CHAPTER VI

DEVELOPMENT OF THE COURSE

The skills and sub-skills having been decided, taking various factors into account, the stage was now set for the crucial task of developing the Course including not just different exercises but also the accompanying notes and instructions, as also other materials such as the Record-sheet and the Key which were to be an integral part of the Course materials. It was also necessary for the measurement of the outcomes to develop pre- and post-tests both unitwise and overall. The chapter contains a discussion of how all these materials were prepared. Preceding this, is a discussion of the objectives of the Course and what they implied, and of certain points that required prior consideration.

OBJECTIVES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

Though it was clear as to what skills had to be taught to the learners, it was thought expedient to list the objectives of the course in terms of abilities and attitudes as well as skills. This would provide a guideline for the approach to be adopted while designing the materials. Stated below were the desired outcomes or objectives of the Course, and their implications.
Objectives of the Course:

Following were the objectives to be achieved through the Course:

(i) To stimulate a desire to acquire better reading ability.

(ii) To instil confidence to meet new reading situations.

(iii) To create an insight into the process of reading and its constituents.

(iv) To promote a clear grasp of the literal, and where possible, implied meaning of what is read.

(v) To promote the ability to read longer passages without showing signs of fatigue.

(vi) To create an awareness of the importance of speed reading towards which end a beginning would be made while taking the Course.

Implications of the Objectives:

The functional implications of these objectives in terms of learning experiences and others were spelled out as under:

(a) Implications In Terms of Learning Experiences: The implications of the above objectives in terms of learning experiences were:
(i) To develop speed and accuracy in the recognition of words.

(ii) To create an awareness of the importance of knowing accurate word meaning.

(iii) To create an awareness of the importance of expanding one's vocabulary.

(iv) To develop word attack skills such as the use of contextual clues, analysis of the word into its known elements etc. for dealing with unfamiliar words.

(v) To improve the skill of reading in meaning-bearing structures.

(vi) To promote the skill of understanding the literal and implied meaning of sentences.

(vii) To promote the skill of reading for the main idea.

(b) Other Implications: Other implications of the objectives were:

(i) To explain in simple terms, whenever there was an opportunity, the nature and importance of different components of reading.

(ii) To use content material that interests the age-group.
(iii) To set a reasonable expectancy level; and
(iv) To use success as a motivator.

CERTAIN BASIC ISSUES

In addition to the objectives which were to be achieved through the Course there were certain issues that required to be considered at the outset. These issues were the language component of the Course, the use of the learners' first language and the strategy for learning to take place. They are discussed below.

A. The Language Component:

The Course was to be constructed not primarily to increase the learners' knowledge of the language, either lexical or grammatical, but to increase their reading proficiency. This implied that in the various Units of the Course no language material which was outside the syllabus prescribed for them (Government of Gujarat, 1974) be made use of except when handling such material itself was the skill in focus, as in the case of inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words. On consideration it was felt that this should be a guiding principle for preparing the Course but adherence to it should in no case be very rigid. As regards new lexical items the functional aspect of the skill just
mentioned required that such items be occasionally used in subsequent units. However, if use of unfamiliar words was dictated by the nature of the idea to be presented but the meaning was not easy to guess, it was to be provided in the text itself, that is, in the form of what Widdowson calls 'prompting glossaries' (1978, p. 82) so that the flow of thought was not interrupted and attention was not diverted from the skill to be practised in the given unit to finding the meaning of the word.

As far as the grammatical items not previously learned by the students were concerned, these were to be avoided as far as possible, but again liberty was to be taken when the situation so demanded. This was in accordance with the view (e.g. D.Y. Morgan's, 1967, p. 49) that the learners do understand the meaning of a structure even if they have not learnt the structure as such. A line, of course, was to be drawn in the use of unfamiliar grammatical items so as to eliminate the more complicated ones which would obstruct the meaning-getting process.

B. Use of the Learners' First Language:

The Course being self-instructional, and one of its aims being to create an understanding about what proficient reading is, the learners had not only to do the various
exercises but also to know, without external help, how they were to be done, and above all, to understand the points highlighted and discussed, including the constituents of reading. The use of the target language, i.e. English, for this purpose would have been an excellent proposition because it would have provided an opportunity for the functional use of reading ability in English which was the basic aim of the course. On the other hand it was necessary that the learners not only understand the instructions clearly and do the exercises properly, but also have a clear grasp of the accompanying discussion, some of which was intended to serve as a motivator, and some to give an understanding of the specific skill or sub-skill in focus, so that learning would be optimized. This entailed in the material accompanying the exercises, the use of not the target language, but the learners’ first language Gujarati.

Same was the consideration in providing the meaning of lexical items as discussed in the paragraph 'The Language Component' above. In most cases this had necessarily to be in the learners’ first language, and providing the 'value' which the lexical items take on in a 'particular context', and not the signification, that is, the definition of the item (Widdowson, 1978, p. 84). Otherwise the very purpose of providing the meaning would be defeated. The rationale for
using the learners' first language in certain exercises is discussed at relevant places.

C. Strategy For Learning to Take Place:

An important question to be considered before preparing the materials was what instructional procedures to select so that effective learning of the skills and sub-skills envisaged to be taught would take place. The different aspects of the question to be considered were the display phase or presentation of stimulus material and providing guidance, the reactive phase or eliciting performance, and the evaluative phase where the learners would get the necessary feedback regarding their performance.

So far as the presentation stage is concerned, the learners were not only to be stimulated to recall the pre-requisite skill or knowledge - an important event in self-instruction - but their attention was also to be drawn to the specific aspect of reading that was to be in focus in the given Unit, and more importantly, they were to be encouraged to think about the why aspect of it because otherwise as Pugh (1972, p. 28), in whose opinion "the training emphasis of most courses precludes this", says, the learner "is unlikely to think about his behaviour in realistic reading tasks, and transfer is unlikely to take place". According to Brumfit (1978, p. 177) also in the materials
prepared to develop the reading skills of those learning
English as a foreign language only rarely is there an
attempt to create awareness of the reading process. Looking
to its usefulness therefore in the notes at the beginning
of each Unit the importance of the particular skill or
sub-skill in the act of reading was to be pointed out.

As regards guidance for learning, it was to be decided
as to what amount of it should be provided. Duffy, Sherman
and Roehler mention two basic strategies for learning to
take place: one is modelling and the other discovery. In
the modelling type the steps for performing the task are
demonstrated, and the learner learns to perform the task
by imitating; In the discovery type the conditions are set
for the learner to generalize and discover the principle
himself. Whereas in the former the learner's response pattern
is tightly controlled and learning seems quick and easy,
the latter involves the learner more actively in the thinking
process and though learning through this technique is not
so quick, the retention rate is high because learning has
taken place through discovery. A still greater advantage
of discovery strategy is that transfer of the skill to new
tasks is easier. (Duffy, Sherman and Roehler, 1977, pp.174-177).

For the purpose of the present research the discovery
type of learning of various skills and sub-skills appeared
more useful. It was more pertinent to the insightful learning of the skill that was envisaged to take place in the learners who take the Course. The higher retention rate and the ease of transfer were also welcome advantages in tune with the basic purpose of the Course. Lastly, it also fitted the recent over-all shift in the language teaching programmes from the mim-mem approach to cognitive code learning (Carroll, 1966, p. 105). For these reasons it was decided to have by and large in the various units and exercises the discovery approach, providing a model only of the way in which a response was to be indicated.

As a natural corollary of the discovery approach with limited guidance to be adopted for the presentation of the material, the students' responses in the performance stage were also not to be tightly controlled. One reason for doing so was that a certain amount of linguistic competence was assumed on the part of the learners, and what they were learning was the application of this competence for developing their reading proficiency. Another reason was that in conformity with the more recent theories of human learning propounded by psychologists like Bruner, errors in the process of learning were not only thought inevitable but also necessary for the development of the learners' insight. In other words "wrong responses" were not only to be expected but they were considered "more educative and
Like in any kind of instructional procedures feedback to the learners as regards their performance was to be an important condition for learning to take place. If the response was correct, confirmation of it would result into re-inforcement, and if it was not, what is correct would be learnt. Here again no need was found for immediate feedback for each response, firstly because there was no interlocking of items as in programmed learning, and secondly, the researcher preferred to subscribe to the view that "the delay of reinforcement for a hungry rat learning to press a lever to obtain food has consequences far different from the delay of informational feedback to a child" (DeCecco, 1970, p. 501). Thirdly, it was also felt that in the approach contemplated to develop time-consciousness the system of immediate feedback for each response would be a handicap. Taking into account all these factors a system of feedback for an entire exercise, but not for a whole unit which would involve too big a gap between the response and feedback, was to be employed.

