

CHAPTER IV

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION, GRADATION AND SIMPLIFICATION

4.1 Selection :

Selection is a process of delimiting the type and quantum of language to be taught. The major criteria for selection are, as ¹Mackey (1966:161) and ²Corder (1975: 201-202) point out, "usefulness to the learner, and feasibility".

For the purposes of the reading programme it is quite sufficient to state the quantum in terms of words and structures.

4.1.1 Selection: Structures-

It is supposed that essential structures of English are taught to the pupils at this level. ³Menon and Patel (1957) suggested that the essential structure of English should be taught within the first four years. In 1964 ⁴A.E. Subramanian claimed that experienced teachers found it possible to teach the essential structure⁵ of English in the first four years of English.

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1. W.F., Mackey, Language Teaching Analysis: London: Longmans, 1966, P.161.
 2. S.P., Corder, Introducing Applied Linguistics. Penguin, 1975. Pp 201-202.
 3. T.K.M., Menon and M.S. Patel, Teaching of English as a foreign Language. Baroda: Acharya Book Dept, 1957.
 4. A.E. Subramanian 1964, Quoted in P.T., George. The Structural Approach and the Production of the Text-books for the Teaching of English in India, Unpublished M.Phil. dissertation, University of Leeds, 1970, Pp 336-337.



In the seminar on textbooks held at the central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad, in December, 1972, George proposed that "the essential principles of English sentence structure----- should be taught along with the first 1000 to 1500 words selected for the teaching"¹ and that this may be done in the first three or four years of English.

The structure of English, as of any language, is limited, and is common, unlike content words, to all varieties of English. The earlier it is covered the easier it is for the textbook writer or the editor to give the learner interesting reading material, because structural control tends to tie the author's hands.

The selection of the passages in this study has been done for the students at B.A. I level. They have studied English for eight years. And it is taken for granted that they have mastered all the essential structures of English. That for this while selecting the passages there is no restriction of the limited structures. At the same time, passages selected are chosen from various areas and from various sources to keep up the reader's interest.

1. P.T., Georgi. "Proposals for a Revision of the Current Approach to English Language Teaching and Course construction at the School level", EIEFL Newsletter, March 1974, pp 18-22.

4.1.2 Selection: Vocabulary:

While selecting the passages for the students at B.A.I level, it is considered that, the words from the General Service List are supposed to be covered by the students. In this programme what is aimed at is not an active vocabulary but a passive vocabulary, that is, ability to recognize the meaning of the words in meaningful contexts. By a word is meant here an item in 'General Service List', that is, a head word and all its most frequent meanings.

4.2 Gradation :

The principle of gradation- that one should take the learner from the simple and the familiar to the complex and the unfamiliar-- is so obvious that it is universally accepted as sound in language teaching. The universal agreement, however, breaks down at the crucial stage of deciding what is simple and what is complex. There has been, and still is disagreement among padagogues as to the staging of the four language skills¹. Even if broad agreement is reached about staging, it is difficult to agree on gradation within a skill.

The basic problem in gradation is that language being a system of systems, a satisfactory gradation in one

1. L.G., Kelley-Twenty Five Centuries of Language Teaching. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House Publishers Inc., 1969. Pp 212-222.

system is apt to destroy gradation in other systems. The structure "This/That" is considered so easy that it is the first item in most structural syllabuses. The fact that it is a very productive structure and that it can be employed from the very first lesson to demonstrate things-concrete nouns, incidentally, and therefore easier than abstract nouns--apparently justifies the choice. Yet, as Hewatt points out, "it is not a particularly easy item considering that most foreign learners have great difficulty getting [ɛ] and [ʒ] right".¹

It means no sequence of teaching items can satisfy all the principles of gradation. And so there is no virtue in rigidly following any particular sequence. George also says that "rigidity in gradation was one of the defects of the older structural syllabuses and that gradation should be flexible".² So while preparing reading programme it is proposed not to grade the structures before the construction of the material.

