PROBLEMS
IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH
IN THE
ARMENIAN SCHOOLS OF BEIRUT

by

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ENGLISH IN ARMENIAN SCHOOLS

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A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

The writer wishes to express her very sincere thanks to all the teachers and principals of the Armenian Schools who so kindly allowed her to observe English lessons and filled out questionnaires. Without their cooperation and generous help this paper could not have been written.

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In particular the writer would like to thank Dr.P. Najarian, her adviser on this paper, for her great patience in reading it, guiding its development and for making criticisms and suggestions.

A B S T R A C T

The purpose of this thesis was to study the problems facing the Armenian schools in Beirut in the teaching of English, and where possible, to make some suggestions.

In it an attempt was made to study the aims of teaching English with a view to clarifying the goals set before the schools, so that the curriculum, syllabuses and methods might be adjusted to them.

Some of the special difficulties facing Armenian students were pointed out in a brief account of English and Armeas languages. Some of these difficulties were found to be in grammar, sentence structure, word order and pronunciation. A study of the characteristics of Armenian as a language revealed further difficulties caused by the present state of Western Armenian.

Through observation, teaching and questionnaires it was possible to give a brief account of the teaching situation as it now exists in the Armenian schools of Beirut. The problems studied were connected with time-tables, syllabuses, textbooks, methods of teaching, the preparation of teachers, and the background of the students in these schools. An attempt was made to point out the shortcomings in the teaching of English and to make tentative suggestions.

The requirements of teachers of English were given briefly in the last chapter, together with a discussion of three widely used methods of teaching English - the Translation Method, the Direct Method and the Linguistic Method. This, it was hoped, would supply some suggestions to teachers who might be interested in modern approaches to the teaching of English.

The four skills in the learning of English - hearing, speaking, reading and writing - were then taken separately in the second part of the last chapter. The suggestions accompanying these tried to give an indication of methods that might be adopted in making the teaching of these skills more effective in the Armenian schools of Beirut.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE. The importance of the teaching of English in Armenian schools both in Beirut and the Middle East in general can hardly be exaggerated. There is no Armenian child in our schools today for whom the mastery of a European language is not imperative, if he is to continue his studies further than the elementary level. He has to learn Arabic in any case if he is to be a good citizen of Lebanon. The fact that European textbooks are used in the Arab secondary schools indicates that Armenian and Arabic will together take him some way, but there will come a time when he will have to resort to a European language.

The growing importance of English in the world as an international language, and the fact that very many scientific and technological and other scholarly works are produced in English make it more than likely that English will have to be the means by which he is to acquire the information he needs for further study. This is only one of the many reasons, though perhaps the most utilitarian one, that the teaching of English is of such paramount importance in our schools today.

And yet some of this teaching seems sadly deficient at the moment, and is causing considerable anxiety to the heads

of the schools, and the people concerned with them. The English used by Armenian students appears often inaccurate, unidiomatic, badly pronounced, and sometimes almost unintelligible to the people whose mother-tongue it is. There are, naturally many exceptions to this, and there are excellent students who are products of some of the Armenian schools. It is however, felt that there is a great need to examine the causes of the weakness, and as far as possible, to try and suggest means of curing them.

It has to be admitted from the start that Armenian schools labour under tremendous difficulties. At the moment many of them, specially the primary schools, are ill-equipped, poorly staffed, overcrowded, and lacking in the most elementary requirements of classroom apparatus. It is the devotion and perseverance of some of their teachers alone that is responsible for the results that we see. The children often come from poor homes with scarcely any cultural background, where circumstances are anything but conducive to hard work and concentration. For various reasons, syllabuses are extremely heavily loaded, children often having to learn three new languages by the time they are nine. Each of these languages interferes with the others and somehow throws its shadow on the others. In spite of this some of these languages have to be used as

a means of instruction for certain subjects both in the primary and secondary schools.

Some of the teachers, alas, are not experts at the languages they teach, or the languages they employ to teach their particular subjects. Through their own faulty use of a language such as English, they reinforce the mistakes and short-comings of their pupils. Satisfactory textbooks are very difficult to obtain, and many schools labour under the illusion that the greater the number and variety of textbooks you "finish" the better your English will be. Given all this, therefore, and since the entire renovation of schools, equipment, teachers, syllabuses and methods is quite beyond the realms of possibility, what is there that can be done to help these schools? Bearing in mind the academic, administrative, financial and other difficulties, is it possible to bring some help and suggestion that will, in a measure, improve the teaching of English in the Armenian schools? This is the problem that forms the subject of this study.

At first the aim of this paper was the study of the problems of the secondary schools alone. A few months of observations, however, showed that this was impossible without taking into consideration some of the conditions and problems that existed in the primary schools. It was therefore decided to extend the scope of this study and include their problems as well.

PROCEDURE. The sources of information for this study were of various kinds, but there were four main channels through which material was collected. These were:

a. Observation of teaching and conditions in the various Armenian schools in Beirut.

b. Questionnaires sent to the headmasters of these schools, and to teachers of English working in them.

c. Actual teaching in a girl's secondary school for the purpose of studying the problems faced by teachers of English.

d. Available and relevant literature on the subject.

Contacting of Schools and Methods of Observation. The schools were contacted through friends who were in touch with the headmasters or directly by the writer.

The observation in every case was arranged through the headmaster, and it was through him that the teachers knew of the arrangements made for the observation.

This contact with the headmasters was very useful because in many cases it was possible to have an informal interview with him and to hear of some of the curricular, staffing, financial and other problems confronting the schools.

Observations were usually made from the back of the classroom, and participation in the lessons was avoided. Invitations to ask the class questions were often declined since it was desired to see lessons as they would normally take place.

Unfortunately it was not always possible to avoid taking part in the lessons, or to see them as they would normally have taken place. There was the natural excitement of children through having a stranger in the classroom. In a few cases it was felt that the lesson had been prepared specially to give a variety of the aspects of teaching usually done. Some teachers actually said this was the case with their lessons. Sometimes the opposite of this was the case and the teacher merely heard children recite work previously done and learned.

Almost in every case there was a little time afterwards for a short talk with the teacher. This gave an opportunity to show appreciation of their cooperation and ask a few questions on the lesson. Many of the teachers expressed their reasons for doing what they had done.

In most cases the whole lesson was heard. It was thus possible to see the entire process of teaching in one period; the work of the teacher, the participation of the class, the handing out of corrected exercises, the use of the blackboard, the assignment of homework and the dismissal of the class.

It was sometimes possible to pay two visits to a school, but even then it was not possible to see a great number of lessons, especially where teachers were few in number.

However, it was felt that a repetition of the visit would not always yield a sufficient amount of information to justify the time given to it. Also, it was felt to be desirable to avoid imposing too much on the kindness and cooperation already shown.

Questionnaires. Two sets of questionnaires were given out in each school that was visited for observation.

The first was to the heads of the schools asking for numbers of children and teachers, the classes where English is started, and for their opinions as to why English is taught in their schools. Fourteen schools were visited, but the number of questionnaires filled out was eleven, for it was not possible to get a reply from one head, and two of the schools had primary and secondary sections, and this meant

only one head for the two.

The second set was given to twenty five teachers all engaged in these schools except for two - one being a former teacher and another the director of a social center teaching English.

In asking the teachers to fill out the questionnaires the writer made a point of explaining the aim of the questionnaires and study, and emphasised how much help they would be giving to the study of problems that were common to us all.

It was possible to get replies from twenty one teachers out of the twenty-five. Many of these were prompt and cooperative, but in a few cases it was necessary for the writer to telephone and to go to the school three or four times before it was possible to obtain the questionnaires. In four cases it was not possible to get any response at all.

The questionnaires were collected from the school heads and teachers either in person by the writer, by friends, or by means of a stamped and addressed envelope left with the teachers for the return of the questionnaires.

Some of the teachers took more than one year to return the questionnaires, so that in a few cases the information given in the questionnaires as regards numbers in classes, and ages of children does not tally with the information re-

corded during observation. However, it was felt that this was a minor point since ages were approximately the same and numbers might have varied even during the same year.

The Schools Contacted for Observation and Questionnaires. In choosing the fourteen schools for observation and questionnaires, care was taken to make them as representative as possible.

In making the choice from among the two types of primary and secondary schools, it was decided to take a greater number of secondary schools. This was because the primary aim of this paper had been the study of the secondary school problems, and because more of their students were likely to continue their studies in English. To make them representative, attention was paid to the question of whether they were mixed or purely for boys or girls. This question did not arise with the primary schools because they were mostly mixed.

The location of each school was considered carefully because it was felt that it had a definite bearing on the socio-economic group from which most of its pupils were drawn, although it was realised that there were exceptions within the schools, and that some of the town schools had quite a large proportion of students from the eastern sections of Beirut.

For the sake of convenience Beirut was arbitrarily

divided into three zones. The first was taken to be Beirut proper, the town itself, containing the highest socio-economic level. The second was taken to be Ashrafieh, still containing a population of a fairly high socio-economic level, and the third, having by far the largest number of the primary schools, was arbitrarily called "Eastern Sections of Beirut." It spreads over a large area, taking in the Karantina, Bourj Hammud, Sinil-fil, Dora, and sections beyond the Nahr region. This zone represents a rather low socio-economic level.

By far the greatest number of students in the Armenian schools of Beirut belong to the Apostolic Church of Armenia, but in the choice of schools care was taken to include Protestant and Catholic schools in the list, partly because they represented a different approach and partly because a large number of their students belonged to the Apostolic church. One adventist school was also included as representing a small independent religious group.

A number of schools run by non-religious bodies was also included, care being taken to consider the religious backgrounds of their students.

The Schools Selected. Seven primary and seven secondary schools were finally selected. For the purposes of the observation and the questionnaires to teachers, the primary sections of secondary schools were considered as separate schools where observation was done in both.

Details are given in the following tables.

Table I. The Armenian primary and secondary schools in Beirut in 1957-58.

Table II. The schools selected for observation.

Teaching English for Observation. This was done at the Tarouhi-Hagopian Secondary school for girls. The Headmaster, Mr. K. Kaloustian very kindly arranged for the investigator to teach three periods of English a week for the whole of the academic year 1956-57. One of these periods was with the 11th grade, that is, the top class in the school, and the other two were with the Preparatory, the youngest class, composed mostly of new arrivals and a few repeaters from the previous year.

This was a very valuable experience since former teaching experience in Palestine, Egypt, the Lebanon and England, although useful, had not been with classes of only Armenian students. Working in this school made possible a close examination of some of the general academic and organisational problems faced by the Armenian schools, as well as their difficulties with the teaching of English.

Literature. Unfortunately there was no available literature pertaining to the specific subject of this study, but the writer was able to make use of the following types of literature in writing it.

1. Works on language and grammer, in both English and Armenian.
2. Works on the teaching of modern languages.
3. Works on the teaching of English as a foreign language to other non-English speaking students.
4. Works on the teaching of English to English speaking students.
5. Periodicals on the teaching of English to foreigners.

In this study there will first be a discussion of the reasons for teaching English, taking into consideration the general aims of teaching modern languages, and the reasons why English in particular is taught in the Armenian Schools, and the particular objectives of the teachers in the actual process of teaching. This will be based on available literature on the subject and the questionnaires. It is hoped that through the clarification of aims we may know more clearly how to organise the teaching of English in these schools.

The next part of the study is a very brief survey of English and Armenian as languages, their similarities and differences, the present state of Armenian, and particular problems arising out of these that may have a bearing on the teaching of English to Armenians.

The concluding part of the study, in the last two chapters, relates the findings to the situation as it exists

in the Armenian schools of Beirut today. It tries to give accurate pictures of the existing circumstances, materials, methods, teachers, textbooks, examinations and students. Through these it is hoped to expose the major problems in the teaching of English and to give practical suggestions for improvement.

TABLE I

ARMENIAN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BEIRUT 1957-58.

KIND OF SCHOOL	PRIMARY			SECONDARY			JUNIOR HIGH
	BEIRUT	ASHRAFIEH	EASTERN SECTIONS OF BEIRUT	BEIRUT	ASHRAFIEH	EASTERN SECTIONS OF BEIRUT	
Armenian Apostolic Church Schools	-	1	13	1	-	-	
Armenian Evangelical Schools	-	-	6	1	1	1	1 (in Eastern Section)
Armenian Catholic Schools	-	-	2	1	2	1	
Independent Schools	-	-	3	1	-	-	
A.G.B.U. Schools	1	-	-	2[x]	-	-	
Totals.	1	1	25	6	3	2	
Totals of Types of Schools	Primary 26[xx]			Secondary 11			Junior High 1

Total number of schools - 38

1. Taken from KHOSNAG. Nov. Dec. 1957, (This is an A.G.B.U. Publication and the information is based on their files.)

[x] With the exception of these two, all other secondary schools have primary sections attached to them.

[xx] A small number of these primary schools have one or two secondary classes.

TABLE II

SCHOOLS SELECTED FOR OBSERVATION AND QUESTIONNAIRE

PRIMARY SCHOOLS	TOWN SCHOOLS	No. of STUDENTS	ASHRAFIEH SCHOOL	No. of STUDENTS	SCHOOLS IN EASTERN SECTIONS	No. of STUDENTS
Armenian Apostolic					1. Sahag Mesrob Primary School. 2. Sahagian School	388
Evangelical Schools	Armenian Evangelical College Primary School.	(518 in all)	Armenian Evangelical Primary School.			
Catholic						
Independent					1. Adventist School. 2. Vahan Tekeyan Primary School	102 447
A.G.B.U.	Yervant Demirdjian Primary School					

No. of Primary Schools - 7.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS	TOWN SCHOOLS	No. of STUDENTS	ASHRAFIEH SCHOOL	No. of STUDENTS	SCHOOLS IN EASTERN SECTIONS	No. of STUDENTS
Armenian Apostolic	St. Nishan School	560				
Armenian Evangelical	Armenian Evangelical College	(518 in all)	Evangelical Central High School			
Catholic	St. Hripsimiants School for girls	540				
Independent	Armenian College of Beirut	500				
A.G.B.U.	1. Hovagimian Manougian Boys' School 2. Tarouhi Hagopian Girls' School					

No. of Secondary Schools - 7.

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A.G.B.U.	1. Hovagimian Manougian Boys' School 2. Tarouhi Hagopian Girls' School					

No. of Secondary Schools - 7.

C H A P T E R I I.

A. Review of Literature.

B. Findings.

C. Discussion of Findings.

CHAPTER II

THE AIMS OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN THE ARMENIAN SCHOOLS OF BEIRUT

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Although the aims of teaching modern languages may vary from country to country and community to community, yet, the fact that these languages are now taught in schools all over the world seems to indicate that educators believe that they must confer some sort of advantage to society at large and the individual learning then in particular. It is the aim of this chapter to clarify in our minds what these advantages are as far as we are concerned, and, taking English as the language very widely taught in the Armenian schools of Beirut, to consider why exactly we are teaching it. Through this clarification of purpose it is hoped to have a more definite idea of how to organise and carry on the teaching of English in these schools.

Review of Literature. The first reasons given for the inclusion of modern languages in the syllabus are often practical ones, usually envisaging their immediate use by the individual student learning them, for further study or in his future career. Yet, before taking these it may be worth while to consider a few reasons that are not so immediately utilitarian.

In a publication by UNESCO, called "The Teaching of Modern Languages," which is a report on the International Seminar held in Ceylon in 1953, there are some interesting reasons for their inclusion, given by a group of representatives from eighteen countries, among them forty outstanding scholars in the field.

The role of language as the key to the understanding of other peoples is given as one of the important reasons for teaching foreign languages. Even if the existing attitude between peoples is one of indifference, the study of foreign languages makes possible the discovery of goodwill through better communication.[1] "The shrinking of the world, and the tension which characterises the relations between the nations have given an increased importance to the concept of language as communication."[2] The good language teacher should therefore be able not only to teach the language, but to digress into the fields of geography, history, folklore, art, philosophy and music of the country whose language he is teaching and, as is apparently the case in many countries of Western Europe "turn his modern language classroom into an enclave of foreign soil, rather like an embassy, with a distinctive atmosphere heightened by the use

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1. Unesco, The Teaching of Modern Languages, p. 12.
2. Ibid., p. 12.

of 'realia' of all kinds."[3] The seminar was strongly of the opinion that knowledge of other countries "cannot be anything but beneficial both to the individual and to the community to which he belongs."[4] The study, however, should avoid adulation of any kind, and be as objective as possible, avoiding generalisations and clichés, and train the pupil in the appreciation of a civilization different from his own. "In this way he can be brought, through the study of modern languages to a fuller awareness of mankind, a richer knowledge of himself, and a clearer realization of the place in the world community of both his own and foreign countries."[5]

This stress on international understanding is in keeping with the other aim which is preparing the student to live in the world today. This has caused a great deal of rethinking and reconsidering of methods, materials, ways of evaluating and the psychological basis of language teaching. The emphasis has shifted from classical to modern languages, and to traditional teachers this has meant a shift in values. Although there was general agreement that this shift to the understanding and speaking, beside the reading and writing of a modern language was now

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3. Ibid., p. 31.
4. Ibid., p. 33.
5. Ibid., p. 32.

an accepted reality, those at the seminar who were in favour of the conservative approach to language teaching apparently criticised the stress laid on the achievement of mere conversational ability by some upholders of modern methods.[6] However, the advocates of the more progressive type assured the others that conversational ability was only a beginning, and oral methods only the basis for the more humanistic approach to follow later.[7]

At the seminar there was apparently general agreement that the teaching of modern languages should rank with the classical languages and with the study of arts and sciences "as an instrument of education capable of developing the highest cultural qualities: the mastery of the physical organs of speech; the intellectual qualities of mental discipline, receptivity to and critical appreciation of new ideas; the power of self-expression; the emotional and spiritual potentialities afforded by access to the finest expressions of human experience and aspirations."[8] In fact, the aim of modern language teaching should be, with the development of self-knowledge and knowledge of other men, "the cultivation of a sense of human solidarity."

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6. Ibid., p. 13.
7. Ibid., p. 13.
8. Ibid., p. 19.

One last aim, which in reality is part of the humanistic aim in the teaching of modern languages is worth mentioning here. The following is a small extract from a paper presented by the President of the French Language Teachers' Association,[9] who, summing up the part of his paper on "Modern Languages and the Training of the Mind," says of the task of the modern language teacher:

> "It consists in showing, firstly, without preaching and without humiliating the child, how difficult it is for anyone to understand the thought of a foreigner, even when it is translated, and how difficult it is to express it in one's own language, even when it is understood. This demonstration will help to foster modesty in the individual--intellectual modesty which is the rarest of all. To show what there is to admire in a foreign country is a means of inducing national modesty, which is perhaps the most necessary and the finest form of patriotism. Without ceasing to exercise political vigilence, to encourage young people to be tolerant in their attitude, to help them to understand why other people act as they do, to put themselves in their place, to forgive where necessary, and above all to abandon collective conceit and unjustified pride in the wrong things--surely all this is within the scope of the modern language teacher who takes seriously his responsibilities for the training of the minds committed to his care."[10]

Although deliberate planning of these aspects of language teaching is not as simple as drawing up a syllabus, yet, both in the preparation of teachers and the planning

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9. Emmanuel Handrich, Professor of German at the Lycée, Henry IV.
10. Ibid., p. 28.

of English courses they should be given serious thought and consideration.

However, as the writers of another "The Teaching of Modern Languages"[11] point out, the division or classification of aims of language teaching into cultural and utilitarian is rather arbitrary, and "there is much of culture in all true utility and and much of utility in all true culture,[12] and, as they point out, a solid, basic grounding must precede all cultural enjoyment and cultural benefits derived from the study of modern languages.

Since the more utilitarian aspects of modern language teaching are now to be taken up, it is proposed to concentrate on one modern language, English, which is the subject of this study. Bearing in mind the aspects of modern language teaching discussed so far, let us consider why English in particular is taught in the Armenian schools of Beirut.

The Aims of Teaching English. One of the questions that usually rise in connection with the teaching of modern languages in such countries as England and the U.S. is which particular one to choose from among a number that

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11. Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools. The Teaching of Modern Languages.
12. Ibid., p. 21

present themselves--French, Spanish, German, Italian, Russian and so on. Although it is interesting to note the points raised in a discussion of the merits of these, the question in the Lebanon, in reality is more simple yet more complicated.

It is simple in that, given the position of English in the world today, and the educational needs and staffing facilities in the Lebanon, there is very little doubt but that English should be the language chosen for the Armenian students. The laws of Lebanon stipulate that a foreign language shall be taught in the elementary grades, beginning with the first year, that is, when the child is six years old.[13] Decree No. 6998, Article II, after saying that the Elementary Cycle courses, covering a period of five years will have Arabic as the medium of instruction except where the Foreign language is taught as a language, goes on, "Teaching shall, beginning with the fourth year, familiarise the students with the scientific terms in French or English--according to the wish of the student--in Arithmetic and science and teach them how to use these terms correctly."[14] Therefore the foreign language taught has to be one of these languages, and it seems more con-

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13. Ministry of National Education, Program of Studies, Program of the Elementary cycle, p. 1.
14. Ibid., p. 5.

venient to choose English rather than French at the moment. The above decree is intended for government elementary schools. Private schools or schools run by the different religious communities have a certain amount of freedom within limits. However, as Arabic becomes stronger in the Armenian schools, they may adopt the regular government schedule too. Even when they do this, however, teaching English or French will still be enforced by law.

The complication arises when we consider that in reality English is not the first but second modern language that Armenian students have to study apart from their mother tongue. The first is Arabic, which, we all agree, must come before English for it is of the utmost importance to Armenian students since it is the language of their adopted country. There is a strong tendency to strengthen Arabic in the Armenian schools today, a number of them starting its teaching in the kindergarten, but whatever the outcome of this may be in the years to come, it is felt that English will not come before either Arabic or Armenian and its place will have to be that of a second modern language. The fact that French is taught as yet a third modern language in most of the Armenian schools (thirteen out of fourteen of the schools whose heads were sent questionnaires teach it) makes it very necessary to reassess our aims in the teaching of modern

languages, and decide which languages are really essential, and which should take priority over others.

The situation is still further complicated by the fact that both Arabic and English are not taught only as languages, but are used as media of instruction in both the Armenian primary and secondary schools.

In the primary schools certain subjects are taught in Arabic in accordance with state laws. At the moment the standard of Arabic is not very high in these schools, and to make quite sure that the subjects are adequately taught, some schools give parallel lessons in Armenian thus crowding an already overcrowded curriculum.

Some of the secondary schools teach certain subjects in English for various reasons. One reason is that some of their students intend to continue their education in English. Another is that it is more convenient to teach in English as regards textbooks and teachers, who often know the textbooks and find it easier to use English terminology than to translate it into Armenian. Often there are no textbooks in Armenian on the subjects, and in spite of the faulty English of the teachers it is necessary to have the subjects taught in English. In some cases English has to

be the medium of instruction for the students are being prepared for the General Certificate of Education examination and have to write it in English. In a few cases the general bias of the school makes it adopt English as a medium of instruction. One school, for instance, definitely stated that their reason for teaching English was connected with their particular religion. Since all their religious literature was written in English they felt it was necessary to teach it to their students.

Leaving aside these complications peculiar to Armenian schools, let us return to English as the language of our choice, and first consider its importance in the world today, and then its importance in the Lebanon.

English is on the way to becoming a world language. It is the mother-tongue of over 200,000,000 people.[15] Its speakers are found in such widely scattered areas as Canada and Australia, the United States and Great Britain, New Zealand and South Africa. In addition to this it is spoken and read by millions of Europeans, Africans, Chinese, Indians, Pakistanis, Japanese, South Americans not to mention the countries of the Middle East. It is now a pre-

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15. F.G. French, The Teaching of English Abroad, Part I, p. 9.

professional requirement in South America,[16] and many Asian countries are teaching it as a second language.[17] Thus a knowledge of English will ensure understanding and being understood in a very great many places in the world. English is also one of the important languages used by the Agencies of the United Nations, the United Nations itself. It is used in international conferences and by associations of medical men, scientists, educators and a great many others who meet on an international basis.

The world has shrunk immeasurably in our times, and is likely to shrink further in the near future with the wonderful vistas that recent scientific discoveries open before our eyes. Facilities for travel now make it within the means of far more people to visit other lands and see other cultures. English is perhaps the most useful language that Armenian students could have for this purpose, whether they travel for pleasure, on business, or to further their education.

The world is becoming smaller in more ways than one. The vast network of broadcasting stations is bringing very close together the distant parts of the world. English is

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16. A.W. Markwardt, "Motives for the Study of Modern Languages", Selected Articles from Language Learning, p. 9.
17. A. Cochran, Modern Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language, p. 3,

one of the languages most used for this. Even on a mediocre wireless set one is able to hear in Beirut broadcasts in English from Sweden, Switzerland, Pakistan, Jordan, Egypt, and a number of other countries.

One has only to glance at the periodical material displayed in the bookshops of Beirut to see how much is produced and is available in English here. There are newspapers produced in English in such countries as Egypt and the Lebanon and Greece, not to mention the innumerable ones produced in the English-speaking parts of the world.

English is the language in which perhaps more of the fruits of scientific and industrial research are published than any other in the world. Translation could not possibly hope to keep pace with what appears every day and every week in pamphlets, periodicals and books, so that a knowledge of English should be an indispensable asset for a young person taking up a scientific career. Translation may be useful and necessary for secondary school textbooks, but any advanced work in science is of necessity dependent on the language in which the latest books appear. Since English is such an important language in this respect our students are very likely to be unable to take up a scientific career without it.

World commerce, too, has kept pace with the development of science and transportation. Of all the Middle Eastern countries, the Lebanon, in its own way, is perhaps the most involved in this. It carries on a great deal of the entrepot trade of this part of the world, and is an important banking centre. It is not only as a seaport that Beirut is involved in this, but the airport is one of the most important in the Middle East and may become as important as the port of Beirut in trade, as well as in passenger traffic.

The economic and industrial development of the Middle East will create a need for a greater number of technicians and specialists in diverse fields. A knowledge of English should be an invaluable asset in not only opening the way to a variety of occupations before Armenian students, but also in helping them to maintain and adequately perform the tasks allotted to them in their different occupations. If one considers the innumerable pamphlets issued by the various departments of the government of the United States alone, many of which are available in U.S.I.S. libraries all over the Middle East, one realises what a wealth of information there is in English available to anyone, ranging from packaging to poultry farming, from banking to bee-keeping,

from carpentry to canning, to mention only a very few.

We have already said that there is much of utility in culture and much of culture in utility. If we turn to the cultural advantages that English may give to our students they seem as numerous as those that are more immediately utilitarian.

A knowledge of English will not only keep our students in touch with the works and lives of their contemporaries, but will provide them with the means of getting great enjoyment through reading all the great works that the treasuries of English and American literature contain. Translations, however good, can never be a substitute for the works they represent, and English literature is so rich, and contains such a variety of different kinds of works that it is not possible to have access to all of them through translations.

Because of its position as the language of so many people in the world, and the culture attained by the people speaking it, a far greater number of the world's classics have been translated into English than into Armenian. We have already said that a translation is a poor substitute for an original work, but since it is not possible to learn all the languages in which valuable works are produced, surely it is better to read them in really fine translations in English

than not to read them at all, or to read some of them in mediocre translations in Armenian.

Other works, perhaps of no great literary value, but important as sources of information on history, education, political science, philosophy, psychology, and a great many other subjects are also found in English translations and make the learning of English worth while.

How much of all these aims in learning English do the students see themselves? How motivated are they as far as the study of English is concerned? This is a question difficult to answer, but, although even the oldest of them may "apprehend them but vaguely"[18] yet, if they are explained to them, specially in the case of students in the Lebanon, they may view them with more conviction than English schoolboys apparently are likely to do.[19] Learning English in the Lebanon, where it is going to be such an asset in whatever the student may undertake, is quite different from the study of French or Germany in England.

Be that as it may, the teachers in Lebanon may find it easier to make their objectives, even the ultimate ones, those of their students too. It may be that the more vague

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18. Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools, op. cit., p. 18.
19. Ibid., p. 18.

aspects of their aims may be incomprehensible to the students but it is a very sound teaching maxim that children will participate in learning activities if they see some relationship between these activities and the goals they personally want to achieve. Concommitant learning, we know, can be as important as the central element of the learning activity. Therefore, keeping in mind the concommitants they desire, educators should analyse the needs and motivating powers at work within their pupils and do their teaching of English with them in view.

The motives of students may vary greatly, but these variations will probably come in the later years of studying English. It should then not be too difficult to make students see that several aims may be pursued at the same time in learning English. Whether they wish to prepare for certain exams, or learn English for commercial, technical or professional purposes, or for the study of English literature, or only to understand certain scientific texts rather than produce it as a language, they may all find common ground in the classroom, and several aims may be pursued concurrently. However, the role of the teacher is an important one, for even the students who are only dimly aware of why they wish to study English, the emotional

response to the teacher is of great importance. What is learned in a classroom, and how it is learned may depend a great deal on the relationship between teacher and pupil.

The purpose of teaching English may also be viewed in the light of many factors that the heads of the schools have to consider. Some of these factors are the time at their disposal, the number of years their students have for the study of English, the length of periods and the importance of English in relation to other subjects on the curriculum. Other factors are the teachers at their disposal, the range and ability of their pupils, the physical amenities in both the school and the homes of their pupils. There are also the demands of parents to consider, the laws of the state, the requirements of institutions of higher learning and examinations to be taken by their pupils, and a great many other things.

Findings. Since these are questions for the heads to consider, it is perhaps time to give a brief account of their opinions as to the general aims of the teaching of English in their schools.

Questionnaires were sent to the heads of fourteen schools. Two were heads of secondary schools with primary

sections, so we have the opinions of twelve headmasters representing fourteen schools.

The questionnaires consisted of a number of preliminary questions about numbers in schools of both students and teachers, and the time given to English and other languages. The main part of the questionnaire, however, consisted of a number of varied reasons for the teaching of English, not put down in any specific order, but including humanistic, cultural and purely utilitarian reasons for the teaching of English. There were ten of these suggested reasons in the questionnaire, and the heads were asked to indicate five out of these which, in their opinion, were the most important. At the end of these there was space left for the addition of further reasons for the teaching of English that they might consider worth putting down.

