

THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN IRAN

A THESIS

By

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ENGLISH IN IRAN

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ABSTRACT

The various problems which Iranian students are meeting in written and oral expression in English at the American University of Beirut led to this study of English instruction in Iran. The methods used in carrying on the study were: two questionnaires, one answered by one-hundred and forty-six Iranian secondary students and the other by forty-four teachers; interviews with professors of English at the American University of Beirut; correspondence with resource people in Iran; a study of the test papers of nine Iranian students in the Special Form Department at the American University of Beirut; and study in the literature.

The data obtained from the questionnaires revealed that: teachers of English are inadequately trained; wrong and ineffective methods are used; speech, written English, and reading are not emphasized; audio-visual materials are not used; the textbooks are not appropriate; classes are overcrowded and teachers overworked; the language of instruction is Persian; the English taught is not useful to students; the examinations are not discriminative and reliable; and teachers are not supervised.

A comparison between the methods used in Iran and modern methods advocated by authorities in the teaching of foreign languages show the ineffectiveness of the traditional methods prevalent in Iran. Also study of common errors made

by Iranians showed that most mistakes spring directly from translation from Persian into English. The modern methods all emphasize correct speech, unity of the language, functional grammar, silent reading, written work, dramatization, and out-of-class activities. Translation is rejected by these methods and dictation is considered unnecessary.

Other weak points in the teaching of English were concluded to be the narrow objectives in curriculum, the short period of English instruction in the schools, the centralized system of education, and the low salaries paid to teachers which result in outside work and their inefficiency as teachers.

The recommendations made for the instructional program are: 1) extension and clarification of the objectives of English instruction; 2) revision of the English curriculum on the basis of modern philosophy of education and theories of learning, and an application of the unit-teaching method in English classes; 3) the introduction of English instruction as early as the fourth year of the elementary school; 4) use of English as the medium of instruction in all English classes; 5) application of the modern methods of English instruction; 6) reduction of the size of classes; 7) adequate libraries containing English books and the use of audio-visual materials; 8) greater flexibility in the curriculum; 9) in-service training and supervision; and 10) revision of textbooks.

The proposals made for the improvement of teacher training colleges in Iran are: 1) more careful selection of candidates for teaching; 2) more attention to written and spoken English and to methods of teaching English; 3) establishment of a demonstration or laboratory school in which modern methods are used; 4) better materials and equipment; and 5) reexamination of the policy of granting allowances to students attending the colleges and better evaluation procedures.

It is further recommended that a comprehensive study of the common errors in English made by Iranians be conducted; and that research be carried on to check the effectiveness of using modern methods.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

In the world today, nations as well as the individuals have become increasingly interdependent due to the advancement of science and technology. No people can isolate themselves from the rest of the world. The press, the radio, and television bring news of happenings in distant places almost as soon as they take place; the airplane minimizes distance; technology makes the resources of far distant places necessary to industry and modern life, and atomic weapons make local wars impossible. Rapid means of communication and transportation have changed our immense world into a very small one.

Western civilization is very rapidly penetrating other cultures. There is a great movement in the world today to accept the positive aspects of this civilization. The rapid advancement of science and the technical knowledge and the achievements of the United States necessitate the learning of the English language by all people who would like to profit from the achievements of this civilization. English as a language of internationalism plays a great role in the process of interdependence. The English language was spoken by 719

millions of people in the world in 1954.¹ Intercommunication among nations is increased not only by the new communication devices but also through a common language. Today, this common language is rapidly coming to be English. Two hundred million people of the world speak English as their native language.² According to Harold Palmer,³ every year about twenty millions people of the world learn English as a second language and, if this rapid spread of the language continues, one may expect that in the not too distant future, almost all educated people of the world will know English.

The English language is playing a vital role in developing a universal understanding among nations. People in distant places can correspond with each other through this medium; they can travel to any part of the world and communicate with the people of that area through English. People of the world are rapidly forming a great family whose language of communication is English.

This expansion of the use of the English language is due in part to British political and economical domination throughout the world in the previous century. World War II

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1. Afif Bulos, The Teaching of English to Arabic-speaking Students, unpublished Master's thesis (Beirut, The American University of Beirut, 1956), p. 1.
 2. Mario Pei, The World's Chief Languages (London, George Allen & Unwin LTD., 1954), p. 64.
 3. Harold E. Palmer, and H. Vere Redman, This Language-learning Business (London, George G. Harrap & Company LTD., 1932), p. 14.

sent British and American soldiers into all parts of the world and after the War, the commercial and political influence of the United States made English more widespread than ever. The abundance of English publications, the Voice of America and the British Broadcasting Corporation, as well as Hollywood motion pictures have all contributed to this tremendous expansion of the English language. Furthermore, the great technological advancement of the United States has made a knowledge of English necessary for scientists who would keep abreast with scientific progress. Even in Russia almost all scientists have to know English in order to use American textbooks and journals.⁴

While the importance of knowing English is understood by Iranians and they are very eager to learn this language, the graduates of the schools have difficulty in communicating effectively in English. There are many obstacles to learning the English language by Iranians which should be studied. Although it is not the intent of this thesis to tackle all the problems related to correct English usage by Iranians, two of the main difficulties will be discussed; namely, the present methods of teaching English in the schools, and the teachers of English.

4. Donald Hughes, "Good, But Not as Good",
Time Magazine, LXX (Dec. 2, 1957),
p. 52.

THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem with which this thesis deals is, "How can English instruction in Iranian secondary schools be improved so that the graduates of the schools not only can read English with speed and comprehension, but can also speak and write English fluently and correctly?". Before any recommendations can be made for improving instructions in Iranian secondary schools, it is necessary to examine: 1) the purpose and importance of teaching English to Iranians, and the English skills needed by them; 2) the methods now used in the schools to teach English; 3) the textbooks, materials, and resources used and available; 4) the teachers and their ability to use English; 5) what the literature says about teaching English to non-English speaking people.

The Basic Assumptions Underlying the Study

This study of how to improve the teaching of English in the high schools in Iran is based on several assumptions, each of which must be analyzed and examined in a study of the problem and before any conclusions or recommendations can be made.

1. English is important to Iranians. The necessity of knowing English in addition to the mother tongue has become increasingly evident in Iran. Any educated person who wishes to continue his studies must inevitably know an important foreign language, such as English, French, or German.

Knowing English per se may not be important to an Iranian, but the advantages it brings are certainly of vital importance from the economical, cultural, and political points of view. Iranians need to know English if they are to make progress. Two or three decades ago, it was customary in Iran to learn a foreign language for fun or pedantry, but now it is a necessity for both the individuals' and the whole country's progress. By learning English well, Iranians will become able to increase their political and economic power through close relationship with Western people. They will be able to import and use the new civilization of the West. Without a knowledge of English the avenues to much economic and cultural progress are closed not only to the individual but to the nation as well. The following advantages of learning English language justify the study of the English language by Iranians:

- a) One can study the most up-to-date research through English.
- b) One can further his international understanding.
- c) One may need to know English to enter a business or profession.
- d) One may more easily travel abroad.
- e) One may like to spend his leisure time with the rich literature of England and America.
- f) One may need to correspond commercially with big companies of the world.
- g) One may need English to get a job as a result of "tourism"; e.g. service, jobs in hotels, restaurants, stores, and beauty shops, or as guides, taxi drivers, and the like.

- h) One may wish to converse socially with English speaking people.
- i) One may wish to become an officer in the army.

2. Graduates of Iranian schools are not proficient in the use of the English language. Iranians who get away from Iran feel deeply the importance of knowing English. In Iran, they may think that their knowledge of English is much better than when they travel abroad and have to face the practical aspects of knowing the language. The Iranian students of the American University of Beirut, for example, complain that their English is poor and that they cannot express themselves as they wish. Their instructors state that these students have difficulty understanding them in classes, and the instructors are likewise unable to understand Iranians. These students are all graduates from Iranian high schools and colleges and they are supposedly the best students because they were selected from among hundreds of the graduates of high schools and colleges of Iran.⁵ Although many of these students are ex-teachers of English, they have had to attend "Special Form" courses at the American University of Beirut

5. According to a letter from Mr. Guy P. Timboe, Training Officer for Point Four in Tehran, Iran, "In February 1958, 187 graduates of the city of Tehran high schools participated in the preliminary examination. Of this number forty-one scored over 60 and one hundred and forty-six scored below 60." Granted that there are usually better teachers and means in the capital, still about 80 per cent of the graduates of Tehran failed in the preliminary examination which is comparatively easy.

to improve their English before continuing their studies in their major field. Even some of those who taught English in Iran and attended the Special Form courses for one year could not pass the English Entrance examination of the American University of Beirut, and eleven out of fifteen Iranian students who have attended the Special Form courses in 1954-1957, failed the final examinations of the Special Form. Furthermore, even those students who obtained top grades in the entrance examination, are often unable to communicate fluently and correctly in English because of lack of practice and drill in the speech. The grades of the Iranian freshmen at the American University of Beirut are a good indication of the English knowledge of these students. Almost all of these students have their lowest grades in English, and the few of them who have good grades in English are graduates of mission schools. A study of the written papers of the Iranian students shows that they are handicapped in the application of English grammar, although they may know the rules thoroughly.

