CHAPTER FOUR
Testing and Evaluation
4.0 PRELIMINARIES

If teaching and learning are to go on efficiently, the achievement of students needs to be constantly measured. That is to say, a good deal of time and attention should be devoted to the assessment of the progress made by the students. It is in this connection that evaluation in any scheme of teaching becomes important.

Evaluation is a continuous process, which is an integral part of teaching. To test the efficiency of teaching, to judge the progress of students and to discover their achievement some sort of measuring tools are required. These tools are tests or examinations. Tests are essential to grade and rank pupils and test may be defined as an activity whose purpose is to convey to the tester how well the testee knows or can do something. They are mostly used for assessment. The test gives a score, which is assumed to define the level of knowledge of the testee. These tools enable the teacher to find out whether the students have learned a particular item. They help the teacher to assess the success of his teaching. Tests cultivate the healthy spirit of competition among the students. By holding tests, teachers can find out whether the objectives of the teaching skill are being realized or not.
The word 'test' covers an immense range of evaluation procedures, from a quick quiz to a qualifying examination. It is very often a teacher devised activity carried out in the classroom and used by the teacher for assessing the day to day progress of his students. It may be more or less formal or more or less carefully prepared [Masood Ali Khan, 2004:152].

'Examination' is the term favoured when promotion or qualification for a career is in question or when it is a formally set piece, kind of assessment. It usually consists of two hours or three hours papers which students have to work for themselves without any access to the textbooks, notes or dictionaries and without any guidance from teacher. Examinations are conducted by directorates and universities as well as by departments in autonomous colleges.

A good examination has two characteristics. It conforms very closely to the declared objective of the course [which must be valuable and attainable]. It does justice between candidate and candidate. The second characteristic which demands justice and fair play makes objectivity an imperative necessity, though objectivity in paper setting and valuation is not easy to attain fully [Ibid].

An 'examination' aims at realizing a required standard of attainment. A 'test' aims to enquire, in order, to see whether the
material taught is still there in pupils. It lays more emphasis on memorizing.

Weekly, monthly and terminal tests are set, leading to the ‘annual examination’, which is held at the end of the academic session [Nangia, 2005:261].

This chapter, thus, discusses the various types of tests, their features and uses, the purpose and importance of Evaluation. It identifies the core groups and brings out a distinction between the performance of urban and rural students as well as boys and girls, and their family background.

4.1 TYPES OF TESTS, FEATURES AND USES

Once a teacher has a clear idea of what he will teach and how he will teach it, he is concerned with knowing to what extent children learn from his lessons. This chapter will deal with specific procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching English.

Evaluation is not merely a test at the end of an English lesson or unit. Instead, evaluation goes on constantly during lessons and units and is clearly related to the teacher's goal. Besides being a continuous experience, evaluation is cumulative. A cumulative record should be kept for all children.

The recent bend in learning and evaluation, link them to behavioural objectives. According to behaviourist psychology,
learning is defined as a change in the behaviour of an individual that can be described in terms of observable and measurable performance. The changes in behaviour are affected by providing experiences and through teaching.

Tests are essential to grade and rank pupils, however, if evaluation is used merely to indicate areas to which children have been exposed or for classifying and categorizing students, a great value is lost. The same occurs if evaluation is interpreted only as arriving at numerical or alphabetical ratings for report cards. In this way much of the positive use of evaluation as a means of teaching and learning could be destroyed.

Effective instructional planning and evaluation of student’s performance have always stressed upon the attainment of instructional objectives so that they are of great help to the students. According to Muller, an instructional usable objective must state the intended outcome in terms of the terminal behaviour of students. Terminal behaviour here stands for the behaviour of students after the classroom instructions and evaluation can be made if the learning outcomes are carefully specified. By coupling continuous evaluation with immediate application of what has been learned, the teacher can provide for:

i) The stimulation of students who learn rapidly to greater growth towards goals by application of advanced works.
ii) The identification of specific weaknesses and difficulties in functional understanding [concepts, principles, generalizations] and the needed re-teaching of varied activities, skills or problem solving abilities, and

iii) The clarification, modification or complete alteration of the goals as needed for the unit [cited in Pahuja, 1995:253].

Evaluation, teaching and learning are the three corners of the education system. Evaluation is concerned with finding out how far students have learned as a consequence of teaching. There are two kinds of evaluation depending upon whether the comparison of student is made with some absolute performance standard or with other students of a given group. These are known as criterion referenced evaluation and non-referenced evaluation.

