CHAPTER

1

The Problem and Definition of the Terms Used
CHAPTER 1

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1.1 Need of the Study

The traditional method measures students' achievement in reference to his/her class, group, school or state for passing judgement. Thus, the typical performance or the norm of a group is used as the basis for judging individual student's learning. Such a measurement is called norm-referenced Testing (NRT).

Comparison of students' performance with reference to their peers, class or grade has been well known to the class teachers. This type of norm referenced evaluation has been in vogue ever since the examinations have been institutionalized. Norm-referencing is useful when the information is needed about an examiner in relation to his relative ability or relative attainment, but is an insufficient tool to give us information regarding the examinee's ability in specific area and his inability in the other. For example, one has scored more than 92% per cent in a mathematics test, and yet the following questions may possibly remain unsolved.

* What kind of mathematical concepts does he know?
* What mathematical problem can he solve?
* How does he solve certain problems?
* Is the mathematical skill limited to arithmetic computations?
* Were the mathematical problems on the test selected because they are typical practical problems or are they abstract, theoretical problems?
* Do the problems require routine, easily memorized procedures for solution or creative, novel thinking for solution?
questions such as these become important when the intended use of a test extends beyond identifying the relative ability of an examinee.

Moreover, to what extent a student vis-a-vis a class has attained mastery of the concept in a particular teaching-learning unit is not the botheration of a teacher.

In conventional examinations also only a few questions - objective type, short answer or essay type - are set in the question paper. When students have a good, detailed syllabus, a few questions, e.g., test items, will at best be related to a specific objective. Students are also expected to attempt only 50 percents to 60 percents of them. So the number of topics reduce to half of the few. Even out of the few, students are expected to know only 35 percents to be able to pass. So how much of the syllabus do such students know? In most cases about 5 percents to be able to pass! Then how much can this say about the individual performance of a student?

Of late there has been growing concern about the improvement of students' learning and as such the proper diagnosis of students' weaknesses and inadequacy in instructional strategies are now considered of great relevance. This has led to the realisation of the need for formulating specific learning outcomes that should act as criteria of acceptable standard of performance. Such criteria which represent the intended learning outcomes should, therefore, be considered the basis for improvement of teaching and testing strategies. Unless the criteria of intended learning
or achievement are spelled out in sequential steps of learning, it becomes difficult to identify the relevant instructional and evaluation procedures. The emphasis, therefore, remains on instructional based evaluation which, in turn, dovetails to the pre-determined criteria formulated as expected standard of performance, and that is possible with the use of criterion-referenced testing.

A measurement in which a specific criterion is used as reference for measuring students' performance is called Criterion-referenced Testing (CRT). Pratam Singh quotes Popham, "A criterion-referenced test is used to ascertain an individual's status with respect to a well defined behavior" (2:1).

During the last decade there has been a good deal of work in the field of CRT for effective learning. Educational evaluators like Popham, Skager, Nitko, and Dockrel have put forward their viewpoints regarding the role of CRT, and construction of domain referenced tests. In India a few models of CRTs have been developed only in the field of research. The NCERT has prepared one model for Class - III, but the work in the field so far hasn't reached to the teachers. It's also not possible for ordinary class-room teachers to appreciate and use this new approach of CRT, unless it is presented to him in a simple, easy and practical way.

Since the focus of CRT is on diagnosing students'
inadequacy in learning and improvement of instructional strategies, it becomes important for the teachers to have more and more knowledge of this testing system and use it to improve the behaviour of the students in the specific area.

It was the purpose of this study to develop test forms in English for Standard IX students to diagnose the inadequacy in their learning and to improve the instructional strategies to bring them to the level of expected mastery.

1.2 **Title of the Study**

Development of Criterion-referenced Test in English for Standard IX.

1.3 **Definitions of the Terms used**

**Development**: It includes the twelve steps of the Development of CRT suggested by Hambelton.

**Criterion-referenced Test**: It is an approach of testing based on the comparison of a subject performance with an established standard or criterion. The criterion is fixed: that is, each subject score is measured against the same criterion and does not influence the relative standing of others. CRT is associated with the assessment of mastery of subject content, e.g., the score reveals what percentage of terms the testee can answer correctly" (1:191).

**English for Standard IX**: It is the course of English (Middle Level) which is prescribed by Gujarat Government for Standard IX for Gujarati medium schools.
1.4 Objectives of the Study

The following objectives were selected for the study:

(i) To develop CRTs in English (in Grammar) for Standard IX,
(ii) To determine the cut-off score of the tests,
(iii) To locate the examinees into mastery-nonmastery stages,
(iv) To establish reliability of the tests, and
(v) To validate the tests.

1.5 Limitations of the Sample

The criterion group to find the instructional effect was based on the following criteria. The pupils of the group were selected from the classes of The New Progressive High School, Mehsana.

Table 1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score in their annual School examination</th>
<th>Students selected</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 - 40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 - 60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 - 70</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71 - 80</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above 80</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.7 Organisation of the Chapters

The whole study was divided into five chapters.

The second chapter of this study deals with the concepts of CRTs and review of the related literature.

The third chapter gives details regarding the development of the tests.

The fourth chapter is devoted to the establishment of the cut-off score, reliability and validity of the tests.

The fifth chapter gives findings, suggestions and conclusion of the study.
References
