METHODOLOGY AND PERSPECTIVES OF HUMANITIES

BA ENGLISH
SEMESTER 6

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Module I
Key Concepts

- The term 'humanities' is derived from the Latin expression *studiahumaniatis* meaning "education befitting a cultivated man".

- Art, music and literature are great power sources that can be used as tools during crises to change a hopeless condition.

- The Stranford Humanities Center defines 'humanities' as the study of how people process and document the human experience

- Philosophy, literature, religion, art, music, history and language have generally been categorized as humanities subject

❑ Various disciplines can be divided into two broad categories:

1. Sciences
2. Humanities

▸ Natural Sciences: The Oxford English Dictionary defines science as the intellectual and practical activity encompassing the systematic study of the structure and behaviour of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment. Natural sciences are the best articulations of the scientific method as the natural world is open to explicit observation by our sensory perceptions; the subject matter can be studied from the outside in an objective manner. The subjects usually categorized as natural sciences include: physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, earth sciences.

▸ Social Sciences: In *The Humanities: Methodology and Perspectives*, Abhijit Kundu and Pramod Nayar define the social sciences as the body of knowledge created when social behaviour of human beings is explained and predicted with the help of scientific methods. The subjects generally brought under this umbrella term include anthropology, economics, political science, psychology and sociology.

Various Subjects of Humanities

▸ Anthropology: scientific study of humans, human behaviour and societies in the past and present: it is the science of humanity

Physical Anthropology- branch that concentrates on the biology and evolution of humanity

Cultural Anthropology or ethnology, Social Anthropology- branches that studies the social and cultural construction of human groups

Psychological Anthropology- branch that studies the range of personality types in a given culture

Linguistic Anthropology- branch which studies how language influences social life
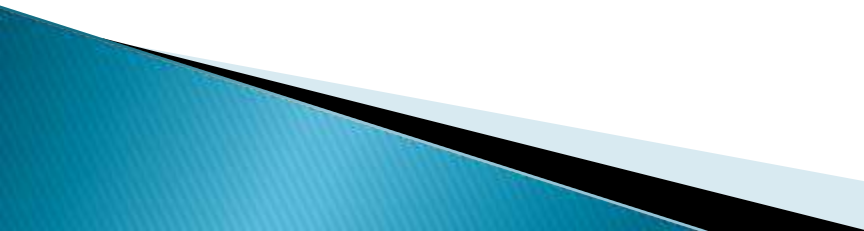
Archaeology- branch which studies early societies through the scrutiny of physical evidence such as art work, buildings, clothing, pottery and other artefacts.

- Economics: branch of social science which analyzes the production, consumption and distribution of goods and services.
- Psychology: science of the soul
- Sociology: The term coined by Auguste Comte(known as the founder of the doctrine of positivism)studies human societies, their interactions and the processes that preserve and change them

- Philosophy: study of general and fundamental questions about existence, knowledge, values, reason, mind, and language. As an academic discipline, philosophy has many sub fields:
  - Metaphysics – concerned with the fundamental nature of reality and being.
  - Epistemology – concerned with the theory of knowledge.
  - Ethics – concerned with the systematizing, defending and recommending concepts of right and wrong conduct.
  - Aesthetics – concerned with the nature of art, beauty and taste as well as the creation and appreciation of beauty.
  - Political philosophy – concerned with the study of topics such as politics, liberty, justice, property, rights, laws and the enforcement of laws by authority.
  - Logic – concerned with the study of principles and criteria of valid inference and demonstration; it distinguishes good reasoning from bad reasoning.
  - Philosophy of science – concerned with the foundation, methods and implications of science.

Module II: A critical overview of literature from the perspective of the Humanities

▸ Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines literature as "writings having excellence of form or expressing and expressing ideas of permanent or universal interest".

▸ Literature, like all other human activities, reflects contemporary, social and economic conditions. Class stratification was reflected in literature as soon as it had appeared in life.

❑ Text Types : A text can be defined as a piece of writing that you read or create. The type of texts depends on their purpose, structure and language features. One of the most commonly used classification of texts is the one based on the text's purpose and meaning. In this classification, there are three main categories:

● Expository texts: An expository text is a type of informational text that provides factual information about a topic using a clear, non-narrative organizational structure with a major topic and supporting information.

● Narrative texts : A narrative text entertains, instructs or informs readers by telling a story. Narrative texts may deal with the imaginary or real world and can be fictional and non-fictional

● Argumentative texts : Argumentative texts require the writer to investigate a topic; collect, generate and evaluate evidence, and establish a position on the topic in a concise manner.

Reality and Representation

- According to cognitive studies, reality enters our consciousness through a combination of neurological (nerve), bodily functions (like the eye or skin) and cultural factors that influence the way we see and interpret things.
- A narrative can be sum totaled as:

  ● The act of representation using signs (words, sounds, visuals, gestures) in particular sequences

  ● Our construction and interpretation of the world through the use of signs

- Reality comes to us in acts of communication and narrative – of memory, history, autobiography, biography, stories, literature, advertisements, propaganda, speeches and so on.