3. The method used in learning English is a factor in how well pupils speak English. The present problem seems to revolve around the methods of teaching English. The old methods of teaching English are still prevalent in Iranian schools. These methods are often ineffective, and the fact that Iranians do not know English well after ten years of studying English may be a result of this ineffectiveness. According to Dr. Gertrude Nye, Director of the Iran-America

Society, the problems of teaching English dealt with in this paper do not exist in the English classes of that Society. This fact and the good English used by graduates of mission schools in Iran show that improved methods of teaching English can bring good results, if applied in Iran. Although the inefficient methods are not the only reason for the inability of Iranians to use English effectively, it is assumed that this is one important factor in their lack of proficiency.

4. The ability of the teacher to use correct spoken and written English affects the English used by the students. Iranian teachers of English are not able to communicate in English as well as should be expected of a teacher of English. Teachers of English in Iran are generally inadequately trained. So, even though they might have been told how to teach according to modern methods, they do not use these methods or principles because they are not trained adequately in how to apply these methods. Their inability to speak may be due to the fact that they themselves were taught by the old method and by teachers who did not speak English well. The American and English teachers of the mission schools and the teachers in foreign English institutions in Iran are certainly important factors in the ability of the graduates of those schools to speak and write English correctly and fluently. Also, according to Mr. Leslie Leavitt and Dr. Robert Howling, Iranian teachers as well as Iranian students with whom they have come in contact do not pronounce correctly sounds, such as w, th, and ing. Students of such teachers

cannot learn the correct sounds as long as their teachers use these sounds incorrectly.

5. The materials used in English classes are very important factors in learning English. The lack of facilities and materials for better teaching is assumed to be a great hindrance to teaching English successfully. What then, are the materials being used in Iranian schools? Are the textbooks used interesting and well-written? Do they motivate the students to read English and speak and write in English? What, if any, audio-visual materials are used? To what extent are students encouraged to read English for pleasure and what are the library resources of the schools? Answers to these questions are needed in understanding the problem and in proposing recommendations.

6. The physical environment is another factor in efficient teaching. Iranian schools are not usually built for the purpose of establishing a school. They are small or big houses which are rented by the Ministry of Education or by the people. These places, in general, are not suitable for schools. In such places, the development of the whole personality of the child encounters many hindrances. The students cannot move about easily either because of overcrowded classes or small rooms without enough spaces for their activities. Their classrooms often lack light and ventilation. How can a child in such an environment be expected to learn properly what is expected of him? In order to improve teaching of any subject, including English,

a good physical environment is necessary.

Importance of the Study

In spite of the fact that English is important to Iranians, the general opinion of the people is that, "Nobody learns English in Iran." Although it is understood that there is something wrong with the teaching of English in Iran, to date no study has been made of the English proficiency of Iranians as compared with other nationals who learn English as a second language, or of the English proficiency of the graduates of Iranian schools. This study was undertaken to test the assumptions stated earlier: first, that the graduates of Iranian schools are not proficient in the use of English, and second, that the reason Iranians "do not learn English in Iran" is due to ineffective teaching and poorly trained teachers. The result of this study should be helpful to the teachers of English and the students of Teachers' College, Tehran University, who are prospective teachers of English. Also, it is hoped that English and American Institutions who are trying to improve the teaching of English in Iran can find some helpful suggestions in this thesis for methods to use in their programs. According to an authority of the International Cooperation Administration program in Iran, this agency is going to establish a big center for the teaching of English in Iran. This thesis should be helpful to it in organizing and developing its center.

The findings of this study about the effectiveness of the present curriculum and methods and the recommendations

proposed for improving the instruction of English in the secondary schools of Iran should be particularly valuable to curriculum planners, administrators, teachers, and students. Thus, it is hoped that this thesis, if studied carefully, will be of help to many people. It is hoped, too, that it will contribute not only to raising the standard of English instruction in Iran but also indirectly to increasing the general knowledge of Iranians in many aspects of life.

THE METHODS OF APPROACH

Five methods were used in obtaining data about the methods used in the teaching of English in Iranian schools and their effectiveness, and about modern methods of teaching English as a foreign language: 1) study of the test results of Iranian students attending the American University of Beirut and of candidates for admission to the University; 2) questionnaires to teachers and students; 3) interviews; 4) correspondence with educators in Iran; and 5) research in the literature.

The Study of Test Results

In order to discover the common errors made by Iranians in grammar and punctuation, 113 test papers of nine Iranian students in Special Form classes, 1955-1958, were studied. Since the aim of this paper is not a study of all errors made by Iranians in speaking English, these papers could give sufficient information about the common errors made in written English.

Since the Iranians attending the American University of Beirut were selected from among hundreds of participants in the entrance examination given by the International Cooperation Administration at Tehran, the results of this test were studied in order to get evidence on the effectiveness of English instruction in Iran.

Questionnaires

A questionnaire was developed to find out the methods of teaching English used in Iranian schools, the materials used, the quality of the teachers, the status of English in the curriculum, what students liked and disliked about the teaching of English, and the difficulties encountered by the students in learning English. This questionnaire was given to eighty-two Iranian students attending colleges and universities in Beirut, Lebanon and sixty-four questionnaires were sent to students in the high schools of Iran.

Another questionnaire was sent to 44 teachers of English in Iran. In this questionnaire, the teachers were asked what problems they are facing now and how they can improve the present situation, and what methods they are using. Their opinions about the present syllabuses, evaluation methods, and textbooks were compiled and form part of the evidence about the methods used in teaching English. A copy of the two questionnaires can be found in appendix A.

Interviews

Authorities in language teaching at the American

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Interviews

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University of Beirut, such as Mr. Leslie Leavitt, Professor of Education, Dr. Robert Howling, Chairman of Special Form Department, and Dr. Malcolm Welland, Associate Professor of English Literature, and Dr. Raja Nasr, Instructor of English in Beirut College for Women were interviewed about the modern methods of teaching English, in general, and their particular views about the training of teachers of English and the methods of teaching English to non-English speaking people, including Iranians. Also, fourteen Iranian ex-teachers of English attending the American University of Beirut were interviewed about the methods they used in the teaching of English, and their suggestions for improving the teaching of English in Iran. A copy of the structured interview with professors of English and the Iranian ex-teachers of English can be found in appendix B.

Correspondence

In Iran there are some institutions and authorities which could give useful information concerning their work and projects. These people and institutions were contacted by mail: Dr. Gertrude Nye, Director of Iran-America Society, Tehran, Mr. D.A. Traversi, the Director of British Council English Classes, Tehran, Professor Alaeddin Pazagardi, Professor of Education and English Teaching in the Department of Education of Tehran University, and Mr. Javad Fazel, Teacher of English in High School Rahnama, Tehran.

Furthermore, Mr. Guy Timboe, Training Officer, International Cooperation Administration, Tehran was contacted in

order to get the test data of Iranians who took the entrance examination to the American University of Beirut. Likewise, three influential men in the Ministry of Education, Iran, were corresponded with in order to get information about examinations, syllabuses, and teacher training in Iran. Copies of the letters sent can also be found in appendix C.

Review of Literature

The modern methods of teaching English as a foreign language were studied in order to find out how they differed from the methods used in Iran and what advantages they possess over the old methods. Reliance had to be placed in the literature in the field rather than on observation and experimentation for evidence on the value of modern methods in teaching English to non-speaking English students.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Teaching of English in Iran starts in the first secondary school. Although, in a very few demonstration schools the instruction of foreign languages starts in the elementary school, the Ministry of Education has prescribed the teaching of English or other foreign languages only in the secondary schools. Therefore, this study is concerned with the teaching of English in high schools only, although some information about the Teachers' College is given in order to show how the teachers of these secondary schools are trained.

The methods used in the study placed some limitations on the data. Most of the data were obtained through questionnaires

and interviews. Consequently, some of the answers may not be objective and reliable. However, many of the questions get at the information in different ways and this serves to check on the reliability of the answers given by the respondents. When inconsistency appeared, the answers were not taken into consideration. However, there were not many which had to be discarded.

Since the aim of the study was not to find out the errors made by Iranians in speaking and writing, no tests or recordings were used.

