

A Study of Research Methodology in English with Special Reference of MLA Handbook 8th Edition

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Abstract:

Research is a dynamic process that is required in every area of human activity, which is why its significance and importance cannot be overstated. Research is a problem-solving activity that makes the assumption that any conclusion is both conceivable and possible. Research can be thought of as a methodical approach or process by which we try to discover a truth or a reality. Research is a cognizant attempt to find solutions to issues raised in relation to specified difficulties, which moves it clearly away from the realms of rectories to the fact of adhering to put down rules and regulations for carrying out a specific study. A research methodology is a method for solving a research problem in a methodical manner. It can be thought of as a science that studies how scientific research is conducted. In it, we look at the many processes that a researcher takes when examining a research problem, as well as the logic behind them. The researcher must understand not only the research methods/techniques but also the methodology. Research is one of the most essential words connected with academics and scholars. Yet, its significance and applicability are not entirely understood. This article explores research in its totality, which is defined as a series of steps used to collect and analyze data in order to gain a better knowledge of a concept or issue. This procedure typically consists of three steps: (i) asking inquiries (ii) data collection to address the issue; (iii) offering responses to the questions given.

Key Words: Research, problem, systematic, cognizant, techniques

Introduction

The scientific study of research methodology is known as a research methodology. By taking a number of logical steps, one can systematically tackle the research challenge. In addition to the results of scientific investigation, the technique aids in understanding the process itself. Research methodology strives to explain and assess methodologies, shed light on their constraints and resources, and clarify those constraints and resources, as well as their assumptions and outcomes while connecting their potentialities to the "frontiers of knowledge" twilight zone. Research is the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources to establish facts and reach new conclusions. The word 'research' is derived from the Middle French "recherché", which means "to go about seeking". It is also a careful inquiry or examination in seeking facts or principles, a diligent investigation to ascertain something.

The following are the views of some eminent scholars and sources on research.

"Research is a careful investigation or inquiry, especially through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge."- **The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary**.

"Research is a systematic inquiry to describe, explain, predict and control the observed phenomenon."- **Earl Richard Barbie, American Sociologist**

"Research is a systematic and objective analysis and recording of controlled observations that may lead to the development of generalizations, principles, theories, resulting in prediction and possibility of ultimate control of events"- **John W. Best**

More on Research: The earliest recorded use of the term 'research' was in 1577

This here's a re-search laboratory. Re-search means look again, don't it? Means they're looking for something they found once and it got away somehow, and now they got to re- search for it? How come they got to build a building like this, with mayonnaise elevators and all, and fill it with all these crazy people? What is it they're trying to find again? Who lost what?"
-Cat's Cradle, Kurt Vonnegut

- **Primary Research:** The term "primary research" refers to the study of a topic through direct investigation, such as reviewing a work that is either literary or historical, a film,

or a performance; conducting a survey or an interview; or carrying out a laboratory experiment.

- Statistical data, historical documents, and works of literature or art are all elements of Primary Research.
- Secondary research examines previous studies on a topic that have been conducted by other researchers.
- Articles and books about political issues, historical events, scientific debate or literary works are all examples of Secondary Research

Objectives of Research

The aim of the research is to find answers to questions through the use of scientific processes. The primary goal of the study is to unearth the truth that has been hidden and has not yet been discovered. Because each research project has its own distinct purpose, we can classify research objectives into the following major categories:

1. To become acquainted with a phenomena or to obtain new insights about it
2. To accurately depict the qualities of a specific individual, situation, or group
3. To ascertain the frequency with which something occurs or is related with something else.
4. To put a theory about a causal relationship between variables to the test (such studies are known as hypothesis-testing research studies).

Research Methods in English

Several approaches might be used in research initiatives. Various research methods serve different purposes and have varying degrees of validity. You must select the suitable approaches and procedures for your research project. Research methodologies offer research credibility and lead to objective and logically sound findings. It assists the so researcher in developing a precise strategy to keep the research activity on track, making the process smooth, effective, and manageable.

