Chapter VI

Interpretation and Analysis

6.0 Introduction

The Survey yields both qualitative and quantitative results, and they can be interpreted separately. The qualitative results are yielded by (1) the students' questionnaires, (2) the observer's remarks, and (3) the researcher's diary. The quantitative results are yielded by the two tests: (1) the Pre-test and (2) the Post-test.

6.1 The Qualitative Results

6.1.1 The Students Questionnaires

These questionnaires (see 5.7.7) give the individuals' opinions on the oblique method of teaching poetry. Fifty filled in questionnaires were got back from I B.Sc. Physics students and another fifty from the I B.A Economics students.

**Question 1(a):** To the question “Did this method help you to know what you can do well?”, all the 100 have answered 'yes' in one form or another though many have not attached any reason. At least 25 have given reasons: “My talent in drawing pictures has been recognized by me”; “I have begun to feel that I can act even without much of the make up”, “It is for the first time I put myself in the place of a parent and write to my son”, “My imagination is so extended as to create a dialogue that would have been spoken by two persons in the next world”, and some other reasons.

**Question 1(b):** To the question “Did this teaching help you to know what you need to improve?”, a majority of them have written ‘yes’, ‘fully’ and some ‘to a great extent’. No one has written ‘No’. Some of the reasons given were: “I came to know
that I must improve my ability to discuss well”, “I understand that I must improve my spoken English”, and others.

**Question 1(c):** To the question “Did this method help you to assess your progress?”, all the Science students have written ‘yes’. 10 students from the Arts group have written ‘No’ without attaching any reason. On the whole those who have given reasons have written a vague answer “Yes I feel I am progressing”. Yet none has marked “Not sure”

**Question 2(a):** "Did this method help you to recognize your own achievements?” – To this almost all have said ‘yes’. Some have given reasons: “I had a feeling of achievement when I successfully drew the picture of the pantaloon with all the details found in the text”, “I could successfully put myself in the place of dead Bess and relate to the dead highwayman the manner in which Bess was teased by the soldiers”. “It was the first time I served successfully as the leader of a group”. Only two in each group have said “Not sure”.

**Question 2(b):** “Did the teaching through this method help your achievement to be recognized by others?” – To this all have answered ‘Yes’ in one form or another. Some of them have said, “I felt elated when others clapped for me and for my group”; “I could establish my leadership qualities by taking active part in the discussion”.

**Question 3:** “Did this method give you a clear indication of what is expected of you”. The majority have said ‘yes’; some have written “Yes, only to some extent”. The reason for this could be due to the bewilderment caused by this new type
of classroom arrangement and activity they were not accustomed to. 5 have said ‘No’ and about a dozen are not sure.

**Question 4:** “Did this method help you to have short-term achievement-targets?” The answers are invariably ‘Yes’ in one form or another. Some of the Arts students had approached the researcher to know the meaning of this question. The answer found in their sheets are, “Yes, I even now remember some important lines and I can use them in the exam”. The Science students say that ‘they are able to talk in English well’, ‘they know how to discuss and debate’. No one has said ‘No’, but 11 are not sure.

**Question 5(a):** “Did this method make you feel valued and respected by your own classmates?” The bland answer is ‘Yes’. Some have written how they were befriended by many after the classes. Only a few have answered in the negative. 2 are not sure of the answer.

**Question 5(b):** “Did this method make you feel valued and respected by your teacher?” Here again the answer is the bland ‘Yes’; At least one has written “this has changed my teacher’s opinion on me”, others have written expressing the same idea in different ways.

**Question 5(c):** “Did this method make you feel valued and respected by the members of your family, and others in the society?” About half of them have said ‘Yes’ and reasoned that they could speak English confidently with the other educated members of the family. 25% have said ‘No’ and the other 25% are not sure.
Question 6: "Did this method help you to pick up effective learning?" "Yes" is the majority answer. Some have given reasons: "Learning is interesting and therefore is effective." "I learnt a lot in the peer group", "there is no need for mugging up," "variety adds flavour to the act of learning", etc. No one has said 'No'.