Due to the fact that the study was made in Lebanon rather than in Iran, some authorities who might otherwise have been interviewed were not accessible, and thus, some probable answers of value were not obtained. Likewise, observations in demonstration schools would have been useful had the study been carried on in Iran.

The sample of the Iranians in Lebanon has both weak and strong points. First, it is limited to the students who were selected from among hundreds of graduate students. Although this sample may be a good one for comparing with those who answer in Iran, it is limited in nature to those who are supposed to know English very well according to the standard of English knowledge in Iran. However, the respondents to the questionnaires are from almost all parts of Iran and so this sample can show a good picture of the outstanding students throughout Iran.

Some aspects of the problem of "Teaching of English in Iran" such as a critical review of the English textbooks

used in Iranian schools, the details of teaching grammar, translation, and phonetics, and the errors made in pronunciation by Iranians, are not discussed thoroughly due to lack of time and inadequate data. The scope of this study, therefore, is limited to a study of the methods used in Iranian secondary schools and of the teachers of English, their preparation and proficiency.

SUMMARY

The various difficulties which Iranian students encountered in their studies in the American University of Beirut, led to this study of "Teaching of English in Iran". Since, it was assumed that these difficulties sprang mainly from inadequately trained teachers and the methods of teaching English used, this study was limited to these two major aspects. The data were obtained through questionnaires, interviews, correspondence, review of the test papers of Iranians, and review of the literature. It is hoped that the recommendations made in this paper can be of value to the Iranian teachers of English, as well as to curriculum planners.

CHAPTER II

PLACE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE CURRICULUM OF IRANIAN SCHOOLS

The educational system in Iran has undergone many changes during the last five decades. These changes have affected many phases of the educational life of the people, including the teaching of the various foreign languages. A brief survey of these changes is necessary in order that the reader may understand the present status of English instruction in Iran.

HISTORY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN IRANIAN SCHOOLS

A survey of the historical background of English instruction in Iran is of importance for two reasons: first, it shows that instruction of English in Iran is still in its infancy, and second, it shows the influence of religious men in determining what foreign languages should be included in the curriculum. These two factors are basic factors in the present problem of English instruction.

Old Schools

Up until 1910, there were special elementary schools in Iran called maktabs. In these maktabs, a mullah would teach most of the subjects, all of which were either wholly religious or related to religion. The method of teaching was quite authoritarian. The medium of instruction was Persian. However, the students of these schools must learn Arabic well enough to read correctly the religious or philosophical books in Arabic.

Although the pupils worked very hard in their subjects, especially in Arabic, they were unable to speak Arabic fluently, because the emphasis was put on reading and writing the Arabic language instead of speaking and understanding the spoken language. This stress on learning Arabic was due to the influence of Islam in Iran. The religious authorities were the influential determiners of the curriculum. They wished the people to learn Arabic in order to read the Koran, not necessarily to understand it. This is why the mass of people pray in Arabic and know all or some parts of the Koran by heart, but they do not know what the Koran says or what they should do according to the instructions of the Koran.

In addition to the maktabs, there were a few secondary schools in Iran called madrassahs. However, the main secondary school in Iran at that time was called the Institute of Technology (Darol-fonoon). In this school, four foreign languages were taught: Arabic, French, German, and Russian.

Likewise in the madrassahs, French and other European languages were taught, but in the same manner as Arabic; i.e., much stress was placed on grammar and reading. Teachers were authoritarian, and no attention was paid to the interests and needs of the students. Children were punished corporally if they did something which the authorities of the schools did not like.

This old system of education lasted for hundreds of years in Iran. In this long period, many books were translated from Arabic into Persian and from Persian into Arabic, and a few books in French and English were also translated into Persian.

These old schools were mainly for boys. There were, however, a few schools, or maktabs, for girls taught by old women who knew the Koran well. An interesting point in the education of girls before the Riza Shah period was that they were not allowed to learn how to write in Arabic or in their mother tongue, because this might result in correspondence between girls and boys, and this was considered a great sin.

The Reforms of Riza Shah

Riza Shah, the great king of Iran, from 1922 to 1942, was an outstanding reformer of education in Iran. One of his most important measures was the abolition of the old schools and the establishment of modern schools. During the twenty years of his reign, Riza Shah tried to eradicate the pressure of the mullahs, or religious leaders, upon the curriculum,

and consequently the Arabic language lost its former importance in the curriculum. The other foreign languages, such as French, German, English, and Russian, which did not have an important place in the old curriculum, found their way into the new curriculum. Yet, since the new curriculum was also based on the philosophy of essentialism, the needs and interests of the children were disregarded and the same old methods continued. The aim of teaching foreign languages was to enable pupils to read and translate books or articles from foreign languages into Persian. Teaching of grammar was emphasized and the state examinations demanded a broad knowledge of grammar rather than an application of the rules.

The motto of the educational system was, "Knowledge is power." This fact had serious results in the education of Iranians. One of these was a hierarchy of subjects. The liberal arts were considered to be the most important subjects, and grammar the most valuable part of a language. It was emphasized in all the language syllabuses of the Riza Shah period.

The unfortunate point about this period is that although the power of the mullahs was decreased and the curriculum was revised, the methods of teaching were not changed. As a matter of fact, the same mullahs continued to be influential, although disguised as teachers of Persian literature, philosophy, social sciences, and Arabic language. Lack of trained teachers was one reason the methods and teachers did not change. However,

the curriculum was broadened. Some subjects such as science, the social sciences, arts, music, and physical education found their way into the new curriculum. On the whole, the modern curriculum took shape during this period.

The Minister of Education, as the educational head, determined the curriculum and the functions of all the schools throughout the country. Everything was dictated uniformly to all schools in all areas of the nation. This centralization of education caused a decline in the importance of Arabic in the provinces and villages as well as in the cities. A child from Tabriz had to learn a European language, usually French, the same as did a child from Kirman.

Since Riza Shah was interested in reviving the original Persian, he established an institution for the careful study of the Persian language. This institution, called Farhangestan (Academy of Language) was supposed to replace the Arabic words existing in Persian with the original Persian words. The new textbooks were carefully examined to omit all Arabic words and to put Persian words in their place. This intense effort to "Persianize" the textbooks had some effect on the textbooks of foreign languages also. In these books, the English or French words were all translated into Persian words, and teachers were obliged to speak in the new Persian in the classroom in order that the pupils might learn and use the new Persian. The big dictionary of English-Persian and Persian-English words was written by Haim in this period. In this dictionary an attempt was made to translate English

words into pure Persian words as much as possible.

French was the most prevalent foreign language in Iran in the Riza Shah period. If the previous period can be called the "Period of the Arabic language", the period of Riza Shah must be called the "Period of the French language". German was encouraged in the vocational and industrial schools because at that time Germany was very powerful industrially. Teachers in the vocational schools were often German, and German became the second important foreign language in this period.

In short, during the Riza Shah period, the status of education in Iran was as follows:

1. Maktabas were abolished and modern schools were established.
2. The influence of the mullahs upon the curriculum declined.
3. The Arabic language lost its previous importance.
4. The scope of the curriculum was broadened.
5. A revival of ancient Persian brought about a revolution in the Persian language.
6. The methods of teaching were changed slightly.
7. The textbooks were written by experts selected by the Ministry of Education. The style of the books was influenced by the French literary style.
8. The teachers of the modern schools were in most cases the same religious men as had taught in the old systems. These people gradually gave their places to trained teachers.
9. The philosophy of education was based on essentialism; the motto of education was, "Knowledge is power".
10. Girls as well as boys were given the right to study written languages, both the mother tongue and foreign languages.

PRESENT STATUS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The victory of the Allies in the Second World War brought about another change in the curriculum of Iran. The authorities in the Ministry of Education decided, in 1945, to change the curriculum, and the English language replaced French as the most important language taught in the schools. The Teachers' College of Tehran University trained about one hundred English teachers every year and gradually the number of teachers of French decreased because of the small demand for them by the Ministry of Education.

English, as the Second Language

Foreign languages can be divided into two classes. On the one hand, there is the Arabic language which is a required subject for all schools and is really not considered a foreign language due to the close relationship between Persian and Arabic. It is believed that Arabic contributes to a better knowledge of Persian. On the other hand, there are the European languages, and pupils may select one of them for study. Usually, in each school only one foreign language, in addition to Arabic, is taught, and pupils elect to attend a school which teaches their desired foreign language. Except in a very few elementary schools, foreign languages are not taught in the elementary schools in Iran, and the children start learning a foreign language in the first grade of high school.

At present, there are few schools offering French as a foreign language. In some provinces, there are schools where French is still taught, but in comparison with the schools with English as their foreign language, they are a small percentage. There are also very few schools in which German is taught as a foreign language. These schools are the last of those technical and vocational schools established in the Riza Shah period. In some Armenian and Assyrian schools, Russian is taught, also.