Types of Research

Exploratory Research

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- Exploratory research seeks to gather information about a subject or topic about which no information is available and not many studies have been conducted.
- The goal of Exploratory research is to formulate problems, clarify concepts and form hypothesis.
- You can do Exploratory research when trying to be familiar with an existing phenomenon and acquire new insight into it.

Descriptive Research

- Descriptive research refers to the methods that describe the characteristics of the variables under study
- Descriptive research is one of the basic types of research because one has to employ description in reporting any research
- Descriptive research answers the questions that begin with what, who, where, when and how
- All types of linguistic and literary research will involve the description of the topics under study
- Descriptive research involves many methods especially case studies, naturalistic observation and surveys

Explanatory Research

- Explanatory research is carried out to know why something happens and to predict future occurrences.
- Explanatory research comes after exploratory and descriptive research.
- While in exploratory and descriptive research we address what and how, the explanatory researcher seeks the answer to why and how.

Basic Research

- Basic research is also called pure/ fundamental/ academic research.
- Its purpose is exploratory and it aims to develop a theory, or hypothesis or discover facts unknown before.
- Basic research does not aim at application or finding solutions.

- Basic research is usually quite distinct from Applied research in the sciences, whereas this distinction is not clear in the humanities

Applied Research

- Applied research aims at applying the research in real-life situations, addressing existing problems and providing innovative solutions.
- Applied research has relevance in scientific, business and commercial fields.
- Applied research is also called Professional research and tends to be organisationally focused

Quantitative Research

- Quantitative research involves the collection, quantification and analysis of numerical/statistical data
- Quantitative research produces objective data to study situations and events that affect people
- Quantitative research employs methods like probability sampling, interviews, questionnaires, surveys, etc

Application of Quantitative Research

- Lexicology
- Language variations
- Dialects
- Phonetics, Morphology, Semantics...
- Reading speed
- Correlation between social media use and English proficiency

Qualitative Research

- Qualitative research seeks an in-depth understanding (rather than a surface description) of social phenomena within their naturalistic setting.
- It involves a phenomenological approach, ethnographic approach, grounded theory, historical approach, case study and action research.

- In Qualitative research data collection is time-consuming and data analysis is difficult.

Primary and Secondary Research

- Primary research or Field research is carried out first-hand and is based on primary sources.
- Secondary research or Desk research is based on the description, interpretation, evaluation and analysis of data published by others

"Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose."

-Zora Neale Hurston

Methods of Research

Scientific Method

- The Scientific Method of Research uses objectivity as the tool and involves six steps.
- Make an observation.
- Ask a question.
- Form a hypothesis, or testable explanation.
- Make a prediction based on the hypothesis.
- Test the prediction.
- Iterate: use the results to make new hypotheses or predictions.

Normative Method

- The Normative Method of Research is a prescriptive approach to sociological studies that have the aim of appraising or establishing the values and norms that best fit the situation under study.
- It makes recommendations about what action should be taken regarding a particular problem.
- This research approach often contains value judgments indicated by words like should or should not, better or worse.
- The setting up of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) sound system by the International Phonetic Association was the result of Normative Research.
- In studies related to testing and Evaluation in ELT, the Normative method will be used.

- The Norms that are thus set up can of course be questioned.

Experimental Method

- The Experimental Method of Research is based on observations made to study a problem, answer a question, or prove/disprove some phenomenon.
- This method can be used to determine causal relationships among variables.
- This method employs the control of one variable while maintaining other variables constant.

Historical Method

- The Historical Method of Research may rely on a wide variety of sources, both Primary and Secondary, including public records, legal documents, recordings, and unpublished material.
- It involves learning about the past through inquiry, and it aims to shape the present or future in the light of the past.
- This method inevitably creeps into every kind of research.
- The Historical Method is most commonly employed in studies of
 - Authorship
 - Dates of texts
 - Origins of texts
 - Development of a genre

Archival Method

- The Archival Method of Research is based on historical methods or documents mostly unpublished as primary sources.
- These researchers will collect data from manuscripts, electronic records, audio-visual materials, etc, from archives or special collections in libraries census records or survey data collected in the past.
- This method has great significance in Biographical and Historical studies.
- The Archival Method is most commonly employed in studies of
 - Development of a genre
 - Origins of a language