Question 7(a): "Did it help you to evaluate your own learning?" Most of them have said "Yes". The reasons given are: 'I find learning happening steadily and in a playful atmosphere'; "my improved ability to write the summary of the poem helps me to evaluate my learning". Some have said 'No' also, and a few of them are not sure.

Question 7(b): "Did this method enable you to develop your own strategies to improve your learning?". Many have said 'yes' and have given reasons; for example one has written that he has begun to draw rough sketches near some poem lines to understand their meanings at a glance. However some have written that they are not sure. No one has said "No".

6.1.1.1 An Analysis of the Answers in the Questionnaires

The above can be put in the form of a table (Table 1). The table shows that the teaching/learning through the oblique method has helped the learners in one way or another. Questions 1(c), 3, 5(c) and 7(a) have fetched negative responses and these could be the probable reasons:
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Responses: Students' Questionnaires

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<td>4) to recognize your own achievements?</td>
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<td>5) to have your achievements to be recognized by others?</td>
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<td>6) to have clear indication of what is expected of you?</td>
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<td>7) to have short term achievement-gets?</td>
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6.11.2 Probable Reasons for Negative Responses

a) Some learners think that they cannot assess their own progress (Question 1c).

b) Some learners think that what is expected of them is to memorise answers and pass the examination, and this method does not deal with that directly (Question 3).

c) These learners do not see the direct relationship between learning well and being respected by others outside the classroom (Question 5c).

d) As said before, self evaluation is thought to be beyond the capacity of learners. (Question 7a).

6.1.1.3 Probable Reasons for Uncertainty in Responses

Some are not sure of the answers to questions 2a, 3, 4, 5a, 5b, 5c, 7a and 7b. This is probably either because the questions were difficult for them or they were not able to judge and give an answer immediately.

6.1.1.4 Summary

On the whole, this method of learning/teaching has been found effective and useful, judged by the remarks in the questionnaires.
6.1.2 The Observer's Remarks

The parameters used by the observer are given in Appendix 7. This set of parameters is the one prescribed to be followed by the expert, while he assesses a teacher-trainee's class, in the Teacher Training Colleges of the University of Madras. A specimen observation sheet is given in Appendix 17.

(1) The teacher: First of all, the observation focuses on the teacher's posture, voice, manner, pronunciation and language as a whole, "steady and lively", "audible and clear", "appealing to the learners", "friendly and enticing", "very good command over various classroom situations" - These are some of the comments given by the observer, in his observations of the poetry classes.

(2a) The teaching: 'Content', 'proportion', 'relevancy' and 'arrangement', are the aspects to be observed. The observer has given his remark following this order. On the whole his general observation is "every minute was very well utilized by the teacher".

(2b) Motivation: The observer seems to have been well pleased with the motivation. He remarks: "Life situation were brought out to motivate the students very successfully".

(2c) Presentation, development, explanation and demonstration: The observer's remarks are "The presentation and the others were well designed and well executed"; "the learners were fully involved" and "they were filled with enthusiasm which sustained till the end", "explanation and demonstration mostly emerged during the group activities sponsored by the teacher".
(2d) **Questioning:** (i) The questioning by the teacher involved preparatory questions, teaching questions and testing questions. The observer remarks that “a variety of questions – wh-questions and yes/no type of questions were asked” and also that “the questions were so well formed that the learners were never tired of answering them”. (ii) The questioning by the learners was also encouraged and insisted on. “Apart from questions asked for clarification of doubts, there were also questions suggesting a different interpretation of a line or a phrase, and the teacher welcomed those questions”, says the observer.