At present, the foreign languages, in addition to Arabic, taught in Iranian schools are in order of their importance: English, French, German, and Russian. Arabic is still required of all students, but as was said before, it is not considered a foreign language. Government examinations for the fifth and sixth grades of the secondary school include these foreign languages, but English is the most popular. It is developing more and more throughout the country as the second language of the people.

Revision of the Foreign Language Curriculum

Since World War II, the foreign language curriculum has undergone three revisions. As the result of the revision made in 1945, English became the formal second language in Iran. Another revision made in 1950 changed the objective of foreign language instruction, while the third one, in 1956, prescribed the methods to be used in teaching foreign language in the junior secondary schools.

Curriculum of 1950. The aim of teaching foreign language according to the program issued by the Ministry of Education in 1950 was "to speak the foreign language and make analysis and syntax". The methods of approach were grammar, dictation, translation, written composition, and oral reading. In the first three years of secondary school, the correct pronunciation of words and the use of objects, pictures, and posters to give meaning to words was recommended. In the second three years of the secondary school, dictation, composition, and grammar were the methods recommended. Also, "memorization of some proper literal selections", "translation of simple phrases and sentences from Persian into foreign language and vice versa", and "reading of selected reading materials" were recommended in the senior secondary school.⁶

This curriculum was defective both in the objectives and the methods of approach recommended and did not meet the needs of the students. Students of a foreign language rarely need "to make analysis and syntax", and the ability to speak the language is not sufficient. The methods of approach are unsatisfactory and do not lead to a realization of the objective. Translation, dictation, and memorization of "some proper literal selections" are not conducive to efficiency in English. These objections to the curriculum and the unsatisfactory consequences of the curriculum in practice, led in 1956 to a modification in the curriculum.

6. Ministry of Education, "Foreign Languages", Program of the Secondary School (Tehran, Mousawi, 1950), pp. 9-11.

Curriculum of 1956. The Program of the Secondary School published in 1956 by the Ministry of Education is concerned primarily with the junior secondary school. According to the changes in the 1956 curriculum, the program of the first and second cycles are different. The curriculum for the first three years is the same for all pupils; in the second cycle, each pupil selects a certain field, such as arts or sciences, and the emphasis in the language he studies is appropriate to his field. The objective of foreign language instruction was stated as "the ability to speak the foreign language". Correct pronunciation of words and conversation are stressed a great deal. The direct method was formally prescribed by the Ministry for the first time. Also, the use of audio-visual materials is recommended in the program.

In the first year of the school, the syllabus prescribes the teaching of sounds, the reading of simple words and phrases. It is recommended that students learn 800-1000 words (nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and verbs) by direct demonstration and association with objects. Translation from Persian into English and vice versa, which was not demanded in the former curriculum, is recommended in the new one. Dictation from previously-announced parts of the book is still an important part of language instruction.

In the second year of the secondary school, instruction of sounds, grammar, written exercises, dictation, and

conversation are prescribed. In the last year of the first cycle, the syllabus, states that "idioms for which there is no literal translation" in Persian should be taught and students should become familiar with the civilization and culture of the foreign country whose language they study. Grammar, written composition, and dictation are given special emphasis in the third year of the secondary school.⁷

The 1956 curriculum has some positive aspects, although it is unsatisfactory, on the whole. The aim of foreign language instruction is still too narrow. The other skills of language, such as, understanding the spoken language, reading, and writing correctly are not emphasized. The methods of approach are inappropriate, too. Translation is not necessary, particularly in the first grade of the secondary school. The emphasis on dictation and grammar should also be replaced by emphasis on listening, correct speech and writing.

An important difference between the program of 1950 and 1956 is that in the former, teachers were obliged to assign a certain hour for dictation and a special period for composition. In the latter, an integrated program of foreign language is approved for the junior secondary schools. Students were given three different grades, one for reading, another for dictation, and the third for translation in the

7. Ministry of Education, "Foreign Languages in Junior Secondary School", Program of the Secondary School (Tehran, Mousawi, 1956), pp. 53-57.

program of 1950; while only one grade is given according to the 1956 revision. This modification of the program, although a commendable one, unfortunately caused the students to think that foreign language was not as important as formerly. Because students study for examinations and grades, they considered English more important when they received three grades in it rather than only one. The program of the Ministry of Education in 1950 and 1956 are given in appendix D.

Special English Classes

In addition to the regular classes in the schools, there are plenty of night classes which teach English, French, and German to adults and young students. The Iran-America Society and the British Council have extensive classes for teaching English and they give certificates for proficiency in English.

The Iran-America Society was established in Iran in 1925. After World War II, this society extended rapidly and now it has 1,400 members. At present there are around 4,000 students in these classes.⁸ The methods used by this institution are quite modern. The Society is directed by world-known linguists. There are nine levels of studying English in this society. In the first levels, all emphasis is laid on pronunciation, listening, and speaking. Grammar is taught in the upper levels and according to modern methods. One

8. "The Iran-America Society", Akhbaré Hafteh (Tehran, the United States Information Service, 1957), p. 3.

who graduates from this institution gets a certificate for proficiency in English. In addition, there are special training classes for translation and composition above these nine levels. In recent years, the Society has expanded its activities in eight cities and the results have been satisfactory. Every year more people rush to register in these classes. The Iran-America Society has special classes for teachers of English. In these classes teachers learn both English and methods of teaching English.

The British Council has also played an important role in improving the teaching of English in Iran. Again, there are classes for students and teachers of English. Until about ten years ago, there were different branches of this Council in Iran, but now they have given their places to the Iran-America Society classes. Although the classes of the British Council are not as broad as those of the Iran-America Society, the methods of teaching and procedures are much the same.

SUMMARY

The educational system in Iran has undergone many changes during the last half century. Teaching of foreign languages has been affected by these changes as well as by changes in the world. In brief, there have been three different phases of teaching foreign languages in Iran. Before 1910, the maktabs taught Arabic so that students could read the

Koran and pray in Arabic. After 1910, Arabic gave place to French, and after World War II, English replaced French as the second language in Iran. The curriculum issued in 1945 recognized English as the most important foreign language. Another change in 1950, emphasized "speech" as the objective of foreign language instruction. The direct method of teaching foreign languages was formally introduced in the junior secondary schools by the revision of the curriculum made in 1956.

Not only is English the most important foreign language in the schools, but many classes are also conducted by American and English institutions which contribute greatly to making English the prevailing foreign language in Iran.

CHAPTER III

STATUS OF ENGLISH INSTRUCTION IN IRAN

In order to study the present status of English instruction in Iran, two separate questionnaires were prepared, one for Iranian teachers and the other for students of Iranian secondary schools. A total of one hundred and forty-six students and forty-four teachers answered these questionnaires of which sixty-four students and thirty teachers were in Iran, and eighty-two students and fourteen teachers were in Beirut, Lebanon, studying in one of the universities or colleges there. The responses of the students and teachers now in Lebanon were more positive about English instruction in Iran than those from the respondents in Iran, probably because the former were selected from among the hundreds of graduates of high schools and colleges, and either found English easier or had better teachers than the others. However, since these teachers and students are from almost all parts of Iran, they probably represent fairly accurately the teaching of English in the whole country. The students who answered the questionnaires were from fifteen different provinces, and the respondent teachers had taught in 123 different schools in twelve towns and cities.

Five respondents among the students had studied in missionary schools. The answers of these students indicated that the present problems of English instruction in the public schools do not exist in the missionary schools. Consequently, the responses of these people were not included in the tabulation of the data.

In addition, one hundred and thirteen test papers of nine Iranian students in the Special Form Department of the American University of Beirut, 1955-1958, were examined in order to discover if common errors in English are made by Iranians and, if so, what they are. Letters were sent to authorities in the Iranian Ministry of Education in order to secure data about the preparation of teachers of English and about the examinations in English given in Iran. The information secured in this way is included in the sections on "teachers of English" and "evaluation".

THE PLACE OF ENGLISH IN THE CURRICULUM

At present almost all of the secondary schools in Iran offer English as the foreign language. There are a few schools in Tehran and other provinces that teach French, German, and Russian, but in proportion to the schools offering English, they are a small minority. No foreign language is taught in the elementary schools in Iran. However, in some private demonstration elementary schools, English or French is taught.

Use of Time in English Instruction

In the present curriculum four periods of fifty minutes per week are allotted to foreign language instruction for all grades except the fifth and sixth grades of the Literature Division where five and six hours per week are respectively assigned to the study of a foreign language. The respondent teachers in the sample studied stated that they use these four periods according to their own wishes.

