Chapter - 5
Various skills in comprehension namely, recognition, re-organisation, inference, recall, evaluation, etc., are given their due place in the questionnaire. All these abilities are tested by way of giving the students a passage to read and asking them to answer a few questions. The texts given for reading were in different forms namely narrative form, tabular form, telegraphic form, matching table form and cloze passage form.

5.1 Comprehension - Recognition

To test the comprehension recognition ability, eight test items were given. Each item contained a passage followed by some questions. The passages were in narrative, tabular and telegraphic forms.

Broadly two types of questions were asked. They were text-based questions and knowledge- or competence-based questions. Text-based questions expected from students answers of different types.

1. Lifting up the answers from the text
2. Deciding whether the statements given are true or false
3. Selection of appropriate answers from the given answers
Knowledge-based questions required the subjects to write a sentence or two or filling up the required answers by recalling vocabulary and grammatical information from their memory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test item No.</th>
<th>Type of the text</th>
<th>Mode of answering</th>
<th>Type of skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Passage</td>
<td>Fill up - word</td>
<td>Text-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Passage</td>
<td>a) question &amp; answer</td>
<td>Competence-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) True or false</td>
<td>Text-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Passage</td>
<td>Question &amp; answer</td>
<td>Text-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tabular passage</td>
<td>a) True or false</td>
<td>Text-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) Fill up - selection of answers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Passage</td>
<td>a) Yes or No</td>
<td>Text-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) True or false</td>
<td>Text-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Matching table</td>
<td>Match out</td>
<td>Competence-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Advertisement form</td>
<td>Selection from the option</td>
<td>Text-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Telegraphic form</td>
<td>Fill up - selection from the option</td>
<td>Text-based</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All these eight questions are meant for testing the comprehension-recognition ability. Out of the eight questions, four questions demanded responses such as "true or false" or "yes or No" from the students. This decision is expected to be based on the reading of the text. The other four questions expected two modes of answering namely 'fill up' and 'writing the answer.'
Comprehension - recognition: recognising the text personage.

Instruction:

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

Passage: Narrative

Both Ramesh and Kumar play cricket. Neither of them plays football. Both Raju and Ravi play tennis. Neither of them plays cricket. Both Dinesh and Shammy play football. Neither of them plays tennis.

Questions:

a) Here is a boy who plays football but does not play tennis. His name must be ............

Expected response: Dinesh or Shammy.

Students' response sample: 1. Raju and Ravi
2. Ramesh and Kumar
3. Dinesh and Shammy
b) Here is a boy who plays cricket but does not play football. His name must be ............

Expected response: Ramesh or Kumar

Students response sample: 1. Raju and Ravi
                        2. Dinesh and Shammy
                        3. Ramesh and Kumar

c) Here is a boy who plays tennis but does not play cricket. His name must be ............

Expected response: Raju or Ravi

Students response sample: 1. Dinesh and Shammy
                        2. Ramesh and Kumar
                        3. Raju and Ravi

Comments:

The question expects only a single name as answer. The students have written two names together because they have just lifted up the assumed answer from the text. Forty three per cent of the students have given the correct response but with two names. Only one per cent of the students have given the correct response. One of the reasons for the wrong response may be the phrase 'Neither of them' in the text.
Performance in %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test item No.</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Mode of name</th>
<th>Single names</th>
<th>Two names</th>
<th>Irrelevant</th>
<th>Partially correct</th>
<th>Reason for the difficulty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Passage</td>
<td>Fill up</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>In understanding the phrase 'Neither of them'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.2 Test Item No.2b

Judging the status of the text personage.

Instructions:

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

Passage: Narrative:

Here are the names of four friends who are studying in a Higher Secondary School. Their names are Prabhu and Prasanth; Nirmal and Nishanth. Prabhu and Prasanth are in the Second group and Nirmal and Nishanth are in the First group. Prabhu and Prasanth go for Physics tuition in the morning. Both Nirmal and Nishanth go for Maths tuition in the morning. Prabhu and
Nishanth go for piano class in the evening and Nirmal and Prasanth go for typewriting class in the evening.

**Instruction:**
Write true or false against the given sentences.

**Questions:**

1. Both Nirmal and Nishanth are Second group students.

   **Expected response:**
   False.
   
   **Students response samples:**
   True/False

2. Both Prabhu and Prasanth are third group students.

   **Expected response:**
   False.
   
   **Students response samples:**
   True/false

3. Prasanth goes for Physics tuition in the morning.

   **Expected response:**
   True.
   
   **Students response samples:**
   False/true

4. Nishanth goes for piano class in the morning.

   **Expected response:**
   False.
   
   **Students response samples:**
   True/false
5. Nirmal goes for Maths tuition in the morning.

Expected response:
True.

Students response samples:
False/true.

Comment:
The answers are explicitly found in the passage. Sixty six per cent of the students have responded correctly for this test item. Thirty four per cent of them have given irrelevant answers.

5.1.3 Test item No.2a:

For the same passage another type of question was asked.

Question:

(Five questions were given. Almost all the students have identified the answers. But while writing the answers they committed mistakes. Only one sample answer given by students is given here).
1. What does Prasanth do in the morning?

Expected response:
Prasanth goes for Physics tuition in the morning.

Students response sample:
Prasanth (go for, going for, going to the morning, went in the morning, doing in the, will go for, does in the morning) Physics tuition.