- Representation can seek to provide reality in two ways:

(i) Mimesis – or imitation, was an idea first suggested by the Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle. It is the imitative representation of the real world in art and literature. A poet or a writer is only imitating something that is original. Plato argued that the better the poet, the closer the poet's description will be to reality. Aristotle modified this argument to suggest that the poet's job is not to simply imitate the original, but to improve it. Thus, art must always seek to attain the perfect model of any object. Catharsis is the effect of mimesis.

(ii) Diegesis – is often taken as the opposite of mimesis. In a novel or story, the author might directly describe the events happening, and proceed to show us what the character is feeling or thinking. This is mimesis. However, the novelist can also choose to narrate the events indirectly. The narrator of the story might tell the story and leave us to discover the characters' feelings and thoughts. Here the narrator only points to the events, and leaves us the task of finding out for ourselves the 'truth'. This is 'telling' as opposed to 'showing' or mimetic narration where the audience or listener or reader must discover the truths about reality or human life from what the narrator tells. Diegesis is indirect representation, or re-presentation of reality.

❖ **Characteristics of Narratives**

➢ Type of artificial construction, not usually present in spontaneous conversation – as in elaborate description of things, prayers etc.

➢ A degree of pre-fabrication is experienced in narratives and poses a sense of familiarity. For example, the major characters in the novels of Dickens, Eliot and Hardy.

➢ Narration has a trajectory; the movement of the story is always unexpected.

➢ Narrative is a medium of communication which requires a speaker and an addressee.

➢ Sequences of logically and chronologically related events.

➢ The locations where events occur are given distinct characteristics and transformed into specific places.

➢ Presence of an omniscient narrator, who has 'god-like' ability to go everywhere.

Narration in Literature

- Consists of the plot, the story and the sequence of events unfolding as 'action'. Narrative theory focuses on three elements – teller/author, tale/text and addressee/reader.

- Real and Implied Author – The real author, say Charles Dickens wrote Oliver Twist and other novels. But the flesh-and-blood Dickens is not the same as the model of the writer constructed in and by the book. We assume that Dickens is the real author; the historical figure is merged with the person who has actually composed the book. The image of the author is constructed from the components of the book. This is the implied author, a concept first formulated by Wayne C. Booth in his The Rhetoric of Fiction (1951).

- ❑ **Narrator** - the person who is telling the story within the novel is the narrator. The narrator could be a character or a 'voice' that stands in for the real, flesh-and-blood novelist. There are various kinds of narrators, and each of them has been given specific terms and names, in narrative theory.

- ▸ A narrator who is outside the story (story meaning diegesis) he or she is narrating is a heterodiegetic narrator. This kind of narrative is usually known as the third person or omniscient narrative. Here the events happen below the narrator – he or she is like a god, viewing things happening without interfering.

- ▸ Sometimes a heterodiegetic narrator can narrate a story about other characters but from the inside of the story (that is, narrate a story that is not about himself/herself: he i-s a spectator to the events that happen around him). This is the heterodiegetic-intradiegetic narrator. An example would be Mr Lockwood in Emily Bronte's Wuthering Heights.

- ▸ On other occasions, the story is narrated by a man who is also a character in the story he is narrating. This makes the narrator a homodiegetic one. The homodiegetic narrative is often called a first person narrative.

- ▸ If the homodiegetic narrator is telling his/her own story then he/she is an autodiegetic narrator. Autodiegetic narrators are seen most clearly in autobiographies.

- ❖ **Literary Narratives** – The Formalists divided literary narratives into two – fabula and sjuzet. Fabula refers to the chronological sequence of events in a narrative. Sjuzet is the re-presentation of those events. Fabula is the story and sjuzetis the plot.

❖ **Vladimir Propp and the Russian Fairytale**

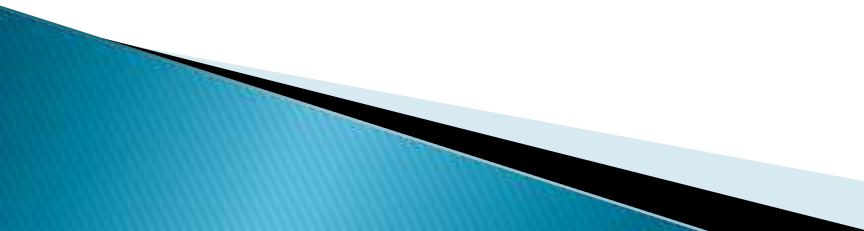- Vladimir Propp worked on Russian folktales analyzed hundred fairytales and concluded that all of them are constructed from a set of 31 functions. All 31 functions need not occur in one single fairytale.
- Every character in a folktale's plot had a specific function.
- All folktales can be reduced to a set of seven characters who generate the entire plot through their various relationships and actions. They are:
- (i) hero (ii) false hero (iii) villain (iv) helper (v) donor/provider (vi) princess and her father (vii) dispatcher.
- This kind of analysis became popular from the 1940s, where critics began to pay attention to the constituents of literary narratives.

