

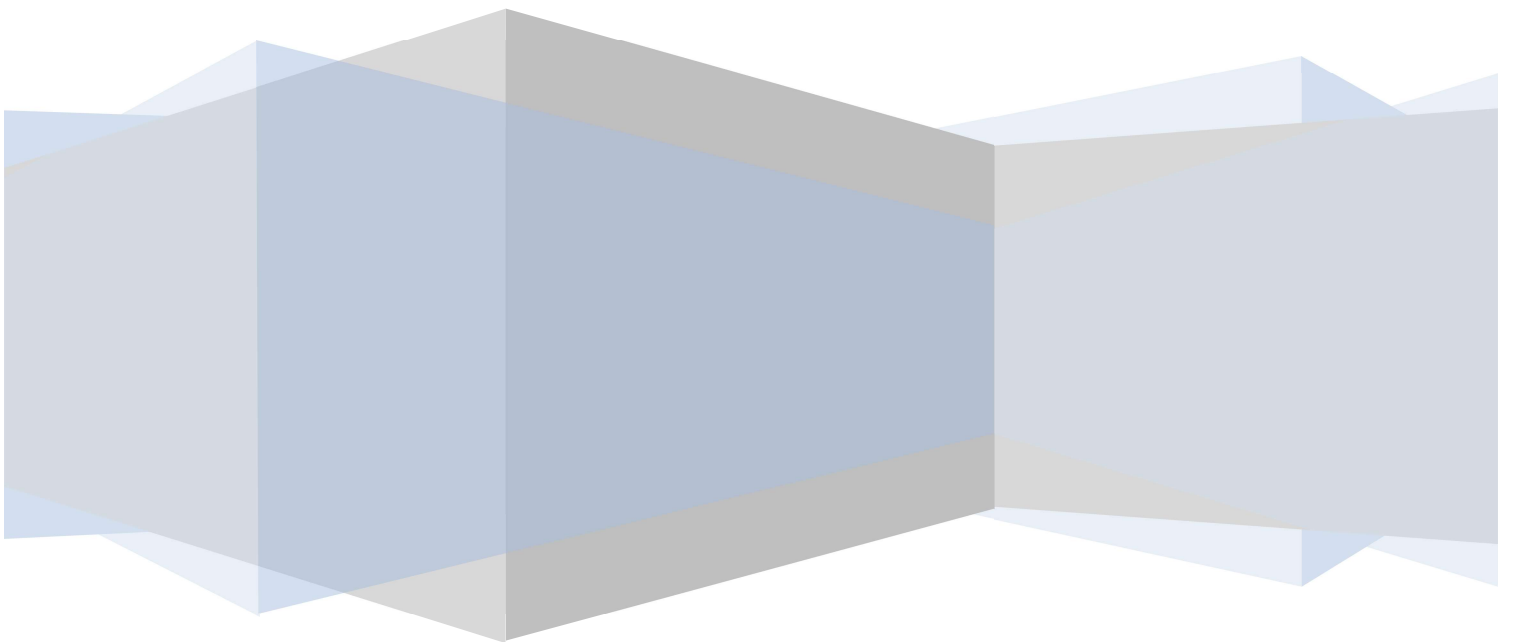
E-LEARNING MODULE

SOCIOLOGY

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E-learning modules I -X

Sociology



Module I

Ethnography I

Description of the Module

Items	Description of the Module
Subject Name	Sociology
Module No.	II
Module Title	Ethnography 1
Prepared by	Dr. Rajeev Dubey, Assistant Professor, Department. of Sociology, Tripura University
Pre Requisites	Basic understanding of discourse as a method to understand the social world through the examination of language
Objectives	This module seeks to provide the assumptions and ideas central to discourse and critical discourse
Key words	Discourse, Critical, Meanings, Language, World View, Power
Word Count	

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Why a new Method?

Quantitative methods fail to adequately understand meaning, motives, feeling, and collective behaviour. The positivistic lessons of dispassionate, impersonal, objectivity, value-neutrality cannot be applied universally to social science subject matter. People's behaviour changes in collectivity. Ethnography is the art and science of describing a human group, its institutions, interpersonal behaviour, material productions and beliefs. Ethnographic researchers are primarily concerned with the routine and everyday lives of the people they study. As a method and a product Ethnography tries to capture these nuances of social life.

Brief History of Ethnographic Research

The ethnographic approach to the study of human groups began with anthropologist in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to serve the needs of Western colonialism. The better they knew their subjects, they reasoned, the easier it would be to control them. They came to the conclusion that only in the field could a scholar truly encounter the dynamic of the lived human experience of the natives.

Sociological ethnography was born in the 1920's at the University of Chicago, when they adapted the ethnographic field research methods to the study of social groups in modern communities in the United States. It sought assimilation and not control. Its guiding question was: How could the 'socially disadvantaged' be helped to join the middle class world?. William F. Whyte (1943) classic study of 'Street Corner Society'. The influence of this 'Chicago school' later influenced disciplines such as- education, business, public health, nursing and mass communication etc.

What is Ethnography?

Ethnography is a *qualitative* research method in which the researcher:

- > Is immersed in a social setting for an extended period of time;
- > observes the behavior of the people regularly and listens to gets involved in conversations
- > develops an understanding of people's behavior within the context of that culture
- > and writes up a detailed account of that setting

Principles of Ethnography

1 Holism

- > focus on relations among activities and not on single tasks or single isolated individuals

- > everything connected to everything else
- 2 Natives' point(s) of view
 - > how people see their own worlds
 - > opportunity to engage with customers
- 3 Study people in their native habitats, such as: home, office, school, library, hospital, community...
- 4 Despite the diversity of positions from which ethnographers may derive, a few important features that link
 - > A search for patterns proceeds from a careful observations of lived behaviour and from detailed interviews with people in the communities under study
 - > Ethnographers must pay careful attention to the process of field research
- 5 The heart of ethnography is "thick description" was originally coined by Clifford Geertz (1973):
 - > Thick description explains not just the behaviour, but its context as well, such that the behaviour becomes meaningful to an outsider
 - > Analyses the multiple levels of meaning in any situation

Geertz discusses the role of the ethnographer. Broadly, the ethnographer's aim is to observe, record, and analyze a culture. More specifically, he or she must interpret signs to gain their meaning within the culture itself. This interpretation must be based on the "thick description" of a sign in order to see all the possible meanings. His example of a "wink of any eye" clarifies this point. [what does that wink mean; or are you referring to an example: in this case, give it]

Following Observations

- 1 Ethnographic researcher is not in a hurry to draw a conclusion, gives time, immerse himself
- 2 Arm chair vs Lived Experiences
- 3 In case of research on religious group - Sahaja Yogis sitting and tying Kundali for example - one cannot understand their practice without participation. Doing research, however, one does not become a believer, but rather tries to understand how people make sense of a practice, how they construct their belief.
- 4 Ethnography is sometime interchangeably used with participant observation. But ethnography, as a term, is preferred over participant observation which gives an impression that observation is the main method, whereas practically many methods are involved.
- 5 Ethnography is both a method of research **and** the written product of that research.

Ethnographic methods are associated with a variety of theoretical orientations:

1 *Structure Functionalism*

Structure Functionalism: is characterized by the following concepts:

- > **The organic Analogy:** Society is thought of as analogous to a biological organism. As biological organism has got a structure and each part of that structure fulfill certain functions, similarly each organ system, has a particular role to play in keeping the entire society as a functional whole.
- > **Natural Science Orientation:** Following the positivistic orientation it means that society is supposed to be studied empirically, to better uncover its underlying patterns and overall order.
- > **A narrowed Conceptual Field:** Structure functionalist prefer to focus on society and its sub-systems as for example economy, polity, political institution, etc.
- > **A Sense of Universality:** All social institutions and their respective functions are assumed to be found in equivalent structures in all societies.
- > **The pre-eminence of Kinship Studies:** It means that family ties are presumed to be the 'glue' that holds societies together. This especially relevant for Asian societies.
- > **A Tendency towards Equilibrium:** Societies are assumed to be characterized by **harmony and internal** consistency.

In terms of method, the structure functionalists are strong advocates of field work based on participant observation which is a long term commitment. Structure-functionalist ethnography serves an inductive rather than a deductive agenda for scientific inquiry.

2 *Symbolic Interactionism*

There are varieties of interactionism but all of them share some basic assumption:

- > People live in a world of learned meanings which are encoded as symbols and which are shared through interactions in a given social group;
- > Symbols are motivational in that they impel people to carry out their activities;
- > The human mind itself grows and changes in response to the quality and extent of interactions in which the individual engages;
- > The self is a social construct: our notions of who we are develop only in the course of interacting with others.

The key to integrationist ethnography is the uncovering of the systems of symbols that gives meaning to what people think and do.

Ethnographer's interactive roles fall along a continuum with four main points:

- 1 The complete participant
- 2 The participant as observer
- 3 The observer as participant
- 4 The complete observer

3 *Feminism*

Several basic principles characterise feminism in the modern social science context:

- > All social relations are gendered
- > The suggestion that there is some sort of female 'essence' characterized by fundamental qualities of nurturance, caring and a preference for cooperation over competition. This essence is expressed in different ways in different cultures, but it is recognized in some way in all societies.
- > The behaviors that are considered typical of one gender or another are socially learned rather than biologically inbred; this does not make them any less important or influential in the way people act and think, but it does move away the enquiry from nature to nurture, from biogenetic to socio-cultural perspective.
- > A universal sexual asymmetry- it is universally accepted that men and women are different from each other, either because of innate biology or because of different processes of socialization.

A feminist approach has certain clear implications for the conduct of ethnographic research. Feminists tend to reject the traditional separation of a researcher and her or his 'subjects'. Therefore, feminist researchers look for a form of ethnography that allows for empathy, subjectivity, and dialogue, the better to explore the inner worlds of women.