(2e) **Drill and application of knowledge:** The observer remarks, “the learners were well prepared for the activities to follow; for example, the knowledge they gained in reading ‘All the World’s a Stage’ was fully applied in depicting the stages in pictures; the ideas found in ‘If’ are carefully embedded in the letters the learners wrote”.

(3) **Aids and Appliances:** The observer remarks that the blackboard was sparingly used; it was more used by the learners than by the researcher while teaching ‘La Belle Dame Sans Merci”; study-materials given to learners had been neatly made; he learners never failed to bring their poetry texts to all classes.

(4) **Attention to Individual needs, and differences of learners:** The researcher with the help of the observer could pay individual attention to each student, remarks the observer.

(5) **Class management and discipline.** There are no adverse comments made by the observer on (i) assembling and dismissal (ii) organization of class routine and
(iii) **general attitude** of the students. The class was under control and disciplined all the time, the observer says, and the learners were very attentive and disciplined during the group activities.

(6) **Effectiveness of the lesson:** This is judged by (i) Interest, attention, comprehension and response (ii) Learner's activity and (iii) Testing or following up and assignment. The observer remarks that “interest was sustained throughout the class; the learners' oral responses and involvement showed that their level of understanding was very high; the activities were made so attractive that no learner shunned them”, “performances of the individuals were evaluated in the groups, assignments were written and corrected in peer groups under the supervision of the teacher”.

(7) **Special features if any:** Asked to comment on the special features of this method, the observer remarks “all the four skills, reading, writing, listening and speaking, were properly taken care of; learners enjoyed the atmosphere which was different from the regular classroom atmosphere; and the real objectives of teaching/learning a poem were achieved by all means and at all times”.

These observations and the suggestions (for example, the researcher may try to adopt a still higher level of histrionic aspects while presenting the poem) were helpful to the researcher in giving a better approach to his method and also in ascertaining the quality of the teaching.
6.1.3 The Researcher's Diary:

The diary maintained by the researcher during the period in which the oblique method was adopted, gives clear indication to the problems faced by the researcher and the learners, and to the solutions adopted.

(1) About the poems chosen: Of all the six poems chosen from the prescribed text, "If" by Kipling was initially found to be difficult to tackle because of the obscurity of the language. However this was overcome in due course, once the learners grasped the central idea of the poem.

The picture depiction of the stages in "All the World's a Stage" gave difficulties when the learners tried to give shape to abstract ideas, yet these were overcome by adopting the method of adding insets and captions.

The poem 'Say Not the Struggle Nought Availeth' involving Cloze dictagloss was very easily learnt.

The other three poems were learnt, more or less in a playful way. The activity indulged in at the end of Frost's poem were really interesting to the learners. The pantomiming in 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci' and the dialogue of characters after their death, while teaching 'The Highwayman' were really challenging to the learner.

(2) The Classroom: At the beginning, when the first poem was taught, the class was a bit noisy as they were quite new to this type of classroom atmosphere, in which the learners were asked to sit in groups, and not facing the teacher. But from the next poem onwards, they took it in good spirit, and willingly did their work in groups without making much noise.
The follow up: The activity given at the end of each poem was properly carried out; the writing works were promptly done as they were likely to be repeated in their examinations.

The tests: The Pre-test and the Post-test were taken seriously by the learners. As such, the listening comprehension was really a challenge to both the Science and the Arts students.

The large classes: The researcher's fear about dealing with large classes was removed step by step in course of time. The class began to settle down to serious work as soon as the groups were formed.

The discussions: It was noticed by the researcher that though some inhibition was noticed among a few students at the beginning, all began to take active parts in the discussion. The group leaders encouraged the members of their groups to debate and to discuss.

6.2 Interpretation of the Quantitative Results

The results of the Pre-test and the Post-test are compared and analysed. The Pre-test marks of the Science students serially arranged, and their respective Post-test marks are put side by side. (Table 2a). The marks of the Arts students are arranged in a similar way (Table 2b).
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2(b) Marks secured in the Pre-Test and the Post-Test
I B.A. (Economics)

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6.2.1 The Frequency Tables

They are given in Table-3(a) and Table-3(b) respectively for the Science and other Arts students.