CRITERION-REFERENCED EVALUATION

It assesses the student's performance standard or criterion without any mention of the performance levels of the other students of the group. This evaluation method is related to mastery and development tests.
NON-REFERENCED EVALUATION

It assesses the student's performance relative to other students of the group. Students are awarded marks and relative ranks in this method of evaluation.

4.2 PURPOSE OF EVALUATION

Evaluation serves some useful purposes. Some of these are as follows:

i) Assessment of attainment, for purpose of awarding a qualification or for selection and placement.

ii) Prediction of future progress.

iii) Measurement of the value of teaching methods and procedures are essential part of the design of experiments in teaching.

iv) Diagnosis of individual or group difficulties.

v) Measurement of aptitude.

4.3 IMPORTANCE OF EVALUATION

i) It enables the teacher to know whether the students have learnt what has been taught to them.

ii) It enables the teacher to evaluate the acquisition or achievement of students with regard to such skills as listening, speaking, reading and writing.
iii) It enables the teacher to pass a judgment on the worthwhileness of the learning experiences, the technique and methodology used and the design of instructions adopted by him.

iv) It becomes the basis of constant monitoring of the language teaching program as developed and implemented at various stages for the target group of learners.

As far as the teaching of English is concerned evaluation means:

i) Finding out the usefulness of teaching English procedures for development of skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing.

ii) Ascertaining the extent of specific acquisition with regard to the four linguistic skills.

iii) Judging the appropriateness of learning experiences provided through a teaching of English program.

iv) Locating the areas of strength and weakness in pupil's learning with reference to learning objectives.

v) Improving the rate and level of English acquisition through constant monitoring of the English teaching program.

4.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD TEST IN ENGLISH

Following are the characteristics of a good test in English:

i) It conforms very closely to the declared objectives of the course.
ii) It does justice between candidate and candidate.

iii) Good test lists only what has been taught.

iv) The tests and examinations should be carefully designed and the examiner should be clear in his mind what skill or particular item in question aims at testing. One item should test only one skill.

v) The question paper should neither be so long that the pupil cannot complete it in prescribed time nor should it be too short that the examinees are able to do it much earlier than the scheduled time.

vi) The language of questions should be definite. In case of essay type questions approximate length of the answers should also be prescribed.

vii) A good test of English must cover as many areas of the subject matter as possible. Due weightage be given to testing of the knowledge of textbook, grammar, vocabulary, and composition.

viii) The test should neither be too difficult nor too easy.

ix) In a good test in English due credit should be given to the work done by the students in the class.

x) The answers should be fairly easy to score.
xi) It should be a judicious combination of:

a. Objective type questions.

b. Short answer questions.

c. Essay type questions. The approximate weightage suggested is

   Essay type       50%
   Objective type   25%
   Short answer type 25%.

4.5 TYPES OF TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS IN ENGLISH

There are two types of tests and examinations in English:

1. Traditional or Essay Type

   In this type of test all the questions set in examination are of essay type. These days such tests have been highly criticized. According to Benjamin, "the traditional essay type of examination has been found rather unsatisfactory and its limitations are well known. Scientific investigations have proved that these examinations are frustrating and extremely unreliable for the evaluation of pupils' achievement and abilities" [cited in Pahuja, 1995:256].

   For improving this system of examination many a suggestions have been given. Some of these are as follows:
i) Examination in English should be a judicious combination of objective tests, short answer questions and essay type questions.

ii) Due weightage be given to all types of questions.

2. New Type

In this type of examination the questions set are of objective type, short answer type and essay type. New type tests and examinations are of two types:


[a] Oral

It is used to test [i] reading, [ii] comprehension, [iii] expression. Some of the various devices used to test these are as follows:

(i) Reading: The teacher asks students to read a passage one by one. He himself notes their pronunciation, stress, speed and intonation.

(ii) Comprehension:

i) Auditory Comprehension: The teacher reads a passage and asks questions on that.

ii) Reading Comprehension: The teacher asks students to read [silently or loudly] a passage of prose and then asks some questions on that passage.
iii) *Picture Comprehension*: The teacher shows a picture to the students and then asks some questions based on the picture.

iv) *Story Comprehension*: The teacher relates a story before students and then asks some questions on that story.

(iii) **Expression**: Three levels of expression in speech as pointed out by Agard and Dunket are:

a) Ability to report a single, simple act or situation in precise words.

b) Ability to express a sequence of ideas fluently, and

c) Ability to converse [cited in Pahuja, 1995:257].

Expression tests can be taken as follows:

i) The teacher performs some actions, he asks students to describe them.

ii) The teacher shows a picture and asks students to describe it.

iii) The teacher asks some general questions.

iv) The teacher gives a topic and asks students to speak a few sentences on that.