4 *Ethnomethodology*

The aim of Ethnomethodologists has been to explain how a group's sense of identity is constructed, maintained and changed. This approach is the study of human behaviour and is based on two principles:

- 1 Human interaction is *reflexive*- people interpret cues (such as words, gestures, body languages, the use of space and time) in such a way as to uphold a common vision of reality; evidence that seems to contradict the common vision is either rejected or somehow rationalized into the prevailing system.
 - 2 Information is *indexed*- which means that it has meaning within a particular context; it is thus important to know the biographies of the interacting parties, their avowed purposes and their past interactions in order to understand what is going on in a particular observed situation.
- Some important techniques that ethnomethodologists look for when studying social settings:

- > The search for the normal form
- > The reliance on a reciprocity of perspective
- > The use of '*et cetera principle*'-means that in any interaction much is left unsaid, so that parties to the interaction must either fill in or wait for information needed to make sense of the other's words or actions; they implicitly agree not to interrupt to ask explicitly for clarification.

The implication is that ethnography is not used to study some large, transparent system like 'culture' or 'society', since such abstraction can never truly order people's behavior. Rather, ethnographic research is designed to uncover how people convince each other that there really is such a thing as 'society' or 'culture' in the sense of order' that makes society possible; rather, it is the capacity of individuals to create and use methods to persuade each other that there is a real social world to which they belong.

The job of ethnography for the ethnomethodologists is not to answer the question, 'What is 'culture'? or 'What is 'society'? but to answer the question, 'How do people convince themselves that 'culture' and 'society' are viable propositions?.'

5 *Critical Theory*

The main philosophical approach of critical ethnographers is the development of 'multiple standpoint epistemologies', which is an explicit challenge to the traditional assumption that there was an objective, universally understood definition of what constitute a culture. Critical theorists have come to favour a style of ethnographic research that is:

- > Dialogic- is one that is not based on the traditional power relationships of interviewer and 'subject'.
- > Dialectical perspective- truth emerges from the confluence of divergent opinions, values, beliefs and behavior not from some false homogenization imposed from outside.
- > Collaborative- attempt to involve the community as active partners in the design and implementation of the research.

6 *Postmodernism*

Post modernism embraces the plurality of experience, argues against the general laws of human behaviour. There are some principles that hold across the issues in research-

- > Reject the presumption of scientist to 'speak for' those whom they study.
- > Dialogical and polyvocal: it means that no community can be described as a homogeneous entity in equilibrium. 'Culture' and 'Society' are concepts arrived at through the process of social construction rather than objective entities.
- > Process of interpretation
- > The study of any one culture, society, or any other such phenomena is essentially *relativistic*.

Ethnography as a Method

The ethnographic method is different from other ways of conducting social science research:

- > It is **field based**- conducted in the setting in which real people actually live rather than laboratories where subjects are controlled
- > It is **personalized**: researcher are in day to day and face to face contact with the people
- > It is **multifactorial**- use of two or more techniques (Quantitative or qualitative)
- > It requires a **long term commitment**
- > It is **inductive**- accumulation of descriptive detail to build towards general pattern
- > It is **dialogic**- conclusions & interpretation of researcher can be commented upon by those under study- prevents putting words in subjects mouth
- > **Eg. Commodification vs Gift**
- > It is **holistic** and aims to provide the fullest possible portrait of the group under study

Ethnography as Product

Ethnographic report is in form of a **narrative** about the study community that evokes the lived experience. It is a kind of extended story with an aim to draw the reader into a vicarious experience of the community in which the ethnographer has lived and interacted. There are many different ways in which an ethnographer can tell a story:

- > in a **realistic mode**: de-personalised, objective, emotionally neutral
- > in a **confessional mode**: researcher acquires a central stage
- > in a **impressionistic mode**: dialogue, elaborate character sketch

Recommended Readings

Angrosino, Michael. 2007. Doing Ethnographic and Observational Research. London: Sage.

Bryman, Allan 2012. Social Research Methods. New Delhi: Oxford (pp.430-467).

Buscatto, Marie. 2011. Using Ethnography to Study Gender. New Delhi: Sage (pp. 35-52).

Flick, Uwe. 2009. An Introduction to Qualitative Research. New Delhi: Sage (pp. 219-238).

Goffman, Erving. 1997. "Frame Analysis of Gender." in The Goffman Reader, edited by C. Lemert and A. Branaman. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Module II

Ethnography 2

Description of the Module

Items	Description of the Module
Subject Name	Sociology
Module No.	II
Module Title	Ethnography 2
Prepared by	Dr. Rajeev Dubey, Assistant Professor, Department. of Sociology, Tripura University
Pre Requisites	Basic understanding of discourse as a method to understand the social world through the examination of language
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What topics can be effectively and efficiently studied by Ethnographic Methods?

- > In general we use ethnographic methods **to study social issues or behaviours that are not yet clearly understood**. In such case entering the community with a detailed and quantifiable survey instrument would be premature.

Eg- Starting of this century- newspaper were replete with news about swamis & scandals

- > Ethnographic methods are also using when getting the people's own perspective on issues is an important goal.

Eg. The Nut Tribe, whose Family profession is prostitution; if viewed from outside immoral: Arm Chair vs. Lived Experience

Ethnographic Methods are used to:

- 1 **Define a research problem:** Well established research topics attract the researcher because of associated literature, which make it possible to formulate the working hypothesis that can that be tested using focused data collection tools. Other topics by contrast are needed to be studied on the ground as it were, before suitable hypothesis can be devised. In these topics ethnographic methods are suitable.
- 2 **Account for unpredicted outcomes:** Standard quantitative research is predicted on the assumption that problems can best be studied if they can be stated in terms of predictable relationship: dependent variables (factors that change) when an independent variable (a factor that seems to be a predisposing condition) is present. But sometimes, real life problems are difficult to fit into such a testable format.
Eg. A techno-scientific modern man surrendering before a Godmen
- 3 **Identify participants in a social setting:** When researcher set out to study a community that is considered to be well known and understood, they must realize that the dynamic of change leads to the inclusion in the network of social interaction.
- 4 **Document a process:** Unlike a statistical relationship, a process is composed of numerous and ever shifting elements. Much of life as it is really lived is a matter of dynamic process.

Ethnographic Method: Research Settings

Ethnographic research can be done wherever people interact in natural group settings. Bringing people together for a specific purpose in controlled laboratory settings is a valid technique for experimental research, but it is not ethnographic. True ethnography relies on the ability of a researcher to interact with and observe people as they essentially go about their everyday lives.

Ethnography as a method has evolved over a period of time- from use in **small-scale, culturally isolated communities** to **study of 'Gated communities'** to **study of 'communities of interest'** (group of people who share common interest **eg.** What is Domestic Violence?; How many treat it as Male violence against female?; Tis Hazari Court, every Saturday- aggrieved Husbands).

Factors for Planning Ethnographic Research

1 *Beginning with a Personal Inventory*

It is often said that one piece of equipment that an ethnographic researcher ultimately relies on is him or herself. It is very well to enter the field fully loaded with cameras, tape recorders, laptop and so on, but in the last analysis participant observation means that researchers are interacting on a daily basis with the people being studied. It is important that researchers begin with a candid assessment of him- or herself. The researcher has to check:

- > His or her emotional and attitudinal state
- > Physical and mental health
- > Areas of competence and incompetence
- > Ability to set aside preconception about people, behaviours, or social and political situations.

It is important to analyse one's self in relation to the research. A person who has been abused in childhood might decide to do research on child abuse to be explicit about his emotions. This entails the danger of slipping into activism

Some personal factors like hair style, clothing, jewellery, tone of voice are under a researcher's control and he/she can modify them to fit into a community to be studied. On the other hand, there are factors beyond the researcher's will, like gender, age, ethnic category, etc. A researcher should keep in mind that his/her main job is that of a researcher, not of a reformer. A researcher does not choose a field site in which he himself or she herself would become the object of discussion.

2 *Selecting Field Sites*

After thorough personal review, a researcher can apply objective criteria in deciding where he/she wants to do research.

- 1 Select a site in which the scholarly issue researcher exploring is most likely to be seen in a reasonably clear fashion. Researchers will develop a sense of the issue to be studied in a number of ways:
 - > A direct assignment by instructor
 - > A follow-up to a study conducted by a reputable researcher

- > An exploration of an issue that is currently in the news
 - > An outgrowth of reading of the scholarly literature
 - > The result of personal experience
 - > An intention to work for a social or political cause by collecting information.
- 2 Select a site that is comparable to others that have been studied by researchers, but not one that has been over-studied. There is a joke among anthropologists that the typical Navajo family consists of a mother, a father, three children and an anthropologist. Some sites are chosen because of proximity to University, but very often those are over researched and should be avoided. **There are also limits to the hospitality of even the best intentioned people.**
 - 3 Select a site with a minimum of gatekeeping obstacles. If a researcher plans to study Nuclear Power plants, he/she will most probably face difficulties in accessing the lobby. There are some matters that need to be taken care of. A background check by law enforcement officials might be necessary. Only researchers decide about the field when the process of gaining entry becomes too much hassle of researcher.

Using Ethnography to Study Gender-

Ethnography enriches analysis of gender relations in different settings by situating the observer at the heart of what Goffman (1997) would term 'the arrangement between the sexes'. Ethnography of gender- either alone or together with other methods such as document analysis, interviews, questionnaires, and statistics- leads the researcher to take into account the fact that gendered social relations are a dynamic, contextual process.

This enables him or her to spot and identify operative social stereotypes, social networks and social gender norms in a particularly efficient way. It also allows us to demonstrate the subtle influence of such stereotypes on how women get marginalized in 'male' spheres or how they get confined in 'mixed' or 'female' spheres to 'female' positions that are less valued in professional terms than male positions.

