



Accolades for NTS from Academic Luminaries



Prof. S. Ramachandran
VC, University of Madras
Report on P. 2



Prof. M. Anandkrishnan
Chairman, IIT-K & IIT-R
Report on P. 3



Prof. P.K. Abdul Azis
VC, Aligarh Muslim University
Report on P. 4



Prof. Ved Prakash,
VC, NUEPA, New Delhi
Report on P. 4

NTS-India reaffirms its commitment...

Diversified systems of teaching offered by various school boards and multiple courses offered in different subject areas by universities are making it almost impossible to evolve a comprehensive mechanism to maintain comparability - across courses, institutions, and individuals at various levels of education. The absence of such a mechanism has not only caused an imbalance in education but also increased the complexities and constraints in formulating a common scale for measurement and evaluation.

Although an in-depth knowledge of evaluation is an essential component for every teacher, it is not imparted as a full fledged subject of study anywhere in the country. Yet, evaluation is practised by all the 5 million teachers to determine the fate of about 50 million learners of the country. Despite the enormity of the issues and intricacies involved, tests of different kinds are developed and conducted for the purposes of admission (on aptitude), certification (on achievement) and employment (on proficiency) across the country. Obviously, the contents, methods, and purposes of these tests are not a reflection of the reality that could be acceptable to all sections of academic fraternity.

In the midst of the multifarious issues associated, the NTS-India has come into being with a huge responsibility of evolving materials and methodologies for the quantification of content inputs and consequential effects that are expected to be achieved at every level of education starting with higher secondary and degree levels. Such an attempt would naturally require the creation of a comprehensive basis through which norms could be evolved which in turn, could pave way for establishing benchmarks for the maintenance of comparability at regional as well as national levels. Accomplishment of this massive task is possible only when it is taken up as a national mission and the objectives are disseminated to all the concerned upto the grass root level. Unless it is done, the possibility to associate about 16,000 teachers from each discipline for ensuring cross fertilization of ideas and to develop a comprehensive mechanism would be remote.

It was in this context that the NTS-India has started a monthly Newsletter with effect from January 2008 in addition to other means of dissemination such as websites, posters, brochures, and documentary films.

On the eve of this Newsletter completing the first year of its birth, NTS-India reaffirms its commitment to create a people's movement for evolving & installing a scientific system of comparability in order to maintain equality in education as enshrined in the constitution of India.

-Editor

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Visit of Academic Luminaries

A provision has been made for soliciting the views of all those associated with the policy making process (both at the centre and states) in order to ensure various *needs* of the country (which should essentially form the *content inputs of education*) to be adequately taken care of so that the *materials and methodologies of evaluation* developed by NTS would become meaningful, relevant, and valid. Prof. Amrik Singh, (Former VC, Punjab University & Former Secretary General, AIU, Delhi), Prof. E. Annamalai (Former Director, CIIL & Visiting Professor, Yale University, USA), Prof. Md. Akhtar Siddiqui (Chairperson, NCTE, New Delhi), and Dr. P.A. Ramiah (Chairman, TRB, Chennai) have visited the NTS H.Qrs. in the recent past and interacted with the NTS staff on various issues.

The month of December 2008 was blessed with a host of 4 academic luminaries. The first one among them was Prof. S. Ramachandran, VC, University of Madras. He was followed by Prof. M. Anandakrishnan, Chairman, IIT- Kanpur & IIT- Rajasthan. The third one was Prof. Abdul Azis, VC, Aligarh Muslim University, and the last one who visited during this month was Prof. Ved Prakash, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi.

The maiden visit of all these dignitaries came as a response to the invitation from NTS for an interaction with them to avail consultancy as part of the consensus building endeavour by this national mission. NTS staff formed themselves into various committees to take care of the academic, technical, and administrative requirements. Prof. Udaya Narayana Singh, Director, CIIL gave a briefing about the activities undertaken by the institute and its Regional Centres, to the visiting dignitaries.

