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KIM SCOTT'S FICTION THROUGH INTERDISCIPLINARY AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES: RETHINKING ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERARY STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

The study of English language and literature has evolved significantly over the years with the introduction of new methods of teaching, learning, and research. Among these methods, the subject approach, interdisciplinary approach, and multidisciplinary approach play an important role in understanding literary texts and language from different perspectives. These three approaches are closely connected, yet each has its own objectives, methods and scope. The growing complexity of contemporary literary texts has encouraged English Language and Literary Studies to move beyond exclusively discipline-specific modes of interpretation. Literature engages with history, sociology, anthropology, psychology, politics, culture, gender, environment and systems of knowledge; consequently, many literary questions cannot be adequately addressed through formal textual analysis alone. This paper examines the role of disciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches in the teaching, learning and research of English Language and Literary Studies, with particular emphasis on Kim Scott's fiction. This study examines Kim Scott's fiction through multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary perspectives, focusing on the relationship between literary form, history, society, culture, psychology, gender, and Indigenous knowledge. The study is organized around five integrated objectives and corresponding research questions. First, it distinguishes disciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches to literary research and examines their relevance to Kim Scott's fiction. Second, it investigates how convergent disciplinary perspectives deepen the interpretation of identity, colonialism, memory, displacement, resistance, Country, and reconciliation. Third, it explores how Scott's fiction recovers marginalized Noongar voices, histories, cultural knowledge, and relationships to Country. Fourth, it examines methodological and ethical challenges associated with interdisciplinary approaches to Indigenous literature, particularly cultural translation, representation, disciplinary boundaries, and Indigenous knowledge. Finally, it proposes an integrated methodological framework for future research in English Language and Literary Studies. The study focuses primarily on True Country, Benang: From the Heart, That Deadman Dance, and Taboo. It argues that interdisciplinary approaches can extend close reading without replacing it and that Indigenous epistemologies must be treated as significant knowledge systems rather than merely as contextual material. The study proposes a framework that connects contextualization, close reading, disciplinary engagement, Indigenous epistemic grounding, interdisciplinary synthesis, and methodological reflexivity.

KEYWORDS: Kim Scott; Indigenous Literature; Noongar Literature; Interdisciplinary Literary Studies; Multidisciplinary Research; Transdisciplinarity; Country; Indigenous Epistemology; Literary Criticism; English Studies

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1. INTRODUCTION

English Language and Literary Studies has traditionally developed around the interpretation of literary language, form, genre, narrative structure, characterization, imagery, symbolism and aesthetic organization. Close reading remains one of the discipline's most important practices because it enables scholars to examine how meaning is produced through textual detail. Nevertheless, contemporary literary texts increasingly engage with problems that extend beyond the conventional boundaries of literary criticism. Colonialism, migration, racial and social inequality, gender, cultural memory, environmental crisis, Indigenous identity, political violence and technological change all require interpretive frameworks that may originate outside literary studies. The increasing interest in interdisciplinarity is therefore not simply a methodological fashion. It reflects the complexity of the objects being studied. Contemporary literary studies increasingly operates in dialogue with sociology, history, anthropology, psychology, cultural studies, gender studies, political theory, environmental humanities and Indigenous studies. Interdisciplinary Literary Studies, for instance, explicitly positions literary scholarship as a field in which literary interpretation can engage with other methodologies and critical theories.

Yet the terms multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, cross-disciplinary and transdisciplinary are frequently used without sufficient distinction. Bringing several disciplinary concepts into an article does not automatically constitute interdisciplinary research. Multidisciplinarity generally places different disciplinary perspectives alongside one another, whereas interdisciplinarity involves interaction and integration. Transdisciplinarity moves further by questioning the boundaries through which knowledge is conventionally organized. This distinction becomes particularly important in the study of Indigenous and marginalized literature. Literary texts produced within histories of colonisation cannot always be understood adequately through Western literary categories alone. Recent scholarship on Indigenous literature has consequently called for methodologies that foreground Indigenous knowledge, relationships and epistemologies. Rogers, for example, proposes an Indigenous Literature Re-view Methodology that challenges the assumption that dominant Western approaches are necessarily the most valid ways of researching Indigenous literary texts.