□ **French Structuralism and Narratology**

➤ French Structuralism galvanized the formation of narratology; the publication of the journal *Communications* resulted in new theories of narrative art by leading structuralists like Roland Barthes, Umberto Eco, Gerard Genette, A. J. Greimas and Tzvetan Todorov.

➤ A. J. Greimas formulated a set of six actants that provide the rules for all narratives. These pairs are present in all narratives:

▸ 1. Subject/Object

▸ 2. Sender/Receiver

▸ 3. Helper/Opponent

❖ Roland Barthes argued that literary narratives consist of signs (words that produce characters and events) that are influenced by five codes. They are:

1. Proairetic code – This refers to the sequence in which the events of a story unfold. The code describes the sequence of 'this happened and then this happened'.
2. Hermeneutic code – This is the code that informs our interpretation. It helps us understand the answers to questions like 'what happened?', 'how?', 'why?', 'by whom?'.
3. Cultural codes – Those elements of common knowledge that we share as a community about our common history, our culture, our geography.
4. Semic code – The code that draws upon a common set of stereotypes. For example, a man in white clothes and wearing a Gandhi cap is a semic code that represents a common stereotype that requires no explanation: we immediately recognise him as a politician.
5. Symbolic code – It extends beyond the immediate stereotype to refer to something larger. For example, associations of night with evil and fear, sunlight with knowledge and happiness are common symbolic codes.
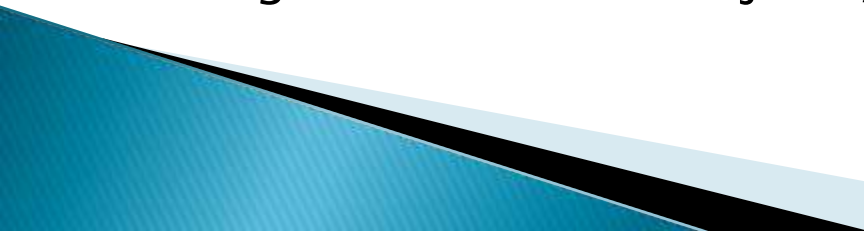
❖ Another important thinker in the criticism of literary narratives is Gerard Genette; he proposed that all literary narratives contain three levels of narration.

1. Histoire/story – which is the set of real actions/events that happened and need to be told. This is the content of all narratives.
2. Recit/narrative – is the story-telling, either in oral or written form. It is the speech or writing of the story teller through which the story comes to us. It is also called 'text'.
3. Narrating – is the larger process of recounting (the novel as a whole, for example) that produces the recit. Narration is the act of producing the text, either by the speaker or author.

Narration in Philosophy

- Philosophical texts have always used narrative in order to explore the various avenues of the discipline like self, identity-formation, existence, knowledge and so on. Philosophical texts are generally concerned with the ways in which stories and selves are connected, and how identities are created within narratives. Philosophy's studies of moral values, identity, subjectivity and selfhood are quite often studies of the narrative modes through which the individual constructs his/her identity. The link between philosophy and narration can be studied at two levels:

(i) Philosophy's dependence on narratives (what can be called the philosophical narrative)

(ii) Philosophy's analysis of various kinds of narratives in order to propose an understanding of human experience, life and truth

- Philosophical narratives: Philosophy uses narratives and analyses narratives in order to explain its arguments. Political philosophers, religious texts and scriptures etc have also used narrative modes to convey their formulations on truth, human life, morals, values and principles of living.

Narration in History

- In the earlier times, past tradition was handed down to posterity through oral folktales and folk songs. The advent of the printing technology enforced the idea of written history.

- In the Indian culture, the epic forms which were traditionally handed down in the form of stories became the main source of reference to our ethnicity and culture. In modern times, however, the task fell to the historians to preserve the past on paper. Thus, narratology has an inevitable role to play in the formation of history, whether it is ancient history captured in oral narratives or modern history captured in written narratives.

- History is written through the perspective of the historian and it can be different if written by another person. For history to be effective in communicating the past to the present and future, it must make use of effective narrative methods.

❑ Hayden White, a theorist of history, talks about three main modes of communicating events from the past:

▸ **Annals Mode** – History can be narrated simply as a form of listing important events. Annals mode of narration portrays only a skeleton form of history in a chronological order. There is no central theme or coherence. They do not give a detailed description of the incident or event.

▸ **Chronicle Mode** – The chronicle mode of representation provides with detailed history while having a central theme or subject. It is coordinated under one particular group of events and is more orderly in nature. It follows a chronological order of events and connects each event with the next by giving genuine and significant information.