It will be seen that the auto-instructional Course contemplated, though it embraced the principles of programmed learning, was different from programming as it is normally
understood. Though the skill to be learned was broken down into its component parts, there were not small steps or frames, and even if response and feedback were integral parts of the Course, errors were not warded off for the fear of wrong responses being learnt. Nor was there immediate confirmation or correction of responses as Skinnerian programmer would have liked it to be. Instead, there was an emphasis on development of insight and learning even from errors.

THE MATERIALS IN THE COURSE

Though different Units and the exercises comprising the Units were to form the major bulk of the Course, there were going to be other ancilliary materials also in it. The following paragraphs describe what all the materials in the Course were, and how they were planned.

The Self-study Book:

This was to form the main bulk of the Course. (See Vol. II, Appendix A.). It was to contain Units on the skills and sub-skills designed to be taught with a general introduction to the Course at the beginning. This introduction was meant primarily to tell the learners what the Course was all about and how it had to be taken. However, one of its aims was also to motivate the learners and to create in them a
desire to become better readers, towards which end they would make their effort while taking the Course.

In addition to the general introduction to the Course each Unit in the Course was also to have a brief note in which the skill or the sub-skill in that particular Unit was to be discussed, followed by instructions as to how the work was to be done: how the exercises were to be done, how the responses were to be checked, how the record was to be kept, and above all, how the follow-up was to be done. These notes and instructions were to be repeated in Unit after Unit because of their importance, if the learner was to benefit maximally from the Course.

From the view-point of economy the Self-study Book was, by and large, to be kept re-usable; that is, the students were not to indicate their responses in these books.

The Answer-book

For indicating their responses the learners had to use a separate Answer-book. (See Vol. II, Appendix B.) Space was to be provided in the Answer-book for indicating the responses: for putting a circle on one of the three or four numbers given, for writing a number or a word on a given line and so on. A separate Answer-book was both feasible and necessary because the responses were going to be short and
precise, and yet they had not to be marked or written in the Self-study Book.

**The Record-sheet:**

For a knowledge of their progress from exercise to exercise and from Unit to Unit, and this in turn to work as a motivating factor, it was necessary that the learners kept a record of their work in terms of both the time they require to do an exercise, and the number of correct responses in the exercise which they would write after checking their own responses. A Record-sheet was therefore provided for this purpose. (See Vol. II, Appendix B.) Though very often neither the time required in two consecutive exercises, nor the number of correct responses in them were comparable, the fact that they had to be noted, would keep up their spirit both to work as fast as they could and as best as they could, it was thought. There was also provision to compute the score in terms of marks for each exercise. This was mainly to point out the relative difficulty value of the skill or the sub-skill in the task of reading.

**The Key:**

Looking to the self-instructional nature of the Course it was extremely necessary that the learners be provided with the Key, that is, correct responses to the items in exercises against which they could check their own responses.
The necessity was, not just because the learners must know the result of their effort sooner or later, but also because in case a learner got his answer wrong, he was supposed to learn carefully what was right. This being the discovery type of learning he was also to try to understand the mistake in the light of the key provided. For this reason the Key was an integral and important part of the Course. However, because the Course was not divided into small, easy steps, the Key was not to be provided after each item as in programming, but separately for all the exercises in the Course. (See Vol. II, Appendix B.) The students were to use the Key after completing the whole exercise.

**PREPARATION OF THE UNITS IN THE SELF-STUDY BOOK**

The ten Units comprising the major bulk of the Course were developed as described below.

**Unit A I: Word Recognition:**

Through this Unit it was aimed to develop students' accuracy in word recognition which was basic to both comprehension and speed. This they were to achieve by having a picture of the word as a whole with total length and distinguishing features resulting in total configuration of the word as an aid as suggested by DeBoer and Dallmann.
(1960, p. 101), for example. However, the words which are mixed up in reading are not always words with visual similarity. Sometimes words with auditory similarity especially of the vowel sounds also get mixed up. If the learners were to develop accuracy in word recognition they should be able to distinguish the word in question from other words which have similarity to it of any kind. Semantic resemblance though not always a source of serious mistake had also to be guarded against. Therefore words with different kinds of resemblance to the key word were to be the distractors. The student had to have a look at the key word, have an exact visual image of the word, and then to locate that word in the words given against it moving his eyes from left to right.

For the purpose of preparing this kind of exercises 220 words from the current syllabus the students were supposed to have learnt were selected. These were words which were in no way unique but which had some similarity with other words in the syllabus and therefore lent themselves suitably for the kind of exercises in view. For example, 'house' was likely to be mixed up with 'horse' on one hand (contourwise visual similarity) and with 'mouse' on the other (phonological similarity). Semantically it had resemblance with the word 'home'. Lengthwise it stood in
contrast with 'housewife' containing it but much longer than it. Therefore 'house' was to be the key word - the word to be recognised when placed with other words - and 'horse', 'mouse', 'home' and 'housewife' were to be the distractors. Sometimes because of non-availability of a similar word a word with no similarity with the key word was also used as a distractor. The key word in the left column was to be underlined wherever it was in the right column. After completing an exercise the students were to check their responses, not with the help of the key in the case of this Unit, but by comparing the words underlined by them in the right hand column with the key word in the left hand column.

The exercises of this Unit were planned to be included not in the Self-study Book but in the Answer-book because the Self-study Book was designed to be re-usable while in this Unit it was necessary that the learners marked their responses in the exercises themselves: they spotted out in the right hand column the key word given in the left hand column and underlined it immediately keeping the eye movement fairly rhythmic in the left-to-right direction and down to the next line. Use of some other space for marking the response would have been an obstacle for this rhythmic eye-movement. Moreover, the usefulness of the Word Recognition Unit had to be decided on the basis of increase in speed.
(Chapter 5), for which it was necessary that no additional time (e.g. for writing the answer elsewhere) was involved in doing the exercises.

Unit A II : Word Meaning – Known Words:

The Unit on the meaning of known words (i.e. the words in the syllabus) was intended to develop an attitude that recognises the importance of accurate word meaning instead of having a vague idea about it. Secondly, like other vocabulary units it also aimed to create on the part of the learners an awareness of the importance of vocabulary for efficient reading. Thirdly, it was expected that convinced of the importance of vocabulary and knowledge of precise meaning, the learners would strive to increase their knowledge of words for developing their reading ability.

The nature and purpose of this Unit entailed that the items for it were selected from the syllabus. However, at the same time it was felt that a better course would be to select those items which also occurred, in the subsequent units such as sentence meaning, getting the main idea of a paragraph or speed reading with comprehension because if the lexical items in these units were refreshed at this stage, or if their precise meaning was acquired, may be by way of follow-up work during this unit, the subsequent
practising of the skill, whether it was sentence meaning or speed reading of passages, would be greatly facilitated. This being more profitable, it was decided that the word meaning Unit be developed when at least the first draft of other Units was ready.

When other Units, especially those which were not vocabulary Units themselves, were developed, a list of lexical items in them thought to be slightly difficult was prepared. In this list the items which were there in the syllabus were marked for inclusion in the word meaning unit. There were about 70 such items. The five exercises in the Unit were to have 120 items in all - the number thought adequate for the kind of purpose in view. So another 50 items had to be selected from the syllabus. This was done keeping in mind the following: (a) loan words taken from English and used freely in Gujarati (e.g. ambulance, commentary, electricity) were not included; (b) derivatives such as childhood, followers were also not included because there was going to be a separate Unit to take care of them; and (c) items which were either too difficult or too simple for the anticipated learners were also avoided. On the other hand, in the vocabulary items selected from other Units as well as in those selected from the syllabus; phrases were to be included in addition to single words.
When the list of vocabulary items for the word meaning exercises was ready, the question arose of the form of the exercises. First of all, for the ease and accuracy of checking, it was necessary that the exercises were of the objective type in which the learners chose from a set of alternatives the appropriate meaning of the word. Secondly, from the pedagogical point of view, it was necessary that the words were not given in isolation but in context. The context would give a clue to the part of speech a word was and also some clue to the meaning. However, the aim of the exercises being accuracy of meaning, strong distractors had to be used whenever possible. Another important consideration was whether the probable meanings suggested should be in English or in L1. The use of English obviously would have been a better proposition but after a great deal of struggle to give the meanings in L2, the researcher felt that it was just not feasible to do so: to give the meanings of words using only those words which were sure to be known to the learners. How to give the meaning of and distractors for the word 'experience'? Or of 'be attracted' for that matter? On realizing this unsurmountable difficulty, the idea of using L2 had to be given up in favour of what was more practicable. Moreover, when accuracy, and not a vague idea of the meaning was the aim, the use of the learners' first language would serve the purpose better, it was felt.
As regards the format it was considered quite proper that the sentence used for contextualization was given with the word or the phrase underlined in it, and the word or the phrase, or its root form where this was different, was again given separately so that those wanting to mark the response without referring to the sentence might be able to do so.