Prof. Pon Subbiah, Head, NTS-India briefed about the objectives and activities of the NTS under the broad headings of R&D, S&D, C&T, and RFUs. Various steps taken up for creating a band of specialized manpower in the area of testing & evaluation, the sub schemes meant for offering Doctoral and Post Doctoral fellowships, etc., were explained. He also demonstrated the Center's website www.ciil-miles.net and the *application software* developed for instant construction of tests in different languages, for different purposes at different levels of education with the help of the NTS technical team comprising Ms. R. Shakunthala, Mr. Ancy Thomas, Ms. R. Kavitha, and Mr. K. S. Raghavan.

The views and the reactions of the visiting dignitaries on a host of issues and the challenges that are being encountered in carrying out this massive task, are given below separately under each of this event.

Prof. S. Ramachandran, Vice-Chancellor, University of Madras, Chennai

5th & 6th December 2008



Prof. S. Ramachandran

A view of audience at the conference hall

Prof. S. Ramachandran, Vice-Chancellor, University of Madras, Chennai, visited NTS-India on 5th & 6th December 2008. The programme commenced with a Welcome by Dr. Sethumani Manian, an invitee from Madurai for a translation work. Following this, the whole progress of NTS was briefed by Prof. Pon Subbiah, the Head, NTS. Subsequently there was an interactive session. The transcribed version of the excerpts from the response made by Prof. S. Ramachandran are as follows:

○ *I am very much impressed with the quality and amount of work carried out at NTS in Testing & Evaluation which is a very important task. I appreciate and congratulate Prof. Pon Subbiah and his team for their dedication*

and commitment. Efforts of NTS should be appreciated and I am really astonished to see the amount of work done. Developing some kind of standardization in language testing & evaluation alone is not enough. Prof. Pon Subbiah made these kind of parameters, components, and variables which will have to be taken into account for a systematic evaluation. A body like NTS has to identify the people and individuals who can contribute for the progress and development of this country. Regional Field Units of NTS are meant for doing the initial job. They need to be strengthened.

○ I think it is a wonderful task and I am sure that you will be able to achieve it in next 2-3 years so that we can have a better evaluation system in our country. The basic requirement of our evaluation should be to bring those who are at the bottom to the top but what is actually happening today is that we take the top and leave the bottom. The teacher's role is to bring lower order ability in students to the level on par with acceptable / normal level. The purpose of evaluation is not just to fail a student but to make him to go to the next level. A teacher's responsibility is to take all such people to the higher level because an individual does it on his own capacity.

The staff of NTS and resource scholars of the Short Term Project were present on the occasion. The queries raised by the NTS staff were clarified by Prof. Ramachandran during the interactive session. In the concluding remarks, Prof. Pon Subbiah expressed his gratitude to Prof. S. Ramachandran for sparing his valuable time with the NTS. He also explained as to how the experience of the guest would be put into use for the NTS work. Mr. M. Saravana (SRP of NTS) proposed vote of thanks.

Prof. M. Anandkrishnan, Chairman, IIT Kanpur & IIT Rajasthan

15th & 16th December 2008



Prof. Anandkrishnan



NTS team with the dignitary during the interactive session

Prof. Anandkrishnan, Chairman, IITs of Kanpur & Rajasthan visited NTS-India on 15th & 16th December 2008. The programme commenced with a welcome by Dr. Sethumani Manian and introduction by Dr. R. Subbakrishna, RRO, CIIL. Prof. Pon Subbiah, the Head NTS gave a briefing about the activities of NTS. Following this, Prof. Anandkrishnan addressed the gathering and subsequently participated in the interactive session.

Excerpts from the views and reactions as recorded by Prof. Anandkrishnan are as follows :

Among many institutions of education that I have visited in the country, my exposure to NTS has been highly rewarding. I am deeply impressed by the total grasp of issues associated with educational testing, evaluation and assessment. It is a repository of the total systemic knowledge in this field. Over the years, the faculty of NTS, under the inspiring and visionary leadership of Prof. Pon Subbiah, has developed the possible approaches to the challenges to educational evaluation. More so, their dedication and commitment is visible in all their activities. I am confident that they will re-engineer the difficult testing procedures in India. My hearty good wishes to their success. This type of work should be extended to other areas/disciplines such as Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Engineering, etc.

