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CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION

1.01 INTRODUCTION:
Development of listening comprehension is the sole aim of teaching listening in foreign languages as well as the mother tongue. This purpose has been justified by introducing supplementary listening material and class-room teaching methods in our Schools. The purpose of the supplementary listening material is to develop the rate of listening, vocabulary and comprehension. The attainment of these goals is generally evaluated by the teacher-made test, more or less without adopting the scientific principles of testing.

The paucity, better say the absence of well-standardized test tempted this investigator to undertake the work of constructing and standardizing the present test.

From birth to death almost every aspect of human life is touched by measurement in its numerous forms. Day to day common experiences are characteristic of the emphasis placed on measurement in the modern world. In recent years, scientists amaze us by their inventions one after another with gradually increasing superiority in quality and measurement is at the root of all these. Not only does it exist, but it becomes more and more precise and accurate also.

Education, one of the very important phases of human society, has much to gain from measurement. In the modern world, Education is being considered as an investment whose profitable outcome depends upon planned programmes of Education which include the techniques of evaluation. Testing, one of the techniques of evaluation, had its origin in very early years, as far back as the 3rd and 4th century B.C., of Course, in a very primitive form.
During the first World War testing technique accelerated its growth. A British psychologist has suggested that a new scientific technique seems to go through three stages as follows:

The first is the early stage of development when no one, except its inventors, is interested in it, and those working on other lines regard it with indifference or suspicion or else think it silly. In the second stage, it begins to gain support, and in the third stage, every one wants to use it whether they understand it or not. There is then the danger of a fourth stage of disillusionment, and this is the time for critical examination (Irwin, quoted by Ross and Stanley, P.57).

In the case of standardized tests in America, the stage of indifference and suspicion had largely passed away when the standardized tests appeared during the first decade of this century. The situation is quite different in India where there is dearth of standardized tests of "general intelligence", and more of "Specific Intelligence". In this respect what Ross and Stanley have stated is significant. They favour the importance of the tests of "Specific" ability when they say;

There is evidence that the development of the future is likely to be along the line of tests for "Specific" aptitude rather than tests of "general" intelligence which aim to cover the whole range of human capacity at one shot (Ross and Stanley, P.37).

What is true for foreign countries is equally true for India. The need for the tests of "Specific" intelligence has increased since the country gained independence. Since then, the country is driving at the aim of national reconstruction. Efficiency of every individual is one of the important phases of national development.

Moreover, the need for testing is felt more acutely because of the following developments which have already gained grounds as part of the guidance movement.
1. The establishment of more technical institutions and the lack of scientific procedures for admission.


Counselling in India for youth coming from varied backgrounds of culture and communication pattern needs a different approach. It can best be decided by research in counselling under Indian conditions. Whatever may be the shape of things to come, in the matter of policy and programme of vocational counselling in India, ability testing will have to play an important role in the educational programmes. Selection procedures shall have to rely more upon tests of specific abilities.

Need for the tests of specific abilities, thus accepted and the sphere of work decided, the question before the investigator was to decide the nature of the test which can be useful to the pupils of Gujarat. The modern trend which sprang from the trait theory is towards the multifactor batteries which provide a profile of stores on a number of major abilities. Considering the need for the pupils of Ahmedabad city, language ability is selected for the test, as the investigator during his teaching experiences felt the need for such an instrument.

The mother tongue is considered as medium of instruction, thoughts and reasoning and therefore, proficiency in language ability plays a very important role in child development. Hence, there is the need for developing language skills from the basis of primary education. Research work on language is insufficient and listening skill, as a subject for research is neglected.
Most of the research reported is frequently ad hoc. Research on the spoken, the oral and the written skills is conspicuous by its absence. There is equally little research on oral and written comprehension and evaluation of competence and performance. The one abstract on listening comprehension not only attests to the above but also shows there is almost no development research spanning over several years of socialization and schooling of a single child, an age group or a class. (Buch, P.575).

1.02 LEARNING:

The main objectives of the school as an institution is to bring certain desirable changes in the behaviour of children through the process of learning which begins from the birth of the child and continues till his death.

All living creatures learn. When the child is born, his mind is just like a clean slate. As soon as he comes in contact with his environment, he starts reacting and in this process of interaction of the individual and his environment, the foundations of learning are laid down. There is no doubt that learning occupies an important position in the whole field of psychology. Psychology of learning is very important for teachers, parents, animal trainers and for all those who are interested in understanding, controlling and predicting behaviour.

