

**Multimodality in Literary Text**  
**Lecture 12**  
**CDA and MDA as a Theory and a Method of Research Paper**  
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**Learning objective**

At the end of this meeting, you are expected to understand:

1. Research paper in English Literature
  2. Structure of research paper
  3. Start Writing a research paper
  4. Research of CDA and MDA
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**A. Research Paper in English Studies**

A scientific paper, as described by Robert Day (1983), is a written report that presents research findings and is made available through publication. Day emphasizes that scientific must meet to certain guidelines, not only in terms of content, style, and structure but also in the procedures leading to their publication. This underlines the importance of the publication process alongside the paper's intrinsic quantities (Derntl, 2014, pg. 106).

Research comes from the Middle French word "*rechercher*," which means "to seek out" or "to research." When writing a research paper, it is essential to look for information about a topic, forming an opinion on it, and supporting the stance with the opinions, ideas, and views of others. The outcome is a written document, often called a term paper or library paper, typically ranging from five to fifteen pages—many instructors set a minimum length. In this paper, thoughts and discoveries about the chosen subject are shared. Research paper itself is a written document that presents the results of a research study or investigation on a particular topic. These papers are a common form of academic writing and are used to communicate the findings, methodology, and conclusions of research to the scholarly community and interested readers. Research papers will contain scientific language with various topics. Different topics also create various writing styles. This means that the way people write varies because of the diverse subjects they choose (Winkler & Metherell, 2016). Therefore, research paper is the dissemination of research process to be publicly consumed and to be a scientific reference.

Each department has its own characteristics in conducting research as well as in writing a research paper. English Literature department typical of research is qualitative than quantitative. Since the topic of research is coming from various sources of literary works, it is also called as literary study. Klarer (2023) in his 4<sup>th</sup> edition book entitled "An Introduction to Literary Studies" he emphasized that literary studies deal with questions concerning the nature of 'literature' and 'text,' discusses the genres of literary works as media of textual analysis, and raises issues of literary theory. Related to Semiotics and Discourse

Analysis, Klarer also states that discourse in literary studies includes written and oral expressions. Discourse referring to a variety of written and oral expressions which share certain themes and structures of features in common. The boundaries of these terms are vary as it is influenced by the context in which they appear, therefore it is not something fixed (Klarer, 2023). He also mentioned that there are four major genres in textual analysis, which are: fiction, poetry, drama, and film. Furthermore, Kress and van Leeuwen (2021) also stated that Multimodal Discourse Analysis can be done in various visual media and images, both still images and moving images, such as: posters, magazines, newspapers, social media posts, children’s literature, novels, biographies, short stories, advertisement, songs, video clips, and many more.

## **B. Structure of Research Paper**

Adrian Wallwork (2011) highlights the structure of a research paper typically follows a standard format. While variations may exist based on the specific requirements of a journal, instructor, or academic institution, the following is a general outline for the structure of a research paper: title, abstract, introduction, literature review, methods, results, discussion, conclusion, and references. However, in many journals, introduction and literature review can be merged into one as well as merging the results and discussion.

Here are the details information about each of the structure (Wallwork, 2011):

### **1. Title**

A concise and indicative research title should reflect the main focus of the research. According to one of Britain’s top editors, writing good headlines represents about 50% of the skills vital to article writing. In simple terms, title with a verb and one or more prepositions are generally easier to grasp. In some journal, title should be written in maximum 12 words.

### **2. Abstract**

Research abstract consists of a brief summary of the research, including the research question, methods, results, and conclusions. Abstracts is placed at the beginning of a journal article, as separate entries in abstract databases, and within conference programs. Begin with a draft of the abstract before you commence the actual paper writing. This preliminary step can aid in determining the paper's content and structure. At the end of the abstract, it should be followed by keywords in between three to five related keywords to the abstract and the article as a whole.