▸ **Historical Narrative** – It gives a detailed description about the past, explaining cause and effect of each incident without leaving any room for further explanation. They create a close-knit form of narrative style and bring about a sense of completion. The past is presented in the form of a story with components like characters, cause–effect sequence, chronology, larger themes and subjects, description and interpretation.
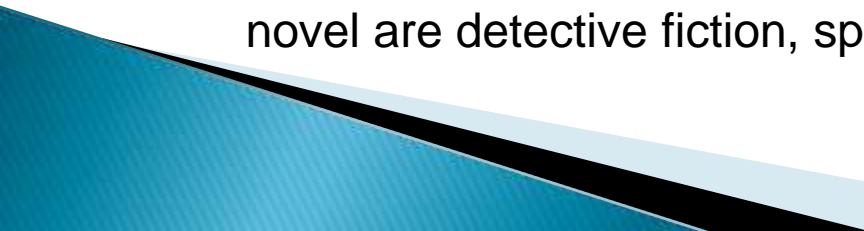
Textuality and Reading

- Narratives are representations that the reader has to interpret. Thus, the process of narration assumes an author (the one who writes), the text (the printed work, the language, the story) and the reader (who engages with the language and gets meaning out of the narrative).

- **Textuality (Nature of Texts):** The text has traditionally been perceived as self-contained - complete and offering its meaning to the astute reader. The New Critics argued that meaning rests within the text, and there is no need to step outside it to discover its meaning. Thus, this interpretation presents the text as a coherent, fixed entity whose meaning is always within it.

- The French critic Roland Barthes argued that a literary work can no longer be regarded as a stable structure. A text is unlimited, and open to many interpretations. The meaning of a text rests with the reader. As a result, a text's meanings are endless and multiply depending on the reader. There is no final, absolute or 'true' meaning.

- No literary narrative can be completely original because it adapts or appropriates other narratives. A text is therefore unlimited.

- Reader :Textuality discusses two components of narrative – the author and the text.

- A novel is written by a flesh-and-blood person, the 'real' author. The story inside the novel is narrated by a narrator – a speaker or storyteller who may simply be one of the characters in the tale.

- The narrative consists of a text. The text constructs an addressee, to whom the story is told. This is the narratee; a figure who is the direct recipient of the story. The narratee is an imaginary reader with particular qualities; this reader is a model and not necessarily a true person.

Literary Genres

- **Fictional Novel** – A novel is a relatively long work of narrative fiction, normally written in prose form, and which describes intimate human experiences. There are many kinds of fictional novels:

  - **Historical novel** – a novel that has as its setting a period of history and that attempts to convey the spirit, manners and social conditions of a past age with realistic details. Examples include Walter Scott's Ivanhoe, Boris Pasternak's Doctor Zhivago.
  - **Picaresque novel** – ia novel which depicts the adventures of a roguish but appealing hero, from a low social class who lives by his wits in a corrupt society. Examples include Henry Fielding's Tom Jones, Voltaire's Candide.
  - **Sentimental novel** – or the novel of sensibility is an 18th century literary genre; it exploits the reader's capacity for tenderness, compassion or sympathy. Examples are Samuel Richardson's Pamela, Goethe's The Sorrows of Young Werther.
  - **Gothic novel** – is a novel that has a prevailing atmosphere of mystery and horror, popular especially in the 18th and 19th century. Examples include Horace Walpole's The Castle of Otranto, Mary Shelley's Frankenstein.

- **Novel of manners** – a novel that recreates a social world, conveying with finely detailed observation the customs, values and morals of a highly complex society. Examples are Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice, William Thackeray's Vanity Fair.
- **Epistolary novel** – a novel written in the form of letters. Examples include Bram Stoker's Dracula, Alice Walker's The Colour Purple.
- **Bildungsroman** – a novel which depicts a coming-of-age story; focuses on the psychological and moral development of its main character from his or her childhood through youth to adulthood. Examples are Charles Dickens' David Copperfield, James Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.
- **Crime novel** – a novel that centers on a criminal act, and especially on the investigation by an amateur or a professional detective. Examples include Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express. Sub-categories of crime novel are detective fiction, spy thrillers, psychological thrillers etc.

❖ Non-fiction – If fiction is imaginary, non-fiction is the opposite-it comes from real life. Works of non-fiction are all based on real-world experiences. These include: newspapers, journals, diaries, academic textbooks. Most of the time, the purpose of non-fiction is to pass on information and educate the reader about certain facts, ideas or issues.

❖ Biography/ Autobiography A biography is a book written by an author about another (real) person. Examples include James Boswell's biography of Dr. Samuel Johnson, Abul Fazal's Akbar Nama. An autobiography is written by the author about his or her own life and experiences. Examples are The Story of My Experiments with Truth by Mahatma Gandhi, My Story by Madhavi Kutty.