The tips about the importance of vocabulary, why knowing the exact meaning is important, and how words along with their meanings and illustrative sentences should be noted were all given in the introduction to the unit. There were also in this part of the unit clear instructions regarding how the exercises were to be done, how the responses were to be checked, and more importantly, how the follow-up work was to be done: correct word-meanings to be noted along with illustrative sentences, and subsequently learnt.

Unit A III: Meaning of Unfamiliar Words - Use of Context

This Unit had the aim of training the students to guess as correctly as possible the meaning of an unfamiliar word or phrase by making an efficient use of the context, instead of being flabbergasted when encountered with an unfamiliar word, or making wild guesses at its meaning.

In his adaptation of Nelson Brooks on vocabulary Nasr (1972, p. 75) says that what we call guessing in this context
is really making a choice. Now this might be true in the case of a mature reader because when proper meaning is not immediately available, several probable meanings come to his mind, and out of them he chooses one that is more fitting, judged in the light of the context. In the case of an immature reader the occurring of several probable meanings could not be taken for granted. Therefore while planning this Unit it was thought more proper to supply several probable meanings of the unfamiliar word at least in the initial stages, requiring the learner to choose the best among them.

The skill in this Unit being almost a new one, the five exercises in it were planned in a graded sequence as discussed below. Care was also taken to give sufficient context for each item. Very often the context was a paragraph of four to five lines.

In the first exercise three probable meanings of the word or phrase in question were to be given vertically in the right hand side of the paragraph. The contextual material was also divided into three parts. The first part suggested these meanings as probable ones. So the students, after reading that part of the paragraph, were to have a look at the meanings given in the margin. Then they were to read the second part of the paragraph and cancel one of the "meanings" as improbable, because it would not fit the context. Then
they were to read the third part of the paragraph which would further enable them to eliminate one more 'meaning' and verify the one that was left.

In the next three exercises no such help with regard to the use of context was to be provided. Nevertheless the probable meanings were to be given below the paragraph that contained the word. The learners were to read the paragraph, examine the hypothetical meanings, eliminate those which did not fit the context, and decide upon the one that was most suitable in the context.

In the last exercise neither the probable meanings of the unfamiliar words were given, nor was any help provided for the use of the context. The students were to see the unfamiliar word underlined in the contextual material, read the context and think out the meaning. This meaning they were to write in the space provided in the answer-book.

As regards the unfamiliar words and phrases to be included in the exercises the researcher selected by her subjective judgement those words and phrases which were outside the syllabus, and yet not very uncommon or difficult, so that the learners, inspired to increase their vocabulary, might find it rewarding to note them and learn them later on.

Clear instructions with regard to what the learners had
to do in each exercise were given at the beginning of the exercise while the importance of this skill for increasing reading proficiency was discussed in the general introduction to the Unit. There was also an attempt to motivate the students in such a way that they would be inspired to make effort, and master the skill.

As in other units the work done was to be evaluated timewise, and in terms of number of correct responses. The items got wrong were to be studied carefully in the follow-up work.

Unit A IV: Reading in Meaningful Phrases:

Clear as the goal of this Unit was - to enable the students to read in meaningful word-groups and thereby improve their reading comprehension - what learning experiences to provide to achieve the goal required a great deal of consideration and some experimentation too.

It was evident that the students needed a good deal of practice in phrase reading. (See Chapter IV.) This meant that the exercises of this Unit would have more of READ-AND-LEARN element and less of READ-AND-DO element in them. This reading practice could be of (a) separate phrases (b) sentences divided into phrases and (c) paragraphs divided into phrases.
Now so far as phrase reading practice of sentences and paragraphs was concerned, there was not much of a problem. Out of three or four models available, one that met certain criteria, could be easily selected. For giving practice in reading phrases as phrases, however, which was necessary to break the word-by-word reading habits of students and to enable them to perceive word-groups as wholes as suggested by certain reading specialists (e.g. Donald Cushenberry, 1969, p. 86) there was no suitable format available. What reading specialists suggest is use of flash cards, but that is pertinent to class teaching. For a course like this there should be some other workable kind of exercise. In self-instructional reading courses one or two types were found but the researcher did not feel sure that they would serve the purpose. In one a key phrase was given at the top, and a number of phrases below it, with the key phrase repeated a certain number of times at irregular intervals. The student was to read the phrases vertically as given in the exercise and mark the key phrase wherever it occurred. In another similar type the student was to read the phrases in the same way marking those phrases which had a certain element (e.g. of life) in them. Doubtful whether the learner would practise reading word-groups as phrases in such exercises, the researcher decided to try it out on a sample of three students of Class XI. Two of them were average and
one slightly above average but all three were smart enough to give their reactions. When exercises prepared after the models described above were given to them and their reactions were asked, they all said that they did not bother to read the phrases, but looked for a certain word which gave a clue to the type of phrase they had to mark. If the exercises were given in this manner, they would not serve the purpose for which they were meant. So the idea of asking the learners to mark any kind of phrases was dropped. Instead, the learners were to read the phrases as meaningful language units. They were also advised to keep the eyes on the central part of the vertical line and try to increase their eye-span. But this was only secondary. Reading a phrase as a phrase was the main thing. This was in accordance with Edward Fry's view which was quite convincing, that whether the reader sees the group "in one fixation, or two or three, is not as important as his mental process which would perceive them as a meaningful group" (1963, p.42).

As regards the types of phrases, there were to be all types that the syllabus would permit: nominal phrases which might occur in the subject position, in the object position or in the position of a complement in a sentence; verbal phrases in different tenses and in both affirmative and negative forms; and also adverbial phrases. Substancewise the phrases were designed to be made as interesting as possible.

For giving practice in phrasal reading of sentences and paragraphs, several models were available. In one phrase-
boundary was indicated by more space after it; in another phrases were indicated by separate underlining; in still another the text was divided into phrases and these phrases were given vertically. In one more variety of phrase reading exercises the phrases were separated by slanting lines or bars (/ / ). On consideration it was felt that in the case of the first two, line-endings would be a problem: either a group would have to be broken or line-endings would have to be very uneven; and still the phrase-boundary might not be very clear. Vertical reading of the text on the other hand is not the natural way of reading sentences and longer discourses whereas on all counts the use of bars was found satisfactory: the text could be given in horizontal lines; line-endings could be kept even; and more importantly, there could be no mistake about the phrase boundary because a bar would clearly indicate it. The style of dividing sentences and paragraphs into phrases by use of slanting lines or bars was therefore adopted for the purpose of phrase reading of longer units.

Another question that required consideration was whether to give after the READ-AND-LEARN type of exercises, any READ-AND-DO type of exercises; i.e. whether to give sentences and paragraphs and ask students to mark phrases in them. Here the problem involved was, not that the contemplated re-usability of the Course-book would not allow such marking -
this problem could be solved by including the DO exercises in the answer-book as in the case of Unit A I. The major problem was, if there was considerable amount of material (i.e. one's own responses) to be checked by comparing the two texts - one in which the learners would have marked their phrases and the other given in the key - it would be a tough job requiring considerable amount of efficiency and concentration. Again, there being no hard-and-fast rules about division into phrases, how to provide for the checking of the responses that would not affect the learners' progress and enthusiasm adversely? On the other hand, if all exercises in the unit were just READ-AND-LEARN type of exercises, and there was nothing to be done as such, the learners' interest would not be sustained, no matter, how interesting the material was. After weighing the pros and cons of including the DO type exercises in the unit, it was ultimately decided that: (i) after each sentence-reading and paragraph-reading exercise in the course-book, to give a similar but short DO type exercise in the Answer-book. This was a kind of compromise between giving the same monotonous work in all the exercises and providing learning experiences which would cause some fatigue; and (ii) to try to bring home to the learners that their phrasing may not be wrong, even if it did not tally with that in the key, because there are no precise rules about it; only that the phrases should be meaningful.
The ten exercises in the unit were divided in this way:
The first three exercises were to contain 120 phrases each for reading practice. The next four exercises were to contain sentences: one was to have sentences with four word-groups, one was to have sentences with five word-groups, one was to have sentences with six word-groups, and one was to be miscellaneous. The idea behind having the same number of word-groups in the three exercises was to have a kind of rhythm and symmetry in them while the assorted type was to approximate life-situation where one meets sentences with varying lengths. The last three exercises in the Unit were to be passages with phrases marked in them. All this material was to be in the Self-study Book, and had to be read.

The D0 type exercises for marking the phrases were included in the Answer-book. The same pattern of sentences and paragraphs was followed in them. The student was to read an exercise from the Course-book (i.e. the Self-study Book) paying attention to the phrases marked in it, and then to phrase-mark the exercise bearing the same number in the Answer-book. No phrase-marking was to be done in the first three exercises in the Answer-book; they were just to be read in the Self-study Book.

For the evaluation of the work the time required for doing each exercise was to be noted. Where phrase-marking was done, it was to be compared with that given in the Key.
The students were asked not to count the number of correct responses or errors, but to see that their phrasing matched the phrases in the Key fairly closely, and in case there was difference, to understand it.