Comment:

The phrase "goes for Physics tuition" is explicitly stated in the text. Hence they have lifted up the answer easily. The use of the substitute 'go for' instead of 'goes for' occurred because in the text 'go for' appears frequently. In the text sentence the subject is in plural, hence 'go for' is given. But the question asked is about, only one person. So, to maintain agreement with singular subject the verb should occur with 'es'. The students are not aware of this grammatical point, and so they have committed the mistake. Seventy two per cent of the students have given wrong responses (i.e.) with grammatical disagreement. Only 10 per cent of the students have responded correctly. Eight per cent of the students have written two names together, though only one name is expected as answer to the question. This shows that they have just lifted the sentence from the text. The main mistake is in maintaining the agreement marker in the verb.
5.1.4. **Test item No.7a**

(Recognising the acts of the personage)

**Instruction:**

Read the following story which is told about Jonathan Swift who was a famous English writer.

**Passage: Dialogue**

One morning, when Swift was dressing, he found that his shoes were covered with mud. He called his servant to him and said, "My shoes are covered with mud. Why didn't you clean them? You are supposed to clean them each night".

"I thought it was useless to clean them in such a bad weather", the servant said, "They will only become dirty again in a short while".
Later that day, when the servant appeared for his dinner, there was no food on the table for him. He went to Swift and asked the reason for this.

"I thought it was useless for you to eat", Swift said "because you will only become hungry again in a short time".

Instruction:

Answer the following questions.

Questions:

I. What did Swift say to his servant?

Expected response:

Swift told his servant that his shoes were covered with mud and asked him why he had not cleaned the shoes. He also added that he was supposed to clean them each night.

Students response sample (mere reproduction)

1. He called his servant to him and said, "My shoes are covered with mud. Why didn't you clean them? You are supposed to clean them each night.

2. Swift said to his servant that his shoes are covered with mud and asked he did not clean them.
3. Swift saying his servant his shoes were covered with mud. So he said to his servant clean the shoes.

**Question:**

II. What was the servant's reply?

**Expected response:**

The servant replied that he thought it was useless to clean them in such a bad weather. The servant said that they would become dirty again in a short while.

**Students response sample:** (mere reproduction)

1. "I thought it was useless to clean them in such a bad weather", "the servant said, 'they will only become dirty again in a short while."

2. The servant replied Swift - the shoes was useless to clean them in such a bad weather. They will only became dirty again in a short while.

**Comment:**

From the above responses, it is clear that the students have responded only to the questions which directly elicit the information present in the text given for reading. They found such questions easy to answer because the answers are available in the text. Moreover, they tend to adopt the strategy of locating similar words found, both in the question and in the passage.
so as to pick out portions of the passage as answers. Fifty five per cent of the students have reproduced the answer for the questions. The rest have given irrelevant answers. They are very poor in converting the direct speech in to indirect speech and they are not aware that they should convert it so, while answering a question. These things are evident from the students responses.

5.1.5 Test Item No.7b:

Recognising the textual items by matching:

Instruction:
Complete the sentences with suitable endings.

Questions:

1. The shoes were ...........
   a) shining with polish
   b) covered with dust
   c) covered with mud

Expected response:
   c) covered with mud

Students responses sample:
   a'b/c.
2. There was no food for the servant......

   a) for his lunch
   b) for his breakfast
   c) for his dinner

Expected response:
   c) for his dinner

Students response sample:
   a/b/c.

Comment:

For this test item, 87 per cent of the students have given responses correctly because the answers are explicitly stated in the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test item No.</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Mode of questioning</th>
<th>Performance in %</th>
<th>Mistake noted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Expec- Repro- Gramma- Irrel-</td>
<td>duc-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>answer</td>
<td>tion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7a</td>
<td>Dialogue Q &amp; A type</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7b</td>
<td>Dialogue Choose from the option type</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instruction:
Read the table given below and answer the questions that follow:

Passage: Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T.V. Programme</th>
<th>National Ranking</th>
<th>Madras Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mahabharat</td>
<td>...... 1</td>
<td>Tamil film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Ramayan</td>
<td>...... 2</td>
<td>Oliyum Ozhiyum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chitrahar</td>
<td>...... 3</td>
<td>Tamil play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi film</td>
<td>...... 4</td>
<td>Mahabharat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeevan Rakshan</td>
<td>...... 5</td>
<td>Thirai Malar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kisasan Santhika</td>
<td>...... 6</td>
<td>Hindi film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor Saheb</td>
<td>...... 7</td>
<td>Ladies Hostel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instruction:
I. Tick true or false

Question:

1. Tamil films rank first at the National level

(true/false)

Expected response:
False

Students response sample:
false/true
2. Uttar Ramayan is placed second at the National level (true/false)

Expected response: true

Students response sample: false/true

3. Thirai Malar gets the fifth rank in the Madras ranking (true/false)

Expected response: true

Students response sample: false/true

4. People watching the National relay are very much interested in Oliyum Oliyum (true/false)

Expected response: false

Students response sample: false/true

5. Hindi films are given the sixth place in the Madras ranking (true/false)

Expected response: true

Students response sample: false/true
Comment:

Only 48 per cent of the students have given the response correctly. Novelty of the passage, answers not in a sentence form in the text, comprehending the question and the unusual correlation of the answers by checking the table, etc., might have created problems to students while reading.

5.1.7 Test Item 8b
(Recognition - Identification)

Instruction:

Fill in the blanks selecting the appropriate words from the brackets.

1. The cited table is about a survey conducted to see how much people are interested in ...... programme (T.V., Radio, Cable T.V., Star T.V.)

   Expected response: T.V.

   Students response sample: Radio, Cable T.V.