In the concluding session, Prof. Pon Subbiah expressed his gratitude to Prof. Anandkrishnan for sparing his valuable time with the NTS. He also explained that the experience of the guest would be of great use for the formulation of NTS. Mr. M. Saravana (SRP of NTS) proposed vote of thanks.

Prof. P.K. Abdul Azis, Vice-Chancellor, AMU, Aligarh

26th & 27th December 2008



Prof. Abdul Azis



NTS team with the dignitary during the interactive session

Prof. Abdul Azis, Vice-Chancellor, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh Visited NTS-India on 26th & 27th December 2008. The programme commenced with a welcome by Prof. P.T.Abraham (SRP). The transcribed version of the excerpts from the reactions of Prof. Abdul Azis is reproduced here :

- *The interactive sessions were very educative. The NTS-India has done a commendable job so far. The work needs to be carried forward with vigor. It has to become a National Mission. I wish them all success. I have enjoyed the stay and interactions.*
- *All the Universities in our country should accept and adopt the principles of Testing and Evaluation prepared by NTS-India. To standardise our education system the role of NTS is very relevant. The country would benefit from the initiative of NTS team, we have to carry it forward. What NTS-India is doing, is really path breaking and a herculean effort. NTS has to convince thousands of experts in the field, so, it needs to carry this idea to the universities, academicians, and people of different walks of life. In future, the country would be benefitted from the initiative of NTS team and I hope all institutions will accept it and take it forward.*



Prof. Abdul Azis with the Director, CIIL and the Head, NTS

○ *The website of the Centre for Testing & Evaluation is inspirational, particularly the presentation; the way NTS has uploaded its entire developments in the website. The website construction is of global quality.*

○ *You can create instant question papers for any type of tests; these are the things that are needed now. One should understand the testing and evaluation methodology prepared by NTS to make the process comprehensive. I am applauding Prof. Pon Subbiah and his team for doing the marvelous job and trying to make it a quality assurance movement at the national level.*

Prof. Ved Prakash, Vice-Chancellor, NUEPA, New Delhi

28th to 30th December 2008

Prof. Ved Prakash, Vice-Chancellor, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi, visited NTS-India, CIIL, Mysore on 28th to 30th December 2008. The transcribed version of the excerpts from the reactions of Prof. Ved Prakash is reproduced here :

- *I am deeply impressed by the NTS work. It has been doing an excellent work under the stewardship of Prof. Pon Subbiah. I am certain that the NTS would grow into a full fledged organization by developing graded tests with known parameters.*
- *I am deeply impressed by the kind of work going on here in this institution. I never came across with any*



Prof. Ved Prakash



NTS team with the dignitary during the interactive session

institution in the country, which has gone so much deep into the subject and this is indeed very laudable and I'm delighted. I do hope that your organization certainly will grow and I would expect that this organization must take the shape of National Evaluation Organization. Till now this type of work has not been done either by UPSC or SSC or by IBPS but only by NTS which is laudable.

Research and Development (R&D)

- To undertake in-depth analysis of the concepts of measurement & evaluation in the context of education
- To identify the content inputs & consequential effects of teaching, and learning
- To interrelate the outcome with the objectives of education and the actual needs of the country
- To develop appropriate methodology to meet all the evaluation needs.

Current Activities

IV Phase of the Workshop on Aptitude, Achievement, and Proficiency Tests

1st to 4th December 2008

One of the objectives of the NTS-India is to undertake research for developing basic frameworks, and prototype models. Accordingly it has formulated a draft frame work on Aptitude, Achievement and Proficiency Tests. In order to make it more comprehensive, gradual improvement is taken up from time to time.

It was in this context that the NTS organized another workshop of four days duration at CIIL, Mysore. The purpose was to review the framework and to prepare model items as illustrative examples under each of the components that constitute the concepts of Aptitude, Achievement, and Proficiency. Scholars from various fields of study were invited for this purpose. Accordingly, review of the draft framework in terms of their constituent elements (major, minor, and sub-components) and the properties associated with them was taken up. This has formed a basis for identifying the problems for item writing in the respective domains, and also to facilitate differentiating one type of test from that of the other. The programme has thus resulted in improving the draft materials to some extent.