These tests enable the teacher to test the students pronunciation as well as comprehension. Yet such a test is unsatisfactory because it is time consuming and because too
many different aspects-sound, Stress, rhythm, intonation, fluency as well as comprehension are tested simultaneously. This type of test can be streamlined if one aspect at a time is judged on the basis of multiple-choice questions given in writing along with passage to the students. This will also affect a kind of standardization and bring in a measure of objectivity. The non-objectivity of oral examinations may also be reduced by recording the students’ answers for replay and assessment by the teacher later.

b) Written Tests and Examinations

Written tests may aim at the assessment of not only graphic skills but also to some extent audio-lingual skills. Objective written tests have the advantage of pinpointing problems of learning. Dictation for example may test both graphic and audio-lingual skills. In early stages of learning continuous writing can be tested objectively by assessing certain factors in isolation. Essay writing should not be tried in the early stages. It is not an appropriate test at all levels. Essay writing should, however, be tested at a higher stage.
4.6 OBJECTIVE TYPE TESTS IN ENGLISH

Objective type tests are of the following types:

i) Recall Item

As the term implies, recall questions ask the student to bring back to mind information that the student was exposed to in the past. Psychologists have indicated that the pupil usually associate items to be recalled with other items and information and rarely, if ever, completely isolate them. The ways in which individuals associate isolated items are still much of a mystery. Even tests of isolation such as the inkblot design used in Rorschach test, evoke widely divergent responses because of unique backgrounds and associations of individuals. Recall with children thus becomes a problem of framing questions in such a way as to stimulate the remembrance of the situation in which the intended information occurred. One of the ways in which this can be accomplished on recall tests is formulation of a question so that only one word or few words are needed to answer the query.

ii) Completion Test

Another way of recall of information in an English content study is by supplying statements with blanks to be filled in.
iii) True or False Tests

These probably are the most commonly recognition tests in use today. In these items the students are asked to mark whether a statement is true or false. The pupil is to write 'T' for a true statement and 'F' for a false statement.

Such tests encourage guessing and it greatly reduces the validity and reliability of the tests, because it is very difficult to frame questions that are neither too obvious nor too ambiguous. This type of examination should be used sparingly. Whenever possible other types of recognition tests such as multiple-choice tests should be given.

iv) Multiple Choice Tests

In this type of tests several alternatives are presented to the pupil from whom he must select the one that makes the statement most correct. Such test items can reduce the subjectivity in making and inter-examiner variability in marking. These tests are the most popular these days and are most useful because in this way guessing is minimized and intelligent thinking is encouraged. Generally for every question three or four alternatives called distracters are given and these should be such that some pupils are led to consider them as correct answers.
Reasoning power can play a big role in answering this type of questions and so-called educated guesses usually are formulated from vague relationships that are seen or sensed. Very often the person cannot explain his reason for selection of correct choices in this type of questions, he just knows. Because there are so many aspects of learning by teaching that are still mysterious to us, teacher should not stand in the way of children's learning. Intuition plays an important part in learning as well as in scientific way of working.

GUIDELINES FOR CONSTRUCTING MULTIPLE CHOICE TEST ITEMS

While constructing multiple-choice test items the following guidelines be followed:

i) A test-item should have a single concept to be tested.

ii) A test-item should be such that it can be used to discriminate a group of students as low, medium and high achievers.

iii) The statement of test items should be very clear and unambiguous.

iv) Be sure that of the plausible answers only one answer is correct.
PARTS OF MULTIPLE CHOICE ITEMS

There are generally two parts of a multiple choice test item viz. stem and plausible answers. The stem of the test-item contains the statement of question or problem. There are some important styles of writing the stem of a multiple-choice question. These are:

1. Stating the stem in form of a question.
2. Writing the stem as incomplete statement.
3. Writing the stem as problem to be solved.

The plausible answers are the options available to the student from which he has to choose the correct answer. These are generally written according to the following guidelines:

1. Write the answers in such a way that to a student who has not read the topic thoroughly each answer seems to be plausible.
2. Include common mis-conceptions, which an average student holds about a particular learning segment.
3. Options which are true on their own but defy the statement of the problems given in the stem of the test-item.
4. Do not provide clues to the right answers.

v) Matching Tests

It is a type of recognition test. In this type of test-item, two mismatched columns are given. The question and answers given in two columns are required to be matched or compared by the students. By giving the pupils two columns and asking him to match the related items, the teacher can easily and quickly see if his students recognise the relationships that exist between the items. There is less of stress upon sheer memory or recall of fragmentary information because the materials are presented to the student for his correlation.