2. The programme Mahabharat gets the ........ place in the National ranking (third, fourth, first)
Expected response:
First

Students response sample:
Third, Fourth

3. Both the programmes ..... and ..... find a place in national and Madras rankings (Chitrahar, Mahabharat, Ladies Hostel, Hindi films)

Expected response:
Mahabharat, Hindi film

Students response sample:
Chitrahar, Mahabharat

4. Jeevan Rakshan finds a place in the ....... ranking (National, Madras)

Expected response:
National

Students response sample:
Madras

5. The programme ..... (Doctor Saheb, Uttar Ramayan, Mahabharat) topped in the National ranking but occupies the ..... place in the Madras ranking (third, second, fourth)
Expected response:

a. Mahabharat
b. fourth

Students response sample:

a. Uttar Ramayan, Mahabharat, Doctor Saheb
b. third, second

Comment:

Only eight per cent of the students have responded correctly to test item No.8b. The reason for the low performance may be the novelty of the passage. The task of comprehending the question, and checking up the table for their correct response are noval exercises when compared to those found in the syllabus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Item No.</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Mode of Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Mistake</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8a</td>
<td>Table True/false</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>51% Novelty of the passage and task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8b</td>
<td>Table Fill up (the option given)</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>86% Novelty of the passage and task</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.1.9 Test Item No.11
(Recognizing the persons and the events)

Instruction:

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

Passage: Narrative:

Sunil and Anil went to a movie. Vikram and Suresh went to an exhibition. Sunil had one hundred rupees. Anil had fifty rupees. Vikram and Suresh each had rupees forty and thirty respectively. Sunil and Anil bought first class tickets and had some snacks and coffee. They spent Rs.30/- each. Vikram and Suresh too had some snacks at the exhibition. In addition, Vikram bought a Tee-shirt and had spent Rs.35/-. Suresh bought some books and had spent Rs.20/-.

Instruction:

I. Tick Yes or No.

Question:

1. Did Sunil go to a movie? (Yes/No)

   Expected response:
   Yes.
   Students response sample:
   Yes/No

2. Did Suresh go to an exhibition? (Yes/No)

   Expected response:
   Yes.
   Students response sample:
   Yes/No
3. Did Anil have Rs.100/- (Yes/No)

Expected response:
No.
Students response sample:
Yes/No.

4. Did Vikram buy a Tee-shirt? (Yes/No)

Expected response:
Yes
Students response sample:
Yes/No

5. Did Sunil buy a second class ticket? (Yes/No)

Expected response:
No
Students response sample:
Yes/No

II. Tick true or false

1. Anil went to an exhibition (true/false)

Expected response:
false
Students response sample:
true/false

2. Sunil bought some books (true/false)

Expected response:
false
Students response sample:
true/false

3. Vikram spent Rs.35/- (true/false)

Expected response:
true
Students response sample:
true/false

4. Suresh went to a movie? (true/false)

Expected response:
false
Students response sample:
true/false

5. Sunil had Rs.50/- (true/false)

Expected response:
false
Students response sample:
true/false
Comment:

Seventy nine per cent of the students have responded to test item 11 correctly, because the answers are stated explicitly in the passage. The rest of the 21 per cent found it difficult to answer perhaps because the amount of information given in the passage is more and that might have created reading and comprehending difficulty. So too, 82 per cent of the students have responded correctly to the test item 11b, due to the explicit statement of the answers in the passage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test item No.</th>
<th>Mode of questioning</th>
<th>Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason for the high performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Expected response</td>
<td>Irrelevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11a Passage</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11b Passage</td>
<td>True/False</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.9 Test Item No.13

Instruction:

Match these parts of sentences to make a complete sentence.

Passage: Matching table

1. She made up 1. a new record in running
2. They built up 2. her mind to study
3. He went for 3. a good business
4. My father left for 4. the doctor at once
5. My friend set up 5. Bombay yesterday
Expected response:

1. She made up her mind to study
2. They built up a good business
3. He sent for the doctor at once
4. My father left for Bombay yesterday
5. My friend set up a new record in running

Some wrong response samples:

1. She made up Bombay yesterday
   She made up the doctor at once
2. They built a new record in running
   They built up her mind to study
3. He sent for a new record in running
   He sent for Bombay yesterday
4. My father left for a good business
   My father left for the doctor at once
5. My friend set up her mind to study
   My friend set up the doctor at once

Comment:

Only 14 per cent of the students have responded to the test item 13 correctly. The poor performance of students may be due to their lack in understanding the collocational complexity of the phrasal verbs like 'built up', 'sent for', 'left for', 'set up', etc. Yet another reason may be their poor vocabulary control and their inability to infer the delicate shades of meaning of words occurring in contexts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Item No.</th>
<th>Text Mode of Questioning</th>
<th>Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason for Performance Efficiency</th>
<th>Expected Irrelevant Answers</th>
<th>Partially Correct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. Matching Table</td>
<td>Matching</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>Difficulty in understanding phrasal verbs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.10 Test Item No. 15

(Identification of the part of the event)

**Instruction:**

Here is an advertisement. Read it and answer the questions given below:

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

**COACHING CLASSES**
**PROFESSIONAL COURSES**
**ENTRANCE EXAMINATION**

**Period:** 6 weeks from 01-04-1992

**Time:** Forenoon 9 a.m. to 12 Noon and Afternoon 2 to 3 p.m.

(Two sessions)

**Fees:** Rs. 250-00

Separate classes for English and Tamil Medium

F: for further details

Contact our Office:

Principal, Selvin Tuition Home, College Road, Salem -2.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *
Instruction

Select the best option from the alternatives given.