Kim Scott provides a particularly productive case study for such an inquiry. As a Noongar Australian writer, Scott's fiction repeatedly engages with colonial encounter, Indigenous history, language, country, memory and identity. Recent scholarship describes *Benang* and *That Deadman Dance* as works marked by linguistic and generic innovation connected to Noongar language and country. Other recent scholarship situates Scott's work within Indigenous studies, Australian literary history and creative-writing research. The present study therefore brings together the conceptual concerns of the original manuscript—disciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary literary inquiry—with the specific objectives and research questions concerning teaching, learning, Subaltern Literature and marginalized voices.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study seeks to examine the role of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches in the teaching, learning, and research of English Language and Literary Studies. The specific objectives are:

- (i) To distinguish disciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches to literary research and establish their relevance to the study of Kim Scott's fiction.
- (ii) To examine how historical, sociological, anthropological, psychological, cultural, Indigenous, and gender perspectives extend close reading and deepen the interpretation of Scott's representations of Indigenous identity, colonialism, memory, displacement, resistance, and reconciliation.
- (iii) To investigate how Scott's fiction recovers marginalized Indigenous/Noongar voices, cultural knowledge, histories, relationships to Country, and experiences of colonial dispossession through convergent disciplinary perspectives.

- (iv) To critically evaluate the methodological possibilities and limitations of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches, particularly the problems of cultural translation, disciplinary boundaries, representation, ethics, and the interpretation of Indigenous knowledge.

To propose an integrated methodological framework for future research in English language and literary studies that combines close textual analysis with contextual, interdisciplinary, and Indigenous-centred modes of inquiry. The study addresses the following questions:

1. What distinguishes disciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches to literary inquiry, and how are they relevant to Kim Scott's fiction?
2. How do historical, sociological, anthropological, psychological, cultural, Indigenous, and gender perspectives deepen the interpretation of Scott's fiction beyond conventional close reading?
3. How does Scott's fiction recover and represent marginalized Noongar voices, histories, cultural knowledge, and relationships to Country?
4. What methodological difficulties arise when interdisciplinary approaches are applied to Indigenous literature, particularly in relation to cultural translation, representation, disciplinary authority, and research ethics?
5. What methodological framework can integrate close reading, interdisciplinary analysis, and Indigenous epistemologies in future English Language and Literary Studies?

3. SURVEY ON PAST STUDIES

The notion of studying literature through multiple disciplines has gained remarkable importance during the last few decades. Earlier literary scholarship primarily relied on formalist and text-centred approaches, treating literature as an autonomous artistic creation. Gradually, scholars began to recognize that the social studies are deeply connected with Society, politics, history, economics, culture, philosophy, and psychology. This realization paved the way for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary methods of literary inquiry. The emergence of Cultural Studies, Postcolonial Studies, Gender Studies, Eco-criticism, technology enhanced studies, have significantly transformed the nature of literary research. These areas demonstrate that literature cannot be studied in isolation because every literary work reflects various factors. Consequently, researchers increasingly employ concepts and finding ways borrowed from neighbouring disciplines to develop richer and more contextual interpretations.

The powerful influential developments in interdisciplinary literary scholarship are the wake of Subaltern Studies. Originating initially in historical research, Subaltern Studies sought to recover the voices of ordinary people who had remained absent from dominant historical narratives. Instead of focusing exclusively on political leaders or elite institutions, this approach shifted attention towards peasants, labourers, tribal communities, women, Dalits, and other socially oppressed and suppressed experiences had long been ignored. When this perspective entered literary studies, it fundamentally changed the way literature was read and interpreted. Literary scholars began examining how texts represent marginalized communities, whose voices are silenced, and the critical structures influence literary output and reception. Subaltern literary criticism moved beyond aesthetic appreciation to investigate issues such as social exclusion, caste discrimination, colonial domination, gender inequality, cultural resistance, and identity formation.

Subaltern literature particularly benefits from interdisciplinary inquiry because its concerns cannot sufficiently assimilate through literary analysis alone. The interpretation of Dalit writings, Tribal narratives, African-American literature, Indigenous literature, Partition narratives, refugee literature, and other marginalized texts requires insights from sociology, anthropology, political science, history, economics, law, and human rights studies. These disciplines collectively help explain the historical circumstances, social inequalities, and cultural realities as mentioned in the works.

Similarly, a transdisciplinary perspective further expands literary inquiry by integrating academic knowledge with lived experiences and community-based perspectives. Such an approach makes investigators to realize literature not merely as a written text but as a cultural document that records the struggles, aspirations, identities, and memories of vulnerable sections. It also bridges the gap between academic theory and social reality, making literary study further integrates socially relevant.

The present study builds upon these developments by examining how all these critical means contribute to contemporary literary criticism. Particular emphasis is placed on Subaltern Literature as an important area where disciplinary integration enhances both textual interpretation and social understanding. The study argues that future literary research must move beyond rigid disciplinary boundaries and adopt flexible, inclusive, and context-sensitive methodologies capable of addressing the interwoven difficulties in academic texts.