- Life writing/Lifestyle of earlier societies
- Archival research can be contrasted with secondary research (undertaken in a library or online), which involves identifying and consulting secondary sources relating to the topic of enquiry.
- It can be contrasted with other types of primary research and empirical investigation such as fieldwork and experiment.
- Archival research is often a laborious and expensive endeavour.
- Archival research requires one to create new narratives, and literary scholars specialize in the study of narrative structure and development.
- Recovered materials often throw into relief ideas about what literature is and who has historically produced it, ideas central to the work of many literary scholars, even those who have yet to conduct archival research of their own.
- Archival research can be challenging, but it can also be enormously rewarding. You may not find exactly what you were looking for, but you may also find much more than you expected.
- Not every source is available online because most special collections/archival libraries are not able to digitize all of their sources (collections) or make them publicly available.
- Not every individual item is listed in a collection's finding aid. Many Special Collections/archival libraries do not catalogue their collections by individual item. Instead, they provide descriptions to the box or folder level.
- Not every collection will have an online finding aid. While most institutions are working to get finding aid online, this is an ongoing process for many organizations. You may need to contact an archivist to learn more about which finding aids are available online, and which are not. Some archives will create catalogue records for unprocessed collections as a means to signal their existence. Further, research/subject guides may also list unprocessed collections.
- There are different types of archives available. Archivists will help you to orient their repository, provide information about their holdings, and assist you with reproduction orders where available. Archivists will not, however, do your research for you.
- College and university archives are archives that preserve materials relating to a specific academic institution. They exist first to serve their parent institutions and

alumni, and then to serve the public. Examples: Stanford University Archives, Mount Holyoke College Archives.

- Corporate archives are archival departments within a company or corporation that manage and preserve the records of that business. These repositories exist to serve the needs of company staff members and to advance business goals.
- Corporate archives allow varying degrees of public access to their materials depending on the company's policies and archival staff availability.
- Government archives are repositories that collect materials relating to local, state, or national government entities. Examples: The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, the New York State Archives, City of Boston Archives.
- Historical societies are organizations that seek to preserve and promote interest in the history of a region, a historical period, nongovernment organizations, or a subject. The collections of historical societies typically focus on a state or a community, and may be in charge of maintaining some governmental records as well. Examples: The Wisconsin Historical Society, the National Railway Historical Society, and the San Fernando Valley Historical Society.
- Museums and archives share the goal of preserving items of historical significance, but museums tend to have a greater emphasis on exhibiting those items, and maintaining diverse collections of artefacts or artwork rather than books and papers.
- Any of the types of repositories mentioned in this list may incorporate a museum, or museums may be stand-alone institutions. Likewise, stand-alone museums may contain libraries and/or archives. Examples: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum.
- Archives relating to the traditions or institutions of a major faith, denominations within a faith, or individual places of worship are called religious archives. The materials stored in these repositories may be available to the public or may exist solely to serve members of the faith or the institution by which they were created. Examples: United Methodist Church Archives, American Jewish Archives.
- Special collections are institutions containing materials from individuals, families, and organizations deemed to have significant historical value.

- Topics collected in special collections vary widely and include medicine, law, literature, fine art, and technology. Often a special collections repository will be a department within a library, holding the library's rarest or most valuable original manuscripts, books, and/or collections of local history for neighbouring communities. Examples: Special Collections Research Center at the University of Chicago, American Philosophical Society Library.