How reading in meaningful phrases enables a person to read better was discussed in the introduction to the Unit. Instructions for groups of exercises as well as for each individual exercise both the READ-AND-LEARN type and the READ-AND-DO type were given at relevant places.

Unit A V : Sentence Meaning:

This Unit aimed to create, in the first place, an awareness that for understanding the meaning of a sentence it is not enough to know the meaning of words it contains but also to get the meaning accruing from the arrangement of words and the relationship between its parts. Its implication was that the words in a sentence being known, the meaning of the sentence cannot be taken for granted — one has to carefully discriminate as to what a sentence does mean and what it does not mean. Co-extensive with creating this awareness, it aimed to develop the skill of understanding various kinds of sentences based on grammatical points in the syllabus. Lastly, it also aimed to enable the students to understand the inferential meaning of sentences.
To enable the learners to see a certain kind of relationship within a sentence or between two sentences it was necessary that they be taught to recognize how anaphoric devices are used in English (of which a detailed discussion follows) as pointed out by Charles Peters (1977, p. 253), Pearson and Johnson (1978, p. 123), Hittlemann (1978, pp. 236-240) etc. Two exercises out of the total five in the unit were therefore planned to be devoted to anaphoric devices, while the rest were to have grammar points in the syllabus decked in different, often more complicated, patterns, and sentences which involved in varying degrees a combination of grammatical points in the syllabus.

Anaphoric devices are those devices which are used to avoid repetition of words or word-groups. Pro-nominals such as 'he,' 'they,' 'this,' 'that' are one kind of anaphoric terms. Another kind is pro-verbals. e.g. I always take my notes to the class. Why don't you do so? Then there are pro-sentential anaphora also. e.g. He came home at about midnight. This upset his mother. Use of such anaphoric devices is common in language. However, for an immature reader they create problems of comprehension. According to a post-graduate teacher of social sciences, her students who have studied English as a third language are at a loss when they have to relate the pro-nominal 'it' to its referent in a definition.
Systematic instruction in recognising the referents of such anaphoric terms has therefore often been recommended.

Of the two exercises designed for practice in relating an anaphoric term to its referent one was planned to be devoted to pro-nominals, and one to pro-verbials and pro-sententials. The format of these exercises had to be such that the anaphoric term was projected in the context. This could easily be done by underlining it in the sentence itself. As regards the referents of these terms, they, too, could be underlined in the sentences, provided the sentences also contained proper distractors. This was possible only in the first exercise where pro-nominals were to be used. So for the first exercise appropriate sentences were constructed, the anaphoric terms were marked with a double underline, and the distractors were marked with a single underline, with letters a, b, c etc. below them. These letters were to serve as numbers for marking responses. In most of the sentences only one anaphoric term was to be dealt with. Only in the last few sentences in this exercise two, and sometimes three, anaphoric terms were given. This was to increase the complexity of the task towards the end of the exercise.

In the second exercise where the anaphoric devices were mostly pro-verbials and pro-sententials, the anaphoric terms
were again underlined in the sentences but the distractors were given under the sentences for the students to choose from. This was necessary due to the fact that constructing sentences with distractors within them as in the first exercise was just not possible. However, the distractors thus given below the sentence did have elements from the sentence so that the correct response could not be selected without proper understanding of the sentence. A couple of pro-nominals were included in this exercise instead of in the first exercise because in their case also the distractors for referents could not be supplied in the sentence.

The last three exercises of the Unit were designed to have sentences which involved a combination of certain grammatical points (e.g. He started to save some money every month because he knew that unless he saved money, he could not educate his son.), or sentences which had a grammatical point learnt in a simple pattern, appearing in altogether a different pattern (e.g. comparison in a sentence like: Airconditioners are nowhere more necessary than in a hospital.). For the sentences in these exercises length was not the only criterion. In fact the length of the sentences in these three exercises varied considerably. It was the grammar points involved in the sentences that mattered more.
Grammar points were chosen to some extent on the basis of contrastive analysis, to some extent as suggested by experts, who, in turn, have based their suggestions on researches, and to some extent on the researcher's own insight. Thus formwise there were sentences with embedded clauses (e.g. Sbhrab, who was determined to meet his father, collected an army and marched to Persia.), considered to be difficult according to contrastive analysis of grammatical structures of English and Gujarati (D.A. Ganchi, 1972, p. 431) as well as others 'who know the language less well' (Schlesinger, 1968, p.107). Then there were negative sentences, also considered to be difficult even for the native speakers of English who "took longer to evaluate and complete them than affirmative sentences" in an experiment according to Schlesinger (pp. 45-46). Negative sentences, the researcher felt, pose a greater problem when there are two negators in the sentence cancelling each other (e.g. There is no Indian who does not like the voice of Lata Mangeshkar.), or when the negative element is not in the verbal group but in some other part of the sentence (e.g. No fewer than one million trees were planted in Gujarat in the 'Grow More Trees' programme.).

Conceptually speaking there were to be in these exercises sentences containing time relationship with the
time markers 'before', 'after', 'until', 'while' etc., those with 'before' considered to be difficult for English-speaking children also (Pearson and Johnson, 1978, pp. 116-119) and all considered to be so for the speakers of Gujarati (D.A. Ghanchi, pp. 428-429). Then there were to be sentences with causal relationship where cause-effect relationship was indicated through 'because', 'since', 'so' etc. or through a participial. Sentences containing comparisons, sometimes of the 'one-of' type (e.g. The elephant is one of the strongest animals...), sometimes with the comparator 'like', and others were also included in the sentence-meaning exercises. However, as indicated above, a grammatical point was, for the most part, to appear along with some other which approximated life-situations more closely.

As regards the format of these exercises the sentence was to be paraphrased and three statements were to be given under it, one or two of them matching the original sentence. These statements were the comprehension probes. Sometimes they included inferential meaning of the sentence also (e.g. Ex. 5, sentence 9). The students were to read the given sentence, see the statements below it, and were to decide which of them were true not according to what they thought, but according to the given sentence. On the numbers of these statements they were to put a circle in the answer-book.
Under the numbers of those statements which they thought were wrong according to the sentence, they were to put a line. Thus for each sentence there were three responses to be made. The idea behind requiring the students to indicate as true or false all the three statements instead of finding out only one statement that would be true was to eliminate the touch-and-go kind of work on their part and have them probe the given sentence thoroughly.

Each exercise in the Unit was prefixed with instructions as to how the task had to be performed, how the responses had to be checked, how the Record-sheet had to be filled in, and most importantly, how the follow-up work had to be done. The general introduction to the Unit explained in brief what sentence meaning is and why it is important to understand a sentence which is the basic unit of a longer discourse.

Unit A VI: Finding out the Main Idea:

This was a comprehension skill rather than a skill enabling to comprehend and its aim was to develop purposive reading as also the kind of reading that helps the reader to grasp and remember a well-formed general idea of the material read.

The Unit for the main idea exercises was to be short paragraphs. Longer passages were not preferred because they
would not lend themselves very comfortably to certain kind of learning activities contemplated - e.g. finding out the topic sentence and marking its number. Moreover, the discovery type of learning also could not be very comfortable if longer passages were used. On the other hand, the awareness and skill acquired through short paragraphs could be expected to be transferred to longer selections and entire books at later stages. Looking from all angles using short paragraphs at this stage was thought to be in the fitness of things.

Substancewise the exercises were to encompass a wide variety of subjects, and that is how they were designed. The topics in them ranged from animal life to human life, and from fashions to most noble characteristics of great persons. There were paragraphs on natural phenomena, human beliefs and even science. In terms of mental operations the exercises involved classification, interpretation, generalization, and drawing conclusions, which Pearson and Johnson (1978, p. 113) call 'backward inferencing'.

In terms of activities the students were to be engaged in for getting main idea practice there was also some variety. In Exercise 1 the students were asked to find out the 'topic sentence' of the paragraph. For this purpose each sentence in the paragraph was numbered, and the student,
after reading the paragraph, was to decide which one of the sentences contained the main idea and which one contained supporting details. They were to write the number of the topic sentence in the space provided in the Answer-book.

In Exercises 2 and 3 of the Unit after each paragraph three sentences were given, one of which contained the main idea, and the rest contained the details of the paragraph. These were to serve as distractors. The kind of distractors suggested by Jerome Axelrod (1974, p. 384) which would be wrong answers because there would be no such information in the paragraph were avoided because they would not, in the opinion of this researcher, serve any useful purpose, and unnecessarily complicate the task.

In the fourth exercise also after each paragraph three alternatives were given and the student was to choose one that stated the main idea of the paragraph. However, the difference between the previous two exercises and this exercise was that in the previous two exercises the main idea was stated in the form of a sentence, while in this exercise it was in the form of a phrase. The second type of distractors mentioned above - i.e. those which were not based on the information in the paragraph - were avoided in this exercise also.
There was still one more variety in terms of learning activity on the part of the students. In the last exercise of the Unit three titles were listed for each paragraph, one of which was more suitable than the other two looking to the main idea of the paragraph. The student was to decide the best title which he would be able to do only if he had grasped the main idea.