4. CONCEPTUALIZING DISCIPLINARY, MULTIDISCIPLINARY, INTERDISCIPLINARY AND TRANSDISCIPLINARY LITERARY RESEARCH

The distinction among disciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches is essential because these terms are frequently used interchangeably.

4.1 Disciplinary Approach

A disciplinary approach operates principally within the conceptual and methodological boundaries of literary studies. A researcher examining *Benang*, for example, may concentrate on narrative structure, symbolism, characterization, focalization, genre, metaphor, or linguistic experimentation without systematically incorporating methods from other disciplines.

Such analysis remains valuable. Indeed, close reading provides the textual evidence upon which interdisciplinary interpretation must depend.

4.2 Multidisciplinary Approach

A multidisciplinary approach places different disciplinary perspectives alongside one another. A literary scholar may examine *That Deadman Dance* through literary studies, history, anthropology, and sociology, but each discipline may retain its own conceptual vocabulary and analytical procedures. The perspectives are complementary but not necessarily integrated.

For example:

Literary studies may examine narrative structure.

History may reconstruct colonial contact.

Anthropology may examine cultural practices.

Sociology may analyse social relations and power.

The result is a richer account, but the disciplines may remain relatively parallel.

4.3 Interdisciplinary Approach

Interdisciplinarity goes further. It involves interaction and integration among disciplinary perspectives so that they jointly produce an interpretation.

In Scott's fiction, colonial history cannot always be separated from identity, identity from memory, memory from family, and family from Country. Literary form becomes the medium through which these relationships are organized.

Thus, a fragmented narrative may be examined simultaneously as:

a literary technique; a representation of fractured historical memory; an expression of intergenerational experience; a response to colonial disruption; and a form of resistance to linear colonial historiography.

Here, the disciplines do not merely coexist; they inform one another.

4.4 Transdisciplinary Approach

Transdisciplinarity moves beyond established disciplinary boundaries. It asks whether the categories through which knowledge is traditionally organized are themselves adequate to the object of study.

This is particularly relevant to Indigenous literature because Indigenous knowledge systems may not correspond neatly to Western disciplinary divisions between history, religion, ecology, anthropology, geography, and literature.

In Scott's work, Country may simultaneously constitute:

- physical landscape;
- ancestral relationship;
- cultural memory;
- spiritual space;
- social identity;

- historical archive; and
- narrative structure.

To force Country into a single disciplinary category would therefore reduce its significance.

The four approaches can consequently be represented as a progression:

Disciplinary → Multidisciplinary → Interdisciplinary → Transdisciplinary

The movement is not necessarily hierarchical. Each approach has a legitimate purpose. The appropriate method depends upon the research question and the epistemological character of the literary material.

5. KIM SCOTT'S FICTION THROUGH INTERDISCIPLINARY AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES

Kim Scott occupies a significant position in contemporary Australian Indigenous literature, particularly through his sustained engagement with Noongar history, identity, language, cultural memory, colonialism and relationships to Country. His fiction provides an especially productive corpus for examining the methodological possibilities of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary literary research because his narratives operate simultaneously as literary constructions, historical interventions, cultural expressions and critiques of colonial knowledge systems. Novels such as *True Country* (1993), *Benang: From the Heart* (1999), *That Deadman Dance* (2010) and *Taboo* (2017) resist interpretation through a single disciplinary framework. Their narrative structures bring together individual and collective memory, Indigenous and settler histories, linguistic practices, social relations and the continuing effects of colonial violence.

Scott's fiction is therefore important not simply because it represents Aboriginal experience but because it questions the epistemological structures through which Aboriginal experience has historically been represented. His narratives frequently unsettle linear accounts of Australian history and challenge the assumption that official archives provide an adequate account of the past. In this respect, his novels invite an interpretive approach that connects literary form with history, sociology, anthropology, psychology, linguistics, cultural studies, environmental humanities and Indigenous Studies.

The significance of Scott's fiction for interdisciplinary literary research lies in the relationship between these perspectives. A historical approach can identify the colonial conditions represented in the novels; sociology can explain structures of social inequality and institutional power; anthropology can illuminate cultural practices and relationships with Country; psychology can assist in understanding representations of memory, trauma and identity; linguistics can examine the relationship between language and cultural continuity; and Indigenous Studies can challenge the epistemological assumptions through which Indigenous literary texts are interpreted. The objective, however, is not simply to accumulate these perspectives. Their analytical value becomes greater when they are brought into dialogue with close reading.