TABLE 1

Amount of Time per Week Devoted by 44 Teachers of English in Iranian Schools to Four Methods

Activity or Method	Number of teachers spending						
	No Min.	25 Min.	40 Min.	50 Min.	75 Min.	100 Min.	120 Min.
Reading	0	1	9	20	9	3	2
Dictation	0	4	9	30	1	0	0
Translation	0	2	5	35	2	0	0
Written Composition	13	3	2	26	0	0	0

According to their responses, shown in Table I, about half of the teachers divide the four period hours almost equally among the four activities. In this case, two out of the four hours are assigned to dictation and translation which are of little, if any, value. Almost one-third of the teachers said they use no class time for written composition.

Question thirteen of the questionnaire to the teachers asked them to indicate how much time per week they devote

to specific skills and activities. Their responses show that some skills, such as pronunciation, speech, and spelling are given very little attention by most of the teachers; others, like silent reading and dramatization, are almost entirely disregarded. Eighty per cent of the teachers spend from forty to sixty minutes on grammar. This is a large amount of time out of the two-hundred minutes allotted for English instruction. Ninety-five per cent of the teachers spend twenty-five to fifty minutes on vocabulary building. Consequently, vocabulary is the skill to which the teachers pay most attention.

Although the program of the Ministry of Education states that the objective of foreign language instruction is "the ability to speak the foreign language", all the oral aspects of the language are quite overshadowed by grammar, translation, and vocabulary building. Table II reveals the approximate time per week spent by the forty-four teachers on various skills and activities.

Size of the Classes

One of the most serious conditions of teaching in Iran is the overcrowded classroom. This is true in English classes as well as in other secondary classrooms. This assumption was supported by the responses of the students in the study. According to their replies to the question, "Approximately how many students were usually in your English classes?", sixty-five per cent stated that there were fifty

TABLE II

The Approximate Time per Week Spent by 44 Teachers
on Different Skills and Activities

Skills and Activities	Number of persons spending						
	No Min.	10 Min.	25 Min.	40 Min.	50 Min.	60 Min.	75 Min.
Grammar	0	0	7	13	17	5	2
Silent reading	39	5	0	0	0	0	0
Vocabulary	0	0	21	13	7	3	0
Pronunciation Practice in Speech	26 13	16 17	2 9	0 5	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dramatization	43	1	0	0	0	0	0
Spelling	18	21	3	2	0	0	0

or more students in their English classes. Only eleven per cent were in classes of thirty or fewer students. So many students in a classroom make the teaching of any subject, particularly a language, very difficult, and undoubtedly account in part for the ineffectiveness of English instruction in Iranian secondary schools. Table III shows the size of the English classes of the 141 students.

METHODS OF ENGLISH INSTRUCTION

In a response to the question, "Which three of the following methods did your teacher stress most?", over fifty per cent of the students answered that grammar, translation, dictation and oral reading are the activities mostly stressed by their teachers. Table IV shows also that pronunciation,

TABLE III

Size of English Classes of 141 Iranian Students

Number of Respondents	Students in Class
1	20
2	25
13	30
11	35
8	40
14	45
41	50
23	55
22	60
4	65
1	70
1	75

TABLE IV

Methods and Skills Stressed by Teachers of English
as Reported by 141 Students

Skills or Methods	Most Stressed		Least Stressed	
	No. of Students	Percen- tage	No. of Students	Percen- tage
Grammar	112	80	0	0
Translation	98	70	0	0
Dictation	85	60	0	0
Oral reading	71	50	0	0
Vocabulary	35	25	0	0
Pronunciation	9	6	43	30
Listening	5	3.5	15	10
Written Composition	3	2	29	21
Oral Composition	2	1.4	56	39
Conversation	2	1.4	40	29
Enunciation	1	0.7	32	23
Comprehension	0	0	34	24
Intonation	0	0	49	35
Silent reading	0	0	46	32
Dramatization	0	0	79	57

listening, written composition, oral composition, conversation, and enunciation are emphasized by only a few teachers, while comprehension, silent reading, dramatization, and intonation are not stressed by any teacher. This fact was confirmed by the responses to another question, "Which three of the following did your teacher stress least"? . The responses to this question are also given in Table IV.

The Iranian teachers who were asked, "What methods do you emphasize most", answered that grammar, reading, and translation were stressed most by them. The replies are as follows:

Grammar	26
Reading	24
Translation	23

The teachers were also asked, "What methods do you emphasize least". The replies revealed that conversation, written work, and pronunciation were stressed least. The replies are:

Conversation	31
Written Composition	22
Pronunciation	15

The answers given by the students and confirmed by the teachers are all evidence of the little attention paid to oral work and the overemphasis on translation and grammar. This is not surprising because, although the curriculum states that the objective is the ability to speak English,

the methods of instruction used most frequently by the teachers are those recommended by the Ministry and stressed in the examinations.

The Language of Instruction

Although the students have only four hours in an English-speaking environment per week, the English language is taught through Persian. When asked, "Did your teacher explain the meaning of English words in English?" the students in the sample replied:

very often	0
often	7
sometimes	15
not often	43
never	75

In order to further check on the language of instruction used in the English classes, these students were asked, "Did your teacher explain the meaning of English words in Persian?". Their replies to this question clearly indicate that Persian is used in more than three-fourths of the classrooms "often" and "very often". The replies are:

very often	85
often	31
sometimes	10
not often	8
never	5

The responses to still another question confirmed the assumption that Persian is the language of instruction. When

asked, "Did your teacher use Persian in the classes?",
the students replied:

very often	73
often	51
sometimes	8
not often	6
never	2
no reply	1

Likewise, the forty-four Iranian teachers who were asked, "How often do you explain the meaning of English words in English?", asserted that they rarely, if ever, explained words in English. The replies are:

very often	0
often	0
sometimes	3
not often	18
never	23

These teachers confirmed the above responses by answering another question, "How often do you explain the meaning of English words in Persian?" as follows:

very often	25
often	16
sometimes	3
not often	0
never	0

When the Iranian teachers were asked how much of the two hundred minutes allotted for English instruction they

spent in speaking Persian in the classes, their responses substantiated the data from the students' questionnaire. All of them spoke in Persian, at least some of the time. According to Table V, half of the time per week is spent

TABLE V
Amount of Class Time Spent in Speaking Persian
According to 44 English Teachers

Number of Teachers	Minutes
2	40
5	60
7	75
24	100
5	125
1	150

in speaking Persian by fifty-four per cent of the teachers. The remaining time is used for English, but not necessarily speaking the language. It might be spent on reading, on written composition or on writing dictation.

Reading

In teaching reading, an Iranian teacher usually reads the selection first and translates the English words into Persian. Sometimes he writes these translations on the chalkboard. The students then, one by one, read some part of the new lesson until the period ends. Sometimes, the teacher starts by asking some student to read the previous lesson; then he teaches the new lesson. Review of the lesson takes place from time to time. The new words are usually

used during the translation period in sentences. Grammar lessons in the text are also taught during the period devoted to reading.

The Iranian students, when asked "Did your teacher read a passage aloud to the class and then ask the students to read it aloud one after another?", confirmed the assumption that this is the method usually followed. The students replied as follows:

very often	42
often	63
sometimes	21
not often	7
never	8

According to these responses, at least three-fourths of the Iranian teachers are teaching oral reading by the above-mentioned method and only ten per cent seldom or never use it.

One of the teachers who reported that he does not teach reading as others do, states, "I would read the text two or three times for different purposes: once for pronunciation, the second time for explanation of the words, and once more for translation of the text". This method, although different from the general method, also wastes time, because the teacher, not the students, has the practice in reading. Another teacher reported that he discusses the stories with the students. This method which stresses reading comprehension is better than the others.

Silent reading. One of the best methods for teaching reading, silent reading, is usually disregarded by Iranian teachers. The responses of the students supports this assumption. In answer to the question, "Did this teacher give you practice in silent reading?", only three per cent of the students said this happened often, while ninety-four per cent said they seldom, if ever, had practice in silent reading. Their replies are as follows:

very often	0
often	4
sometimes	4
not often	55
never	75
no replies	3

The answers given by the teachers to a similar question, "Approximately how much time did you devote to giving practice in silent reading to your students?", confirmed the results obtained from the students' replies. According to Table VI, only two of the forty-four teachers gave any time to silent reading. One gave five minutes per week and another ten minutes, but the remaining forty-two did not spend any time on silent reading.

TABLE VI

Approximate Time per Week Spent by 44 Teachers
on Silent Reading

Number of Teachers	Minutes per Week
1	5
1	10
42	0

Usually Iranian teachers do not complete one book during the school year, and very often students who have not completed the book of a lower grade, cannot catch up and do the work of the upper grades. After two or three years some students lag far behind their classmates. To the question, "Did you study a book completely during a school year?", the students answered as follows:

very often	7
often	14
sometimes	15
not often	42
never	63

Thus, only fifteen per cent of the one-hundred and forty-one students reported that they often completed a book during the year, while seventy-five per cent answered in the negative.