Palmer makes a very important distinction between

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1. Hewatt, 1973 Quoted in J.P.B., Allen and S.P. Corder. Techniques in Applied Linguistics, The Edinburgh course in Applied Linguistics, Volume III, OUP, London. 1973. Pp. 1-27.
 2. P.I., George. The structural Approach and the Production of Text-books for the Teaching of English in Indian Schools. Unpublished M.Phil. dissertation, University of Leeds. Pp. 243-246.

i) a progressively graded course and ii) a statistically graded course.

i) Progressively graded Course :

It is meant for learners who, having no knowledge what so ever of the language, start from Zero. The texts cannot be called easy and hence are intended for "intensive" reading.

ii) Statistically graded Course :

"The reading material of statistically graded course is composed within a given radius of from 500 to 3000 words. Texts which are statistically graded make reading easy and therefore can be used in "extensive" reading courses".

To follow the principle of gradation, from the simple and the familiar to the complex and the unfamiliar, Flesch's readability formula has been applied to all the passages in the selection. And with the help of reading ease score the difficulty level of the passages is decided. And then the passages are graded in a sequence from R.E. 100 to 0.

Flesch's Reading ease formula is as given below:

" R.E. = $206.835 - 846 w_1 + 1.015 s_1$.

1. H.E. Palmer. The Grading and Simplifying of Literary Materials. TOKYO: IRET. 1932.

Here -

R.E. = reading ease, a score on a scale from 0 (hard to read) to 100 (easy to read) ;

Wl. = number of syllables per 100 words;

S1. = average number of words per sentence;¹

Flesch has suggested some steps while using this formula, they are as given below:

i) Pick your Samples:

Unless you want to test a whole piece of writing, take samples. Take enough samples to make a fair test (say, three to five of an article and 25 to 30 of a book). Don't try to pick "good" or "typical" samples. Go by a strictly numerical scheme. For instance, take every third paragraph on every other page. (ordinarily, the introductory paragraphs of a piece of writing are not typical of it's style.) Each sample should start at the beginning of a paragraph.

ii) Count the Number of Words:

Count the words in your piece of writing up to 100. Count contractions and hyphenated words as one word. Count numbers and letters as words, too if separated by spaces. For example, count each of the following as one word; 1948, 19,892, e.g., C.O.D., wouldn't, week-end.

1. George, Klare: 'Readability' Encyclopaedia of Educational RESEARCH, Vol.III, 5th edn. New York: The Free Press/American Educational Research Association 1982. Pp. 1522-1524.

3) Figure the Average Sentence Length.

Figure the average sentence length in words for your piece of writing. If you are using samples, do this for all your samples, do this for all your samples combined. In a 100-word sample, find the sentence that ends nearest to the 100-word mark—that might be at the 94th word or the 109th word. Count the sentences up to that point and divide the number of words in those sentences in all your samples by the number of sentences in all your samples. In counting sentences, follow the units of thought rather than the punctuation; usually sentences are marked off by colons or semicolons. But don't break up sentences that are merely joined by conjunctions like 'and' or 'but'.

4) Count the Syllables :

Count the syllables in your 100-word samples and divide the total number of syllables by the number of samples. If you are testing a whole piece of writing, divide the total number of syllables by the total number of words and multiply by 100. This will give you the number of syllables per 100 words. Count syllables the way you pronounce the word.

5) Find your "reading ease" score :

Using the average sentence length in words (step3) and the number of syllables per 100 words (step4), find your reading score using this formula-

Multiply the average sentence length
by 1.015

Multiply the number of syllables per
100 words by .846

add; _____

Subtract this sum from 206.835

Your "reading ease" score is _____

The "reading ease" score will put your piece of writing on a scale between 0 (practically unreadable) and 100 (easy for any literate person).

"Reading ease" scores of the passages, included in this study, are as given below"¹

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1. Rudolf, Flesch. The Art of Reading Writing. London: Collier Books. 1949.

1) The Shock of My Life.