Initially Prof. Pon Subbiah, the Head, NTS explained the need for improving the framework and illustrative models to each of the three groups working on the above mentioned concepts. A general session was held at the end of the workshop to have an overview of the task accomplished. The deliberations helped a lot for better understanding of the whole process. The NTS places on record its gratitude to all those who participated and contributed model items. The workshop ended with concluding remarks and observations.

The scholars who participated in the programme are : Prof. Sriramamurthy (Former Dean, Dept. of Education & Physical Education, Osmania University, Hyderabad), Prof. Nagalakshmi (Head, Dept. of Curriculum & Text Books, Govt. of A.P.), Dr. K.Anban (Rtd. Professor, Dept. of Linguistics, Karnatak University, Dharwad), Prof. Ratnasabapathy (Counsellor, TIERA, Chennai), Dr. A. Kamatchi (Sr. Lecturer, CAS in Linguistics, Annamalai University), Dr. R. Saranya (Reader, CAS in Linguistics, Annamalai University), Dr. Rosemary (Lecturer, Dept. of Linguistics, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram), and Prof. M. Suseela (Rtd. Professor, Dept. of Linguistics, Tamil University).

The programme was coordinated by Prof. P.T. Abraham and Mr. M. Saravana (SRPs) of NTS. Dr. M. Balakumar, RRO, CT&E, was present throughout the programme. Dr. Biresh Kumar, Dr.R.C. Maurya (RPs), Dr. T. Janaki, Dr. T. Amudhan, Dr. Anand Ravi, Dr. G. Sandhya Nayak, and Dr. Rizwan (all JRPs) represented the NTS.

Survey and Documentation (S&D)

- Collecting, consolidating, and creating a grid of resources pertaining to evaluation
- Contents, methods, and purposes of tests
- Contact particulars of individuals and institutions involved in preparing and using different types of tests
- Syllabi of various courses and corresponding question papers at different levels of education.

Current Activities

In order to disseminate the information pertaining to various activities of NTS across various sections of the academic community, NTS monthly Newsletters are regularly brought out w.e.f January 2008. Mr. K.S. Raghavan and Ms. R. Kavitha (JRPs-Tech) are involved in equipping the electronic database by adding more and more addresses of individuals and institutes to have a comprehensive mail list. Some of the language related institutions included in the list are EFL University, Dravidian University, International Hindi University, Kannada University, Sanskrit University, Tamil University, Telugu University, Maulana Azad National Urdu University, CIIL, CHI, NCPUL, Sindhi Council, etc.

Two other technical staff viz., Mr. Ancy Thomas, and Mr. Dheeraj (JRPs-Tech.) are involved in developing a new website CIIL-NTS.com exclusively for NTS-India. The website is waiting for launch. Similarly, Mrs. R. Shakunthala, and Mr. B.L. Mahesh (JRPs-Tech.) are involved in layout making, & interior designs of all the publications of NTS, including that of monthly newsletter.

Consultancy and Training (C&T)

- Evolving a mechanism for periodical training
- Preparing teaching cum training modules
- Producing documentary films
- Creating trained manpower in various branches of evaluation
- Extending consultancy on matters related to testing and evaluation.

Current Activities

Short Term Project cum Training Programme for Interdisciplinary Scholars

NTS-India invited young scholars with Hindi, Tamil and Urdu language background from different parts of the country to participate in a Short Term Project for a duration of about three months starting from 15th October 2008. This was later extended upto 31st March 09. The scholars belong to the disciplines of Linguistics, Language, Literature, Education, Psychology, Statistics, and so on. 15 scholars from Hindi, 22 scholars from Tamil and 15 scholars from Urdu have been engaged in this project. For the first two weeks, they were provided with all background information by the Head and faculty of NTS. The scholars were asked to prepare question items, each with 10 parameters based on the guidelines given to them. Everyone was also assigned the task of preparing 10 question items per day in the area of their specialization and submit the same to the concerned language faculty for scrutiny and improvement. It is planned to send them on field work for a month.