Because matching tests are generally focused mainly to measuring subject matter it is not always indicative of the pupils' ability to perceive the deeper meaning or real understanding of the relationship between the items used on the tests. Stress upon mere verbalization and memory of isolated bits of information should be avoided. Teachers will find it necessary to use all types of testing instruments so as to get a broad picture of the student's achievement.
SHORT ANSWER TESTS

With all the drawbacks of the short answer tests, there is wide use of these tests and such tests are becoming quite popular. Test items [Questions] in this type expect brief, to the point, limited, short answers. Generally the length of the answer is specified. They offer the teacher an ease of construction and scoring not possible with other type of tests. The tests offer a great degree of objectivity than other evaluating techniques. These results of tests can be helpful to the teacher for evaluating and reporting children's progress to their parents. If correctly made, interpreted and administered, these tests can offer many advantages to the teacher, however they should never be used as a sole testing device. They should only be used in conjunction with other types of oral and written tests as well as teacher's observation.

ADVANTAGES OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

i) They are easy to design,

ii) Scoring is less subjective and easy,

iii) The question paper becomes comprehensive i.e. it covers the entire syllabus.
ESSAY TESTS

The essay-type examinations are in use in India since long and these have been greatly appreciated due to the freedom of response allowed. Like all testing devices essay tests also present many serious disadvantages. At the same time they present many possibilities for getting information. This type of test directs attention to and places emphasis on a larger segment of the subject, or on integrated total unit. It provides a student a chance to create a new approach to a problem, as it requires the student to express his views in writing. He is required to produce something and not merely to guess or recognize the answer.

These tests can measure verbal fluency, skill of expression of thoughts and attitude of examinees towards problem considered in the class, however it lacks most of the qualities of a good measuring test. Obvious advantages and disadvantages of essay type test are:

1. Shows how well the student is able to organize ideas.

   but

   Scoring is very subjective due to lack of set answers

2. Varying degrees of correctness since there is not just a right or wrong answer.

   but

197
Scoring requires excessive time.

3. Tests ability to analyze problems using pertinent information and to arrive at generalization or conclusion but

Scoring is influenced by spelling, handwriting, sentence structure and other extraneous items.

4. Gets to deeper meanings and inter-relationship rather than isolated bits of factual material but

Questions usually are ambiguous or too obvious [Pahuja, 2003:261].

LIMITATIONS OF ESSAY-TYPE TESTS

These tests have low validity, low reliability; and are less comprehensive. Discussing about weakness of this type of tests Ross remarks: “The essay over rates the importance of knowing how to say a thing under rates the importance of having something to say” [Ibid].

These types of tests are not reliable because there is no agreement between teachers about the marks to be assigned and the studies have shown that even some teachers do not agree with themselves. Sandiford, in his book on Education Psychology
refers to a study, "In one department of the University of Toronto, the same subject was set for an essay in different years. The essay which had scored 80 marks in one year, was exactly copied by the student in the other year and scored 39 marks" [Ibid:263].

Ashburn who carried out a study at the university of West Virgina concluded that, "the passing or failing of about 40% depends not on what they know or do not know, but as who reads the papers and that the passing or failing of about 10% depends on when the papers are read" [Ibid].

Another general complaint of students about essay tests is that the questions did not suit them. Certainly nine or ten questions set in this type of question paper cannot cover the whole syllabus. Hence this type of test is less comprehensive.

In an effort to offset the disadvantages the teacher must carefully consider the construction of each essay question. The teacher should word the question in such a fashion that the pupil will be limited to a certain degree to the concepts being tested.

To minimize the shortcomings of excessive subjectivity teacher should prepare a scoring guide before hand. Each question be scored separately and a list of important ideas that are expected should be made.
4.7 MANNER OF EVALUATION

At the outset the results in the Reading Comprehension Test and Achievement Test are compared in terms of means standard deviations and correlation coefficients. The objective is to get an idea about their composition, that is, whether they are a heterogeneous or a homogenous group as well as there is a significant relationship between these two tests. Subsequently the performance of the whole sample in Reading Comprehension Test is analysed in terms of six heads of analysis to gain a deeper insight into their reading behaviour.

The picture of the reading behaviour of the whole sample thus obtained is characterized by an element of broad generality whereas the specific objective is to shed some light on the contrastive reading strategies used by the good and poor readers.