Question:

1. The advertisement is about coaching classes to .......... 
   (Arts College, Professional College, Staff College)

   Expected response:
   Professional College
   Students response sample:
   Arts College/Professional College

2. The period of coaching classes is ........ (2 weeks, 4 weeks, 6 weeks)

   Expected response:
   6 weeks
   Students response sample:
   6 weeks

3. The classes are held in ........ sessions (one, two, three)

   Expected response:
   Two
   Students response sample:
   Two

4. The fees announced is Rupees ........ (fifty, one hundred and fifty, two hundred and fifty)

   Expected response:
   Two hundred and fifty.
   Students response sample:
   Two hundred and fifty

5. The advertisement is given by the ..... (Staff Principal, superintendent)

   Expected response:
   Principal
   Students response sample:
   Staff/Superintendent

Comment:

Eighty two per cent of the students have responded to this question correctly. The reason may be the answers are explicitly stated in the text.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Item No.</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Mode of questioning</th>
<th>Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason for the performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. Advertisement

Select the best option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th> </th>
<th>Partially correct</th>
<th>Expected answer</th>
<th>82%</th>
<th>18%</th>
<th>Answers explicitly stated in the text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5.1.11 Test Item No. 18

(Identifying the components of the telegram)

Instruction:

Read the following and answer the questions given below:

Passage: Telegram

```
* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *
* To                       *
* Mohan                   *
* 215, Mount Road        *
* Madras 600 001         *
*                          *
* FATHER HEART PAIN ADMITTED KOVAI MEDICAL CENTRE *
* OPERATION OCTOBER SEVEN START IMMEDIATELY *
* - RAJESH                *
* From                    *
* A.Rajesh                *
* 21, Nehru Street        *
* R.V.Puram               *
* Coimbatore -3.          *
* PIN: 641 003           *
*                          *
```
Instruction:

Fill up the blanks with suitable words from the options given.

Question:

1. The given item is ....... (an advertisement, a letter, a telegram)

Expected response:

a telegram

Students response sample:

an advertisement/a telegram

2. The information is given to Mohan who is at .......

(Madras, Salem, Coimbatore)

Expected response:

Madras

Students response sample:

Coimbatore

3. Rajesh's ......... (brother, mother, father) was admitted in the Hospital

Expected response:

father

Students response sample:

brother
4. He was admitted in ...... (Ramakrishna Hospital, Kovai Medical Centre, K.G.Hospital)

Expected response:

Kovai Medical Centre

Students response sample:

Ramakrishna Hospital

5. Rajesh's father needs ...... (Medication, operation, rest)

Expected response:

Operation

Students response sample:

Medication, rest

Comment:

Only 58 per cent of the students have responded to this test item correctly. One of the reasons may be the novelty of the passage. But interpreting and producing telegrams is not excluded from the higher secondary syllabus. This type of questioning is unusual. The information given in the text is not in full sentence form. All these factors might have played a role for the poor performance of the students.
Test Item Text Mode of Performance in % Reason for the performance
No. question-Expected Partially
tion- answer correct

18. Telegraphic Fill up Novelty of the Full passage options passage-difficulty
the given
expected in understanding the telegraphic
the mode of informations.

Some general comments about the eight type of questions and responses are the following:

Even for the questions eliciting the textual information as answers, the students did not give the answer if the reading passage given are in tabular or telegraphic form. Only when the answers are explicitly stated in the text they are able to pick up the answer to the question. Even if the answers are scattered but found in the same passage, they find it difficult in collecting, organising and presenting the information. All these strategies of answering reveal deficiency in the skill of reading and comprehending.

5.2 Comprehension - Reorganisation:

Reorganising the facts given in a reading text is also one of the sub skills coming under comprehension. Only when one could read and comprehend the text fully, one could organise the facts. To test the degree of this ability among the test sub-
jects, six test items were given. Two types of questions were asked, one is purely text based and the other is based on the student's linguistic competence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Item No.</th>
<th>Type of the text</th>
<th>Mode of answering</th>
<th>Type of the questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Full passage</td>
<td>Listing out the places</td>
<td>Competence based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Jumbled sentences</td>
<td>Re-arrange</td>
<td>Text based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Narrative sentences</td>
<td>Re-arranging</td>
<td>Competence based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Full passage</td>
<td>Listing out</td>
<td>Text based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Sentences</td>
<td>Re-arrange</td>
<td>Text based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Narrative sentences</td>
<td>Re-arranging</td>
<td>Text based</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.1 Test Item No.3: Organising the places of visit given in the text.

Passage: Narrative

Next month Kamala is going to Delhi for a holiday. She is going to Simla and she may also go to Agra. She will stay for a week in Simla and then return to Delhi. From Delhi she will come back to Coimbatore. She may stop at Hyderabad.
Question:
Instruction:
List the name of the places under the given headings.

Q.1. Places Kamala is sure of visiting

Expected response:
1. Delhi
2. Simla

Students response sample:
1. Delhi and Agra
2. Hyderabad

Q.2. Places Kamala is not sure of visiting

Expected response:
1. Agra
2. Hyderabad

Students response sample:
1. Simla, Agra
2. Delhi

Comment:
When response samples are analysed, only 18 per cent of the students have responded to these questions correctly. The wrong responses reveal the students inability to read and comprehend the text, giving importance to the verbs referring to 'sureness' and 'doubt' about actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Item</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Mode of Questioning</th>
<th>Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason for the performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. 3</td>
<td>Passage</td>
<td>List out the places and the reason</td>
<td>18% 6% 76%</td>
<td>Failure in comprehending words denoting 'sureness' and 'doubt'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2.2 Test Item No.4
(Reorganisation of textual information and production)

Instruction:
Here are a number of sentences about a postman and a doctor jumbled together. You sort them out and write a paragraph about a postman and a doctor.