Because of the constraints arising from the auto-instructional nature of the course other activities such as stating the main idea in the form of a sentence or a phrase, or giving a suitable title could not be given a place.

In all there were five exercises in the Unit and each had six paragraphs in it. Each exercise was prefixed with instructions regarding the task to be performed and suggestions about the follow-up work. The Unit was prefaced with a note on the usefulness of getting the main idea while reading. In accordance with what was stated in Chapter IV of this report the meanings of unfamiliar words were given in the paragraphs themselves so that the learners did not have to bother about word-meanings and they could fully concentrate on acquiring the new skill.

Unit B I : Formation of Words:

This was another unit dealing with vocabulary and it
was intended to develop in the learners a confidence that the problem of vocabulary is not as difficult as is often thought, and that there are different ways to tackle it. It was specifically designed to make them aware of certain common affixes used in the formation of a large number of English words so that on encountering a new word with a known root they can understand its meaning, and thus improve their reading proficiency. It was also hoped that the Unit would have a carry-over effect, so that the learners would not only apply their knowledge of affixes acquired in this Unit to new situations, but would also get interested in learning more and more prefixes and suffixes, and thereby increase their word-stock as well as knowledge of word elements.

The basic assumption, when this Unit was designed, was that the students had during their study of English upto Class X learned certain derivatives mentioned as vocabulary items in the syllabus, but they had not studied prefixes and suffixes as such. Therefore a very systematic presentation of these elements reinforced by a great amount of practice was necessary.

One important consideration in the preparation of this Unit was the substance of the exercises; i.e. the affixes and the lexical items to be included in the exercises. Since no formal training in word formation was assumed on the part of the learners, what was intended to be taught through
this unit was the basics of word-formation. This meant that very simple prefixes and suffixes should be included in the programme. One measure of the simplicity criterion would be the affix being known at least in its applied form through the prescribed syllabus e.g. the suffix 'ous' as part of the word 'dangerous'. As regards the lexical items, knowledge of either the root word or the derivative (either 'danger' or 'dangerous') was expected, though familiarity with both would be more welcome.

A study of the syllabus was made with a view to listing the affixes known to the students in their applied form. These were classified into three categories: those used in the formation of nouns, those used in the formation of adjectives, and those used in the formation of antonyms. Surprisingly, no affixes used in the formation of verbs were found in the entire syllabus. Since this was an important class of affixes, used freely in the ever-increasing word-stock of the English language, simple affixes used in the formation of verbs were listed. On the other hand, '-ly' being the only common affix available for the formation of adverbs, it was conveniently dropped. In the final picture that emerged, there were eight suffixes and their variants used in the formation of agent nouns, abstract nouns and others; eight suffixes used in the formation of adjectives; four suffixes and one prefix used in the formation of verbs; and
four prefixes (three found in the syllabus, to which one was added) used in the formation of antonyms. These were arranged into exercises in the following way: Exercises 1, 5, 6 and 7 were to have formation of nouns; Exercises 2 and 3 were to have formation of adjectives; Exercise 4 was to have formation of verbs; and Exercise 8 was to be on formation of antonyms. Some kind of gradation was the guiding principle in this arrangement.

Taking into account the fact that students were not supposed to know formal English grammar, attempt was made to use grammatical terminology minimally. But since some use of words like 'noun', 'verb', 'adjective', 'prefix', 'suffix' etc. was inevitable, their Gujarati equivalents were freely used, thus largely drawing upon the students' knowledge of simple grammar terms in Gujarati, in turn aided by numerous examples that accompanied their mention.

For the purpose of presentation and practice of word formation those lexical items were invariably taken, which were known in both the forms; the root form as well as the derivative (e.g. 'science' and 'scientist'). Those were also included which were known in one form only (e.g. 'remove' but not 'removal'; or 'competition' but not 'compete'). However, in some cases it was felt that sufficient practice could not be given if lexical items were selected only from
the syllabus. Therefore in a few cases words from outside the syllabus but not very uncommon or difficult (e.g., 'guide', 'secure' 'oppose' etc) were also included in the exercises.

On the question of format it was felt that to optimize learning, formation of words should be taught at cognitive as well as skill level, and its application to larger language units such as sentences should also form part of learning experiences. This necessitated the following in the exercises: (a) a brief note on each prefix and suffix and its variants; (b) a table to provide drill on each prefix and suffix, which would give practice in formation of derivatives and/or finding out the root word of the derivative; and (c) a sentence level exercise on a cluster of prefixes and/or suffixes. This would enable the learners to apply their knowledge and skill to reading situations.

Treatment of point 'b' above had certain options. One option was that the tables meant for drilling be READ-AND-LEARN type tables, where the learners just read from the two columns the root word and the derivative and/or vice versa. The second option was that they don't just read words from the two columns, but keeping one column open and one covered, they think out for the word in the open column, the related word in the column covered. The advantage
of the second option was that the learners would be more involved in the work than in the first option. Taking this benefit into account it was decided to follow the second option, and to ask the learners to practise pairs of words with one column covered. However, for immediate confirmation (and at times correction) of their responses they were instructed to slide down the cover as they proceeded from one item to the next.

Accommodating all three things mentioned above, namely, notes on prefixes and suffixes, tables with appropriate instructions, and sentence level exercises demanded special consideration regarding the pattern of the larger exercise. After a good deal of thought it was decided that each (larger) exercise in the Unit be divided into two sections. The first section should contain notes and tables on the four or five affixes selected for that particular exercise, and the second section should contain sentences. Further, the notes and tables in the first section of the exercise should treat each prefix or suffix separately, while the second section should contain assorted sentences on all the four or five affixes covered in section one. The derivatives in the sentences of which the root word had to be thought out, were to be underlined while for the root word to be given by the student asterisks were given instead of a line,
to prevent the student from writing the word in the course-
book even inadvertently. The word, as usual, had to be
written in the Answer-book.

In the general introduction that prefaced the Unit
the usefulness of knowledge of word formation was pointed
out with the help of an illustration. All the steps in the
Unit were also explained at this place though instructions
were to appear at relevant places in the Unit. This was to
give an idea of the entire task before it was undertaken,
and then of various sub-tasks, may be repeatedly, so that
there was no mistake about the way the task had to be
performed, and no benefit was lost.

Unit B II : Dictionary Skills:

This was one more Unit designed to enable the students
to deal with unfamiliar words. It was also pictured as
supplementary to a previous Unit where the learners were
to acquire the skill of guessing the meaning of a word
from the context. This was not to assign a secondary position
to dictionary skills but to impress upon the mind of the
learners that for efficient uninterrupted reading use of
contextual clue is very helpful; while looking to the
importance of knowing the accurate meaning of a word,
subsequent use of a dictionary was inevitable and one should
be in a position to use it in an efficient way. The dictionary
thus had a definite place in the entire scheme of things. However, no secret was made of the fact that there are occasions when a dictionary has to be used even while engaged in the task of reading, and one need not hesitate to do so when the situation so demands.

The overall objective of this Unit, as might very well be expected, was that the learners acquire reasonable facility in the use of a dictionary. It was obvious that mastery of even the basic dictionary skills could not be aimed at through a course like this. So all that was aimed was to initiate the learners into the basic skills over which they could get control and mastery after further subsequent practice. The specific skills aimed to be taught could be categorised into two groups: the locational skills and the meaning skills. The pronunciation skills often mentioned in the programmes of teaching dictionary skills (e.g. by Harris and Sipay, 1977, p.419) were not intended to be taught for the obvious reasons that in the first place pronunciation is not indispensable for comprehension purposes, and secondly, teaching of pronunciation through phonetic alphabet, be it the international phonetic alphabet or any other, would be a stupendous task by itself; on the other hand, hardly any purpose would be served by giving the pronunciations in the learners' first language for the simple reason that quite a number of English sounds cannot
be properly represented in it.

In the locational skills were included:

(i) Determining the place of a word by its first, second and third letters.

(ii) Using the guide word at the top of a page to determine whether a word would be on a particular page or not.

In the meaning skills were included:

(i) The skill of recognising the abbreviations used in the dictionary to indicate a part of speech or verb-form.

(ii) The skill of recognising the part of speech a given word is.

(iii) The skill to understand meanings by reading simple definitions.

(iv) The skill to understand the illustrative sentence or phrase.

(v) The skill to select from several meanings listed the one that fits the context.

