is drawn at the end and put before the appendix, footnotes and bibliography. Sometimes researchers tend to modify their hypothesis / hypotheses.
- vi) **Appendix.** An Appendix comes at the end (after the reference list) of a report or dissertation. Appendices generally contain information that is not essential to the essay/report that you have written, but supports analysis and validates your conclusions. However, sometimes an appendix may be used for. essential tables and figures that are too large to fit into the text of an essay/report. It includes a brief discussion which is ignored in the main body of thesis or tables.
- vii) **Footnotes.** It is commonly believed that, the place of Footnotes is in the body of dissertation unless required. They should be placed in the main body of the thesis.
- viii) **Bibliography/Webliography.** The bibliography is always drawn at the end of the thesis. It consists of the list of books and articles published in reputed journals and books consulted by the researcher. The researcher has to take note

and cognizance of all possible resources and books published recently. If not followed the convention the work sounds outdated and irrelevant.

Similarly, the term **Webliography** is commonly used when discussing online resources. It is referred to as “Web bibliography”. Accordingly, a Webliography is a list of resources relating to a particular topic that can be accessed on the **World Wide Web**, and can be referred to in a scholarly work.

Students need to complete a research project on a topic they have selected or chosen for themselves. According to W.R. Owens the length of an MA dissertation/thesis will be set somewhere between 10,000 and 20,000 words. The purpose is to enable students to demonstrate:

- (a) that you know how to use libraries effectively to locate relevant materials
- (b) that you can prepare and write up a sustained and logically structured academic argument in clear prose, and
- (c) that you can present your work well, using appropriate scholarly conventions. In short, an MA dissertation/thesis gives you the opportunity to show that you are capable of undertaking further independent work at postgraduate level.

It should be noted that once your research proposal has been approved, the researcher can embark on the work with due enthusiasm and rigour. The data collection, preliminary studies, extensive careful reading help leading the researcher to and preparing of first draft. But he or she needs patience and endurance to remain active throughout the project. He must acquire certain skills and practice in the matters such as note-taking and documentation. It is important to note that the researcher needs to start writing at right point of time, and keep it till the submission of final report.

4.4 Commonly used Style Manuals in Research: MLA, APA and the Chicago Style Manuals

Introduction: The most common problem is not that beginners or researchers don't know that they should cite a source, but that they lose track of which words are theirs and which are borrowed. You must cite source every time you use its words, even if you only paraphrase or summarize them. If the quotations, paraphrases, or summaries come from different pages of your sources, cite each one individually. If a paraphrase or summary extends over several paragraphs, cite it only once at the end.

Therefore, always include the citation as soon as you add a quotation because you may not remember to do so later. They should be careful to cite a paraphrase or summary as you draft it; otherwise, you may not even remember that it originated with a source.

Researchers must paraphrase appropriately when they represent an idea in their own words more clearly or pointedly than the source does. But readers will think that you plagiarize if they can match your words and phrasing with those of your source.

Researchers must indicate in their paper every place where they use a source. The three of the four most common citation styles—Chicago author-date style, MLA style, and APA style - use parenthetical citations that direct readers to specific pages in the source, with enough information to find the corresponding entry in a list of sources.

4.5 Three Types of Style Manuals: The following three types of style manuals are often used in research.

**MLA Style Manual,
APA Style Manual and
the Chicago Style Manual**

A) MLA Style

The MLA (Modern Language Association) style for documentation is widely used in the humanities, especially in writing on language and literature. MLA style features brief parenthetical citations in the text keyed to an alphabetical list of works cited that appears at the end of the work. (Source: Official MLA website)

i) Core Elements

Each entry in the list of works cited is composed of facts common to most works—the MLA core elements. They are assembled in a specific order.

ii) Containers

The concept of containers is crucial to MLA style. When the source being documented forms part of a larger whole, the larger whole can be thought of as a container that holds the source. For example, a short story may be contained in an anthology. The short story is the source, and the anthology is the container.

iii) Rationale

The Modern Language Association, the authority on research and writing, takes a fresh look at documenting sources in the ninth edition of the MLA Handbook. Works are published today in a dizzying range of formats. A book, for example, may be read in print, online, or as an e-book--or perhaps listened to in an audio version. On the Web, modes of publication are regularly invented, combined, and modified. Previous editions of the MLA Handbook provided separate instructions for each format, and additional instructions were required for new formats. Starting with the 8th edition of its best-selling handbook, the MLA recommends instead one universal set of guidelines, which writers can apply to any type of source.

