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This is a sample synopsis for the IGNOU MPATHA Project (course MTHP 044, Dissertation). It shows how a theatre research plan can be laid out part by part. It is a model to study, not a document to copy.

1. Prepared by the ignouproject.com editorial desk (Shri Chakradhar Publication Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi) with AI assistance, and checked against the IGNOU documents named below. Published under BK Sahni's editorial responsibility, November 2026.

2. IGNOU documents read for this file in November 2026: the Common Prospectus (July 2026), pages 23, 27 and 126 to 127; the MPATHA Programme Guide (School of Performing and Visual Arts); the MPATHA programme page on ignou.ac.in; the MTH-031 and MTH-034 assignments for the July 2026 session.

3. What those documents fix for MTHP 044: it is the Dissertation course of MPATHA, a Project course of 4 credits (about 120 study hours) in Semester IV, studied alongside MTH 043 Research Methodology. For admissions from the January 2023 cycle, the project evaluation fee for project work up to 4 credits is Rs 300, paid with the term-end examination form (Prospectus, page 27). The Programme Guide allows no re-evaluation of dissertations.

4. What they do not fix: none of them prints an MTHP 044 synopsis format, supervisor rule, word limit, page format or viva rule, and the Programme Guide's list of forms has no dissertation approval form. The parts used in this file draw on the proposal components that IGNOU's School of Education lists in its MESP-001 Handbook on Dissertation Work: hypotheses are left out because that Handbook treats them as not always needed in fact-finding studies, and the ethics, chapter scheme and work plan sections are our additions. That choice is ours. Ask the MPATHA Programme Coordinator at SOPVA which parts, length and form SOPVA expects, and follow SOPVA's answer wherever it differs.

5. Everything in [square brackets] belongs to you: your city, group, play, people, dates, numbers and sources. A synopsis that keeps any bracket, or copies this wording, is not your work.

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Indira Gandhi National Open University

School of Performing and Visual Arts

Master of Performing Arts (Theatre Arts), MPATHA

Course MTHP 044: Dissertation

SYNOPSIS (DISSERTATION PROPOSAL)

Vachika Abhinaya in the Rehearsal Room: How One [City]-Based [Language] Theatre Group Trains the Voice for a Contemporary Production of [Play], [Year]

Detail	Entry
Learner's name	[Your name]
Enrolment number	[Your enrolment number]
Study centre	[Code and name as printed on your ID card]
Regional Centre	[As printed on your ID card]
E-mail and mobile	[Your own active e-mail and number]
Proposed supervisor	[Name, designation, institution; check with SOPVA who may supervise]
Date	[Date of submission]

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1. Context and rationale

Bharata's Natyashastra names four kinds of Abhinaya: Angika (the body), Vachika (the voice and the spoken word), Aharya (costume and make-up) and Sattvika (involuntary expression). IGNOU's own MTH-031 assignment for the July 2026 session asks MPATHA learners to explain these four. Whether a contemporary group describes its voice work in these terms, or in others, is the question this study tests.

This study looks at one rehearsal room. It asks how a working group prepares its actors' voices for one production, and how far the language of the Natyashastra helps describe what happens there. [State, from your own reading, how much has already been written on voice training in the theatre you study.] [Add two or three sentences on why this group and this production matter: their history, their language, their audience.]

2. Statement of the problem

The study examines the voice training used by [group] during the rehearsal period of [play] in [city], [month and year] to [month and year], and reads it against the treatment of Vachika Abhinaya in the Natyashastra (Ghosh translation).

3. Review of literature

The review will cover three bodies of writing. First, the Natyashastra on voice and intonation, read in Manomohan Ghosh's English translation [cite the chapters you use]. Second, voice pedagogy used in actor training, including Kristin Linklater's Freeing the Natural Voice and Stanislavski's An Actor's Work in Jean Benedetti's translation. Third, writing on post-independence urban Indian theatre, beginning with Aparna Bhargava Dharwadker's Theatres of Independence. [Summarise what each source argues in your own words, and name the gap your study addresses. Do not add a source you have not read.]

The performance record also counts as literature for this study: earlier production photographs, reviews, programme notes and recordings of [group]'s work, where the group allows access. [List what exists and where it is kept.]

4. Research questions

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(a) Which voice exercises does [group] use during the rehearsal of [play], and in what order?

(b) How do the director and actors explain the purpose of these exercises?

(c) Which of these practices can be described in the Natyashastra's terms for voice and intonation, and which cannot?

5. Objectives

1. To document the voice exercises used across the observed rehearsal period of [play].

2. To study how the director and actors describe the aims of those exercises.

3. To analyse the exercises against the Natyashastra's account of Vachika Abhinaya.

4. To explore what the findings suggest for voice training in MPATHA practical courses.

6. Operational definitions

Vachika Abhinaya: for this study, the spoken and vocal side of performance as described in the Natyashastra and as practised in the observed rehearsals. **Voice exercise:** any activity the director names as preparing breath, voice or speech. **Rehearsal session:** one scheduled meeting of the cast with the director, as entered in the group's call sheet.

7. Delimitations

One group, one production and one rehearsal period: [dates]. The study does not judge the quality of the production, and it does not measure audience response.

8. Methodology

Design: a qualitative single case study. **Site and participants:** [group], [city]; the director and [number] actors who agree to take part. **Tools:** an observation schedule for rehearsal sessions; a semi-structured interview schedule; an annotation sheet for the promptbook or working script. **Procedure:** a permission letter from the group, written consent from each participant, observation of [number] sessions, interviews after [stage of rehearsal], and audio or video recording only where consent covers it. **Analysis:** thematic analysis of field notes and transcripts, followed by a mapping of themes against the Natyashastra categories

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named in section 3. No figure in this synopsis is a finding; numbers appear only in the dissertation, from your own observation.

9. Ethical considerations and permissions

These are practices we recommend; SOPVA has printed no ethics rule for MTHP 044. Written permission from [group]; individual consent forms; the right of any participant to withdraw; no recording of minors without a guardian's written consent; photographs and recordings used only with the permission of the people shown and of the group; quotations from the play text kept short and credited. [Name where the signed forms will be kept.]

10. Tentative chapter scheme

Chapter 1 Introduction. Chapter 2 Review of literature and the performance record. Chapter 3 Methodology. Chapter 4 The rehearsal room: exercises observed. Chapter 5 Voice exercises read against the Natyashastra. Chapter 6 Findings, conclusions and further study. References. Appendices: permission letters, blank consent form, observation and interview schedules, rehearsal log.

11. Work plan

[Month 1: reading and permissions. Month 2: observation and interviews. Month 3: analysis. Month 4: writing and revision with the supervisor. Fit these to your Semester IV practical workshop dates and to the term-end cycle you choose.]

References (all real; read each one before you cite it)

Bharata-Muni. (1951). *The Natyasastra: A treatise on Hindu dramaturgy and histrionics* (Vol. I, Chapters I to XXVII; M. Ghosh, Trans.). Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal. (Bibliotheca Indica, Work No. 272.)

Braun, V., and Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77 to 101.

Dharwadker, A. B. (2005). *Theatres of independence: Drama, theory, and urban performance in India since 1947*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press.

Linklater, K. (2006). *Freeing the natural voice: Imagery and art in the practice of voice and language* (Rev. ed.). London: Nick Hern Books.

Stanislavski, K. (2008). *An actor's work: A student's diary* (J. Benedetti, Trans.). London: Routledge.

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Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

[Add the sources from your own reading, in the same style throughout.]

Learner's signature and date: [ ] Supervisor's signature and date: [ ]

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