Total words : 193

Total syllables: 226

Total sentences: 17

Number of syllables per 100 words:

$$\frac{\text{total syllables}}{\text{total words}} \times 100$$

Average Number of words per sentence =

$$\frac{\text{total words}}{\text{total sentences.}}$$

W1 = Number of syllables per 100 words.

S1 = Average number of words per sentence.

Number of syllables per 100 words = 117.10.

Average number of words per sentence = 11.35

R.E. = 206.835 - .846 x 117.10 + 1.015 x 11.35.

= 206.835 - 99.06 + 11.52

= 206.835 - 110.58

= 96.25

2) Today a Peacock, Tomorrow a feather dusterMystical Characters:

Total words : 127

Total syllables: 159

Total sentences: 13

Number of syllables per 100 words : 125

Average Number of words per sentence: 9.77

$$R.E. = 206.835 - .846 \times 125 + 1.015 \times 9.77$$

$$= 206.846 - 105.75 + 9.91$$

$$= 206.835 - 115.66$$

$$= 91.17$$

3) Time and Again

Total words : 163

Total syllables: 198

Total sentences: 11

Number of syllables per 100 words = 121.47

Average number of words per sentence = 14.82

$$R.E. = 206.835 - .846 \times 121.47 + 1.015 \times 14.82$$

$$= 206.835 - 102.76 + 15.04$$

$$= 206.835 - 117.8$$

$$= 89.03.$$

4) Widows: Wrecks of Humanity

Total words : 189

Total syllables: 234

Total sentences: 13

Number of syllables per 100 words: 123.81

Average number of words per sentence: 14.54

$$\begin{aligned}
 R.E. &= 206.835 - 0.846 \times 123.81 + 1.015 \times 14.54 \\
 &= 206.835 - 104.74 + 14.74 \\
 &= 206.835 - 119.5 \\
 &= 87.33
 \end{aligned}$$

5) A Cup of Tea

Total words : 296

Total syllables: 379

Total sentences: 22

Number of syllables per 100 words : 128.04

Average Number of Words per Sentence = 13.45

$$\begin{aligned}
 R.E. &= 206.835 - .846 \times 128.04 + 1.015 \times 13.45 \\
 &= 206.835 - 108.32 + 13.65 \\
 &= 206.835 - 121.97 \\
 &= 84.86.
 \end{aligned}$$

6) The Bird From Heaven

Total words : 368

Total syllables: 487

Total sentences: 23

Number of syllables per 100 words : 131.98

Average number of words per sentence: 16.04

$$\begin{aligned}
 R.E. &= 206.835 - .846 \times 131.98 + 1.015 \times 16.04 \\
 &= 206.835 - 11.65 + 16.28 \\
 &= 206.835 - 127.93 \\
 &= 78.90
 \end{aligned}$$

7) World War I - Air Warfare

Total words : 183

Total syllables: 247

Total sentences: 10

Number of syllables per 100 words : 134.97

Average number of words per sentences= 18.3

$$\begin{aligned}
 R.E. &= 206.835 - .846 \times 134.97 + 1.015 \times 18.3 \\
 &= 206.835 - 114.18 + 18.57 \\
 &= 206.835 - 132.75 \\
 &= 75.08
 \end{aligned}$$

8) Sculpture Technique : Wood Carving.

Total words : 216

Total syllables: 285

Total sentences: 11

Number of syllables per 100 words : 131.94

Average number of words per sentence: 19.64

$$\begin{aligned}
 R.E. &= 206.835 - .846 \times 131.94 + 1.015 \times 19.64 \\
 &= 206.835 - 111.62 + 19.93 \\
 &= 206.835 - 131.55 \\
 &= 75.28
 \end{aligned}$$

9) Scuba Diving.

Total words : 133

Total syllables: 181

Total sentences: 8

Number of syllables per 100 words : 136.09

Average number of words per sentence: 16.6

$$\begin{aligned}
 R.E. &= 206.835 - .846 \times 136.09 + 1.015 \times 16.6 \\
 &= 206.835 - 115.13 + 16.84 \\
 &= 206.835 - 131.97 \\
 &= 74.86
 \end{aligned}$$

10) Spiritual Knowledge is Man's Great Wealth.