Reading comprehension. The modern methods of teaching a foreign language stress the comprehension of the language. In the Iranian schools, on the contrary, comprehension of the language is not stressed. All but one of the teachers of English who were asked, "How much time did you devote to the comprehension of your students?", answered that they spent no time on it. One of them answered ten minutes per week. Eighty-four per cent of the students who were asked, "Did your teacher test your comprehension of English sentences?", answered in the negative. Only six per cent replied that their teachers often tested their comprehension of the language. The responses of the students are as follows:

very often	0
often	9
sometimes	6
not often	121
never	5

Supplementary Readings. In the Iranian schools, not only are textbooks rarely completed during one year, but also supplementary readings are not often assigned by teachers. The forty-four teachers in the sample also confirmed the fact that they rarely assigned supplementary readings. To the question, "Approximately how many times per year did you assign supplementary readings?", all but three answered in the negative. One of them answered that he assigned supplementary readings only once, and the other two replied that they assigned them two times per year.

Although over ninety per cent of teachers confessed that they did not assign supplementary readings, another question to the teachers showed that even those three who did assign them, did not check to see if the students did the assignment. Of the 135 students who answered the question, "Did your teacher check up on supplementary readings?", eighty-seven per cent said their teachers did not check their supplementary reading very often, if ever, while only five per cent said their outside readings were often checked. The students responses to the question were:

very often	0
often	7
sometimes	11
not often	37
never	80
no reply	6

Usually teachers do not encourage students to read English newspapers, magazines, or books other than the textbook. However, one-third of the students in this study reported that their teachers encourage the reading of books in English, as is shown in Table VII, but few encourage them to read magazines and newspapers.

TABLE VII

Number of the 141 Students Encouraged
To Read Newspapers, Magazines, and Books in English

Kind of Reading	Encouraged		Not Encouraged	
	Number of Students	Percentage	Number of Students	Percentage
Magazine	7	5	134	95
Newspaper	15	10	126	90
Books	47	34	94	66

Without encouragement little reading will be done by students. To the question, "Did you read English books other than textbooks outside of class?", the students answered:

very often	0
often	17
sometime	25
not often	70
never	29

These answers show that only twelve per cent of the students in this study often read books outside of class and eighteen per cent do sometimes. But seventy per cent seldom or never read English books outside of class.

Use of the dictionary. Since it has frequently been observed that Iranian students have difficulty using a dictionary, they were asked "Were you taught how to use dictionaries?", ninety per cent of the students gave a negative answer and only ten per cent replied, "yes".

Library use. A library is a sine qua non of the modern school, but Iranian schools often suffer from lack of them. Furthermore, even those schools having them may not have English books in their libraries. This was brought out in answer to two questions asked in the students' questionnaire. To the first one, "Was there a library in your school?", the students answered:

Yes	56
No	85

The answers to the second question, "Did your library contain English books?", were as follows:

Yes	36
No	105

Since only fifty-six students said their schools had libraries, twenty of the libraries contain no English books. This would mean that in approximately three-fourths of the schools there are no library books in English for the students to use.

There are two comparatively well-equipped English libraries in Iran, the USIS and the British Council. These libraries contain different kinds of English books and can be used by various people, including students. Seventy-eight per cent of the Iranian students, when asked, "Did you use the books of the USIS library or British Council?", replied they did not use the books often. Their replies are as follows:

very often	2
often	5
sometimes	11
not often	109
never	14

Dictation

Dictation, as it is now used in Iran, is very easy for teachers to use and needs little or no preparation. The teacher usually reads some portion of the text and the students write what he reads. Some teachers dictate a previously selected and assigned part of the textbook; others dictate selections the students have not read. After finishing the dictation, the teacher collects the papers and distributes them among the students so that each student

corrects the paper of another student. Either the teacher himself or a student writes on the blackboard the part or parts of the text dictated by the teacher. The other students look at the blackboard and correct the papers. After the papers are corrected, the teacher collects them and gives them to their owners. Some teachers check the mistakes and give grades; others do not. Some correct the papers themselves in the classroom while the students read their books or they talk among themselves. It is customary in Iranian schools for teachers to make the students write the words they miss ten or twenty times, not apparently as a punishment but for the purpose of practice in spelling.

Over fifty per cent of the students in the sample answered the question, "Did your teacher dictate a previously-announced part of the book and ask you to write what was dictated?", with "often" or "very often", and only two per cent said this method was never used. The replies of the one hundred and forty-one students were:

very often	28
often	48
sometimes	48
not often	14
never	3

In answering the question, "Did your teacher dictate from sources other than the textbook?", the students revealed the fact that, teachers usually dictate from the text and seldom use other sources. Their replies were:

very often	7
often	14
sometimes	27
not often	45
never	48

Translation

One-fourth of the time allotted to English is spent by eighty per cent of the teachers in the study on translation. The teacher gives some sentences in Persian and some in English and asks the students to translate them into English or Persian. Then, the teacher asks a student to go to the blackboard and write the correct translation of the sentences. The other students are obliged to note the correct translation in their copybooks. The teacher gives grammar lessons in this period on the mistakes made.

Usually teachers do not give sentences relating to the daily life of the student, but take sentences from the textbooks or newspapers. As a result, one is often amazed that an Iranian who apparently knows English very well and is expert in translating, is unable to speak English and oftentimes does not know the name of the objects around him, because he has not had the opportunity to learn the language of everyday usage from one who speaks it.

The great emphasis laid on translation in Iran may be due to the following reasons: first, it is easy for the teachers to teach, especially for those who do not speak fluently; second, the formal program of the Ministry of

Education prescribes it in all grades of the high school; and third, in the opinion of some teachers it is a good way for teaching grammar. They think if a student sees the need for knowing grammar, he learns it better.

Almost three-fourths of the students in the sample reported that their teachers often demand translation from Persian into English and vice versa, only seven per cent said this method was never used. To the question, "Did your teacher have you translate sentences from Persian into English?", the students replied:

very often	52
often	49
sometimes	28
not often	12
never	0

The students replied similarly to the question, "Did your teacher have you translate from English into Persian?":

very often	50
often	50
sometimes	29
not often	9
never	2
no reply	1

According to the students who participated in this study, about three-fourths of the teachers of English correct translation carefully. When asked the question, "How did your teacher correct translation?", they replied:

very carefully	21
carefully	85
somewhat carelessly	22
carelessly	13

Teachers who were asked, "Please state the approximate number of minutes per week you devote to asking your students to translate from Persian into English? or vice versa?", declared that they spent more time on translation from Persian into English than on translation from English into Persian. This may be because translation from English into Persian seems easier. According to Table VIII half of the teachers spend twenty minutes on translation from English into Persian, while half of them spend thirty minutes on translation from Persian into English.

TABLE VIII

Number of Minutes Spent per Week
in Translation by 44 Teachers

Kind of Translation	Number of teachers spending					
	15 min.	20 min.	25 min.	30 min.	35 min.	40 min.
From English	3	22	2	14	2	1
Into English	2	13	6	22	0	1

Written Work

Written work does not receive the attention it should in Iranian schools even though it is one of the four activities to which time is usually allotted. Some teachers do not even read the compositions and students complain that their

papers are carelessly graded.

Composition. In the upper classes of the secondary school, written composition finds a special place in the curriculum of the school. Sixty per cent of the teachers in the study devote about one hour per week to written composition. However, the study shows that about one-third of the teachers neglect written composition. This may be the reason for the statement by the students that written composition is stressed very little by Iranian teachers.

In the composition period, the teacher usually asks the students to write a composition on a certain subject. The students write on this topic at home, bring the compositions to class and then read them aloud, one after another. Because of the limited time, few students get an opportunity to read their compositions aloud.

Moreover, it is doubtful if teachers can correct all the mistakes by hearing a composition read once. Mistakes in spelling and punctuation can be caught only when the compositions are read by sight. Some teachers do correct the papers at home. A probable reason for correcting written compositions in the classroom is that teachers are often busy with other jobs, and they do not have time to correct papers at home.