Table-3(a)

Frequency Table: (Pre-test and Post-test), A.M., S.D., and 2-T Probability (P)

I B.Sc. (Physics)

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<th>Respons To Advt.</th>
<th>Dialogue Writing</th>
<th>Listening Comprehension</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Total</th>
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S.D. 2.2 2.1 1.6 1.3 2.0 1.3 1.6 1.5 2.5 3.2

P (2-Tai Prob) .000 .000 .000 .000 .040

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A.M. 15.7 23.3
S.D. 8.5 7.7

P (2-Tai Prob) .000
Frequency Table: (Pre-test and Post-test), A.M., S.D., and 2-T Probability (P)

I B.A. (Economics)

<table>
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<th>Class</th>
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<th>Reply To Letter</th>
<th>Response To Advt.</th>
<th>Dialogue Writing</th>
<th>Listening Comprehension</th>
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A.M | 2.6 | 2.7 | 3.1 | 4.1 | 4.4 | 3.5 | 4.4 | 2.7 | 2.9 |
S.D | 1.9 | 2.0 | 1.3 | 1.4 | 1.3 | 1.7 | 1.6 | 2.4 | 2.6 |
P (2-Tail Prob) | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .400 |

The Arithmetic Mean, the Standard Deviation and the P value (2-Tail Probability) are also calculated. They are also given in Table 3a and Table 3b respectively for the Science and the Arts students.

5.2.2 Mean and S.D

Table 3a also gives the Mean and S.D of the I B.Sc. students' performances in the various aspects of the Pre-test and the Post-test. Similarly Table 3b also gives the
Mean and S.D of the I B.A students’ performances in the various aspects of the Pre-test and the Post-test.

6.2.3 P value (2-Tail Prob.)

Table 3a also carries the P value which is the 2-Tail Prob, of the performances of the Science students. Similarly Table 3b carries the 2-Tail Prob of the Economics students. The significance of the progress is judged by following this principle

\[
\begin{align*}
P &< 0.05 \quad \text{-- Progress in significant.} \\
P &< 0.01 \quad \text{-- Progress is more significant.} \\
P &< 0.001 \quad \text{-- Progress is highly significant.}
\end{align*}
\]

6.2.4 Graphs

Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 give respectively the comparison of the mean performances in each aspect of the Pre-test and the Post-test results of Science students and Arts students placed side by side.

6.3 Interpretation of the results:

The measures of Central Tendency (Mean) and Dispersion (Standard Deviation), when compared, give us indications to the level of progress obtained.

6.3.1 Appreciation

Science students: There is an increase of 2.5736 in average and it is a sign of progress. The deviation from the centre is reduced showing that some more have moved towards the expected performance from low performance. The P value is .000 which is much less than 0.001 indicating that the progress is highly significant.
Fig. 1  Comparison of Mean : Appreciation

Category of Students & Type of Tests

1 B.S.C. (Physics)  1 B.A. (Economics)

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<th>Post-test</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
Fig- 2  Comparison of Mean: Reply to Letter
Fig. 3: Comparison of Mean: Response to Advertisement

Category of Students & Type of Tests

1 B.A. (Economics) 2 B.Sc. (Physics)

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<th>Post-test</th>
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</table>
FIG. 4 Comparison of Mean: Dialogue Writing

Category of Students & Type of Tests

1 B.A. (Economics)
1 B.Sc. (Physics)

Mean Marks

Pre-test
Post-test

3.4712
4.4231

3.4623
4.3811
Fig- 5 Comparsion of Mean: Listening Comprehension
FIG. 6 Comparison of Mean: Total Category of Students & Type of Tests

1. B.A. (Economics)  2. B.Sc. (Physics)

Pre-test  Post-test

Mean Marks

21.1 154
15.7 66
23.2 83
15.7 36
**Arts students:** There is an increase of 2.1546 in average and the deviation from the centre is slightly increased, showing that some have moved away from the expected performance, probably beyond the expected performance. Yet since P value is less than 0.001, we can say that their progress is highly significant.