❖ Drama – In literature, a drama is the portrayal of fictional/non-fictional events through the performance of written dialogue, which can be either prose or poetry. The term 'drama' comes from a Greek word which means action. Drama is usually associated with two masks – the laughing mask and the crying mask, which represent the traditional generic division of drama into comedy and tragedy. Each chapter of the drama is called acts and is further divided into scenes. The history of Western drama involves various phases like classical Greek drama, classical Roman drama, Medieval drama, Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, English Restoration Comedy, Modern and Postmodern dramas.

❖ Poetry : A poem is a collection of spoken or written words that expresses ideas or emotions in a powerfully vivid and imaginative style. A poem is comprised of a particular rhythmic and metrical pattern; it is a literary technique that is different from prose or ordinary speech, as it is either in metrical pattern or in free verse. The various types of poems include:

➢ **Haiku** – A type of Japanese poem consisting of three unrhymed lines, with mostly five, seven and five syllables in each line.

➢ **Free verse** – Consists of non-rhyming lines, without any metrical pattern, but which follow a natural rhythm.

➢ **Epic** – A lengthy poem, often written in blank verse, in which the poet discusses a lofty subject matter and presents a 'heroic' figure.

➢ **Ballad** – A type of narrative poem which is usually about folklore or legends. It may take the form of a moral lesson or a song.

➢ **Sonnet** – It is a form of lyrical poem containing fourteen lines, written in iambic pentameter.

➢ **Elegy** – A melancholic poem in which the poet laments the death of a subject.

Literary Interpretation and Evaluation

➢ Literary criticism can be defined as "an informed analysis and evaluation of a piece of literature" or as "a written study, evaluation and interpretation of a work of literature". The literary criticism is a concept, formed on the basis of critical analysis and primarily estimates the value and merit of literary works for the presence or quality of certain parameters of literary characteristics.

➢ **Types of Literary Criticism** : Literary criticism includes various techniques of literature analysis which are widely used for critical essay writing and drafting analysis for texts and materials against specific merits of evaluation.

  ▪ **Objective Analysis**: An objective analysis makes uses the technique of independently investigating a particular subject matter with reference to the existing facts, figures, events and background information. An objective analysis can also be referred to as statistical interpolation, objective mapping, or systematic probing into a subject and is completely devoid of personal feelings and viewpoint.

  ▪ **Traditional Criticism**: The traditional criticism approach examines how the author's life, his/her biographical information, contemporary times and effect of his life circumstances on his inspiration and their reflection in his works. This technique is commonly used in general surveys of English literature. It includes a general analysis of the writers as opposed to a detailed analysis of their individual works.

- **New Criticism**: The new criticism approach is mostly used in poetry analysis and evaluates elements like diction, imagery, stanza structure, verse form, meanings, particularly the complexities of meaning. This form of critical analysis refrains from analyzing the biographical and historical context of a poem. Sociological Criticism: The sociological criticism approach deals with the direct analysis of society with reference to societal problems, conflicts and contemporary issues. Areas of analysis typically include events, happenings, cultural trends and effects of modernism.
- **Rhetorical Criticism**: The rhetorical criticism approach makes use of the technique of persuasion and aims to understand the conveyance of the content of poetry and other works of art. It evaluates the angle of approach, presentation of arguments, evidence and attitude.
- **Stylistic Criticism** The stylistic critical technique evaluates the manner of presentation for any work and focuses on the minor details like diction, vocabulary, tone and various style elements.

- **Metaphorical Criticism** A metaphorical critical analysis makes use of the use, nature, purpose and evaluation of metaphors used in any work. The analysis probes into the meaning and illustration along with the message conveyed of the metaphorical stance being used.
- **Structuralist Criticism** The structural critical analysis studies symmetry, trends and patterns for a particular society or for a societal comparative analysis of various societies, underlying patterns of symmetry which are held to be common to all societies. Corroboration is drawn from sociology and anthropology, and the study techniques categorize and evaluate the work in larger context rather than assessing its quality alone.
- **Biographical Criticism** A biographical critical analysis evaluates a poem in terms of the reflection of the writer's psychology, or as biographical data piece. This kind of analysis focuses on the interrelationship of a particular work in context of understanding the influences, inspiration and circumstances of the writer.

- **Marxist Criticism**: In case of the Marxist critical analysis, poetry is analyzed on the basis of its political correctness and calls for mention of support for workers against capitalist exploitation andperils of free market.

- **Historical Criticism** : Historical criticism analyzes poetic works in their historical context and evaluates the use of allusions, words, phrases and diction along with conventions and expectations at the time of when the written works are/were produced.

- **Psychological (Freudian) Criticism**: Psychological critical analysis examines texts and works for the portrayal of sexual imagery and against other Freudian concepts; struggles of the superego, the Oedipus complex, repressed contents of consciousness, etc. The purpose of Freudian analysis is to highlight the existence of psychic conflicts rather than looking for aesthetical merits.