### **3. Introduction**

The background knowledge in the Introduction helps readers understand why the paper's findings represent progress compared to what is currently known in the field. Catching the reader's attention is crucial, especially in the review process. The introduction needs to hook the reviewer, making them eager to read further and prompting thoughts like, “Why didn't I think of this before?” The readers should understand the reasons that led you to conduct your research in the background. These reasons should be supported by the current state of scientific knowledge, and you should

provide appropriate references to justify your claims. This part can be closed by stating the research objective or research problem or research question.

#### **4. Literature Review**

The content of literature review should be able to elaborate the existing scholarship related to the research question as well as establishes the theoretical framework for the research. The crucial skill lies in offering readers an appropriate amount of literature about the series of events that led to the current situation. It should neither be excessive, making it boring, nor too little, making the context of your research insignificant to them. According to Klarer (2023), literary studies are distinguished from primary and secondary source. Primary sources are the main literary work that will be analyzed. It is the main object of analysis in literary criticism, including texts from all literary genres. Secondary sources are the other sources related to the primary source. It includes articles, book reviews, notes, and other related scholarly journals.

#### **5. Methods**

There are several key points must exist in the methods. First is describe the research design and methods used. To effectively write this section, you need to describe the materials used in your experiments or the methods employed in your research. It is crucial to provide sufficient detail so that others in your field can easily understand your approach and, if they wish, reproduce your work. Semiotic methods of analysis which originated in literary criticism have been applied in the study of popular culture such as advertising, film. The majority of these approaches emphasize the systemic character of the object under analysis. The elements of analysis are taken from the linguistic and visuals aspects which are called as semiotic resources (Klarer, 2023).

#### **6. Results**

Results must be able to present the findings of the study. It often includes tables, graphs, or figures to illustrate data. It is crucial to determine which results accurately represent your study. Afterward, arrange them in a sequence that emphasizes the responses to the goals, hypotheses, or questions established at the paper's outset.

#### **7. Discussion**

Interprets the results in the context of the research question.

Start your interpretation of the findings by providing readers with a concise statement summarizing what can be concluded from your research. Utilize this statement as a foundation for comparing and contrasting your results with existing knowledge in the literature. Using a narrative approach to construct your theory is often suggested by experts. In this method, your variables, data, or findings are likened to characters in a book, helping to weave a story that supports the development of your theory.

#### **8. Conclusions**

Conclusions do not have to be too long. What matters is that it summarizes the key findings. It should also restate the importance of study or the significance of the study. To create effective conclusions,

it is crucial to understand the expectations of referees and readers. Avoid simply restating phrases and information from the abstract and introduction. Instead, focus on delivering a clear and impactful take-home message that resonates with readers. If the research results new findings that the other previous researches, adding suggestions to the readers about how to implement the research results in practice is also important. If the research has specific limitation, then suggestions for the next research may also be added to conduct further research in the same area of study.

## 9. **References**

References consist of list of sources cited in the paper. Even though it is placed at the end of a research paper but this part is not less important compared to the other parts. References are very much important to see the original sources of your writings. If other researchers cannot find what they need in your paper, they would search for the related sources in your references. Your references would help them to lead them to the articles and books that would be in accordance with their research.

References and Citation connected one to another. Citation is placed in the text, while references is at the end of the article. There are various types of citation and reference style. JIU uses the APA 7<sup>th</sup> style for both references and citations.

## **C. Start writing a research paper**

Anthony C. Winkler & Jo Ray Metherell (2016) highlights that the research paper is a formal piece of writing that needs to follow the standards of scholarly writing. These standards are just a commonly accepted way of doing things, similar to how we follow etiquette, table manners, or rules when driving. It's not possible to create a schedule that fits each student's research paper assignment perfectly. However, usually, there are seven clear steps in the process. This means you need to turn in at least five parts of your paper over a span of five weeks. Many instructors follow a similar schedule, though there might be some differences.

These guidelines are essential for the need of writing a research paper.

### **1. Choosing the topic**

The title needs to have important words that show the main topics in your article. It should also make the reader interested and make them want to read your whole work. Ideally, you would pick a topic that you find interesting, one that is complicated enough to require multiple research sources, and that won't be dull or patronizing to your reader.