Four of the twelve heads made additions to the reasons already given. The reason for teaching English in one school was a religious one. Apparently all the literature concerning the particular church to which this school belonged was in English, and they therefore taught it so that their students might be able to understand it. They also prepared their students for admission to a religious college near

Beirut where all subjects were taught in English. Two schools gave the importance of English in the Middle East as a reason for teaching it. Two heads gave Anglo-Saxon education as superior to others. One of them stressed its spiritual and logical character, and the other said that Anglo-Saxon culture was more healthy and gave greater importance to moral and spiritual values. In one school, apparently, the reason for studying English was a desire to emigrate to the United States on the part of students. One headmaster said that through English it was possible to get acquainted with the civilization of Europe without the help of Greek and Latin, and that the teaching of English was educationally more simplified and made easy for students. One headmaster said that unfortunately they had to rely on French and give greater prominence to it because the fees at A.U.B. were beyond the means of their students.

The following table shows the result of the questionnaire analysis. The reasons are put down in their order of importance in the opinion of the headmasters, the column on the right showing the number of approvals that each question was given.

REASONS FOR TEACHING ENGLISH IN THE ARMENIAN SCHOOLS OF BEIRUT	NUMBER OF APPROVALS
One of the Universities in the Lebanon uses English as a means of instruction, therefore the study of this language is indispensable for those of our students who wish to continue their education there.	9
A very important part of modern scientific literature is written in English. If our students intend to continue their studies, the learning of English is essential for them.	8
English is one of the most important languages used in business and commerce. We should therefore teach it so that our students may be able to use it for purposes of trade and business.	8
A knowledge of English will give better chances to our students in their lives, and lead to better openings in careers.	7
English is the key to the literature of English-speaking peoples, and through translations made into English to that of other lands.	7

REASONS FOR TEACHING ENGLISH IN THE ARMENIAN SCHOOLS OF BEIRUT	NUMBER OF APPROVALS
A knowledge of English helps international understanding.	6
Books and periodicals published in English are important sources for understanding of the news and situation of the world.	5
Learning a foreign language will increase the intellectual ability of our students -- will lead to mental discipline.	5
Knowing a foreign language is the sign of a cultured and educated person.	4
The teaching of English satisfies the demands of parents and boards of Education.	4

Discussion of Findings. This table seems to indicate that the important aims of the headmasters of Armenian schools, put briefly, are the following:

1. To equip students for further study.
2. To equip students for future careers.
3. To help them appreciate English and World literature.

4. To help them understand the world they live in.
5. To produce cultured human beings.
6. To satisfy parents and education committees.

These are the wider aims of responsible heads in the Armenian schools. In what ways will they have a bearing on the actual planning of English teaching in these schools?

In any discussion of the aims of teaching English four main and definite objectives are usually given now. These are to teach people to hear and understand the spoken language, to speak it, to understand what they read, and finally to write it. The four abilities aimed at then are hearing and understanding, speaking, reading and writing, "with understanding as the main ingredient in each."[20] Naturally all these abilities will be within the limits of a certain amount of vocabulary and sentence patterns to begin with.

However, bearing in mind that these constitute the entire language ability of a person, and also bearing in mind the needs as expressed in the opinions of the head-masters of the Armenian schools, let us consider how important each of them is as a goal, and a means to help

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20. P. Gurrey, Teaching English As a Foreign Language, p. 7.

us attain the wider aims set before us.

The first ability, that of hearing and understanding the spoken language, is an essential part of the equipment which the students should be given whether they wish to go on with their studies in English or take up a commercial career, or go into industry. At the university it will be necessary for them to attend lectures, to take part in discussions, and to understand their teachers and fellow students. In a commercial and industrial career it will be equally important to understand spoken English in their offices, in their relations with foreign customers, or employers or their foreign associates. The Lebanon, as has already been said, is a very cosmopolitan land as far as trade goes, and whatever the nationality of the people they have to deal with, English will be very useful in establishing oral understanding with them.

To go on taking the aims of the headmasters in order of their importance, it could quite reasonably be said that an oral understanding of the language will help students in their appreciation of literature. It is now often possible to get great enjoyment from listening to various wireless programmes that give readings of poetry, plays and prose works. The theatre, the cinema, and

gramaphone records are other means through which an aural appreciation and enjoyment of great literature can take place.

If we go on to the next aim that of understanding the world in which the students live, the spoken word is again of great importance whether it comes over the radio, or in films, or whether it is spoken by people they come in contact with. If a knowledge of English increases the intellectual ability of a person, and is a sign of a cultured man, surely that knowledge should also apply to an understanding of the spoken word in a modern language. The desires of parents and education committees appear to be among the least important of the aims put down, and yet they, too, would now maintain that only a book-knowledge of English would not be sufficient.

However, there is perhaps one reservation to make here before going on to the next point. There is no question but that pronunciation is a very important element in speaking, and everything should be done to improve the pronunciation of teachers, and through that the pronunciation of students, but it is possible to be unduly anxious about perfection in intonation and accent. So long as students can be helped to produce a good and understandable imitation of spoken English, the long hours spent in endless repetitions

of sentences to make tone and stress and speed more like that of native speakers of English in America or England might be used to better advantage in drilling sentence patterns.

The next general aim, the ability to read with understanding is perhaps, for the moment, a more important part of the general language ability of students in the Lebanon. However useful speaking English may be, it is still through the written word that Armenian students will gather information in greater abundance for their studies, their commerce and for use in their various careers. It is still through the printed word that they will get a more representative and more true picture of Western culture and thought. Even in international affairs, the considered opinions of thinking men are not always available over the wireless or through the spoken word. They still have to rely on books and periodicals for these. If we take the humanistic aspect of language learning it is again comprehension of the written thoughts of past and present authorities that is going to give that breadth of understanding of humanity that is so desirable for our students. Not only reading, but reading with care and accuracy to understand the exact meaning of what they have before them

will help them form the habits of concentration and discipline which were found so valuable earlier on.

Writing a foreign language is perhaps the hardest skill to attain, for it involves almost everything mentioned so far and has other skills added to it. "To speech, listening and reading it adds spelling, handwriting, and punctuation,"[21] says F.G. French. According to him it is "the hardest task of all, and for many learners the least important."[22] This may apply to a good many of the students in the Armenian schools, but it certainly does not apply to those who intend to continue their studies in English. For them, and for those who wish to take up business or commercial careers it is a very important part of their language ability.

It would be interesting and profitable to make a study of the activities of the graduates of Armenian schools, for instance within the last ten years. It would then be possible to know the proportion of those continuing their studies in English or French, those taking up business or other careers that need these languages extensively, and those taking up crafts and factory work. This type of study

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21. F.G. French, The Teaching of English Abroad, p.6.
22. Ibid., p. 6.

would need involved cooperation from the schools in locating the students, and might need a great deal of time to find out the exact nature of the activities of the ex-students, either through interviews or correspondence. Another way of doing it might be an extended study over a period of five or ten years. This last method might be more yielding in information, but whatever the method, it was unfortunately felt that neither the involved cooperation of the schools nor the time needed allowed it to be done in connection with this paper. Nevertheless, it would be very useful to have the information for planning not only the English course, but the whole curriculum of Armenian schools in Beirut.

In the meantime, we have to rely on tradition, general experience and the opinions of the heads of the schools in determining whose needs should guide the planning of English courses in the schools. There is no doubt that at the moment it is the needs of the more intellectual students that are uppermost in the minds of most heads and people responsible in guiding the educational work of the community, hence the almost unbearable weight of the curriculum on all students. It cannot be denied that it is desirable for all students to have some skill in writing

English. However, a more careful analysis of the needs of all students may lead to a number of different approaches.

The question, in reality, is deeper than it would seem. Serious thinking should be done as to whether the needs of a comparatively few students should determine the basis for the approach to teaching English to the entire primary and secondary school population in the Armenian schools of Beirut.

As we saw, the laws of the state demand that a foreign language be taught in the primary school. This being the case English or French will have to be taught to all, though the wisdom of teaching both is a very doubtful thing. However, if English is chosen, and it has to be taught to all, would it not be possible to arrange the time-table so that several sims might be pursued by the school at the same time? It should be possible, based on the opinions of teachers, to make groupings within the school and to put the children with promising language ability together so that a more academic approach might be used with them, and a more practical approach with others. Or, within the limits of the law, it should be possible to give the required time at the language to all pupils and to continue its teaching only with those who show at least some

ability for it. If a student has no linguistic ability, and if continued study in overcrowded conditions of both syllabus and actual numbers is not going to help him much, is it wise to continue teaching a foreign language? The authors of "The teaching of Modern Languages" put the situation rather neatly in the following way.

"Now there are some subjects of study in which a little knowledge is better than nothing: geography, music and botany are diffidently suggested as examples. There are others where a little knowledge is very dangerous: medicine and surgery. There are yet others in the middle position, where a smattering is futile: such are Modern Languages."[23]

The consideration of almost any problem raises this question of the curriculum in Armenian schools. In the next chapter a more detailed account of it will be given, but it is impossible to conclude this chapter on aims without considering the implications of its weight on planning the English course. The fact that French, as well as English, is taught in all but one of the fourteen sample schools taken for this study gives some indication of the issues

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23. Association of Assistance Masters, op. cit., p. 20.

raised. It is therefore enough to say here that children are truly overburdened from very tender years up to the time when they graduate from secondary schools.

It is therefore with a deep concern not only for the health and enjoyment of school on the part of students, but for keeping up a love of study in them, that a plea is made here for reorganising the entire curriculum in Armenian schools. Very serious thought should be given as to whether it is essential to teach both English and French to all students. The importance of English has been pointed out in this chapter, and the usefulness of French in the Lebanon is only too evident to most people. To leave one out might seem an evil, but it may be a very necessary evil, and it might be the lesser of two evils. The greater one might be a futile smattering of two languages, added to an aversion to study of any kind, at least for some of the students. There may be other ways of dealing with the problem such as the postponement of certain subjects, or the omission of others, but the choice between English and French seems to be a very practical, if rather unpalatable way of solving part of the problem.

CHAPTER III.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF ENGLISH AND ARMENIAN.

A. Some differences in English and Armenian as languages.

B. Some characteristics of the Armenian language.

C. The sounds of English and Armenian.

CHAPTER III

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF ENGLISH AND ARMENIAN

Some Differences and Similarities in English and Armenian as Languages.

Having discussed the aims of teaching English in the Armenian schools of Beirut, it is now proposed to give very briefly some of the important differences in the two languages, and the difficulties that these present to Armenian students. An account of the Armenian language as it is at present will then be given, for it is felt that this has a direct bearing on the difficulties faced by students in learning English, and explains their attitude towards this.

Armenian and English both belong to a group of Indo-European languages which is sometimes called Indo-Germanic or Aryan. However, their divergence has taken place so long ago that the two languages, having developed in their own way, have very little in common now. What they have in common in vocabulary is almost unrecognisable to ordinary people, and it is linguists who can tell that in certain aspects they bear the marks of the same root language.

The two languages have had very different histories. English has grown out of the mixture of the dialects of the

Anglo-Saxon invaders of Britain. It has been enriched through contact with the romance languages of the Continent. This contact has come through the Church, the Norman Conquest, and later through the Renaissance and the study of the classics. The development of English has, on the whole, been due to natural growth and change, with no conscious effort on the part of its speakers to shape its destiny. Armenian, on the other hand, owing to different factors, has had periods of grave peril as a language. It has in two important phases of its history, through the conscious efforts of its speakers, assured permanence for itself and has become adapted for use by its present speakers.

The two languages, English and Armenian have, however, one minor thing in common which should facilitate the learning of English for Armenians. Neither language has grammatical gender. Therefore there is nothing like the complication that gender presents in such languages as French and Arabic. The only difficulty here for Armenian students is that English has three personal pronouns for the third person singular, "he", "she", and "it", whereas Armenian has only one that stands for all three. A number of teachers gave this as one of the difficulties faced by the Armenian students.

Armenian is still an inflected language whereas English has lost most of the inflexions that existed in it. The only surviving ones in the substantive in English are the 's', and 'es' of the plural, and the ' 's' of the possessive case. But English has the forms "David's son" as well as "The son of David" so that even this inflexion is not as much used as its counterpart in Armenian. The loss of inflections has meant a much wider use of prepositions in English. This, as we shall see later, constitutes one of the difficulties faced by Armenian students.

English has developed a very intricate system of tenses through the use of auxiliaries, whereas Armenian depends far more on inflexions. Standard Armenian does not possess a Present Continuous tense, and the auxiliary "to have" is not used at all. The correct use of tenses in English is one of the important difficulties of Armenian students, specially the use of "will", "shall", "would", "could", "do" and "did" in the compound tenses and in questions, negations, and affirmations.

One difficulty about the English language peculiar to the Middle East is that it has been taught both by American and British people. There is great confusion in the Armenian schools as far as pronunciation goes, but

apart from that there are distinct differences in usage. M. West, in an article in "English Language Teaching" advises people to avoid acquiring a hybrid form of the language.[1] Observation showed, however, that this is easier said than done, because people seemed to be unaware of the differences. The following are a few examples of differences taken from the list given by West.[2]

American Usage	English Usage
All that much	so much
baby carriage	perambulator
bar	public house
biscuit	scone
calculate	think, believe
candy	sweets ("candy" refers to crystalised sugar.)
check	bill
cookies	sweet biscuits
cunning	amusing, attractive
elevator	lift
fall	autumn
faucet	tap
homely	ugly
locate	find
mad	angry
mail	post, letters
sidewalk	pavement
Faithfully yours,	Yours faithfully
Do you have?	Have you got? Have you?
Half after six	Half past six.

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1. M. West, "American & British Usage", English Language Teaching, Vol. XII, No. 2, Jan-March, 1958, p. 41.
2. Ibid., p. 41-45.

Apart from these perhaps minor differences, though, American English presents the same difficulties as English as far as grammar, sentence construction, use of prepositions and word order in general are concerned.

Perhaps the most important thing in teaching English is to remember that through all the changes in its history English has become an analytic rather than a synthetic language. The loss of inflexions has enabled the language to develop a wonderful capacity for clear and exact communication of thought and feeling, but it has made word order of utmost importance. If a language is inflected it does not matter very much if the words are not obsolutely in the right order, for the word-endings indicate the number, tense, and person of verbs, and the cases of the nouns, and pronouns. In a language where nouns, verbs and adjectives have no difference in form for these things, sentences must be formed after regular patterns. It is for this reason that drill in sentence patterns is of such paramount importance for beginners of English, in whom the habits of a new language pattern must be inculcated as early as possible, and with as much care as possible. It is said that the most difficult thing in learning a new language is forgetting the sentence patterns of your own, and adopting those of the new language, S. Potter, in his

"Our Language", writing for English-speaking readers says, "we do not learn to form sentences instinctively, as we learn to breathe and walk. We repeat sentences from memory, and we vary them by analogy." He says our sentences may be varied, but basically, their forms have come to us from other sources.

"You have inherited them from the immediate, the distant, and the long distant past. You have carried with you in your mind a certain number of sentence-patterns, few or many according to your linguistic capacity, and into these patterns you have fitted the varied words expressing your thoughts and desires.[3] According to him the sentence is the most important unit of English speech, and teachers of English would do well to bear this in mind always, for it is almost impossible to exaggerate the importance of teaching sentence patterns to beginners.

Some Characteristics of the Armenian Language.

The coming of the Armenians into their mountainous land on the southern slopes of the Caucases is now thought

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3. S. Potter, Our Language, p. 90.

to have taken place about the 10th and 8th centuries B.C.[4a]

The language they spoke was an Indo-European tongue, but the land they came to was already inhabited by non-Aryan peoples, and the language of these people is supposed to have had some influence on Armenian accent and phonology.[4] Armenian is not connected with any other specific Indo-European tongue, being a separate branch, but it has a number of words that are common to languages descended from the parent Aryan language. Among the ones it shares in common with English are the following:-

star - աստղ (asdr)[5]

foot - ոտն (vodn)

cow - կով (gov)

door - դուռ (tour)

daughter - դուստր (tousdr)

eye - աչն (agn)

snow - ձիւն (tzun)

feather - փետուր (petour)

navigation - նաւ (nav) meaning boat.

noun - անուն (anoun)

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4. A.C. Baugh , History of the English Language, p. 28.
5. All transliteration in this study has been done according to Western Armenian pronunciation.

4[a]. A. Meillet, ed., Les Langues du Monde, p. 36.

argent - արծաթ (ardzat)

light - լոյս (looys)

day - տիւ (div)

mind - միտ (mid)

angle - անկիւն (angun)

fire - հուր (hour)

orphan - որբ (vorp)

sword - սուր (soor)

martial - մարտ (mard) - fighting, battle.

ten - տասն (dasn)

eight - ութ (out)

nine - ինն (inn)

mother - մայր (mair)

sister - քոյր (kouyr)[6]

From the 3rd century B.C. to the 3rd century A.D. Armenia was ruled by a Parthian aristocracy and kings of Parthian origin, so that there are many Iranian words in the language.

With Christianity Armenia turned her face gradually towards the west, towards the Greeks with whom she now

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6. These words were taken from lists given by S. Potter, op. cit., p. 13, and Ghazarian, S. Gh., Hayots Lezvi Badmutyun, p. 59-60, and paired off by the writer, and in a few cases the counterpart provided.

belonged to the universal church. This was to prove of immense significance in her cultural as well as political history.

Through Christianity and the work of the Translators and later scholars a very great number of words have come into Armenian. Adjarian gives as 916 the number of Greek words that found their way into the language.[7] Among the ones Armenian shares with English are the following.

episcopal	- եպիսկոպոսական	(ebiscobosagan)
ecclesiastic	- եկեղեցական	(egeghetsagan)
catholic	- կաթողիկէ	(gatoghigé)
abbot	- աբբա	(appa)
alabaster	- ալապաստր	(alabastr)
academy	- ակատեմիա	(agatemia)
barbarian	- բարբարոս	(parparos)
zephyr	- զեփիւր	(zepur)
lamp	- լամբար	(lampar)
litre	- լիտր	(lidr)
cherry	- կեռաս	(geras)
quitar	- կիթառ	(guitar)
heretic	- հերետիկոս	(hérédigos)

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7. H. Adjarian, Hayots Lezvi Badmoutyun, p. 10.

machine - մեքենայ (mekena)

patriarch - պատրիարք (badriarch)

spunge - սպունք (sbunk)

titan - տիտան (didan)

There are a great many others, but it is not necessary to search for more for the purposes of this paper. Of the Hebrew words that came in through the translations, and which also have found their way into English the following are examples.

aleluya - ալէլուեա (aleluya)

amen - ամէն (amen)

gehenna - քեհեն (kehen)

satan - սատանա (sadana)

rabbi - ռաբբի (rappi)

Abraham - Աբրահամ (Apraham)

Anna - Աննա (Anna)

Jacob - Յակոբ (Hagop)

David - Դաւիթ (Tavit) etc.

The significance of these borrowings both in English and Armenian, goes far deeper than similarities in vocabulary. It has meant that speakers of both languages have the background of the Bible and Christianity for their culture, and the influence of this on both the written

machine - մեքենայ (mekena)
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The significance of these borrowings both in English and Armenian, goes far deeper than similarities in vocabulary. It has meant that speakers of both languages have the background of the Bible and Christianity for their culture, and the influence of this on both the written

and spoken languages is very great as far as imagery, proverbs, sayings, references to scripture and allusions to stories go. To give a few examples of sayings common in both languages it will be sufficient to cite the following in English, stating that they have the same meaning in Armenian:-

Deluge,
The wisdom of Solomon,
Ballaam's ass,
Tower of Babel,
Golgotha,
Carrying one's cross,
Judas' kiss,
To wash one's hands of something,
To be a pharisee,
The widow's mite,
The worship of mammon,
The prodigal son.

Arabic has had two stages of influence on Armenian. One, the first, was after 640 when the first Arab conquest of Armenia took place, but this was chiefly on literary style, and not language. The second stage was the Cilician stage, when great numbers of Armenians had migrated to

Cilicia and founded a kingdom there. Here we get many words, specially those to do with medicine, and botany and here are a few that English has as well.

hashish - հաշիշ (hashish)
houri - հուրի (houri)
opium - ափիոն (apion)
Emir - ամիր (amir)
Sultan - սուլթան (sultan)

and a few that have come to Armenian, through Arabic, but are also found in English as

sandal wood - սանդալ (santal)
balsam - բալասան (palasan)
narcissus (the flower) - նարկիս (nargis)
gypsum - ճիպս (gyps)

The first Turks entered Armenia in 1021. From then on, for about 900 years parts of Armenia have been under Turkish domination. Turkish has had a very great influence on the spoken language of Armenians, in fact some Armenians lost their language completely and became Turkish-speaking, specially in the West. Others borrowed great numbers of words but the written language was not influenced. Turkish speaking Armenians even produced

some literature written in Armenian letters but it has not survived. Turkish, however, has had influence on modern Armenian grammar and idiom.

Spoken Armenian. Spoken Armenian developed independently of "krapar", or the "written language" though the constant use of the latter in church services, religious and scholarly works, its beauty and sacred character together with the fact that it was the language of what came to be known as the "Golden Age" of Armenian literature were bound to have an effect on the formation of the spoken language. Succeeding generations of writers used it as a model and rejected every foreign influence from their own language, though the actual spoken language of the people was undergoing profound changes. The distance between the unchanging written language and the evolving vulgar speech gradually widened as time went on.

Modern Armenian. There are, at present two main branches of "ashkharhapar" or the "spoken language".

1. Eastern Armenian, used in Armenia, Russia, and Iran mainly.

2. Western Armenian, used in the Middle East, Europe, America, and wherever Western Armenians have migrated in the last century or so.

Both these languages have become literary languages and works of great beauty and worth have been produced in both. Their growth has been simultaneous, but on slightly different lines. We are at present concerned with Western Armenian for it is the language the students in Beirut use.

The Armenians in the Lebanon are mostly those that were lucky enough to escape the great catastrophe of World War I and to find shelter in a friendly land. They speak the Western Armenian of Asia Minor.

The two languages, Eastern and Western Armenian have been developing separately, in rather different ways.

The following are some of the differences between the two.

1. Pronunciation

There are considerable differences in this, specially in the sounds of the consonants. There are also a few other differences in such things as the endings of substantives when declined, like "լեզուի" (lezoui) which is always "lezvi" in Eastern Armenian, but sometimes "lezouyi" in Western Armenian. There are significant differences in the pronunciation of foreign words, especially European words which Eastern Armenian borrows with great freedom through Russian.

2. Spelling

There are differences in the spelling of individual words such as կեթրոն (getron) and կենդրոն (gendron) բեղ (pegh) and պեխ (bekh)[8], but the main difference comes in the new system of spelling that Eastern Armenian has adopted. This has been ameliorated since its early days, but is still considerably different from the spelling of Western Armenian.

3. Grammar

There are wide grammatical differences in the use of the article, in declentions, personal pronouns, relative pronouns, the conjugation of verbs and in adverbs.

4. Vocabulary

Apart from individual words which vary in form ամաչել (amachel) and ամչնալ (amchnal) առաւօտ (aravod) and արտու (ardou) ընկնել (engnel) and իյնալ (iynal)[9] - Eastern Armenian has now borrowed so many European words that, in certain instances, specially in scientific prose, it has become almost unintelligible to Western Armenians who are not familiar with European languages.

Changes in Grammar in Western Armenian. The result

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8. Ibid., p. 555.
9. Ibid., See lists on pp. 562-566.

of all these developments has been the simplification of the grammar of Modern Armenian. It will be useful to give very briefly some of these changes here.

1. Substantives

There has been a considerable amount of simplification in the declention of substantives. There were, in classical Armenian, twelve regular ways of declining nouns. This has been reduced to one, with a number of exceptions which have irregular declentions, but there are still, in the regular declention, four case endings. They are as follows:

Singular

Nominative) Accusative)	No change in the form of the noun.	պարտէզ (bardéz)
Genitive) Dative)	Addition of 'ի' (i) to the noun.	պարտէզի (bardézi)
Ablative)	Addition of " է" (é) to the noun.	պարտէզէ (bardéze)
Instrumental)	Addition of "ով" (ov) to the noun.	պարտէզով (bardézov)

Plural

The regular way to form plurals in Armenian is the

addition of "եր" (er) to words of one syllable, and "ներ" (ner) to words of more than one syllable.

The substantive normally agrees with the verb in number.

Nominative) Accusative)	Addition of the suffix forming the plural only.	պարտէզներ (bardéznér)
Genitive) Dative)	Addition of "ու" (ou) to the noun in plural.	պարտէզներու (bardéznérou)
Ablative)	Addition of "է" (é) to plural noun.	պարտէզներէ (bardéznéré)
Instrumental)	Addition of "ով" (ov) to plural noun.	պարտէզներով (bardéznérov)

Pronouns

These, like the English pronouns, have undergone less change, and there are six case forms. Only one example, the first person of the Personal Pronouns will be sufficient to illustrate this.

	Singular		Plural	
Nominative -	ես	(yes)	մենք	(menk)
Accusative -	զիս	(zis)	մեզ	(mez)
Genitive	- իմ	(im)	մեր	(mer)
Dative	- ինձի	(indzi)	մեզի	(mezi)
Ablative	- ինձմէ	(intzmé)	մեզմէ	(mezme)
Instrumental -	ինձմով	(intzmov)	մեզմով	(mezmov)

It might be useful to remind the reader here that there is no gender in Armenian pronouns, and the third person singular of the English pronouns, with its three forms for feminine, masculine and neuter constitutes one of the difficulties of Armenian students.

Verbs

There were four modes of conjugating verbs in classical Armenian. These have been reduced to three in Western Modern Armenian. They are verbs the infinitives of which end in ել (el), իլ (il) and ալ (al) and they differ in the endings of the different tenses.

Compared with English the Armenian system of conjugation appears simple, in that it does not possess all the tenses formed by the use of auxiliaries in English. The Present Continuous, as we saw, does not exist at all. It would take too long to give the differences in the two systems of conjugation here, but the important thing to remember is that in Armenian there are far more inflexions, and in English more tenses formed by auxiliaries.

Adjectives

In Classical Armenian there was agreement between

the adjectives and substantive. In Modern Armenian this has disappeared and consequently there is no difficulty in Armenian students grasping a similar situation in English.

Prepositions

Prepositions do not play as important a part in the formation of sentences as they do in English. This does not mean that they are not widely used, but the inflexions are so numerous still that the precise use of these words does not constitute such an important element in Armenian idiom as it does in English idiom. Indeed, perhaps the most difficult skill to be attained by Armenian students is the correct use of these very important but very tricky "structural words" that help to convey such precise and yet such subtle shades of meaning in English. One interesting thing that Adjarian points out is that they are not prepositions at all for they come after a noun in Modern Armenian.[10] In Classical Armenian they always came before a noun, hence the Armenian word նախադրութիւն (nakhatroutyoun) which means what "preposition" does in English. Adjarian says it really has no meaning in Modern Armenian, for there are only "postpositions" հետադրութիւն

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10. Ibid., p. 291

(hedatroutyoun) in that language.[11] This reversal of the order of words brings us to word order in Armenian which, as we pointed out before, constitutes such a problem to the students.

Word Order

Classical Armenian, like other ancient Indo-European languages, was free to change the order of words in sentences or phrases but, nevertheless, in ordinary writings there was a definite word order which was followed. This order is very like that of modern European languages.[12] In Modern Armenian, however, this order has been completely reversed. Before we take any examples it should be remembered that the inflexions at the ends of verbs often make the insertion of the subject unnecessary in Modern Armenian.

The following are examples that Adjarian gives.[13]

French: Jai vu l'oiseau qui chantait sur l'arbre.

Classical Armenian: Տեսի զթռչունն որ երգէր ի վերայ ծառոյն

(I saw the bird that sang on the tree)

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11. Ibid., p. 291.
12. Ibid., p. 291.
13. Ibid., p. 291.

Modern Armenian: Ծառին վրայ երգող թռչունը տեսայ։

(The tree on singing the bird I saw)

The English, as the sentence in brackets shows, is on the pattern of classical Armenian.

Here are a few more examples:

Classical Armenian: Սիրեէք զթշնամիս ձեր։

(Love enemies your)

Modern Armenian: Ձեր թշնամիները սիրեէք։
(Your enemies love)

Classical Armenian: Արարէք ձեզ բարեկամս ի մամոնայէ անիրաւութեան։
(Make yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness.)

Modern Armenian: Անիրաւ դրամէն բարեկամները պատրաստեէք ձեզի։[14]
(Unrighteous of money friends prepare yourselves)

Although these are examples to show the difference in word order in certain sentences, yet they are by no means representative of all sentences in Modern Armenian, and it would be easy to prove the opposite of this from exactly the same sources.

Modern Armenian is such a young language, and still in such a state of flux that here are a few more

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14. Both last examples from Archbishop E. Tourian's Parakidoutyun, pp. 17 and 36.

sentences, the reverse of what is normal in Modern Armenian. They seem also acceptable, in that they are both found in grammars written in the twentieth century.

1. եղբայրս գրեց իր պարտականութիւնը։
   (My brother wrote his homework)

2. ես կը սիրեմ իմ քոյրս։
   (I love my sister)

3. Ան կը կարդայ գիշերը։
   (He reads (at) night)[15]

and Աստուած տեսաւ ամէն բան։[16]
(God saw everything)

եւ անոնք նետեցին զանի առիւծներու գուբին մէջ։
(And they threw him the lions' den into.)[17]

Mechanics and Punctuation. The actual mechanics of the written form of Armenian should present few difficulties for Armenian students when they are studying English.

Like English Armenian writing starts on the left and proceeds to the right. Each letter is formed separately,

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15. All three examples from Z. Melkonian, Kordznagan Keraganoutyun Arti Hayeren Lezvi, p.65.
16. Tourian, op. cit., p. 11.
17. Ibid., p. 14.

syllable that contains the change in voice, thus.

Another sign, called a "երկար" (yergar) is placed on a sound that is to be lengthened while reading, thus.

The dash is used in the same way as in English, and so are brackets.