Ethnography enriches the identification and analysis of gender by inducing the researcher to focus on 'doing gender'. As Goffman would argue that in studying gender we are studying the ways in which 'the arrangement between the sexes' is produced, contradicted and legitimated. It is in daily interaction that 'sex-class makes itself felt, here in the organization of face-to-face interaction, for here understanding about sex-based dominance can be employed as a means of deciding who decides, who leads, and who follows' (Goffman 1997: 208).

Can there be a Feminist Ethnography?

- > There can be a feminist ethnography that draws on the distinctive strengths of ethnography and is informed by feminist principles.
- > Reinharz(1992) sees feminist ethnography as significant in terms of feminism because:
 - > It documents women’s lives and activities.
 - > It understands women from their perspective, so that the tendency that ‘trivializes females’ activities and thoughts, or interprets them from the standpoint of men in the society or of the male researcher.
 - > It understands women in context.

Overall feminist ethnography helps the researcher to understand and write how women’s experience of structure (their class and gender positioning) and institutions framed and informed their responses and how this process informed constructions of their own subjectivity.

Gaining Access in Ethnographic Research

In ethnographic research, gaining access is the most difficult step.

Four Forms of Ethnography

Setting Role	Open/Public Setting	Closed Setting
Overt Role	Type 1 William Whyte’s Classic Study of Street Corner life in a Boston slum area	Type 2 Atkinson’s study of medical school training
Covert Role	Type 3 Patrick’s (1973) study of a violent Glasgow gang	Type 4 Holdaway’s (1982) study of a police force in which he was already a policeman.

(Source: Bryman 2012:434)

Access differs in several dimensions like in **open setting or closed setting** and the type of role acquired by the researcher **overt or covert**.

- > **Open/ Public Settings**- research involving communities, gangs, drug-users and so on.
- > **Closed Settings**- organisations like firms, schools, cults etc.

- > **Overt Role-** researcher is open about his/her intentions in the field and ensures all members of the social group are aware of what is happening.
- > **Covert Role-** researcher is not informing the members of the group their intention and the reason for their presence in the group.

Covert Role in Ethnography

Advantages

- > No Problem of access
- > Reactivity is not a problem

Disadvantages

- > Problem of taking notes
- > Unable to use other methods
- > Anxiety
- > Ethical Problem
 - > Lacks informed consent
 - > Entails Deception
 - > Harm the practice of research

Can there be a totally Overt or Covert Role of an Ethnographer?

Over/Covert is a matter of degree. During Mattley's (2006) study on sex fantasy phone lines she initially decided to be open about who she is, but not why she wants to be hired. She was covert for her callers **but overt for her employer**. Generally mixed type ethnography is more often found because of:

- > Challenges of Covert Ethnography- Ditton's (1977) study in a bakery- practical difficulties of taking notes- toilets- **tissue paper- doubt- shifted to Type-2**
- > Ethical Issues

Access to a Closed Setting

- > Use friends, contacts, colleagues, academicians to gain access.
- > Support of someone within the organization who will play the role of sponsors.
- > Get access to the top management/senior executives because usually clearance is given by them.
- > Provide a clear explanation of the aims and methods.
- > The researcher should be honest about the amount of people's time he/she is likely to take up.

Access to an Open Setting

- > Come in contact with individuals who act as both sponsor and gatekeeper.
- > 'hanging around'

Ongoing Access

- > Gaining access is an ongoing activity for a researcher.
- > Gaining access to people comes after gaining access to a setting.
- > Problem while gaining access to people - suspicious – fear of identification.

Rapport

Establishing and maintaining rapport are essential to the conduct of ethnographic research that is based on participant observations. If anyone has doubt about his or her ability to fit in, a few point may be kept in mind-

- > Don't assume that communities closer to home or with cultures most similar to own will be easier to work in
- > Don't take too much for granted about the community you are going to study
- > Do not allow to be captured by the first people who make feel welcome.
- > Do make sure that the people who serve as principal guides to the community are themselves respected and liked.
- > Make every effort to be helpful
- > Take the time to explain purpose of your study
- > Do not be afraid to express own point of view
- > Inform people about the parameters of participant observations.

Roles for Ethnographers

Complete	Participant	Observer	Complete
Participant	as Observer	as Participant	Observer
_____		_____	
High			Low

Degree of Participation and Involvement

Gold's (1958) classification of Ethnographer's roles:

- 1 Complete Participant: Participates as a member and has full involvement. His/her identity is not disclosed. Complete participant and a covert observer.

- 2 Participant as observer: Participates as a member. But the members of that particular setting know the researcher. The researcher is in an overt role.
- 3 Observer as participant: The researcher only observes and his participation is limited. Limits to participation.
- 4 Complete observer: In this role, the researcher does not interact with people. He neither participates nor questions anyone, he only observes.

Potential Vulnerability of 'Going Native'

When the researcher lose the sense of being a researcher and gets wrapped up in the worldview of the people he/she is studying. The prolonged immersion of ethnographers in the lives of the people they study, coupled with the commitment to seeing the world through their eyes, lie behind the risk of actually going native.

Field Notes

- > take notes based on their observations.
- > write detailed summaries of events and behavior.
- > General principles to be followed in writing field notes:
 - > Brief & quickly
 - > At the end of the day
 - > Detail and clear
 - > Extensive notes

Lofland and Lofland (1995):

- > **Mental Notes:** particularly useful when it is inappropriate to be seen taking notes.
- > **Jotted Notes:** memory tickler to make the researcher remember about events that should be written later.
- > **Full Field Notes:** written at the end of every day.

Tips for taking Field Notes

- > **Begin each notebook entry** with the date, time, place, and type of data collection event.
- > **Leave space** on the page for expanding your notes, or plan to expand them on a separate page. (See the section above on "How do I expand my notes?")
- > **Take notes strategically.** It is usually practical to make only brief notes during data collection. Direct quotes can be especially hard to write down accurately. Rather than try to document

every detail or quote, write down key words and phrases that will trigger your memory when you expand notes.

- > **Use shorthand.** Because you will expand and type your notes soon after you write them, it does not matter if you are the only person who can understand your shorthand system. Use abbreviations and acronyms to quickly note what is happening and being said.
- > **Cover a range of observations.** In addition to documenting events and informal conversations, note people's body language, moods, or attitudes; the general environment; interactions among participants; ambiance; and other information that could be relevant.

Bringing Ethnographic Research to an End-

- > In ethnography, knowing when to stop is very difficult.
- > Because of unstructured nature and no specific hypothesis, the ethnographer finds it difficult to find the obvious end point.

Advantage and Disadvantages of Ethnography

Advantages

- > Deeper, more nuanced understandings
- > More ecological validity
 - > Represent what's really going on in some everyday setting
 - > What's meaningful to people: disconnect between e.g., survey questions... and how people think about things)
- > Respect for complexity of human activity
- > Design for human needs; reflect users' own issues and everyday problems

Disadvantages

- > Seeing the world in a single grain of sand
 - > comparative work needed
 - > build from multiple cases
- > Ethnography in a mobile, distributed world
 - > it's easier when the natives sit still, but we have to modify our methods and perspectives...

Recommended Books

LACKS LOTS OF TITLES MENTIONED IN THE MODULE

Angrosino, Michael (2007), Doing Ethnographic and Observational Research, London: Sage.

Bryman, Allan (2012), *Social Research Methods*, New Delhi: Oxford (pp.430-467).

Buscatto, Marie (2011), *Using Ethnography to Study Gender*, New Delhi: Sage (35-52).

Flick, Uwe (2009), *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, New Delhi: Sage (219-238).

Goffman, Erving. 1997. Frame analysis of gender. In *The Goffman reader*, ed. C.Lemert and A. Branaman. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Module VII

Narrative Analysis

Description of the Module

Items	Description of the Module
Subject Name	Sociology
Module No.	VII
Module Title	Narrative Analysis
Prepared by	SeynemHwranghkwI, Research Scholar, Department. of Sociology, Tripura University
Pre Requisites	Basic understanding of discourse as a method to understand the social world through the examination of language
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What is a Narrative?

Narrative inquiry or narrative analysis emerged as a discipline from within the broader field of qualitative research in the early 20th century. Narrative inquiry is a form of qualitative research that emerged in the field of management science and later also developed in the field of knowledge management, which shares the sphere of Information Management. Thus Narrative Inquiry focuses on the organization of human knowledge more than merely the collection and processing of data. It also implies that knowledge itself is considered Valuable and noteworthy even when known by only one person.

Narrative inquiry uses field texts, such as stories, autobiography, journals, field notes, letters, conversations, interviews, family stories, photos (and other artifacts), and life experience, as the units of analysis to research and understand the way people create meaning in their lives as narratives. It derives from the Latin verb *narrare*, “to tell”. It can also be found in oral story telling process. It is often used in case study research.

Box 1: HIV narratives

Squire (2000) conducted narrative interviews with thirty-four people infected or affected by HIV, who used HIV support groups for HIV positive people, and for workers, carers and volunteers in the HIV field. Some were interviewed on more than one occasion. Interviewees were not directed to produce autobiographical narratives, but in the course of the interviews, many did so. For example, interviewees who were HIV-positive produced narratives of how the identities that were forged immediately after diagnosis were derived from a stigmatizing identity. However, with time, they forged identities based on acceptance and also a shift from not being involved with others towards communion with others who were similarly affected by the disease. Other narratives described by Squire include a disengagement narrative of seeking to get away from the illness and a coming-out narrative, which was one of finding ways of coming to terms with a gay sexual identity. With the latter, coming out about being HIV-positive inevitably meant for many gay men coming out about their sexuality to those who were not aware that they were gay. The dilemmas and concerns

Three Key Features of Narratives within Sociology

- 1 There is a growing recognition among sociologists of the importance of the temporal dimension for understanding the interrelation between individual lives and social contexts. The paradigmatic example of this is the growing body of work around the concept of the ‘Life Course’, instigated by Glen Elder in the United States in the mid-1970s.
- 2 There is a long humanist tradition within sociology which stresses the importance of attempting to understand the meaning of behaviour and experiences from the perspective of the

individuals involved. In this context narrative can perhaps be understood as a device which facilitates empathy since it provides a form of communication in which an individual can externalize his or her feelings and indicate which elements of those experiences are most significant.