Examples of MLA Style:

i) In-text Citation

Material Type	In-text Citation
Author's name in text	Magny develops this argument (67-69).
Author's name in reference	This argument has been developed elsewhere (Magny 67-69).
Two authors' names in reference	The most notorious foreign lobby in Washington is the "Sugar Mafia" (Howe and Trott 134).
Quotation found in indirect or "second-hand" source	The philosopher Alain states that "admiration is not pleasure but a kind of attention. . ." (qtd. in Magny 66).

ii) Work-cited page of MLA Style.

Material Type	Works Cited
Book in print	Card, Claudia. <i>The Atrocity Paradigm: A Theory of Evil</i> . Oxford UP, 2005.
eBook	Gaither, Milton. <i>Home-school: An American History</i> . Palgrave Macmillan, 2017. <i>SpringerLink</i> , doi-org.pitt.idm.oclc.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95056-0.
An article in a print	Doggart, Julia. "Minding the Gap: Realizing Our Ideal

journal	Community Writing Assistance Program." <i>The Community Literacy Journal</i> , vol. 2, no. 1, 2007, pp. 71-80.
An article in an electronic journal	Sherrard-Johnson, Cherene. "A Plea for Colour': Nella Larsen's Iconography of the Mulatta." <i>American Literature</i> , vol. 76, no. 4, 2004, pp. 833-869, doi:10.1215/00029831-76-4-833.
A encyclopaedia entry	"Patanjali." <i>Benét's Reader's Encyclopaedia</i> , edited by Bruce Murphy, 4th ed., HarperCollins Publishers, 1996, p. 782.
A government publication	United States, Federal Maritime Commission. <i>Hawaiian Trade Study: An Economic Analysis</i> . Government Printing Office, 1978.
An interview you conducted	Brandt, Deborah. Personal interview. 28 May 2008. (Note: List the interview under the name of the interviewee)
A film/DVD	Note: This depends on the focus of your work. Please see the MLA Style Blog for a detailed explanation.
A Page on a Website with no author	"Stunning Lakeside View on Lake Erie." <i>Visit PA</i> , Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 7 June 2018, www.visitpa.com/article/stunning-lakeside-views-lake-erie .
A Page on a Website with an author	Del Castillo, Inigo. "How Not to Kill Your Houseplants, According to Botanists." <i>Apartment Therapy</i> , 29 Jan. 2020, www.apartmenttherapy.com/houseplant-tips-botanists-36710191 .
Artwork - from website	Sherald, Amy. <i>Former First Lady, Michelle Obama</i> . 2018. <i>National Portrait Gallery</i> , npg.si.edu/object/npg_NPG.2018.15 .

(Source: Official MLA Manual website)

B) APA Style Manual

The acronym **APA** stands for the American Psychological Association and is the format designed for use within the field of psychology. However, other disciplines use APA as well, so always use the format your professor chooses.

In addition to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th edition, the APA maintains its own website with multiple examples of how to format your paper and cite your sources.

Papers constructed according to APA guidelines generally include the following elements:

- i) Title Page
- ii) Abstract
- iii) Body
- iv) Subsections within the body, with headings
- v) Tables and Figures
- vi) References

In most cases, each of these elements will begin on a separate page, and it is important to note that not all academic papers will include all of these elements.

For specific types of reports, your subsections may need to be named with headings that reflect the type of report you are writing. For example, in reports on experiments or studies you'll usually need to follow the IMRAD structure with Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion sections. Be sure to check with your instructor to determine what the expectations are for your paper.