The following learning experiences were devised for the attainment of the skills:

(i) Arrangement of words in alphabetical order according to their first letter. (Exercise 1).
(ii) Arrangement of words having the same first letter in alphabetical order according to the second letter. (Exercise 2)

(iii) Arrangement of words having the same first two letters in alphabetical order according to the third letter. (Exercise 3)

(iv) Practice in determining between which two guide words a given word would be. (Exercise 4)

(v) Recognising the meaning of abbreviations used to indicate the parts of speech and verb forms. (Exercise 5)

(vi) Recognising the part of speech of the words used in sentences. (Exercise 6)

(vii) Reading and understanding illustrative sentences and phrases. (Exercises 7 & 8)

(viii) Selecting from several meanings of a word the one that fits the context. (Exercises 7 & 8)

It can be seen that various learning experiences had to be provided through the exercises in this unit. Each exercise (except when two were similar) therefore had to have a separate detailed note where the skill had to be explained, sometimes with illustrations. There being no uniform pattern of scoring and evaluation, for the whole Unit, that also had to be included in the note prefixing each exercise. The general introduction addressed itself
to the usefulness of a dictionary for a reader. It also recommended that the students start making use of a dictionary and have more practice since the practice provided in the Course-book was not sufficient for the mastery of the skill.

Unit B III: Guided Reading:

In the Units preceding this the students had learned vocabulary skills, phrase-reading and sentence-meaning skills, and so on. Now they were to encounter longer passages. Before requiring them to read and understand longer passages entirely by themselves (as in Unit B-IV), at this stage they were to be provided with some assistance in the form of guiding questions.

Since this was a kind of learning to walk with the help of a walker its span had not to be very long. Five or six passages gradually leading to independent reading would suffice, it was thought. In spite of the care taken to make the passages palatable both thematically and linguistically, there is always the possibility of some students not liking a certain passage, and therefore six passages were written at this stage so that one of them could be dropped if need arose. They were on a variety of subjects including sports, science, social life and fiction.
The main purpose of the questions being to aid comprehension three issues had to be considered: the wording of the questions, the specificity of the questions, and the distribution of the questions.

On the question of wording there would hardly be any doubt that better questions would be those which are worded differently from the text. However, for students having difficulty with comprehension there need be no inhibition in the use of questions 'couched in the exact words of the writer' (DeBoer and Dallmann, 1960, p. 122). Accordingly, the guiding questions in the Unit were, by and large, formed in the words of the text. Would real comprehension take place if the questions were so worded? - might be a pertinent point. In this context it might be said that the possibility of students just locating the answer in the text without fully understanding the passage was guarded against by requiring the students to answer what West (1960, p. 23) calls 'after-questions' - the multiple-choice type of questions at the end of the passage where the details covered might not be the same as in the guiding questions. This again was made clear in the introduction to the Unit so that the students might not be under any wrong impression.

Related to the question of wording, was the question of specificity, though the two were not the same. As regards
the specificity of the guiding questions, its degree varied. The questions on the first passage were all specific questions. While from the second passage onwards there were, along with specific questions, those covering "longer units of material" (Durrell, 1949, p. 202). Thus, for example, questions such as "How did Archimedes find out whether the crown was pure gold or not?" (Passage 2), or "How can we say that athletes liked to take part in the games? Find out two things." (Passage 4), or "Find out three things in modern Olympics done as a sign of respect for Greece." (Passage 5) are all examples of questions which are less specific and cover a large chunk of the text.

One more point requiring consideration was the distribution of the questions: should the guiding questions be all together at the top of the passage or should they be distributed over its constituent parts so that the students have to note only a few questions and remember them for a shorter span? The second option was, undoubtedly, easier than the first and therefore adopted for the first two passages. This was done after weighing the probable advantages, namely, the relative ease of the process and the resultant confidence the students would gain, against the disadvantage pointed out that "questions within the body of the text were found to be generally disruptive" (Patricia Wright,
1972, p. 279). This practice was abandoned after the first two passages, and in the last four passages of the unit all the questions on the passage were given at the beginning of the passage. However, the students were allowed to refer back to them, in case they found it necessary. The whole idea behind increasing the spatial and temporal distance between seeing the question and reading the text was to wean the students from their dependence on guiding questions and gradually prepare them for independent reading.

As mentioned earlier in addition to pre-view questions, there was to be a comprehension exercise at the end of each passage. In the exercise there were multiple-choice items where incomplete statements with four alternatives for their completion were given. All these were what Fred Pyrczak (1974, pp. 308-309) calls passage-dependent items which the students can answer only if they have read and understood the passage. While most items tested factual comprehension, those testing the students' interpretive comprehension were not totally excluded.

As in certain other units the meanings of unfamiliar words were given in brackets immediately after the word. These were words thought to be crucial for the understanding of the passage and their meanings were given so as to enable the students to read for the ideas without struggling to get the meanings of words.
The purpose of the Unit and its scheme were discussed in the introduction to the Unit. There were also clear instructions about how the Unit was to be done, how the work was to be assessed, and how the wrong answers were to be dealt with by re-reading the relevant portion in the passage. This was because reading the whole passage again may not be necessary in most cases and still asking the students to do so might act as a de-motivator.

Unit B IV : Speed Reading with Comprehension:

In this final Unit of the Course the learners were to read and understand without the aid of guiding questions, longer passages. The speed aspect of reading was also to be given more prominence than in the previous Units because in those Units the students had only to note the time required for doing a particular exercise whereas in this Unit they were to find out their speed of reading for each passage and note it in the Record-sheet. The speed aspect, however, was not to be highlighted to such an extent that comprehension would recede into background.

To motivate the students to put in their best in this final Unit of the Course, and as reward for the work done by them so far, it was necessary that the passages were of such a nature that would interest the learners. One measure of making them interesting was to have variety. Without
thematic variety and variety of treatment of the subject interest would soon be faded. Another measure would be to bring in some novelty: things which are common and therefore known (e.g. stories from the Puranas) would be less liked by the students; whereas writings which are relatively modern and less known would interest them more. Moreover, comprehension of passages where subject matter is known would not require much effort and the exercise would not be much fruitful. Still another measure would be appropriateness to age. Certain kinds of subjects have a stronger appeal to the young mind than do others.

Bearing these measures of interest in mind passages were selected from different sources and rewritten to suit the linguistic equipment of the students. Looking from the viewpoint of variety, the subjects included, ranged from 'King Alfred' to 'Kangaroos' and from 'Battle for a Ration-card' to the 'Conquest of Everest'. If 'Pip Meets a stranger' had horror and suspense in it, the story of Rosanna exemplified one of the noblest traits of human beings. If Rip's story was a legend, in 'A Dead Man's Christmas Gift' was an attempt to present science in the guise of an anecdote. Thus the Unit was a vast canvass that covered a wide variety of subjects. As regards novelty, almost all passages met the criterion because no passage had as its theme something that is known by every Tom, Dick and Harry, and certainly not by an average Indian boy. On the other hand, quite a few passages were included because writings of that kind have
a special appeal to the young reader. Thus a glimpse at how Swami Vivekanand weathered the difficulties and pursued his goal would be both inspiring and interesting. In the background of women's liberation movement a woman's struggle for a ration-card without the husband's name on it would specially interest the girl students among the learners, and would certainly not bore the boys. So also the 'First Woman Doctor' of England. Again, with love of adventure at their age, the students would also find the 'Conquest of Everest' interesting.

An important problem faced by the researcher regarding the passages was deciding their readability: how to decide how far a particular passage would be readable to the potential users of the course. In reading literature there are several readability formulas, which, using counts of certain language variables in a piece of writing, provide an index of its probable ease or difficulty for readers (Klare, 1978, p. 248). Thus the well-known Lorge Formula, for example, takes into account average sentence length in terms of words, number of prepositional phrases per 100 words, and number of difficult words. The Flesch Formula of Reading Ease takes into account average number of syllables per 100 words and average number of words per sentence. The widely used Dale-Chall Formula is also based on similar factors. Now it is obvious that these formulas, devised for the reading
material for English-speaking children cannot be applicable to the reading material for those studying English as a foreign language. For example, so far as the present research is concerned, variables such as word-length and sentence-length would have less relevance for determining the difficulty level of a passage than familiarity with the item through class-instruction or text-book, dictated in turn, by the prescribed syllabus. Again, as far as the sentence variable is concerned, syntactic complexity, rather than the length of the sentence would be a more important factor. For all these reasons no attempt was made to apply any formula to decide the readability of the passages and alter them if necessary. Instead, with the prescribed syllabus serving as the beacon light, it was ensured that from the language point of view the passages were neither too difficult nor too simple.

At this stage there were 12 passages in the Unit. This number was, as in the previous Unit, to have provision for omitting a passage or two in case the students did not like them much, though care was taken to see that they were suitable for the potential users. The arrangement of the passages at this try-out stage was purely arbitrary.

In view of the objective of the Course that the students, after taking this Course, should be able to read longer selections, the passages in the Unit were to be of considerable
The comprehension of the passages was to be tested through multiple-choice type questions. The items were either incomplete sentences given for completion, or, occasionally, questions. In either case four answers were suggested out of which the student had to choose the one that was correct. Care was taken that the items were passage-dependent, as in Unit B III.