- 3 Sociological research is clearly carried out within a social context. In the past two decades, there has been a growing awareness of the role of the interviewer in helping to construct, and not just to collect, biographical information from interviewees.

Narrative and Social Research

Narrative inquiry is a form of qualitative research that emerged in the field of management science and later also developed in the field of knowledge management, which shares the sphere of Information Management. Thus Narrative Inquiry focuses on the organization of human knowledge more than merely the collection and processing of data. It also implies that knowledge itself is considered Valuable and noteworthy even when known by only one person. Narrative inquiry uses field texts, such as stories, autobiography, journals, field notes, letters, conversations, interviews, family stories, photos (and other artifacts), and life experience, as the units of analysis to research and understand the way people create meaning in their lives as narratives. Some of the common themes that run through research that pays attention to narrative in respondents' accounts are:

- 1 An interest in people's lived experiences and an appreciation of the temporal nature of that experience.
- 2 A desire to empower research participants and allow them to contribute to determining the most salient themes in an area of research.
- 3 An interest in process and change over time.
- 4 An interest in the self and representations of the self.
- 5 An awareness that the researcher him- or herself is also a narrator.

Narrative inquiry is a way of understanding and inquiring into experience through "collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus" (Clandinin & Connelly). Approaches to Narrative

Following are the four models of narratives which has been distinguished by Riessman(2004**b**):

- 1 **Thematic analysis:** an emphasis on what is said rather than on how it is said.

- 2 **Structural analysis:** an emphasis on the way a story is related. Issues of content do not disappear but there is an emphasis on the use of narrative mechanisms for increasing the persuasiveness of a story.
- 3 **Interactional analysis:** an emphasis on the dialogue between the teller of a story and the listener. Especially prominent is the co-construction of meaning by the two parties, though content and form are by no means marginalized.
- 4 **Performative analysis:** an emphasis on narrative as a performance that explores the use of words and gestures to get across a story. This model of narrative analysis includes an examination of the response of an audience to the narrative.

Characteristics of Narrative Research

- > Focus on the experiences of individuals
- > Concerned with the chronology of an individual's experiences
- > Focus on the construction of life stories based on data collected through active interviews: Active interviewing emphasizes the collaborative construction of the story
- > Uses restorying as a technique for constructing the narrative account
- > Incorporates context and place in the story
- > Reflects a collaborative approach that involves the researcher and the participant in the negotiation of the final text

Understanding Narrative Form

Having established a basic definition of narrative and demonstrated its widespread use in the social sciences, particularly by qualitative researchers, over the past two decades, it is now necessary to provide a slightly more detailed discussion of some of the definitional elements of narrative. In particular, as highlighted by Clandinin & Connelly characterization of narrative, the temporal, meaningful, and social aspects of narrative will be explored.

Temporality in Narratives

Perhaps the simplest definition of narrative, and one that has been traced back to Aristotle in his *Poetics*, is that a narrative is a story with a beginning, middle, and an end. Temporality is certainly widely accepted as a key feature of narrative form. In a frequently cited and influential paper stated that narrative provides a 'method of recapitulating past experiences by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events that actually occurred'. It is this placing of events in a sequence which is therefore considered by many to be the defining feature of

narrative. Intimately linked with the temporal qualities of narrative is the notion of plot. An important feature of narrative is that rearranging the narrative clauses, or the events within a narrative, typically results in a change of meaning. Stories rely on the presumption that time has a uni-linear direction moving from past to present to future. The plot within a narrative therefore relates events to each other by linking a prior choice or happening to a subsequent event.

Three commonplaces in Narratives

Three commonplaces of narrative inquiry, temporality, sociality, and place, specify dimensions of an inquiry and serve as a conceptual framework. Commonplaces are dimensions which need to be simultaneously explored in undertaking a narrative inquiry. Attending to experience through inquiry into all three commonplaces is, in part, what distinguishes narrative inquiry from other methodologies. Through attending to the commonplaces, narrative inquirers are able to study the complexity of the relational composition of people's lived experiences both inside and outside of an inquiry and, as well, to imagine the future possibilities of these lives.

- 1 **Temporality:** "Events under study are in temporal transition". Directing attention temporally points inquirers toward the past, present and future of people, places, things and events under study. The importance of temporality in narrative inquiry comes from philosophical views of experience where the "formal quality of experience through time is seen as inherently narrative". Drawing on philosophers such as Carr who shows that "we are composing and constantly revising our autobiographies as we go along", narrative inquirers need to attend to the temporality of their own and participants' lives, as well as to the temporality of places, things and events.
- 2 **Sociality:** Narrative inquirers attend to both personal conditions and, simultaneously, to social conditions. By personal conditions, "we mean the feelings, hopes, desires, aesthetic reactions and moral dispositions" of the inquirer and participants. Social conditions refer to the milieu, the conditions under which people's experiences and events are unfolding. These social conditions are understood, in part, in terms of cultural, social, institutional and linguistic narratives. A second dimension of the sociality commonplace directs attention to the inquiry relationship between researchers' and participants' lives. Narrative inquirers cannot subtract themselves from the inquiry relationship.
- 3 **Place:** Connelly and Clandinin define place as "the specific concrete, physical and topological boundaries of place or sequences of places where the inquiry and events take place". The key to this commonplace is recognizing that "all events take place some place". Indeed, for narrative

inquirers such as Marmon Silko, our identities are inextricably linked with our experiences in a particular place or in places and with the stories we tell of these experiences.

First and Second-Order Narratives: The Importance of Narrative for Sociologists

Having discussed the key features which can be understood as providing the defining qualities of narratives in general, a conceptual distinction can usefully be made between 'first-order narratives' and 'second-order narratives' (Carr, 1997) or what might alternatively be termed 'ontological narratives' and 'representational narratives' (Somers and Gibson, 1994). First-order narratives can be defined as the stories that individuals tell about themselves and their own experiences. First-order narratives occur spontaneously in everyday life during the course of normal interaction. They would include the stories produced by a family around the dinner table in the evening, each member of the family recounting the significant events that had occurred during the day – at work or school perhaps. First-order narratives would also include personal testimonies produced in more formal settings. For example, in the context of a job interview or a self-help group, an individual may be expected to provide a coherent account of key biographical events. The special significance of these first-order narratives is that they can be understood as in some senses constitutive of individual identities. This is why Somers and Gibson describe them as 'ontological narratives' (1994). Distinct from these individual or personal first-order narratives, second-order narratives are the accounts we may construct as researchers to make sense of the social world, and of other people's experiences. These narratives are therefore methods of presenting social and historical knowledge. In addition, these second order narratives do not necessarily focus on individuals. For example, Abbott's account of the formation of a profession might be defined as a second-order narrative (Abbott, 1988). While an interest in first-order narratives may perhaps be thought of as a preference for a certain type of qualitative evidence at the level of *method*, an interest in second-order narratives requires a decisive shift to the level of *methodology* or even epistemology.

Interviews in Narratives

Interview is one of the important tool for data collection in narrative. If we have the right informants, we can learn about the quality of neighbourhoods or what happens in families or how organizations set their goals. Interviews can inform us about the nature of social life, about the occupations and how people fashion careers, about cultures and values, and about the challenges people confront as they lead their lives.

We can learn also, through interview, about people's interior experiences, what people perceived and how they interpreted their perceptions. We can learn how events affect their thoughts and feelings. We can learn the meanings to them of their relationships, their families, their work, and their selves. We can learn about all the experiences, from joy through grief, that together constitute the human condition.

Box: 2 Student experience

The use of narrative interviews

Isabella Robbins adopted a narrative interview approach for her study of parents' decision-making in connection with vaccination of their children. She did this by encouraging them to tell about the vaccinations.

In order to capture what I considered to be complex decision-making routes for some people contemplating childhood vaccination, I employed qualitative in-depth interviews as my main methodological route. In these interviews mothers were invited to explain how they came to their decisions regarding childhood vaccination. They were encouraged to tell the story of their child's/children's vaccination/s, and how I took opportunities to follow up their talk. This narrative approach was supplemented towards the end of the interviews by inviting the mothers to respond to a series of informal vignettes, designed to elicit materials relevant to foreshadowed and emerging themes.

Eliciting Stories in Interviews - Asking the Right Questions

Having established *why* social scientists might be interested in hearing people's narratives in the context of research interviews, it is appropriate to turn to a consideration of *how* researchers might best elicit narratives from interviewees. Authors such as Graham (1984), Mishler (1986), and Riessman (1990) have each emphasized that interviewees are likely spontaneously to provide narratives in the context of interviews about their experiences, unless the structure of the interview itself or the questioning style of the interviewer suppresses such stories. Most people like telling stories and with a little encouragement will provide narrative accounts of their experiences in research interviews. In contrast to this view that narratives will emerge naturally during in-depth interviews, some authors have described situations in which they failed to obtain narratives from respondents even though this was the primary aim of the interview. This raises questions about the most effective ways of encouraging respondents to

provide detailed storied accounts of their experiences in interviews. Qualitative researchers are in general agreement that questions in interviews should be framed using everyday rather than sociological language. Example: Box 2.

Box 3: Questions developed by Hollway and Jefferson to elicit narratives in their first interview

1. Can you tell me about how crime has impacted on your life since you've been living here?
2. Can you tell me about unsafe situations in your life since you have been living here?
3. Can you think of something that you've read, seen or heard about recently that makes you fearful? Anything [not necessarily about crime].
4. Can you tell me about risky situations in your life since you have been living here?
5. Can you tell me about times in your life recently when you have been anxious?
6. Can you tell me about earlier times in your life when you have been anxious?
7. Can you tell me what it was like moving to this area?