APA 7th Citation Examples

Material Type	In-text Citation	Bibliography
A book	(Sapolsky, 2017)	Sapolsky, R. M. (2017). <i>Behave: The biology of humans at our best and worst</i> . Penguin Books.
Chapter in an <u>edited</u> book	(Dillard, 2020)	Dillard, J. P. (2020). Currents in the study of persuasion. In M. B. Oliver, A. A. Raney, & J. Bryant

(If the chapter is from an authored book, use the book citation)		(Eds.), <i>Media effects: Advances in theory and research</i> (4th ed., pp. 115–129). Routledge.
An article in a print journal	(Weinstein, 2009)	Weinstein, J. (2009). “The market in Plato’s Republic.” <i>Classical Philology</i> , 104(4), 439-458.
An article in an electronic journal	(Grady et al., 2019)	Grady, J. S., Her, M., Moreno, G., Perez, C., & Yelinek, J. (2019). Emotions in storybooks: A comparison of storybooks that represent ethnic and racial groups in the United States. <i>Psychology of Popular Media Culture</i> , 8(3), 207–217. https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000185
A website	(Bologna, 2019)	Bologna, C. (2019, October 31). <i>Why some people with anxiety love watching horror movies</i> . HuffPost. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/anxiety-love-watching-horror-movies_1_5d277587e4b02a5a5d57b59e

(Source: Official APA Manual website)

C) The Chicago Style Manual

The Chicago Style Manual is a documentation style manual that has been published by the Chicago University Press since 1906. This citation style incorporates rules of grammar and punctuation common in American English. Typically, Chicago style presents two basic documentation systems: (1) notes and bibliography and (2) author-date. Choosing between the two often depends on subject matter and the nature of sources cited, as each system is favoured by different groups of scholars.

- i) The **notes and bibliography style** are preferred by many in the humanities, including those in literature, history, and the arts. This style presents bibliographic information in notes and, often, a bibliography.

Material Type	Notes/Bibliography Style
A book in print	<p><u>Note Style:</u> 1. Michael Pollan, <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals</i> (New York: Penguin, 2006), 99–100.</p> <p><u>Duplicate Note:</u> 2. Pollan, <i>Omnivore's Dilemma</i>, 3.</p> <p><u>Bibliography:</u> Pollan, Michael. <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals</i>. New York: Penguin, 2006.</p>
An article in a print journal	<p><u>Note Style:</u> 1. Joshua I. Weinstein, "The Market in Plato's <i>Republic</i>," <i>Classical Philology</i> 104 (2009): 440.</p> <p><u>Duplicate Note:</u> 2. Weinstein, "Plato's <i>Republic</i>," 452–53.</p> <p><u>Bibliography:</u> Weinstein, Joshua I. "The Market in Plato's <i>Republic</i>." <i>Classical Philology</i> 104 (2009): 439–58.</p>
An article in an electronic journal	<p><u>Note Style:</u> 1. Gueorgi Kossinets and Duncan J. Watts, "Origins of Homophily in an Evolving Social Network," <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 115 (2009): 411, accessed February 28, 2010, doi:10.1086/599247.</p> <p><u>Duplicate Note:</u> Kossinets and Watts, "Origins of Homophily," 439.</p> <p><u>Bibliography:</u> Kossinets, Gueorgi, and Duncan J. Watts. "Origins of Homophily in an Evolving Social Network." <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 115 (2009): 405–50. Accessed February 28, 2010. doi:10.1086/599247.</p>
A website	<p><u>Note Style:</u> 1. "Google Privacy Policy," last modified March 11, 2009, http://www.google.com/intl/en/privacypolicy.html.</p> <p><u>Duplicate Note:</u> "Google Privacy Policy."</p> <p><u>Bibliography:</u> Google. "Google Privacy Policy." Last modified March 11, 2009. http://www.google.com/intl/en/privacypolicy.html.</p>

(Source: Official Chicago Manual website)

- ii) The **author-date style** has long been used by those in the physical, natural, and social sciences. In this system, sources are briefly cited in the text, usually in parentheses, by author's last name and date of publication. The short citations are amplified in a list of references, where full bibliographic information is provided.