Auto/Biographical Method

- Biographical research is a qualitative research approach associated with the social interpretive pattern of research.
- Biographical research is concerned with the reconstruction of life histories and the constitution of meaning based on biographical narratives and documents.
- The material for analysis consists of interview protocols (memorandums), video recordings, photographs, and a diversity of sources.
- The starting point for this approach is the understanding of Individual biography in terms of its social constitution.
- Among the numerous forms of biographical research in education, five types are often noted: scholarly chronicles, intellectual biography, life history writing, memoir biography. and narrative biography. These orientations may take the form Using Biographical Methods in Social Research Barbara Merrill & Linden West articles, vignettes, chapters, monographs, and full-length books.
- The scholarly chronicle is the most fundamental type of biographical research with its focus on the historical portrayal of an individual life.
- This basic research orientation constitutes telling the subject's story in chronological order with emphasis upon the development of a quest plot (life pattern-stages) and the description of acts recognition (or notoriety) as the biographer progress through the life of the biographical subject.
- The scholarly chronical is often viewed as synonymous with biography and different from other forms biographical inquiry.
- Another genre, intellectual biography, abandons the need for basic chronological structure and develops a narrative of a life through the conceptual analysis of the

subject's motives and beliefs within the world of ideas. The intellectual biographer recognizes and accepts the intrusive yet justifiable analysis and overcomes the invasive nature of inquiry with care resulting in contemplation and understanding.

- The third form of biographical research is defined as life history writing (and the narrative study of lives) with strong adherence to the social science research traditions of oral history and narrative discourse and, specifically, a great devotion to theoretical constructs from sociology and psychology.
- In recent years a fourth genre, memoir biography (still distinct from autobiography and memoir) has begun to appear in the field of curriculum studies.
- Attention is devoted to the researcher's motives about the biographical subject and with importance upon the stylistic presentation of the biographer's reflections and insights about the factual account of the life.
- An interpretive narrative of the writer, alongside the presentation of the biographical subject, becomes part of the research. A life story is being told yet about the transactional experiences of the biographer that in turn impacts and suggests related experiences for the reader.
- A fifth type, narrative biography, embodies a dynamic representation of a life without the need for absolute factuality or a broad account from birth to grave. Neither is this style burdened by the vital interpretation of the subject that must be accepted by the reader.
- Facts are recognized and some interpretations are accepted as being more significant than others; however, the biographer, though consciously aware of his or her emotions and reactions to the subject, acknowledges that the telling of the story is primarily defined by the subject in relation to the reader.
- Autobiographical research uses various empirical sources such as life narratives, oral stories, official and personal documents, diaries, memorials, epistles, videos, photos and techniques such as triangulation of information and in-depth analysis of the sources.
- Memory is the key element of autobiographical research. It is an essential characteristic of the narrator and a component of narration. It is a component with which the researcher works to (re)construct elements of analysis that may help in understanding the object of study.

- The detection and the unmasking of the past are, therefore important part of the place that auto/biography occupies as a research tool for both the social sciences and the humanities.
- Autobiographical research has an ethical and political dimension to the extent that it lies in the capacity of recovering memory and recounting by the social actors themselves.
- Autobiographical research is a method that bears the potential for addressing questions of the individual and the sociocultural environment since it puts into evidence how each person mobilizes his knowledge, his values, and his energies to gain his own identity concerning his contexts.
- Using autobiographical research, the researcher consciously recognizes that the social reality is multilayered, compound and socially constructed by human beings who experience their lives in a holistic and interconnected way and that people are in a constant process of self-knowing.
- James Boswell's *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791), Elizabeth Gaskell's *The Life of Charlotte Bronte* (1857), John Forster's *The Life of Charles Dickens* (1892), Richard Ellman's *James Joyce* (1959), Peter Ackroyd's *Dickens* (1990). Lyndall Gordon's *The Imperfect Life of T.S. Eliot* (1998) are some of the prominent examples of literary biographies.
- The Autobiography of *Benjamin Franklin* (1791), *The Story of My Life* (1903) by Helen Keller, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1969), and *My Days* (1973) are some examples of autobiographies.
- **Oral History**
- Oral history is a method of conducting historical research through recorded interviews between a narrator with personal experience of historically significant events and a well-informed interviewer, to add to the historical record.
- Oral history is not intended to present a final, verified, or "objective" narrative of events or a comprehensive history of a place, such as the UCSC campus since it is a primary source.
- Oral history refers both to a method of recording and preserving oral testimony and to the product of that process. It begins with an audio or video recording of a first-person

account made by an interviewer with an interviewee (also referred to as narrator). both of whom have the conscious intention of creating a permanent record to contribute to an understanding of the past.