Collecting Life Histories - The use of a Life History Grid

If the primary aim of carrying out qualitative biographical interviews is to obtain individuals' own accounts of their lives, it is clearly important not to impose a rigid structure on the interview by asking a standardized set of questions. However, it is also important to be aware that some individuals might find it very difficult to respond if simply asked to produce an account of their life. This is a particular problem if the focus of the research is on the broad life course or on experiences that may span a great many years. As was mentioned above, respondents are likely to find it easier to talk about specific times and situations rather than being asked about a very wide time frame. One approach is therefore to make use of a pre-prepared life history grid at the beginning of the interview.

The length of Narrative Interviews

The emphasis within in-depth interviews on allowing the respondents to set the agenda and on listening to, rather than suppressing, their stories also raises practical questions about the appropriate length for these types of interviews. For example, Riessman discusses how a research project that was originally conceived as using a structured interview to examine the differences between the post-separation adaptation of men and women was modified to allow interviewees more of an opportunity to talk and to tell the story of how their marriage had ended. She explains that in the pilot phase of the study, the structured interviews typically took

under two hours to complete, but in the research itself, when interviewees were allowed to tell their stories, many of the interviews lasted for up to six hours.

Repeated Interviews

A further practical consideration when using the method of biographical interviews is whether to rely on a single interview or whether to conduct a series of interviews with each respondent, and practice among researchers is very variable in this respect. Seidman (1998) makes a persuasive case for conducting a series of three interviews with each respondent. He suggests that the first interview should focus on the life history of the respondent, who should be asked to provide an account of his or her past life leading up to the topic or event of interest. The second interview should then focus on the concrete aspects of the respondent's present experiences, and Seidman advocates encouraging the respondent to tell stories as a way of eliciting detailed information. In the final interview, the researcher can then move on to encourage the respondent to reflect on his or her understandings of those experiences. Seidman argues that this three-interview structure also helps with establishing the internal validity of the findings as the researcher can check that the respondent is consistent across the three separate interviews.

Box 4: An example of organizational narratives in a hospital

Brown (1998) has examined the competing narratives involved in the aftermath of the introduction of a hospital information support system (HISS) at British hospital trust referred to as 'The City'. The IT (information technology) implementation was largely seen as unsuccessful because of the absence of clear clinical benefits and cost over-runs. Drawing on his unstructured and semi-structured interviews with key actors regarding the IT implementation and its aftermath, Brown presents three contrasting narratives: the ward narrative; the laboratory narrative; and the implementation team's narrative, thereby presenting the perspectives of the main groups of participants in the implementation.

The three contrasting narratives provide a very clear sense of the organisation as a political arena in which groups and individuals contest the legitimacy of others' interpretations of events. Thus, 'the representations of each group's narrative are described as vehicles for establishing its altruistic motives for embarking on the project and for attributing responsibility for what had come to be defined as a failing project to others' (Brown 1998:49).

Thus, while the three groups had similar motivations for participating in the initiative, largely in terms of the espousal of an ethic of patient care, they had rather different latent motivations and interpretations of what went wrong. In terms of the former, whereas the ward narrative implied a latent motivation to save doctors and nurses' time, the laboratory team emphasized the importance of restraining the existing IT systems, and the implementation team placed the accent on the possible advantages for their own careers, in large part by the increased level of dependence on their skills. In terms of the contrasting narratives of what went wrong, the ward narrative was to do with the failure of the

It is clearly very useful to be able to tape-record the interview. This also allows the interviewer to give full attention to the interviewee rather than needing to pause to take notes. For interviews lasting ninety minutes or more it would be impractical to try and remember the interviewee's responses and make detailed notes at the end of the interview. Recording is therefore now generally thought to be good practice in all qualitative interviewing. Without tape-recording all kinds of data are lost

The ethics of using Narrative in Research

As is courteously highlighted by the British Sociological Association's (BSA's) *Statement of Ethical Practice*, 'Sociologists, when they carry out research, enter into personal and moral relationships with those they study.' This is perhaps most evident in the data collection stages of qualitative research when the researcher is likely to come into direct contact with the research subject. This discussion of the specific ethical implications of using narrative in research will therefore start by focusing on issues raised by the use of narrative in the process of data collection in terms of the interaction between the researcher and research subject, issues around informed consent and the potential impact of the research encounter on the respondent.

The Ethics of Narrative Interviewing

During the 1980s, a number of researchers emphasized that the movement away from structured interview schedules towards giving research respondents more opportunity to provide narratives about aspects of their lives and experiences was a way of empowering the subjects of their research. For example, in line with other researchers advocating qualitative methods in the early 1980s, Graham highlighted the exploitative nature of a great deal of survey research. She suggested that story-telling provides an alternative to more structured interviews, whose format is determined by the researcher. Graham therefore advocated stories as the basis for informant-structured interviews, which 'more effectively safeguard the rights of informants to participate as subjects as well as objects in the construction of sociological knowledge' and argued that because the narrator is aware that he or she is providing information, the 'story marks out the territory in which intrusion is tolerated'

Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

Researchers have combined both qualitative and quantitative for the study of life event of the respondents: like the birth of a child and the date of starting a job could both be described as

events within an individual's biography. One example of this study is the life course research by Sampson and Laub's on Criminal careers.

Box 5: Life course research

Sampson and Laub's research on criminal careers provides a good practical example of how those adopting the life course approach have integrated quantitative and qualitative evidence. As Laub and Sampson write in explaining the rationale for their approach: 'We believe that merging quantitative and qualitative data analyses provides important clues for explaining the processes of continuity and change in human behavior over the life course'.

The starting point for Sampson and Laub's research was the study of juvenile delinquency carried out by Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck in the 1940s. This prospective study of the formation and development of criminal careers involved 500 officially defined young male delinquents who had been recently sent to one of two correctional schools in Massachusetts. This group was matched with a corresponding sample of 500 non-delinquents drawn from state funded schools in Boston. The average age of both groups was just over 14 years. The Gluecks followed up this original sample at age 25 years and again at age 32 years, with the data being collected between 1949 and 1965. The data were archived at the Murray Research Center in the early 1970s. Sampson and Laub recoded the Gluecks' data and used the original case records to construct a complete criminal history for each respondent in the study from the time of their first arrest until the final data collection at age 32. Quantitative analysis of this longitudinal event history data showed that both job stability and marital attachment in adult life had a positive effect on desistance from criminal activities independent of early childhood experiences. In other words, Sampson and Laub identified turning points such as getting a good, stable job and entering a satisfying marriage which appeared to protect individuals from further criminal activity. Sampson and Laub stress the importance of the historical context of their study. The men in the sample reached adulthood in the 1940s and 1950s and therefore had no contact with the wide variety of drugs, such as crack cocaine, available today. This historical period also represents a time when there were expanding employment opportunities and when early marriage rather than cohabitation was the norm. These factors all contribute to the life experiences and criminal careers of the men in the study.

Possible Starting Places for Narrative Inquiries Conclusion

While most narrative inquiries begin with telling stories, that is, with a researcher interviewing or having conversations with participants who tell stories of their experiences, "a more difficult, time-consuming, intensive, and yet, more profound method is to begin with participants' living because in the end, narrative inquiry is about life and living". Furthermore, from either starting point, narrative inquirers situate themselves in more or less relational ways with their participants. Some narrative inquirers see themselves and their participants as co-composing

each aspect of the inquiry as well as their lives as they live out the inquiry. Other narrative inquirers see themselves and their participants at more of a distance, and acknowledge the relational aspects as less important.

Conclusion

Narrative analysis therefore can be used to acquire a deeper understanding of the ways in which a few individuals organize and derive meaning from events. It can be particularly useful for studying the impact of social structures on an individual and how that relates to identity, intimate relationships, and family. For example: Feminist scholars have found narrative analysis useful for data collection of perspectives that have been traditionally marginalized. The method is also appropriate to cross-cultural research.

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Web Links:

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Module VI

Discourse Analysis

Description of the Module

Items	Description of the Module
Subject Name	Sociology
Module No.	VII
Module Title	Discourse Analysis
Prepared by	Dr.SharmilaChhotaray, Assistant Professor, Department. of Sociology, Tripura University Rashmi Das, Research Scholar, Department. of Sociology, Tripura University
Pre Requisites	Basic understanding of discourse as a method to understand the social world through the examination of language
Objectives	This module seeks to provide the assumptions and ideas central to discourse and critical discourse
Key words	Discourse, Critical, Meanings, Language, World View, Power
Word Count	

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Overview of the Module

This module is concerned with the approach to the examination of language in social sciences called discourse analysis and its variant called critical discourse analysis. The design therefore is crafted around the definitions, themes, theoretical-methodological approaches and basic tenets. Examples, a list of references used in the module and a bibliography for further reading are provided as well.

What is a Discourse?

Generally the word discourse means an extended verbal expression in speech or writing larger than a sentence.

- > Discourse means the study of language as it is expressed in society through conversations or in documents.
- > Discourse is the general idea that language is structured according to different patterns that people's utterances follow when they take part in various domains of social life. Discourse analysis is the analysis of these patterns.

The definition also varies as several disciplines have used in their own research purposes like Sociology, Psychology, Philosophy and Linguistics. Linguists define discourse in three ways.

- 4 First as language beyond a level of a sentence,
- 5 Secondly language behaviours linked to social practices and
- 6 Thirdly languages as a system of thought. It necessarily has to have a coherent unit, a meaningful, unified, and purposive.

Therefore, discourse is viewed as a social practice determined by social structures. Thus, analyzing discourse primarily means *how language is used in certain contexts* of conversations from a specific moment to a specific historical period.