5.1 Kim Scott and the Interdisciplinary Approach

An interdisciplinary approach involves the integration of concepts, questions and methods from different academic fields in order to develop a more comprehensive interpretation of a literary text. In Scott's case, such integration is particularly appropriate because his fiction continually moves between literary representation and historical, cultural and political experience.

A purely formal reading of Scott's novels can identify narrative fragmentation, shifts in perspective, symbolism, characterization, temporal disruption and linguistic experimentation. These features are essential to literary interpretation, but they do not by themselves explain why particular forms of fragmentation, memory or linguistic disruption are significant within the historical and cultural contexts represented by the novels. Interdisciplinary analysis consequently extends close reading rather than replacing it.

5.1.1 Historical Perspective

History is indispensable to the interpretation of Scott's fiction because his novels revisit Australia's colonial past and the experiences of Aboriginal communities during and after European settlement. His writing repeatedly exposes the distance between official historical narratives and Indigenous experiences of colonisation.

Benang: From the Heart is particularly significant in this respect. The novel engages with the history of Aboriginal dispossession, racial classification and assimilationist practices. The narrative's movement across generations demonstrates that colonial history cannot be understood merely as a completed sequence of past events. Its consequences remain embedded in family relationships, identity, memory and social structures.

The historical perspective consequently deepens formal literary interpretation. The fragmented chronology of *Benang*, for example, can be understood not merely as an experimental narrative technique but also as a literary representation of disrupted historical memory. The novel's departure from a straightforward chronological structure challenges the expectation that colonial history can be narrated as a coherent and uncontested progression.

Scott therefore transforms history into a formal component of fiction. The past is not simply represented by the narrative; it shapes the narrative's structure, temporal organization and modes of remembering. Literary form consequently becomes a means of questioning historical authority.

5.1.2 Sociological Perspective

A sociological reading directs attention to institutions, social relationships, inequality, power and the processes through which identities are produced within communities.

Scott's fiction represents social environments shaped by colonial classifications, racial discrimination, dispossession, assimilation and unequal relationships between Indigenous and settler communities. Within these contexts, identity cannot be regarded solely as an individual psychological characteristic. It is also produced through family structures, social institutions, racial categories, political systems and relationships of power.

This perspective is particularly valuable in reading *Benang*, where individual and family histories intersect with wider institutional attempts to regulate Aboriginal identity. The novel demonstrates how policies and social classifications can enter intimate spaces and influence people's understanding of themselves and their communities.

A sociological approach therefore complements literary characterization. Characters are not isolated individuals existing independently of history and society; their identities emerge through relationships with institutions, families and communities. Literary characterization can consequently be read as a representation of social processes.

5.1.3 Anthropological and Indigenous Studies Perspectives

Anthropological perspectives can contribute to the study of cultural practices, kinship, oral traditions, community relationships and connections between people and place. Scott's fiction contains numerous elements that invite such analysis, particularly in relation to Noongar cultural memory and relationships with Country. However, an Indigenous literary text should not be reduced to an anthropological source. This distinction is methodologically important. An external anthropological framework may describe cultural practices, whereas Indigenous Studies can additionally question who has the authority to define and interpret Indigenous knowledge.

Scott's representations of Country are particularly significant in this context. Country should not be interpreted merely as geographical landscape or physical setting. Within Indigenous conceptual frameworks, relationships with Country may involve ancestry, cultural memory, identity, responsibility and belonging. Consequently, the literary representation of land can carry cultural and epistemological significance. This perspective also encourages a movement from studying Indigenous literature merely *about* Indigenous people toward engaging with Indigenous ways of knowing. Such an approach is consistent with recent calls for Indigenous-centred literary methodologies that challenge the dominance of externally imposed interpretive frameworks.

The distinction is crucial for interdisciplinary research. The objective is not to use anthropology to explain Indigenous culture as an object of academic observation; rather, anthropology and Indigenous Studies can enter into dialogue with literary analysis while allowing the text's cultural and epistemological dimensions to remain central.

5.1.4 Psychological Perspective

Psychological perspectives provide another important dimension of Scott's fiction, particularly in relation to memory, identity, silence, displacement and representations of historical trauma. Scott's characters frequently encounter the consequences of histories that precede their individual lives. Their experiences demonstrate how historical violence can influence personal and collective memory. In *Taboo*, for example, the representation of the Kukenarup massacre creates a complex relationship between historical violence and contemporary consciousness. Psychological analysis can therefore help explain how individuals and communities negotiate painful memories and unresolved histories. It is particularly useful for examining silence, repression, remembrance and identity formation. Nevertheless, psychological criticism should be applied cautiously. Literary characters should not be treated as clinical subjects, and fictional representations should not be converted into psychological diagnoses. The purpose of psychological interpretation is instead to examine how literary form represents subjectivity, memory and emotional experience.