Passage: Sentences

A doctor/postman brings letters/treats patients
A doctor/postman wears white/khaki uniform
A doctor/postman carries a bag/a stethoscope
A doctor/postman drives a car/rides a bicycle
A doctor/postman gives injection/puts date seal on letters

Expected response:

Doctor
A doctor treats patients
A doctor wears white uniform
A doctor carries a stethoscope
A doctor drives a car
A doctor gives injection

Postman
A postman brings letters
A postman wears khaki uniform
A postman carries a bag
A postman rides a bicycle
A postman puts date seal on letters

Comment:
For this test item, 80 per cent of the students have responded correctly. The high degree of response is due to the following:
1) The passage given is a simple one

2) Textual information is within the realm of the cultural experience of the students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Item No.</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Mode of Questioning</th>
<th>Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason for the performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Expec- Irre- Par-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ted levant tially</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>answer correct</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Sentence Re-organize (Segregation) 80% 7% 13% Information is familiar

5.2.3 Test Item No. 6

(Reorganisation of textual structure)

Question:

Instruction:

The way oxygen is restored in the atmosphere is described in eight sentences which are given in a shuffled form. Rearrange the sentences in the right order.

Passage: Jumbled sentences

1. The carbon is used to make starch
2. The green leaves of trees absorb carbon-di-oxide from the air
3. They give out carbon-di-oxide
4. Oxygen is released into the atmosphere
5. They take up oxygen from the atmosphere to breathe and burn.

6. Thus the trees help to replace the oxygen in the atmosphere.

7. Plants and animals breathe and things burn.

8. With the help of sunlight carbon-di-oxide is broken up into carbon and oxygen.

**Expected response:**

\[(7 + 5 + 3 + 2 + 8 + 1 + 4 + 6)\]

**Students response sample:**

\[(8 + 6 + 2 + 5 + 1 + 3 + 4 + 7)\]

**Comment:**

Only 23 per cent of the students have given partially correct responses. No one has responded correctly. The low degree of response may be due to several factors: 1. The subject matter of the text is related to science. 2. The language in which they have studied science may be different. 3. The medium of instructions through which they studied science and the technical words used in the text might have given them the problem in comprehension. 4. The conclusion we draw is that reorganisation capacity of the student is not up to the mark.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Item Text</th>
<th>Mode of Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason for the performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 6. Sentence Reorganisation | Expec | Irre | Not | Par-
| No. | tion | ted | laevent | attempt-
| | answer | | | ted |
| | | | | correct |
| | | | | 0% | 68% | 9% | 23% | The subject matter of the text |
5.2.4 Test Item No. 10

(Causality based reorganisation)

Instruction:

Read the following passage

Passage: Narrative:

Today is Sunday. Two days ago Dr. Naresh went to Bangalore to perform a heart surgery. He is today in Coimbatore. He is planning to attend his friend's wedding at Madras the day after tomorrow. The next day he is visiting his parents at Salem.

Question:

a) Given below are the names of the week. Write the names of the places visited by the doctor against the day and the reason for the visit.

Expected response:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Places</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Madras</td>
<td>to attend his friend's wedding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Salem</td>
<td>to visit his parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Bangalore</td>
<td>to perform heart surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Students response sample:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>(Madras, Bangalore)</td>
<td>heart surgery, visiting parents, friends wedding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>(Salem, Madras)</td>
<td>to attend his friends wedding, visiting parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>(Bangalore, Salem)</td>
<td>visiting parents, friends wedding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comment:**

Only 6 per cent of the students have given the response correctly. Identification of the date and places of visit from the information given in the passage requires sufficient use of inferential strategies applied over the comprehension of deictic elements on the part of the students. This being the case, many students did not give the right response to this question. This again reflects deficiency in reading-cum-inferencing skill of the students.

Sixty-four per cent of the students have written correctly the place and the purpose of the doctor's visit, because they are explicitly stated in the text. They have failed to locate the day of the doctor's visit.

The reason for the low performance of the students may be due to the following:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test item No.</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Mode of questioning</th>
<th>Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason against the place</th>
<th>Reason for the performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Place against the day</td>
<td>Correct</td>
<td>Irre-levant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Passage List out the place and reason for the visit</td>
<td></td>
<td>6% 55% 39%</td>
<td>64% 3% 33%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
i) Temporal information is stated indirectly in the text

ii) Temporal infering ability (based on textual information) is poor among the students

iii) Temporal phrases are problematic for interpretation (See the table on page 122)

5.2.5 Test Item No. 12

(Organize textual information on grammatical basis)

Passage:

There are some activities which occur as an addition to what Rajesh does everyday. Differentiate the activities Rajesh did additionally yesterday from what Rajesh normally does everyday, making use of the tense form. Write the letter 'Y' against the sentences showing yesterday's special activity and 'E' against the sentence reflecting everyday activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Expected response</th>
<th>Students response sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. He went to the airport to see off a friend</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. He gets up early</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. He reads the newspapers</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. He had some icecream</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. He came very late from the office</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. He goes for a walk</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. He attended some meeting</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. He played cricket</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. He goes to temple</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. He takes the children to school</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comment:

Only 21 per cent of the students have responded to this question correctly. This question tests the ability of correlating the conception of tense with time. The poor performance may be due to the following: Lack of clear cut tense conception. Only present habitual and past perfect are the tense forms found in the passage. The students manifest lesser degree of correlational ability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Item Text</th>
<th>Mode of questioning</th>
<th>Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason for the performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Sentence Classifying</td>
<td>Expected Partially correct</td>
<td>21% 79%</td>
<td>The difficulty in comprehending the word expressing tense concept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.6 Test Item No. 14
(Organisation of hortative text)

Instruction:

The following sentences instruct the process of diluting concentrated sulphuric acid in the laboratory. But they are in shuffled order. Arrange them properly.