- **Mythological (Archetypal) Criticism**: Mythological criticism evaluates content for instinctual andinnermost emotions in human nature which are influenced by certain events, happenings and character situations. The analysis is based on communal beliefs since mythology is strongly derived from religious beliefs, anthropology, and cultural history.
- **Moralist Criticism**: The moral critical approach examines poetry and art works against standard ethical and civil criteria; humanistic, societal impact, tolerance, equality, social justice and sensitivity. This approach adheres to the humanistic and civil element in poems, dramas and other art work and evaluates the impact and influence of works of literature in a stringent moral context.
- **Feminist Criticism**: Feminist critical analysis is concerned with the politics of women's authorship, representation of the women's condition within literature. Origin of feminine criticism is originally derived from the classic works of 19th Century women authors like George Eliot and Margaret Fuller. Based on the feminist theory, the feminist critical evaluation analyzes elements like stereotypes of women, images of women in literature, literary mistreatment of women, place of women in patriarchal societies and challenges faced by women in the modern era.
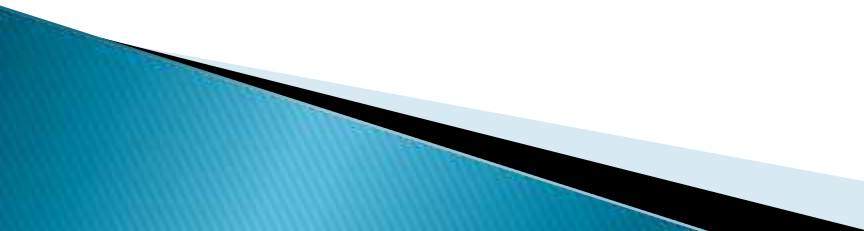
Module 3
Unit One: Text-Oriented Approaches

- M. H. Abrams in his essay, Orientalism of Critical Theories, outlines four different approaches in the field of criticism and theory:

- Mimetic theory – which focuses on the relationship between the text and the universe.

- Pragmatic theory – which focuses on the relationship between the text and the audience.

- Expressive theory – which focuses on the text-author relationship.

- Objective theory – which focuses on the analysis of the text in isolation.

- Roland Barthes makes a distinction between the terms 'work' and 'text' – "the work can be held in the hand, the text is held in language, it only exists in the movement of the language". Therefore the 'text' is the linguistic structure possessing signs that convey meaning and allow interpretation, while the 'work' represents a whole creation that can be physically brought, like a book.

- A text-oriented approach focuses on the 'text' and analyses the form, literary devices, structure and meaning contained within it. Anything outside of the 'text' is not considered for scrutiny.

Philology

- The term philology originates from the Greek terms philo (love) and logos (word, reason) and literally means a love of words.

- Generally speaking, philology can be conceived as a combination of linguistics, literary studies and history.

- **Branches of Philological Studies**

- **Comparative philology** : Comparative philology is the study of the relationship between languages; it is a combination of synchronic and diachronic approaches to the study of language.

- **Textual Philology** : Textual Philology is a branch of philology, which includes the study of texts and their history, in a sense, including textual criticism. The textual philologist will seek to reconstruct an author's original text by painstakingly going through available manuscripts, later editions and historical data.

- **New Philology** : New Philology rejects the method of Textual Philology; it concerns a return to and re-emphasis on the original manuscript as the focal point of study. New Philologists do not allow the process of editing or reconstruction of the original manuscripts and study the actual text without any amendments. Close attention is paid to all elements of the manuscript including the manuscript's markings, illustrations, layout and marginalia as well as its transmission history and treatment by readers and writers.

- **Cognitive Philology** : Cognitive Philology studies written and oral texts as the product of human mental/cognitive processes. Cognitive philologists compare documentary evidence emerging from textual investigations with results of experimental research, especially in the fields of cognitive psychology and neurosciences. This helps in the study of the evolution of narratives in so-called natural conversation and selective process which lead to the rise of literary standards for storytelling.

- **Decipherment** : Decipherment is another branch of philology which specializes in resurrecting dead languages such as the decipherment of hieroglyphs using the Rosetta stone by Jean-Francois Champollion.

Stylistics and Rhetoric

- **Stylistics** : Generally considered as a branch of applied linguistics, stylistics/literary linguistics can be defined as the study of style in literary texts, with special emphasis on the figures of speech, tropes and other rhetorical devices used to provide variety and distinctness to someone's writing. Stylistics is a combination of linguistic analysis and literary criticism For instance, Cicero classified style under three different heads – high (grand), middle (mean) and low (plain).

- Stylistic features of language can be applied at two levels:

    1. Rhetorical level – character development, dialogue, foreshadowing, form, imagery, irony, juxtaposition, mood, pacing, point of view, structure (beginning, action, climax, denouement), symbolism, theme and tone.

    2. Syntactic level – alliteration, assonance, colloquialisms, diction, jargon, metaphor, repetition, rhyme, rhythm, sentence variety, syntax.