Discourse Analysis

1 An Introduction

Discourse analysis (further DA), is a much known word for at least ten years in social sciences. Discourse analysis is not just one approach, but a series of interdisciplinary approaches that can be used to explore many different social domains in many different types of studies. There is no

clear consensus as to what discourses are or how they are analyzed. Stephanie Taylor (0000:00) puts it simply by saying that DA is to study well-established meanings or ideas around a topic which shape how we can talk about it. Largely DA sees language as performative and functional. It is a field of research for analysing talk and texts, which emerge from a diverse range of sources like social construction. The study of discourse generally has generally been influenced by theories and ideas emerging from linguistics, critical psychology, deconstructionism, phenomenology, post-structuralism, postmodernism and pragmatism. The kinds of data in a typical DA according to Taylor (0000:00), language data which can be written, spoken-found and collected. Apart from language, there are other kinds of **evidence** like images, behaviors, situations-found and collected **evidences**.

There are two major approaches to discourse analysis: ethnomethodological and Foucauldian traditions. The ethnomethodological approach to discourse **means as Grafinkel refers to understand the implicit rules governing human conduct**. Rather than exploring the rules that govern meaning-making, the Foucauldian approach to discourse focuses on the power inherent in language and seeks to understand how historically and socially instituted (institutionalized?) power (for instance doctors, patients, media) construct the wider social world through language.

DA is anti-realist as researchers claim that any aspect of the social world can be investigated and secondly it is constructionist. The constructionists emphasize on the discourse entails a selection of many viable interpretations and that in process of a particular depiction of reality is built up.

2 *Themes in DA*

Four themes are discussed by Alan Bryman (2008:501) for a useful understanding of DA.

- 7 **Discourse is a topic:** This means that DA is a focus of enquiry not just gaining access to aspects of social reality unlike traditional research interview.
- 8 **Language is constructive:** This refers that discourse is a way of constituting a particular view of social reality.
- 9 **Discourse is a form of action:** Language is a way of accomplishing acts. For instance, a person's discourse is affected by the context that he/she presenting oneself (blame, argue, talk)
- 10 **Discourse is rhetorically organized:** This means there is recognition by the DA practitioners that we want to persuade others when we present a version of events or whatever.

3 *DA- A Complete Package*

Although discourse analysis can be applied to all the areas of research, it cannot be used with all kinds of theoretical frameworks. Crucially it is not to be used as a method of analysis detached from its theoretical and methodological foundations. Each approach to discourse analysis is not just a method for data analysis, but a theoretical and methodological whole. It is a complete package. The package contains first, philosophical premises which include ontological and epistemological sides regarding the role of language in the social construction of the world, second, theoretical models, third, methodological guidelines for how to approach a research domain and fourth, specific techniques for analysis. In discourse analysis, theory and method are intertwined and researchers must accept the basic philosophical premises in order to use discourse analysis as their method of empirical study.

Example of a DA: National Identity

DA can be used in many ways like it can be used as a frame work for analysis of national identity such as how can we understand national identities and what consequences does the division of the world into the nation states have? Many different forms of text and talk could be taken for analysis. The focus could be the discursive construction of national identity in text books about Indian history, and then one can also choose to explore the significance of national identity for interaction between people in an organizational context such as a workplace. Another research topic could be the ways in which expert knowledge is conveyed in the mass media and the implication for questions of power and democracy.

4 *Approaches to DA*

There are three different approaches to social constructionist discourse analysis:

- 11 **ErnesrtLaclau** and Chantal Mouffe’s discourse theory,
- 12 Critical Discourse Analysis and
- 13 Discursive Psychology.

These three approaches share the starting point that our ways of talking do not neutrally reflect our world and identifies our social relations but rather play an active role in creating and changing them. For the students of Sociology, this module will be only emphasizing on Critical Discourse Analysis.

Critical Discourse Analysis

1 *Basics of Critical Discourse Analysis*

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analytical research that studies the way social power, abuse, dominance and other social inequalities are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. In other words:

- > CDA highly influenced by Michel Foucault, is a theoretical approach to studying the role of language in society that originated within linguistics that has applications across social sciences.
- > CDAs have been written extensively by the European linguists like Fairclough, Wodal and Dijk, however the intellectual origin of CDA actually goes back to British and Australian critical linguists of the 1970s(Names?).
- > The intersection of discourse, ideology and power has been the foundation of CDA.It analyses real and longer instances of social interaction which takes a linguistic or a partially linguistic form.
- > CDA wants to study and understand the social inequality that prevails in our society and it tries to **resist it**.
- > CDA sees the discourse of language used in speech and writing as a form of social practice. Describing discourse as a social practice, however, implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive or not so relevant event and the situation, institution and social structure which frame it. Here, dialectical relationship is a two way relationship:

1 The discursive event is shaped by situations and social structures and

2 Situations and social structures are again shaped by discursive event.

This provides the meaning that discourse is socially constituted and also socially shaped by discursive event as it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge and also the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people.

- > Critical discourse analysis can be said to be constitutive because it helps in maintaining and also reproducing the social status, and it also contributes in transforming it. And due to all these things it has become highly socially influential and it gives rise to some important issues of power.

Discursive practices may have major ideological effects- like they help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between social classes, women, men, ethnic and cultural majorities and minorities. This is because of the way they represent things and position people. They create a sense of hierarchy. So, discourse, may be racist or sexist tries to pass off assumptions about any aspect of social life as mere common sense. But the ideological loading of particular ways of using language and the relations of power which underlie them are often unclear to

people. So, critical discourse analysis tries to make unclear and invisible aspects of discourse more visible.

- > Critical discourse analysis is a form of intervention between social practice and social relationships. It is engaged and very much committed instead of being dispassionate and objective social science. It is not an exception to the normal objectivity of science.
- > The most distinctive thing about critical discourse analysis is that it both intervenes on the side of dominated and oppressed groups and also against dominating groups and it openly declares the emancipatory interest that motivate it.

2 *Aims of CDA*

Critical discourse analysis needs to satisfy a number of requirements in order to effectively realize its aims:

- 1 Critical discourse analytical research has to be better than other research in order to be accepted.
- 2 Another important aim of critical discourse analysis is that it focuses mainly on social problems and political issues, rather than on current paradigms and fashions.
- 3 Critical analysis of social problems which are empirically adequate is usually multidisciplinary.
- 4 Critical discourse analysis also tries to explain discourse structures in terms of properties of social interaction and especially social structure.
- 5 It mainly focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce or challenge relations of power and dominance in the society.

3 *Key Tenets of CDA*

Critical discourse analysis is based upon eight principles of theory and method as explained by Fairclough and Wodak (1997:271-80)

- 1 **Critical Discourse analysis addresses social problems:** It develops a critical awareness among the people about the discursive strategies.
- 2 **Power relations are discursive:** Critical discourse analysis tries to highlight the substantively linguistic and discursive nature of social relations of power in the contemporary society. It is shown how power relations are exercised and negotiated in discourse. The power relation between the media and politics is something which receives a great deal of attention. A very close analysis of power relations in political interviews in the media can through some light on this issue.

3 **Discourse constitutes society and culture:** We can only make sense of the most important points of discourse in contemporary social processes and power relations by recognizing that discourse constitutes society and culture as well as society and culture constitutes discourse. So, there relationship here is a dialectical one. This means that every instance of language use makes its own small contribution in reproducing and transforming society and culture, including power relations. So, we can understand the power of discourse here, and how important it is and for what reason it is struggling over time.

4 **Discourse does ideological work:** In our contemporary society, the opposition between government and people is explicit, it is very clear and visible but the ideologies are more implicit, it is expressed in an indirect way. They attach to key words which evoke but leave implicit sets of ideological assumptions such as freedom, law and order. The contrast between the government and the people is ideological.

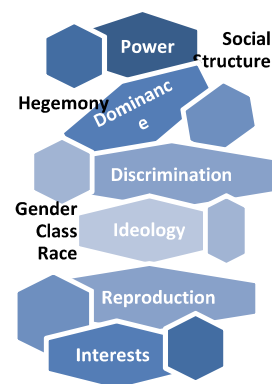
5 **Discourse is historical:** Discourse is always connected to other discourses which were produced earlier, and also with those which are produced synchronically and subsequently. Here, intertextuality and sociocultural knowledge gets included.

6 The link between text and society is mediated

7 **Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory:** Discourse can be interpreted in different ways due to the audience and the amount of context formation which is included.

8 **Discourse is a form of social action:** It is mentioned before that the principal aim of critical discourse analysis is to uncover opaqueness and invisibility and power relationships. It is a socially committed paradigm. One important area here is the use of sexist language. Guidelines for nonsexist language use have been produced in many countries. These guidelines will serve in making women visible in the language we use. This kind of discourse with and about women will gradually lead to change in social consciousness.

CDA does not have a unitary theoretical framework, but overall conceptual and theoretical frameworks that are closely related. CDA generally features notions such as: →



Conceptual and Theoretical framework Vis-à-vis Discourse, Cognition, and Society

CDA as a mode of investigation lacks a unitary theoretical framework. Its major challenge has been to explicate the relationship between discourse and social formations while attending to the layered nature of social existences. There are largely two major conceptual and theoretical frameworks that relates to discourse, cognition and society.

- 1 First the macro versus micro level analysis: The micro level of the social order includes language use, verbal interaction and communication. One needs to understand the role of CDA in these approaches.
- 2 Secondly, the social power as control: Power, dominance, and inequality between social groups are macro level analysis of the social order. The second most critical work is social power defined in terms of control. Therefore this needs to be understood through cognition through CDA which are rooted socially. For instance, researchers studying social cognition emphasise that individual or group discriminatory practices, such as race related violence need to be studied in conjunction with social cognitions – attitudes and ideologies – that are necessary to produce and maintain them.

CDA bridges the “gap” which is a sociological construct between micro and macro level approaches. There are several ways to analyse these levels like member-groups, action-process, context-social structure and personal and social cognition.

Beliefs and norms are largely disseminated and reproduced through public means of communication. Thus, CDA scholars have developed discourse-historical studies as a critical mode of inquiry through the in-depth analysis of hegemonic discursive practices within particular domains. Researchers rely on multiple data sources like newspaper, legislative texts, individual narratives to link text-internal analysis to socio-historical context and draw on interdisciplinary theoretical frameworks for interpretation and explanation.