In *Taboo*, for instance, the significance of silence can be examined not simply as an individual psychological response but as a social and historical phenomenon. Psychological, historical and sociological perspectives therefore intersect rather than operate independently.

5.1.5 Linguistic Perspective

Language constitutes one of the most important dimensions of Scott's literary practice. His fiction raises questions about the relationship between English, Indigenous language, cultural identity and memory.

Scott's use of language demonstrates that language is not merely a neutral instrument of communication. It can function as a repository of cultural knowledge and as a means through which identity and historical experience are negotiated. The presence of Indigenous linguistic elements within English-language fiction consequently raises important questions about linguistic authority and cultural representation. A linguistic analysis of Scott's fiction can examine vocabulary, naming practices, linguistic variation, narrative voice and the interaction between English and Indigenous linguistic traditions. These features can then be connected with larger questions concerning cultural continuity and the historical dominance of English within colonial institutions.

This dimension is especially important to English Studies because the discipline itself developed within linguistic and educational structures shaped by colonial histories. Scott's fiction therefore encourages scholars to consider not only what English communicates but also the historical conditions under which English has functioned as a literary and institutional language.

5.1.6 Environmental and Ecocritical Perspective

Environmental humanities and ecocriticism provide another productive dimension of Scott's fiction. His narratives frequently challenge the separation of human experience from the natural environment.

In Indigenous contexts, Country cannot simply be understood as property or scenery. Relationships among people, land, animals, memory and ancestry may constitute an interconnected cultural system. Scott's fiction therefore allows ecological questions to be considered alongside cultural and historical questions. *That Deadman Dance* is especially significant because its representation of Indigenous-settler encounters also engages with changing relationships between people and the environment. The novel can consequently be read through environmental history, Indigenous ecological knowledge and literary representations of ecological transformation. The ecocritical perspective becomes more productive when integrated with Indigenous Studies. Rather than applying a generic environmental framework to the novel, the researcher can examine how Indigenous relationships with Country challenge colonial understandings of land as commodity and territory.

5.2 Kim Scott and the Multidisciplinary Approach

Although interdisciplinarity involves integration, a multidisciplinary approach permits different disciplines to investigate the same literary work while retaining their distinctive conceptual and methodological orientations.

Scott's fiction is particularly suitable for multidisciplinary analysis because it contains multiple dimensions of social and cultural experience. A historian may examine the representation of colonial policy and Indigenous-settler relations; a sociologist may investigate race, power and social

marginalisation; an anthropologist may examine cultural practices and community relationships; a linguist may study language and naming; a political theorist may investigate colonial governance and Indigenous rights; a psychologist may analyse representations of memory and trauma; and an environmental humanities scholar may examine relationships between people, Country and ecological change. Each perspective can produce an independent contribution.

For example, a historian reading *Benang* may focus on the representation of assimilation policies and racial classification. A sociologist may investigate the institutional production of Indigenous identity. A psychologist may examine the representation of memory and intergenerational consequences. A linguist may analyse the relationship between language and cultural identity.

The strength of the multidisciplinary approach lies in analytical plurality. It enables the same literary text to be examined from several disciplinary positions without requiring every perspective to adopt a common methodology. The distinction between multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research is therefore important. In a multidisciplinary study, disciplinary perspectives may remain relatively autonomous. In an interdisciplinary study, they are brought into conceptual dialogue.

For Scott's fiction, both approaches are valuable. Multidisciplinary research demonstrates the richness of the text from several perspectives, while interdisciplinary research demonstrates how these dimensions interact.

6. VALIDATING OBJECTIVES & RESEARCH QUESTIONS DEVELOPED FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

Objective 1: To distinguish disciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches to literary research and examine their relevance to Kim Scott's fiction.

1 Disciplinary Approach

A disciplinary approach studies literature primarily within the conceptual and methodological boundaries of literary studies. In the case of Kim Scott, such an approach may examine narrative structure, characterization, imagery, symbolism, language, genre, chronology, point of view, and narrative voice.

For example, a close reading of *Benang: From the Heart* may focus on its fragmented narrative structure and representation of memory. Similarly, *That Deadman Dance* may be examined through narrative perspective, dialogue, characterization, and representations of contact.

Such analysis remains fundamental because the literary text provides the primary evidence for interpretation.