- ❖ **Rhetoric** : Rhetoric is the art of persuasion. Along with Grammar and Logic, it is one of the three ancient arts of discourse. Rhetoric studies the capacities of writers or speakers needed to inform, persuade or motivate particular audiences in particular situations. In the literary context, rhetoric is limited to the insights and terms developed by the rhetoricians of classical Greece and Rome. Rhetoric typically provides a heuristic for understanding, discovering and developing arguments for particular situations.
- ▸ In *The Art of Rhetoric*, Aristotle discusses in detail the three means of persuasion that an orator must rely one:
- ○ **Ethos** – those grounded in credibility
- ○ **Pathos** – the emotions and psychology of the audience
- ○ **Logos** – patterns of reasoning
- ▸ The five canons/phases of rhetoric were developed in classical Rome:

    1. Invention/inventiois the method used for the discovery of argument.

    2. Arrangement/dispositio is the system used for the organization of argument

    3. Style/elocutio is the term for the mastery of stylistic elements

    4. Memory/memoriais the term for aspects involving memory

    5. Delivery/pronuntiatiois the discipline of delivering speeches

New Criticism

- New Criticism, a formalist movement in literary criticism, emphasized close reading, in order to understand how a work of literature functioned as a self-contained aesthetic object.

- The movement derived its name from John Crowe Ransom's book published in 1941 The New Criticism.

- Seminal works of New Criticism include Practical Criticism (1929) by I. A. Richards, Seven Types of Ambiguity (1930) by William Empson, T. S. Eliot's essays like "Tradition and the Individual Talent", "Hamlet and his Problems"etc.

- Other figures associated with New Criticism include Cleanth Brooks, R. P. Blackmur, Robert Penn Warren and W. K. Wimsatt Jr.

- New Critics aimed to exclude the reader's response, authorial intention, historical and cultural contexts, and moralistic bias from the analysis of literature, seeking to bring the focus back on the relationship between the form of the 'text' and its meaning.

- To the New Critics, poetry was special – a means of communicating feelings and thoughts which could only be expressed in the 'literary' language. The 'literary' language differed qualitatively from the language of science or philosophy or everyday speech for that matter. New Critics set out to define and formalize the qualities of poetic thought and language, utilizing the technique of close reading. This 'close reading' gave special emphasis on the connotative or associative values of words and on the multiple functions of figurative language (symbol, metaphor, image).

❑ Basic tenets of New Criticism:

● Autonomy of the text –text as an independent entity. As far as the New Critics are concerned, the text is untouched by the biography and temperament of the author, socio-cultural conditions of the time of writing the work and the reader's response.Close reading – It is a procedure that involves comprehensive analysis of a 'text' giving special attention to its various components. In close reading, the New Critic strives to understand the multiple meanings of a word or a passage.

● Verbal principles – New Critics are primarily concerned with the language (verbal meaning) and the organization (structure) of a text and the organic unity of the two. In the words of F. R. Leavis, New Critics focus strongly on "the words on the page" – they want to understand how the literary text speaks itself through the words (interpretation of its multiple meanings and the association of various words with each other), figures of speech and symbols. New Criticism also assumes the superiority of literary language.

● Genre division is not relevant – Even though the New Critics acknowledge the various genres of literature, it is not relevant in the context of analysis of literature. Rather than the Aristotelian concepts of plot, character, thought, the text is made up of linguistic elements like words, images and symbols in New Criticism, whether it is prose, poem or drama.

Key Concepts in New Criticism

- **Irony** – It is defined as an expression of meaning which is often humorous or sarcastic, by the use of language of different tendencies. In other words, irony implies a distance between what is said and what is meant. There are different types of irony such as verbal irony, non-verbal irony and dramatic irony. While verbal and dramatic irony includes either spoken or written language, non-verbal irony does not include the use of language.

- **Paradox**: The word 'paradox' is derived from the Greek term paradoxon. and was originally used to designate a statement which was contradictory to accepted opinion. The point of a paradox is to point out a truth, even if the statements contradict each other logically.

- **Tension** :The term 'tension' was introduced into the realm of New Criticism by Allen Tate. When the successful union of the two attributes of a text, the concrete and the abstract, creates an organic unity within the text, it is referred to as tension.

- **Ambiguity** : Ambiguity can be generally defined as the use of language in a way that can be interpreted in numerous ways. Sentence structures can have two kinds of meanings – surface level meanings and deep level meanings. Ambiguous statements go beyond the surface level into two or more levels of deeper meaning. In a general sense, ambiguity is taken to be a fault in writing style. Authors and poets have often made use of this device deliberately to create an effect of having deeper meanings.

Semiotics

- **Semiotics or semiology** can be defined as the systematic study of signs. The term is derived from the Greek word semeion, meaning sign.

- It is the Swiss structural linguist Ferdinand de Saussure who is attributed with the founding of this field of studies. His lectures formed the basis of modern literary study and were collected and published by his students in 1915 under the title Course on General Linguistics. In this work, he proposed a study known as semiology and also laid out its governing principles.