Choose a subject that you enjoy, are curious about, are knowledgeable in, or have a genuine interest in. It could range from tackling issues like childhood and teenage obesity to exploring the impact of broadcasting wars. Whether it's a historical, controversial, or literary topic, your selection should meet two criteria: it needs approval from your instructor, and, most importantly, it should genuinely interest you.

Take your time when searching for a topic. Don't choose the first idea that comes to mind. Reflect on it. Consider whether you would like to spend five weeks reading and writing about that topic. If you're unsure, continue searching until you find an idea that genuinely interests you.

However, there are also topics that you need to avoid. For examples,

- a. Topics that are too narrow
- b. Based on a single source
- c. Overused or cliché topic
- d. Biased topic, etc.

## **2. Doing the research**

After deciding the topic, you must search the main body or the content of your research paper. In your paper, the references you include to support your points usually involve essays, book chapters, articles from magazines, newspapers, or journals, treatises, pamphlets, and transcriptions on tape or disk. These materials might be in printed, electronic, or photographic formats. The specific type of material you should seek depends on the topic, thesis, and even the perspective you adopt in your paper.

In the beginning of your research, you need to find sources. Generally speaking, in a research paper, you usually mix all three types of information—single-fact, general, and in-depth. The ratio of each type varies depending on the nature and complexity of the topic.

You may do your research in various platforms such as:

- a. Asking a librarian.
- b. Online encyclopedia.
- c. Online journals & articles.

## **3. Thesis and Outline**

The central idea of the paper is typically summarized in a statement called the thesis. Customarily, the thesis is found at the end of the opening paragraph for convenience. A clear thesis helps readers anticipate the paper's content, making it more reader-friendly. Textbooks use detailed chapter headings and section headnotes precisely for this reason. They guide readers in understanding what to expect from each section.

Outline on the hand, a list in a specific order detailing the topics discussed in a paper is helpful for both the writer and the reader. Following an outline makes it less likely for the writer to veer off track or make structural mistakes, such as excessively focusing on one topic while neglecting another.

You might start by creating an outline for your paper and discover, to your surprise, that the final paper differs significantly from your initial plan. If this occurs, don't worry; just modify the outline.

Take solace in knowing that such deviations happen to all writers at some point, and, in fact, it's a positive sign.

#### **4. MLA & APA System**

Founded in 1883, the Modern Language Association (MLA) is an organization comprising more than 30,000 scholars and writers from the United States and around the world, spanning over a hundred countries. The MLA was established as an advocate for the study of literature and modern languages. Today, its style is extensively utilized by scholars and researchers in literature and language across the globe. In MLA style, you have to mention each source twice: first within the text where you're writing and then again in a list at the end of your paper.

Meanwhile, The American Psychological Association's (APA) style, commonly used in social sciences, business, anthropology, and some life sciences, involves citing sources within the text using parentheses, similar to MLA. However, unlike MLA, APA in-text citations include the author's last name and the publication date instead of the author and page number. This emphasis on the date is due to the time-sensitive nature of scientific research, which can become outdated quickly. The page number is not as crucial in this context.

The APA (American Psychological Association) and MLA (Modern Language Association) citation systems are used to give proper credit to sources in academic writing. These systems provide guidelines on how to format citations within the text and in the reference or works cited page. Both systems help readers locate the sources cited and allow for proper acknowledgment of the original work, promoting transparency and academic integrity in research and writing.

As a lecturer in Indonesia, we are required to actively conduct research based on our expertise. I am now an assistant professor and I have been actively publishing several papers which can be accessed in the Google Scholar. I have also supervised several thesis students as one of requirements to obtain bachelor's degree at JIU. I apply my own tips to my students on how to start writing their research paper.