2 Multidisciplinary Approach

A multidisciplinary approach brings different disciplines to the study of the same literary work, but each discipline may retain its own analytical framework.

Scott's fiction can therefore be studied through:

- literary studies for narrative and language;
- history for colonial encounters;
- sociology for identity and social power;
- anthropology for cultural practices and kinship;
- psychology for memory and trauma;
- cultural studies for representation;
- gender studies for gendered power relations; and
- Indigenous studies for Country, cultural knowledge, and sovereignty.

The disciplines contribute different forms of understanding without necessarily becoming methodologically integrated.

3 Interdisciplinary Approach

Interdisciplinarity involves interaction and integration among disciplinary perspectives.

For example, Scott's representation of Country may be considered simultaneously as literary imagery, cultural knowledge, historical memory, social identity, ecological relationship, and Indigenous epistemology.

The meaning emerges from the relationship among these perspectives.

Thus, interdisciplinarity does not simply place different interpretations next to each other. It creates an interpretive relationship between them.

4 Transdisciplinary Approach

Transdisciplinarity goes beyond the integration of established academic disciplines. It questions whether conventional disciplinary boundaries are sufficient for understanding the object of research.

This is especially important in Scott's fiction because concepts such as Country, kinship, ancestry, cultural memory, and Indigenous knowledge may not fit neatly into Western academic categories.

Country, for example, cannot be reduced to geography, landscape, ecology, anthropology, or literary symbolism. It may simultaneously involve land, ancestry, identity, community, history, spirituality, and knowledge. Consequently, transdisciplinary research allows Indigenous epistemologies to challenge the boundaries of conventional academic knowledge.

• Answer to RQ1

The four approaches differ in their relationship to disciplinary boundaries. Disciplinary research remains within one field; multidisciplinary research places different disciplinary approaches alongside one another; interdisciplinary research integrates those perspectives; and transdisciplinary research challenges disciplinary boundaries themselves.

Scott's fiction is particularly suited to interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary inquiry because its central concerns—identity, Country, history, language, memory, colonialism, and cultural knowledge—extend beyond the conceptual boundaries of literary studies.

Objective 2: To examine how convergent disciplinary perspectives deepen the interpretation of Scott's representations of identity, colonialism, memory, displacement, resistance, Country, and reconciliation.

Close reading provides the foundation of literary interpretation, but interdisciplinary perspectives can reveal dimensions that remain less visible when the text is examined in isolation.

1 Identity and Sociology

Scott's representations of Indigenous identity cannot be understood solely as individual psychological experiences. Identity is also shaped by family, community, racial classification, institutions, colonial structures, and cultural memory.

In *Benang*, the reconstruction of family history becomes an attempt to recover identity from colonial systems that sought to classify and regulate Aboriginal people.

A literary reading identifies the importance of fragmented narrative and family memory. A sociological perspective explains the structures of power behind the classification of Indigenous identity.

The two perspectives therefore complement each other.

2 Colonialism and History

History provides an important context for understanding Scott's fictional engagement with colonialism.

That Deadman Dance revisits early encounters between Noongar people and European settlers. Its representation of contact challenges conventional narratives in which European arrival becomes the central beginning of Australian history.

Similarly, *Benang* engages with the historical consequences of colonial classification and dispossession.

Historical knowledge therefore deepens close reading by connecting narrative structure and characterization with broader processes of colonial power.

3 Memories and Psychology

Memory is central to Scott's fiction.

In *Benang*, family memory becomes a mechanism through which suppressed histories can be reconstructed. In *Taboo*, historical violence continues to affect descendants and contemporary communities. Psychological perspectives help illuminate memory, silence, trauma, identity, and intergenerational experience, while literary analysis demonstrates how these issues are constructed through narrative technique.

Thus:

History → Memory → Trauma → Narrative Representation

becomes an interdisciplinary interpretive sequence.

4. Displacement and Cultural Identity

Colonialism often produces physical, cultural, and psychological displacement.

Scott's characters may experience displacement through separation from family, community, language, history, and Country.

Sociology can explain the structural dimensions of displacement, while anthropology and Indigenous studies can illuminate cultural relationships to community and Country.

The literary text provides the representation through which these dimensions become visible.

5 Resistance and Cultural Studies

Cultural studies help examine how literature challenges dominant representations.

Scott's fiction resists narratives that position Indigenous people as passive subjects of colonial history.

Instead, Indigenous characters and communities become active participants in history, culture, and knowledge production.

Resistance therefore operates at both thematic and formal levels.

6 Country and Indigenous Studies

Country is perhaps the most important concept demonstrating the value of interdisciplinary interpretation.