The apostrophe is also used in the same way as in English for dropped letters.

The Sounds of English and Armenian

This section discusses from a practical point of view the sounds of English and Armenian with a view to isolating some of the differences and difficulties. It does not presume to make a scientific analysis of sounds in either language.

One great problem which confronts us is not really connected with the English language as such, but is nevertheless a great difficulty. It is the fact that English has been taught in the Middle East by both English and American teachers. It may not matter very much at university level which variety the students know, but it presents very great problems with beginners, specially in connection with teachers, particularly if there are two or more teachers with differing pronunciations at the same school. The confusion of the children at a girls'

secondary school where the first year students came from twenty three different schools was all too apparent. Some of them even pronounced such words as "grass" in both the English and American ways within one short passage. It would be easy enough to decide for one or the other if the teacher problem allowed it, but unfortunately the teachers themselves have learned English at second or third hand sometimes from people who were taught by either English or American teachers, but who nevertheless produced what was their own version of these different pronunciations. So that, today, we find a variety of Armenian variations of American and English pronunciation being imitated by hundreds of pupils in the Armenian schools.

It is partly for this reason that a phonetic alphabet has not been used in the following brief glance at the sounds of English. So long as there is consistency in the use of either the English or the American type of pronunciation, it does not matter very much whether the vowel sound in "path" for instance, is pronounced one way or the other. The ordinary spelling of words has therefore been adhered to, but on the whole the standard English pronunciation has been in mind specially when

representing sounds in Armenian which came near to English ones.

There are, according to Fries, a great number of distinguishable differences of sound in each language. Yet, if one analyses a foreign language phonetically "he will find that practically no sound of that language is exactly like any one of his own."[18] And yet, in spite of this, most of us hear the sounds of our own tongue even when we think we hear different ones. What people hear in reality is not sounds of another language but "only the sounds of their mother tongue that are near to the new foreign language sounds."[19] Pronunciation, therefore is a twofold process. The learner must first hear accurately, and then learn, through this aural perception, to produce the sounds that he has recognised as distinct from those of his own language.

Let us then turn to the sounds of the English language and try to see where the greatest difficulties of our pupils will come.

The sounds of English may be divided into three groups: vowels, diphthongs or double vowels, and consonants.

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18. C.C. Fries, Teaching & Learning English as a Foreign Language, p. 10.
19. Gurrey, op. cit., p. 16.

Vowels

The number of vowels in English is usually given as eleven or twelve. Some of these are short and some long vowels. The following are lists of words containing both kinds.[20]

Short Vowels	Long Vowels
bid	bead
bed	bard
bad	board
body	booed
bud	bird
hood	
cupboard	

The very short vowel in cupboard is sometimes known as a neutral vowel and occurs often in English. It is best heard in the very short a of a book, a man, and at the end of such words as painter, better.[21]

These sounds may vary slightly from person to person in themselves, but in English they are distinctive sounds as far as meaning goes.

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20. Mostly taken from S. Potter, Op. cit., Table I, p. 63.
21. French, op. cit., p. 50.

In Armenian, on the other hand, there are only six vowels. They are the following:

ա - found approximately in c<u>o</u>me in English.

ե or է - found approximately in b<u>e</u>d in English.

ի - " " " b<u>i</u>d " "

ու - " " " h<u>oo</u>d " "

ը - " " " cupb<u>oa</u>rd "

ո or օ - " " " n<u>o</u>d "

ո (o) and ե (é) are like the examples given above in the middle and at the end of words, but become <u>yo</u> and <u>ye</u> at the beginnings of words.

We have said that these vowels are only approximately like their English counterparts, because they are all slightly longer than the examples given, but not as long as the long English vowels. Also, apart from slight variations, they are all the same length.

Armenians therefore find it very difficult to distinguish between such words as sh<u>i</u>p and sh<u>ee</u>p , r<u>ea</u>d and r<u>i</u>d, l<u>i</u>ve and l<u>ea</u>ve.

Another difficulty is the sound represented by the ե (e) and է (e). These are, as we said, like the vowel sound in b<u>e</u>d, but Armenians tend to pronounce b<u>a</u>d, and b<u>e</u>d, in the same way.

Another difficulty is making Armenians pronounce the long vowels in bard, board, and bird. They tend to shorten all these and pronounce the r distinctly, whereas it is not heard in English at all.

One important point to remember in comparing Armenian and English vowels is the frequent occurrence of the sound ը in Armenian. This sound is best heard in such words as cupboard, a book, a man, in English. It is sometimes called a neutral vowel and does not occupy an important position in English.[22] In Armenian, however, it is very often heard between consonants, or before clusters of consonants. It is sometimes written when it occurs in certain positions in words, but quite often it is pronounced without being written, especially with clusters of consonants.

One other point, slightly connected with this is the use of this sound for the vowel in such words as bus, sun, but. Unfortunately some Armenians are under the impression that the American way of pronouncing these vowels is to say them using the Armenian " ը" sound, that is, the neutral vowel in "cupboard".

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22. Ibid., p. 49-50.

Diphthongs

S. Potter gives nine diphthongs in English,[23] and so does F.G. French,[24] but Fries[25] only gives three phonemic ones in American English.

Here is a list of the ones most frequently used.

bayed, day hay.
bode, no, know.
bide, my, hide.
bowed, now, cow.
buoyed, Boyd, coy.
beard, hear, dear.
bared, there, mare.
bored, more, sore.
cured, hue, dew.

A diphthong is a result produced "by melting two vowels together,"[26] Potter says that it is "a whole series of sounds uttered by the speaker as one syllable, that is, with a single breath impulse, and heard by the person addressed as one unit of sonority."[27] These are supposed to be the most unstable of speech sounds and vary greatly

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23. Potter, op. cit., p. 63.
24. French, op. cit., p. 50.
25. Fries, op. cit., p. 11.
26. French, op. cit., p. 50.
27. Potter, op. cit., p. 64.

according to locality. "As you travel over the country you will observe infinite varieties of these five diphthongs from Scottish to Cockney[28] says Potter, and concludes that they are the least stable of the sounds of the Germanic languages. The Romance and Slavonic languages, on the other hand, seem to have relatively few diphthongs and are therefore more stable as languages in this respect.[29]

Armenian, too, has very few diphthongs. S.G. Ghazarian talking of Eastern Armenian says that there has been a tendency since early times to turn diphthongs into two distinct sounds, and this is still going on in contemporary Armenian.[30]

The examples he gives are:

ի - յի (you)

ա - յա (ya)

ոյ - ույ (ouy) etc.

A. Apeghian, in his small but very useful spelling dictionary gives the following as diphthongs in Armenian:[31]

այ - ay	ա - ya
ոյ - oy, ouy	ո - yo
	ի - you.

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28. Potter, op., cit., p. 64.
29. Ibid., p. 64.
30. Ghazaria n, op., cit., p. 422.
31. A. Apeghian, Oughghakragan Pararan, p. 27.

He says that they are pronounced with the aid of the յ (ny) "half-sound".[32] The sound y is usually taken to be a consonant. Here it is represented by the յ (y) of Armenian. Although Armenians in the West still go on spelling their diphthongs in the old accepted way, some of them have in reality also turned into two distinct sounds. Armenians tend to turn certain English diphthongs into single vowels or add a "y" sound to them. They usually tend to pronounce road as rod and here as heer, or hyer, pronouncing the r after a shorter i sound than is suggested in heer and hyer.

The consonants in English are the following.[33]

b - as in bus, rubber, tub.
p - as in pin, nip, happy.
d - as in door, nod, fodder.
t - as in tap, mat, matter.
k - as in kill, coal, sick.
g - as in give, rug, finger.
l - as in land, pill, pillow.
m - as in mat, jam, hammock.
n - as in name, sand, manner.
h - as in hare, home, who.
f - as in fat, staff, coffee.

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32. Ibid., p. 27.
33. Partly based on Fries, op. cit., p. 11 and 12.

v - as in very, live, ever.

w - as in wet, want, win.

r - as in rot, tar, borrow.

s - as in some, basic, mice, cats.

z - as in zero, raise, cousin, dogs.

th - as in thin, breath, throw.

th - as in then, breathe, other.

gn - as in singer, long, finger.

s - as in pleasure, measure, azure.

y - as in yet, beauty, you.

j - as in joke, wedge, judge.

These may seem to present fewer difficulties than the vowels and diphthongs, but in reality there are just as many problems connected with them.

It is not necessary here to give the Armenian consonants which are thirty in number, and usually divided into 21 simple and 9 compound ones.[34] It is sufficient here to give the difficulties as they arise in connection with English.

Let us first take the consonant sounds that have no approximate equivalents in Armenian.

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34. Ghazarian, op. cit., p. 420.

1. th.

Both sounds represented by this combination - thin and then - do not occur in Armenian. The tendency, therefore, is to pronounce the first a s an Armenian t and the second as an Armenian d.

2. W.

There is no sound that could be called approximate to this in Armenian. The tendency is usually to pronounce it as a v. In certain cases the spelling of a word in Armenian suggests a similar sound to the W because in early times ւ (v) had a "vowel-like sound, and ու (ou) was a diphthong and had an oո (ow) sound as, for example, the English ow sound in "mow".[35] Now the tendency is to insert a v between the neutral e that is sounded after the consonant, and the vowel following the ou sound.

Here are three examples.

թուապանություն - touapanoutyoun.

լուալ - loual.

քուէ - koue.

The English counterparts are transliterations, but the real sound of the words would be better represented by the following:

tvapanoutyoun
lval
kve

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35. Apeghian, op. cit., p. 39.

In each case, as was stated above, there is a very slight neutral e between the first consonant and the v. The insertion of this neutral e will be taken later when we consider consonant clusters.

3. ng.

This sound, as it occurs in singer has no equivalent in Armenian, where the two sounds of n and g often come together as in անկում (angoum) մանկական (mangagan)-- but the g sound is always distinctly pronounced. It is not, however, as difficult a sound for Armenians as the first two would seem to be, because the n gets a certain quality resembling the n in finger in Armenian words when it comes before a g sound.

d and t.

These sounds are formed in English by the tip of tongue touching the palate above the teeth, whereas in Armenian it is lower down in the mouth, and more than just the tip touches the teeth while sounding them.

r.

There are two 'r's in Armenian, and they are phonemic. The first ր (r) is much like the English r in "free", but the second ռ is made to vibrate and is much more stressed resembling the Scottish r in "circle". The tendency among Armenians is to pronounce all 'r's in English very distinctly like the first Armenian r.

This is partly due to their own phonetic alphabet, so that it is very difficult to get Armenian students to say words like "mother", "ford", and "hard" correctly, without sounding the r. Altogether the r sound constitutes a difficult item of pronunciation because it does not usually occur at the beginning of Armenian words and even such words as "road", "ring" and "rebel" are not really correctly pronounced for the tongue is usually kept rather flat as for an Armenian p. According to Apeghian there is a tendency to precede the r by a very slight neutral e (ը) sound. The examples he gives are ռուս (rouss - Russian) and րոպե (robe - moment).

h.

This sound is always pronounced in Armenian whether it occurs at the beginning, middle, or the end of a word, whereas it is only heard at the beginning of a word in English, and even then it is dropped in certain words like heir.

s.

The tongue is more flat in the formation of this sound in Armenian than in English.

k.

This sound in Armenian is more like the sound in kill than in coal, although even there the vowel coming

after it changes its quality slightly.

l, m, n, g, f, v, b, p, j, sh, ch, z, z(measure).

These are much the same in Armenian as in English.

Y.

This sound occurs very often in Armenian, as has been seen, with the so called diphthongs. It is also added to the letter ե (e) at the beginnings of words, and is represented by the letter յ (h) in the middle of world. Here are a few examples.

diphthong - լույս - louys - light

(h) - հայոց - hayots - of Armenians.

(e) - Երևան - Yerevan - Erevan.

There are a few difficulties connected with consonamt clusters.

In English double letters are usually pronounced as one sound. For instance, correct, has really one r sound, and yellow has one l sound. In Armenian usually double letters are pronounced as two sounds when they occur in such words as " ելլալ " (ellal - to be) Էմմա (Emma) and մրրիկ (mrrig - storm)

When there is a consonant cluster beginning with the sound s or sh or ch the neutral vowel is either added on at the beginning or between the first consonant,

s, sh, ch and what follows it. Here are a few examples:

Ստեփան	- Sdepan - pronounced	Esdepan (Stephen)	
ստախօս	- sdakhos - pronounced	sedakhos(liar)	
սփիւռք	- spurk - pronounced	espurk (diaspora)	
սգաստ	- skasd - pronounced	eskasd	
շրթունք	- shrtounk -	"	shertounk
չքնաղ	- chknagh -	"	cheknagh
շքեղ	- shkegh -	"	shekegh
զգեստ	- zkesd -	"	ezkesd

This is why Armenians often say "esmall" instead of "small", "eskin" instead of "skin" and "Espinney's" instead of "Spinney's".

The usual tendency in Armenian is to insert this neutral vowel when clusters of consonants occur in words.

Here are a few examples.

մթնել	- mtnel - pronounced	metnal.	
Գրիգոր	- Krikor -	"	Kerikor.
Բռնագալ	- prnagal -	"	pernagal.
նշան	- nshan -	"	neshan.
ամչնալ	- amchnal -	"	amechnal.
կարմրիլ	- garmril -	"	garmeril.
մանր	- manr -	"	maner.

This is only a general tendency and there are many cases where it does not occur, but we are concerned here only with the effect it has on English pronunciation, and this sometimes is to do the same in such words as transit, Providence, Christian, French. There is a slight tendency to introduce the e sound between the first and second consonants.

It will be necessary to refer back to most of the material discussed in the foregoing three parts of this chapter when we come to take the special difficulties in the actual business of classroom teaching later on. However, it was felt that even such a sketchy account of the differences between the two languages and their sounds would be of some use to the teacher of English in Armenian schools.

The non-Armenian teachers of English in the Armenian schools, and there are a few even now, will find it useful to have some idea of the state of the language of their students, its structure at the moment, and the difficulties in the oral production of the language. Unfortunately there is no literature, known to the writer, in the English language on this subject. It is hoped that the foregoing pages will have been of some use in

giving some of the facts and the difficulties attached to them.

Another reason for giving even a sketchy idea of the state Armenian it is in at the moment is that it makes us perhaps understand in a measure some of the confusion in the minds of our students. There are, as we saw, three separate and distinct Armenian literary languages with all of which our students are in constant contact. Most of them belong to the Apostolic Church of Armenia, and in church and in their worship they employ the classical language. In school, in the books they read and in their newspapers they come in contact with Western Armenian. In some of their outside reading they come in contact with Eastern Armenian. Unfortunately there is yet another type of Armenian that is the spoken language of most of their homes and friends. This colloquial Armenian is still full of the Turkish words and sayings that the renovators of the language fought so assiduously and with such zeal. It is, however, full of colourful and easy turns of speech that any colloquial language possesses, except that, in it all the slang words and expressions are in an entirely different language - Turkish. Added to this, in a number of homes,

there are grandparents and aunts and uncles who are still entirely Turkish-speaking, using a sprinkling of Armenian words for such things as days of the week, religious feasts and church services and so on. On the other hand, there are homes where the older people still speak the Armenian dialects of the various parts of Asia Minor from where they have come. These are not only different in pronunciation from standard Western Armenian, but have often differences in grammar and idiom and vocabulary. Is it any wonder that the students are in something of a confusion as far as language goes? Charles Fries, in his "The Teaching of English" says that there are three levels of English. The first is the written language, the second is the spoken language of the socially acceptable, and the third the spoken language of the vulgar or socially unacceptable. He very ingeniously illustrates these three levels with a series of overlapping circles, showing approximately how much they have in common, thus,[36]

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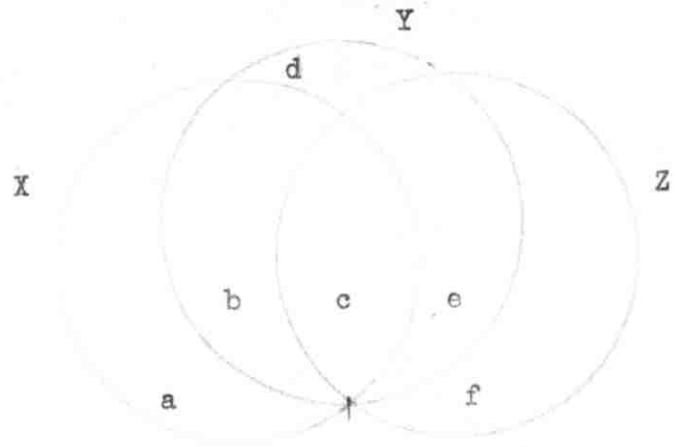
36. C.C. Fries, The Teaching of English, p. 130.



The three overlapping circles X Y and Z represent the three sets of speech habits that Fries wishes to illustrate. The following are the notes he attaches below the diagram.

X - formal literaty English, the forms and syntax that one finds in serious books.

Y - Informal spoken English of the socially accepted group.

Z - "vulgar" English, the speech of the illiterate whose native language is English.

Segments b, c, and e represent the overlappings of the three types of English.

c - that which is common to all three: formal literary English, the informal spoken English of the socially accepted group, and "vulgar" English.

b - that which is common to both formal literary English and the informal, spoken English of the socially accepted group.

e - that which is common to both the formal spoken English of the socially accepted group and the "vulgar" English.

Segments a, d, and f represent those portions of each set of habits that are peculiar to the particular dialect.

If one tried to do this with Armenian there would have to be at least six of these circles to represent classical Armenian, Western written Armenian, Western spoken Armenian by educated people, Western Armenian spoken by the careless and uneducated, Eastern Armenian, and to add one more, very recent Eastern Armenian so mixed with borrowed foreign words that it is practically unintelligible to the average Western Armenian with no knowledge of a European language.

We shall take later on the influence of Arabic and French on the teaching of English in Armenian schools, but the temptation is too great to resist mentioning them here, just to add to this profusion and alas confusion in the minds of some, at least, of the students in Armenian schools.

Armenian, being a new language, is still in a stage of rapid growth and flux. This fact, in itself, perhaps accounts for some of the comparative indifference towards exactness and precision in the use of English, for the students fail to realise the importance of word order or of using exactly the right preposition with the right word. Although good works have been produced in Armenian, there have been no good linguists to work on Western Armenian as Bradley and Jesperson have done on the English language. There is no such institution as the Académie Francaise to preside over usage and form, and there are no public bodies like the British Broadcasting Corporation to set up some sort of standard. There are no dictionaries like the Oxford and Webster dictionaries produced in Western Armenian. There are not even works like Fowler's "Modern English Usage," nor the more recent and popular handbooks produced by people like Robert Graves and Eric Partridge, nor indeed the numerous excellent grammars that abound both in England and America.

Although this lack of authority may be responsible for a certain laxity of attitude towards pronunciation, usage, idiom and sentence structure, it must not be

assumed that this is the general attitude. There are, even among the teachers, a few sceptical and self-satisfied individuals, but on the whole the desire to learn English, and to be really proficient in it is very strong. This fact, perhaps, is the greatest hopeful sign in the situation. There are places in the world where the learning of English is actively and sometimes passively resisted. We have no such difficulty to contend with. The pupils in Armenian schools are willing, and often anxious to learn it, knowing full well of what advantage it will be to them to know English. If teachers through understanding of their peculiar difficulties, and a firm hold of the language themselves can help them in their task, they will probably find as much motivation on the part of the students as can be expected in almost any situation.

C H A P T E R IV.

THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS IT IS AT PRESENT IN THE ARMENIAN SCHOOLS OF BEIRUT.

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A. Languages taught.

B. Time-tables and syllabuses.

C. Textbooks.

D. Methods used.

E. Preparation of teachers.

F. Students.

CHAPTER IV

THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS IT IS AT PRESENT IN THE ARMENIAN SCHOOLS AT BEIRUT

The academic year of 1957-58 opened with thirty eight Armenian schools in Beirut. Of these twenty six were primary schools, eleven secondary schools and one was a junior high school.[1] The total number of students enrolled in these schools was 11,306. The total number of students in the schools selected for observation in this study was 4223, comprising approximately 37.2 percent of the entire school population in the Armenian schools of Beirut. Although not every class in every school was observed, yet it is felt that the teaching seen, and the conditions under which it was being carried out gave sufficient information about each school, and about the teaching of English that was taking place in it.

As it has been stated before, care was taken in the selection of the schools to be observed to make them representative as to type, and also as to the religious, social and economic groupings existing in Beirut.[2] The descriptions that follow, therefore, cover a great range

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1. For particulars see Table I, p. 13 in Introduction.
2. For particulars see Table II p. 14 in Introduction.

in a number of aspects, but, on the other hand, the findings showed that a number of characteristics were common to all of them no matter to what group they belonged.

Languages Taught

Arabic, English and French were being taught in all the schools observed except for one. In this there was only Arabic and English beside the mother tongue.

In four of the schools Arabic was started in the first class of the primary school. The rest started it in the kindergarten.

English was started in the kindergarten of one school, but it varied in the others. The latest class to start it was the third class of a primary school. The ages of children beginning it varied from four to eleven.

French was started before English in three of the schools.

Time-Tables and Syllabuses

A study of the time-tables of the Armenian schools reveals three important facts. The first of these is the great number of subjects that appear on the time-table. The second is the comparatively great amount of time given

to the study of languages, and third is the small amount of time given to music, art and physical education. The curriculum on the whole seems to lean heavily on the academic side leaving very little time for the development and expression of the creative powers of children through making things, or drawing, or painting or music. Games as such do not appear on the time-tables, and the time devoted to drill or physical training is very small indeed.

Four schools were chosen from among the fourteen for a closer study of their curricula and time tables. These were a primary school in town; a primary school with three secondary classes, in the eastern suburbs; a secondary school in town; and a secondary school which had its own primary school attached. This last one was in Ashrafieh.

To illustrate the number of subjects that are included in these schools it will be enough to give the number of different subjects listed in all, and to give a list of the subjects of one school. The primary school had sixteen subjects listed. The secondary school had twenty nine, the primary school with three secondary classes listed twenty subjects and the following is a list of the subjects included in the time table of the

secondary school with a primary school attached:

Scripture,
Armenian,
Arabic Language,
Arabic Geography,
Arabic Arithmetic,
Arabic Science,
Arabic History,
English,
French,
Arithmetic,
Science,
Geography,
Armenian History,
General History,
Algebra,
Trigonometry,
Geometry,
Biology,
Nature Study,
Psychology,
Home Economics,
Writing,
Drawing,
Copying,
Handwork and Drawing,
Singing,
Drill,
Typewriting,
Bookkeeping,
Chemistry.

The number of different subjects taken in each class varied. The fewest number of subjects taken by a class was thirteen, and the greatest number was nineteen.

In one of these schools some of the mathematics, the science and some of the history were taught in French. The headmaster explained that this was really

against their own wishes but higher education in English was so prohibitively expensive for their students that they had to give more attention to French. Their students could afford the French university much more easily than A.U.B. Two others had English as the medium of instruction in the secondary school. In the primary sections teaching was done in Arabic for geography, history, arithmetic and science, but there were lessons in Armenian, too, in these subjects.

Table III, p. 95[a], gives the approximate percentage of time devoted to languages and some other subjects in the four schools.

In two of them the time given to languages, including Armenian, exceeded half the entire teaching time of the school. The average time given in all four schools to languages was 44.8%.

The time given to languages other than the mother tongue was 32%. When compared with other Beirut schools this seems excessive. In International College, for instance, the time given to languages other than Arabic in the year 1956 was 24.5%, at Souq el Gharb College in the same year the time given to English and French was 23.7%, and in the English High School for Boys (B.S.M.) where there appeared to be no French taught during that year. The time given to a foreign language--English--was 19%.[3]

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3. This information was taken from forms filled out by these schools.

The third striking point in the division of time is perhaps irrelevant here, but it does illustrate the preponderance of the academic subjects on the curriculum of the Armenian schools. This is the very small amount of time given to art, music and physical education. The average time given to these in the four schools was 11.8% of the entire time. In a country like England this would be approximately the normal time given in most schools to physical training and games alone, and art, music and some form of handwork added to these would form between 20-25% of the time devoted to lessons during the whole week. To this would often be added time after school hours devoted to matches either within the school or between the school and other schools.

A revision of the curriculums of the Armenian schools is a very urgent problem. This was discussed at some length in the chapter on the aims of teaching English, so there is no need to say much here. However, it is perhaps forgiveable to stress again the need to rethink the time given to both English and French when Arabic and Armenian are such important subjects on the curriculum.

The other point which did not come up in Chapter II is the preponderance of the academic subjects. It is only when children of nine and ten are seen in their homes arriving

TABLE III

APPROXIMATE PERCENTAGE OF TIME GIVEN TO LANGUAGE AND OTHER SUBJECTS IN FOUR REPRESENTATIVE SCHOOLS

SUBJECTS	A Primary School	A Primary School with 3 Sec. classes	A Secondary School	A Secondary School with a Primary School Attached
ARABIC	13.5	15.6	16.5	11.4
ENGLISH	8.2	6.1	15.2	9.3
FRENCH	2.4	16.2	8.9	4.7
Average Total Average 32%	24.1	37.9	40.6	25.4
ARMENIAN	16.0	14.3	11.9	8.9
Average Total Average 12.7%				
MUSIC, DRAWING, HANDWORK	12.6	5.2	6.7	7.7
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	9.9		1.7	3.5
Average Total Average 11.8%	22.5	5.2	8.4	11.2
MATHEMATICS	8.2	10.2	10.7	10.0
SCIENCE	5.2	8.1	9.8	8.1
OTHER SUBJECTS	24.0	24.3	18.6	36.4
Average Total Average 43.6%	37.4	42.6	39.1	54.5

perhaps after an hour of riding through the town in a crowded school bus and settling down to two or three hours of homework that one realises the burden on their shoulders. There is scarcely any time left for play even after school, and the time, as we saw, given to any form of physical activity in school is very small indeed.

The English Syllabus. Many of the schools had no definite English syllabus, but followed textbooks assigned for each year. We shall see later that these textbooks were not always chosen with care to ensure continuity of learning the language. Some schools had very elaborate syllabuses and others rather sketchy ones. One secondary school, for instance, with an elaborate syllabus, included the following items for its first year of English:

Reading (explained)

Reading aloud to ensure rhythm and correct enunciation.
Translation.
Explanation of words and idioms.
Conversation.
Verbs, changing tenses etc.
Oral exercises on passages studied.

Vocabulary - From textbooks
From surroundings.

Conversation - On passages read
Surroundings
Sentence formation
Oral exercises on verbs.

Grammar - Parts of speech
Articles
The verb - Tenses: Present, Past, Future, Present continuous, Past Continuous, etc.
Weak and strong verb.
Active and Passive.
Defective verbs.
The Infinitive.
Prepositions.
Conjunctions.
Interjections.

Dictation - Prepared.

Recitation - 2nd Semester.

Short, easy poems.

Written Exercises

One dictation per week.
One grammar exercise per week.

The textbooks given are by four different authors, and are five in number. More will be said about them later, but the syllabus itself shows need for reorganisation to eliminate what appears useless repetition.

In another secondary school, for insance, the items included for the first year were:

Reading.
Exercises in clear enunciation.
Conversation exercises through questions and answers.

This school gave only one textbook for this year.

Different though they appear, both these syllabuses

are not really satisfactory. If the first is too ambitious and disorganised, the second does not possess clear cut goals that are so important, especially in the teaching of language.

There is grave need for organisation in the teaching of English in all the schools. "Finishing" a set number of textbooks, not always wisely chosen, is not enough. The question of textbooks will be taken later, but there must be much closer integration of the syllabus if a waste of time and labour is to be eliminated. There must be wise and economical planning in all the classes. It is far better to accomplish a little thoroughly, than to race through material that is neither digested nor assimilated by the majority of students. It only complicates and hinders further learning.

A few of the suggestions given by the teachers stressed the need for better organisation of the time-table and syllabus and asked for more time for English. The following are examples.

"An organised teaching program from grades 1-11 with a department chairman to suggest methods and unify subject matter taught, hand-writing, etc."

"Have more time, longer periods".

"We need more time as a class."

"To begin the teaching of French language some years later than the English language, or not teach French at all, since the pupils are to learn two more important languages alongside with many other subjects."

"Start special English classes of at least two levels."

Textbooks

The question of textbooks is one of the major problems of the Armenian schools. It was revealed through the questionnaires, observation, and the remarks of teachers that on the whole a great number of teachers do not seem to be satisfied with the textbooks in use, but they do not know how to solve the difficulty or to replace them. One headmaster definitely said that it was difficult to know what to do as there was so much variety to choose from, and opinions differed among the staff as to the merits of the different books. Some of his teachers felt that the newer textbooks stressing oral exercises were really not an improvement on the old readers.

The trouble really appears to be the result of two things. The first of these is that whatever the textbook, it is used by some teachers as a text for trans-

lation. This was the case in many of the lessons observed. Even when the completion exercises were done in English it was sometimes evident that the lesson had previously been translated and learnt and the exercise was possible only after that. This, naturally, makes textbooks prepared to be the basis of oral work seem unsatisfactory. The second is that too great a variety of books is often used with one and the same class. The result of this is much repetition that is not really profitable because it is not planned, and a general lack of organisation in the English syllabus. One airy remark from a teacher who was commenting on the books of M. West, C.E. Eckersley and G. Brackenbury, all used by him, is indicative of the preparation and attitude of some. The remark was. "I like them. Its means for the Student's success are a lot."

The comments of teachers on textbooks in the questionnaires showed a variety of opinions.

Michael West's "New Method Readers for Students of English" were the most widely used textbooks. There were teachers who approved of them, and teachers who found them inadequate. Those who disapproved of them said that the stories they contained did not interest the children. One teacher said that the vocabulary they

contained was not practical, more words based on the interests of the children were needed in the readers. Another teacher said of these books: "Very often I meet words and uses of verbs that is above the standard of the class." Another teacher said the stories were poorly selected and the composition book was poorly organised and prepared.