- A verbal document, the oral history, results from this process and is preserved and made available in different forms to other users, researchers, and the public. A critical approach to oral testimony and interpretations is necessary for the use of oral history.
- Oral histories may be used together with other primary sources as well as secondary sources to gain understanding and insight into history. It is a spoken account, reflects personal opinion offered by the narrator, and as such it is subjective.
- Oral historians assure that narrators voluntarily give their consent to be interviewed and apprehend that they can withdraw from the interview or refuse to answer a question at any time. Narrators may give this consent by signing a consent form or by recording an oral statement of consent before the interview. All interviews are conducted in consensus with the stated aims and within the limits of the consent.
- Oral history interviews are historical documents that are preserved and made accessible to future researchers and members of the public.
- This preservation and access may take a variety of forms, reflecting changes in technology. But, in choosing a repository or form, oral historians consider the best to preserve the original recording and any transcripts made of it and to protect the accessibility and usability of the interview. The plan for safeguarding and access, including any possible diffusion through the web or other media, is stated in the informed consent process and on release forms.
- The methodology involves three distinct tasks such as conducting the preliminary research, creating of a research design, writing a treatment, and finishing the interview process.
- The methodology is based on several academic disciplines, including history, sociology, anthropology, law, journalism, and psychology. Each of these disciplines has contributed significant perceptions into the art of interviewing and has enriched the methods used by oral historians.
- The importance of oral history lies in the recovery of lost histories and thereby giving ordinary individuals a place in history.

- This is an exciting and developing methodology as it plays a vital role in enlarging our understanding of the past.

Visual Methodologies

- Visual research is a qualitative research methodology that relies on the use of artistic mediums to "produce and represent knowledge." These artistic mediums include, but are not limited to: film, photography, drawings, paintings, and sculptures.
- Visual methodologies are a collection of methods used to understand and interpret images. These methods have been used for a long time in anthropology and sociology; however, they are a relatively new way to research for the majority of disciplines, especially health research.
- Autophotography and photo elicitation are two effective visual methodologies that could be used in health research.
- Autophotography is asking participants to take photographs of their environment and then using the photographs as actual data. It captures the world through the participant's eyes with subsequent knowledge production.
- Photo elicitation is using photographs or other visual mediums in an interview to generate verbal discussion to create data and knowledge. Different layers of meaning can be discovered as this method evokes deep emotions, memories, and ideas. Photo elicitation interviews contribute to the reliability and consistency of the findings through member checking.
- A visual methodology is a novel approach to qualitative research derived from traditional ethnography methods used in anthropology and sociology.
- Compositional interpretation is a method that offers a way of looking at the content and form of images.
- This method offers a series of questions that should lead to the careful description of the content, colour, special organization, and light and expressive content of a still image.
- Visual methods improve the abundance of data by exploring additional layers of meaning, adding validity and depth, and creating knowledge. They add to traditional

methods by capturing more detail and a different kind of data than verbal and written methods.

- Visual methodologies can be used on almost any population by allowing participants to express their ideas in a nonverbal way.
- Visual methods result in increased authenticity of the findings through member checking.
- Using visual methods to enable and augment communication enhanced the data production and a different kind of data was available than verbal methods.

Semiological Analysis

- Semiological analysis as a methodology rooted in linguistics but has appropriated sociology, particularly in the analysis of communication studies.
- According to Ferdinand de Saussure, a sign comprises two elements: the signifier and the signified; and semiotic analysis is concerned with the relationship between the two.
- The other major semiotic theory, developed by the American philosopher and logician C. S. Peirce, defines the sign as a triadic relation as "something that stands for something, to someone in some capacity"
- Charles Sanders Peirce suggested that there were three kinds of signs iconic, indexical and symbolic.
- An iconic sign is very important in visual images, especially photographic ones
- Indexical signs have an inherent relationship between the signifier and the signified.
- In symbolic signs, the relation between signifier and signified is purely conventional and culturally specific.
- Stuart Hall's Encoding/Decoding Theory suggests that audience derive their meaning from media texts. These meanings can be dominant, negotiated or oppositional.
- According to Hall, media texts are read in three main ways. A dominant or preferred reading of the text is the way that its creators want an audience to understand and respond to it. An oppositional reading of the text is when an audience completely rejects the message. A negotiated reading is when the audience interprets the text in their unique way, which might not be the way its producer intended.

