

Hall Ticket Number _____

**Entrance Examinations 2026
PhD English Language Studies**

Time: 2 hours

Maximum marks: 70

INSTRUCTIONS

- There are 14 pages and two parts to this question paper - Part A (Research Methods) and Part B (Content Questions).
 - Part B is divided into two sections.
 - Part A and Section I of Part B (questions 1-55) should be answered in the OMR sheet.
 - Section II of Part B should be answered in the separate answer booklet provided.
-

**Part A
RESEARCH METHODS
(35 marks)**

1. A researcher is studying the effects of "study hours" on "exam scores." In this scenario, "exam scores" is the _____.
 - A. independent variable
 - B. dependent variable
 - C. control variable
 - D. confounding variable
2. Which sampling method involves dividing the population into relevant subgroups and then randomly selecting samples from each subgroup?
 - A. Simple random sampling
 - B. Convenience sampling
 - C. Stratified random sampling
 - D. Quota sampling
3. An operational definition in research refers to _____.
 - A. a dictionary meaning of a concept
 - B. a theoretical meaning of a concept within a framework
 - C. a definition of a concept in terms of how it is measured or observed
 - D. a justification for choosing a research method

4. Read the following research scenario and answer the question that follows:
A study on translanguaging practices in English teacher education classrooms begins with classroom observation only, but repeated field notes reveal emerging tensions around caste identity, linguistic prestige, and performative English use.
 What is the most methodologically appropriate response?
 - A. Restrict analysis to the original observation categories
 - B. Revise the analytic framework to address emergent power relations
 - C. Exclude socially sensitive themes from the analysis
 - D. Postpone analysis until a complete coding framework is developed
5. Which of the following best describes participant observation in research?
 - A. Observing participants through a one-way mirror in a controlled setting.
 - B. Analysing datasets collected by other researchers.
 - C. Becoming part of the group being studied to observe behaviour from within
 - D. Collecting data through structured questionnaires from a large sample
6. In qualitative research, "triangulation" refers to _____.
 - A. using three different participants to verify a story
 - B. using multiple data sources or methods to cross-verify findings
 - C. a specific type of geometric sampling
 - D. the process of coding data into three distinct categories
7. Read the situation given below and answer the question that follows:
A researcher selects two comparable intact classes. Both groups are pre-tested for fluency, one receives task-based instruction while the other follows traditional instruction. After 8 weeks, both groups are post-tested. The groups are matched on pre-test scores, but learners are not randomly assigned.
 Which research design is most appropriate?
 - A. Post-test only true experimental design
 - B. Correlational design with matched sampling
 - C. Quasi-experimental pre-test-post-test matched groups design
 - D. True experimental randomized control group design
8. Which ethical principle requires that participants are fully informed about the nature of the research before agreeing to take part?
 - A. Beneficence
 - B. Justice
 - C. Respect for persons
 - D. Confidentiality

9. A study finds $p = 0.03$ with a pre-set $\alpha = 0.05$. The researcher concludes _____.
A. the null hypothesis is definitely false
B. the result is statistically significant at the 5% level
C. there is a 3% probability that the result is due to chance
D. the alternative hypothesis is proven true
10. Read the following scenario and answer the question that follows:
An intervention introducing AI-assisted writing tools helps postgraduate English education students improve organisational coherence and section structuring in proposal writing, yet faculty report little improvement in the quality of argumentation or theoretical framing.
Which interpretation is most methodologically defensible?
A. Uneven improvement across writing dimensions indicates failure of the Intervention
B. AI support may improve rhetorical organisation without necessarily strengthening disciplinary reasoning
C. Variables showing limited change should be excluded from interpretation
D. Improved textual structure alone demonstrates advanced research writing development
11. Which section of a research report provides sufficient procedural detail for other researchers to replicate the study in a different context?
A. Introduction
B. Literature Review
C. Methods
D. Findings
12. Which of the following best characterizes research writing?
A. Goes beyond description to include analysis and argument
B. Presents information in a chronological narrative style
C. Lists previous studies without synthesis or evaluation
D. Focuses only on describing events or phenomena
13. A PhD research proposal typically includes _____.
A. background, literature review, research gap, methodology, and timeline
B. background, literature review, research gap, and findings
C. background, literature review, research gap, and implications
D. background, literature review, research gap, and preliminary results