One teacher who teaches in a secondary school found these books unsuitable for beginners. "Beginners in our schools use the West Readers which include complex idioms. Vocabulary is graded but idioms are not. In my opinion our students' difficulty in composition or sentence making starts here." Those who liked them on the other hand said exactly the opposite. One teacher found them practical, useful and interesting. One experienced teacher spoke very highly of them and said that if teachers used the West method and his books well, results would be very good. She did not like the "companions", however, and said they were for "dull" teachers.

C.E. Eckersley's "Essential English" series, together with "Brighter English Grammar"s were the next most used textbooks in the Armenian schools. The attitude towards these seemed the same. One teacher said "The grammar book is not a helpful one because it has no exercises (only a few).

In grammar specially, I think they should have much exercises." Two teachers in charge of older students who were beginning English found them satisfactory on the whole. Their one defect, they felt, was that they were "unsuited" to this particular conditions. Other teachers, however, spoke very highly of them. Here is the remark of one. "The best books are the "Essential English" series. They are of great help to the foreign students because most of the lessons are based on every day English."

Other series of textbooks used were L. Faucett's "Oxford English" Series, and E.L. Gatenby's "A Direct Method English Course." There were no special comments on these but they were much less frequently used than the first two series.

In grammar books G. Brackenbury's "Grammar Exercises" seemed to be fairly popular. One teacher said "Brackenbury is a good book, with many exercises, and it helps them a lot for writing and speaking." Among other grammar books were Oliphant's "Matriculation English Grammar" and Tipping's "A Matriculation English Course." One teacher said, "I dislike Oliphant first because it is difficult for my students and also because it does not meet their needs. It is not prepared for students who study English as a foreign language."

Another teacher said that Tipping's "Matriculation Grammar" lacked clarity and comprehension. It would take too long to list other grammar books used. Here is the remark of one teacher who does not name the particular grammar books on their authors. "I dislike the grammar books especially because they are not chosen according to their class, age and understanding. The books are not systematically arranged to give them a clear knowledge of the English Grammar."

A few schools seemed to do precis writing. R.W. Jepson's "A New Guide to Precis Writing" and J.A. Bright and K.F. Nicholson's "Precis Practice for Overseas Students" were two textbooks mentioned with no comments.

There was a wide variety of other textbooks used. In some cases the teachers have not provided the authors of these books, so it is difficult to make an estimate of the number of different writers whose works are used. The following are a few to illustrate the range.

Allen, S. - Living English structure.
French , F.G. - Self Help Exercises in English.
Leavitt, L. - A First Book of English.
Smith, - Brush Up Your English.
A Typewritten Course in English Idioms.
Vocabulary List of 5.000 Words.

Literature books included the following:

Shakespeare - Macbeth, Julius Caesar.

Stauffer Larsen - Adventures in English Literature.
Drake - An Approach to English Literature.
Collins - Treasury of English Prose.
Cross, Smith and Stauffer - English Writers.
Guibillon - La Litterature Anglaise Par les Textes.

There were far fewer American textbooks used than English. This may have been due to their higher price, but it must also be due to the greater abundance and variety of English textbooks produced for the Middle and Far East.

"Let's Learn English" by Audrey L. Wright and James H. McGillivray was used by one school, and very highly spoken of by a teacher who said: "I like it because it teaches English, not about English (grammar); it teaches intonation which is quite difficult for us. It tries to give the natural environment of native speakers. Above all it puts emphasis on practice." Another school used "The New Basic Readers" published by Scott, Foresman and Co. The teachers using them were very proud of them, and seemed to attach a great deal of importance to them. However, although these books were very brightly illustrated and could have been used for oral work without the help of Armenian, even with the youngest children they were being used for translation. In one class two pages of one reader were read and translated over and over again, each child chanting

the English words and in the same tone giving the school's version of their Armenian equivalents. "Robin", for instance, became " թռչուն " (bird) and "Oh! Oh! was translated " Ամա՛ն, Ամա՛ն ".

Suggestions Concerning Textbooks. One immediate suggestion as regards textbooks is that a variety of series or authors should be avoided. For instance in one school the same class was using the following books:-

G. Brackenbury, Grammar Exercises, B. I & II.
Eckersley and Macaulay - Brighter English Grammar. BI.
L. Faucett - The Oxford English Course, B. I.
M. West - Reader I, Alternative edition.
M. West - Learn to Speak by Speaking.

This can only result in unprofitable repetition and confusion. The producers of these books are experienced teachers, and their books are based on word frequency lists, so that each book follows the previous one building on vocabulary and construction already learned. It is suggested that the works of only one author be used specially in the early years. It is also suggested that the same series of textbooks be used for a period of time in order to ensure continuity, and to have some uniformity in the teaching of English within each institution.

Later on, when students have acquired a fair amount of vocabulary and familiarity with sentence patterns, other

books might be used. Most of the series written for foreign students have alternative readers, based on the vocabularies contained in them. Some of them also have simplified classics reduced to the limits of their vocabularies. The value of simplified classics is a doubtful one as far as their literary merits are concerned. It is not easy to produce works that would have literary merits of their own like Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare", but the simplified classics are preferable to haphazard repetition of words and forms that must appear in works not based on the textbooks in question. As soon as the students are able to follow them at all, original works within their capacity should be urged on them as supplementary reading material. Outside reading thereafter should be encouraged as much as possible.

The choice of textbooks in the first place should be the work of the teachers of English. The head of the department in consultation with other members could do this. The British Council has a very good collection of English textbooks. Copies may be had for study outside, or questions asked about the books there. Close study of the series, including handbooks for teachers, alternative readers, supplementary readers and grammars is necessary before adopting it. The handbooks accompanying the series usually

give a very good indication of the material to be found in the textbooks, and the way it is intended to be used. Some of them give keys to exercises and make further suggestions.

The next suggestion is that a close study should be given to the method that the author of each textbook intended to be used with it. It is very unprofitable to use them as texts for translation when they were intended to be the basis of oral work and drill in sentence patterns. The exercises should serve as a model to the teacher who should augment them with similar exercises. Although textbooks are often useful in the existing conditions in the Armenian schools, for focusing the attention of great numbers of children on one particular object in front of each, it is not wise to depend entirely on them. The practice of going round the class doing exactly the same thing time after time can only lead to boredom. The textbook should only serve as the basis for the work to be done by teacher and pupil.

There is very great need for special textbooks for the Armenian schools. Some teachers feel this strongly. Here is a suggestion by one of them. "Better textbooks specially prepared for Armenian school children. The textbooks we have are either only good for Arabs or for English boys. Our textbooks should be written having in

mind our mother tongue which presents a much different situation than the other languages." The same teacher's comment on textbooks used in that particular school is on similar lines. However, no textbook could replace the teacher. Even the best textbooks could be badly used through lack of careful preparation and adherance to old, though familiar, and perhaps too easy, methods of translation and reading.

Methods Used.

The methods used in the Armenian schools did not show a very great deal of variety from school to school. The variety appeared to be more within the schools than between them. The latter may have been due to the fact that only a very few lessons by each individual teacher, were seen, and there may have been more homogeneity if a longer time had been spent at each school. On the other hand several teachers said they had made the lessons as representative as possible so that all that they usually did might be seen. This may have been the cause for the fact that there was, on the whole, little conscious implementation of any particular method except that of translation in the lessons observed. Several approaches were usually tried in many of the lessons, thus giving the impression that there was very little planning beforehand

as to how material was selected, graded and presented in each lesson. Also there appeared to be very little overall planning or cooperation between teachers as to how the teaching was to take place.

Translation. As translation was the method most widely used, it is proposed to give an account of it as seen in these schools, and later to take other approaches to teaching English that were seen in the lessons observed, or mentioned in answer to the questionnaires.

Out of the twenty seven lessons observed, eleven were taught almost entirely through translation. Translation, or the use of the mother-tongue was also seen in many of the others, but the extent varied. Sometimes it was an occasional word or phrase translated, sometimes another language, such as French, did the work of Armenian, and sometimes a considerable part of the lesson consisted of translation and the use of the mother tongue in explanations and instructions.

The characteristics of the translation method as they were seen were the following. The first was an almost entirely one-way translation, from English to Armenian. Occasionally when the observer was asked to take part in the

lesson, children were asked to translate from Armenian into English and failed to do so in a number of cases, although they had obviously understood the English words. The second characteristic was the breaking up of sentences into groups of two or three words for translation. This often reduced a passage into meaningless word groups, so that it was difficult to know if the children had really understood the passage as a whole. A result of this was a sad distortion of the mother-tongue in many cases. Not only was the normal word order reversed, but auxiliaries, idioms and expressions were turned into Armenian verbatim, often making no sense at all. A third characteristic was the teaching of formal grammar with translation. This usually happened at the end of the lesson when rules for plurals, tenses, comparatives of adjectives were taken and illustrated from the passage. However, since in all language teaching so very much depends on the personality and teaching ability of the teacher, there were translation lessons that seemed on the whole successful. Before giving the opinions of the teachers and their own estimate of how much they use it as a method it may be profitable to describe briefly a few lessons observed.

In one school the lesson was being taken in a very

crowded room. The book being used was West's New Method Reader III. Each child was asked to stand up, read and translate. The translation was done in groups of two or three words, first literally into Armenian, then the teacher put the words in their right order in Armenian, and the child proceeded to the next few words. The class was extremely bored and fidgety even with a visitor present. There were several scuffles going on in different parts of the room. As a contrast to these, a little girl, squashed in the middle of a row of five at a desk, was intent on the text, her little face registering torture when the teacher did not correct or put into the right order the words produced by her classmates. This happened several times as the teacher could not entirely ignore the rest of the class and failed to make the necessary correction. The following phrases will give an idea of some of the distortions of the mother tongue.

They had heard.

Անոնք ունէին լսած

He had gone.

Ան ունէր գացած

Without making any response.

Առանց ընելու ոեւէ պատասխան։

It has been said earlier in this paper that Armenian is

in a more fluid state as a language than English, but there are certain usages in English like the auxiliary use of the verb 'to have' which are entirely foreign to the language.

This was one of the worst examples of the translation method seen. However, there was another class in the same type of school, under similar conditions, where there appeared to be an excellent atmosphere. The children were interested, and even enthusiastic. The distortion of the mother-tongue was far less obvious here, the rules of grammar, the 's' of the third person singular in the Present Tense, in this case, seemed to be understood by the students. Here the translation was not entirely one-way, for the teacher asked the children to give a few things in English. The mistakes they made were pointed out and corrected. There was also an attempt at making them compete with each other through dividing the class into sections according to the columns of desks in the room. Thus, with small variations it seemed possible to get diverse results from the translation method.

The method is so prevalent that it is very hard for teachers who do not approve of it to break away from it when their students have begun English with other teachers.

This was the case in a class where children had come from twenty four different schools to form the youngest class of a secondary school. At first it was almost impossible to speak entirely in English because however simple the instructions were, several children always said, in Armenian, "Please I don't understand." It was not that they did not know the words. It was an attitude that had been built up to expect all information about the lesson in Armenian. It took several months, before simple instructions in English could be followed. Even then the most elaborate preparations of lessons were often frustrated by some of the children, who knew the meanings of words already, and could not restrain themselves from giving them in Armenian.

In answer to the questionnaires most of the teachers said that they used the mother tongue at some time or another in their teaching. They did not all give the percentage of time they spent on translation, but the highest amount given was thirty to sixty percent. One teacher gave it fifty percent, three gave it forty percent, two gave it twenty five percent, three twenty percent, one fifteen percent and one ten percent. Three people said they gave it less than five percent.

There were two questions on the use of Armenian in the questionnaire. The first was whether they used it at all, and the second whether they used translation as such.

Only two people said definitely "No" to the first question. The rest all said they did use it sometimes, though the amount and extent varied. The reasons they gave included the following.

It clarifies meaning.
Without it they cannot "get the homework".
It improves vocabulary.
It helps them to understand the meaning of what they read, hence it helps them to like it.
It helps understanding of "irregular words."
It helps to explain grammar and reading.
It relates Armenian and English grammar
Explaining words with the few words that they know is difficult. Using Armenian avoids vagueness and makes meaning sure.
It saves time.

Translation as such was also defended by many. Here are some of the reasons given.

It is useful occasionally for testing.
It tests comprehension of fine differences.

It helps the introduction of new vocabulary.

"Translation makes the student realise the beauty and difficulty of the foreign language. In an indirect way it steadies the basis of the mother-tongue."

"It makes them conscious of the differences of the languages, to avoid them, from the mistakes that they actually make."

Strangely enough four teachers said translation was more necessary for beginners than later on. This, as we shall see when a fuller discussion of the method takes place later on in this paper, is quite contrary to modern theories of language learning.

Other Methods. Although there was a great variety in the amount of translation used, no lesson observed was conducted on entirely Direct Method lines. There were, however, sections of lessons where teachers tried it. One such lesson was in a primary school where conditions were very difficult. Here the teacher asked the children who were beginners at English to actually do things and then speak about them. The teacher seemed to have an unusually friendly way with children and they all seemed to enjoy the lesson. However, there was no attempt at drill, and only a very few children took part in the activity which formed really a small part of the lesson.

In the questionnaire the teachers were asked to say what they did with a class of beginners. A look at their answers will give an idea of methods used in the early years.

Several teachers seem to be using variations of the direct method with beginners. Here is what one says.

> "The most effective way of starting is the oral method. I started with simple sentences which were found in their pictured textbook. First I taught vocabulary by bringing in the actual objects if they were objects and using action if they were verbs or otherwise. I repeated the words and sentences until they got used to it and let them repeat them and do them if they were actions, and then they read it in the book. First they read like parrots but after a few weeks they got used to the letters. I introduced dictation only after two months and then only a few words. During the first two months I gave them words and sentences to copy mainly to get used to the letters."

This teacher was one of the few who were using actions and conversation and the lesson appeared very successful. The children were interested and eager, and there was an attempt

at drilling the form "I have a piece of paper".

Several teachers said they used pictures, flash cards, objects, actions, films, the blackboard and coloured chalk, repetition, questions and answers. These stressed the importance of oral work at first. Some mentioned that no formal grammar was taught although they tried to be grammatical themselves.

However, as a contrast to these there were teachers who believed in the teaching of formal grammar. There were others who believed that the students being told how important English is in their lives made lessons at the beginning more effective. Many bemoaned the fact that children were learning four languages, which made the teaching of English very difficult. Here is what one teacher says.

> "They first start learning French. They learn the names of the letters (French names) so that it gives great difficulties in spelling classes. When you say (e) he writes (i), when you say (h) he looks at your face amazingly."

This question of the interference from French in the learning of English comes up again and again in the questionnaires. However, the quotation given above points

to difficulties very different from that. It indicates methods of teaching reading and writing which have been extinct for a good many years even with the most traditional teachers. Another teacher, complaining of French again, says it makes them confuse it with English. He also says the pupils hear no English outside. "I have to write in Armenian the pronunciation of some words. Usually in this matter a teacher faces difficulties in teaching English, and I am not an exception." This, again indirectly, raises the importance of having teachers aware of theories of teaching speech. Linguistic science strongly stresses the difference of sounds in two separate languages and emphasises the necessity to dissociate, if possible, the sounds of the mother-tongue from that of the language being learnt. Here they were being imprinted further by the use of the characters used in the mother-tongue.

In the older classes again teaching varied with the teacher. Although there was much less tendency here to use the mother tongue, it could not be said that all the lessons were satisfactory.

There seemed to be teachers who did not really know what they were teaching, and had not taken the trouble to prepare the lessons. As a consequence there was no organisation in the material of the lesson, and no conscious

method of presentation. One teacher took all the tenses in one lesson. It was admittedly a revision lesson, but there seemed to be no planning, and the teacher found herself in great difficulty over the Present Continuous tense (which was used as the future by many), over the Present Perfect, and the Subjunctive. Since the examples had not been prepared, such sentences as "I have been at you for many times" "I have had few clothes when I was eight years old" were put on the board by the students, and passed by the teacher.

There was a great deal of asking children to use the blackboard in many of the lessons. In another lesson which appeared equally hastily prepared, the teacher's lack of English was very evident. Again students were sent to the board to write sentences. The textbook in use was Eckersley's Essential English Book II and "since" and "for" were the words being taught. The use of the Present Perfect was entirely ignored and such sentences as "I am in this school for two years" "I used to play the piano since I was a child" were accepted. Negatives were done next, in the same manner, then a number of sentences in the passive voice were turned into the active, and finally there was a dictation on the board, one student dictating and another writing it out.

There were some very good lessons observed in the secondary schools. Some teachers were able to make their students think, and express themselves quite well orally. It is difficult to judge efficiency from the observation of one or two lessons, and the adequacy of the work will have to depend ultimately on the ability of their students to do well both in written and oral work later. However, it must be admitted that many of the secondary school teachers have to face the difficulty of faulty beginnings in their students.

Pronunciation and Intonation. Both in the primary and the secondary schools there were attempts at teaching pronunciation during the lessons observed. Where this had been done effectively the results were obvious in the children's pronunciation. There were classes where th was pronounced by most pupils quite un-selfconsciously, but in the majority of classes it became d in words like then and t in words like throw. Some teachers were attempting to teach the difference between the long and short vowels, but not with much apparent success always. In one school the teacher made each child say the correct pronunciation three times every time a child made a mistake.

Only in one school did there seem to be an effort to teach intonation, but this was mere theoretical than

practical because the teacher's own intonation was not quite English.

Audio-Visual Aids. It is necessary to say a few words about the use of audio-visual aids in the Armenian schools in connection with teaching methods. On the whole very little was seen in the lessons observed. The time-honoured blackboard was very much in evidence, and not always well-used, but there was little else to be seen. However, in the questionnaires a number of teachers say their schools possess gramaphones, projectors, pictures, flash cards. If this is so, more use could be made of them. More will be said about teaching aids at the end of this paper, but it is worth mentioning one instance of lack of coordination in a school in connection with this. The following are the answers of two teachers, both teaching in the same school, to the question "Do you use teaching aids such as pictures, films, gramaphones, etc.? List the kind of teaching aids available at your school."

First Teacher - "No, we lack means."

Second Teacher - "Limited teaching aids available.

1) projector.

2) phonograph.

Have used a tape recorder of 'Peter the Wolf'

as motivation for composition writing in 8th grade. They listened to the tape: then wrote the story. New words were introduced first. Eleventh grade writes fiction suggested by pictures given them."

Testing. Methods of testing work appeared to present no special problems. Both oral and written tests were used. Some teachers preferred objective methods and some subjective methods of testing, and some used both. Very few teachers sent in copies of examination papers. Those that were sent, however, seemed to be well thought out and balanced and representative of the work done during the year. The answers written by the students appeared to be carefully corrected and graded. Some of these were on the mimeographed sheets given to the children, and some on ordinary paper. The questions, however, were all mimeographed and each student had had a copy to himself.

Examinations were observed in one school. Here the organisation was very good indeed. The whole school had examinations, the students worked under strict supervision, but in very orderly and quiet circumstances.

The foregoing pages have given some idea of the actual process of teaching in the Armenian schools, and

the problems raised by it. These may be divided into three main categories. The first is the problem of the coordination and integration of teaching. There is too wide a range of differences within each school, especially where there are as many as four or five people teaching English. This is not unusual because it seems to be taken for granted that people who have had their education in English can teach it as a language. Either a supervisor for each group of schools run by the same organisation, or, better still, a chairman for the English department in each school could, perhaps, help not only in organising the syllabus but also in seeing that the teaching is done with the maximum of efficiency possible by all members of the staff.

The second, which is really part of the first, is the problem of teachers with insufficient preparation. Again some help is necessary from a coordinating agent or the head of a department. Some schools seem to labour under the illusion that if they have efficient teachers in the top classes all will be well. This is not so. Language learning is a long process, and good foundations are indispensable. Help must be given to the teachers of younger classes if they need it. In the appointment of teachers very great care must be taken to employ really good people for beginners. This question comes up again and again.

It is very unwise to cut expenses on the salaries of teachers and to be content with poor or mediocre teachers in the primary schools.

The third difficulty is the weight of the curriculum and interference from other languages. All these problems have risen in connection with other aspects of the teaching of English, but this glance at teaching methods stresses the need to look seriously into them.

Preparation of Teachers. Perhaps enough has been said about teachers in the foregoing pages, and more will be said in the last chapter of this study. However, there are a few general points that must be mentioned here before going on to the students in the Armenian schools.

There was a great variety not only in the teaching techniques and ability of teachers, but their qualifications. Among the twenty one who answered the questionnaires there were ten with university degrees. Among these there were people who had done post-graduate work, and the universities mentioned included American and European institutions. Five of the twenty one had gone on to training colleges or other institutions of higher learning after their secondary education, and six had had secondary education.

However, the general impression from the questionnaires and observations did not indicate that those who had university degrees were necessarily the best teachers. Indeed, in one or two cases the opposite was the impression. From among those with more modest qualifications there were some very thoughtful answers, and their teaching seemed to justify the impression left by the questionnaires.

There are, however, several characteristics that seemed to be common to many. The first of these appeared to be an ability to work under adverse circumstances with a sense of duty. This seemed to strike the observer in a great number of schools. The adverse circumstances were not necessarily physical ones. They included the amount of work each teacher was expected to do, the preparation, background and mental ability of their students, the demands of the community and family on their time and energy, the little pay they had, and the insecurity of their position. The weight of the curriculum and confusion resulting from the study of four languages has already been mentioned.

The second characteristic seemed to be a desire to know more about modern methods of teaching. Many asked questions, and sought for advice and suggestions. However, there were a few who were unaware of their shortcomings.

and tended to take rather a self-satisfied attitude.

The third point noticed about a great number of teachers was their own lack of knowledge of the language. There were, naturally, some whose English was very good indeed, but there were a far greater number of people who made very bad mistakes themselves in the lessons, and allowed bad mistakes to pass on the part of students. This has already been apparent in some of the quotations from the questionnaires, and examples from the lessons themselves. The only way to eliminate this is a serious endeavour on the part of teachers to improve their own English, and to be very meticulous and careful in the preparation of lessons. There is no need to be too down-hearted about it, though Gatenby, talking of other non-English teachers of English says:

> "Don't be discouraged if you feel that you have not a perfect command of English, or that your accent and intonation betray you....Can you express all ordinary ideas in reasonably correct English, spoken or written? If you are satisfied on these points, there is no need for self-criticism provided that you continue to improve your efficiency."[4]

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4. Gatenby, op. cit., p. 62.

He is speaking of teachers teaching English for "practical purposes". Since in the aims of teaching English in the Armenian schools we have seen that far more than that is involved, this question of improving the efficiency of teachers of English cannot be too strongly urged.

To end this section on teachers one last remark seems appropriate. Almost without exception there seemed to be a genuine interest in the children, and affection for them. Whatever the shortcomings of teachers, this quality is of supreme importance not only in the teaching of English, but any teaching that is done anywhere.

Students. To end this chapter some information about the students of the Armenian schools and their background seems appropriate.

It will have been seen from the division of the Armenian schools into categories that there is a variety of economic levels as well as religious backgrounds - Catholic, Protestant, Apostolic - are too familiar to deserve much space here. It will be sufficient to say again that the majority of students in the Armenian schools belong to the Apostolic Church of Armenia.

Although there is a great range in economic differences between the families of students, the range is not so obvious

at a cultural level. As far as educational background goes, therefore, the majority of students come from homes that are not too different from one another. The Armenian community in the Lebanon is a very young community, and therefore there has been no time to build up a tradition of culture in successive generations of families as one finds in countries like England and the United States. Social differences are mainly based on the money that each family has been able to acquire within the period of time between World War I and the present. There are families with very near relatives with whom they have much in common socially and culturally, living in very different circumstances from their own. There are, naturally some homes that do possess numbers of books, where the parents are educated and cultured people taking an interest in literature, art, music and the ideas of other people, but the majority of the well-to-do in Beirut are not of a very high intellectual level.

The professional class in the community is small. Also, financially they are not always in a position to afford the books, pictures, music and so on that the more moneyed classes could afford if they were sufficiently interested. The large class of civil servants, doctors, lawyers, judges, business executives, army, navy and air-force officers that form the backbone of the middle classes in other communities

is mostly lacking here. Therefore there is not the leaven of children with that type of background in sufficient numbers to help raise the cultural level of students in the schools. Also, a number of children who would come from such homes go to non-Armenian secondary schools in Beirut.

Some of the so-called intellectuals in the community are rather intense people bent on some political or social ideology or other, and too much taken up with it to be open to the broader aspects of culture that help to form the intellectual life of a community. Books or ideas for their own sake are treated as trivialities beside the central theme of their existence. Their children are naturally subjected to this intensity of thinking along certain lines on certain subjects and have not the mental ease and comfort that foster clear thinking in a more balanced background.

The social pattern has been very authoritarian for a long time in the Armenian community. Now that change has come rapidly, the homes are not able to adjust themselves satisfactorily to it. Either there is extreme anxiety to make the children do well at lessons, and therefore a great deal of pressure is brought to bear upon them in their work and play, or else the parents are unable to exert much authority and they are left to do as they please.

Many families pay teachers to come in the evenings and supervise homework or give extra lessons. On the other hand there have been cases of parents going to teachers to ask how to stop their children going to the cinema as often as they do.

These have been mostly children of the fairly well-to-do homes, possessing some financial security. The proportion of those who do not possess it is much larger. Some of the headmasters had very sad stories of really acute financial distress among their students. Many of them apparently live in homes where the net income is between one hundred and one hundred and fifty Lebanese pounds, and that when the father can get employment. Many children live in one-room houses, with sheds outside for kitchen and other amenities. This was driven home in a lesson of English in one of the schools. They had been asked to describe a house with vocabulary that they had had. One girl failed to mention a kitchen, and was genuinely surprised when she was asked why she had not. "It is outside the house, not inside!" she said. Very many of them have literally nowhere where they can do homework. This was one of the anxieties of the headmasters of these schools. Many of them play in the streets after school and get into bad habits. And yet, among these, there seemed to be very promising material,

and the headmasters mentioned several of their boys and girls who were doing very well either at secondary schools or the universities.

It would, as we have said, be informative to have a long-term investigation on the careers and achievements of students from the Armenian schools. Pending this, however, there is one piece of information that may throw some light on how some of them are doing in one institution.

The following table was made from information taken from a report by Prof. W. Wyant of A.U.B. to Dean Hanania on the results of Freshman English for the first semester of 1957-58. As four of the schools observed were among the ones he reported on, it was considered the information would be useful.

ARMENIAN SCHOOLS	AVERAGE GRADES	PERCENTAGE OF DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF WORK			
	(Average AUB Grade = 67.4)	Good	Fair	Weak	Failing
First School	62.7	14.3	14.3	28.5	42.8
Second School	66.1	--	50	33	17
Third School	73	33	50	--	17
Fourth School					

N.B. The third and fourth schools were put together because they are sister schools run by the same institution.

It can be seen from this table that for these particular results at least, only two of the four schools have grades above the average for A.U.B. students. The first school has nearly half its students in the "Failing" category. The second school has no students that come under "Good".

C H A P T E R V.

S U G G E S T I O N S.

A. The needs of teachers.

B. Methods.

   1. The Translation Method.

   2. The Direct Method.

   3. The Linguistic Method.

C. Teaching to hear.

D. Teaching to speak.

E. Teaching to read.

F. Teaching to write.

G. Conclusion.

CHAPTER V

SUGGESTIONS

The Needs of Teachers

It has been seen throughout this study that at almost every stage of the discussion reference had to be made to the teachers of English. Important though they are in any system of modern language teaching, it is scarcely possible to exaggerate their importance in the particular case of the Armenian schools in Beirut for several reasons.

The students in their charge very seldom come in contact with native speakers of English. They are, as we saw, labouring under difficulties created by their own language, by overcrowded conditions both in the classroom and the curriculum, by the necessity to learn several foreign languages at the same time, and by other social and economic conditions that they or their families face. The task of the teacher here, therefore, is a harder one than that of a great many other colleagues engaged in the same task. There is, however, one great advantage that they have. Their students usually are highly motivated, realising the usefulness of English to them.

The following pages will give some of the qualities expected in the ideal teacher of modern languages. They are mostly the suggestions of authorities from various parts of the world, representing different systems of education.

Following this there will be some suggestions taken from these authorities and from a consideration of the situation in Beirut. Finally there will be a discussion of the status, salaries and retirement of teachers.

The requirements of modern language teachers may be divided into three parts. These are the formal training that they may be expected to have, their knowledge of the subject they teach, and their personal qualities with regard to their work.

The formal training which is expected of teachers of necessity varies from country to country. The UNESCO seminar has divided this into three main types or patterns, which it gives in its report on the training of teachers.

According to it existing systems of training for secondary school language teachers fall into three main patterns.

1. Training spread over a four - or five - year university course, and forming an integral part of such a course.

2. Training conducted by a university or an educational authority subsequent to the normal academic course and sometimes separated from it by an interval of one or more years' teaching.

3. A university course of academic studies including an introduction to philosophy as well as the theory of education, followed by a training period of two years in training centres established by the educational authorities."[1]

These are the qualifications expected of secondary school teachers, but the general feeling is that the teachers of junior classes are equally, if not more important than those of the higher classes, and the UNESCO seminar is of the opinion that at all stages of the teaching of modern languages "the teacher should have the highest possible qualifications. In particular, it is vital that the teaching of beginners' classes should be of the highest quality. The seminar emphatically deprecates any system which puts junior classes in the hands of unqualified teachers."[2]

Any of the three patterns of training seem very remote for all the teachers in the Armenian schools in Beirut at the moment, but a university degree and formal professional training, though very highly desirable, are not held as absolutely essential even in a country like England. The authors of "The Teaching of Modern Languages"

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1. Unesco, op. cit., p. 126.
2. Ibid., p. 126.

say that sometimes "the necessary knowledge and cultural background are found in one who has lacked the good fortune to be a member of a university, but who is nevertheless a skilled linguist and a sound scholar."[3]

The academic qualities, then, which a modern language teacher is expected to have may or may not have been acquired through formal university and professional training. However, teachers should constantly be widening their own knowledge of the language they have undertaken to teach.

The UNESCO seminar gives the following as the requirements of the ideal modern language teacher in his knowledge of the language he is to teach.