6.3.2 Reply to Letter

**Science students:** There is an increase of 1.368 in Mean. Deviation is decreased, showing that more have moved towards expected performance. P < 0.001. Progress is highly significant.

**Arts students:** Increase in Mean: 1.3077. Deviation is increased. Some have moved away from the expected performance, probably beyond it. P < 0.001; and therefore progress is very significant.

6.3.3 Response to Advertisement

**Science students:** Increase in Mean is 1.5321. S.D is reduced and therefore there is a significant move towards the expected performance. P < 0.001, therefore the progress is highly significant.

**Arts students:** Increase in Mean is 1.2403, which indicates progress. S D is slightly reduced and there is a move towards the expected performance. P < 0.001, therefore progress is highly significant.

6.3.4 Dialogue Writing

**Science students:** The increase in Mean in 0.9189 showing progress. Deviation from the centre is increased slightly showing that some have moved away
from the expected performance, and definitely beyond it. \( P < 0.001 \) and therefore progress is highly significant.

**Arts students:** The increase in Mean is 0.9519, this is a sign of progress Deviation is decreased showing that many more have moved towards the expected performance. \( P < 0.001 \) and therefore progress is highly significant.

### 6.3.5 Listening Comprehension

**Science students:** The increase in Mean is 0.8302, signifying progress Deviation from the centre is decreased showing that more have moved towards the expected performance from low performances \( P < 0.05 \) showing that progress is just significant.

**Arts students:** The increase in Mean is 0.2788 signifying a slight progress Deviation is increased showing that some have moved beyond expected performance \( P \) is not less than 0.05 showing that the progress is not very significant.

It is evident that in this aspect of the test, namely ‘Listening Comprehension’, the Science students have shown only a slight progress and the Arts students’ progress is insignificant. A discussion by the researcher with the learners reveals that this activity is new to them as they are accustomed to listening and taking down notes at once and not to retain in memory and bring forth the relevant point using reasoning. The difficulty they faced in this regard in the Pre-test, is not completely overcome in the Post-test also, though there has been an attempt (as the results show) to overcome it.
This throws light on the fact that in the present scene of teaching/learning, the learners are just passive listeners and are not given training in comprehending what they listen to. It is hoped that the oblique method, in due course, will rectify this situation.

6.3.6 A Comparison of Totals

**Science students:** There is a very high increase when the average of the totals of the Pre-test and that of the Post-test are compared. The increase in average in 7.5474 showing a very highly significant progress. The Standard Deviation is reduced from 8.5 to 7.7 showing that more learners have moved towards the expected performance. The P value is 0.000 which is much less than 0.001 showing that the progress is highly significant.

**Arts students:** The increase in Mean is 5.5385 which signifies significant progress. Deviation from the centre is reduced from 8.6 to 6.9 showing that more learners have moved towards the expected performance. P<0.001 showing that the progress is highly significant.

6.3.7 Inference

All these indicate that there is progress not only in the overall performances but also in each aspect of the tests. There is progress not only in the Science section but also in the Arts section, though the levels of progress in these sections vary.
6.4 **Conclusion**

This chapter began by making a distinction between qualitative results and quantitative results, and they were analysed separately in the subsequent sections. The students' questionnaires, the observer's remarks and the researcher's diary enable us to look into the minds of the learners, the observer and the researcher-teacher, each functioning in a specific context. All these point to the use and practicability of the oblique method. The analysis of the quantitative results enables us to compare not only the performances of the Science students and the Arts students separately, but also to compare the performance of the two sections.

Chapter VII gives the summary of the present study.