1.03 PROCESS OF LEARNING:

Learning means to bring changes in the behaviour of the organism. It is very difficult to give a universally acceptable definition of learning, because various theories developed by psychologists attempt to define the term from different angles. Learning in psychology has the status of concept. Concept means an idea or image that cannot be directly observed like electrons or genes but which is inferred from the behaviour of the organism. Melvin H. Mark defines learning thus "Learning is
a relatively enduring change in behaviour, which is a function of prior behaviour".

The definition given above emphasizes four attributes of learning as a process - the first is that learning is a permanent change in behaviour; it does not include change due to illness, fatigue, maturation and use of intoxicants. The second is that learning is not directly observable but it manifests itself in the activities of the individual. The third attribute of learning is that it results in some changes of enduring nature. The fourth and the last is that learning depends on practice and experience.

There are certain terms which are confused with the learning as instincts, imprinting and maturation. If we examine the behaviour of an organism, we find that some behaviour of the organism is reflexive or inborn as for example, we breathe, our heart pumps, our cells apparently teem with activity, our knee jerks etc. All these activities take place without the benefit of learning. As we move to lower animals, reflexes and instincts account more and more for their behaviour. An instinct according to R. Haber (1966) is "A pattern of behaviour, usually complex in nature, which is found universally among the members of a species, occurs without the need for prior learning or experience, as relatively invariant in form, and is reliably elicited or released by a particular and usually very simple stimulus".

The prospective teachers have to take the job of teaching after completing their training. They must know the operations and approaches to learning to develop better teaching strategies. The teacher can be benefited by studying the psychology of learning in a number of ways. He can understand the individual differences in learning among learners and can adapt his teaching according to their requirements by using different teaching methods. The most important contribution of psychology of
learning is the concept of motivation. The teacher may know the needs and motives of children at different age levels. He can motivate them. He can know the concept of motivation as developed by various theorists of learning. He can organize these activities which create interest and motivation in children. He can know the process of remembering and forgetting and can utilize efficient methods to minimize the percentage of forgetting. He can help the students to transfer skills and information acquired in class room to life situations outside the school. He can diagnose special difficulties of children and help them individually to overcome those difficulties. Modern psychology of learning lays more emphasis on social psychology of learning. The teacher can improve the social climate for learning by providing conducive environment in the class. Briefly, more a teacher knows about the fundamental principles of learning, the more efficiently he can guide classroom teaching - learning process.

Learning has been classified in various categories as learning of motor skills such as walking, writing, swimming and typing etc. which require the use of motor skills and verbal learning involving verbal expression. Effective learning and cognitive learning emphasize the role of learning emotional responses and learning of facts, understanding of facts and problem solving.

Learning is being done by observation and instruction. Learning is also possible by trial and error method. It is also affected by following others. Children learn mostly by observation. But they impart knowledge by way of communication. Listening, speaking, reading and writing are the four fundamental skills of communication. Reading is an important aspect of the foundation of education. A person acquires knowledge by reading. The wealth of one's knowledge depends on one's reading habit, reading material, reading ability, listening and the ability of comprehension. In this context reading and listening are the two sides of the same coin (knowledge). Both of these activities make the whole coin of knowledge. It is essential to know
as to how the second side of the coin of knowledge is important in acquiring it and the children's ability of reading, listening and comprehending can be improved. Keeping in mind these viewpoints, the investigator has undertaken the present study.

1.04 NEED AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Need is the mother of invention. It is the target of the work to be done in the field of education. It is seen that four fundamental skills of communication, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Play a very important role. Most of the knowledge can be acquired by listening. But the purpose will not be served with listening only. It should be done by comprehending the ideas of others. So listening comprehension is the fundamental and important of basic skills in imparting knowledge. Listening is the first language skill that a child acquires after the birth and it is basic piece of tool of communication used in class room as well as social life, but it is, by and large, a neglected area for research in our country.

Besides this, the importance of listening could also be realised by simple observation of class room teaching process. In most of the class rooms, the teacher speaks and the pupils listen. Whatever the teacher has in his mind, he expresses it through the medium of words which have significant meaning attached to them. The pupil listens and tries to register the meaning in his mind. How many of the pupils are in a position to take notes from the teacher's speech? How many of them really understand or comprehend the teacher's speech? The teacher, if he is in the mood, will write a few words on the blackboard, of what he has spoken in the classroom. Many a time, he does not even care to ascertain whether the students listen to him effectively. This is the picture of class room reading, and learning process where mainly the listening skill is employed and still no proper attention is paid. The importance of listening skill has been thrashed out by analysing the time spent by the pupils in the class room and time spent by adults in social life. The studies carried out with regard to the time spent by the pupils and people reveal that the most of the time is spent in listening.
A similar study made by Bird with female college students revealed that forty-two percent of time was spent in listening, 25% in speaking, 15% in reading and 18% in writing. From the various studies cited here and even from experiences of day to day life, it could be said without any hesitation that listening is a significant skill employed or used at all levels of education, and even after school and college life. So the investigator also got interested in the study of listening comprehension.