##### **1. Observe the object of research they are interested in**

I realize that conducting research is not merely about our interest but it should be for a scientific reason. However, for undergraduate students who have never conduct research, it is quite difficult to build their critical mindset to choose an object of research based on its significance. Therefore, I usually ask them to start from something they like, whether it is books, film, songs, advertisement,

##### **2. Choose the topic of research**

Choose the research topic based on the object of research. It is like narrowing the topic from something you like to something more scientific. You may start from questioning what's interesting from the research object? If it is a novel, is the storyline interesting? Does it make you questioning many things? If it is a film, there supposed to be more semiotic resources you can criticize. Furthermore, please check how influential the research object to the society. The more influential,

is the better. For example, the book has been listed to the best seller section or the film has won several awards in certain categories.

### **3. Decide the research objective or question**

It could be one or more. Based on my experience, it is enough for students to have only one comprehensive research objective or question. At the same time, you are also determining the related theories required to answer the research objective or research question. If the topic is about 'the representation of black people in a series' then you have to find related literature about black people representation in the same area. So, the Semiotics or MDA or CDA is implemented to examine how the black people are being represented through the characters, dialogues, settings, gestures, and other semiotic resources appear in the series.

### **4. Make an outline**

I usually ask my students to make outline first. Starting from the introduction to method to result and discussion. Of course, first outline cannot be smoothly written and that is okay. Just write whatever comes up to mind. Collect as much ideas as possible. The next step is to re-organize the ideas, which one comes first and next, which ones are not necessary and can be omitted. This is where I usually I guide students more intensively. There can be two or three times in constructing the proper outline for the Introduction only. Once the outline is ready, it is easier for students to find the references in the books or journal articles because they have already known the keywords.

### **5. Start writing**

After finding all the related references in books and journal articles, it is time to sew the researcher's ideas with those references. This process will not be easy for beginner researcher. Sometimes it is just like writing everything together without linking them smoothly. Supposedly, researcher's can write their idea first then supported with the related literature as the scientific evidence or support. We can do on the other way as well, researcher can paraphrase the sentence from journal article, for example, and then add or conclude it with researcher's own ideas. To help students, I also allow the students to use the Chat GPT wisely. Use of AI to help the research writing, not to substitute the researcher's way of thinking and flow of thought. ChatGPT is an AI software with the potential to aid in the creation of scientific papers, offering support in tasks like literature review, research question formulation, summarizing the current state of the field, and providing help with formatting and language editing. It also has practical applications in clinical practice as a time-saving tool. As chatbot tools become more prevalent, it's essential to establish international academic guidelines to govern their use in scientific writing and to develop systems for detecting and penalizing unethical usage. It's important to remember that chatbots are tools meant to assist human researchers, rather than replace them. Human expertise, judgment, and individuality should remain integral (Salvagno et al., 2023).

Therefore, in the real practice of MLT course, I conduct an intensive coaching clinic on the last half of the semester. I will accompany them in writing their research paper. This writing process is not

something that can be described theoretically in this lecture. This is something applicable and personal experience of each researcher.

#### **D. Research on MDA and CDA**

Both MDA and CDA are in the scope of discourse analysis. As has been explained in the previous chapters, CDA emphasizes more on the analysis of the linguistic aspects or languages in written and verbal. Meanwhile, MDA emphasizes more on various semiotic resources, including languages, images (moving and still), colors, shapes, placements and positions, sounds, gestures in moving image, vector in still image, and other semiotic resources occur in the object of research we want to analyze. Linguists and researchers such as Fairclough, Wodak, Kress, and van Leeuwen, state that MDA and CDA can work as a theory and a method in research. van Dijk (2013) argues that CDA is not merely a method of analysis but a social movement of scholars that requires various methods of discourse analysis. Furthermore, MDA and CDA are not recommended to be the independent study to analyze something. To get more comprehensive analysis result, a researcher should also refer to the other related studies and theories. Discourse analysis should be analyzed through transdisciplinary perspective within social theory and research to develop broad interpretation in analyzing texts as elements in social processes (Fairclough, 2003). Van Leeuwen and Kress (2021) also stated that analyzing various semiotic resources in MDA should also reflect to the other related theory. For example, in analyzing colors, researcher should refer to the color theory. In analyzing movies or series, researcher should refer to the theory of mise-en-scene or theory of intrinsic and extrinsic elements of movies.

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