An observer of these classes would probably notice that most of the students daydream or work on other school work while the teacher gives his attention only to the student who is reading his paper. Only one hundred and two of the

students answered the question, "Did this teacher assign subjects for written composition and then ask you to read your composition aloud?". Their replies are:

very often	30
often	38
sometimes	15
not often	9
never	10
no answer	39

Presumably, the thirty-nine students who did not answer this question did so because some teachers do not demand written composition at all. The same number omitted the other questions dealing with written compositions. Of the one hundred and two who answered the question, "When did your teacher correct composition?", more than half of them state that their teachers correct the written compositions during the class period. The replies are:

always outside the class period	22
mostly outside the class period	26
mostly during the class period	38
always during the class period	16
no response	39

The Iranian students were not particularly satisfied either with the way their papers were corrected. Almost two-thirds of them said their papers were corrected carelessly or at least "somewhat carelessly". To the question, "How did your teacher correct your composition?", they replied:

very carefully	4
carefully	28
somewhat carelessly	55
carelessly	15
no answer	39

Spelling. The Iranian teachers do not pay attention to the spelling either. The students who answered the question, "Did your teacher emphasize the improvement of spelling?", state that almost ninety per cent of the teachers do not emphasize the improvement of spelling. The replies are:

very often	0
often	3
sometimes	19
not often	104
never	15

Vocabulary building. Teachers of English in Iran are usually concerned with enlarging the vocabulary of the students. This is done in oral work, in reading, as well as in written composition. Iranian students supported this statement by answering positively the question, "Did your teacher concern himself with enlarging your vocabulary?". Over half of the students said they were often or very often given work in vocabulary building. Their replies to this question were:

very often	7
often	73
sometimes	49
not often	6
never	6

Grammar. As it was stated before, one of the most stressed aspects of language instruction by teachers in Iran is grammar. Teachers of English teach grammar during the period devoted to reading. However, since a functional knowledge of grammar is necessary for written compositions, it seems more logical to discuss grammar here rather than under reading. The responses given by Iranian students to the question, "Did your teacher give you practice in grammar?", showed that eighty-two per cent of the teachers give practice in grammar "often" or "very often". The replies are:

very often	42
often	73
sometimes	16
not often	6
never	3

From these replies, it would seem that students as well as teachers believe they are getting adequate practice or instruction in grammar. Only seven per cent said they get little or no instruction.

Notebooks. Iranian teachers usually require notebooks for different purposes, such as reproduction of what is learned from the text, translations, compositions, and so

forth. All teachers in our sample stated that they always require notebooks. Furthermore, they state that they check notebooks for neatness, accuracy, penmanship, and completeness of assignments. The Iranian teachers who were asked, "Approximately how many times per year, do you check the notebooks of the students?", replied as follows:

1-5 times	12
5-10 times	29
10-15 times	3

Oral Work

The most important aspect of language instruction and the one which is given least attention in Iranian schools is oral work. The neglect of oral work may be due to the fact that it is not required in the course of study laid down by the Ministry of Education although the stated objective is to speak the foreign language.

Pronunciation. Although the curriculum emphasizes the importance of practice in correct pronunciation, teachers of English in Iran overlook it, at least according to our data. When asked, "Did your teacher emphasize difficulties in English pronunciation, such as the sounds of w, th, ing, etc.?", the students replied:

very often	4
often	11
sometimes	35
not often	49
never	42

Similar results were obtained from the question, "Did your teacher insist that you improve your English pronunciation?". Almost three-fourths of the students said that teachers of English are often or always negligent in improving the pronunciation of the students. This may be due to the fact that teachers themselves were not trained in how to speak English correctly and consequently do not detect errors in pronunciation. The students replied to this question as follows:

very often	13
often	15
sometimes	38
not often	61
never	13
no reply	1

A similar question was asked the teachers. They answered that they did not spend much time on pronunciation. Table IX shows the approximate time spent per week on improving the pronunciation of the students.

TABLE IX
The Approximate Time Spent on Pronunciation
as Reported by 44 Teachers

Number of Teachers	Minutes
6	10
11	5
27	0

According to the table about sixty-one per cent of the teachers do not spend any time on pronunciation, twenty-five per cent spend just five minutes per week, and only about fourteen per cent spend as much as ten minutes per week on pronunciation. It is not surprising that Iranians have difficulty in speaking English correctly and fluently.

Speech. This study shows that Iranian teachers are especially careless about giving students practice in speaking English. About seventy-four per cent of the students make this complaint about their teachers. To the question, "Did this teacher give you practice in speaking English?", the students replied:

very often	3
often	4
sometimes	29
not often	81
never	22
no reply	2

Dramatization. One of the best devices for learning a foreign language according to modern methods is play-acting and dramatization. Unfortunately this method is not employed by Iranian teachers. The answers given by both students and teachers confirm this statement. Eighty-five per cent of the students state that play-acting was never used in their classes and none of the students said it was used often. The replies to the question, "Did your teacher use play-acting in the class to improve your English?", were as follows:

very often	0
often	0
sometimes	7
not often	14
never	120

Similarly, the Iranian teachers answered negatively the question, "Approximately how much time did you devote to using play-acting in the class?". All the teachers but two answered that they did not give any time to play-acting. One teacher said he gave five minutes and the other gave ten minutes per week.

Oral composition. Oral composition is not much used in Iranian schools according to the results of this study. To the question, "Did your teacher ask you to prepare a classroom talk in English?", eighty-seven per cent of the responses are negative. Almost none of the students replied that oral reports were given often in their classes. The following replies were given to this question:

very often	0
often	4
sometimes	15
not often	44
never	78

Likewise, teachers were asked, "Approximately how many times per year, does each student give classroom talks in English?". Ninety-one per cent of these teachers answered that no student gives classroom talks in English. The rest

also replied disappointingly as the following responses reveal:

one time	3
two times	1
never	40

Although at present they give little attention to oral work, all teachers stated that they believe the emphasis in teaching English should be on pronunciation, conversation, and oral work rather than on translation and dictation. The teachers justify their belief in pronunciation, conversation, and oral work by the following reasons:

1. Students need to speak more than translate.
2. If one can speak fluently, he is able to translate, too.
3. In oral work children make sentences and they understand them better.
4. When children learn to speak English, their abilities in other parts of the language improve as well.
5. Oral work is fundamental.
6. Communication takes place mainly by oral work rather than through translation or dictation.

Table X summarizes the use made of the various methods discussed in this section by English teachers in Iranian secondary schools according to the responses of the 141 students who replied to the questionnaire.

TABLE X

Use of Different Methods in English Classes in Iran
as Reported by 141 Iranian Students

M e t h o d s	Very often		Often		Some-times		Not Often		Never	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Dictation from textbooks	28	20	48	34	48	34	14	10	3	2
Dictation from sources other than text	7	5	14	10	27	19	45	32	48	34
Translation from Persian to English	52	37	49	35	28	20	12	8	0	0
Translation from English to Persian	50	36	50	36	29	21	9	6	2	1
Reading the written composition aloud	30	30	38	38	15	14	9	8	10	10
Classroom talks	0	0	4	3	15	10	44	32	78	55
The use of Persian in class	73	52	51	36	8	6	6	5	2	1
Practice in speaking English	3	2	4	3	29	21	81	59	22	15
Oral reading	42	30	63	45	21	15	7	5	8	5
Silent reading	0	0	4	3	4	3	55	40	75	54
Checking up on supplementary reading	0	0	7	5	11	8	37	27	80	60
Explanation of the English words in English	0	0	7	5	15	11	43	30	75	54
Explanation of the English words in Persian	85	60	31	22	10	7	8	6	5	5
Practice in grammar	42	30	73	52	16	11	6	4	4	3
Practice in pronunciation of difficult sounds	4	3	11	8	35	25	49	35	42	29
Improvement of pronunciation	13	10	15	11	38	27	61	43	13	9
Improvement of spelling	0	0	3	2	19	13	104	74	15	11
Enlargement of vocabulary	7	5	73	52	49	35	6	4	6	4
Comprehension of English	0	0	9	6	6	4	121	87	5	3
Bringing pictures to the class	0	0	0	0	5	3	16	12	120	85
Play-acting	0	0	0	0	7	5	14	10	120	85

TABLE X (Continued)

M e t h o d s	Very Often		Often		Some-times		Not Often		Never	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Listening to radio program	1	1	2	1.5	5	3.6	17	12.3	112	81.6
Completing a book during a year	7	5	14	10	15	10	42	30	63	45
Reading books other than textbooks	0	0	17	12	25	18	70	50	29	20
Using the books of the USIS library or British Council	2	1	5	3	11	8	109	78	14	10

TEACHERS OF ENGLISH IN IRAN

The teacher is probably the most important single factor in the quality of teaching of any subject. Several questions on the teachers' questionnaires were designed to find out the preparation of the teachers, why they entered the teaching field, how they liked teaching, their teaching load, and how proficient in English they considered their students. The students were also asked about the teachers and their ability to use the English language.