Meanings of words which were unfamiliar or less familiar and likely to hamper comprehension were provided in brackets in the text itself for easy and unobstructed reading. The meanings were given either in simple English or in Gujarati, the first language of the students.

To enable the students to find out their speed of reading in terms of number of words per minute a Speed Chart was prepared and given in the Record-sheet (See Vol. II, Appendix B, p. 229). The reason why it was not given in the Key was that the Chart had to be used immediately after reading the passage, and if the Key were to be used at this point, the students might feel tempted to have a look at the
Key for answers to comprehension questions also. On the other hand it was not given in the Course-book because the Course-book was to contain only introductory notes, instructions, and exercises.

While preparing the Speed Chart it was assumed that minimally the students would require three minutes to read a passage, and maximally twelve minutes. In other words the Chart was prepared on the assumption that the maximum speed the students would attain would be around 250 words per minute, while their minimum speed would not be less than 40 words per minute even initially. Accordingly speeds were given for all the passages in the Unit for time ranging between 2 minutes and 12 minutes to read a passage. This again was given with 30 seconds' interval because one full minute's interval would make too rough a measurement while less than 30 seconds would be too fine, it was thought. For finding out his speed the student was to cancel the seconds if they were less than fifteen; but count them as 30 seconds if they were more than fifteen.

In the introduction prefixing the Unit there was, among other things, a note on raising questions so as to have a searching attitude while reading, and instructions about the use of the Speed Chart, comprehension exercises, and follow-up work. As in Unit B III for the follow-up work the students were
suggested to re-read, with a view to understanding properly, only the relevant portion of the passage.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE EVALUATION TOOLS

To determine the efficacy of the Course that was developed, it was necessary that students' reading proficiency both before and after taking the Course be measured and the difference be found out. The best way to decide the change in students' reading performance would be use of a standardized test with parallel forms; but because of non-availability of such tests this was not possible. It might be noted that B.V. Patel's 'Reading Comprehension Test for Std. XI' was a standardized test but it did not have a parallel form and therefore it would not serve the purpose. Secondly, it included sub-tests of those skills (e.g. map reading, chart-reading etc.) which were not aimed to be taught through the course developed by the present researcher. Moreover, it was based on a different syllabus which further limited its scope of applicability. On the other hand to develop a suitable test for the purpose and standardize it would have been a project by itself and therefore beyond the scope of this work. Hence preparation and use of teacher-made tests was the only option left.

Overall tests measuring the students' reading proficiency before and after taking the Course, however, would give an
idea of the efficacy of the Course as a whole. To measure the usefulness and effectiveness of different Units and to know the students' reactions about the Course and its parts, use of some other tools in addition to the one measuring the effectiveness of the Course as a whole was called for. Thus it was decided to prepare three kinds of tools for the evaluation of the Course: (a) an overall pre-test and post-test to measure students' reading proficiency before taking the Course and after taking the Course; (b) unitwise pretests and post-tests to measure the effectiveness of different units separately; and (c) a response sheet for the students to give their opinion as regards the usefulness of the Course and the Units, and to indicate how far they found the material in the Course easy or difficult, interesting etc. The following paragraphs describe the preparation of these tools.

A. The Overall Pre-test and Post-test.

The Overall Pre- and Post-tests (Vol. II, Appendix D) designed to determine the efficacy of the Course as a whole were to do so by measuring the students' reading proficiency in terms of comprehension and speed. The tests were therefore to contain passages through which the two aspects could be conveniently measured. Now according to the principles of psychometry, the longer the test, the more reliable it is. But for that purpose it was thought more desirable to have
two or three shorter passages instead of one long passage in each test so that the student could be exposed to substantial amount of reading material covering a variety of themes, thus neutralizing the effect of interest. The effect of fatigue could also be minimized that way, it was thought.

Another important consideration in the preparation of the Pre- and Post-tests was their equivalence. So far as the overall Pre- and Post-tests were concerned, this was to be with respect to (a) the themes of the passages; (b) the length of the passages; (c) the readability or linguistic difficulty of the passages; and (d) test of students' comprehension of the passages. Of these four dimensions of comparability the first two were to be effected by selecting pairs of passages with matching themes, and re-writing them in such a way that their lengths did not vary much. Thus 'Chamari' in the Pre-test had its counterpart 'Lalajee' in the Post-test - both short stories, originally written by Jim Corbett, having similarity of theme inasmuch as both were about an honest, hard-working, god-loving Indian, and having similarity of style where the writer is a character and also the narrator. To match 'Hunting the Tiger' in the Pre-test, a story again by Jim Corbett, there was in the Post-test 'Snake Hunting in West Africa', both stories of adventure, with mild suspense a little before the end, and the end, of course, a little amusing in the one, and certainly
not serious in the other. Lastly, the corresponding passage for 'Albert Einstein' in the Pre-test was 'Sir Isaac Newton' in the Post-test — both life-sketches of great scientists of the world. The first passage in the Pre-test entitled 'Sindbad on the Island' was a practice passage. No such practice passage was thought necessary in the Post-test because the students were expected to have become familiar with the procedure by the time they would take the Post-test.

The three test-passages in the Pre-test had about 370 and 480 words, making a total of 1320 words, while their counterparts in the Post-test had about 500, 480 and 560 words adding up to 1540 words. Thus lengthwise the two tests were fairly comparable. For deciding the readability of the two sets of passages, one for the Pre-test and one for the Post-test, none of the readability formulas was found appropriate as discussed in Unit B.IV above. Therefore the researcher used her own subjective judgement to see that from the viewpoint of linguistic difficulty the two sets compared well.

To test the students' comprehension of the passages sometimes use of cloze technique is suggested (e.g. by Hittleman, p. 135). In this technique certain words in a passage (e.g. every fifth word or every tenth word) are deleted. The subject taking the test guesses the missing word, which he can do only if he understands the passage, and
supplies it. Though widely used in recent years this technique was thought most inadequate for the purpose of the present research, where reading proficiency in a foreign language, and that, too, not at a very advanced level was to be tested, because it involves language production and not just comprehension. For the purpose of testing comprehension 'the same general type of test long used to measure the reading ability of native speakers of English' and which works 'with equal effectiveness with foreign learners of the language' (Harris, 1974, p. 60), namely, multiple-choice type of test was decided to be used. Accordingly multiple-choice items testing the pupils' understanding of the passage including their understanding of significant details, sequence of events, cause-effect relationship etc. were prepared. The equivalence of difficulty of items was decided by the researcher by using her own subjective judgement. Unlike the comprehension questions on passages in the Course the questions on test passages were in a separate booklet. (See Vol. II, Appendix D, pp. 344-353.) This was thought necessary to prevent referring back to the passage while doing the comprehension questions. To keep the test material including the comprehension questions re-usable a separate answer-sheet for marking the answers was prepared. (See Vol. II, Appendix D, p. 354.)

Sometimes it is suggested (e.g. by Stroud J.B. 1970, pp. 320-321) that the reader's speed and comprehension be
measured separately so that pure speed and pure comprehension are possible to be measured. But here the question is why on earth to measure speed which is devoid of comprehension? Does speed without comprehension have any meaning? As a matter of fact, speed of reading means speed of comprehension. So the idea of testing the two aspects of reading, namely, speed and comprehension, separately was rejected in favour of the more sensible one of measuring the speed and comprehension through the same material.

Of the two techniques of measuring speed, namely, the time-limit technique in which the subject is directed to read a passage for a specified period of time and his speed computed from the amount read, and the amount-limit technique in which the time taken by the reader to read the entire passage is recorded to compute his speed (Humphry, 1970, pp. 286-287), the latter was decided to be adopted because in the opinion of this researcher a clearer picture of the improvement of students' comprehension — a major objective of the Course — could be obtained only if the student reads the whole passage and answers all the questions. It was planned therefore that the student, after finishing the reading of a passage, should note the time. Clear instructions were given in this regard in the booklet of Test Passages. (See Vol. II, Appendix D.) In the Answer-sheet for the comprehension questions space was provided for the same.
B. The Unitwise Pre-tests & Post-tests:

The Unitwise Pre-tests and Post-tests were designed to measure the effectiveness of different Units in the Course separately. However, no pre-testing and post-testing was thought necessary in the case of the Word Recognition Unit (Unit A I), where the gain in speed and accuracy, if any, was to be the indicator of improvement, and in the case of Guided Reading (Unit B III) which was only a stage preliminary to independent reading. Similarly, the last Unit in the Course, namely, Speed Reading with Comprehension (Unit B IV) was not to have a separate Unitwise test for the obvious reason that it was the final product of the Course and as such its effectiveness along with the effectiveness of the Course as a whole was to be tested throughout the Overall Tests.