1.05 PROBLEM OF THE STUDY:

In foreign countries courses in communication are being conducted by educational institutions. In our country very few courses on communication are conducted at M.Ed. and Ph.D. level. Some significant work on communication has been done at the N.C.E.R.T., New Delhi. There are so many courses on language developed and conducted by special institutions with a view to helping the students know about machine of languages rather than using them in practical communication. Most of our teachers concentrate on or emphasize the content of the language text used in classes. But almost all of them disregard the skill developed through the select passages. They resort to the teaching of grammar, traditional or modern, without much relevance to the mental process of listening. Looking to such a situation, present problem has been undertaken with definite objectives. The problem runs as follows:

"An Investigation into the listening comprehension in Gujarati of the pupils of Std V, VI, VII with respect to different variables in the city of Ahmedabad."

Variables I Sex
Variables II I.Q.
Variables III Socio-economic status
Variables IV Type of school management
Variables V Size of family
1.06 DEFINITION OF THE TERMS:

It is quite essential to define certain terms of the problem under study. The terms that are defined are (1) Construction & (2) Listening Comprehension.

Construction: Here the term construction means to coin the test items after selecting the content for listening materiala for the population under study. Coined items must pass through the rigorous stages of standardization, as a result of which only valid and reliable items remain to be included in the final run of the test. This naturally leads one to think that items must undergo the process of pilot administration and item analysis.

Listening - Comprehension.

Listening is not hearing. It is different from hearing. It has been defined in different ways by different research workers.

Listening is the perceptual aspect of hearing. The process of listening is the process of recognition and interpretation or comprehending of the spoken language. Listening is the comprehension of oral symbols.

The study of the definitions leads one to say that "listening means the understanding or the comprehension of the spoken language."

1.07 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The objectives of the present study are given below:

1. To construct and standardize the listening comprehension test in Gujarati for the pupils of V, VI and VII standards.

2. To examine the listening comprehension ability among the boys and girls.
3. To examine the listening comprehension ability among the pupils of high I.Q. and low I.Q.

4. To examine the listening comprehension ability among the pupil of socio economic conditions.

5. To examine the listening ability among the children studying in private and Municipal Corporation primary schools.

6. To examine the L.C. ability among the pupils coming from the big and small families.

1.08 HYPOTHESIS:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scope obtained on listening comprehension test by boys and girls of the population under study.

2. There is no significant difference in the mean score in the listening comprehension test given to pupils of high I.Q. and low I.Q.

3. There is no significant difference in the mean score in the listening comprehension test given to the pupils coming from economically higher strata and lower strata.

4. There is no significant difference in the mean score in the listening comprehension test given to pupils coming from higher social strata and lower strata.

5. There is no significant difference in the mean score obtained on listening comprehension test by the pupil coming from big and small families.

6. There is no significant difference in the mean score obtained on listening comprehension test by the pupils learning in privately managed and Municipal Corporation managed school.

1.09 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

To conduct the research on total population is difficult, if not impossible So the investigator has standardize listening
comprehensive test on about 2500 pupils, selected by stratified random sampling from the population of Ahmedabad city. Norms were found out on 1700 pupils of Ahmedabad city.

The study is conducted in primary schools of Ahmedabad City. The implementation of the listening comprehension programme was carried out with the help of language teachers of the primary schools of Ahmedabad City. For the purpose of listening the tape-recorder and cassettes were used, so the listening period and the noise and the rhythm remain uniform in all the schools under study.

1.10 THE SCHEME OF THE REPORT PHASES:

The report of the present work is covered under ten chapters. The First chapter deals with the introduction regarding the study - it covers the general concept of learning and learning process. With the need and scope of the study, it gives the definite statement of the problem, 'defines' the important terms of the problem which are used in the present study. Objectives and hypothesis are also given with the limitations of the present study.

Chapter second deals with the theoretical perceptsives that give the theory of the terms which are essential for the study.

Chapter third deals with the review study of the researches done in the past in the field of the study-problem. Chapter 4th deals with the planning and procedure of the study. Test design is also discussed here.

Chapter 5th gives the report of the experimental try out of the test. (L.C. Test) Chapter 6 deals with the establishment of norms. Chapter 7 deals with the other related studies as per the objectives of the study. Chapters 8 and 9 deal with methods and procedures of test reliability and validity respectively. Chapter 10 gives the observation, conclusion and suggestions. In all this report includes ten chapters, plus appendix and bibliography.