14. Discussion sections in research papers are typically characterised by _____.
- A. answering research questions by interpreting study findings and drawing implications without reference to prior studies
 - B. answering research questions by comparing study findings with previous research and ignoring implications
 - C. answering research questions by presenting findings and suggesting future research directions without interpretation
 - D. answering research questions by interpreting findings, comparing them with existing research, and drawing implications
15. Read the following doctoral research scenario and select the methodological rationale most consistent with the proposed research design.
- A doctoral applicant investigates why first-generation multilingual students in rural Indian universities produce linguistically competent M.A. dissertations in English yet struggle to construct persuasive literature reviews. The proposed study combines textual analysis of dissertations, supervisor interviews, student think-aloud protocols, and analysis of institutional writing guidelines.*
- Which methodological rationale most convincingly justifies this research design?
- A. To triangulate findings across multiple forms of qualitative evidence in order to enhance replication
 - B. To examine dissertation writing as a situated practice shaped by textual, cognitive, pedagogical, and institutional processes
 - C. To ensure convergence between student perceptions and institutional expectations before interpretation
 - D. To measure subjective participant accounts with more objective documentary evidence
16. Which section of a research report has the least scope for presenting or interpreting empirical evidence related to the research problem?
- A. Introduction
 - B. Literature Review
 - C. Methods
 - D. Findings
17. How does the nature of evidence for argument differ between the Literature Review and Discussion sections of a research report?
- A. The Literature Review uses existing studies, while the Discussion uses both the study's own findings and previous studies
 - B. The Literature Review uses the study's findings, while the Discussion uses existing studies
 - C. The Literature Review uses only raw data, while the Discussion uses only theoretical claims
 - D. The Literature Review and Discussion rely on the same type of evidence

18. Research writing tends to be complex, dense, and abstract because it _____.
- A. accompanies immediate action in real-world contexts
 - B. involves reflection on and analysis of event
 - C. relies on everyday language used in interaction
 - D. focuses on describing events without interpretation
19. Read the following scenario and answer the question that follows:
A researcher develops a test intended to assess doctoral readiness for academic research writing in English among PhD applicants. The assessment measures only grammatical accuracy, vocabulary range, and sentence-level cohesion as indicators of doctoral research writing ability.
- Which validity concern is most strongly implicated by this operationalisation?
- A. Construct underrepresentation
 - B. Criterion contamination
 - C. Inter-rater unreliability
 - D. Construct-irrelevant variance
20. Which of the following is NOT primarily used as a data collection instrument in language education research?
- A. Questionnaires
 - B. Observation checklist
 - C. Interview schedule
 - D. Teaching material
21. Which of the following sequences most appropriately represents the early stages of conducting research in language studies?
- A. Select a research area, review the literature, identify the research gap, and formulate the research design.
 - B. Select a research area, identify the research gap, review the literature, and formulate the research design.
 - C. Review the literature, select a research area, formulate the research design, and identify the research gap.
 - D. Formulate the research design, select a research area, review the literature, and identify the research gap
22. The cautious interpretive stance reflected in the phrase, "*suggests that learner autonomy may positively mediate language learning outcomes*" primarily strengthens the _____.
- A. methodological reliability of the research design
 - B. epistemic credibility of the interpretive claim
 - C. statistical validity of the findings
 - D. generalisability of the findings

23. Read the following dissertation excerpt and answer the question that follows.
"This research set out to examine the possibility of involving students in designing their own teaching materials and the impact this had on their language learning. The analysis of students' performance using such materials suggests that learner autonomy may positively mediate language learning outcomes."
 The rhetorical function of the above excerpt is best described as _____.
- A. establishing the conceptual gap motivating the study
 - B. reporting methodological procedures and research design
 - C. synthesising previous scholarship on learner autonomy
 - D. interpreting findings in relation to the study's research objective
24. A researcher uses a "snowball sampling" technique when _____.
- A. they need a sample that represents the entire national population.
 - B. it is difficult to locate or access members of a specific population.
 - C. they want to ensure every individual has an equal chance of being selected.
 - D. they are conducting a large-scale telephone survey.
25. Read the following methodological scenario and answer the question that follows:
A candidate states:
"Because my study is interpretive and qualitative, concerns about methodological rigour and validity do not apply."
- Which response demonstrates the strongest methodological understanding?
- A. Correct, because subjective experience cannot be evaluated using research criteria
 - B. Correct, because qualitative inquiry evaluates research quality through contextual interpretation rather than fixed universal criteria
 - C. Incorrect; qualitative inquiry still requires rigour through credibility, reflexivity, trustworthiness, and transparent interpretation
 - D. Incorrect only when the study fails to achieve sufficient interpretive depth or saturation
26. A pilot study is NOT primarily conducted to _____.
- A. test the feasibility of research procedures
 - B. identify possible problems in data collection
 - C. refine research instruments before the main study
 - D. draw final conclusions about the research problem
27. A longitudinal study of code-switching practices in a multilingual society primarily involves _____.
- A. analysing language use at a single point in time.
 - B. examining archival records from earlier speech communities
 - C. tracking language use within the same community over time
 - D. comparing experimentally elicited bilingual interactions