Author/Date Style	In-text Citation	Bibliography
A book	(Pollan 2006, 99–100)	Pollan, Michael. 2006. <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals</i> . New York: Penguin.
An article in a print journal	(Weinstein 2009, 440)	Weinstein, Joshua I. 2009. "The Market in Plato's <i>Republic</i> ." <i>Classical Philology</i> 104:439–58.
An article in an electronic journal	(Kossinets and Watts 2009, 411)	Kossinets, Gueorgi, and Duncan J. Watts. 2009. "Origins of Homophily in an Evolving Social Network." <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 115:405–50. Accessed February 28, 2010. doi:10.1086/599247.
A website	(Google 2009)	Google. 2009. "Google Privacy Policy." Last modified March 11. http://www.google.com/intl/en/privacypolicy.html .

(Source: Official Chicago Manual website)

4.6 Summary of the Unit Four.

In this unit we studied the meaning and definitions of research report writing. We also discussed key issues and characteristics of Research Writing, viz. the steps of research process, tips for writing research paper/project/thesis, commonly used format of a research paper/project/thesis/doctoral dissertation. A thorough study of these topics will help you to become a good and proficient researcher. Along with this study material, you should also read the reference books listed at the end of this

unit. You should also prepare in detail the answers to the questions given in the exercise section of this unit.

In this unit we studied the meaning and examples of different style manuals. We also discussed the key issues in citations of commonly used style manuals such as the MLA, APA and the Chicago Style Manuals. We also discussed about core elements, containers, rationale, and citation examples in tabular forms. A careful and thorough study of these topics will help you to become a good researcher and proficient writer of good and scholarly research papers and projects. This section may help the researcher to plan and execute a first draft of research paper or project using legitimate primary and secondary sources and documentary evidences. Along with this study material, you should also read the reference books listed at the end of this unit. You should also prepare in detail the answers to the questions given in the exercise section of this unit.

4.7 Exercise on the unit.

Answer the following questions in about 800 words each.

1. Discuss the importance of research writing
2. Define the term ‘writing for research’.
3. Discuss importance of primary and secondary source in writing research report
4. Discuss the importance of argument in research writing.
5. What is the importance of Internet or On-line sources in literary research?
6. Discuss the steps involved in research in the context of MLA in-text citations
7. Discuss the steps involved in research in the context of APA 7th Citation Style Manual
8. Discuss the steps involved in research in the context of the Chicago Style Manual.

Answer the following questions in about 400 words each.

1. What is the difference between primary and secondary resources in research writing?
2. Explain Review of Literature in research writing

3. What is Bibliography in the context of research reports?
4. Discuss the importance of online MLA style manuals
5. What are the commonly used style manuals in research in language and literary studies?
6. Define the term documentation in literary research.
7. Discuss the importance of primary source in writing research draft
8. Discuss importance of secondary source in writing research report
9. Discuss the importance of bibliography in research.
10. Explain in the context of Literary Research
11. What is Webliography?
12. How does biographical research help to understand the authors and their time?

4.7 Books for further reading

Correa, Delia da Sousa and W.R. Owens, (ed.) *The Handbook to Literary Research*. London: Routledge, 2010.

MLA Handbook. 9th ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2021. MLA Handbook Plus, 2021, mlahandbookplus.org/.

American Psychological Association. (2021). *Mastering APA Style student workbook* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000271-000>.

The Chicago Manual of Style (17th Edition)

Eliot, Simon and W. R. Owens, (ed.) *a Handbook to Literary Research*. London: Routledge, 1998.

Griffin, Gabriele, ed. *Research Methods for English Studies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007.

Booth Wayne C. ed. *The Craft of Research* Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Sinha M. P. *Research Methods in English*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2017.