Passage:

Hortative text with sentences in shuffled order
1. And also the heat that is produced will be released slowly
2. Now what is in the trough is dilute sulphuric acid
3. Take a trough of water and a glass rod
4. As the acid is poured, keep on stirring the water gently
5. Pour concentrated sulphuric acid along the walls of the trough
6. Add the required amount of concentrated sulphuric acid into the water
7. If you do so, the acid will not splash over

Expected response:

\[ (3 + 5 + 4 + 7 + 1 + 6 + 2) \]

Students response sample:

\[ (2 + 7 + 6 + 1 + 3 + 5 + 4) \]

Comment:

Only 4 per cent of the students have done this exercise correctly. The topic dealt with in the above passage is a part of their science syllabus. But the poor performance of the students shows their poor reading and comprehending ability. Reorganising the sentences of a passage with due conceptualisation of the sequencing of textual information is really a problem to students whether the passage is related to science or other subjects.
5.3. Comprehension inference

A test was given to assess the student's ability to infer or guess the information that was not given in the text, while reading and comprehending the given text. In a way this test was given to test the ability of reading beyond and between the lines.

Inferring is a skill of associating related information which is not found in the text with the information already found in the text. For this, knowledge and experience are essential. Inferring is a kind of strategy associated with comprehension. Making inference is a higher order comprehending ability. Four test items were used for testing the inferencing ability and they are the following:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Test Item No.</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Mode of questioning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>7a</td>
<td>Passage</td>
<td>Questions and answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>7b</td>
<td>Passage</td>
<td>Select the correct endings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Passage with underlined words</td>
<td>Select the correct meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Passage</td>
<td>Find out the cause for the effect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.1 Test Item No. 7a, 7b: Inferring information related to textual information

Passage: Dialogue

One morning when Swift was dressing, he found that his shoes were covered with mud. He called his servant to him and said, "My shoes are covered with mud. why didn't you clean them? You are supposed to clean them each night".

"I thought it was useless to clean them in such a bad weather", the servant said, "They will only become dirty again in a short while".

Later that day, when the servant appeared for his dinner, there was no food on the table for him. He went to Swift and asked the reason for this.

"I thought it was useless for you to eat", Swift said, "because you will only become hungry again in a short time".
Question 1: 7a

1. Was the writer angry with his servant? Which part of the text indicates it?

Expected response:

Yes, the writer was angry with his servant. The last few lines indicate this. Swift said that he thought that it was useless for him to eat for he would only become hungry again in a short time.

Students response samples:

1. No. Writer was angry. My shoes are covered with mud. Why didn't you clean them? You are supposed to clean them each night.

2. The writer was not angry. Later that day, when the servant appeared for his dinner, there was no food on the table or him. He went to Swift and asked the reason for this.

Question 2:

Does Swift teach his servant a lesson on the same day or on some other day? How do you know?

Expected response:

Swift taught a lesson to his servant on the same day. Because when the servant turned out for his dinner on the same day, there was no food for him on the table. 'later that day' - phrase in the passage indicates this.
Students response samples:

1. Some day or some other day. I thought it was useless to clean them in such a bad weather.

2. Some other day. My shoes are covered with mud. Why didn't you clean them?

Comment:

Only 4 per cent of the students have just reproduced the answers as they are from the passage. Most of them did not answer this question. This shows their inability to infer the answer from the given text. This reveals their poor reading habits. They are very good at the reproduction of the answer from the text provided the questions asked are direct ones and the answers could be lifted easily from the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Item Text</th>
<th>Mode of Question- Repro- Irre- Not Repro-</th>
<th>Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason for the performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Reproduction</td>
<td>Irrelevance</td>
<td>Attempted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7a Passage Question &amp; answer</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.2. **Test Item No. 7b**

**Instruction:**

Fill the gap in the sentences with suitable items.

1. The writer is trying to show that the servant was......
   a) a clever man
   b) a kind man
   c) a fool

Expected response:
   a) a clever man

Students response samples:
   b) a kind man
   c) a fool

2. Mr. Swift has....... his servant
   a) pardoned
   b) taught a lesson to
   c) was kind to

Expected response:
   b) taught a lesson to

Students response samples:
   a) pardoned
   c) was kind to
Comment:

When the responses were analysed, only 16 per cent of the students were found to have answered correctly. This may be due to their less inferential capacity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Item No.</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Mode of questioning</th>
<th>Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason for the performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 (3-4) Passage</td>
<td>Choose the correct ending</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>Less inferential capacity during reading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.3. Test item No. 9

Instruction:

Read the following passage and select from the option the meanings for the underlined words in the context.