28. Consider the following possible research topics and answer questions 28 and 29.

- i) *The strategic use of active and passive constructions to distribute agency and responsibility in media reporting*
- ii) *The use of metaphors to construct "us" vs. "them" in political speeches on immigrants*

These topics are most directly aligned with research in _____.

- A. second language acquisition.
- B. World Englishes and language variation
- C. critical discourse analysis
- D. contact linguistics and creole studies

29. Research on the above topics would most likely involve the analysis of _____.

- A. intake data.
- B. authentic discourse data
- C. simplified pedagogic data
- D. synthetic linguistic data

30. In language research, the "researcher's voice" most appropriately refers to _____.

- A. the researcher's expression of stance, evaluation, and positioning within the text
- B. the researcher's reputation and theoretical alignment in the academic community
- C. the attempt to eliminate authorial presence to ensure objectivity
- D. personal opinions expressed outside established academic conventions

31. Which of the following best describes "grounded theory"?

- A. Testing an existing theory using new data.
- B. Developing a theory based on the systematic analysis of data.
- C. Research conducted in a literal ground-level environment.
- D. A theory that has been proven through decades of research.

32. Which of the following best represents a Likert-type item used in attitude measurement for the statement, which reads, *online learning is effective*?

- A. Respondents select one option on a 5-point scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.
- B. Respondents rate it from 1 (Very poor) to 10 (Very good).
- C. Respondents answer Yes or No.
- D. Respondents write a short paragraph explaining their opinion.

33. Which of the following best illustrates deductive reasoning in research?
- A. After observing several classrooms, a researcher concludes that teacher talk dominates interaction in English-medium schools.
 - B. A researcher begins with the theory that interactional dominance affects language acquisition and examines classroom discourse to test it.
 - C. A researcher categorizes interview transcripts into emerging themes without prior hypotheses.
 - D. A researcher reports participants' opinions without linking them to any theoretical framework.
34. What is the *Null Hypothesis* (H_0)?
- A. The researcher's main prediction.
 - B. A statement that there is no relationship or effect between variables.
 - C. A hypothesis that has been proven false.
 - D. The secondary hypothesis is used if the first one fails.
35. In a normal distribution, approximately what percentage of scores fall within one standard deviation of the mean?
- A. 50%
 - B. 68%
 - C. 95%
 - D. 99%

PART B
Section I
Content Questions
(20 marks)

36. Chomsky's concept of "competence" is grounded in the assumption of _____.

- A. a socially variable and multilingual speech community
- B. language use shaped by communicative appropriateness in context
- C. a homogeneous speech community with an idealised speaker-listener
- D. the actual performance of language in real-life situations

37. Read the statement below and answer the question that follows:
"Systematic attention to grammatical form of utterance is neither a necessary condition nor a sufficient one for successful language learning".
 (Newmark, 1970 p. 217)

In the context of language learning theory, this statement most closely aligns with ____.

- A. Chomsky's view of language competence as internalised grammatical knowledge
- B. Hymes' emphasis on communicative competence and appropriate language use
- C. meaning-focused and communicative approaches in SLA that downplay explicit grammar instruction
- D. structuralist approaches that prioritise rule formation and grammatical accuracy

38. Read the situation below and answer the question that follows:
A doctoral researcher examining English curriculum reform notices a mismatch between policy emphasis on critical literacy and classroom focus on examination preparation and workbook completion.

This situation is best understood as an example of _____.