1. High standards of attainment in the language he proposes to teach: correct pronunciation, the ability to read aloud in a clear and impressive manner, fluent and correct speech, facility of expression in writing, and advanced reading ability.
2. Sound linguistic knowledge based on scientific study of the characteristic features of the language, past and present, such as systems of sounds, inflexions, sentence patterns, word order formation, and the ability to apply this knowledge in the classroom.
3. Extensive knowledge of the literature and the civilization of the country under study.

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3. Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools, op. cit., p. 42.

4. An introduction to educational psychology and to theoretical and practical problems of teaching, with special attention to techniques of teaching foreign languages and the use of audio-visual aids.[4]

This covers very briefly what most authorities on the subject give as requirements.

This thorough knowledge of the subject he is to teach is usually assumed to have been required before the teacher starts upon his work, but he is expected to go on perfecting it throughout his career. He must "know" as much as his colleagues on his subject, but he "stands in greater need than they do of constant refreshment and revision of his knowledge. To teach a language and a civilization is to teach a growing, living subject, constantly shifting and changing, constantly threatening to leave far behind and hopelessly out of date people who thought they had once mastered it."[5]

In the question of the personal qualities of the language teacher the authorities appear to be equally exacting in their demands.

> As the development of a balanced personality is of first importance for the teacher of modern

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4. UNESCO, op., cit., p. 126.
5. Ibid., p. 124.

> languages, he will require for his task imagination, tenacity of purpose, and enthusiasm. The sustained study of the language and its literature, together with an ever-increasing knowledge of the way of life of the people whose language he is studying, will assist in broadening his culture and enhance his professional ability.[6]

Together with this balanced personality and broad culture he must have a sympathetic attitude towards the language he is teaching. He must try to live in "two or more different linguistic worlds",--that of his pupils and that of the foreign language he is teaching. "He must, in a sense, live a life of carefully divided loyalties, being at one and the same time a normal, loyal citizen of his own country and, in the classroom, the unofficial ambassador of another."[7] It is through this balance that he will achieve the purpose of the teaching not only in imparting linguistic knowledge but promoting the wider aims of language teaching. In the last few decades the emphasis appears to be on a broader cultural outlook for the teacher, as the aims of modern language teaching are now expected to contain the promotion of international understanding. Along with the older emphasis on an understanding of the literature of the country whose language is being studied, there is an awareness of

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6. UNESCO, op. cit., p. 124.
7. Ibid., p. 124.

the importance of the spoken language of the people, their life, customs and their culture in general.

To achieve good results in the actual teaching of the language the teacher "will need to use all the skill he has, all his energies and all his ability of voice, mind, action, will; for he himself is the instrument, the language transformer of the cold printed word, giving out the sound-tones, rhythms, which the new language uses to express meanings of all kinds--intellectual, emotional, purposeful."[8] The teacher is expected to have a talent for dramatisation, "and a temperament not averse to a little exhibitionism in the cause of language instruction."[9] This is needed in the oral work which so many modern authorities advocate for the first years of language teaching, "when day after day, week after week, he must continually summon up fresh stores from ever-dwindling reserves, until by the end of term he can hardly avoid feeling drained and empty."[10]

Beside this amount of energy and skill, the teacher is expected to have confidence and skill in the implementation

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8. Gurrey, op., cit., p. 1.
9. Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools, op., cit., p. 43.
10. Gurrey, op., cit., p. 2.

of the methods he uses, and he is to handle them "with perseverance and courage to carry on the work with good humour and enjoyment."[11]

Beside using his own initiative and energies the teacher should "seek advice from others if he wishes to receive effective help; so he should discuss language-teaching problems with colleagues, visiting supervisors, training college lecturers; he should invite criticism of his plans and of his actual teaching; and he should put his own methods of teaching languages, his procedures, teaching habits and mannerisms, his objectives and results under the revealing microscope of his own critical and well-focused scrutiny."[12] Virginia French, in an article in "Selected Articles from Modern Language Learning" called "Do I Do That?" suggests visits to the classrooms of colleagues, to observe other lessons. "A glimpse of the mote in the other fellow's eye sends the visitor promptly to a mirror, where more often than not he finds a similar mote in his own."[13] In the same article she gives a very useful list of the situations in which she

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11. Ibid., p. 2.
12. Ibid., p. 3.
13. V. French, 'Selected Articles from Modern Language Learning', "Do I Do That?", p. 46.

has had to say "Do I do that?" and to answer herself "Yes, but it looks as if I shouldn't." Unfortunately time and space do not allow a detailed account of it here.

Whatever his academic qualities, "the Modern Language teacher must be more than linguist and scholar. Like all other teachers, he must have a sympathetic understanding of boys and girls and a genuine interest in the varied activities of the school community. Unless he feels that he will be able to enjoy his life as a teacher, he will do well to choose some other profession."[14]

Another aspect of the personal qualities of a language teacher is the ability to cooperate with his colleagues on the same staff. This cooperation should show itself in an "esprit de corps,"--"Teachers should remember never to let a colleague down, and always to maintain the authority of the staff.... The teacher must beware of letting his pupils see that he is in any way critical of another man's capability or methods. Team work must be the rule."[15]

As it was stated at the beginning of this discussion, these ideal requirements are perhaps not attainable by all

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14. Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools, op. cit., p. 42.
15. Gatenby, op., cit., p. 126.

teachers of English at least for the time being. However, to help teachers and the institutions by which they are engaged to improve the qualities of these teachers, a number of suggestions are made.

There is a very useful and practical list of these suggestions in the publication of the UNESCO seminar.[16] A few of these are perhaps beyond the means of the Armenian Schools in Beirut, but it may be worth giving those that seem to be within the realms of possibility.

The first is a suggestion that prospective teachers be sent to the country whose language they are going to teach. This is perhaps too ambitious for these schools at the moment, but it is not outside the realms of possibility as there are a few cases in which it has taken place for other subjects. It should be possible to do this for English, and the arrangement to do this might attract more prospective teachers of good quality to the English departments of these schools. The same suggestion is made for teachers already engaged in the task of teaching English.[17] A few of the teachers whose lessons were observed expressed a desire to do this, and it might be made possible

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16. UNESCO, op., cit., p. 126-127.
17. This was also one of the suggestions put forward by the Armenians teachers in the questionnaires sent to them.

for them to do it through "Exchange of Persons Programmes." There would be difficulties in this because it might not be possible to arrange for the Armenian teachers to do the work of those who will come to replace them here, but they could be made use of in other ways in the Armenian communities of the United States. There is one Armenian school among those visited that gets English teachers from the United States on a one or two ye ar basis, and a return appointment could be made in America for teachers from Beirut. There are a few cases where teachers have been sent to England or America for short periods to study conditions or attend courses. This could be arranged for teachers of English. Teachers could also be given leave of absence with pay, or their visit and stay in England or the United States could be arranged through some other scheme.

Refresher courses at regular intervals are suggested for teachers already in service. During the summer there are courses at the A.U.B. Summer School which the teachers of English could very profitably attend. The Point 4 Summer School in Brummana in the summer of 1957 could have been very useful. The schools and education authorities could at least help in the arrangement and organisation of the

attendance of these teachers at similar courses. There is a great deal that could be done by the authorities in arranging other refresher courses, perhaps within the framework of the different educational communities. There are some that do run summer schools for the staffs of their schools, but much more of this is necessary specially in the field of English teaching.

A more close contact between the universities and other institutions of higher learning is another suggestion. A scheme whereby teachers attended evening lectures or courses at the A.U.B. or British Council if only to audit them should be encouraged. Already a number of teachers are doing this on their own, but with the cooperation and help of the authorities this could be extended to more teaching staff, especially those teaching English. A far greater use could be made of the universities and other institutions in Beirut than seems to be the case now.

A more easy access to books and periodicals on their subject is another point advocated. There are several libraries in Beirut that could be made more use of by teachers in the Armenian schools. Also their own school libraries could be augmented with a view to the needs of teachers. A discriminating and useful selection

of periodicals could be subscribed to, and the names of these or suggestions concerning them could be had from the A.U.B. or the British Council or U.S.I.S. libraries. There are several good periodicals on the teaching of English which are not too specialised and might meet the needs of the Armenian schools. Even a more general paper like the "Times Educational Supplement" might keep teachers in touch with what is going in England and the world of education, and also give them opportunities of seeing book reviews on their subject.

Another suggestion is more opportunities for teachers of English to hear native speakers of the language, either through asking them to speak on some topic of their choice or through meeting them socially. Beirut is peculiarly suited for this and yet not enough is made of the opportunities in which the city abounds. Not only are there institutions like the A.U.B., Point 4, and the British Council all with specialists on the teaching of English, but the city has numerous other residents and visitors who could be asked to talk to the teachers and students of the Armenian schools. A few schools do get visiting lecturers to speak to them, but much more could be done on this line.

The spoken word may be heard over the wireless from several stations in Beirut. This point was raised over the question of audio-visual aids in the previous chapter, but in the case of teachers it is important to stress it again. It is one easy and convenient way to hear the language in the standard pronunciation of native speakers. The Lebanese Broadcasting Service has now regular programmes for teaching English to beginners. There is also a programme for more advanced students, specially those preparing for the Baccalaureat. Both these could be profitably used by the Armenian schools specially as at the moment they take place after school hours and therefore more students could be made to listen to them without upsetting the time-table. Some are already doing this.

So far the subject of this discussion has been the needs of teachers as far as their efficiency goes in doing their work adequately. The stress has been on improving and perfecting their knowledge of English and their teaching of it. It would be well also to look at the task of teaching from their point of view and to consider what the schools offer them in the way of conditions under which the teaching is to be carried on, and the status and salaries they are offered.

The problem of a good teaching staff is not only the preparation and qualities of teachers, but also the conditions on which these teachers are employed. This is perhaps one of the major problems facing the schools. From observation in the fourteen schools it was evident that most of the English teachers in Armenian Schools were ingenious in their adaptation of themselves and their teaching to the existing circumstances. They often had to work under very difficult conditions of both physical environment, crowded classes, and inadequate teaching aids. In spite of this there was good humour, sympathy towards the children, and a willingness to do well. However, with all this it cannot be said that there is no urgent need for improvement. If these teachers are to be helped to improve their knowledge of English and their ways of teaching, it is necessary to give them an assurance of security, an adequate status among colleagues engaged in the work of education, and a better salary.

It is a comforting consideration that in the Lebanon language teachers are at least not considered inferior in status to other teachers, which seems to be the case in some countries where they apparently get less pay and consideration than their colleagues.[18] But status

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18. UNESCO, op. cit., p. 124.

among their own immediate colleagues is not enough. The most desirable situation would be one in which all teachers in all schools had a similar status. It became evident in the course of the observations that status varied from school to school, either because of the type of school or the socio-economic level of the area where the school was situated.

The question of salaries concerns the whole teaching fraternity, and is not a problem of language teachers alone. Teachers are divided into two categories according to Lebanese law. These are "cadrés" and "en dehors des cadres."[19] Those that are "cadrés" are divided again into three categories which are "Mudarris", "Mu'allim" and "Ustaz".[20] There is a special scale according to which these receive salaries. Those that are "en dehors des cadres" are paid "suivant des contrats particuliers."[21] (According to particular agreements.) However, this special arrangement may be for only two years, at the end of which period they either become "cadrés" or are discharged. If they become "cadrés", they are entered "suivant la categorie et l'echelon correspondants a leurs qualifications."[22] (According to the category and scale of their qualifications.)

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19. "Loi sur L'Organisation du Corps Enseignant Dans les Etablissements Prives", Article 4.
20. Ibid., Article 6.
21. Ibid., Article 4.
22. Ibid., Article 17.

The following is the government scale for teaching staff in the Lebanon according to the new law of May 7th, 1957. It constitutes a total ladder of 31, 35, and 45 years for the three categories of Ustaz, Mu'allim, and Mudarris respectively.

GOVERNMENT SALARY SCAIE FOR TEACHING STAFFS, in L.L.

Ustaz	Mu'allim	Mudarris
1075	790	790
1075	790	790
1075	790	790
1000	720	720
1000	720	720
1000	720	720
930	650	650
930	650	650
930	650	650
860	610	610
860	610	610
860	610	610
790	570	570
790	570	570
790	570	570
720	530	530
720	530	530

Ustaz	Mu'allim	Mudarris
650	530	530
650	490	490
610	490	490
610	490	490
570	450	450
570	450	450
530	420	420
530	420	420
490	390	390
490	390	390
450	360	360
450	360	360
(Any salary for) (first two years.)	330	330
Total ladder of 31 years.	330	330
	300	300
	300	300
	(Any salary) (for first 2) years.	275
		275
	Total ladder of 35 years.	250
		250
		225
		225
		200
		200
		175
		175
		(Any salary for first (two years. Total ladder of 45 years.

Unfortunately these salaries are not strictly adhered to at the moment. However, even if they were, it is difficult to see how people teaching in the primary schools getting 300 L.L. after thirteen or fourteen years of work could keep up a decent standard of living, considering the rent of houses in Beirut, the cost of food and clothes and school fees for children.

There is thus inadequate pay and a great range in the salaries of teachers in the Armenian schools, but even those who are the best paid do not necessarily get their salaries from one institution alone. They often teach part-time in several schools, wasting precious time and energy travelling between these institutions. A number of teachers are engaged in other activities such as secretarial work, night-school teaching, club-work and other such occupations. A better and more uniform scale of salaries might eliminate the dissipation of energy and encourage teachers to become better qualified for the work they do. The question of financing schools is always a difficult one, but it is very short-sighted policy to cut down expenses on the salaries of teachers. As we saw in the last chapter, and as most experienced teachers and educators realise, it is possible to produce good results in a great variety of conditions, but it is not

possible to produce them with incompetent and dissatisfied teachers.

Agreements between schools and teachers are usually signed on a one-year basis. Very often teachers do not know till July or August whether their services will be required for the following year. Even with the most well-established teacher there must be doubts as to his immediate future and this could not be conducive to a happy and secure feeling which is necessary if people are to work to the best of their ability.

The question of retirement is even more doubtful than the present security of these teachers. Article 31 of the Law states that a teacher may demand a discharge on three conditions. These are:

a. if he has reached the age of sixty,
b. if he has taught for twenty five years consecutively, except when the interruption has been for a legitimate reason,
c. if he is afflicted by an illness which renders him incapable of work. This must be certified by the medical commission of the Ministry of Health.[23]

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23. Ibid., Article 31.

If a teacher leaves the school without these conditions he is entitled only to his own contributions towards the indemnity.[24]

The indemnity itself is one month's salary for every year of service at the school. This is calculated on the average of the monthly salary, of his last three years' service.[25] When one considers that this may be something like 300-400 L.L. in the case of most teachers in the Armenian schools it is easy to see that the amount received could not possibly ensure a secure old age for them. Since most of the schools are run by different institutions this makes movement of teachers from one school to another extremely difficult. Staying in the same school may have some advantages but variety of experience would undoubtedly enhance the teaching ability of most people. It is difficult to see how a feeling of frustration could be prevented under existing circumstances.

Thus, one of the most pressing problems of the Armenian schools at present is the question of superannuation for their teachers. It is not only the present happiness of their teaching staffs that is at stake, but the whole future of the schools. The question of superannuation may have a very strong bearing on the requirement of capable

teachers for the future. Unless young people can be made to see reasonable prospects of promotion and security both in work and for their old age, the best of them will be attracted by other occupations.

It is not difficult to see the predicament of the schools and their education committees over the question of teachers' salaries. With almost all of them the raising of funds is a major problem. And yet, this question is beyond doubt one of the most important items that need attention. It is possible to endure a great many of the hardships that other shortcomings impose on schools, but it is imperative to have good teachers if any standard is to be kept up. There must be ways of raising more funds for the schools either through the acquisition of donations and endowments, or through the activities of education boards and the schools themselves. There are many possibilities for these last two suggestions. The cooperation of parents, friends, alumni and friendly organisations might be solicited. The question of fees might be looked into. Space in schools might be better used. One perhaps minor point in connection with this is that there might be a wiser spending of available funds. Whatever the ambitions of education committees or headmasters for their

schools in the way of buildings, equipment and furniture, the salaries of teachers, with the minimum amount of facility compatible with the needs of the modern classroom are of primary importance. Even under conditions which would be considered far below minimum requirements there seemed to exist a sense of vocation and duty among some of the teachers. This spirit should be appreciated and encouraged but it would be wrong to base a system of recruiting teachers on the assumption of its presence in all members of the teaching staff, irrespective of the financial awards that might be theirs.

It would be well to consider the dangers of such a policy. To take too much advantage of the spirit of vocation among teachers might stifle it even in those that possess it now. It would be short-sighted policy for acquiring new members of staff, for apart from the few that might feel this vocation, it could only attract mediocre people who otherwise were not able to find other employment. It is not difficult to see that unless prospective teachers are assured of some security and an adequate salary the best of them will take up some other occupation or go to other institutions. This, in its turn, is bound to have an adverse effect on the next generation of teachers likely to fill up posts in the schools.

The urgency of this problem facing the Armenian community can hardly be exaggerated. It is now not only a question of keeping up standards at the moment, but the whole future of these schools. A policy that underestimates the importance of the preparation, adequacy and happiness of the teaching staff is bound to prove disastrous in the future.

On the other hand, if there is better pay, more prospects of promotion and some kind of security both for the present and after retirement, then the schools can be in a far better position to be discriminating in their choice and appointment of teachers. Then they could choose only the best and most well-prepared candidates who applied for the vacancies. This would ensure not only present standards but the whole future of not only the students in the schools at present, but those for generations to come. The community itself would suffer greatly through lack of adequately educated members and leaders. Unless those responsible for the schools face this problem now it may be too late.

Methods

It was seen in Chapter IV that a great number of "methods" were used in the Armenian schools, sometimes

indiscriminately, but sometimes with conscious effort and success.

The following pages will give a critical account of a few accepted and widely used methods of teaching English, giving the characteristics usually attributed to each, and discussing their merits. It must be remembered, however, that there is a very great difference between the best and worst implementation of these methods, and that of necessity they will vary in the hands of individual teachers according to the preparation and the personality of each.

It should also be stated from the first that the choice of a method of teaching is dependent on circumstances existing in the classroom and the school. Very often the number of children in a class, the range of age and ability, and the physical conditions in the classroom are serious factors in determining methods. The preparation of the teacher, his knowledge of the language he is teaching or the language of his students, are other factors that determine method. The attitude of the headmaster, the nature of the course, the aims of teaching each lesson, the text-books used, the time allotted, methods used and accepted in the society where the school functions and pressure brought to bear on it by other members of the staff may

all have a bearing on how English is taught in each school.

It is also necessary to remember that the exclusive use of any one method may tend to make it dull and mechanical in the end. Since the object of each lesson is a particular one, it may be necessary to adapt the method to the immediate subject in hand, to the needs of the class at the moment. It is easy to imagine even the most lively and effective method palling after constant and unrelieved use on all occasions in every lesson. It is therefore necessary for teachers to be aware of different ways of approach to the teaching of English, and not to follow one single method blindly, be it advocated by the textbook in use or by educationists who have formed strong theories as to what is the best method. "Being mere teachers," says A. Cochran, "with no theoretical ax to grind, we are free to choose whatever is helpful in any or all of the four methods of English teaching described, and to use the books as we please."[26] She then makes a plea for the understanding of the materials of teaching English as a foreign language and carrying out a real programme so that the classes are "not just a hodge-podge of pupils and teachers occupying a certain amount of time in the classroom."[27]

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26. A. Cochran, op. cit., p. 64.
27. Ibid., p. 64.

The word "method" generally covers most aspects of language teaching, but it may be divided into three main parts. These are, selection of the language itself and the parts of it to be taught; the grading of the material so that it may be taught systematically, and the actual business of the presentation of the material.[28] Some of these points came up in the chapter on the aims of teaching English, and will come up again in the part of this chapter which deals with the teaching of hearing, speaking, reading and writing English. The merits and defects of the methods discussed in the following pages will depend on how they deal with the three questions of selection, grading and presentation.

The Translation Method. The first method described by A. Cochran is the Translation Method, and since this is the one most widely used in the Armenian schools, it will be convenient to take it first. It is, as she points out, quoting Agard and Dunkel, often called the "old" method.[29] It is all too familiar to many of us not only from the descriptions in the last chapter but from our own experience

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28. W.F. Mackay, "What to Look for in a Method" English Language Teaching, Vol. VIII, No 2, Winter, 1953-4, p. 45.
29. Agard and Dunkel, An Investigation of Foreign Language Teaching, p. 17, quoted in Cochran, op. cit., p. 13.

of learning foreign languages, specially French in English and American schools, and probably English in French schools.[30] At its worst it is a word-for-word translation of a text- either an extract from a well known classic, or the whole book itself, ("Lettres de Mon Moulin," by Alphonse Daudet is one that may be remembered by some) which is slowly and painfully read and translated in small sections of two or three lines by each student. The translation is often interrupted by questions and explanations from the teacher, usually in the language of the students or the school; or promptings from nearby neighbours who are not too bored to take part; or admonitions from the teacher to these or a restless and uninterested class. The students are usually called in alphabetical order or seating order to translate the next few lines that fall to their share. These have often been calculated by the student, who has prepared only the part likely to fall to his share, either at home or feverishly in class, and after their recitation he sinks back into his seat to take no further part in the lesson. The grammar taught is formal, and based on knowing rules and exceptions by heart. It is often taught in a separate lesson, although questions on it come up as the teacher sees a chance to test or illustrate some point in the text.

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30. For a not very flattering description of this method see O. Jespersen, How to Teach a Foreign Language, pp. 40-42.

The slower pupils take a much longer time than others, making the teacher impatient and even the conscientious ones among the pupils long for the end of the lesson. Just before the end the teacher gives a brief translation of the passage set for the next lesson, dictates the meanings of the difficult words and the class is dismissed.

This is the picture of the method at its worst. There is a picture of the same method at its best in "The Teaching of Modern Languages." The writers recommend it for the teaching of French in the Middle School.[31] In it the teacher reads the passage in French, adding a translation to each sentence, so that "the pupils have satisfied their curiosity as to what it is about, and have not only heard the correct pronunciation of a passage to which they are paying close attention, but have also been enabled to appreciate its qualities through the interpretive intonation of the master." Then a good pupil is asked to read it in French, and a series of lively and interesting questions follow by the master. This method, they claim, tackles the grammar difficulty in several ways at once:-

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31. Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools, op. cit., p. 135-136.

1. It provides a constant revision of grammar already known.

2. It enables the master to find out what grammar is imperfectly understood and to make it clear.

3. It enables the pupils to induce new grammar rules for themselves from the examples which occur in the text. Experience will show that this inductive method can be of great value. [32]

"Moreover," it goes on, "pupils are extending their vocabulary at the same time; and the master has excellent opportunities of finding out which pupils fail to answer which grammar question." He will thus be able to help those that stumble, and hold the attention of lazy ones. Apart from grammar "certain words will suggest interesting remarks, designed both to impress practical knowledge on the minds of the class and also to awaken in them wider interests in the life and culture of the foreign people." He then sets the passage for "prep". The students will be expected to know the words explained, the grammar referred to, and the spelling of the passage for dictation. He will even set some seven or eight lines of the passage "selected very carefully both as fine prose and as a repository of valuable words and phrases" to be learnt by heart by the pupils.[33]

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32. Ibid., p. 135.
33. Ibid., p. 136.

It is clear that this method has many advocates on both sides. Some of the arguments are given in the following pages. Those against it seem to outweigh the ones for it, but even those who do not approve of it give sound reasons why it should, sometimes, be used.

A. Cochran says that because it is "old" we must not take it for granted that it is the least satisfactory method for teaching a language. On the contrary, according to her, if the students' aim is an "effective reading comprehension of the language" this method may be the best to train him to be independent.[34]

There are other advantages that A. Cochran points out.

> The method is practical because it is fitted to the physical and financial limitations of many schools. The teachers do not need to be masters of the language taught. Their pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary may be very shaky, but all they need to be is to follow the textbook closely and discuss it in their own - and the students' - language. It is by far the easiest method to use in big classes. Where it is necessary to have from thirty to seventy students in a class it is impossible to give each student much opportunity for individual drill. But this method can be used in what is virtually a lecture course, with students doing their individual work outside the class without the guidance of the teacher. For the same reason this method does not require many hours of class work.[35]

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34. Cochran, op. cit., p. 13.
35. Ibid., p. 14.

The disadvantages of the method are pointed out later on, but the above passage refers to so many of the situations in the Armenian schools that it might be well to consider our aims and objectives at each stage before dismissing this method as completely unsatisfactory on all occasions.

Otto Jespersen says that in spite of all the arguments against it "translation might still be a very useful and indispensable means in the service of language instruction.[36] Although basically opposed to the method, he gives the following points in favour of translation. It is a means of making the students understand the foreign language. It is a means of testing whether they understand it. It is a means of giving the pupil "practice in producing something in the foreign language." It is a means of testing whether he can produce it. He goes on to say that translation is very far from being "the only means" of doing these things, but these are ways in which it can be used.

F.G. French says translation "cannot be completely shut out from the English lesson.[37] Forbidding translation, he says, is being unaware of the fact that children may be thinking in their own language and translating mentally,

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36. Jespersen, op. cit., p. 56.
37. French., op. cit., p. 81.

although nothing is said to show it. He says this may happen throughout the course and go on happening after the student has left school. Not only does he find the use of the mother-tongue inevitable, but he argues that a pleasurable feeling accompanies it when through translation the pupil has been successful in understanding something.[38] Another point he makes is that there are words that cannot be understood without the help of translation, and sometimes there are words that even with translation need long explanation. The examples he gives are "ago", "quite", "neat", "to get up" "once upon a time". Again, he finds translation useful in comparing the two languages and explaining points in grammar.[39] In fact, he says that on certain occasions it may be very useful and save much time.

"It is a safe guide for the teacher to use any method which will make things easy for the children, and which will give them a feeling of success and of being certain. The teacher will avoid at all times and by every means any possibility of giving his pupils a feeling of hopelessness, defeat and discouragement. These are

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38. Ibid., p. 82.
39. Ibid., p. 82.

golden rules, and apply to every branch of teaching English. Every time a pupil makes a mistake he feels downhearted because he has gone back a step; therefore, let the work be done so thoroughly that when the pupil has to speak, or read, or write anything, he knows it so well that he gets it right the first time. If translation helps, use it; if it is likely to lead to mistakes, avoid it."[40]

However, for all this, these authorities do not really advocate the Translation Method. Each one of them gives very strong reasons why it should be avoided, specially in the early years of learning a language. The general feeling is that other, more up-to-date methods should be used, and that translation be resorted to, only in certain cases.

The first argument usually given against the Translation Method is that it does not teach the spoken language. We have seen in the discussion of the aims of teaching English in the Armenian Schools that mere book-knowledge and the ability to comprehend what is read are not their only aim in teaching the language. Therefore since we do want the students to be able to understand and speak English, other methods will have to be adopted before translation, which, though sometimes

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40. Ibid., p. 84.

useful, has many disadvantages.

In translation the constant use of the mother tongue will have several undesirable results.

It will be impossible to give sufficient listening practice to English as a spoken language, and this is essential if the students are to master it. It may help with comprehension of a written passage if students are given constant practice in it, but a student who taught the language through translation will find it difficult to understand a foreign language when it is spoken even at normal speed by native speakers of it. "If he should hear the simplest everyday sentence in a foreign language, correctly and naturally pronounced, and he should be asked merely to repeat it, he would in nine cases out of ten betray the strangest perplexity, although he would have no trouble whatever with a far more difficult piece which he happened to meet with in print."[41] The other side of this is that he will also not have much opportunity to use the foreign language since so much time is given to the explanation and translation of

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41. Jespersen, op. cit., p. 43.

passages in the native tongue. "The most prominent feature of the teaching is haste," says Jespersen, referring specially to examinations. He deplores the time devoted to translation, often two or three times, rather than reading the passage aloud.[42]

It is now considered very important not only to give the student opportunity in the use of the foreign tongue, but also to drill him in its patterns so that they finally become automatic, and the student uses them without conscious effort.

"Every language is a closely and arbitrarily knitted mechanism composed of sounds and sound sequences, grammatical devices and vocabulary items, and the details involved in this intricate relationship and the inter-play among these units are fairly rigid and limited, and vary from language to language."[43] This arbitrary mechanism of each language forms the fairly rigid sentence and other patterns of that language. The constant use of another language with these will of necessity hamper the learning of new patterns. Indeed, according

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42. Ibid., p. 41.
43. Yao-Shen, "Why No Translation?" Selected Articles from Language Learning, p. 52.

to French "The chief difficulty in learning a new language is the trouble of changing from the sentence patterns which you are used to in your own language to the sentence pattern of the new language."[44] Translation, therefore, with the constant use of the mother-tongue which it necessitates, is a definite hindrance to the learning of English, not only in its spoken form, but the pattern of the language as a whole.

Not only does translation hinder the learning of the new language, but, according to Jespersen its use has an adverse effect on the native tongue of the pupil, and brings a restraining and confusing influence "to bear upon the pupils' thoughts by the foreign forms and expressions; the strange language lures him in upon linguistic paths where he would never set his foot otherwise, and which only lead him to a mire."[45] The following sentences heard during actual lessons in schools in Beirut will illustrate this in the case of Armenian pupils.

Ես եմ շատ հպարտ անոնցմէ։

(I am very proud of them.)

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44. French, The Teaching of English Abroad, p. 40.
45. Jespersen, op. cit., p. 46.

Ան էր զգալ տխուր։
(He was feeling sad.)

They are both word-for-word translations from English and err against grammatical, structural and idiomatic usage in Armenian.