A conventional literary reading might interpret landscape as setting or metaphor. Indigenous studies, however, allows Country to be understood as a complex relationship involving land, ancestry, community, identity, cultural memory, and knowledge.

Scott's fiction consequently challenges the assumption that land is merely a physical location.

Country becomes a mode of relational understanding.

7 Reconciliation and Anthropology

That Deadman Dance provides an important context for examining reconciliation.

Anthropological and Indigenous perspectives draw attention to cultural protocols, relationships, exchange, community, and forms of encounter that cannot be adequately understood through a purely settler-centred historical framework.

The novel consequently expands the meaning of reconciliation beyond political or institutional recognition.

• Answer to RQ2

Interdisciplinary perspectives deepen close reading by connecting Scott's literary techniques with the historical, social, psychological, cultural, and Indigenous contexts in which those techniques acquire meaning.

The value of interdisciplinarity therefore lies not in replacing literary interpretation but in extending the range of questions that literary interpretation can ask and answer.

Objective 3: To investigate how Scott's fiction recovers marginalized Noongar voices, histories, cultural knowledge, and relationships to Country.

1 Recovery of Marginalized Voices

Scott's fiction challenges literary and historical traditions in which Indigenous people have frequently been represented through external perspectives.

His narratives provide Indigenous characters and communities with greater narrative presence and cultural agency.

The recovery of marginalized voices therefore occurs not simply through the inclusion of Indigenous characters but through changes in narrative authority.

2 Recovery of Historical Memory

In *Benang*, family history functions as an alternative form of historical knowledge.

Official colonial records are not the only sources through which the past can be understood. Family memory, storytelling, ancestry, language, and place also become important forms of historical recovery.

The novel therefore challenges the authority of a single official archive.

3 Cultural Knowledge

Scott's fiction demonstrates that cultural knowledge is embedded in:

- language;
- storytelling;
- family;
- community;
- ancestry;
- ceremony;
- memory; and
- Country.

Literature consequently becomes a means of preserving and transmitting cultural knowledge.

4 Country

Country is central to understanding Scott's Indigenous literary imagination.

It is not merely landscape or setting.

Country can signify:

- belonging;
- ancestry;
- identity;
- memory;
- cultural continuity;
- community;
- ecological relationship; and
- knowledge.

This makes Country an important point of intersection between literary studies and Indigenous epistemology.

5 That Deadman Dance

The novel reimagines the history of contact between Noongar people and European settlers.

Rather than presenting Indigenous people simply as victims of colonial expansion, Scott gives attention to Indigenous agency, diplomacy, cultural practice, exchange, and resistance.

The novel therefore complicates conventional colonial narratives.

6 Taboo

Taboo addresses historical violence and its continuing effects.

The novel's engagement with the Kukenarup massacre demonstrates how suppressed history can remain present through memory, silence, family relationships, and community experience.

Historical recovery thus becomes both a literary and cultural process.

• Answer to RQ3

Scott's fiction recovers marginalized Noongar voices through narrative agency, family history, cultural memory, language, storytelling, representation of Country, and the questioning of dominant colonial histories.

The recovery is therefore simultaneously literary, historical, cultural, political, and epistemological.

Objective 4: To examine the methodological and ethical challenges involved in applying interdisciplinary approaches to Indigenous literature.

Interdisciplinary research provides significant interpretive possibilities, but it also creates methodological and ethical challenges.

1 Cultural Translation

Indigenous concepts may not have exact equivalents within Western academic terminology.

Concepts such as Country, kinship, ancestry, and cultural memory may carry meanings that exceed conventional disciplinary definitions.

Researchers must therefore recognize the limitations of translation.

2 Representation

Researchers studying Indigenous literature must consider who has the authority to represent whom.

An external researcher may unintentionally reproduce colonial patterns by treating Indigenous culture as an object of academic observation.

Scott's fiction requires researchers to consider Indigenous perspectives as forms of knowledge rather than simply objects of analysis.

3 Disciplinary Boundaries

Interdisciplinary research can become theoretically excessive.

If every available discipline is applied to a literary text, interpretation may become fragmented rather than integrated.

The researcher must therefore select disciplines according to the specific literary problem.

4 Reductionism

There is a danger of reducing literature to another discipline.

A novel should not become merely:

- a historical document;
- a sociological case study;
- a psychological case;
- an anthropological record; or
- a political statement.

Literary form must remain central.

5 Indigenous Knowledge

A further challenge concerns epistemic authority.

Indigenous knowledge should not simply be inserted into Western theoretical frameworks. It may also challenge those frameworks.

