

**DC 132**  
**Handout 11**

**CLOZE PROCEDURE**

- Cloze procedure is a psychological tool for measuring the effectiveness of communication. When first introduced, it was regarded mainly as a "new and better" way of determining the readability of printed English prose.
- Cloze is an automatic word deletion process where words are removed from a printed page. The subject's task is to predict the word that was removed and replace it. In making his word prediction, the subject depends upon prior knowledge or word usage. In attempting to replace the deleted word, the reader is forced to pay more attention to the messages of the passage conveyed by the remaining words.
- Developed by William Taylor who adopted the word cloze from the Gestalt psychologists' concept of closure, which means filling in the parts of an incomplete message in order to arrive at a conclusion. His rationale was that if a person could understand the meaning of the printed page when words are moved so that he could replace those words exactly, he was experiencing a form of closure, hence the term clozure or cloze.
- The rationale underlying cloze procedure in measuring comprehension is that the ability to supply the deleted word in a cloze test involves the ability of the subjects to match his grammatical, lexical and sociocultural habits with those of the author of the passage. Since comprehension involves the ability to draw meanings intended by the writer of the written passage, therefore the closer the degree of correspondence of the linguistic habits of both the writer of the message and the reader of the passage, the greater is the comprehension of the passage.

How cloze procedure works

1. Delete an equal number of words from each passage by some essentially random counting-out system. Such a system is based on a table of random numbers or simply by counting out every nth word (every fifth, for example) without any regard for the functions or meanings of specific words.
2. Reproduce each mutilated passage with a blank of some standard length (so the length would not influence the guessing) in place of every missing word.
3. Give copies of all reproduced passages to all subjects in a sample group.
4. Ask all subjects to fill in all blanks by guessing, from the context of remaining words, what the missing words should be.
5. Total for each passage separately the number of times original words were correctly replaced, and consider these totals as readability scores.

## Cloze scoring

	Categories	Score
1.	Exact responses  Responses which correspond exactly to the deleted words.  e.g., From her porch, Susan could see all the other carts along the _____ .  Deleted word                    - <u>road</u> Exact response   - <u>road</u>	1
2.	Divergent responses  Responses that do not correspond to the deleted word but are semantically and syntactically appropriate resulting in a meaningful passage in relation to the rest of the words in the sentence.  e.g., From somewhere nearby, Helen heard voices _____ "Those Mexicans! They're right alongside us."  Deleted word                    - <u>saying</u> Divergent word   - <u>calling</u>	1
3.	Incorrect responses  These are responses resulting in a meaningless passage in relation to the rest of the words in the sentence; responses that are semantically and syntactically unacceptable.  e.g., Many of them carried families like her own, _____ that followed the crops.  Deleted word                    - <u>families</u> Incorrect response - <u>sister</u>	0

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### The Cloze Test

This is an exercise which will require you to fill in the blanks for the missing words in order that you can understand the sentences. In answering, follow this procedure:

1. Read the whole selection to get the general meaning.
2. Fill in the blanks with the missing words.
3. Review and check your answers.

You may skip blanks if you cannot think of the right word the first time, but read carefully again until you can get the answer. If you do not know the answer, make a guess. It is better to write an answer than leave a blank. Write your answer in the corresponding blanks in your answer sheet.

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English is the most widely used (1) \_\_\_\_\_ in the history of our planet. One in every seven human beings can (2) \_\_\_\_\_ it. Of all languages, English has the largest (3) \_\_\_\_\_ perhaps as many as two million words. Nonetheless, English is a crazy (4) \_\_\_\_\_. There is no in egg in eggplant, neither pine nor apple in (5) \_\_\_\_\_, and no ham in (6) \_\_\_\_\_. English muffins weren't invented in (7) \_\_\_\_\_ or french fries in France. Sweetmeats are candy, while sweetbreads, which aren't sweet, are (8) \_\_\_\_\_. When we explore its (9) \_\_\_\_\_ we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square, and a (10) \_\_\_\_\_ pig is neither a pig nor from Guinea. And why is that a writer (11) \_\_\_\_\_ but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce, and hammers don't ham? If the (12) \_\_\_\_\_ of tooth is teeth, shouldn't the plural of booth be beeth? One goose, two geese - so one moose, two (13) \_\_\_\_\_? If a (14) \_\_\_\_\_ eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat?

(From: Richard Lederer, "The Crazy English Language," Reader's Digest, August 1990, p. 95.)