Keeping this in view, the whole sample is divided into two groups of 39 good and 41 poor readers on the basis of their performance in the Reading Comprehension Test. Then an attempt is made to test whether the teachers are adopting appropriate method of teaching in the classroom or not. Also an attempt is made to know that how many teachers, have completed
their in-service trainings. It was found that since the teachers are not well trained their teaching method to teach English as first, second or third language at Higher Secondary level is not appropriate. On the basis of feedback from teachers and students and statistical analysis, hypothesis 1 is validated.

Feedback of students was collected though Reading Comprehension Test and Achievement Test, both these tests were carried out under the six heads, in which as the serial number of question go on the level of difficulty increases. The study, on the basis of whole sample, showed surprising results. Some of the students who cannot differentiate between types of questions made satisfactory score.

This leads to a conclusion that the students make an attempt to just memorize the things for examination purpose but do not get deeper knowledge which is desired. On the basis of linguistic questions and statistical analysis hypothesis 2 is validated.

In order to assess the effectiveness of teaching of teachers two teachers from each college were selected and a feedback questionnaire was filled up by them to find out the skills of
teaching of teachers in the classroom, their interactions with students and the steps taken to improve the reading habits of weak students. Unfortunately the findings elicit the fact that most of the teachers are not trained, are ill equipped and their teaching becomes ineffective. Thus on the basis of the answer and statistical analyses, hypotheses 1 is validated. For validating hypothesis 3 a comparative study was undertaken by making two groups of urban and rural each of 40 students. Each group is tested for its performance on the basis of six heads then attempt is made to evaluate whether the background a student comes from is responsible for his performance or not. The study again enlightens the fact that the students from urban area have more knowledge acquiring capacity than the rural area.

DATA ANALYSIS

A profile of the whole sample as revealed through the test:

An attempt is made to obtain a profile of the whole sample, first holistically by considering the results of the two tests and then by analyzing their scores in Reading Comprehension Test and Achievement Test separately in greater detail.
HOLISTIC ANALYSIS

The chief concern of the chapter is to present analysis of the data and the relevant statistical procedures with a view to examine the validity of hypotheses. For that, the first task was to compare the performance of the whole sample in Reading Comprehension Test and Achievement Test so as to enable the researcher to determine whether the test population constitutes a homogeneous group.

As can be seen from the summary table and figure shown below, the average scores [means] for the whole sample in the Reading Comprehension Test and Achievement Test were 42.01 and 27.59 with standard deviations [SDS] 16.59 and 14.87 respectively.

Table 1: PERFORMANCE OF WHOLE SAMPLE IN READING COMPREHENSION TEST AND ACHIEVEMENT TEST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students (80 total)</th>
<th>Reading Comprehension Test</th>
<th>Achievement Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Σ</td>
<td>3361</td>
<td>1130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>42.01</td>
<td>27.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>16.59</td>
<td>14.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure: 1 Mean and SD's of Whole Sample in Reading Comprehension Test and Achievement Test

- Mean
- SD

- Reading Comprehension Test
- Achievement Test
Having looked at the composition of the group from the mean and standard deviation, it is pertinent to analyse whether the results of the two tests have a strong internal relationship among themselves. This may help in getting an accurate idea about the student's level of reading proficiency. For this purpose the need is to find the correlation coefficient among the tests concerned.

**Correlation between Reading Comprehension Test and Achievement Test:**

\[
\begin{align*}
r &= \frac{N(\Sigma XY) - (\Sigma X)(\Sigma Y)}{\sqrt{N\Sigma X^2 - (\Sigma X)^2} \sqrt{N\Sigma Y^2 - (\Sigma Y)^2}} \\
r &= \frac{80(103334) - (3361)(1130)}{\sqrt{80(162941) - (3361)^2} \sqrt{80(78363) - (1130)^2}} \\
r &= \frac{8266720 - 3797930}{\sqrt{13035280 - 11296321} \sqrt{6269040 - 1276900}} \\
r &= \frac{4468790}{(1738959) (4992140)} \\
r &= \frac{4468790}{1318.70(2234.31)} \\
r &= \frac{4468790}{4992139.10} \\
r &= 0.54
\end{align*}
\]

Where \( r \) = Pearson Product Moment Coefficient;

\( N \) = Number of paired scores;

\( X \) = Scores on Reading Comprehension Test and Achievement Test

\( Y \) = Scores on Achievement Test

Summary of analysis
PERFORMANCE OF THE WHOLE SAMPLE UNDER THE SIX HEADS

With a view to obtaining a more detailed profile of the whole sample, the results of the Reading Comprehension Test were analyzed in each of the following six heads, namely, factual, interpretation, personal response, grammar, dramatic technique and global understanding. The procedure adopted to test the subjects on these heads has already been explained in the research design and procedures. The student’s marks and percentage in the six heads of analysis of Reading Comprehension Test are reckoned.