Other arguments against the use of the Translation Method are that often the texts used for it are not scientifically selected, being usually English classics or extracts from them. "No selection has been made of practical and useful reading materials. The beginning lessons, therefore, are designed to train the student to read the English classics used in English or American schools, (George Eliot, Dickens, Irving, and Poe) archaic forms, stylistic tricks and all; and the foreigner is naturally bewildered by the amount and complexity of the structure and vocabulary."[46]

It is argued that in the question of vocabulary the same lack of careful selection hampers learning. As the words learned are those that happen to be in the texts used, there is no question of basing the words learned on their frequency in English or their practical

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46. A. Cochran, op. cit., p. 14.

usefulness to the student. They are often far too many in number to be learned at a time, and are often given in lists with no reference to the context. Usually no attempt is made to drill the students in the use of these words and they feel discouraged in the face of so much "unclassified material."[47] This last argument may not apply to some of the textbooks in use in the Armenian schools, for in a number of them the vocabulary is carefully chosen and graded, but unfortunately the method of teaching with these books often completely nullifies their careful preparation. The most rigid forms of the translation method are often applied, with lists of words given with their Armenian equivalents, and the meanings learnt. "Disconnected words are but stones for bread;" says Jespersen, "one cannot say anything sensible with mere lists of words."[48] Learning a dictionary could never enable one to speak a language, and words in any case have often more than one or two meanings, especially in English where the inflexions have disappeared and one word may have many functions and meanings. C.C. Fries

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47. Ibid., p. 14.
48. Jespersen, op. cit., p. 11.

illustrates this very well with the word "time" in his "Teaching and Learning English As a Foreign Language," with the following examples.

What time is it?
We had a good time.
This is a good time to speak.
They consulted a time-table to find out the time of the trains.
They made good time in the race.
The watch kept good time.
His doctrine did not fit with the times.
We run on standard time.
He worked late to make up his time.
They receive time and a half for Sunday work.
These plays do not observe the unity of time.
This picture was a time exposure.
The director of the orchestra beat time vigorously.
The music is in compound, not simple time.
Time is in compound, not simple time.
Time hangs heavy on the idle.[49]

In the above examples 'time' has been used as a noun in all but two example, but still more examples could

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49. Fries, op. cit., p. 40.

be given of its use as a verb and adjective. The pages of any good dictionary will be able to give many more illustrations of this.

Another argument against the method of translation is that "There are essential linguistic features that lie outside the realm of lexical equivalents such as the use of word order in English to distinguish certain statements from certain questions, the presence of oneor more words functioning as a structural signal, the use of specific expressions which may have lexical meanings in another language but which are used differently according to the social patterns or behaviour of the people who speak the language."[50] A few examples will illustrate this.

The police have arrived.

Have the police arrived?

Here change in word order turns a statement into a question.

The man followed the thief.

The thief followed the man.

Here word order has completely reversed meaning, as word order is used to convey direction of action in

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50. Yao-Shen, op. cit., p. 52.

in English. In Armenian this is conveyed more by inflexions than word order.

You like coffee.

Do you like coffee?

Here a function words changes a statement into a question.

A word-for-word translation of idioms or specific expressions which cannot be conveyed through translation may lead to absurdities such as the following sentences from compositions of students in Armenian schools.

I was very tired and I have slept without any feeling.
(I was so tired that I must have fallen asleep)
My grandmother had taken a smell.
(My grandmother had smelt something.)

Collections of howlers abound in similar absurdities, and the translation of such a sentence as "She has ideas above her station" may have very strange results in another language. Greetings, polite turns of speech, and most idioms, specially those made up of prepositions used with other words all fall under this category, in that there are lexical meanings to the words used in the other language, but the sense conveyed by these is utterly wrong. The very

simple greeting of "Good morning", the answer to which is the same in English, would be, if translated from Armenian, "Good light", and "The good of God". When we come to less well-known and more precise expressions such as "laid up" and "laid out"; or "to work by", "to work at", "to work with", "to work out"; or, "out of pity," "out of order", "out of sorts", "out of doors", "out of hand", "out of one's head", "out and out", "out of print", "out of date", mere lexical translation would lead us very far astray.

To sum up the arguments for and against the Translation Method before considering its merits for the particular situation in Beirut the following points might be taken into consideration.

This method is deficient in the question of selection, as the material for translation is usually taken from the classics and therefore no account can be taken of the frequency of occurrence of words, or expressions, or their usefulness to the students. Learning, therefore, is often not very meaningful since there is a tendency to acquire vocabulary that is not always commensurate with the students' ability. It is also often not related to the background or lives of the students. Since the transfer of learning is best produced "when the learning situation

all the way through most closely simulates the way in which ideas and behaviour will be used,"[51] this method cannot be held to be educationally sound.

The translation Method does not allow much grading of material either. Even if "easier" passages are selected for beginners, it is still not possible to grade vocabulary or expressions or idioms of the language. The formal grammar which is usually taught alone with the translation of extracts, does not take into account the difficulty of abstract ideas in grammar. It is usually not functional but theoretical grammar. Here, too, learning is not al ways meaningful because of this lack of functionality and its detachment from the lives of students. In its lack of grading material this method violates the principle of readiness for learning. Not only can it not take into account individual differences in readiness in a class, but the fact that the passages selected vary within themselves in difficulty may make parts of the material beyond the comprehension of the brightest of the children.

This method may have a few advantages as a method of presentation in large classes in that it makes possible the participation of all in class work at least in a passive way. It may also save time through giving meanings otherwise

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51. Blair, Jones and Simpson, Educational Psychology, p. 248.

difficult to convey, in the native tongue. A method that rigidly excluded any translation might prove frustrating to children and enhance a feeling of hopelessness, specially before a passage far beyond the ability of the poorer students. Understanding on the other hand, may help to stimulate learning. On the other hand translation is in itself deficient since lexical meaning cannot always convey true meaning.

One other point, perhaps not altogether relevant here is that the prevalance of the same method in the teaching of French gives rise to a great deal of negative transfer in learning. Such words as "marriage" and "mariage", "uncle" and "oncle" "noun" and "name" appear to add to the confusion in the minds of students. It would take too long here to give instances of expressions translated into English both from French and Arabic.

As it was mentioned earlier a great deal of space has been given to a discussion of the translation method in this study because it is so prevalent in the Armenian schools, and it is necessary to give serious thought to it. As we saw, it is convenient and easy to use given some of the situations and requirements in the schools, but the extensive use of it may have very serious adverse

results on teaching. It should, then, be used very sparingly, and only on occasions where it is necessary. Here is a summary of these.

It may be used when it will save time in explaining a word or phrase which is otherwise very difficult to explain or illustrate. It should not be used for sentences or long passages, and certainly not for every word.

It may be used to compare the two language English and Armenian from the point of view of grammar, or to explain a point of grammar.

It may be used by older students in exercises of reading comprehension.

It may be used to test either understanding or ability to express what is understood, specially in the older classes.

Apart from these occasions it should be very strictly avoided. Wherever possible the direct connection should be made between the object or the idea and the English word for it. This is very important in the junior classes, and translation should be avoided there more than anywhere else in the school.

The whole question really, is more fundamental than the foregoing discussion would make it seem to be. Translation as was stated before is only a means to an end, and its use as an end is limited to a very few people who are actually going to translate books or to work as translators in news agencies or the press or embassies. Apart from these, very few people really use it. We do not wish our students to be able to translate what they hear and read but to understand it. For this purpose it is far better to enable them not only to know the meaning of what is said but to react to it as a native speaker of the language would do. This is an ideal that may not be easily attainable, but it is worth aiming at. Not only should the students be trained to understand English, but to make it part of their experience. It is what Fries calls "contextual orientation" that should be the goal of teaching. He says that language is an essential part of every portion of the experience of people, it is "inextricably bound up" with the whole of their life-experience. If anyone wishes to understand a foreign language, he should try to understand the situations which give rise to the utterances of native speakers. He urges a sympathetic and systematic observation of every aspect of the lives of the people who speak the

foreign language. For him it is not enough to have valid techniques for the descriptive analysis of a language, nor is it enough to study the life, customs and mores of the people that speak it. To achieve real understanding of the art of communication with the speakers of the foreign language one must aim higher, for the "goal of language as a communicative art is akin to that of all artistic effort - vivid imaginative realisation."[52]

It must be admitted that Fries is assuming that the foreign language is being learnt in its native setting, that is, in the land where is is spoken. Since the situation in Beirut is very far indeed from this, we can at least provide an atmosphere in the classroom in which English is for the time being the means by which actual experience is gained and expressed by both teachers and students, as far as it is at all possible.

This brings us to the next method to be discussed - The Direct Method.

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52. Fries, op. cit., p. 57.

The Direct Method

The emergence of the Direct Method may be attributed to several factors. With the shift from classical to living languages there was a greater demand for oral-aural skills in language learning. This did not emanate only from the nature of the languages to be learnt, but also from reasons (discussed in Chapter II) which demanded the use of these languages by those who learnt them.

The fact that universal education was adopted by many countries broadened the base of education, and a method suited to the needs of other than very intellectually gifted children had to be devised. The necessity to teach European languages to children in under-developed countries was instrumental in devising methods other than translation. The needs of students in the Middle East, Asia, and parts of Africa, where European methods of education and the results of technological advances were being adopted and used, made it necessary to revise past methods of teaching languages, especially English.

The better understanding of the process of learning through the development of psychology brought new light to the whole concept of education, and language teaching was inevitably affected by it. New methods of teaching

were based on a better knowledge of the child as a whole, his needs and the motivating forces within him. In language teaching the stress came to be laid on making learning take place in as natural a way as possible. There was insistence on meaningful activity on the part of the learner, not mere oral activity but actual participation in a living event which made use of the material being learnt in the way it would be used later in life. Learning became more interesting and pleasant, and the artificial situation of the translation method gave way to a situation in which the learner could see the goal of his learning and find meaning in it. Emphasis on oral work, drill, and grading of material helped to make learning more effective and permanent. The child was given what he could understand and assimilate, and constant use of it made him less liable to forget it.

These were some of the ideas behind the direct method, though not all followers of it worked with a conscious understanding of what they were doing, and there were some very rigid interpreters of it.

It is not very easy to define the Direct Method, for there appear to be many interpretations of it. It is, however, usually taken to mean that method of teaching

a foreign language in which no use is made of the learner's own language.[53] C.C. Fries, quoting Webster's New International Dictionary gives the following definition:

Direct Method. A method of teaching a foreign language, especially a modern language, through conversation, discussion, and reading in the language itself without use of the pupil's language, without translation, and without the study of formal grammar. The first words are taught by pointing to objects or pictures or by performing actions.[54]

The Berlitz Method, with its uncompromising stand against translation or use of the learner's language is the most extreme example of it. However, the method is also sometimes known as the "Natural Method" as it is supposed to follow "the process a child uses in learning to speak."[55] Other variations that go under the names of "oral", "living" and "active" also seem to follow the same ideas. L. Faucett, one of the prominent English advocates of the method says that the name is often very loosely applied to various theories about the teaching

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53. Cochran, op., cit., p. 16.
54. Second Edition, 1934, p. 738.
55. Cochran, op., cit., p. 16.

of modern languages. To illustrate this vagueness he quotes H. Watts, a writer on the teaching of English in India, who, apparently says that in his book "by the term 'direct' method is intended any method reaching its end by the fewest steps." Faucett attributes this vagueness to the fact that it is used and interpreted by many would-be followers of it who, in reality, often would horrify the true Direct Method reformers.[56] The UNESCO seminar calls the attitude of many of its followers "veneration without understanding."

According to Gurrey the Direct Method can be used in conjunction with other methods "because it is not a method at all. It is a principle, and it is one of the main principles of the psychology of language that can be directly translated into classroom behaviour."[57] Although in its simplest form it is an association of words with things named, it really involves much more than that.

> "The principle may be explained as the association of word with thing, of thing with context, and context with expression in the new language. Context may be idea, or whole situation;

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56. L. Faucett, The Teaching of English in the Far East, p. 106.
57. Gurrey, op. cit., p. 26.

> but the fullest application of the method is the association of a complete thought expressed in words with the real experience that would give the occasion and impulse for the thought."[58]

In other words the experience and the language being learnt are essential parts of one another, so that the child learns to associate the two as it does in its mother-tongue, and learns to think in the new language rather than to translate. The providing of this "contextual situation", and the participation of the students in a living event is expected to rouse their interest, attention and pleasure and to strengthen their learning. There is then no need for translation, for they have participated in a living action. By seeing, sometimes touching, and watching a situation built up and talked about in English, and themselves taking part in it, the words and sentences are indelibly inprinted in their memories.

Through the skill and ingenuity of the teacher there is constant repetition, so that the patterns finally become automatic in the minds of the children and they react to the objects, situations and ideas in English as

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58. Gurrey, op. cit., p. 26.

they would do in their own language. Drill is emphasised in the method, but since interest, attention and pleasure are to accompany the experience and use of the language, a great deal is demanded of the skill and energy of the teacher in avoiding monotony. The oral work demands very good discipline in class, an ability to be in complete command of the situation so that the enjoyment and fun may not degenerate into license and disorder. The first seven chapters of Gurrey's "Teaching English as a Foreign Language" give very good examples of how this may be done by competent teachers. Oral work is carried on through demonstration, conversation, question sequences, action chains, the chorus method, mining and play-acting. Songs, nursery rhymes, poetry reading may also help. The idea behind it all, as we saw, is "co-operation of action with thought and its expression in language."[59]

It is usually assumed that prolonged oral work of this type preceeds reading and writing of the foreign language being learnt.

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59. P. Gurrey, "A Study of Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Countries in Asia, Africa and the Mediterranean." Extract in UNESCO, op. cit., p. 61.

However, there seems to be disagreement even among the ranks of those who preach the method. Michael West, for instance, does not agree with the theory that reading and writing should be deferred for at least a year or two after the beginning of the course. His Readers, which are so widely used in the Lebanon, assume that both reading and writing start fairly soon after the beginning of the course. Gurrey, on the other hand maintains that the satisfactory results in English teaching in the Gold Coast are a direct result of two years of oral work preceeding reading. "If only one year of speaking is possible before reading begins," he says, "an intensive course of listening and speaking would be necessary, with no less than eight lessons a week."[60] This, as we saw in the previous chapter is a physical impossibility as far as the Armenian schools are concerned. Not only can they not afford this amount of time for oral work, but even if they adopt a less uncompromising attitude towards it, eight periods a week for English in an already over-crowded time-table seems impractical.

A characteristic of this method, as we saw, is the avoiding of teaching any formal grammar. Since the

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60. Cochran, op. cit., p. 18.

language is being learnt as a native language, "naturally", there is no need to teach it for a child does not learn to speak grammatically through the learning of rules. However, this, too, is not accepted by all followers of the method, and many liberal interpreters feel that the understanding of the grammatical structure of the new language is necessary for the mastery of it.[61] They favour a more functional study of grammatical material, rather than the traditional form. Gurrey says that it is much more important to know how to use plural forms of nouns and tenses of verb than to produce accurate lists of them.[62] Many of the textbooks produced by the followers of the Direct Method do include grammar, but unfortunately thereis a great deal of "blind" using of these books. They are often used as texts for translation in the Armenian schools. As a result there is neither the drill that they indicate, nor are they used to explain and build up structural forms in sentence patterns. However, apparently this is not a fault that is unique in the Armenian schools as we shall see later, in the discussion of the shortcomings of the Direct Method.

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61. Cochran, op. cit., p. 17, and Gurrey, op. cit., p. 71.
62. Gurrey, op. cit., p. 70.

The liberal interpreters of the method also often concede that the native language may, occasionally, be used in connection with the teaching of grammar, and the comparison of the two languages when necessary, and for certain tests.[63] This point too, will be taken later more fully in the discussion of the criticisms aimed at the Method.

Thus, in the hands of liberal interpreters of the Direct Method the teaching of modern languages has become much more scientific and efficient. By applying more consciously and directly the psychological principles of learning it has facilitated learning for a greater number of people. There was a time when the Direct Method was regarded as a fad by traditional teachers, who scorned it and would have nothing to do with it. "The day has not yet come to reject the Direct Method, even if we reject its undiluted form; and it is regrettable that many teachers ignore the advantages which it has introduced."[64] Actually most traditional teachers now do adopt some of the theories introduced by the Direct Method though they may claim to have no use for it. It is difficult to believe that any responsible teacher today would seriously base his

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63. French, op. cit., p. 82 and Faucett, op., cit., p. 115.
64. Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools, op. cit., p. 89.

teaching on the old theories of training the faculties or teaching through books and translation alone so that skill in speech may result.

The division between the two camps of teachers, the conservative on one side and the progressive on the other, seems to have been evident at the UNESCO seminar in Ceylon, but the traditional or classical camp seems to have lost the battle.

> "The seminar participants seemed to be of one mind in agreeing that this quarrel of the ancients and moderns has definitely been won by the latter in that almost no one now contends that the aims of modern-language study should not include the understanding and the speaking of a foreign language or languages."65

Since the Direct Method by its very nature promotes this oral understanding, there is no doubt that it is an improvement on the rigid Translation Method that existed before it.

Th is ideal picture, however, is often far from the reality of the situations in which the method is used. The following pages will show some of the criticisms aimed at the method. The point to remember is that the Method,

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65. UNESCO, op. cit., p. 12.

in its undiluted form scarcely exists now, and the divergences that have come from its uncompromising form seem to have made it a far more valuable way of teaching English.

Extreme advocates of the Method avoid translation at all costs. This tends to waste a great deal of time which would be saved by the discriminating use of the mother-tongue, especially in the later years of teaching when demonstration and "realia" are not so easy to use. This was once extremely well illustrated in a class of Arabic in a Berlitz school, where a group of adults were mystified for about ten minutes by the teacher's efforts to explain the word for "fruit" in Arabic. Most of the students spoke English, and the mystery would have been solved in the fraction of a minute through translation, but the teacher refused to do this, and as he had not foreseen the word, he had not brought one to demonstrate. Even the demonstration of one fruit might have been insufficient unless he had had a whole tray of fruit instead of an apple or a pear. It must be admitted that the Berlitz Method is a very extreme form of the Method, and even ardent supporters of it, as we saw, advocate

the use of the mother-tongue on certain occasions.[66]

A further point connected with translation, which was not emphasized before, is perhaps more fundamental and important. It is argued that whatever the conditions or methods used, translation takes place in the mind of the child in any case. By ignoring it the teacher is neglecting a fundamental fact in the learning situation. L. Faucett, quoting "Modern Studies", a Government Report in Great Britain, writes: "Even if the native language of the pupils is studiously excluded from the lessons, the pupils cannot be prevented from translating in their minds words and phrases which they learn. If only six periods a week can be given to it, it is illusory to hope that children can be got to 'think in French'."[67] The authors of "The Teaching of Modern Languages" say that many teachers flatly deny that the Direct Method teaches immediate knowledge of the word symbolising the object in the new language. "The habit of thinking in a

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66. M. West has published Arabic and Armenian companions to his Readers. F.G. French advocates discreet use of translation (op. cit., p. 85) and L. Faucett gives uses for it in op. cit., p. 116.
67. Government Report. Great Britain, Modern Studies p. 183, quoted in Faucett, op. cit., p. 115.

foreign language is normally formed only after considerable practice and certainly very few beginners possess it". In any case, they say, since the child has growing powers of reason at this stage, failure to make use of them is an error "certainly serious, and perhaps most serious of all."[68] The contention, therefore, that through the Direct Method the new language is learnt so that it becomes part of the thinking of the child like his mother tongue is unacceptable to a great many people.

This question of learning the language in the "natural" way so that children can be made to think in it raises an even more serious issue. It is argued that it is not possible to learn a second language in the way one learnt one's mother-tongue, for the situation at school is entirely different from that of the home. Whereas the child learning his own language in a house surrounded by several adults has that number of teachers, the situation in a classroom with one teacher and a great many pupils is quite different. Further, the child takes long years to master his own language, and even at twelve or thirteen cannot be said to be completely proficient in it. How, then, could a few periods a week, "sandwiched

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68. Association of Assistant Masters, in Secondary Schools, op., cit., p. 88.

between history, mathematics and the rest, which at once banish the necessary atmosphere,"[69] hope to create conditions comparable to the home? Moreover, and most important of all, the child learning his own language has no previous language patterns of sound or structure which are such a stumbling-block in the path of both teacher and pupil in the school situation. Therefore, the assertion that a comparable situation is created to that of learning a a mother-tongue is false. It is desirable to make it as near that as possible, but to base the teaching on this principle, critics feel, is to be unaware of the situation in the mind of the child. Thus, the argument that by the Direct Method the new language is learnt in a "natural" way is not borne out in practice really.

The next point that comes under the fire of criticism is the insistence on prolonged oral work. (This, the supporters of the Method feel, will create the "live" situations that are needed for the "natural" way of teaching a language, and to drill the forms of the new language into the minds of the learners.) The critics feel that much of this is time wasted, especially after

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69. Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools, op. cit., p. 87.

the early stages of the course, when "live" situations cannot be created, however ingenious the teacher. Time therefore, has to be spent on long explanations of ideas and situations in the vocabulary and sentence patterns that the students know. It is contended that uncompromising Direct Methodists who reacted against the old-fashioned systems "tended to make language the end; their thesis, at its worst, became the contention that is mattered very little if the words were trivial, provided they were uttered. Thus, these teachers found themselves in almost the same position as the grammar-grinders whom they had ousted, except that their pupils said, instead of writing, what was worth neither speech nor script."[70]

It should be stated, here, perhaps, that this insistence on prolonged oral work is advocated for learners in under-developed countries by people like Gurrey. It seems to have given very good results in Africa, and it is understandable that the teachers in Europe where there is a long tradition of teaching foreign languages, and where it is thought of as "a closely integrated part of secondary education, a discipline

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70. Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools, op. cit., p. 88.

whose methods have been evolved over a long period of time."[71] should fear that mere conversational ability may be the result, rather than a humanistic education in the language field. They neither reject the importance of oral ability nor do they adhere to old theories of training the faculties. They feel, rather, that a more humanistic approach would form good habits of critical understanding of what is learned, and an attitude towards language which is thoughtful rather than superficial which mere conversational ability might be.

Its efficiency as a method of teaching, its ability to make learning pleasant, interesting and permanent make the Direct Method a double edged tool. Because it is a more effective method than the Translation Method, in the hands of teachers whose own English is faulty it will be a dangerous means of impressing, perhaps indelibly, a distorted and incorrect form of the language in the minds of the learners. Therefore, unless it is used by expert teachers, or by people who are very careful and conscientious in the preparation of actual lessons it can have disastrous results. Teachers who adopt this method should be aware of this

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71. UNESCO, op. cit., p. 47.

danger, and if they feel that their own preparation is inadequate they should then put more care into the preparation of every detail of their lessons. It is only through this, and through constant effort to improve their own English that they can prevent the learning of a faulty form of the language, in their students. More will be said about this later in this chapter.

A further criticism of the method arises out of the dislike of teaching grammar on the part of some adherants of the method. As we saw, the assumption that language is learnt in the "natural" way led to this distaste of grammar, but apparently there are hardly any upholders of the Method who maintain this strictly now. "In spite of their professed scorn", says Cochran, even the extremists "often base their textbooks on outlines of traditional grammar in its least helpful aspects."[72] The more liberal followers, however, have produced very practical works on grammar, and have no hesitation in teaching it, though not in its most formal way.

One of the most serious criticisms of the Direct Method, that of grading, is based on its dependence on

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72. Cochran, op. cit., p. 17.

demonstration and the learning of English in "live" situations. It is contended that this allows neither good organisation nor grading of materials in vocabulary, sentence patterns or sounds. Cochran points out that the beginning material must be governed by what is demonstrable, and such words as "chalk", "pen", "blackboard", "map" must be taken, rather than more useful or more frequent items of vocabulary. This applies also to sentence structure, she says, and also to the grading of sounds, and to students' difficulties in handling grammatical material.[73] Since the learning is supposed to be "natural", it is often assumed that English can be taught by anyone who speaks it as a native through conversation, without organisation or understanding of English structures. Many different forms are taught, with no realisation on the part of the teacher that they are different. This confuses the students so much "that they never get the welter unscrambled, and all sorts of books have to be written for correcting "typical errors" which are really the fault of presentation rather than that of the language."[74] One of the examples given by A. Cochran will be sufficient to

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73. Cochran, op. cit., p. 18.
74. Ibid., p. 19.

illustrate this. Her example is from a "Complete Course in English Book I." by Robert J. Dixon.[75] Among other questions on the subject of going to school, and with the same vocabulary items occurs the following question. " Maria, why don't you use the street car instead of the bus?"[76] The other questions also use the Present tense, so that this is supposed to be "similar" to them. Yet this similarity is only on traditional grammatical lines. This question needs a "because" answer and has a negative form. The actual pattern of the answer expected is full of pitfalls for the child and difficulties for the teacher.

And yet, it is the English experts working with the Direct Method that have produced perhaps the most useful and practical material on the teaching of English for students in the Lebanon and other countries of the Middle East as well as Africa and Asia. Some of these are H.E. Palmer, M. West, L. Faucett, E.V. Gatenby, F.G. French and others. Their textbooks often have vocabularies carefully selected from word frequency lists and graded with additions that they think may be useful. Their books avoid traditional grammar in its rigid form, but analyse usage and present forms that can be learnt easily.

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75. Latin American Institute Press New York, 1951.
76. Cochran, op. cit., p. 19.

Their books, though much more scientific than any before them, have weaknesses which modern American linguistic theories have exposed,[27] but they are still much the most practical among those used in the Armenian schools. So that again, although the rigid Direct Method is unpractical, its liberal, understanding use on the part of its supporters seems to produce good results.

The strongest argument against the undiluted use of the Direct Method has been kept to the end. This is the question of teachers. As we saw earlier in this chapter, a great deal is asked of the language teacher in any case, but the ideal Direct Method teacher must surpass even this. Not only must he have a sound knowledge of the language, its sound system, a perfect pronunciation of it and the art of teaching this, but he must have inexhaustible resources of energy, liveliness, skill, good humour and patience to do the oral work in large classes. If the Method is to be true to its theory and effective, drill is essential for all the children. When there are thirty or forty in a class, with no textbook or exercise book to keep individuals busy, one may well imagine the magnitude of the task before the teacher.

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27. Ibid., p. 23.

Even with these, discipline is no easy matter in large classes, and most teachers know how exhausting it is to concentrate on the business of teaching when there is inattention, and there are very few whose lessons are so absorbing and interesting that the attention of the children never wanders. It is easier for producers of educational theory to advocate ideal methods than for those engaged in teaching to carry them out. "The nervous energy of teachers is not inexhaustible: it is, indeed, far less than will satisfy non-teaching advocates of the Method."[78] Further, it is not possible to expect all teachers in a school to teach with the same degree of efficiency, and as this Method depends so very much on the individual teacher and his ability, there may be a great deal of difference in achievement in the school.

All this has assumed that the teacher knew the language well. It will be interesting to contemplate the results if teachers are deficient in their knowledge of English, both language structure and pronunciation. Even if these use the textbooks produced by advocates of the Direct Method, the results are not usually satisfactory. These teachers, according to Cochran,

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78. Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools, op. cit., p. 88.

"because their own English is too shaky to use in their teaching, use what is really the translation method with direct method textbooks. As a result the students have all the disadvantages and none of the advantages of either method. Often, after six years of sitting in English classes, they know practically no English, either spoken or written."[79] If, on the other hand, we can imagine the Method used by lively teachers who are unaware of their own deficiency in the language, drilling children in mistakes, and making their own conception of the language automatic in the children the magnitude of the disaster can be understood.

To sum up this discussion a short evaluation of the Direct Method would be the following.

In its undiluted form it is too rigid a method and may have as many disadvantages as the Translation Method. In the hands of expert and liberal teachers who have a thorough knowledge of English it will give excellent results. Its insistence on oral work makes the language more alive and usable. It is, however, a better method for beginners than advanced classes, for learning through "demonstration" and "live situations" makes it difficult

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79. Cochran, op. cit., p. 21.

to be used exclusively for long. It is somewhat deficient in the questions of selection and grading because of its insistence on what is demonstrable. It is a very good method for presentation but it asks for expert teachers and small classes.

The Linguistic Method

This method of teaching foreign languages is based on the studies of modern linguists, mostly in the United States. Its first widespread use was in the Armed Services Training Program during World War II. It is the most scientific of the approaches to the teaching of modern languages, but as yet it is not very widely used in the Middle East or Asia, owing to reasons that will be seen later. Reference was made to it in Chapter III in connection with the sounds of English and Armenian.

The science of linguistics has made great contributions to the study of language, approaching it through sound and form rather than through the traditional approach of meaning.[80] It maintains that language is a "systematic arrangement of speech-sounds by which meaning is signaled from one human being to another."[81] These sounds, they

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80. Cochran, op. cit., p. 39.
81. Ibid., p. 6.

say, operate within a small group, and are arbitrary since there is no apparent reason why a certain sound should be the symbol for what it represents. For instance, there is no apparent reason why "house" should represent what it does in English, and "down" and "beit" should do the same in Armenian and Arabic. Thus, they say, "A language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates."[82] Although arbitrary, these groups of sounds are systematic within each language, and can be analysed. The linguists analyse them into meaningful units called "phonemes", which make "a distinctive difference between meanings of words in a given language." Phonemes do not convey meaning in isolation, but are "combined to form larger units which convey a limited meaning. Sometimes we call these words."[83] According to Cochran this theory of the phoneme is the most helpful contribution of modern linguists to the study of foreign languages. Another aspect of learning the sounds of a language is the understanding of the "stream of speech." Fries says that in the first stages of understanding and production, the phonetic differences between a native language and

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82. B. Bloch and G.L. Trager, Outline of Linguistic Analysis, p. 8, quoted in Cochran, op. cit., p. 6.
83. Ibid., p. 8.

a foreign tongue are not the chief problems. "The chief problems," he says, "arise out of the patterning of the sounds of the two languages."[84] Cochran says that changes "in pitch, intensity (loudness), speed, and timing (pauses) also convey grammatical meaning. Such sound units in English may be called secondary phonemes, as they distinguish grammatical meaning while the sounds which distinguish lexical meaning may be called primary phonemes."[85] It is punctuation that symbolises these secondary phonemes, spelling symbolises the primary phonemes.[86] For instance, in the sentence

"The captain says the colonel is a fool," meaning and grammatical functions of words may be entirely changed when we turn it to:

"The captain", says the colonel, "is a fool." Cochran gives an example from Palmer where even punctuation could not indicate change of meaning which intonation would convey: "I don't lend my books to anybody." Pronunciation could make this sentence mean both "I lend my books to nobody", and "I lend my books to only a chosen

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84. C.C. Fries, Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language, p. 15.
85. Cochran, op. cit., p. 9.
86. Ibid., p. 9.

few."[87] These have been taken is some detail because there is a tendency in the Armenian schools to ignore intonation altogether. Pronunciation of actual words needs much more care as it is, but it is chiefly because of the intonation of both teachers and students that the English they speak is almost unintelligible to native speakers of it.