An important issue to be considered while designing the Unitwise Pre- and Post-tests was whether to use the same test as both Pre-test and Post-test or to use two parallel forms of the test at the two stages of measurement. The reason why it was necessary to give thought to this issue as distinct from the overall testing was that in the overall test there was comprehension ideas and the units were long passages. When these are involved, the thinking process between the two tests, the 'recollection in tranquility' might
also help and a reader's performance might be better in the post-test though there might not be any real improvement in his reading proficiency as such. Not only that but things which might not have been clear the first time might become clear on second reading and thus practice might have a direct effect on score. This would not be possible in tests on at least certain skills where responses cannot be determined later on without reference to the test items, and the test items being discrete would be difficult to remember. Even practice would not play a very significant role in their case. Karlin and Jolly (1970, p. 351) support this view when they express strong doubts about use of the same test items altering the results. However, in the case of certain skills later determination of responses might be possible. Moreover, if the students discovered that the Pre-and Post-tests were the same, they might, in spite of all their motivation to improve their reading proficiency, feel tempted to note down or commit to memory at least a few items about which they would not be sure, and by finding out correct responses try to obtain a higher score which might not give a correct picture of their improvement. Hence it was necessary that no clue be given to decide whether the Unitwise Pre-tests and Post-tests were the same, and even where they were the same, to present them under different masks. This was done by adding to the actual test items in
certain tests a few dummy items, and further, by varying their numbers in the Pre- and Post-tests. In the case of one Unitwise test where handling of unfamiliar language material was the skill to be tested, even the actual test items were different. Thus three different courses were adopted in the preparation of Unitwise Pre-tests and Post-tests: (a) where the details of the test were difficult to remember, same items were kept in the pre-test and the post-test; (b) where the items were discrete but a few of them possible to remember, the actual test items were kept the same but some dummy items were added to them so as to create an illusion that the entire pre- and post-tests were different; and (c) where handling of new language material was the skill in question, all the items in the two tests were different.

Another consideration in the preparation of the Unitwise Tests was their form. Since there was no need that this be different from what it was in the practice exercises of the Course, it was kept the same. All Unitwise Tests, however, being power tests, the speed factor was eliminated, and the tests were not to be timed.

Except for one Unitwise Test where the responses were to be marked on the test paper itself, namely, Test on Unit A a separate answer-sheet was prepared for the responses. (See Vol. II, Appendix E.)
Below is a description of the Unitwise Tests. The tests appear in Vol. II, Appendix E.

(i) **Unit A II : Word Meaning - Known Words** : As regards this Unit on word meaning it may be recalled that the purpose in including this Unit in the Course was not to teach new vocabulary but to create an awareness about the importance of vocabulary and to cultivate an attitude of accuracy in word meaning (Chapter V). The students' word-stock was therefore not expected to rise impressively by the time they had done the Unit. It was only to keep the Unit in tune with others and to further impress upon the minds of the learners the importance of vocabulary for developing reading efficiency that a pre-test and a post-test were planned to be included. As might be expected the two tests included vocabulary items from the prescribed syllabus. Again looking to the purpose of the Unit and also the tests the real test items were kept the same. Only the dummy items in the two tests were planned to be different so as to give an impression that the entire tests were different. Thus in the test with 27 items seven were dummy items - nos. 3, 7, 11, 15, 19, 23 and 27 in the case of the pre-test, and nos. 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21 and 25 in the case of the post-test - while 20 were real test items.
(ii) **Unit A III : Meaning of Unfamiliar Words -**

**Use of Context** : In this Unit the students were to learn how to get the meaning of unfamiliar words by making use of the context in which the words appear. The nature of the skill entailed that the tests contain words which were not familiar when they were met. Two sets of unfamiliar words were therefore prepared : one for the Pre-test and one for the Post-test. In each test there were ten items. These were appropriately contextualized and three 'meanings' were given for each of them, out of which the student was to choose one. The response was to be marked in the Answer-sheet.

(iii) **Unit A IV : Reading in Meaningful Phrases** : The students' ability to read in meaningful phrases both before learning the skill in the Course and after learning it was to be tested, like in the later practice exercises in the Course by asking: the students to mark phrase boundaries with slanting lines or bars. The test material included single sentences as well as short paragraphs of 3-4 sentences. To give the impression of fresh test material in the post-test dummy items were used in both. Out of the total fifteen, item nos. 3, 6, 9, 10 and 15 were the dummy items in the Pre-test while nos. 1, 4, 7, 10 and 13 were the dummy items in the Post-test. The remaining ten were the actual test.
items. The nature of the task necessitated that in these tests the responses be marked in the test-papers themselves.

(iv) Unit A V : Sentence Meaning : The sentence meaning test was on interpretation of sentences. There was no separate test for finding out the referent of or interpreting the anaphora as in the couple of practice exercises in the course. Interpretation of sentences included all this and therefore there was no need to test it separately, it was thought. There were twenty sentences in the test, each followed by three statements, and the student was to say which one(s) according to the sentence was/were true and which one(s) false. On the number of the true statement he was to put a circle, while on the number of the false statement he was to put a cross-mark. The answers were to be indicated in the Answer-sheet. Since the details of the test items were difficult to remember, practice would not have much effect on later performance, it was thought. The same test was therefore to be used as both Pre- and Post-test.

(v) Unit A VI : Finding out the Main Idea : The same three ways of telling the main idea - by finding out the topic sentence of the paragraph, by choosing the most appropriate title, and by choosing the statement that expresses the main idea of the paragraph - which were in the practice exercises in the Course-book were kept in the test. There were three questions on the above-mentioned three
types, with the first two having four items, and the last having one. The question of remembering the details being involved, use of different tests as Pre-test and Post-test was not felt necessary. Instead, the same test was to be used at both the stages of measurement. The responses, as usual, were to be marked in the Answer-sheet.

(vi) Unit B I: Formation of Words: The Unit on word formation was designed to teach to some extent at the cognitive level some of the prefixes and suffixes used in the formation of words. What had to be tested before and after teaching these elements was therefore the knowledge of the same. This meant that if a student could separate the affix and the root form in the Post-test, which he was not able to do in the Pre-test, he had acquired the knowledge of word elements whether the items were the same or different. So the improvement was planned to be measured through the same test at both the stages. There were twenty items in the test and all were test items. No use was made of dummy items in this test. The responses which were to be root words divested of the common affixes were to be written in the answer-sheet.

(vii) Unit B II: Dictionary Skills: Of the two dictionary skills taught through the Course, namely, the location skills and the meaning skills, only the meaning skill in which the student chooses out of several meanings
the one that fits the context, was planned to be tested. The reason why the location skills were not to be tested was that their proper acquisition which would be reflected more in speed with which the task is performed rather than in the result of the task, would be possible only after considerable practice the students might do subsequently. In other words there was no point in giving a power test of the location skills. On the other hand the culmination of all the meaning skills taught was choosing out of several meanings the one that best suited the context. So in the Unit on dictionary skills only the last mentioned was planned to be tested. Twenty vocabulary items suitable for the purpose were listed along with their three different meanings. Out of these ten were used as actual test items while five each as dummy items for the Pre-test and the Post-test. Sentences with these words used in them were also prepared. The students were to say after reading the sentence, which of the three meanings given, was appropriate in the context. The response was to be marked in the Answer-sheet.

C. The Response Sheet:

In addition to the Over-all Tests and the Unitwise Tests a third tool was used to measure the efficacy of the Course and that was students' Response Sheet (Vol. II,
Appendix G). This was prepared to obtain students' opinion as to how far the Course as a whole and its parts were (a) useful, (b) interesting and (c) easy or difficult. There was also an attempt to obtain suggestions regarding the way they would wish the Course to be taken in terms of time, sequence of exercises etc.

In all there were ten items in the Sheet. The first was a kind of five-point scale about the usefulness of the Course, while the second item listed the reasons why the Course was found useful if it was found useful. These included the desired effect of different Units as well as reasons mentioning the cumulative effect of the Course as a whole. The usefulness of different Units irrespective of whether one had attained the desired result or not, was to be mentioned in item 3, where opinion about the nature of the task in each Unit from the view-point of interest was also to be indicated. Two pairs of brackets were given for these two purposes against the title of each Unit. The Units found too easy and those found rather difficult were to be mentioned separately in item 4.

Items 5 and 6 of the Sheet, which referred to the number of hours one could work on the Course daily, had a two-fold purpose. They were intended to find out indirectly
how far the Course as a whole was found interesting, and
secondly, to help time-wise planning of the final try-out.
Items 7 and 8 also had the intention of subsequently altering,
if necessary, the method of giving the Course, by getting
the students' views on the sequence in which they would like
to do the various exercises: whether unitwise or in the
assorted form.

In item 9 were listed the titles of the passages in
Unit B IV. The students were asked to indicate five of them
which were more liked comparatively, and three which were
disliked.

Item 10 asked to note anything that they might like
to say about the Course.