Table 2: PERFORMANCE OF WHOLE SAMPLE IN READING COMPREHENSION TEST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heads of Analysis of Reading Comprehension Test</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (Total 80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marks</td>
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<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As column ‘4’ indicates the whole sample could successfully answer 74% of the questions related to personal response, which is the highest. The lowest of 24% was observed, as column ‘7’
indicates in relation to the student's Global understanding of the text. Followed after this is their ability in personal response. The students showed a remarkable level of proficiency in understanding and attempting question of the types of dramatic technique, which is 58%. Similarly, for factual questions students record 56% of marks. Moreover, their ability in interpretation is noted to be 36%. This is followed by grammar and global understanding questions where in the scores are 32% and 24% respectively.

The scores in grammar [32%] and [24%] in global understanding indicate that they are yet to grasp the meaning of the text and develop faculties to express it in their own words that is to say they do not achieve the same degree of proficiency as far as higher units like interpretation and dramatic technique are concerned.
Figure: 2-Performance of Whole Sample in Six Heads

- Factual
- Interpretation
- Personal Response
- Grammar
- Dramatic Technique
- Global Understanding
Thus, it can be concluded that the students in the study seemed to pay more attention to the meaning of the word and sentence level.

DISCRIMINATING GOOD AND POOR READERS ACCORDING TO READING COMPREHENSION TEST

For the purpose of identifying the good and poor readers from among the whole sample on the Reading Comprehension Test was considered. As already explained in the research design and procedures the students who obtained 50 marks and more were considered as good readers and those who obtained less than 50 marks were considered as poor readers. Accordingly 30 students were identified as good readers and the remaining 50 as poor readers.

COMPARISON OF 39 GOOD AND 41 POOR READERS ON THE READING COMPREHENSION TEST

Performances of the good and poor readers were compared on the reading test. For this purpose, their answers in the Reading Comprehension Test were analysed in terms of the six heads of analysis, namely, factual interpretation, personal response, grammar, dramatic technique and global understanding.
Their marks and percentage in each of the six heads of analysis of the test are presented in the following table [details in appendices]

Table: 3 PERFORMANCE OF THE GOOD AND POOR READERS IN THE READING TEST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heads of Analysis of Reading Comprehension Test</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor Reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a measurable difference between the good and poor readers in each of the six heads of analysis as a matter of fact.
Figure 3: Comprehension of Performance of Good and Poor Readers in Six Heads

- Factual: Good Reader 80, Poor Reader 51
- Personal Response: Good Reader 44, Poor Reader 12
- Dramatic Technique: Good Reader 62, Poor Reader 29

- Good Reader
- Poor Reader
4.8 IDENTIFICATION OF CORE GROUPS

In order to obviate this problem of ambivalence, it was decided to define more rigorously the good and poor readers so that the analysis of their strategy may be more reliable and accurate. For this purpose an attempt was made to identify those from among the 39 good readers who performed uniformly well, that is, secured 50% and above in both Reading Comprehension Test and Achievement Test, which would reasonably place them as good readers. Similarly in order to single out those among the 41 poor readers who performed uniformly badly those who have secured below 50% of marks in both the test instruments. It was assumed that using two test instruments for defining good and poor readers would result in neater and more accurate sample of either group. It was found that only 16 qualified themselves as core readers and 21 as core poor readers [hereafter core group].

The remaining 43 students were excluded from the preview of the comparisons as they did not fall into either of the categories and displayed mixed characteristics, defeating the purpose of a neat contrast between the good and poor readers. This is in conformity with the principles postulated by Best and Kahn [1996], who say:
Many studies employ the classification of data into dichotomous, or two fold categories when the categories are established on the basis of test scores, ranking, or some other quantitative measures, it may be advisable to compare those at the top with those at the bottom, omitting from the analysis those near the middle of the distribution. This eliminates those cases near the mid point that tend to obscure the differences that may exist. Through elimination of the middle portion, sharper contrast is achieved [260-1].

It is to be noted that the scores of the achievement tests were considered undependable for the present purpose and were not validated, designed for a different purpose and, as explained above, were found to have a correlation \[ r = 0.54 \] with the Reading Comprehension Test.