Since language is approached through form rather than meaning, some advocates of this method insist on the spoken language being learnt before reading or writing, but apparently they do not all agree on this point.[88] They do agree, however, that the spoken language is of utmost importance, and since learning it is based on imitation, it is essential to have native speakers teaching it.[89] This in itself is not enough, and must have explanation, careful comparison and drill to supplement it, but the basic problems in the early stages, according to Fries, "are first, the mastery of the sound system--to understand the stream of speech, to hear the distinctive sound features, and to approximate their production--and

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87. Ibid., p. 9.
88. Ibid., p. 9.
89. Ibid., p. 40.

second, the mastery of the features of arrangement that constitute the structure of the language." This, however, cannot be left to chance, or any haphazard selection, and can only be arrived at through careful analysis.[90]

This careful analysis then applies to both the learner's language and the foreign tongue. The reason for this is that they believe that foreign language teaching is "always a matter of teaching a specific 'foreign' language with its specific structural features to students who have a specific 'native' language background with fundamentally different structural features."[91] For them there are no "better" or more logical languages, since they are all arbitrary; the comparison, therefore, is on a "fair and equal basis."[92] They compare sound structures, vocabularies and grammatical structure. They also believe that there are no difficult languages per se. "Ease or difficulty of pronunciation turns out to be a matter of patterning distinctive sound features in the characteristic sequences of the language."[93] All this, of necessity, means that the stress is on the form of the language. Oral work is very important.

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90. Fries, "As We See It", Selected Articles from Language Learning, p. 35.
91. Ibid., p. 38.
92. Cochran, op. cit., p. 41.
93. Fries, op. cit., p. 38.

The chief reason for the careful analysis is to expose difficulties that the learner is likely to encounter. "Only comparison of this kind will reveal fundamental trouble spots that demand special exercises and will separate the basically important features from a bewildering mass of linguistic details."[94] The linguists also believe that beside its use for comparison, the native tongue should also be used for explanation and clarification of points. This they believe saves time, and gives satisfaction specially to the adult learner who likes to understand the system of the language he is studying.[95]

This comparison of the two languages leads us to perhaps the most important feature of this method. Because it is so scientific in the analysis and exposure of difficulties, it makes grading of material to be learned really possible, though again it is in sounds and form.

> The most important principle underlying the work of the English Language Institute of the University of Michigan is the belief that only with satisfactory basic materials can one efficiently begin the study of a foreign language. No matter what happens later, the ease and speed of attainment in the last stages of the learning of a language will depend primarily upon the selection and sequence of the materials to be studied.[96]

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94. Fries, op. cit., p. 36.
95. Cochran, op. cit., p. 40.
96. Fries, op. cit., p. 35.

This grading needs special techniques, and it is a trained linguist that can "efficiently and accurately arrive at fundamentally significant matters of structure and sound system amid the bewildering mass of details which constitute the actual rumble of speech." He can have the really important items of language "selected and arranged in a properly related sequence with special emphasis upon the chief trouble spots."[97] Textbooks, therefore must be specially prepared by experts, and the teaching must be done by native speakers of English.

Having compared, analysed and graded the new language, the linguists attack the task of teaching it. Though the mother tongue is used for clarification, it has no place in learning the foreign language as this is done through exhaustive drill, till the patterns become automatic, and the response comes without conscious effort. A great deal of attention is paid to the oral-aural skills. The theory that no language is more difficult than others once the component sounds are analysed, makes supporters of this method say that sounds can be mastered even by adults through analysis and understanding of how they are made. The organs of speech are studied with great care, diagrams

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97. Fries, Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language, p. 5.

are made, trouble spots for the learners located and the students shown exactly how to use the tongue, lips, and other parts of the organs of speech, in order to produce the right sounds. Gramaphone records, tape recorders, ear-phones, and any available aids are used to enable speakers to hear the sounds they must produce. In language laboratories they are enabled to hear their own voice back to see what mistakes they make, and are given long periods of correction and drill.[98] The drill is a very important part of the whole process, "and must be continued to the point of 'over-learning', where the action becomes automatic."[99] The sounds must be incorporated in useful sentences so that these are practised and repeated, but although structural patterns can be pointed out, studied or explained, yet making them matters of conscious knowledge "must never be allowed to become a substitute for constant practice and accurate repetition of the sentences themselves.[100] One drawback of this is the monotonous work it involves for the teacher who must be constantly listening, correcting, and helping as this repetition goes on in the laboratory or classroom.

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98. There are sets of these aural aids in the English Laboratory in the Special English section of A.U.B. An intensive course with these-aids is given for one year to students who come with practically no knowledge of English.
99. Cochran, op. cit., p. 40.
100. Fries, op. cit., p. 39.

C.C. Fries, one of the most important authorities on this method, is not content with this mastery of the sound system, stream of speech, and vocabulary of a language. Even when production has become an unconscious, automatic habit through continuous and careful drill, there is yet more to learn. He calls this "contextual orientation." By this, as we saw earlier he means a knowledge of the lives of the speakers of this language.

> "A thorough mastery of a language for practical communication with real understanding demands a systematic observation and recording of many features of the precise situations in which varied sentences are used. Such a systematic observation and recording must be minute and sympathetic not for the purpose of evaluation in terms of one's own practice, or of finding the 'quaint' customs, but in order to understand and to feel and experience as fully as possible."101

Fries is assuming that the language is being learnt in the country where it is spoken. This is very far from being the case in Beirut, but nevertheless, there are a few features in the situation which might be useful in this respect. As was pointed out earlier in this chapter, Beirut has numbers of English and American residents and institutions. What applies to the teachers also applies to the school situations. Further, the advice of Fries might well be taken and systematic presentation made to

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101. Fries, op. cit., p. 57.

the children of such things as the places and times of play, particular games, particular stories, songs, schools, formulas of address and so on, that are common in English. One further point in this connection is that although very different, the two cultures do have certain things in common through a heritage of Christian civilization. This was pointed out in Chapter III. The similarities could be a starting point in presenting different aspects of English or American culture and through this perhaps more of the "contextual orientation" which Fries desires might be had. Unfortunately the conception of American, and perhaps British, culture in the minds of many Armenian children seems to be based on films and comics. To compete with these might be a formidable task, but it is one that is well worth undertaking if we are to give them a more fair and true "contextual orientation" in teaching English.

Although this, too, sounds an excellent method for teaching foreign languages it has weaknesses even on the theoretical side. Its practical difficulties are as yet quite unsurmountable for its adoption by the Armenian schools.

On the theoretical level some of its weaknesses are the following. Since there is so much stress on the

pronunciation of words and patterns, extremists stress that the choice for grading should depend on form alone. Apart from the function words, the choice of other items of vocabulary depends on form rather than meaning.[102] This means that the words chosen will not depend on their usefulness or the frequency of their occurrence in the foreign language, but on the difficulty or ease of their form. Again, many of the words chosen depend on their occurrence in the situations which will be encountered by students.[103] This will not allow basing them on word-lists that depend on frequency or usefulness.

Another criticism is that the mastery of oral-aural skills does not necessarily make learning the language easier, as "certainly in English the written language is so often different from the spoken."[104] As was stated at the beginning, this method was first used in the Armed Services Training Program, where, in a sense, it was an emergency measure, and the aims were often a quick mastery of languages by the adult students of the spoken languages of certain lands. The objectives here and those of the students in the Armenian schools are not exactly parallel. But it must be remembered

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102. Cochran, op. cit., p. 42.
103. Ibid., p. 42.
104. Ibid., p. 43.

that oral skills are at the very least an essential beginning. "By all means let modern language teaching be something more than the imparting of a skill, but the skill must be there as a solid foundation." Otherwise, it is pointed out, all the finer aims of language teaching will not have much chance of being realised.[105]

This brings us to the question of practical drawbacks as far as the Armenian schools are concerned. The description of the method, with all that it entails of scientific linguistic analysis, prolonged and expert study in locating, analysing, grading the difficulties, elaborate oral-aural aids, and above all expert teachers that speak the language as natives, make it quite beyond the means of these schools. Since, for the moment at least, the Armenian schools have to work through non-English-speaking teachers, under conditions described in Chapter IV, the Linguistic Method remains an unattainable means of teaching English in them.

However, there is much to learn from the method although we may not be able to use it in its perfectionist form. As the aims of the Armenian schools do not demand an oral ability that would enable their students to speak

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105. UNESCO, op. cit., p. 46.

English as natives, there is no need to dwell too much on the practical difficulties raised by this method. But the comparison of two languages, the analysis of difficulties and classifying of these in order to overcome them should give teachers many useful ideas. Although they may not be able to do it on the scientific level, yet even a practical analysis, and understanding of the structure of the two languages even on the traditional level should be very useful.

The three methods of teaching modern languages discussed so far give a brief idea of the main means of teaching English used by a great many teachers. There are other methods, not unlike these, but time and space do not allow a detailed discussion of them here. The two other methods discussed by A. Cochran are "the Language - Control Method", and "the Graded Direct Method." She really takes the latter as part of the former, and puts them in one chapter (Chapter 5). The first is a method using a consciously controlled part of the language for beginners. This is what is known as Basic English, which reduces the language to a list of 850 basic words, which, with structural units "can be made to express all meanings."[106] The learner's own language is used, but not for comparison

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106. Cochran, op. cit., p. 26.

since the basic words are used for all learners no matter what their language. The system is carefully controlled and regulated and has certain advantages, but it is not of very great use to Armenian students in Beirut because their aims in learning English are much broader than this system would allow. The sixteen verbs it uses and the selected vocabulary would not go a very long way to fulfill all the needs of the students, and the transition from Basic to full English would have to come fairly soon. Because one of the aims of Basic English is its use as a universal language, a great many books have been produced for its use. Therefore there is cheap, attractive available material which, apparently, eliminates "much of the waste found in a good many classes in beginning English."[107] Cochran gives a very clear evaluation of it as a method, and teachers interested in this method could get this information, as well as the bibliography for it in Chapter IV of her "Modern Meth ods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language."

The Graded-Direct Method is very like the Direct Method, and adopts many of its principles, but it grades material to be taught rather like the Language Control Method. The grading, however, is neither based on vocabulary counts and frequency lists as it is by followers of

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107. Cochran, op. cit., p. 28.

the Direct Method proper, nor on a comparison of the learner's language with English used by the followers of the Linguistic Method.[108] It is, rather, based on the "nature of language", and it is assumed that it is possible to select "a vocabulary carefully chosen to include all the working parts of speech." The words will be of high frequency and widely useful in order to express "almost any concept or make use of any formal construction in language."[109] Again Chapter V in A, Cochran's book will give a good account of this method for those interested. It is enough here to end the description with her question as to whether it is not easier for the foreigner to learn the word peel than to resort to such an expression as to take the skin off with a knife.[110]

Before concluding this discussion of the methods of teaching English, it is necessary to return to the idea expressed at the beginning, that the question of method is a very individual thing, and may vary very greatly from teacher to teacher. Whatever the method used, the personality of the teacher is of paramount importance.

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108. Cochran, op. cit., p. 30-31.
109. Ibid., p. 31.
110. Ibid., p. 38.

> "In the teaching of Modern Languages, perhaps more than in any other teaching, we find completely opposed methods of instruction working with success. There is the grammar-grinder of the old school who derides phonetics, gramaphone and oral work, rejects all the more recent findings of teaching methods, treats his language as though it were dead--yet fills his pupils with an enthusiasm for language and culture that many others, playing records, Realien, dramatics, correspondence and epidiascope, can but partially attain. Some men can succeed in their own highly personal approach, however odd and unworkable this may appear to others. Thus it is well to be sparing of criticism of any methods, the success of which may depend upon the men who wield them. None the less, we feel competent to make suggestions as to methods, confident that these methods are efficient in themselves, and capable of ready application by those who may not wish to apply grammar-grind, or may not have the considerable gifts required for the uncompromising Direct Method."111

Many of these suggestions have already been incorporated into the preceeding pages. However, it is now proposed to summarise the points that are perhaps the most useful from all the preceeding discussion, and to see how they may be applied in the Armenian schools.

There are certain principles that emerge as important from the foregoing discussions. In spite of their differences, the following points are perhaps common to most of them, and are important as principles.

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111. Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools, op. cit., p. 87.

Perhaps the most important point that emerges is the linking of learning the language with action. Although book-learning is of importance in the Armenian schools later, at the beginning at least activity methods should be used as far as possible. These will vary in form as the course proceeds, and it is possible to use them in a less obvious way even with advanced classes, but they are very important with beginners. As was pointed out before, they are educationally sound, and even if translation is taking place in the heads of the students, the fact that experience is linked with the English word will make its learning much more effective than mere translation.

It follows from this that much of teaching should be in oral form at the beginning at least. Oral work could be used throughout the course, but it is especially important with beginners. However, it may be supplemented with reading and writing even fairly early in the course. One very important point with non-English speaking teachers, however, is the absolute necessity of careful preparation of material so that mistakes may be avoided. It is very wise to base teaching on the patterns of the textbook, even if the immediate classroom situation is being used for vocabulary items. It is also very important to make pronunciation

accurate. For this, again, very careful preparation is necessary on the part of the teacher. The first task is to make his own pronunciation as correct as possible, and the second is to make his students hear it accurately and reproduce it.

Translation should be avoided as far as possible, and English should be used throughout the lessons unless the use of Armenian, as indicated before, is absolutely essential. This, again, is more important in the younger classes than later on, but no classes should be allowed to be only translation lessons.

Selection of material, and grading it according to difficulty, especially with a view to the problems of Armenian students is important. However, this may be rather a difficult task for individual teachers as they probably have to follow a set syllabus or textbook. In spite of this, however, it is possible to see the difficulties that the students are likely to have and to plan the lesson accordingly. Most of the textbooks used in the Armenian schools have their material carefully selected and graded. It may be necessary to choose from among these, and adapt them to the needs of the class. Th e important reasons behind this are psychological. The

children proceed from the easy to the difficult without being frustrated or downhearted. They have a feeling of achievement and success when they can learn easily and use what they learn.

The teaching of formal grammar should be avoided. However, most of the foregoing discussions seemed to indicate that it is necessary to teach some form of grammar later on if the students are to understand the structure of the language. It is functional grammar that should be taught, and not mere mechanical knowledge of rules with examples. The aim in teaching it is to help students understand sentence patterns, and to see the differences or similarities of the two languages, so that they may more consciously understand correct form in the language being learnt.

Modern methods of teaching language assume that language is a skill for the communication of thought. To acquire this skill many aids are resorted to, and many methods used in the classroom. Constant drill, the use of audio-visual aids, memorisation of songs, rhymes, are all aids to the teaching of language skills.

The rest of this chapter will be devoted to the teaching of the four skills in language: hearing, speaking, reading and writing, with understanding as the most important element in each. It will be mostly in the form of suggestions for each, with a special regard to the difficulties of Armenian students.

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Teaching the Four Skills.

The aims of teaching English in the Armenian schools of Beirut, as we saw, were to foster in the Armenian students an ability to speak and read and write English so that they might be equipped for further study and for their future careers. Their knowledge of English, it was hoped, would be sufficient to enable them to read and appreciate English literature and to keep them aware of what was going on in the world around them. It was also hoped that the learning of English would enable them tobecome more cultured human beings, and would satisfy the expectations of not only their parents, but also of educational authorities and themselves.

These were the general aims, but it is important to remember that although these must form the basic assumptions of all English courses, there must be very definite and concrete objectives for each teacher in each lesson. This has been referred to before, but it is scarcely possible to overemphasize it.

Most modern authorities now state that the learning of a language consists of learning the four skills of hearing, speaking, reading and writing the language. It is absolutely necessary for each teacher to know exactly what skill, and what aspect of it he is trying to teach in each

lesson. Not only must the teacher be aware of this himself, but it is very desirable that the students themselves know what the immediate objectives of lessons are. In this way both teacher and students can move with consciousness towards the set goals they are trying to attain. This will simplify the preparation of lessons, focus the attention of students, and improve teaching.[112] More than this, it will help to eliminate the mistakes on the part of both teachers and students which seemed so serious an aspect of the teaching of English in the Armenian schools.

Teaching to Hear. All the foregoing discussions have pointed to the importance of oral work at the beginning of the course.

> Speech is the groundwork; all the rest are built up on it. Through speech, the pupil learns to make the direct connection between the English word or phrase and the object, action, or idea it bears. He learns the habit of using words in the correct sentence patterns and phrase-patterns; and he can learn this in no other way. 113

Oral work is a two-fold process. It is necessary to hear the right sounds before being able to produce them. Gurrey says speaking should come after a period of listening. He suggests a week or two of listening before the

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112. French, op. cit., p.11

113. Ibid., p.6

new sounds are attempted by the students,[114] but some teachers may wish to allow their students to start attempting the sounds soon after hearing them. The important thing is to make sure that they hear them correctly. Gurrey points out the extreme importance of this, and of starting correctly.[115]

Apart from the difficulty of hearing sounds different from those in their own language, the students in Armenian schools seem to be lacking in the ability to listen with care. The importance of training them in this form the very start cannot be over-emphasized. Experience in a secondary school with a class of eleven to thirteen year olds, who had come from twenty four different primary schools in the Lebanon pointed to this. The following are mistakes made by these students in a prepared dictation at the end of five months of instruction. It must be admitted that the lessons were taught once a week only by this particular teacher, so that even though some of the words had been constantly used for a period of time, this period had not been continuous. The words opposite their correct forms are mistakes made by six different students in the same class.

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114 Gurrey, op. cit., p. 17.
115 Ibid., p. 14.

About - amowt, abound.
Rooms - rouse, roofs
Likes - lackes
Them - than, day.
Always - alwise, olowes, alwas.
Reads - rives.
Jane - Jeck, Jame.
Teacher - teather, theachers.
Question - soustion, cuequeus.
Means - mins, mens, lives.

Some of these mistakes are due to the sounds in the mother tongue, but it is difficult to explain the others by any other way than a lack of ability to listen.

Other teachers with similar experience attribute it to insufficient thoroughness and accuracy as fundamentals of learning in the primary schools.

The first step, then, is to train students to listen with care from the start. It is very important to begin right. The next step involves aural receptivity and recognition of sounds in the foreign language. As we saw before, phoneticians say that what we really hear are the sounds of our own language in another language. The Armenian students in Beirut have yet other difficulties. A number of teachers gave instances of Arabic and French sounds being heard in English, and being produced by students. The French u sound was one, and the Arabic b sound was another for the English p. One teacher said his students confused the e, a, o, i, and u sounds in French with the English

vowels. In a prepared dictation the following French forms were given for English words by eleven to thirteen year old students.

a book = et book.
aunt = tante.
uncle = oncle.
name = nome.
tiger = tigre
elephant = éléphant.

Here it is necessary to point out again the extreme importance of the teacher's own pronunciation. Gurrey, talking of the same problem says that the imperfect pronunciation of teachers may be due to various causes, chiefly the lack of insistense on correctness on the part of their own teachers. Then he goes on, "To some extent this may be true, but it is also because they themselves did not make up their minds to train their own ears to hear correctly, and to learn how the sounds were really made. The ultimate responsibility rests with the individual."[116] But, as Gurrey himself says, most teachers are unaware of the shortcomings of their own pronunciation. It is ironical that most of the teachers in the Armenian schools complained of the pronunciation of the children, and yet their own in many cases was not very different from it. Since imitation is "the only way in which

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116. Gurrey, op. cit., p. 14.

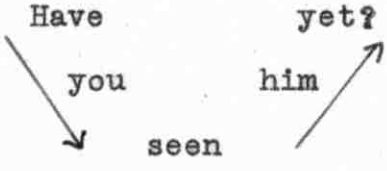
most learners can learn a foreign language"[117] the extreme urgency of improving the teachers' pronunciation can be understood.

The question of stress on English words was one of the difficulties mentioned by teachers. "More attention is paid to stress in English than any other language."[118] Armenian has not nearly as much stress on the different parts of a word as English has. A good dictionary will be of great use to the teacher in showing stress in English words.

One other very important question is intonation. There are ways of indicating this on the printed page by dots or lines thus:

Good morning.

or by arrows, the position of words, thus:



Other devices may be employed to point it out, but perhaps it is too difficult for teachers to learn intonation from

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117. Gurrey, op. cit., p. 15.
118. French, op. cit., p. 54.

the printed page themselves. As we saw there were attempts at teaching it in the Armenian schools, but until the teachers can be given expert help themselves it is difficult to see how they can help the student. This is one of the pressing problems facing the schools.

For this, and for other reasons of pronunciation and stress it would, therefore, be very advisable to make use of gramaphones, the wireless, and native English speakers as much as it is possible. Hearing the words and sentences in another voice will be of great help to the students.

Something has already been said about differences between English and American pronunciation. The important thing is to be consistent at least within each school.

The particular sounds that are difficult for Armenian students both to hear and produce are given below. They were collected from observation, experience, and the answers of teachers in the questionnaires. Here are some of the difficulties. These were taken in greater detail in chapter III.

1. The ng sound in sing.
   There is tendency to pronounce the g distinctly.
2. The r at the ends of such words as father, motor.

Both teachers and students tended to pronounce these words as they were written, sounding the r distinctly.

3. The th in thin and then.

Bother teachers and students tended to pronounce these as tin and den. These sounds do **not exist** in Armenian, but learning to say them should not be too difficult if there is insistence on correctness from the beginning.

4. The w sound in well.

This seemed to present greater difficulty when it was near a v than on its own. This should be remembered when teaching, and constant drill on its own should be given before it is introduced in such combinations as "very well" or words like "vowel".

5. The initial s before consonants, and s in clusters of consonants. This seemed a very difficult fault to hear for both the teachers and the students.

6. The difference between bad and bed.

This, too, appeared difficult to hear for both teachers and students. One teacher gave these two words as "Similar words having different meanings", constituting a difficulty in vocabulary.

7. The long and short vowels in ship and sheep, live and leave.

The teachers did try in several lessons to point these out, but they appeared very difficult to teach. The following are mistakes made in a prepared dictation by the class mentioned before.

means - mins, mens, minse.
need - nid, nide.
pleased - pliced.
listens - leacenes, laissons, leassens.
reads - rids
live - leave.

8. The diphthongs.

These are perhaps the hardest to hear and produce. Constant practice and careful pronunciation on the part of the teacher may help.

These sounds will be referred to later in connection with teaching to speak. Listening and speaking are so closely linked that it is difficult to separate them in discussing their teaching. Listening will have to form part of the course throughout, and speaking will depend on it to a very great extent. In teaching both, however, the fundamental principle of keeping the association between the word and object or action it represents in English must be kept in mind.

Teaching to Speak. Speaking at first will have to take place within a limited vocabulary which the students have already heard. These should be used in the most useful sentence and phrase patterns. The textbook will help in this as both vocabulary and sentence patterns are usually chosen with care in the better textbooks.

Since direct association is the most important principle in the early stages of learning English the choice of vocabulary will be limited by the children's immediate surroundings. This may be supplemented by pictures, objects, wall-charts, and so on.

F.G. French gives a good analysis of the process by which objects and actions are associated with the English word in the mind of the child. This may be reduced to the following.[119]

1. Listening. The child uses ears and eyes. Hears the sound of the word and watches the teacher make it.

2. Trial and practice. Repeated use of the word fixes it in the mind of the child.

3. The word is heard with the object or action in sight. It is always heard in a sentence.

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119. Ibid., p.24-26.

4. The child learns sentence patterns in the same way as words.

5. Reading and writing come after he has learned the words. These fix the words still further in the mind of the child.

Thus, the mother tongue is not used at all, and the process relies entirely on direct association. Children do not only hear and see, but also participate in the action when possible.

These are very good examples of how varied oral work can be done in the first seven chapters of Gurrey's "Teaching English as a Foreign Language". He illustrates how situations can be built up to introduce words and phrases. He explains how to use "question sequences", in which such questions as "Where is.....?" "Why is.....?" can be used on different occasions. He illustrates "action chains" in which a series of actions can be performed and spoken about. He deals with the "chorus method", giving its advantages and pitfalls, and takes miming and classroom play-acting as means of doing varied oral work in class. It would take too long to give these in detail here, but there are some very valuable suggestions in these chapters.

Before taking the questions of vocabulary and

sentence patterns in more detail, something must be said about pronunciation.

Pronunciation. A great deal has already been said about pronunciation. The sounds in English that Armenian students find difficult have already been given. The technique in teaching pronunciation appears to fall into three sections. The first is the locating of the difficulty. The second is teaching the students to hear and produce the sound, and the third is giving them sufficient drill in it.

One example of how this is done is given in an article by Betty J. Wallace.[120] The sounds in question are the long and short vowels in "live" and "leave". To enable the students to recognise them pairs of words with these two sounds are taken, and pronounced before the students. They are then arranged on the blackboard in columns, the long ones under one another on one side, and the short on the other, thus;

1	2
leave	live
seal	sill
lead	lid
beat	bit
seat	sit
sheep	ship

120. B.J. Wallace, "Pronunciation as a Two-fold Process", Selected Articles from Language Learning, p. 128-129.

The teacher pronounces these till she is sure that the students can hear the differences. Then the students can participate in the exercise. This is done by asking the students to say which column the words pronounced are from. The words are then used in short sentences like "He bought a ship". "He bought a sheep" by the teacher, and the students are asked to recognise them. Then the students imitate the teacher in pronouncing them. Then the students give the contrasting sounds alone, and the teacher or other students identify them. Drill then follows by various devices such as making a student say aa word, and another give the contrasting pair, and so on. These techniques can be varied to avoid monotony till all the students both recognise and are able to produce the sounds.

This technique can be used for various other sounds, and adapted by the teacher to all of them. The ingenuity of the teacher will find ways of drilling all of them till the children can really produce them with ease.

At the beginning, when the students are still unable to read or when their vocabulary is too small for this more simple techniques on the same lines can be used.

<u>The Vocabulary.</u> The difficulties named by most Armenian teachers as regards vocabulary did not appear peculiar to

Armenian students alone. They included such things as confusion of similar words with different meanings, such as "there" and "their", confusion of synonyms, lack of care in the choice of words, and an inability to see fine differences in the meanings of words. The difficulties appeared to have more to do with pronunciation, because the examples of confusion between words such as the following can only be explained in that way.

bad	and	bed
what	and	where
want	and	went
one	and	on
her	and	here
cold	and	cloud

Other difficulties named were a tendency on the part of students to consider each word in English as having an exact equivalent in Armenian, and a tendency to take the word as the linguistic unit rather than the sentence.

The conclusion from all this is the necessity of the application of thorough methods at the very beginning of teaching English. Therefore, not only the choice of vocabulary, but how it is taught is very important.

The immediate surroundings of the child will supply suitable items of vocabulary only for a short time. After that it is necessary to ensure that the vocabulary learnt is useful and interesting to the students.

Much work has been done on vocabulary selection in English. The most used list in English textbooks is "The Interim Report on Vocabulary Selection".[121] The words are chosen for their frequency in use, their usefulness in any country, their usefulness in explaining other words and so on. They include all the structural words.

These structural words are some of the most difficult to teach, and yet of the 100 most useful words 95 are structural words, including such words as other, what, any and of.

The following are given as the 24 most useful words in English by F.G. French.

a be is that will and
are but it the with you
as for not this have your
at in of to on me[122]

There are no nouns among them at all. As we saw in Chapter III, English has lost most of its inflections, and is dependent on structural words to show relationships in a sentence. These words then are very important in the word-order patterns of English.

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121. Revised by M. West, Published by longmans, Green and Co., London, 1953.

122. French, op. cit., p.15.

Prepositions in English are some of the most frequently used words. In 100 ordinary sentences apparently there may be as many as 300 prepositions.[123] These are, as we said, perhaps the hardest to learn for Armenian students. The following sentences from examples given by teachers show how these words can be wrongly used through translation.

"I think at him."

"He is better from me."

"I am afraid from him."

Most of the teachers said prepositions were the source of a great number of errors.

The only way to ensure their correct use is to teach them in phrases and make the students practice them constantly. Dril can be done in many ways. French gives examples of diagrams which would help the teaching of prepositions.[124] However, the most difficult use of prepositions is their idiomatic use in sentences. All learning of words of any kind should take place in sentences and phrases, so that the idiomatic patterns can be taught as easily as the more obvious patterns in prepositional phrases.

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123. Ibid., p.14

124. French., op. cit., p.18.

F.G. French has some very useful suggestions about teaching new words, and adding to the vocabulary of students in chapters III and IV of his "The Teaching of English Abroad." His practical suggestions for making charts, movable strips and using pictures are very useful.

Word Order and Sentence Patterns. Here are a few examples from Armenian students of sentences produced in the usual Armenian word order.

In the forest a man I saw.
I school go.
What your name is?
I Hovig saw.

It will be noticed that the verb is invariably at the end of the sentence. It so happens that in three of these sentences, (the ones with I as the subject,) the verb would indicate the subject in its conjugation and it would not appear in the sentence. In the fourth example "what" is in its right place, at the beginning of the sentence. The rest of the predicate, the object or other extention of the verb comes in the middle.

The greatest difficulty therefore is with the position of the verb. However, as we have already said, the normal word-order in Armenian is not as important as

it is in English. Armenian is a more inflected language, and therefore the functions of words are more apparent from their forms than in English. This is true of tenses and persons in verbs. English, as we saw in Chapter III, has an elaborate tense system which uses auxiliaries. These make word order very important, and a great number of teachers mentioned tenses as one of the difficulties Armenian students face. We also saw that Armenian in its present spoken form is a newer language than English , and therefore more subject to influence and change from its surroundings. Therefore, as we saw in Chapter III word order may vary occasionally in it.

It is therefore important to remember that word-order is fixed in English. There may be certain changes possible in the structure of a sentence, but the basic patterns of sentences are also fixed.[125]

Some of the Armenian teachers complained that the textbooks they used had vocabularies that were well-selected, but th at sentence patterns were chosen at random, and did not appear to be very useful. Chapter V in "The Teaching of English Abroad", by F.G. French has some very useful suggestions as to sentence formation and the most useful

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125. Ibid., p. 13.

patterns for practice.