Passage:

Mr. Gupta is a famous industrialist. He had a very hard life and earned money only by fair means. Now he is held in high esteem by every one. He is a light hearted man but gives close attention to every aspect in life.
Questions:

1. The word 'hard' means unpleasant/difficult

Expected response:

a) difficult

Students response sample:

b) unpleasant

2. The word 'fair' means honest/impartial

Expected response:

a) honest

Students response sample:

b) impartial

3. The word 'high' means supreme/great

Expected response:

a) great

Students response sample:

b) supreme

4. The word 'light' means cheerful/less weight

Expected response:

a) cheerful

Students response sample:

b) less weight
5. The word 'close' means careful/covered

Expected response:

a) careful

Students response sample:

b) covered

Comments:

When the responses were analysed it is found that only 13 per cent of the students have answered the questions correctly. Two per cent of them have gone wrong completely. The rest of 85 per cent have got 4 items or one item correctly. This shows the poor vocabulary recognition of the students. They do not have vocabulary stock in their memory as expected of them on reaching the higher secondary level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test item No.</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Mode of questioning</th>
<th>Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason for the performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Expected response</td>
<td>Irrelevant response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Passage with underlined words</td>
<td>Select the best meaning</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.4 Test Item No.19

(Testing the inferential capacity (Causality)

Instructions:

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow:

Passage: Narrative

On June 26th, all the private buses were diverted to Madurai for the convenience of people attending the conference. In Coimbatore, on that day, all the Cheran Transport buses were overcrowded. I did not get the bus at the correct time to go to school. I went very late to school. The Headmaster asked me to pay fine. In my hurry that day I forgot to take my lunch and my friends shared their lunch with me.

Questions:

1. State the reason for the following:

   a) I went very late to school.

   Expected response:

   Because on that day all the Cheran Transport buses were overcrowded and the reporter did not get the bus at the correct time.
Students' response samples:

1. Cheran Transport buses crowded
2. Why is Cheran buses over crowded.
3. The Cheran Transport buses were over crowded in Coimbatore on that day.
4. On June 28th the private buses were diverted to Madurai for the convenience.

b) I shared my lunch with my friends.

Expected response:
Because I have forgotten to take my lunch.

Student's response samples:

1. Who shared you lunch?
2. You are shared your with your friend?
3. I shared my lunch with my friend.
4. Friends shared their lunch with me.

c) All the private buses were diverted to Madurai.

Expected response:
for the convenience of people attending the conference.

Student's response samples:

1. The private buses were the going?
2. What happened the private buses?
3. All the private buses were diverted to Madurai for the convenience of people attending the conference.
4. Yes, the private buses were diverted to Madurai.

d) I paid fine.
Expected response:

... because I went very late to school.

Student's response samples:
1. Are you pay for Headmaster find?
2. You paid fine.
3. The Headmaster asked me to pay fine.

e) The Cheran transport buses were over crowded.

Expected response:
Because all the private buses were diverted to Madurai for the convenience of people attending the conference.

Student's response samples:
1. Cheran transport buses crowded?
2. Why is the Cheran buses over crowded?
3. In Coimbatore on that day all the cheran transport buses.
4. On that day all Cheran transport buses were over crowded.
Comment:

Asking questions that expect answers based on the skill of inferring cause and effect from students is a novel technique. The student's performance to these questions is very poor. Only 7 per cent of the students have responded correctly. The students have lifted up the sentences from the passage which carries the words found in the question and hence they have gone wrong. Even those who have given the answer did not modify the passage sentence to make it a suitable answer. They have not used appropriate cohesive elements while writing the cause for the given effect. Leaving aside the ungrammaticality in the response samples, it could be said that the responses reveal lesser inferential ability found among students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Mode of questioning</th>
<th>Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason for the performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Write the cause for the effect</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4 Comprehension - recall

Recall is an aspect of literal comprehension. Comprehension has a direct impact over recall. Text organisation, long term and short term meaning, knowledge level, comprehension
ability, etc., will have some influence over the information and the recall ability of the individuals. If comprehension is higher, then recall also will be higher. To test the recall capacity of the students subsequent to the act of reading, a test was administered with two types of exercises.

One is in the form of cloze test, and the other one is in the form of a dialogue wherein the prepositions were omitted and the students were expected to fill up the prepositions appropriate to that place.

Comment:
Only less than 15 per cent of the students have done this exercise correctly. This shows their poor vocabulary control and control over the use of prepositions. As for as the cloze test is concerned no one has filled all the gaps correctly. 10 to 20 per cent of them have filled 3 or 4 gaps correctly. The words substituted in the blanks were found to be incompatible with the structural context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Test Mode of the questioning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fill up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fill up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Test Mode of the questioning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fill up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fill up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Gapped passage (cloze)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Dialogue with gaps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4.1 Test Item No.5
(Recalling from the mental lexicon)

Instructions:

In the following paragraph every sixth word is missing. Read the passage carefully and fill in the blanks with the most appropriate words you can think of.

Passage:

Your parents love you very.....They have given all that .... have to make you healthy, .... and happy. But some of .... have no idea about how .... are at times. You may.... every aspect is alright with.....because they do not complain ..... It is your duty to..... life easy and pleasant for....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Expected response</th>
<th>Student's response samples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>much</td>
<td>like, might, freedom, have, careful, happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>they</td>
<td>things, wife, sad, were, for, body, medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>wealthy</td>
<td>good, cheerful, strong, mother, enough, joy, all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>good, to, the, do, time, money, know, have, they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>they</td>
<td>use, it, and, life, eat, wife, that, they, brother</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. think can, are, have, do, in the, know, discipline, my
7. them his family, wrong, come her, worse, carefully, the
8. anything your, time, very, happy, with, mummy, duty, school
9. make future, his, officer, useful, reading, get, save, my, good
10. them some, good life, more, happy, think, with me, trichy, enjoy

Comment:
The above responses reflect their poor vocabulary control and deficiency in general reading habits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Item</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Mode of Questioning</th>
<th>Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason for the Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Cloze passage</td>
<td>Fill up</td>
<td>0% 25% 14% 61%</td>
<td>Poor vocabulary control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.2. Test Item No. 17

Instructions:
Complete the following dialogue by filling the numbered blanks with suitable preposition.
Passage: Dialogue

Booking a plane ticket

1. Clerk: Good morning, Madam, Can I help you?


3. Clerk: Certainly, Madam, please sit...(2) and I shall be...(3) you...(4) a moment.

4. Lady: Thank you,

(.... (5) a minute or so;

5. Clerk: When would you like to travel, Madam?

6. Lady: let me see. Today is the 10th...(6) October. Do you think I can fly...(7) Saturday the 22nd...(8) this month?

7. Clerk: Just a second, Madam. I shall check let me see ...(9) Delhi...(10) London, Yes, Madam, on Saturdays there are three flights....(11) London....(12) here. You can fly Air India, British Airways or Gulf Air. These are direct, non-stop flights.