For research on Scott, Indigenous concepts should therefore have the capacity to reshape the researcher's analytical assumptions.

6 Romanticization

Researchers must also avoid presenting Indigenous culture as homogeneous, timeless, or untouched by historical change.

Such romanticization can reproduce stereotypes even when the intention is positive.

• Answer to RQ4

The major methodological challenges include cultural translation, representation, disciplinary reductionism, excessive theoretical integration, epistemic imbalance, romanticization, and questions concerning Indigenous intellectual authority.

Therefore, interdisciplinary research on Indigenous literature must be methodologically reflexive, culturally sensitive, and epistemologically responsible.

Objective 5: To propose an integrated methodological framework for future research in English Language and Literary Studies.

Based on the preceding analysis, this study proposes the **CCDISE Framework**:

• C — Contextualization

The researcher first identifies the historical, social, political, and cultural context of the literary work.

• C — Close Reading

The researcher examines:

- language;
- narrative structure;
- characterization;
- imagery;
- symbolism;
- chronology;
- dialogue;
- silence; and
- spatial representation.

- **D — Disciplinary Engagement**

Relevant disciplinary perspectives are selected according to the research problem.

These may include:

History → colonialism and historical memory

Sociology → identity and power

Anthropology → culture and kinship

Psychology → memory and trauma

Cultural studies → representation

Gender studies → gender and intersecting power

Indigenous studies → Country, language, knowledge and sovereignty

- **I — Indigenous Epistemic Grounding**

Indigenous concepts are treated as knowledge-producing frameworks rather than merely as themes.

In Scott's fiction, Country, kinship, ancestry, language, storytelling, and cultural memory can therefore shape interpretation.

- **S — Interdisciplinary Synthesis**

The selected perspectives are brought together to develop an integrated interpretation.

- **E — Reflexive Evaluation**

The researcher evaluates:

- theoretical limitations;
- cultural translation;
- disciplinary assumptions;
- representation;
- epistemic authority; and
- ethical implications.

The framework can be represented as:

Contextualization → Close Reading → Disciplinary Engagement → Indigenous Epistemic Grounding
→ Synthesis → Reflexive Evaluation

This model prevents interdisciplinarity from becoming the simple accumulation of theories.

7. DISCUSSION

The five objectives and research questions establish a continuous methodological progression.

Objective 1/RQ1 establishes what the different approaches mean.

Objective 2/RQ2 demonstrates what interdisciplinary perspectives contribute to literary interpretation.

Objective 3/RQ3 applies these perspectives specifically to Noongar voices, histories, cultural knowledge, and Country.

Objective 4/RQ4 identifies the limitations and ethical problems of such approaches.

Objective 5/RQ5 converts the findings into a methodological framework for future research.

The resulting approach may therefore be understood as:

Conceptual distinction → Interpretive expansion → Indigenous-centred analysis →
Methodological critique → Future framework.

This structure ensures that the objectives and research questions remain directly connected throughout the study.

8. CONCLUSION

This study has examined Kim Scott's fiction through five integrated objectives and corresponding research questions concerning interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary literary research.

The first objective established the distinction among disciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches. While disciplinary research remains essential to literary criticism, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches are particularly useful for Scott's fiction because his works engage simultaneously with literary form, history, society, culture, psychology, identity, and

Indigenous knowledge. The second objective demonstrated that convergent disciplinary perspectives extend close reading. History illuminates colonial memory; sociology reveals structures of identity and power; psychology helps explain memory and trauma; anthropology contributes to the understanding of cultural practices; cultural studies examines representation; gender studies reveals intersecting forms of power; and Indigenous studies provides important perspectives on Country and cultural knowledge.

The third objective demonstrated that Scott's fiction contributes to the recovery of marginalized Noongar voices, histories, cultural knowledge, and relationships to Country. His fiction challenges dominant colonial narratives and presents Indigenous identity and cultural memory as active forms of knowledge.

The fourth objective identified methodological and ethical challenges. Cultural translation, disciplinary reductionism, representation, epistemic inequality, romanticization, and questions of Indigenous intellectual authority require careful consideration. The framework provides a structured approach through which future researchers can combine literary analysis with relevant disciplinary perspectives without losing sight of the literary text or Indigenous epistemological specificity.

The study therefore concludes that interdisciplinary literary research is most productive when it does not simply add other disciplines to literary studies but creates a critical dialogue among different forms of knowledge. In the case of Kim Scott's fiction, such an approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of identity, colonialism, memory, displacement, resistance, Country, reconciliation, and Indigenous cultural knowledge while preserving close reading as the foundation of literary interpretation.

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