Total words : 295

Total syllables: 407

Total sentences: 15

Number of syllables per 100 words : 137.97

Average number of words per sentence : 19.67

$$\begin{aligned}
 R.E. &= 206.835 - .846 \times 137.97 + 1.015 \times 19.67 \\
 &= 206.835 - 116.72 + 19.96 \\
 &= 206.835 - 136.68 \\
 &= 70.15
 \end{aligned}$$

11) Urbanization :

Total words : 173

Total syllables: 248

Total sentences: 11

Number of syllables per 100 words : 143.35

Average number of words per sentence : 15.73

$$\begin{aligned}
 R.E. &= 206.835 - .846 \times 143.35 + 1.015 \times 15.73 \\
 &= 206.835 - 121.27 + 15.96 \\
 &= 206.835 - 137.23 \\
 &= 69.60
 \end{aligned}$$

12) Smoking - A Major Cause for lung Cancer.

Total words : 396

Total syllables: 564

Total sentences: 22

Number of syllables per 100 words : 142.42

Average number of words per sentence: 18

$$\begin{aligned}
 R.E. &= 206.835 - .846 \times 142.42 + 1.015 \times 18 \\
 &= 206.835 - 120.49 + 18.27 \\
 &= 206.835 - 138.78 \\
 &= 68.07
 \end{aligned}$$

13. Illuminating the Noble Path

Total words : 282

Total syllables: 398

Total sentences: 15

Number of syllables per 100 words : 141.13

Average Number of words per sentences: 18.8

$$\begin{aligned}
 R.E. &= 206.835 - .846 \times 143.13 + 1.015 \times 18.8 \\
 &= 206.835 - 119.39 + 19.08 \\
 &= 206.835 - 139.18 \\
 &= 67.64
 \end{aligned}$$

15) Good English or English Medium

The Crare of English Medium

Total Number of words 188

Total syllables 286

Total sentences 10

Number of syllables per 100 words = 152

Avarage Number of words per sentence = 18.8

R.E. = $206.835 - .846 \times 152 + 1.015 \times 18.18$

= $206.835 - 128.59 + 18.46$

= $206.835 - 147.05$

= 59.78

Changing Inda - Development

Total words : 231

Total syllables: 364

Total sentences: 12

Number of syllables per 100 words: 157.57

Avarage Number of words per sentences: 19.25

R.E. = $206.835 - .846 \times 157.57 + 1.015 \times 19.25$

= $206.835 - 133.30 + 19.54$

= $206.835 - 152.84$

= 53.99

Flesch has given a table to interpret how easy is the particular passage. The table is as given below-

Description of style	Average Sentence length	Average Number of Syllables per 100 words	R.E.Score	Estimate reading grade
Very easy	8 or less	123 or less	90 to 100	5 th grade
Easy	11	131	80 to 90	6 th grade
Fairly easy	14	139	70 to 80	7 th grade
Standard	17	147	60 - 70	8 th grade
fairly difficult	21	155	50 - 60	10 th to 12 th grade
Difficult	25	167	30 - 50	13 th to 15 th grade
very difficult	29 or more	192 or more	0 - 30	College graduate.

Interpretation of the passages selected in this study with the help of the table is as given below.

The first two passages from this selection are very easy because the 'reading ease' score of both the passages come between 90 to 100. It means that 13.33% passages in this selection are very easy.

Next three passages are easy because the 'reading ease' score of these passages come between 80 to 90. It means that 20% passages in this selection are easy.

Next four passages are fairly easy because the 'reading ease' score of these passages come between 70 to 80. It means that 26.67% passages from this selection are fairly easy.

Next four passages from this selection are standard because the 'reading ease' score of these passages come between 60 to 70. It means that 26.67% passages are standard.

Remaining two passages are fairly difficult because the 'reading ease' scores of these passages fall between 50 to 60. It means that 13.33% passages from this selection are fairly difficult.