- A. direct translation of curriculum policy into classroom practice
- B. alignment between assessment systems and curriculum goals
- C. policy enactment determines institutional and assessment pressures
- D. lack of interdependence between classroom teaching and policy frameworks

39. Who among the following theoreticians is most closely associated with Critical Discourse Analysis?

- A. Stephen Krashen
- B. Noam Chomsky
- C. Norman Fairclough
- D. Dell Hymes

40. Read the scenario carefully and select the most appropriate theoretical explanation for the observed writing pattern.
In advanced academic writing classrooms, students produce literature reviews with extensive citation, thematic organisation, and coherent synthesis, yet rarely question gaps, silences, or underlying assumptions in the literature.
- This pattern most strongly reflects a limitation in _____.
- control over academic vocabulary and lexical range
 - ability to structure and organise source-based writing
 - engagement with texts as sites of argument and knowledge construction
 - skill in summarising and integrating multiple sources
41. According to National Education Policy 2020, which of the following best reflects the recommended approach to English language education in India?
- English should replace Indian languages as the primary medium of instruction at all stages of schooling.
 - English language learning should be separated from students' home languages to ensure accuracy and fluency.
 - English should be taught in a multilingual framework that values learners' home languages and promotes communicative competence.
 - English instruction should begin only after secondary education to strengthen regional language proficiency.
42. Words such as *glamping*, *email*, *spork* and *cyborg* are examples of _____.
- affixation
 - compounding
 - blending
 - clipping
43. Which of the following best defines a minimal pair in phonology?
- Two words that differ in meaning and differ by only one phoneme
 - Two words that have the same meaning but different spellings
 - Two phonemes that never occur in the same phonological environment
 - Two words that are similar in spelling but differ in pronunciation
44. A teacher uses repetition drills, memorisation of dialogues, and immediate correction of pronunciation to reinforce correct language habits. This approach is most consistent with _____.
- Communicative Language Teaching, which emphasises meaning-focused interaction
 - Audio-lingual Method, which is based on habit formation and behaviourist principles
 - Total Physical Response, which relies on physical actions to support comprehension
 - Direct Method, which promotes inductive learning through natural conversation

45. A language policy committee is evaluating the integration of AI-based translation and learning platforms in multilingual education systems. A key concern raised by critical applied linguists is that such technologies may _____.
- A. improve access to minority and endangered language resources through automated documentation tools
 - B. support multilingual education by providing equal quality translations across languages
 - C. reinforce existing global language hierarchies by privileging high-resource languages in digital systems
 - D. encourage rapid development of new standardized forms of emerging languages
46. In language teaching methodology, the terms *approach*, *method*, and *technique* are best described as follows:
- A. Approach refers to classroom activities, method refers to teaching philosophy, and technique refers to a structured plan
 - B. Approach refers to theoretical assumptions about language and learning, method refers to an overall instructional plan, and technique refers to classroom procedures
 - C. Approach refers to a structured syllabus design, method refers to classroom interaction, and technique refers to theoretical principles
 - D. Approach refers to teaching materials, method refers to assessment design, and technique refers to learning outcomes
47. School English textbooks in India most commonly include _____.
- A. mostly literary genres
 - B. literary genres and everyday functional texts (e.g., letters, notices)
 - C. academic research genres (e.g., essays, reports)
 - D. professional workplace genres (e.g., memos, proposals)
48. In NEP 2020, English as a school subject in India is primarily intended to _____.
- A. develop English for everyday communication in national and international contexts
 - B. develop English mainly as a tool for learning other school subjects
 - C. develop English along with other languages to support multilingual meaning-making
 - D. develop English as the dominant medium for all academic learning
49. Translanguaging in classroom pedagogy refer to _____.
- A. using learners' limited proficiency in the target language as a basis for remediation
 - B. separating languages strictly to ensure accurate language acquisition
 - C. drawing on learners' full linguistic repertoire to support meaning-making and learning
 - D. avoiding use of other languages to maximise target language exposure