Regional Field Units (RFUs)

- To disseminate the R & D outcome at the grass root levels
- To ensure wider participation for building up national consensus on materials and methodologies
- To identify scholars and undertake the process of item preparation, test construction, field administration, data collection, and standardisation (of tests) for establishing norms.

Current Activities

Inauguration of RFU at PSG College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore, TN.

3rd December 2008

NTS Regional Field Unit (No-5 B) of the Tamil speaking areas meant for higher education, was established in the campus of PSG College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. After inaugurating the unit preliminary orientation was provided on 3rd December 2008 by Prof. Pon Subbiah, Head, NTS-India. Following this, there was an interactive session wherein more than 150 scholars from different disciplines



Head NTS, with the Principal PSG College and the RFU Co-ordinator

participated. Dr. Sampath Kumar (Secretary), Dr. Sheela Ramachandran (Principal), Dr. Ramani (Head, Dept. of English), Dr. Sathyamurthy (Head, Dept. of Tamil), and Dr. Brunda Ravikumar (Local Coordinator) of PSG College were present on the occasion. The NTS was represented by Dr. R.C. Maurya (RP), Dr. Md. Rizwan, Ms. R. Kavitha (JRPs), Mr. B.M. Lingaraj (Officer-RFUs) and Mrs. G. Usha Nandini (of NTS Secretariate). This RFU has the jurisdiction of Coimbatore and Nilgiris Districts of Tamil Nadu.

Grant-in-Aid

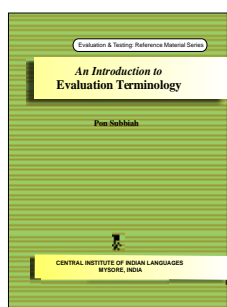
NTS-GIA : Release of Funds

31st December 2008

Subsequent to the recommendation of a 4 member committee, & approval from the competent authority NTS GIA grant has been sanctioned to the following scholars who have submitted their proposals for such grants. Out of 24 proposals received the following were shortlisted and recommended by the committee for further action. (1) *Dr. J.R. Nirmala* (Prof. & Head, Dept. of English, Vellammal Engg. College, Chennai) (2) *Dr. S.K.G. Ganesh* (Asst. Professor, Dept. of Management Studies, BSA Crescent Engg. College, Chennai) (3) *Dr. Dasarathi Bhuyan* (Lecturer, Dept. of Political Science, Vanivigar PO-ASIKA, Ganjam, Orissa) (4) *Dr. P. Ganesan* (Asst. Professor, VIT Business School, VIT University, Vellore) (5) *Dr. N. Murugaiyan* (Prof. & Head, Dept. of English, Periyar Maniyammai University, Thanjavur) (6) *Dr. L. Saraswathi* (Principal, Thiagaraja College of Preceptors, Madurai) (7) *Dr. C. Paramasivam* (Lecturer, Dept. of Commerce, Vivekananda College of Arts and Science, Trichengode) (8) *Dr. Chetan Sharma* (Datamation Foundation Charitable Trust, Delhi) (9) *Dr. K.P. Suresh* (Director, School of Pedagogical Sciences, Kannur). A sum of Rs. 50,000/- has been released to each one of them as 1st installment.

What do they contain?

An Introduction to Evaluation Terminology (3rd edn.)