**COMPARISON OF THE CORE GROUPS PERFORMANCE ON THE READING TEST**

It is worthwhile now to compare the core good and poor reader performance initially on the six heads of analysis of Reading Comprehension Test with a view to obtaining their comparative profile on this primary test instrument. In the second phase their performance would be subjected to analysis on the Achievement Test to relate these two performances. This matching of the product with the process is expected to lead to better understanding of their reading behaviour.
Marks and percentage of the core groups in the Reading Comprehension Test are presented in the table below.

As column '6' indicates the performance of good reader is the highest, 93.65% related to the reader is Dramatic Technique and that, poor group is 14.29%, which is very close to that of the good readers. This difference of percentage [93.5%] and [14.29%] indicates that the poor group fails to solve successfully the questions of high difficulty level. Next to this, as column '4' indicates the performance of good readers related to personal response questions showed a remarkable ability, since in this head their score is 83.65% nearly half of good readers. Poor readers showed only 42.49% in the same head. On response to interpretation or inference type questions poor group shows very low percentage that is 4.40% as compared to good readers, which is observed 67.79%. In fact, it is a matter of study to investigate, on some skills, the difference between poor and good readers.

Table 4: PERFORMANCE OF THE CORE GROUPS IN THE READING TEST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heads of Analysis of Reading Comprehension Test</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Reader</td>
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<td>Poor Reader</td>
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</table>
Poor readers show the highest performance in factual type of question [42.12%] where as good reader showed [60.53%] less than in dramatic techniques and personal response [93.75%] and [83.65%].

Poor and good readers have both shown the lowest performance in global understanding [3.69% and 30.65%].

4.9 PERFORMANCE OF THE URBAN AND RURAL STUDENTS IN THE READING TEST

In order to figure out the relationship between strategies adopted by students in an urban setting and those in a rural setting in the six heads of analysis of the reading comprehension test is compared.

For this purpose, marks and percentages of urban and rural students in the comprehension test are tabulated and their summary is given I the following table [Details in Appendices 6 and 7].

The urban students uniformly demonstrated a distinctive superiority over those from a rural background at all relevant units of analysis. The pattern that emerges is that all the students,
irrespective of their background showed maximum strength at the level of personal response type of question [85% and 63%] and factual type of questions [52% and 60%]. On the other hand of the scale of dramatic technique [75% and 42%] and interpretation [39% and 32%] both the groups are conspicuously at their lowest. In regard to factual type questions the urban group has an impressive lead over their rural counterparts. Obviously, there is a substantial qualitative and quantitative difference in the output of the urban and the rural students, presumably due to the environmental factors and the quality of their nature. It is essential to mention here that the urban students have access to facilities such as language institutes, computer and well-equipped libraries for updating their level of awareness. In contrast, in rural ambience, not many of the students are lucky enough to have a reasonably comfortable dwelling place or any of the facilities available to their urban counterparts. In most cases, electricity is a luxury denied to many under such distressing and forbidding circumstances, it is not difficult to explain why the rural folks lag behind the city-bred. This has very important overtones for the
replenishment or enrichment of social-academic environments of the students from the rural backgrounds.

The results of the reading comprehension test can be explained in terms of the strategies the students adopted for monitoring their reading. This is so because reading monitoring strategies are a means or a process leading on to the comprehension, which is the end product. The nature and the quality of strategies adopted have their inevitable impact on the quality and quantity of comprehension.

4.10 PERFORMANCE OF BOYS AND GIRLS IN THE READING COMPREHENSION TEST

The significant difference between boys and girls in terms of initialization of reading comprehension strategies necessitated comparing the performance of 40 boys and 40 girls in the reading comprehension test.

<table>
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<th>Heads of Analysis of Reading Comprehension Test</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls Marks</td>
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Comparing the group performances of boys and girls revealed an interesting insight. The girls were observed to be keener and more motivated than the boys to brace themselves to the task and complete it as best as they could. They demonstrated a greater degree of readiness of mind, concentration of attitude, and singleness of purpose in accomplishing the reading task assigned to them as compared to the boys, who were generally observed to be less serious. The higher level of motivation and the part of the girls was reflected in their level of performance, too, in the reading comprehension test.
Figure 4: Comparison of Performance of Boys and Girls Readers in Six Heads

- Boys
- Girls

Bar chart showing performance in different categories:
- Factual: 70% for Boys, 24% for Girls
- Interpretation: 47% for Boys, 26% for Girls
- Personal Response: 61% for Boys, 47% for Girls
- Grammar: 85% for Boys, 23% for Girls
- Dramatic Technique: 70% for Boys, 45% for Girls
- Global Understanding: 44% for Boys, 22% for Girls
It is observed that girls as a group secured an impressive margin over the performance of the boys in all the six heads of the analysis of the reading comprehension test. This is evident from the fact that the girls obtained a higher score of 88% as compared to 63% scored by boys in the personal response type of questions, 68% as against 48% in the dramatic technique type of questions even in the areas such as grammar and factual type questions both the groups maintained a relatively low profile. Girls obtained a higher score of 40% as compared to 24% score by boys in grammar. It is remarkable to note that there is a striking difference between the scores of girls 48% and scores of boys 24% in the interpretation type questions.