Difficult or very difficult passages are not included in this selection.

4.3 Simplification :

Simplification is defined as a method of making the process of interpretation simpler for a specific reader, by providing explicit cues at the levels of discourse, syntax and vocabulary.

The notion of simplification cannot be defined in isolation, but must be defined in terms of the reader and the purpose of simplification. In other words, a text can not be said to be 'simple' in any absolute sense.

One must answer the questions in this connection

1) Simple for whom? (2) simple for what purpose? Only then can a genuinely simple text be produced that will convey the propositional content of the original and the ways in which it is presented, in a manner that will make explicit the communication of the original to the learner.

Simplification strategies are employed to enable the learner to interact meaningfully and appropriately with the text. Thus the learner gradually acquires the skills to cope with unsimplified discourse at any levels of complexity appropriate to his needs.

4.3.1 Principles Behind Simplification Procedures:

There is very little indication as to what principles, if any, lie behind the procedures adopted for simplification. For, what should constitute a reader seems to be left to the subjective decisions of the simplifier within the vocabulary limitations of each stage. Davis, who attempted to discover

what principles lie behind the technique of simplification, comments, "what the simplifiers are trying to do is to adjust the surface structure of the sentence concerned. But again it is difficult to have any consistency in this procedure!"¹

While simplifying the passage or a text, some guidelines are suggested to follow -

1) It is necessary to follow closely the outline of the plot. The elimination of the descriptive detail and the condensing of events produce the 'reporting effect'. It is necessary to explain the words which are necessary to the plot, West calls them 'advoc words'². The words not included in General Service list, outside words, are to be explained. Because of this force of the discourse becomes less explicit and one reads the simplified text more as a "Plot summary".

2) Simplifications have also to deal with problems presented by the cognitive complexity of the original text. A difficult concept may be omitted or explained in the discourse itself. Cultural significance has to be preserved otherwise it will be difficult to understand.

3) Important descriptive details should be retained so that events and conversations can be interpreted against them.

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1. Davis and Widdowson. 'Reading and Writing'. ECAL, Vol.3. London: Oxford University Press. 1974. Pp. 193-195.
 2. Michael, West. Learning to Read a Foreign Language. London: Longmans. 1950.

4) The simplified text must be evaluated primarily in terms of the reader and not in its relation to the original. But at the same time the simplifier needs to provide for sufficient richness of detail (sufficient and appropriate to the level of the learner) so that the process of interpretation is simplified.

4.3.2 The aims of Simplified readers :

The aims of simplified readers, to paraphrase west, one of the pioneers in this field in the 1930s, are:

1. to give extra practice in reading;
2. to review and register the vocabulary already learned;
3. to "stretch" that vocabulary;
4. to show the learner that what he has learned; so far really enable him to carry on his own study of the language.¹

It is quite evident from this that the purpose of simplified readers is two-fold: (a) to reflect what the reader already knows; and (b) to extend this knowledge.

Thus simplification procedures involve -
 "a) making a given text easier to understand by bringing its content within the area of language already assumed to be known; and (b) allowing the inclusion of some language items not already known but whose meaning is, presumably, recoverable from the context."²

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1. Michael, west. Learning to Read a Foreign Language. London: Longmans. 1950.
 2. Davis and Widdowson. "Reading and Writing". ECAL, Vol.3. London: Oxford University Press. 1974.

The second point (b) distinctly underlies what we mean by "stretching" vocabulary.

The passages selected in this study are meant for the students at B.A.I level. It is also supposed that they have mastered necessary structures. And so no change is done on the level of structures. It is taken for granted that they have mastered the words from General Service List, and so the words which are not included in the List are either omitted or synonyms are used in place of these words. Means simplification is done only on vocabulary level. The summary of the same is as given below-

The following words are not included in the 'General Service List', but they are present in the passages. Not all the words are simplified because it is possible for the pupils to infer the contextual meaning of the words. The passage wise list of the words not included in G.S.L. is as follows.