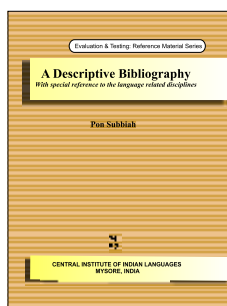
ENGLISH

Pon Subbiah

ISBN : 81-7342-056-4
6.5" X 9.5", xxxi + 280,
2008, Rs.200/-

Introduces about 1,000 terms that are used in the interdisciplinary area of evaluation. Concepts represented by these terms encompass the areas of education, psychology, mathematics, statistics, natural & physical sciences, language, literature, and so on. The criteria used for identifying these concepts are contents, methods, and purposes of evaluation. Every term is provided with an introductory briefing, meaning, scope and illustrative examples. The entries are presented in an encyclopedic form. Terms of synonymous concepts are given in parentheses. Differences if any in the meaning, are cited from authoritative sources. For certain entries, figures and tables of computations are also incorporated. Worked-out models of item and test analysis are provided in the appendices. A consolidated list of evaluation terms is included in the preliminary part to have an overall view in addition to abbreviations, figures, tables, etc. Details of bibliographical information are provided at the end. As a reference material, this volume is widely used by all those associated with the educational process - especially the teachers, teacher-learners, evaluators and the academicians associated with various boards and councils of examination, evaluation, assessment & accreditation as well as agencies of recruitment.

Evaluation & Testing : A Descriptive Bibliography



ENGLISH

Pon Subbiah

6.5" X 9.5", xviii + 144
1997, Rs.172/-

Consists of more than 600 informative and unbiased abstracts from research articles, study reports, experiments, and books on evaluation published during the period between 1960-1995. Intends to disseminate information on evaluation among the researchers and practicing teachers; also to create awareness and facilitate cross fertilization of ideas among those dealing with Indian language and literature to undertake similar studies. Each entry included here is composed of the purpose or hypothesis of the work, 'approach / strategy adopted', and 'evidence obtained or conclusion drawn' so that the users can get an overall idea about the work described, at a glance. Author and subject / title indices are provided at the end for an easy access to the abstracts included. Listed as one of the reference materials for language testing under readings (for teachers) in the UGC Model Curriculum: Linguistics (p.28), New Delhi. The 2nd and revised edition of this book with an addition of more than 80 new entries, is under print.

News & Events

Congratulations !

Prof. V.G. Talawar, Dept. of Library and Information Science, University of Mysore, a Consulting Expert for various NTS recruitments and a Senior Resource Person for NTS programmes has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University of Mysore w.e.f 11th December 2008. Prof. Talawar has been closely associated with various activities of the Centre for Testing & Evaluation and has made significant contributions to the academic ventures taken up by it. Academic and technical staff of NTS led by the head Prof. Pon Subbiah, visited the University of Mysore on 12th December 2008 to greet Prof. V. G. Talawar on his assuming charge as the VC of this oldest University in Karnataka.



NTS team felicitates the new VC, UOM, Mysore

Field Work for Item Preparation

54 scholars with different specialisations drawn from 9 states of the country will go on fieldwork for collecting information required for item setting and test construction. These scholars are working under a short term project of NTS.

Forthcoming

- Prof. H.A. Ranganath (Director, NAAC, Bangalore), Prof. Jacob Tharu (Former Professor of Evaluation, CIEFL, Hyderabad) have confirmed their visit to NTS shortly.
- National convention on Testing & Evaluation for Hindi speaking area is scheduled to be held at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (JNU campus), New Delhi, on 18th & 20th Feb. 2009. This phase of convention is meant exclusively for the National Capital Territory of Delhi. This is being organised in collaboration with Central Hindi Institute, Agra / New Delhi.
- The full text of the observation on the NTS-India, made by Prof. M. Anandakrishnan, Chairman, IIT- Kanpur & IIT-Rajasthan, will be published in the February 2009 issue of NTS Newsletter.

Reader's View

The phenomenal growth of NTS is reflected through its series of activities such as national conventions, symposia, interactive meetings, seminars, workshops, and training programmes being organised in different parts of the country. All these events with a specific focus on testing & evaluation have trembled the traditional mindset of the academics as I could hear from various scholars involved in language pedagogy. The academic productions, doctoral & post doctoral research fellowships, grants in aid, development of training modules, opening of RFUs, etc., would definitely bring a revolution in evaluation. I wish the NTS Newsletter would function as an effective tool to disseminate the objectives of this national mission to every nook and corner of the country so that the unrealised dream of maintaining equality in education evaluation becomes a reality in this part of the globe.

- Dr. K. Pasumpon, Asst. Director, Tamil Development, Madurai-20

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