8. Lady: Then can you kindly book me a ticket?....(13) British Airways....(14) Saturday?


10. Lady: Thank you and bye.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Expected response</th>
<th>Student's response samples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>ticket, from, could, her, air, going, plane, airport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>down</td>
<td>thanks, their, that, own, down, conductor, here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>with</td>
<td>waiting, ticket, if, are, could not, check, can, help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>in/within</td>
<td>plane, fly, this, are, just, shall, about, were, his</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>after</td>
<td>wait, yes, madam, week, 1990, few, five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>of</td>
<td>October, from, today, September, travel, yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>on</td>
<td>London, by, to go, 10th, air India, go, yes, to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>of</td>
<td>October, from, today, September, travel, yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>from</td>
<td>fly to, come to, first, Calcutta, Madras, you, not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>and, the, sent, Ooty, gone, ticket, airport, I go, or.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>went to, airlines, on, work, in, Delhi, where.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>from</td>
<td>in this, by, will, for, yes, Gulf air, them, and.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>the, fly, the place, for, which, ticket, they, all the.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>on</td>
<td>went to, go for, 10th October, for, go on, coming to, flights, her, Madras</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comment:

Only 69 per cent of the students have responded to this test item with partially correct responses. No one has responded 100% correctly. For filling up the prepositions in the gaps, they have made use of items belonging to different grammatical categories. They have followed certain interesting strategies while filling up the gaps. After the item 'fly' (dialogue part 7), they have written a variety of items, October, November, Monday, Friday (1990, 1992), etc. In some places, they have randomly written words found in the passage itself. The responses reveal the lack of knowledge about the distribution of prepositions. Preposition selection ability, etc., will come only when one develops reading ability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Item Text</th>
<th>Mode of Performance in %</th>
<th>Reason for the performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Expectation</td>
<td>Irrelevance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. dialogue fill up gaps</td>
<td>Fill up with appropriate preposition</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.5. Comprehension - Evaluation

Evaluation is an higher order skill associated with comprehension skill. Evaluation involves making judgement about the text with regards to its organisation, meaning, its appropri-
ateness to the context, etc. Evaluation is made by correlating a text with one's knowledge and experience and thereby the worth of a text is evaluated. To test the evaluation capacity of the students, a test was also designed.

5.5.1 Test Item No.16

(Evaluation about textual information)

Instruction:

Read the following passages and answer the questions given below:

Passage: Narrative

Once a lady travelled with her little dog in a bus. It was a cold night. The conductor refused to allow the dog inside the bus. A quarrel was to arise and the conductor stopped the bus and said that the bus would go only if the lady gets out of the bus. After sufficient argument, the lady got down and the bus began to move. The author who was travelling in the bus said to the conductor when asked for his opinion that rules should be followed only in spirit and not in letter.
Instructions: Tick 'yes' or 'no'

Question:

1. The author's opinion is correct (yes/no)
   Expected response: Yes.
   Student's response samples: No/Yes

2. The action taken by the conductor is correct (yes/no)
   Expected response: No.
   Student's response sample: Yes/No

3. Since it was a cold night and the dog was very small, the conductor should have allowed the lady to take the dog (Yes/No)
   Expected response: Yes.
   Student's response samples: No/Yes

4. The conductor had caused inconveniences to the passengers by stopping the bus in the middle of the journey during night time.
   Expected response: Yes
   Student's response sample: No/Yes

5. It was cruel to ask the lady to get out of the bus with the dog (yes/no)
   Expected response: Yes
   Student's response samples: No/Yes

Comment:

On analysing the student's responses, it was found that only 14 per cent of the students have responded satisfactorily. This shows a lack in the ability of students in making textual
judgement, which again reflects their deficiency in reading habits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Item No.</th>
<th>Text Mode of questioning</th>
<th>Performance in %</th>
<th>Expected response</th>
<th>Partially correct</th>
<th>Reason for the performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16. Passage</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>Poor evaluation capacity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general, when all the skills of comprehension are analysed, it is found that student's performance is better in recognition skill. The students are capable of locating the answers which are readily available in the text itself. They lift the answers up from the passage. If the answers are not readily available and if answering a question requires an understanding of the text and picking out the answers, they experience difficulty. When the text is not a narrative one and when it is in telegraphic or tabular and matching table form, they found it difficult to read, comprehend and produce the answers.

While ranking, next to the recognition skill comes, the re-organisation skills. Students are not up to the mark in this skill. If the concepts are clear, easy and are within the realm of their experience, they find it easy to re-organise; otherwise they find it difficult.

The rest of the skills in comprehension namely infer-
ence recall and evaluation are rated to be tough skills in the ranking and the students manifest very low performance in these skills. These skills demanded the students to infer, recall and evaluate the information found outside the given passage. The answers are not found explicitly in the passage. The skills require activation of their cognitive ability and hence they have failed to respond appropriately.