

CHAPTER V

Preparation of Exercises for

Comprehension :

After selecting the passages, they are simplified and after grading them the exercises are prepared. These exercises are mainly the comprehension exercises. They become effective only when the carefully selected passages of 150 to 200 words are provided. This requirement is fulfilled here. The questions asked should be based on the exact meaning of ideas, idioms, words or phrases as used in the passage. The questions which are prepared here, will fulfil this requirement also. It also has to be seen that the content of the passage must be within the general knowledge of the candidates so that they are not defeated by a complete lack of identity with the topic. To fulfil this condition the passages are selected relating them with Indian context or displaying general information

Various types of questions are selected to test the comprehension. Theoretical discussion of these types is given below.

5.1 (1) Vocabulary Items/ Matching Items .

Vocabulary items, selecting a word and offering four or five other words, or perhaps phrases, for the choice of the best synonym can be offered. This item in isolation is rather feeble and it is essential to link such items with the words in context, where the exact meaning or usage of the word is quite unambiguous.

Matching items simply require the preparation of two lists of items. The candidate is required to match items together, taking one from each list.

5.1.1 Guidelines for Writing Matching Items :

- 1) All parts of a single matching item should be homogeneous in content; that is, all should refer to dates, all to names, all to places, and so on. Be sure that the student knows the basis on which the terms should be matched.
- 2) If the two lists contain phrases of different length, have the longer phrases serve as stems, and the shorter ones as responses.
- 3) Each list should contain no more than five to seven items. When possible, include one or two more responses than stems. Instruct students as to whether each response can be used more than once or only once.
- 4) Each stem should have one, and only one, response associated with it; that is, there should be only one correct response for each stem.
- 5) Arrange responses in a logical order for example, alphabetically. Avoid response patterns.¹

In the present selection both the types of exercises are prepared and maximum attention is given to the guidelines.

1. G., Brown. Principles of Educational and Psychological Testing. 2nd Edn. New York: Hold, Rinehart and winston, 1976. P. 257.

5.2 True/False items :

A true-false item is a declarative statement; the test taker's task is to determine whether the statement is correct or incorrect. Many people think that true-false items are restricted to factual content, to situations in which there is agreement as to the correct response. If factual refers only to recalling learned knowledge, this view of true-false items is incorrect, since there is no doubt that this item can be used to test application and comprehension of principles.

True-false items are easily scored and relatively easy to construct, certainly much easier than multiple-choice items. And, since many items can be administered in a given time period, scores on true-false tests can be highly reliable.

5.2.1 Guidelines for writing true-false items:

- 1) Items should be based on significant facts, concepts, or principles. Items should deal with a single idea.
- 2) The crucial element in the statement should be apparent to the student. The truth of the statement should not rest on trivial details or trick phrases.
- 3) Express items clearly and simply in words whose meaning are definite and precise and known to the student. Include no more than one qualifying phrase. Use quantitative rather than qualitative terms whenever possible.

- 4) Statements should be clearly true or false, not partially true and partially false.
- 5) Avoid mere repetitions or minor variations on textbook wording. Do not create false items by inserting "not" in a statement from the text.
- 6) Avoid "specific determiners" - words such as always, never, or sometimes-- which may provide clues to the correct answer.
- 7) Include approximately equal numbers of true and false statements. Make sure correct answers do not fall in a pattern.
- 8) When items refer to controversial material or to matters of opinion or value, cite the authority whose opinion is being used.¹

on every passage such type of items are prepared in this study. And while preparing these items the above mentioned guidelines are taken into account.

5.3 Multiple choice items:

It is one of the most widely used and educationally respectable form of objective testing. A multiple choice items consist of a stem, which may be either a question or an incomplete statement, and a set (usually 4 or 5) of alternatives. The student's task is to select the alternative from among the distracters (incorrect responses),

1. G., Brown. Principles of Educational and Psychological Testing. 2nd Edn. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976
p. 257.

that correctly answers the questions or completes the statement.

The stem of the item should present the problem in enough detail that there is no ambiguity as to the nature of the problem; the alternatives provide the basis for inferring whether the student possesses the desired knowledge. One empirical method of obtaining distractors would be to have a sample of students respond to a recall form of the item and determine which wrong answers are most prevalent; these responses could be incorporated as distractors. Other methods of selecting distractors include use of common misconceptions, logical alternatives, and distractors that maximize item validity.¹

Although multiple-choice items have been criticised for testing only factual material, if properly designed they can be used to test complex intellectual skills.²

A large number of multiple-choice items can be administered in a relatively short period. Scoring of multiple-choice items is rapid and objectives and items can be analyzed statistically.

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1. Ebel: 1972; Wesman: 1971, G., Brown. Principles of Educational and Psychological Testing. 2nd Edn. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976. P.255.
 2. R.Anderson: 1972, Quoted in Brown: Principles of Educational and Psychological Testing. 2nd Edn. New York; Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976. P. 255.

5.3.1 Guide lines for writing multiple choice items:

- 1) Write clearly simple, and briefly, Eliminate nonfunctional words. Use only words whose meanings are clear to students.
- 2) The item stem should present the problem and all qualifying phrases. The stem should include all words that would otherwise appear in each alternative.
- 3) There should be one and only one, correct response. This alternative should be clearly correct.
- 4) All distractions should be plausible and attractive to students who do not know the correct answer; yet they should be clearly incorrect. Distractions can be common misconceptions, frequent errors, or other plausible but information.
- 5) Alternatives should be homogeneous in form and grammatical structure. They should not overlap, be synonymous with each other, or otherwise be interdependent.
- 6) Whenever possible, use new situations and examples. Try to avoid repeating text book examples or phraseology.
- 7) Each item should be independent. One item should not aid in answering another item on the test.
- 8) Avoid negatively stated items. Try to avoid using all of the above, none of the above, or some of the above.
- 9) If an item includes controversial material, cite the authority whose opinion is used.
- 10) Avoid irrelevant clues to the correct answer providing by response length, repetition of key words, common associations, or grammar.

easier and more objective if the teacher prepares a scoring key prior to scoring the test. Even with a key, some students probably will give responses that are not on the key, and the teacher will have to use his best judgement in scoring these response.

5.4.1 Guidelines for writing short answer items :

- 1) Phrase items so that there is only one possible response.
- 2) Phrase items so that student knows the type, length, and preciseness of the required response, for example, in items with numerical answer, the units in which the response should be expressed; if a listing, how many points to be include.
- 3) Ask questions that can be completed by a word, phrase, or sentence.
- 4) Use new examples of illustrations. Avoid wording or example taken directly from the text.
- 5) Before administering the test, prepare a key that indicate what responses will receive partial credit.¹

The short answer items prepared in this study follow the above discussed line.

1. G., Brown. Principles of Educational and Psychological Testing. 2nd Edn. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976. P. 258.