Methodological Principles

CDA method can only be developed by understanding its explicit commitment to furthering social justice. The first thing is to start by identifying a social problem like media or politics that has discursive aspect. The specific social domain will also determine the kinds of data are to be analysed through examining newspaper articles, transcripts of television debates etc. Researcher may conduct interviews. There is no such rule for number of data collection as the decision will depend on the research project. CDA largely is conducted within an ethnographic framework.

The analytic methods of CDA should be thorough examination of a text/newspaper to understand how agentic or salient the ideologies appear in the text. A researcher may choose to concentrate on analysing the argumentation structure of a text and its rhetorical effects. Thus, the text may be read with regard to the sentences are linked through causal, contrastive, or other relations.

Example of CDA :Media Discourse

To understand the power of media upon many disciplines, the early studies focussed on easily observable surface structures such as the biased or partisan use of words. The critical tone was set by a series of “Bad News” studies by Glasgow University Media Group (1976, 1980, 1982, 1993) on features of TV reporting on various issues like war, the media coverage of AIDS. (see Fairclough 1995b.) An early collection of work of Roger Fowler and his associates (Fowler et al. 1979) also focused on the media. Thus, in an analysis of the media accounts of the “riots” during a minority festival, the responsibility of the authorities and especially of the police in such violence may be systematically de-emphasized by defocusing, e.g. by passive constructions and nominalizations; that is, by leaving agency and responsibility implicit. Fowler's later critical studies of the media continue this tradition, but also pay tribute to the British cultural studies paradigm that defines news not as a reflection of reality, but as a product shaped by political, economic, and cultural forces (Fowler 1991). (Dijk p.359)

Discourse analysis can be applied in analysis of many different social domains, including organizations, institutions and in exploration of the role of language use in broad societal and cultural developments such as globalization and the spread of mass mediated communication. The approaches share certain key premises about entities such as language and the subject are to be understood. They also have in common the aim of carrying out critical research that is to investigate and analyse power relations in society and to formulate normative perspectives from which a critique of such relations can be made with an eye on the possibilities for social change.

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Weblinks

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- <http://www.qualitativeresearch.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1298/2882>
- <https://sites.google.com/a/sheffield.ac.uk/all-about-linguistics/branches/discourse-analysis/what-is-discourse-analysis>

Module X

Writing Qualitative Reports

Description of the Module

Items	Description of the Module
Subject Name	Sociology
Module No.	X
Module Title	Writing Qualitative Reports
Prepared by	Dr.SharmilaChhotaray, Assistant Professor, Department. of Sociology, Tripura University
Pre Requisites	Basic understanding of discourse as a method to understand the social world through the examination of language
Objectives	This module introduces the basic features and basic technical aspects for writing a Qualitative Research Report.
Key words	Discourse, Critical, Meanings, Language, World View, Power
Word Count	

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Introduction

This module introduces formal and technical aspects of writing reports based on Qualitative Social Research. The brief exemplification of core aspects to be taken into account when writing Qualitative Reports (QRs) should work as a general guideline and stimulus for further enquiry and reading.

Purpose of Writing

A report is the common and necessary means to make research, findings and conclusions accessible to the public as well as the academic world. For the purpose of easy comprehension and accessibility, QRs feature a certain degree of uniformity in structure, layout and technical make-up, which will be dealt with in this module.

Common Structure of a Qualitative Report

1 *Introduction*

The introduction might be considered as the head of the QR and along the conclusion as the most important part for a readership, it introduces the nature, purpose and content of the article. Here the topic/subject matter of the thesis is to be introduced along all necessary background information such as relevant localities, geographical, historical, economic, social and demographic settings. Furthermore, it might be relevant to introduce one's own personal, educational or political background as well as motivation behind the research. Since no researcher can be entirely objective it is important to disclose all information that would help the reader to situate the QR. Further the introduction has to present the rationale of the research.

The second important objective lies in introducing the research question which is supposed to operate as a lens, focussing on particular aspects of the subject matter. The research question generally goes through two phases during the course of its development: (1) The first (rough) version stands at the outset of every QR; it is likely to be more tentative since it precedes the Review of Literature and the Fieldwork, which are essential to gain real knowledge about a subject matter. (2) With at least the Review of Literature at hand, the research question is to be refined adapting to the new insights, that might have changed certain pre-conceptions.

2 *Review of Literature*

A thorough review of literature is the most vital part of a QR. It's purpose is to inform the reader about literature and any readings which have been taken into account while dealing with the research topic. In some cases the review of literature can also demonstrate the emergence and the necessity of formulating a research question. A neatly drafted review of literature might not only include information on what has been read, but as well on what has been excluded (and why) or been unavailable at the state of writing. The purpose is to bring the reader on par with the researcher. The style of review is commonly topic- or argument-centred, which means that the QR's research objectives are central and the information drawn from the literary sources are brought into discussion accordingly. That means different arguments within one reference book are to be taken into account according to the sequence of problems discussed in one's QR. The review of literature deals only with the issues related to one's topics and is not a general review in any sense.

General observations resulting from the Review of Literature are often (1) that literature or other material on one's subject are scant, (2) that available studies deal with the overall subject in general, but do not give answer to one's particular question or (3) that the engagement with a subject or drawn conclusions are inadequate, inaccurate, overhauled or even wrong. In that way a research undertaking becomes justified and validated.

3 *Methodology*

Just as in case of the Review of Literature, the reader has to be informed about the methods employed to conduct the research. It needs to be explained why these methods were chosen (sometimes, why they have been preferred over others) and how they have been applied. This chapter of a QR discusses the methodology-research-question-correlation. Case-wise it can be equally important to point out its short-comings and limitations (if any) and discuss further perspectives and scenarios that were beyond the scope of the QR.

Commonly methodology is chosen in regard to the subject matter and facilitates two core issues: (1) It should provide the most effective means to investigate the matters of the research question/hypothesis presiding over the QR and (2) ensure a well-suited framework to evaluate, contextualise and discuss the findings. Therefore methodologies do not necessarily have to be the same or drawn from the same background. The first set of methodological instruments is chosen with regard to what needs to be investigated; the working conditions of migrant workers in Tripura for example. The second set pertains to the evaluation of the findings; which might..

Methodologies can be drawn from various publications (some of them are given under References: Methodology), but can equally be modified or interconnected always with regard to the research undertaken. It has to be kept in mind that different methodologies can carve out different aspects of one and the same subject matter.

4 *Presentation of Data*

The presentation of data is likely to constitute the major body of the QR. There are various modes of presenting the data. Two major modes of presentation and their characteristics have been coined as *Realist Tales* and *Confessional Tales* by Van Maanen (1988). In a nutshell, *Realist Tales* are characterised through the tendential absence of the author “from the text: observations are reported as facts or documented by using quotations from statements or interviews. Interpretations are not formulated as subjective . . . [but] may seek to give the impression of 'interpretive omnipotence' ” especially by employing “experience-distant concepts” and “far-reaching interpretations” (Flick 2010:415). In a *Confessional Tale* the author or field-worker is personally part of the narrative, presenting his/her experiences with all its short-comings and problems therewith achieving a different extent of credibility though first hand narration. Even though both narrative modes can exist in pure form, they are often combined contingent upon the needs of the QR, the research question and the methodology. A great deal of field data presentation is arranged under different sections or topics employing different sub-headings, making it easier to be dealt with and accessible for selective reading.

5 *Analysis of Data / Discussion*

The analytical part of the QR mainly draws from the presented data, the readings pre-discussed under Review of Literature and the methodological framework. The discussion is likely to elaborate and deepen previous sub-conclusions or reflections that came up during the presentation of data.

6 *Result / Conclusion*

This section is the most substantial part of a QR as it synthesises the research question, all important findings, their analysis, related conclusions and theorisation into one coherent, persuasive text. It should not be repetitive in character, but summarising, abstracting and focussed on the essential matters related to the research topic. Furthermore, limitations of the study and future prospects are to be discussed.

Further Comments on the Structure

The core itinerary of a QR, as briefly introduced in the above should not leave the impression of a fixed recipe that would automatically lead to an accomplished QR. Moreover, it is the

individual style of writing suiting the subject matter and the targeted readership which leads to the kind of credibility necessary. In that way it is always recommendable to keep in mind so-called mixed methodological approach including quantitative research methods as well (see Bryman 2009:675-679).

The following is a structure based on Beardsworth and Keil's (1992) study of vegetarianism that Bryman (2009: 672) offers. It shows that the QR is not necessarily deemed to be pressed into a fixed structure if the writer is capable to interweave all necessary ingredients to make his study clear and persuasive.

- 1 Introduction
- 2 The analysis of the social dimensions of food and eating
- 3 Studies of vegetarianism
- 4 The design of the study
- 5 The findings of the study
- 6 Explaining contemporary vegetarianism
- 7 Conclusions

Technical Aspects of Writing

Referencing

References are to be considered most essential for QR or any other academic work. Their most important aspect is to assure a reader about the sources of an argument and enable him to trace it back to its original context or deepen his/her understanding of a subject matter or argument, etc. Note that the following topics can only provide a small choice of aspects to be observed when writing a QR. Every student of the Department of Sociology is expected to thoroughly familiarise him/herself with the *American Sociological Association Style Guide* (ASA) and, as far as referred there with *The Chicago Manual of Style* (CMS) both available in digital copy at the Department of Sociology.