- Other key figures in the early development of semiotics were Charles Sanders Peirce, Charles William, Roland Barthes, Algirdas Greimas, Yuri Lotman, Umberto Eco and Julia Kristeva.

- **Importance of Semiotics** – Semiotics helps not to take reality for granted as something having a purely objective existence which is independent of the reader's interpretation. Studying semiotics can assist to become more aware of reality as a construction and of the roles played by ourselves and others in constructing it. Information or meaning is not 'contained' in the world or in books; meaning is not 'transmitted' to any reader, it is actively 'created' by the reader according to a complex interplay of codes and conventions, of which we are normally unaware. Semiotics is about becoming aware of these codes, which is both inherently fascinating and intellectually empowering. Semiotics teaches us that we live in a world of signs and have no way of understanding anything except through signs and the codes into which they are organized.

- **Definition of Sign** - In "Nature of the Linguistic Sign", Saussure defines the basic components of language as sign, signifier and signified.
- Sign is a product of the union between the signifier and the signified. A signified is the concept or idea conveyed (for example, the idea of a tree or a real tree) and a signifier is essentially language, a set of speech sounds or marks on a page (the word 'tree' or the drawing of a tree).
- According to Saussure, the sign is arbitrary in nature; there is no natural connection between the signifier and signified.
- Since a sign is regarded as the conveyor of meaning, it is not restricted to language systems alone – anything verbal or non-verbal can be regarded as a sign. Apart from language systems, people have certain accepted modes of communication systems like Morse code, traffic signals and signs, referee signals in sports etc. There are also body postures, hand gestures, facial expressions as well; subtle attributes of a person such as clothes worn, rituals performed, meals served, type of home one resides in, interaction with people, even inactions and silence can be studied as signs (and signifying systems) in semiotics.

- According to C. S. Pierce, there are three categories of signs – Icon, Index and Symbol.

1**. Icon** – has a physical resemblance to the signified, the thing being represented. A photograph is a good example as it certainly resembles what it depicts.

2. **Index** – shows evidence of what is being represented. A good example is an image of smoke used to indicate fire. An index doesn't resemble the object or concept being represented. Instead it resembles something that implies the object or concept.

3. **Symbol** – has no resemblance between/to the signifier and the signified. The connection between them must be culturally learned. Numbers and alphabets are good examples. There is nothing inherent in the number to indicate what it represents. It must be learned. Other examples of symbols include traffic lights, flags etc.

- **Ambiguity :** The term 'ambiguity' comes from the Latin expression ambiguus which means 'doubtful'. Ambiguity refers to the presence of two or more possible meanings. There are two types of language structures namely surface structures and deep structures. Literary texts often convey an obvious meaning on the surface and a deeper meaning. This is possible through layers of deep structures hidden within the surface structure of the text. The literal/surface meaning is also known as denotative meaning and the implication conveyed through deep structures is connotative meaning. These dichotomous concepts give rise to ambiguity in language and literature.
- **Semantic Ambiguity** – occurs when a word, phrase or sentence, taken out of context, has more than one interpretation. For example, in the sentence "we saw her duck", the phrase 'her duck' taken out of context can refer either to the person's bird or to the motion she made.
- **Syntactic Ambiguity** – results when the syntax (word structure) of a sentence makes two or more meanings possible. For instance, a sentence like "the chicken is ready to eat" may be interpreted as "the cooked chicken is ready for people to eat" or that "a live chicken wants to be fed". The structure remains the same but the meaning is very different. In linguistics, this process of determining the various meanings possible due to syntactic ambiguity, is known as disambiguation.

Ambiguity in Literary Criticism

▸ The term 'ambiguity' became a part of literary criticism with the publication of William Empson's Seven Types of Ambiguity in 1930. Empson was of the view that words appear to be one thing, but in reality it is not so, as words convey more than their original/surface sense. Ambiguity is a verbal nuance and it gives scope for alternative reactions (interpretations) for the same piece of language. Empson enumerates the seven types of ambiguity as:

▸ First type of ambiguity arises when a detail is effective in several ways at once. In other words, two different things are said to be similar. For instance, a metaphor or metaphysical conceit.

▸ In the second type of ambiguity, two or more alternate meanings are fully resolved into one. It could mean the use of two different metaphors at once.

▸ The condition for the third type of ambiguity is that two apparently unconnected meanings are given simultaneously. For instance, a pun is a play on words which usually hinges on a word with more than one meaning or the substitution of a homonym that changes the meaning of the sentence for humorous or rhetorical effect.

- In the fourth type, two or more meanings of a statement do not agree among themselves but combine to make clear a complicated state of mind in the author.
- The fifth type of ambiguity happens when the author is discovering his idea in the act of writing. Words build on words until they lead to the thought that the author did not think about.
- In the sixth type of ambiguity, what is said is contradictory or irrelevant and the reader is forced to invent interpretations.
- The seventh type of ambiguity is that of full contradiction, marking a division in the author's mind.