The reasoning power of girls manifests itself in the marks scored by them, which is double the marks scored by the boys. In the areas of global understanding where both the groups maintained a relatively low profile, the girls had an edge over the boys [26% and 21%].

4.11 TEACHERS PERFORMANCE

In this study an attempt is made to investigate the style of teaching of Higher Secondary teachers of English language
specially their performance in teaching reading comprehension. Entire sampling consists of two strata namely urban and rural. It was found that most of the teachers were not trained in E.L.T. Consequently; the method of teaching was not appropriate. The response of the teachers to the question about method adopted for teaching varied from teacher to teacher. This leads to the conclusion that there is no uniform similar pattern of teaching or method adopted by the teacher, which defeats the very purpose of their exercise. From the figure and appendix, it can be seen that only 38% of teachers have taken their training in ELT. While remaining 72% of teachers which is remarkably a very high percentage are still to be trained in ELT. This analysis strongly favours the hypothesis that the methods of teaching adopted by the teachers at Higher Secondary level are not appropriate.

A feedback was collected from the teachers to know whether they allow some time to their students for silent reading and to read aloud or both. Here it is most proper to remark that nearly all the teachers asked their students to read a paragraph silently or aloud. Only 5 to 8 percent teachers are in favour of silent reading of a paragraph. This leads to the conclusion that the teachers must provide some time to students for silent reading of a paragraph. In the same regard another question was asked to
teachers that how much time they allot for paragraph reading. It was found that 70 to 80 percent teachers allot 5 to 10 minutes while remaining teachers are in favour of allotting the time as per text volume.

In response to the question whether the objectives of teaching reading comprehension are achieved, the whole sample of teachers can be put into three categories, out of which first category is not satisfied about achievement of objectives. The second is satisfied as 40 to 50 % objectives are achieved. In the third category about 50 to 75% teachers are satisfied in achieving the objectives.

From the above discussion it may be concluded that the three categories formed are due to the absence of training in ELT, and the divergence in students grasping power.

4.12 FAMILY BACKGROUND OF THE STUDENTS AT +2 LEVEL

In response to the question whether the parents of students are educated, from the whole sample, it is found that 82% parents are educated as compared to 18% parents who are not educated. Regarding the qualification of parents, it could be noted that, though the parents are educated they are not able to teach their wards the English language skill.
Nevertheless, they insist that their wards should study at home and do their best.

Figure: 6-Educational Background of Parents

The discussion can be made more clear from the figure, 73% educated parents teach their ward at home, even then it is observed that this factor could not improve the performance of the students.

Figure: 7-Contribution of Parents Teaching at Home

223
4.13 CONCLUSION

The focus of the study is to examine whether the research hypotheses formulated for the study have any validity. Keeping that in view an attempt is made to empirically examine the data to find out the supporting base for these hypotheses.

For the validity of hypothesis 1, it can be seen from the figure that only 35% teachers are trained in ELT in comparison with 65% teachers who are not trained in ELT. Consequently, the method adopted by untrained teachers is incorrect. Further, it is observed that the students from core group do not have the ability to solve the interpretation or inference and global understanding type questions. Their poor performance might be due to the lack of clear understanding of the text. The teacher being ill equipped could not succeed in developing global understanding. Therefore, linguistically as well as statistically hypothesis 1 is valid.

Teaching of English is pathetic and it requires more attention. The teaching is examination oriented rather than objective based. This can be noted from the table and graph. The marks scored by students in factual and personal type of questions are more. The answers of the factual type are lifted from the paragraph and noted in the same textual language. Students fail to interpret the correct answer. The graph also
shows that global understanding of the students is poor. The marks scored in factual type questions and in Personal type of questions are more than scored in Interpretation and Global understanding. Therefore it is concluded on the basis of statistical analysis hypothesis 2 is valid.

Similar, conclusion is made about the hypotheses 3, 4 and 5 on the basis of detailed discussion and statistical analysis, carried out in the previous section.

The next chapter deals with the various aspects of Reading Comprehension, its Implications and limitations based on the reading performance of students, the study of which has been encompassed in five hypotheses, leading to suggestions in future research work.