Quotation in Text

Every phrase taken from any textual or audio(-visual) source has to be given in double quotation marks to set it apart from one's own writing. The text has to be given exactly according to the source. Follow ASA (2.1.8 – 4.3) for different scenarios of quotations. The most basic are as follows:

- 1 Text Quotation with the author or authoring body (as in this case) given within one's own text. Note that the capital letter from the original text had to be lower-cased adjusting to the running sentence. See 4. for further details on the use of square brackets.
 - > The American Sociological Association (2010) instructs that “[q]uotations in text begin and end with quotation marks” (p. 25).
- 2 Quotation without mentioning the author or authoring body:

“Quotations in text begin and end with quotation marks” (The American Sociological Association 2010: 25).
- 3 Block citations in cases beyond 50 words. Set an indent of at least 2 cm for both left and right and set the paragraph style to 'Justified'. Note the three dots intersected by one space each ('. . .'), indicating that text has been omitted from the original quotation.
 - > The American Sociological Association (2010) states:

Block quotations are set off in a separate, indented paragraph and should be used for longer quotations (generally, 50 words or more). Block quotations should not be enclosed in quotation marks. . . . The author, date, and/ or page number follows the period in a block quotation and the "P" for "page" is capitalized when the page number is cited alone without author and date information, as in the above example. (P. 25)
- 4 Adjusting upper case as in 1. or interpolating additional information can become a necessity when incorporating quotation into a text. For such purpose the additional text is inserted within square brackets:
 - > The American Sociological Association (2010) instructs that “[q]uotations in text [should] begin and end with quotation marks” (p. 25).

Referencing without Quotation

It is possible to give more general references to a whole text or book without particular page numbers. This can be done in cases of well known/established theoretical content, but is more common when re-referring to a publication that has already been discussed in the QR.

- 1 With the author given within the written text:
 - > Michel Foucault (1990) objected the idea that sexuality could perpetrate the laws of nature.
- 2 Without mentioning the author in the written text, the reference appears at the end of the phrase in parenthesis:
 - > The general nature of money is characterised by its shortage (Houghton 1868).

- 3 The same styles can be applied when giving page number(s) for concrete reference. When referencing without quotation the author paraphrases the content of the original author:
- > Michel Foucault (1990:98-102) objected the idea that sexuality could perpetrate the laws of nature.
 - > The general nature of money is characterised by its shortage (Houghton 1868:12).
- 4 In case of three authors all names are mentioned only in the first citation and thereafter only the first name followed by 'et al.'
- > Urban growth is mainly dependent upon the city's economy (Ghosh, Dutta, and Bishwanath 1972: 22).
 - > The development of a functional sewer system is inevitable for urban growth (Ghosh, et al. 1972:67).

Plagiarism

Every author is obligated to identify his sources for direct text or indirect paraphrased quotations as described in this module and according to the ASA and CSM standards. A violation of this liability is called plagiarism. Refer to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plagiarism> for a detailed definition of the subject. Plagiarism, so-called copy-paste-writing, is deemed unacceptable. In case of a course work, an MA or a PhD thesis the student is compelled to write an entirely new thesis on a new topic. Plagiarism can result in expelling the student from the university. Everyone is requested to equally abstain from simple rephrasing of passages obscuring their origin from reference sources.

Footnotes / Endnotes

Since quotations and references are given within the running text, footnotes or endnotes are largely confined to provide additional / optional information to the reader that can deepen his/her understanding but would otherwise interfere with the flow of the running text. Some authors chose to work with footnotes to provide information that might be required for an interdisciplinary or lay-reader but not necessarily required for academics of his/her own discipline. Whereas footnotes are more common for academic QRs or MA / Phd thesis', the majority of publishers prefer endnotes instead. It is possible to convert footnotes into endnotes via software.

Reference Literature / Bibliography

The list Reference Literature is commonly given after the conclusion of the QR or (if existent) after the Endnote apparatus. Writing proper bibliography entries is most vital to ensure the reader (especially researchers) can identify and access the publication in question. In consequence of the enormous extent of published material,

For the Arrangement of Reference Literature and other important issue like undated or forthcoming publications, refer to ASA (Additional Guide Lines): 49-51. For writing bibliography in dissertations, abstracts, poster sessions and legal or government documents please refer to APA: 51-59.

If an earlier date of previous publishing is given, it should be included additionally in order to account for its actuality as a reference work:

- > Ahuja, Ram. [1999] 2009. *Society in India: Concept, Theories and Recent Trends*. Reprint, Jaipur: Rawat Publications.

Publication Categories

1 Monograph

- > Ahmad, Aijazuddin. 2012. *Social Geography of India*. 2nd ed. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company.

2 Monograph (2 Authors)

- > Adams, Bert N. and R. A. Sydie. 2001. *Sociological Theory*. New Delhi: Vistaar Publications.

3 Monograph (3 or more Authors)

- > Adler, Ronald B., George Rodman, and Jeanne Elmhurst. 2000. *Student Resource Manuel to Accompany: Understanding Human Communication*. 7th ed. Orlando, FL: Harcourt College Publishers.

4 Edited Volumes

- > Ahmad, Imtiaz. 1978, ed. *Caste and Social Stratification among Muslims in India*. 2nd ed. New Delhi: Manohar Publications.

5 Chapters in Books

- > Coffey, Heather M. 2010. "Contesting the Eschaton in Medieval Iberia: The Polemical Intersection of Beatus of Liébana's Commentary on the Apocalypse and the Prophet's Mi'rajnama" Pp. 97-137 in *The Prophet's Ascension. Cross-Cultural Encounters with the Islamic Mi'Rāj Tales*, edited by Gruber, Christiane and Frederick Colby. Bloomington and Indianapolis: India University Press.

6 Articles in Periodicals

Journals, Bulletin and Magazine are periodicals being issued at varying intervals, like annual, biannual, triannual, quarterly, monthly or even weekly in some cases. One Volume (number given in brackets) usually covers one year and the Issue Number (following the volume number in brackets) indicates the respective Issue within that period. The last issue of a quarterly journal in its tenth year would be Volume 10, Issue 4 → (10)4. Beyond Volume and Issue number an article might feature one or more months indicating a period that the issue covers, which are excluded in the APA style. Furthermore, one or more seasons are often given for a journal article, indicating a period that the issue covers (Spring, Summer, Autumn / Fall, Winter). Those remain equally unmentioned in the APA style. Note that there are various irregular cases (more than 20) that cannot be covered within this module and might equally be unmentioned in the ASA and CMS guide. (Note that the *Art Journal* starts its first issue in Autumn!)

- > Pollock, Sheldon (1993) "Ramayana and Political Imagination in India." *The Journal of Asian Studies* (52)2, May: 261-297.
- > Cantelupe, Eugene. 1971. "Picasso's Guernica." *Art Journal* (31)1, Autumn: 261-297.

7 Articles from Online Sources and E-Books

Follow the same pattern as articles, but include the date of retrieval, the web-link or a Digital Object Identifier (DOI). Hyperlinks are to be removed:

- > Ruiz Ruiz, Jorge. 2009. "Sociological Discourse: Methods and logic." *Form: Qualitative Social Research* (19)2: 1-23. Retrieved April 28, 2015 (<http://www.qualitativeresearch.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1298/2882>).
- > Herbst, D. M., Griffith, N. R., & Slama, K. M. (2014). "Rodeo Cowboys: Conforming to Masculine Norms and Help-seeking Behaviors for Depression." *Journal of Rural Mental Health* (38): 20–35. doi:10.1037/rmh0000008.

8 Other Online Sources

Follows the pattern of 7. but the Author or Source needs to be given individually:

- > Facebook. 2011. "Statement about the War in Iran by Max Mustermann." Retrieved March 20, 2012 (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/301671800091/>).
- > Brainyquote. 2012. "Quote by Ulysses S. Grant and Fyodor Dostoevsky." Retrieved December 20, 2012 (http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/in_my_opinion.html).

Appendixes

After the Reference Literature, Appendixes follows, containing Questionnaires, Schedules and all essential supported documents mentioned in the thesis.

Every item is supposed to carry a caption in running numbers such as Appendix 1, Appendix 2, etc. making them identifiable for reference in the running text of the QR.

General Aspects of Layout

Font style Times New Roman (12 point) is still considered standard for writing academic work in India. Nevertheless, sans-serif fonts like Calibri, Calibri light, Arial or Myriad Pro are more effortless to read and might be considered more suitable to modern design concepts. Quality is everything: a professional document shall at least feature some standard attributes briefly explained in the following.

- 1 Footer: The footer should at least display the running page number; whereas the author's name and/or date are to be considered in regard to the requirements and nature of the QR.
- 2 Header: The header can carry the title of the QR plus the chapter title. Section markers or page breaks into new page styles, can be used to create individual headers for each chapter.
- 3 Headings and Subheadings: Should be uniform for the whole document, thus apt to be read into the automatic table of content.

Cross-references

Developing an interactive document saves time and prevents mistakes occurring when the QR reaches a certain complexity. Cross-references (CR) update automatically according to any changes made and therefore constitute the most vital means to ensure all parts of QR remain interconnected. Some of the common CRs provided by Word, Libre Office or InDesign are given in the following:

- > Insert CR to footnote/endnote in the running text: (such as: see footnote 12, p. 14)
- > Insert CR to Figure or Appendix in the running text or footnote/endnote (such as: see Figure 3)
- > Insert CR to heading: (such as: refer to 'Economic Factors')
- > Insert CR to

The software provides different options for a CR as for example in case of 3. where one could include the page number as well (such as: refer to 'Economic Factors', p. 24) or only the pages number when referring to a topic, such as: 'see page 24', by choosing only page number when cross-referring to a heading on page 24.

Publication

Publication should be final goal of every QR, even though it will have to undergo certain changes according to the publishing format. Journals, for example, have their own individual requirements as in regard to length, structure, maximum number of illustrations and formatting, etc. Those standards have to be obtained from the journal in question, whereas

sample reading will give an idea about the general writing style and structure of articles. For contribution to an edited volume even more individual necessities might arise.

Presentation on Conferences

For presenting a QR at conferences it is crucial to keep the audience and time limitation in mind. Content and formulations should be concise and straight to the point. One should focus on the important core aspects of the QR: What was the research question, how was it dealt with, and what were the results and conclusions? One should chose visual material over textual when preparing a Power point Presentation.

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