- Roland Barthes helped found the modern science of semiology. applying structuralist (or semiotic) methods to the "myths" that he saw all around him: media, fashion, art, photography. architecture, literature.
- According to Barthes, anything in culture can be a sign and send a specific message.
- In semiotics, denotation and connotation are terms describing the relationship between the signifier and its signified, and an analytic distinction is made between two types of signifieds: a denotative signified and a connotative signified. Meaning Includes both denotation and connotation.
- In 'The Photographic Message' (1961) and 'The Rhetoric of the Image' (1964), Barthes argued that in photography connotation can be (analytically) distinguished from denotation.

Discourse analysis

- Discourse is a generally used abstract term that is used to refer to a range of topics in various disciplines.
- Discourse analysis is used to describe several approaches as well as to evaluate written and spoken language use beyond the technical pieces of language, such as words and sentences.
- Discourse analysis has two components; one is the investigation of patterns in language. The other relates to patterns of language used in an activity or process.
- Contrary to much of traditional linguistics, discourse analysts not just examine language use 'beyond the sentence boundary' but also prefer to analyze 'naturally occurring' language use.
- The major difference between discourse analysis and text linguistics is that discourse analysis focuses on identifying socio-psychological characteristics of a person/persons rather than text structure.
- Michel Foucault developed a notion of discourse in his early work, especially the *Archaeology of knowledge* (1972).
- In *Discursive Struggles Within Social Welfare: Restaging Teen Motherhood*, Lara Lessa summarizes Foucault's definition of discourse as "systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the

subjects and the worlds of which they speak. Foucault later theorized that discourse is a medium through which power relations produce speaking subjects.

- Foucauldian discourse analysis is a form of discourse analysis, focuses on power relationships in society as expressed through language and practices.
- Reiner Keller developed 'Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD).
- Keller argues that sense of reality in everyday and thus and even the product permanent, routinized interaction.
- The 'Sociology Discourse' approach to with the vividly discussed micro-macro problem in sociology
- Wetherall et.al. identified six distinct discourse analytical research traditions
 1. Conversation analysis ethnomethodology
 2. Interactional sociolinguistics and the ethnography of communication
 3. Discursive psychology
 4. Critical discourse analysis and critical linguistics
 5. Bakhtinian research
 6. Foucauldian research
- Discourse analysis can be done 'qualitatively' and 'quantitatively'. In English studies, the qualitative analysis focuses on the interpretation of 'non-uniform' text. Novels, plays, short stories, dialogue in films and so on all constitute 'non-uniform' text. Quantitative research focuses on the frequencies of words, phrases, particular grammatical structures or lexical features to identify the typical language use of a specific author.
- Discourse analysis both enhances researchers' research capacity and creates process-content-specific knowledge that is useful across many different kinds of activity.
- Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse that views language as a form of social practice.
- Critical discourse analysis differs from discourse analysis as it highlights issues of power asymmetries, manipulation, exploitation, and structural inequities in domains such as education.
- Norman Fairclough developed a three-dimensional framework for studying discourse in his seminal work *Language and Power*. According to him, the aim is to map three

separate forms of analysis onto one another: analysis of (spoken or written) language texts, analysis of discourse practice (processes of text production, distribution and consumption) and analysis of discursive events as instances of socio-cultural practice.

- CDA has been applied to media studies, English language teaching and environmental sciences.