1) The shock of my life :

Mandir	insist	deity
Ganapati celebrations	a waited	thrill
rike	electrocuted	literally
clap	divine justice.	

2) Today a Peacock, Tomorrow a Feather Duster
(Mystical Characters)

gorgeous	Mayor	ignore
adorn	bumper	blasting
disappear		

3) Time And Again -

Brahma Muhurta	mental	Physical
energy	peak	concentration
alternative	equivalent	nap

4) Widows wrecks of Humanity-

bland	bangles	blendat
disgraceful	caste	natta
callously	auction	bidder

5) A Cup of Tea -

window panes	lash	sip
eternal	satisfaction	chat
beverage	brewed	abundance
establish	export	moist
propagate	vegetatively	bud
pluck.		

6) The Bird From Heaven-

mango	orchard	resonate
flute	oriole	refuge
breeding	plaintive	why
secretive	altitude	striking
conspicuous	flamboyantly	arboreal
flit	foliage	suspend
hammock	forked	sprinkle
nectar	prey	swoop
snatch	melodious.	

7) Air Warfare-

air-craft	jigs	air-minded
available	combat planes	general staff
cavalry	artillery	infantry
navies	reconnaissance	vehicle
locate	troops	concentrations
bivouac	enthusiasts	predesignated

8) Wood Carving

obscure	image	process
laborious	sophisticated	coherent
embody	generation	degnified
constant	creative pleasure	

9) Scuba- Diver

Focuss	enterprising	economic
salad	scuba diver	lobster
flora	fauna	coral
wrecks	pursuit	paradise.

10) Spiritual Knowledge-

creation	adore	salutation
enlightenment	exposition	compassionate
tendered	erudite	righteousness
acquire	perish	instruction
privilege	elevate	ultimate
altar	identify	slippery
genuine.		

11) Urbanization :

	urban	fertile
contact	perennial	noteworthy
assure	interior	eventually
evolve	facilitate	divert
harnessed	flourish	transport
irrigation channels	cluster	computer part
engage	utensils	occupation.

12) Smoking- A Major Cause for Lung Cancer:

clinical	conduct	deleterious
cancer	lung	contributory
factor	ailment	bronchitis
hazard	significant	statistics
chronic	developing	epidemic
decade	countries	inhale
	alarming	
assault	tissues	retain
organic chemicals	victim	chemical substances
constrict	vessel	inject
emit	exhaust	dissolve
literally	haemoglobin	blood cells.

13) Illuminating :

locate	luxury	realize
seek	discard	robe
starve	release	withdraw
meditation	hivana	attain
doctrine	egocentric	grave

eliminate	symbol	advocate
resolve	mindfulness	concentration

14) Good English :

alternative	impact	status symbol
craze	epidemic	careers.

15) Changing India :

devoted	confirmed	social
conclusion	resources	utilise
attain	constituent	constitution
sovereign	assembly	republic
	democratic	
secure	justice	expression
worship	fraternity	assuring
dignity	individual	realising
adhering	doctrinaire	definition
evolve	welfare	enrichment
ultimately	parliament	adult
franchise	privileged	minority

The passage-wise list of simplified words is as given below-

1) The Shock of My Life.

electrocuted = put to death.

2) Widows Wracks of Humanity

callously = indifferently

3) A Cup of Tea

beverage = drink

- 4) Scuba Diving -
world of flora and fauna, coral and
wrecks = curious thing, lobster = shell fish.
- 5) Spiritual Knowledge -
erudite = learned.
- 6) Urbanization -
harnessed = controlled
- 7) Smoking -
constrict = tight
- 8) Illuminating the Noble Path
practicing severe asceticism = by living simple life.

The passage wise list of dropped words ~~is~~ as
given below :

- 1) Sculpture technique -
The word, 'naivēṭē' and the sentence 'as for instance
in the case of primitive work, where a child- like
naivēṭē compensates, for the lack of skill'.
- 2) Scuba Diving-
enterprising
- 3) Urbanization -
perennial, eventually.