He divides simple (not complex or compound) sentences into seven groups. These patterns can be changed by changing the words, but the basic pattern remains the same. The patterns are:[126]

1. Two-part patterns: He laughed.
2. Three-part patterns: Mary sang a song.
3. Four-part patterns: She told me a story.
4. Patterns with there: There are many colours.
5. Questions beginning with a verb: "Has he come?"
6. Questions beginning with an asking word: "Why did you do it?"
7. Commands or requests: "Sit down". "Please go away".

All learning should take place in sentences from the beginning. The question is which patterns to begin with. Apparently out of 100 ordinary English sentences 97 are usually statements.[127] But since oral work demands asking students to do things or to answer questions, F.G. French says they should be taught at the same time as statements. The most frequently used patterns in English, according to

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126. French, op. cit., p. 13.
127. Ibid., p. 41.

him are the three-part pattern, and the "there" pattern. Therefore, the patterns to begin with are.[128]

1. The three-part statement.

   "Mary saw a book."

2. The 'there' pattern.

   "There are two books"

3. Question patterns.

   "What is this?"

4. Command patterns.

   "Sit down".

   "Please take the chalk."

Later on these patterns can be augmented to by others, but they provide for a great deal of variety themselves.

One example, taken from page 39, and in which four sentences may be turned into sixty four example of pattern is interesting.[129] Here it is.

At the beginning	in the middle	after the verb
A noun or words like nouns.	a verb	a noun or words like a noun.
I	took	this.
Kazi	will not buy	the other one.
Two of the men	tried to make	a wooden box.
The woman and her husband	refused to take	a small lorry.

129. French, op. cit., p. 39.

All four subjects can take any of the verbs or the rest of the predicate, thus, "I will not buy a small lorry" makes just as good a sentence as the first one on this pattern.

The phrase patterns are as important to teach as the sentence patterns in English. Since most of these are dependent on prepositions, this gives good practice in the correct use of prepositions. Again F. G. French has very useful patterns and suggestions on pages 42 to 44 in book mentioned above. His practical suggestions to teachers, showing how to use movable strips, diagram and matelstick men on the blackboard or charts are very useful. Apart from these, pictures that have clear, interesting subjects might be used very profitably.

Important though pattern practice is, it is bound to give way to more free oral work in the end. Its wide use at the beginning, however, will have made many useful patterns automatic in the minds of students so that a great many of the un-English constructions which now are found in the oral work of Armenian students will have been eliminated.

One point that arose in a parents' meeting in one of these schools is perhaps worth mentioning here. Some

of the parents suggested that the students be made to speak English during recess for a few days a week. Some teachers have made similar suggestions. The reasons given are usually "to give them practice at English". It is hoped that the foregoing pages have shown that uncontrolled and uncorrected "practice" may be far worse than useless. There is grave danger in "practising" mistakes. Even when more free oral work succeeds pattern-practice the teacher should be on the alert to correct mistakes and to point out faulty construction and idiom.

The question of expression will be taken up with writing. It will be sufficient to end this section by a reminder that pattern practice should be confined to short spells, and that interest should be maintained through variety.

Teaching to Read. When Armenian students begin to read English, they already know how to read their own language. The mechanics of reading, therefore, the fact that letters stand for sounds, and the fact that they must begin on the left and go on, will be familiar to them.

Some will have started French, therefore the Latin characters will be familiar to them. This, however,

was mentioned as a drawback by several teachers. There are two reasons for this. The first, a legitimate one, is that the students confuse the French sounds with the English. The second, unfortunately points to a grave error in teaching reading. These teachers say that the students confuse the names of the French letters with their English names. Obviously the letters are being taught not only one by one, but by their traditional names of ay, bee, cee, dee, This is a practice for which there can be no justification, as we shall see.

The immediate goal in teaching reading is to enable the students to read quickly and with understanding.

The first stage of reading must constitute the recognition of the symbols or letters that stand for certain sounds. At the beginning this is necessary, but modern methods discourage their being taught in order, and by their names. They should, rather, be taught in words. There are good reasons for this. Reading usually takes place in whole phrases, and the eye jumps from one group of words to another, taking in several at a time. Words are certainly read as wholes, not letter by letter. Therefore it is better to teach children to read in words and phrases, rather than letter by letter. Good textbooks usually take this into account. There are, however, ways

of grading the first words that students should learn, grouping them with words containing similar letters or groups of letters.

Th is helps the problem of pronunciation which, according to some teachers, makes reading difficult for Armenian students. Part of this difficulty is the phonetic character of the Armenian alphabet. To drill the different uses of letters like a flashcards could be used, or columns could be put up using such words as:

cat	fat	hat	sat
car	far	star	jar
made	fade	late	date
ball	hall	fall	tall

or the diphthongs could be drilled in such words as

coat	goat	boat	float

F.G. French has some very helpful suggestions along these lines in Chapter IV of his "The Teaching of English Abroad". There are some very useful suggestions for flashcards, movable strips, pictures, diagrams and other audio-visual aids to help reading in this chapter.

It is very important to remember the close connection of oral work with reading. All words to be read should first be learnt orally, and used as spoken words by

the students. When reading begins a great deal of choral reading in imitation of the teacher would be very useful. Later this could be decreased and more independent reading could be done by students on their own. It will have helped both in speed of reading and the problem of pronunciation.

A number of teachers, specially in the primary schools, complained that the reading of their students was slow and hesitating. Thorough oral work before, and familiarity with words before they are read would help in this. Even when it is their native tongue, more children "seem to have difficulty with reading than any other school subject."[130] There may be psychological causes for slowness or other difficulties in reading which the teacher would do well to look into.

After the initial stage of reading, more attention should be given to the important stages that come later, than appeared to be given in the Armenian schools. The teachers complained of the various shortcomings of their pupils, but not very much appeared to be done to help them. One teacher said h is students were poor at grasping the meaning of material read and picking out important

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130. Blair, Jones and Simpson, op. cit., p. 303.

points. Another complained that fine differences in passages were not understood. Yet another said his students were poor at following arguments. Some said their students did not grasp the meaning of passages because they were too preoccupied with reading fast. Many blamed these shortcomings on the primary schools, or the lack of time in class.

P. Gurrey in his "Teaching English as a Foreign Language" deals with most of these difficulties, and has some very good suggestions in chapters 11 - 15. He gives five necessary skills which are to be taught after the first stages of reading, and gives detailed ways of teaching each one. The following are the groups into which he divides them.[131]

1. Reading aloud.

2. The skill of grasping the gist of the passage read.

3. The skill of deducing information and ideas from what has been read.

4. The skill of being able to find facts and information in books or other printed matter.

5. The skill of being able to note exact information when one is reading.

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131. Gurrey, op. cit., p. 85.

Bearing in mind the aims of teaching English in the Armenian schools, it seems very necessary that more conscious effort be made in teaching the above skills. There was précis writing in some schools, and there was a great deal of oral questioning on passages read, but perhaps a more organised and well-thought-out method that could help them with better comprehension of passages might be more useful than elaborate paraphrasing of every sentence, phrase and word in every passage, which was what the oral work amounted to in some cases.

Silent reading, which the students will have to do later, might be given more attention. This may help the enlargement of a passive vocabulary which the few Armenian students in A.U.B. seem to be somewhat deficient in. One important point here is the use of the dictionary. Students should be taught how to use one, preferably an English-English dictionary.

Reading outside class should be encouraged as much as possible. This can be guided through giving lists of books to the students, out of which they may choose what they like. It would be best to base these on the students' interests, as well as the intrinsic value of the books. Book reports in class can be useful. This was tried in one

secondary school, and was met with good response, but the students needed guidance in what to look for in a book. These particular ones were novels and the tendency was to retell the story only, rather than think about the different aspects of plot, characterisation, theme, background, atmosphere and so on.

Some ways of arousing interest in outside reading might be occasional reading by the teacher from books which he would like to recommend. Speaking about books of special interest in connection with topical subjects, films or subjects of special interest to students might be other ways.

A school library is an essential feature of any good school. A number of Armenian schools have fine little libraries, and spend a considerable amount of money on them in proportion to their funds. If a library does not exist in the school the English teachers might help to build one up for English at least. It does not matter how small the beginning is. A class library to which each member of the class contributed one book for a year had very good results, though this was not done in Beirut. The students had the benefit of reading twenty books, and had their own book at the end of the year.

Where schools do have libraries one "library period" a week when the students can have free access to the books (unfortunately they are kept in locked shelves in some schools) would be very useful. There will be opportunity then to recommend certain books to individuals and to discuss them after they are read. The students could also be encouraged to use outside libraries that lend books to students. There are several in Beirut to which it would be easy to subscribe.

If the students by the time they leave secondary school have attained a few basic abilities in reading, they will find their further study on other work much more easy to do. These may be summed up as the ability to read fairly fast and with understanding, both orally and silently, the ability to pick out important points in what is read. This will, naturally, be within a certain amount of vocabulary, and with the help of a dictionary for more difficult passages.

Teaching to Write. The problems connected with writing which the Armenian teachers spoke about fell into two groups. The first had to do with the mechanics of handwriting, penmanship, capitals, punctuation and spelling; and the second had to do with grammar, expression and idiom.

The specific difficulties faced in the mechanics of writing were the following:

Handwriting. Many teachers complained of poor handwriting, six of them attributing it to a lack of good training in the primary schools.

One difficulty, the teachers said, was confusion between similar shapes of letters in English and Armenian. The following were given as examples.

Armenian ռ confused with English r.
Armenian բ confused with English p.

Another difficulty appeared to be connected with capital letters. One teacher complained that his students put capital letters in the middle of the word, rather than at the beginning, and many said capital letters were either badly used or not used at all. One said their French forms were used.

Observation and comments revealed that more than this was wrong with some, though not all, of the handwriting. Letters were badly formed usually, the lines on the exercise books not well used, and there was little attempt at making the letters even or the strokes parallel. However, it is possible to improve handwriting even if

children have written badly for years. Careful teaching and insistence on good, careful work always, will make a great deal of difference. Unfortunately time and space do not allow much to be said about it here. F.G. French has some very useful suggestions concerning this at the beginning of Chapter VIII. [132] Teachers of beginners should be especially careful in the teaching of handwriting.

Punctuation. This was the next problem mentioned by teachers. Two general mistakes appeared to be the use of the colon for a full stop, and the omission of the question mark. These as we saw in Chapter III are due to the Armenian system of punctuation. Beside these there appeared to be general carelessness in punctuation in both written and oral work. The only remedy that can be suggested for this is patient teaching and insistence on good punctuation.

Spelling. Spelling, as we saw in connection with pronunciation, was a difficult problem. This is not only due to the difficulty of Armenian children in hearing English vowels and diphthongs, but the unphonetic character of English spelling. Some difficulties mentioned by teachers are ie and ei in words, and the doubling of

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132. French, op. cit., pp. 71-74.

consonants. There is the further difficulty of differences between English and American spelling, both of which will have to be accepted within limits of consistency. The difficulties apart from these, however, were not peculiar to Armenian children. There are certain basic rules for English spelling that might be taught profitably, but insistence on correctness in what the children write, and avoiding mistakes through care in preparation of the children for writing can be of great help. The improvement in hearing English sounds and pronouncing them will help in the end even if English spelling seems so "different from pronunciation", as one teacher puts it.

The next group of problems, as we said, were wider and more concerned with how students expressed themselves in English.

These again fell into two groups. The first group covered grammatical usage, the most important of which seemed to have to do with tenses. As we saw in Chapter III the tense systems in the two languages are different and some of the difficulties can be explained through this, but others are not specially peculiar to Armenian students. They include the sequence of tenses, the use of the Future and Conditional tenses, careless

use of the Past Tense, the Perfect tenses, the use of the 's' in the third person singular of the Present tense. Curiously enough, the Present Continuous tense which does not exist in Armenian was not mentioned. Its existence in Turkish and colloquial Armenian may account for this.

Other difficulties were mistakes in sentence structure, reported speech, and an inability to apply rules. The question of grammar will be taken later, but it is doubtful if good usage can be taught through teaching rules of grammar.

The next group of difficulties mentioned by teachers included the following:

"A tendency to shun simplicity in the pursuit of involved expressions". This was considered to be due to the fact that the written word was traditionally associated with " higher" thinking in Armenian, and that simple language was not a sufficiently suitable medium for lofty ideas. Other teachers thought it might be an attempt to impress the teacher, or that it was due to the influence of oriental ways of feeling. Whatever the cause, it is a very prevalent characteristic, and should be discouraged. At its worst it produces pompous nonsense and it is very difficult to make the students see that the long words,

vague generalisations, circunlocutions and soulful questions in their compositions do not really mean anything. Early training in simplicity and directness in talking about things they are really familiar with will do a great deal not only in improving written work, but in promoting clear thinking.

Tendency to go off the point, to deviate from the subject. This again is due to lack of early training in thinking clearly on the subject at hand. Students from these schools at A.U.B. have been known to deviate completely from the subject because in their opinion it was too trivial to write about, or to digress into the evils of society from as simple and direct a subject as the description of an incident in the summer holidays.

Lack of organisation, and an absence of the logical sequence of ideas in written work. This is perhaps again due to vague thinking and a too ambitious attitude towards work. Difficult and vague subjects are given before the students are ready for them, and not a sufficient amount of preliminary work in sentence and paragraph writing is given in preparation. Only a few teachers seemed to be doing work on paragraph writing and planning of written

work. Observation showed that students on the whole were poor at it. Either the whole composition was one paragraph, or it was divided into paragraphes of two or three lines. The senior students in one secondary school were very sceptical about planning written work. They said their thoughts came when they took up their pens, and they wrote. There was no need for planning it on paper, they could do it in their heads, they said.

"Tendency to translate quaint expressions". This is a very strong tendency which is the result of thinking in Armenian and writing in English. Some are very obvious translations, as in "He does not make my word twice", meaning he does what I say without forcing me to repeat it. Others, however, though not so obvious, result in very odd and un-English constructions. The following is an extract from the composition of a student in the senior year of a secondary school.

> "It is a reality that everybody walking on the street thinks about a subject which occupies his mind, that sometimes these subjects take us to such extremes that the person even cannot see the big car approaching or cannot hear the glaxoning of the driver, and when the damage occurs the driver is the responsible."

Apart from the misuse of one preposition, one definite article, a shift in pronouns, and the use of a French word, there are no glaring mistakes in this, and yet it cannot be said to be good English.

Very long and careful preparation is necessary before "free" composition is attempted. Both Gurrey and French stress this very strongly. Unless the words to be used, and the ideas to be put down are clear and familiar in the minds of the students, they are bound to think in their own language and translate. For this reason free composition should come late in the course, and should be preceeded by long, careful oral and written work, so that the sentence patterns, as well as the words and ideas are familiar to the students.

Authorities seem to be agreed that first attempts at written work should be in the form of transcription, the completion of sentences by single, or at most a few words, and the answering of simple questions. The object at the beginning is so to plan the work that mistakes do not occur. In every case much oral work is to precede written work so that what is put down is really familiar both in words and sentence-patterns. These can be graded and increased in difficulty as time goes on, but even

towards the end of this preliminary stage difficult sentence construction should not be left entirely to the students. The subject or the predicate can be provided and the students can be asked to give the rest.

The next stage may be the reproduction of short, simple narratives. Here again oral work precedes and prepares for writing. In this way, the subject - the story- is familiar, and the words that are important and new are explained and written on the board. All that remains for the student is to follow the sequence of the story and write it out.

The next stage may be easy questions on a paragraph or story that has been read and understood. At first the questions will need as answers the sentence patterns of the passage itself. Gradually the passages can be made more difficult, and the questions can demand more independent answers.

When students are fairly good at constructing sentences of their own, it is very important to start them on writing short paragraphs. Very few of them seemed to realise that a paragraph was a unit in itself, with a beginning, a development and an ending. It is best to insist on the topic sentence coming at the beginning of

a paragraph, and the logical sequence of ideas following that in each paragraph. If the subjects chosen are really familiar to students, and they are discussed and the students are made to understand that they must deal with that one topic and only its own development, they may be able to organise their work better than they seem to at present.

This stage is preparation for the most advanced stage in writing - "free" composition. As soon as the students begin to write down their ideas there is danger that they may do their thinking in their own language and translate. Therefore very great care is necessary to give them a sufficient amount of oral discussion of the subject before they begin to write. This will make the subject more clear, guard against digression, and ensure familiarity with terms and words that are to be used.

The subjects given at first should be familiar to students, preferably to do with their immediate surroundings, the school or their life at home. Other help such as pictures, films, a walk, an event that they all know about would be of help. It is always a help if there is a purpose for the composition. For instance, if they

are describing their playground, it might be for the purpose of giving their parents an idea of it. Research has shown that students write best about subjects within, and to do, with their experience.[133] General subjects, which need deductions, conclusions and the following up of relationships need facts and knowledge. It would be best to postpone these to a more advanced stage, and even then to demand preciseness and exactness of information.

Paragraph writing will have given an idea about planning written work. It is far more important that the composition itself be planned. It might be wise to make a common outline for the first few compositions with the help of students, on the blackboard. This has proved to be more fruitful in ideas than single plans from individual students. The fact that it is possible to have several plans, and several points of view can then be illustrated. The importance of openings, logical order in development, and endings can be stressed and illustrated. The discussion that leads to this common plan can show the importance of coherence and unity in the composition, and can be a valuable exercise in sorting out a number of ideas and putting them in logical order. The students can thus

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133. Gurrey, op. cit., p. 141.

gradually be trained to make their own outlines and learn to avoid the vague generalisations and repetitions that are found in their work.

The Teaching of Grammar. Previous discussions seemed to indicate that it is necessary to teach some form of grammar in a foreign language. Even the most ardent followers of the Direct Method advocated it or used it in spite of disapproving of it. The question that arises is not whether to teach it or not, but what to teach, and how to teach it.

The first principle to remember is that grammar is not a separate subject, but part of the language being taught. The next principle is that not the rules of grammar, but usage is the most important thing to teach. There is a tendency in the Armenian schools to think that "knowing" grammar will help their students to write good English. In fact one teacher said grammar should start in the first grade to enable his students to use the tenses more correctly.

In beginning to teach grammar, as well as the other aspects of the language, the most important thing to remember is to make the learning take place in as natural a way as possible. A child does not learn rules when he

learns how to use plurals, pronouns, tenses and so on in his own language. He hears and imitates correct usage. It is therefore important not to teach too much grammar, but to be grammatical in teaching English. Curiously enough, English grammar itself is not very difficult since it has few inflections, no gender, and no agreement between adjectives and nouns. Usage, however, is very difficult since word order and the "structural words" are so important. This is why grammatically correct sentences may still sound un-English. "Therefore explanation can do little, whereas practice can do much."[134]

Most Armenian children, however, are familiar with grammatical concepts in their own language. It would be unwise not to make use of this in comparisons and explanations should it be necessary to do so. For this reason it is also not necessary to postpone the teaching of grammar till the third year of learning English as some authorities suggest. The important thing is not to make too much of it, and stress correct usage rather than learning names of cases, types of pronouns, transitive and intransitive verbs and so on.

From the very first lessons the children will have to be drilled in the use of the Present Continuous,

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134. Gurrey, op. cit., p. 78.

the Imperative, the Present Simple, and the Past. They will have to be taught how to use plurals, and the possessive case. They will be using adjectives and adverbs soon, and the phrase patterns will drill the prepositions into their minds. If comparison with Armenian grammar will clarify their use, then it may be resorted to. The important thing is not to teach formal items of grammar, but to drill their uses through oral and written work.

In the higher classes it may be necessary to make the teaching of grammar more formal. If students are expected to be able to do clause analysis, parsing and so on, and they may have to because of external examinations, then some formal grammar will have to be taught. For this reason it seems advisable to start on the simple parts of speech fairly early in the course. Both the insistence on correct usage, and their knowledge of Armenian grammar will be of great use.

It would be best to base the grammar taught on the material covered in the class reader, so that the examples and illustrations may be within the vocabulary and experience of the students. The more ambitious and traditional grammar textbooks, if used, can be adapted to this.

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The most important point to remember in teaching grammar is teaching grammar that is functional. Even the requirements of external examinations like the General Certificate of Education examination could be met with this in mind. If the material being taught is helpful in clarifying usage and making it easier, then it is safe to teach it.

The Teaching of Literature. It has not been possible to give a sufficient amount of time and space to the teaching of literature in this study. This was partly because the primary aim of this paper was the study of the teaching of English as a language. Another reason is that very little space is given to the study of English or Armenian literature in the Armenian schools in general. However, it should form a very important part of the English course in providing material for reading and study. The two aspects of English teaching - language and literature - are really interdependent. It would be very difficult to appreciate literature without a fair knowledge of English as a language.

There are, as we saw, a number of simplified English classics for use as supplementary readers. These, however, cannot be said to possess any literatury value, or to be representative of their authors' works, as the adapting

of their vocabularies to the number of words familiar to students must, of necessity distort the books. Shortened versions, if available, would be much better. In the higher classes the reading of such books as "A Tale of Two Cities", "David Copperfield", "Pride and Prejudice", have given very good results. They provide material for reading to be done at home, reading aloud in class, discussions, written exercises, and so on. Thus, the study of literature can further the study of language.

Simple rhymes, as we saw, could be used from the earliest stages of teaching English. Poetry that is suitable and easy can be made to supplement these. Its teaching can go on throughout the course. An appreciation of poetry on the part of the teacher can be of great help in teaching poetry. It is, however, perhaps the most difficult thing to teach in English, for irreparable damage could be done to the appreciation of poetry in children if it were badly handled.

Some schools were teaching the plays of Shakespeare, but there seemed to be no other drama studied. Plays could form the basis for language teaching just as well as novels if they were well-selected and well handled.

So far literature has been regarded as a help in

language study. Its teaching, however, would end in benefits far greater than this. It would provide enjoyment, enlarge the ideas of students, and bring them in contact with great minds. Unfortunately time and space do not allow more to be said about it here.

Conclusion

The main aim of this study has been to reveal, as much as possible, the underlying problems in the teaching of English in the Armenian schools of Beirut. The suggestions that have appeared have been tentative and on the whole rather theoretical. A great deal of work is needed to make really concrete suggestions, with illustrations and examples in every case. If, with the problems in mind a practical handbook for teachers, with accompanying textbooks could be produced it would be of very great help in the teaching of English.

The problems themselves appear to fall into three main groups. These are: curriculum problems, problems to do with teachers, and problems connected with the actual teaching of English.

The problems connected with curriculum include some of the most serious facing the Armenian schools. However, this thesis has not taken the study of the problems connected with it as a primary aim, and an exhaustive analysis of them

and suggestions concerning them cannot be given here. The emphasis in this paper has been rather on problems connected with language, teachers and teaching methods. As these cannot be separated from the aims of teaching, and as aims touch the curriculum, it has been dealt with only to the extent that it is connected with the general aims of teaching English.

At present by far the greater number of schools are teaching four languages. These languages are taking a proportionally large amount of space on the time-table, but not always getting sufficient time to make their teaching effective. The necessity to teach some subjects in Arabic as well as Armenian makes the time-table lean heavily on the academic side.

It is suggested that in the primary school only one European language be taught - either English or French. The teaching of this need not start till the fourth year of the primary school. In the secondary school it may be possible to teach both French and English, but it is suggested that this be done only when the linguistic ability of the students justifies it. It may be necessary to do some grading of students in this as was suggested in Chapter II. Those with less ability could then go on with one language at their own pace, and the more gifted students could be given a more academic approach.

The problems connected with teachers are also serious. It appears that many teachers need help in extending their own knowledge of English, and in using educationally sound methods in teaching English. On the other hand there are problems connected with the insufficiency of teachers' salaries, security, and old-age pensions.

The third group of problems is connected with the difficulties that Armenian students face in learning English, and the ways of teaching it at present.

The differences between English and Armenian present some difficulties. The main difference is that English has lost most inflexions while Armenian is still an inflected language. This, and the present condition of the Armenian language seem to foster an indifference to fixed patterns of word-order in English. There are specific difficulties connected with hearing, pronunciation, spelling, reading and writing English. These do not appear unsurmountable but need great care and constant drill in overcoming them.

On the whole, perhaps the greatest problem facing the Armenian schools is that of teachers. Reorganisation of the curriculum and syllabus probably come next. With these two problems solved, the question of methods, specific difficulties in language learning and the attitude of students will be comparatively easy to deal with.

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A P P E N D I X.

Questionnaire to headmasters.

Questionnaire to teachers.

QUESTIONNAIRE TO HEADMASTERS

(Translated from Armenian)

Name of School
Primary or Secondary
Number of students
girls
boys
Number of teachers
permanent
visiting.

I. In what classes do you start the teaching of the following languages?:-
1. Arabic
2. English
3. French
4. Other.

II. What are the subjects taught in the following languages, and in which class does each start?:-

a. Arabic — Subject — Class

(1)
(2)
(3)
(4)
(5)

English — Subject — Class

(1)
(2)
(3)
(4)
(5)

French

(1)
(2)
(3)
(4)

III. How many of your teachers teach English as a language?

IV. How many of your teachers teach other subjects in English?

V. Below are given a few reasons for teaching English. Kindly indicate 5 of these, which, in your opinion, are the most important.

If you have further reasons to add to these, will you please write them in the space provided at the end.

1. A very important part of modern scientific literature is written in English. If our students intend to continue their studies the learning of English is essential for them.

2. A knowledge of English helps international understanding.

3. Books and periodicals published in the English language are important sources on the news and situation of the world.

4. A knowledge of English will give better chances to our students in their lives, and will lead to better openings in careers.

5. One of the universities in the Lebanon gives instruction in the English language, therefore the learning of this language is essential for those of our students who intend to continue their education there.

6. English is the key to the literature of the English-speaking peoples and through translations made into English, to that of other lands.

7. Learning a foreign language will increase the intellectual ability of our students, will lead to mental discipline.

8. The teaching of English satisfied the demands of parents and boards of education.

9. English is one of the most important languages used in business and commerce, we should therefore teach it so that the students may be able to use it for purposes of trade and business.

10. Knowing a foreign language is the sign of a cultured and educated person.

11. Other reasons:-

Q U E S T I O N N A I R E

TO TEACHERS OF ENGLISH IN THE

ARMENIAN SCHOOLS IN BEIRUT.

-o-

The following questionnaire is intended to get information on the teaching of English in the Armenian schools of Beirut. It is not necessary to have the teacher's name, but we would be grateful if you could supply the information asked for as it will help us in studying some of the problems connected with the teaching of English in Armenian schools.

-o-

1. Name of school _____

2. Type of School

   a. Primary
   b. Secondary

3. At what age do children start to learn English at your school?

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. For how many years does each child study English at your school?

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. Kindly fill in the appropriate information into the table below.

	Classes that you teach	Number of children in each class.	Age of children	Number of periods per week you teach in each class.
1			from.....to....	
2			from.....to....	
3			from.....to....	
4			from.....to....	
5			from.....to....	
6			from.....to....	

6. What are some of the difficulties that you face in teaching English?

a. _____

_____

b. _____

_____

c. _____

_____

d. _____

_____

e. _____

_____

f. _____

_____

7. What are the most common mistakes that your pupils make in learning English as a language? Will you please list them under the headings given below, and indicate whether you think the mistake is due to their mother tongue, some other language, or some other reason.

	SUBJECT	MISTAKES	REASONS FOR MISTAKES
A.	Speaking a. Pronunciation		
	b. Vocabulary		
	c. Sentence structure		
	d. Idiom		

	SUBJECT	MISTAKES	REASONS FOR MISTAKES
	e. Colloquialisms		
B.	Reading a. Speed		
	b. Accuracy		
	c. Understanding		

	SUBJECT	MISTAKES	REASONS FOR MISTAKES
C.	<u>Writing</u> a. Handwriting		
	b. Spelling & Punctuation		
	c. Grammar		
	d. Idiom		

SUBJECT	MISTAKES	REASONS FOR MISTAKES
e. Expression		
f. Planning of written work		

8. If you are a teacher of beginners in English in your school, please tell briefly what you find to be the most effective ways of beginning the teaching of English.

9. Do you find it necessary to use Armenian in Teaching English? If so, what are your reasons?

10. About what percentage of time is devoted to translation as a method of teaching?.....% What are your reasons for using translation?

11. What forms of oral work other than translation do you do in your classes? What percentage of time does this take? .....%

1. _____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

12. Do you use any teaching aids such as pictures, films, gramaphone, etc. List the kinds of teaching aids available at your school.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. What English textbooks do you use in each of your classes? Please give them below.

1. Class _____ Texts _____

_____

_____

2. Class _____ Texts _____

_____

_____

3. Class _____ Texts _____

_____

_____

4. Class _____ Texts _____

_____

_____

14. What comments have you on the textbooks that you use? If you like or dislike any one in particular, could you please give your reasons, naming the book first?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

15. Do you teach English Literature? Yes._____ No.____

If so, to what classes? _____

_____

What textbooks do you use for this that you did not mention under "Textbooks".

1. Class _____ Text _____

_____

2. Class _____ Text _____

_____

3. Class _____ Text _____

_____

16. Can you make any suggestions that would help to make the teaching of English more effective in your school?

_____

_____

_____

17. What forms of testing do you use?

a. Objective.

b. Subjective.

Do you use oral tests? _____

Is it possible to send us a copy of your last written examination questions, and some examples of quizzes or other evaluation materials you have used?

_____

_____

_____

18. Information About Teacher

A. Education
(Please fill in the names of schools, colleges, etc., you have attended, and any certificates, diplomas, degrees, etc., that you hold.)

1. Primary school _____

_____

2. Secondary school _____

_____

3. Training college _____

_____

4. University _____

_____

5. Other qualifications _____

_____

B. Experience.
(Please fill in the names of schools where you have taught, and number of years in each.)

1. School _____ Years____

2. School _____ Years _____

3. School _____ Years _____

4. School _____ Years _____

5. School _____ Years _____

19. Have you been to England or the United States?.....
If so, what length of time did you spend there?.....

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

20. Have you been in any other English-speaking country?
If so, what length of time did you spend there?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____