

CHAPTER 8: CLOZE AND DICTATION

1. CLOZE PROCEDURE

Cloze is based on the concept of *closure* (closing gaps) which is well known in Gestalt psychology

Gestalt psychology was influential in the area of *visual perception* and emphasized *pattern of stimuli* → *theory of whole*

The ability to fill in the blanks within a passage became an indicator of the *comprehension ability* of the readers in their L1.

Cloze is a means of determining whether or not certain texts are at an appropriate level for particular groups of students:

- M > 53% → independent level
- 44% < M < 53% → instructional level
- M < 44% → frustrational level

Cloze tests the following types of knowledge are required: linguistic knowledge, textual knowledge, discourse structure, reading skills and strategies, knowledge of the world, and expectancy grammar → Cloze test is a good indicator of general linguistic ability.

2. VARIETIES OF CLOZE TEST

2.1. Psychological Process

- **Open-ended Cloze** → students have to complete each gap in the text → comprehension and production processes
- **Multiple-choice Cloze** → choices are provided for each blank → comprehension and recognition processes

2.2. Deletion Process

- **Pseudo-random** → the magnitude of 'n' does not change from one item to the other
- **Complete Random Sampling Procedure** → all the words in the passage will be assigned a number. Then the numbers will be randomly selected and corresponding words will be deleted
- **Stratified Sampling Procedure** → to select the members of the sample in proportion to the nature of population
- **C-Test Procedure** → the second half of every second word is deleted

Other varieties include:

- **Mini-cloze** → to get good coverage of the features that we think are relevant, e.g. various forms like short exchanges.
 - **Note:** the context very restricted
- **Cloze-elide Procedure** → to insert words into a text that don't belong

- **Conversational cloze** → to measure overall ability to reflect oral as well as written ability, we can use passages which represent spoken language
- **Summary cloze** → a reading passage is summarized by the tester, and then gaps are left in the summary for completion by the candidate

3. SCORING A CLOZE TEST

3.1. Exact Word Method

Only originally deleted words are considered correct responses and given credit if reproduced by the testees

- **Note:** the most objective method

3.2. Acceptable Word Method

A given blank can be filled by words synonymous to the originally deleted word

3.3. Weighted Response Method

Developed from the acceptable word method when some of the responses seem to be more appropriate than others. Thus different words receive varying degrees of credit.

- **Clozentropy** is the most famous weighted response which uses the relative frequency of responses to weigh them through complex mathematical computations.

4. CLOZE TASK

The theory behind the cloze procedure emphasizes the naturalness of the language by utilizing some sort of randomization procedure in deleting the words ≠ cloze tasks do not meet the *naturalness* criterion and thus don't qualify as test device

5. DICTATION

The integrated skills involved in tests of dictation include careful listening, reproduction in writing of what is heard, auditory discrimination, the auditory memory span, spelling, the recognition of sound segments, a familiarity with the grammatical and lexical patterning of the language, and overall textual comprehensions → Dictation is a good indicator of general linguistic ability

The difficulty of a dictation can be easily manipulated by

- the overall speed of presenting the materials,
- the length of the word groups (or **bursts**, as they are technically called) presented between the pauses,
- the number of times the material is presented,
- the complexity of the discourse, grammar, and vocabulary used in the passage.

5.1. Standard Dictation

The passage is read three times:

- 1) students just listen to obtain the general idea of the passage
- 2) students write what they hear
- 3) students check their performance

5.2. Partial Dictation

A passage with some deletions is given to the testees; but it is read in complete form

5.3. Elicited Imitation

The testees are required to imitate or repeat what they hear

5.4. Dicto-comp

Materials are presented to the examinees auditorily at a normal rate of speech, and they are required to write down what they have heard.

5.5. Dictation with Competing Noise

It is performed by adding the so-called *white noise* to the content of the material to be read or played through a tape. Thus the testees receive language in a situation similar to that of real life.

- * **Note:** Since these tests violate the assumption of the independent of items, underlying internal consistency coefficients, the previous interpretations of reliability of these tests are called into question.