50. Cohesion is not the same as coherence because _____.
- A. cohesion refers to grammatical and lexical linking within a text, whereas coherence refers to the overall meaning and logical organisation of a text
 - B. cohesion refers to the overall meaning and logical organisation of a text, whereas coherence refers to grammatical connections
 - C. cohesion and coherence are identical features of all well-formed texts
 - D. coherence depends only on the presence of cohesive devices
51. Sense of plausibility (Prabhu, 1987) refers to _____.
- A. the extent to which teaching methods are validated by empirical research across contexts
 - B. a teacher's context-sensitive pedagogic intuition about what constitutes effective classroom practice
 - C. learners' perception of how meaningful and engaging classroom tasks are
 - D. adherence to established methods and prescribed teaching procedures
52. Read the text (numbered for ease) carefully and answer the question that follows:
- (1) *Many first-year university students find academic writing challenging.*
 - (2) *These challenges often stem from difficulties in organizing ideas coherently.*
 - (3) *Effective organization enables readers to follow how one idea develops into the next across a text.*
 - (4) *Instructors also note that students frequently rely on informal vocabulary in academic assignments.*
 - (5) *Consequently, writing courses increasingly emphasize cohesion and logical progression.*

Which sentence most disrupts the flow of information in the text?

- A. Sentence 1
 - B. Sentence 2
 - C. Sentence 4
 - D. Sentence 5
53. Read the clause below and answer the question that follows:

The students had their assignments reviewed before the final submission.

Which of the following is the most appropriate *active* version of the sentence above?

- A. The students reviewed their assignments before the final submission.
- B. The students had someone review their assignments before the final submission.
- C. Someone had reviewed the students before the final submission.
- D. The assignments reviewed the students before the final submission.

54. In language standardization, “elaboration of function” refers to the process of _____.
A. selecting one dialect as the basis for the standard language
B. developing grammatical and orthographic norms for the language
C. extending the language to be used for specialized functions (e.g., science, law)
D. promoting public acceptance and adoption of the standard language
55. Which of the following educational policy measures in colonial India emphasized state support for privately managed institutions through a grant-in-aid system?
A. Macaulay's Minute
B. Wood's Despatch
C. Hunter Commission
D. Charter Act of 1813

PART B
Section II
ESSAY QUESTIONS
(15 Marks)

Answer any ONE of the following questions:

1. Do you think the English language was imposed on India only by the British rulers? Justify your answer.
2. Is India divided or unified by languages? Argue out your perspective.
3. Is it possible to use mother tongues as the medium of education for professional communication? Justify your perspective.
4. A teacher education programme celebrates inclusion, multilingualism, and learner diversity in policy documents, yet classroom practice rewards standardisation. Does this indicate an inherent flaw? Discuss a realistic corrective strategy to overcome this problem.
5. Discuss three emerging areas in the field of English language education. Discuss the scope and strategy of research in these areas.
6. Translanguaging is an everyday reality in Indian classrooms. Discuss this claim with reference to your experience as a teacher or student. In your response, analyse its pedagogic functions and implications for learning.
7. There is often a gap between educational policy discourse and textbook discourse in India. Critically examine this claim with examples from policy documents and textbooks you are familiar with.
8. Develop a brief research proposal on a topic related to English language studies or English language education. Your proposal should demonstrate your understanding of research design and include: the research problem, research questions, theoretical framework, methodology (including data sources and methods of analysis), and the potential significance of the study.

University of Hyderabad
Entrance Examination 2026
Ph.D Admissions - July 2026 Session
Answer Key *(Revised)*

Centre: English Language Studies
Subject: English Language Studies

Programme: Ph.D

Q. No.	Answer	Q. No.	Answer	Q. No.	Answer
1.	B ✓	26.	D ✓	51.	B ✓
2.	C ✓	27.	C ✓	52.	C ✓
3.	C ✓	28.	C ✓	53.	B ✓
4.	B ✓	29.	B ✓	54.	C ✓
5.	C ✓	30.	A ✓	55.	B ✓
6.	B ✓	31.	B ✓		
7.	C ✓	32.	A ✓		
8.	C ✓	33.	B ✓		
9.	C ✓	34.	B ✓		
10.	B ✓	35.	B ✓		
11.	C ✓	36.	C ✓		
12.	A ✓	37.	C ✓		
13.	A ✓	38.	D ✓		
14.	D ✓	39.	C ✓		
15.	B ✓	40.	C ✓		
16.	C ✓	41.	C ✓		
17.	A ✓	42.	C ✓		
18.	B ✓	43.	A ✓		
19.	A ✓	44.	B ✓		
20.	D ✓	45.	C ✓		
21.	A ✓	46.	B ✓		
22.	B ✓	47.	A ✓		
23.	D ✓	48.	C ✓		
24.	B ✓	49.	C ✓		
25.	C ✓	50.	A ✓		

[Signature]
09 June 2026
Joy Anuradha

Member, Examination Committee #