Ethnographic Research

- Ethnography is a methodology with more than one hundred years of history. It arose in the Western world as a particular form of knowledge about distant cultures (typically non-Western ones) which were impenetrable to analysis comprising only of brief contact or short-term conversations.
- Ethnography as a research methodology is typically associated with the social sciences, especially anthropology.
- It is chiefly a qualitative research strategy that relies primarily on participant observation and concerns itself with the study and interpretation of cultural behaviour.
- Ethnography refers to both a process of research and to the research account, the ethnographic report, which is a compilation of the research. In that sense, it is both a method of study and a result of such a study.
- Everything is now ethnography from life stories to the analysis of letters and questionnaires, from autobiography to narrative analysis, from action research to performance, to field research lasting a few days to several years.
- Non-participant observation and participant observation are the two research strategies in ethnographic methodology.
- Ethnographic research employs three kinds of data collection: interviews, observation, and documents.
- In non-participant observation, the researcher observes the subjects 'from a distance without interacting with them. Those who use this strategy are uninterested in investigating the symbolic sphere, and they make sure not to interfere with the subjects' actions so as not to influence their behaviour.
- The ethnographic methodology gives priority to observation as its primary source of information. This purpose is also served, in a secondary and subsidiary manner, by

other sources of information used by the ethnographer in the field which includes informal conversations, individual or group interviews, and documentary materials (diaries, letters, class essays, organizational documents, newspapers, photographs, and audiovisual aids).

- Ethnographic research which is very sensitive to the researcher's attitudes and insights can be considered a highly subjective method.
- The impossibility to generalize their results is a recurrent criticism towards the ethnographic method.
- Ethnography allows for flexibility and complexity in research design with multiple sources of data, multiple methods to analyze these, multiple settings, timeframes etc.
- John Van Mannen in his work, *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography* classifies ethnographic research into five types;
 1. Ethnographic realism
 2. Confessional ethnography.
 3. Dramatic ethnography
 4. Critical ethnography
 5. Autoethnography
- Ethnographic research includes 'microethnographies', that deal with specific social phenomena such as medical ethnography, school ethnography, family ethnography and organizational ethnography.
- Ethnographic research is more often used in two specific areas of English studies: Travel writing and Audience response criticism.

Textual Analysis

- Textual analysis is a methodology that involves understanding language, symbols, and/or pictures present in texts to gain information regarding how people make sense of and communicate life and life experiences.
- Researchers are expected to interpret texts (films, music, television programmes, magazines, advertisements, and so on) to try and obtain a sense of how, in particular cultures at particular times, people make sense of the world around them.

- The word 'text' has particular implications. There are no two exact synonyms in the English language and words always have slightly different meanings and connotations. The word 'text' has post-structuralist implications for thinking about the production of meaning.
- Performing textual analysis is an attempt to gather information about sense-making practices not only in cultures radically different from our own but also within our nations.
- There are four major approaches to textual analysis: rhetorical criticism, content analysis, interaction analysis, and performance studies.

Interview as a Research Method

- An interview in qualitative research is a conversation where questions are asked to evoke data.
- They can be appeared differently about focus groups in which an interviewer questions a gathering of people and observes the subsequent discussions between interviewees or surveys which are increasingly unknown and limit respondents to a range of predetermined answer choices.
- Interviews are used as a research tool in phenomenological or ethnographic research to uncover the meanings of central themes in the life world of the subjects from their point of view.
- Qualitative research interviews can be categorized into four possible types;
 - Informal, Conversational interview
 - General interview guide approach
 - Standardized, open-ended interview
 - Closed, fixed-response interview
- Irving Seidman, in *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*, discusses the importance of proper interviewing technique and interviewer etiquette and identified six fundamental techniques of qualitative interview:
 - Listening
 - Ask questions
 - Be respectful of boundaries

- Be wary of leading questions
- Don't interrupt
- Make the participant feel comfortable
- There are three types of interviews: unstructured, semi-structured, and structured.
- The type of interview the researcher chooses for the research topic depends on the data the research needs to elicit.
- Interviewing is a useful research method for understanding people's perspectives and perceptions as producers and consumers of literary texts.

Conclusion

Research is a journey of discovery, a journey, an attitude, an experience, a method of critical thinking, and an activity motivated by an innate desire to learn new things and get new perspectives or answers to questions.

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