Iranian teachers of English may be divided into five classes. First, there are the graduates of the Teacher Training College, with majors in English. These people are often called "trained teachers", because they have studied a little psychology and philosophy of education. They have had a little training in the teaching of English as well. Their English is supposedly better than others. The second group are the graduates of Tehran University, with majors in English Literature. These teachers know English comparatively well,

but they know nothing of educational psychology or how to teach English. A third group are graduates of high schools. Some teachers of English in the high schools have had no education beyond high school. Their knowledge of English is usually restricted to the books they have studied in school. Presumably they are totally ignorant of the psychology of teaching and the methods of English instruction. They are quite unqualified for the teaching of English in either the lower or upper grades of the school. Fourth, there are teachers of other subjects who are assigned to teach English. Oftentimes, schools are in need of teachers of English, but the Ministry of Education cannot provide them. In this case, teachers of other subjects are used to fill the gap. So, a teacher of physical education, penmanship, or drawing may be assigned to teach English. These teachers cannot be depended upon to be qualified teachers. The fifth group is composed of teachers employed by the Ministry of Education as the result of a qualifying examination. These people are usually those who have not attended the whole six grades of the secondary school and consequently lack a valid certificate. They are not qualified to teach English either because, even though they may know English, they do not know how to teach it.

Preparation of Teachers

Although there are no exact statistics at hand, a considerable number of teachers are graduates of the Teacher Training College of Tehran University. About sixty per cent

of the teachers in this study were graduates of this college. To enter the Teacher Training College, one must pass an entrance examination. This examination consists of two parts: English written composition and Persian written composition. If one can get a grade of ten out of twenty, he will be accepted as a student in the first grade of this college. This entrance examination is not very discriminating. Students majoring in English must pass all the courses listed in Table XI and write a thesis in order to get the degree called "Licence" which is somewhat like a B.A. degree. Some professors, however, accept translations from English literary books into Persian as a thesis.

The educational subjects in this program mean psychology of education in the first year, philosophy of education in the second year, and history of education in the third year. A brief study of this program shows that much time is spent on courses which have nothing to do with English or education, and consequently do not prepare good teachers of English. Conversation or oral work in English is given only in the second year. In these three years of college, the stress is on reading the texts, translation, composition, and Persian. The method of teaching is the lecture method. The number of students in a class may be over one hundred and the teacher may not know, or talk personally with the students during the whole academic year. The medium of instruction is Persian, and English language and literature are taught through Persian.

TABLE XI
 Program of English Majors
 at Teacher Training College, Iran

S u b j e c t s	Hours per Week		
	1st year	2nd year	3rd year
<u>Educational subjects</u>	5	5	7
<u>Persian (reading and grammar)</u>	4		
<u>Reading of English texts</u>	6		
<u>History of the social evolution in Iran after Islam</u>	2		
<u>Educational sociology</u>	4		
<u>Civil law and United Nations</u>	2		
<u>Persian composition</u>	2		
<u>Persian literature (research)</u>		4	
<u>Reading of English texts (including rhetoric)</u>		6	5
<u>Composition and grammar of English</u>		4	2
<u>Translation (from and into Persian)</u>		2	2
<u>English conversation</u>		4	
<u>A short history of English literature</u>			4
<u>Study of the high school books</u>			2
<u>Administration of the school</u>			1
<u>An elective course</u>			3
<u>TOTAL HOURS</u>	25	25	26

The evaluation of the students generally takes place once a year, in a final examination. If one does not pass the final examinations in June, he will take a make-up examination in September. If he fails in two courses, he cannot be promoted to the upper classes, but if he fails in one course, he can be promoted provided that he takes another make-up examination in the second year. The passing grade for these examinations is ten out of twenty.

The professors of the college are supposed to have a doctor's degree in English Literature, but at the present there is just one Ph.D. in English Literature teaching in the University. The other teachers have M.A.'s or B.A.'s and some years of experience in teaching.

In addition to the Teacher Training College at Tehran University, there are a few other colleges throughout the country. The Teacher Training College at Tehran University is the best equipped one in Iran. However, there is no language laboratory or audio-visual center in the College. The library of the College also does not contain many up-to-date books and its supply of sources is very limited.

The preparation of English teachers was criticized by the teachers who answered the questionnaire for the following reasons:

1. The professors are often busy with other jobs and do not have time for preparation and further study.
2. The classes are overcrowded.
3. The examinations are subjective and reliance is made only on one examination.

4. Students are not given training in teaching.
5. Teachers speak in Persian.
6. Some subjects are of little use to a teacher of English.
7. Teacher-student relations are not sincere and democratic.
8. There is no equipped language laboratory, no adequate library, and no audio-visual materials.
9. The requirements for entrance to the college are too easy.
10. The program of the College is not based on the ability of the graduates of high schools. While these people are often weak in the language, they are required to study literature.

Ability of Teachers of English

Since the ability to use the English language of the teachers of English was questioned, several questions were asked to verify this point. First, it was assumed that teachers of English in Iran are usually not as good as the teachers of other subjects. This assumption had some support from the students. Forty-three per cent of the students believe that their teacher of English was as good as the teachers of other subjects, but fifty-three per cent said that he was inferior. When asked to compare their English teacher with the teachers of other subjects, the students responded:

better than teachers of other subjects	5
the same as teachers of other subjects	61
Not as good as teachers of other subjects	75

The students were also asked how well their teachers spoke English. According to their replies, over two-thirds of the students believe that their teachers were unable to speak English well or fluently. Thus, to the question, "How did your teacher speak English?", the students replied:

fluently	5
well, but not fluently	39
rather poorly	50
very poorly	46
no answer	1

It was assumed, too, that if a teacher knows English well and is trained in how to teach, he would make efficient use of the class period. To find out if their teacher used their class time efficiently, the students were asked, "Did your teacher make efficient use of the class?". To this question the students answered:

very often	6
often	23
sometimes	23
not often	78
never	11

A final assumption made about the quality of teaching was that if an English teacher knows how to teach and can use the English language well himself, his students will benefit from his instruction and be able to speak, read, and write English with some degree of proficiency. The Iranian teachers were, therefore, asked to state their opinion about the competency of Iranians with the English

language. Twenty-seven per cent of these teachers believed that Iranians are unskilled in English; and the rest believe that they are "just able to get by". These teachers believe this lack of competence is due not only to untrained teachers, but also to methods of teaching, overcrowded classes, and poor textbooks.

The sample of the Iranian ex-teachers of English at the American University of Beirut, although limited to fourteen students, were asked to evaluate their own English proficiency as a further check on the English competence of Iranian teachers of English. These students considered their English to be good when they were in Iran according to Iranian standards, but now that they are in the American University of Beirut, eighty-five per cent of them believe their command of English to be only fair or poor.

Teaching Conditions

The quality of teaching is often affected by the conditions under which teachers teach. The low salary paid the teachers has forced many of them take on other jobs to supplement their low salaries. Ninety-three per cent of the teachers in the sample said they had another job or taught extra hours. To the question, "Did you have another job at the same time you were teaching?", the teachers answered:

yes 41

no 3

The number of hours teachers teach also affects their teaching. The teachers who participated in this study teach

twenty-four to fifty hours per week. Eighty-four per cent of these teachers teach thirty-five hours or more per week. This heavy teaching load further explains why the teaching of English in Iran is so inefficient. Table XII gives the data on the teaching load of forty-two teachers.

TABLE XII
Hours per Week Taught by
42 Teachers in the Study

Number of teachers	Hours per Week
1	24
1	26
5	30
18	35
8	38
7	40
2	50

Perhaps one of the reasons that the teaching of English is not satisfactory in Iran is because the teachers of English have little or no supervision. The students in the study were asked, "Were there supervisors to supervise the teaching of English in your school?". Ninety-nine per cent of these students said there was no supervision. Their replies to this question were:

yes 2

no 139

Attitude Toward Teaching

It was also assumed that there is considerable difference between a teacher who voluntarily and upon his own interest decides to teach English and a person who becomes a teacher in order to earn his living, or because he finds nothing else to do. So, Iranian teachers were asked, "Why did you decide to teach English?" . The replies show that about two-thirds of the teachers became teachers for one or more of the following reasons:

1. Not passing the entrance examination of other colleges and inevitably entering the Teacher Training College.
2. Needing the allowance paid to the students of this college.
3. By chance and mistake.
4. To earn money for living.
5. Knowing only English - not any other profession or art.
6. It is a job which could easily be had.

The teachers were also asked if they enjoyed teaching. It was assumed that a teacher who enjoys his job is probably a more successful teacher than one who does not. Sixteen per cent did not like teaching at all, and another seventy-five per cent answered that they receive only a little enjoyment from their job. The responses of the forty-four teachers to the question, "How do you enjoy your job as a teacher?", were:

very much	0
much	4
a little	33
not at all	7

All the Iranian teachers in this sample stated that they try to improve their English while they are teaching. They do this, according to their responses, by studying books, by associating and talking with Americans and Britishers, and by listening to radio programs in English.

VALUE OF ENGLISH TO STUDENTS

Since motivation is a prime factor in learning any subject or skill, it is important to find out why students enroll in English classes and what they like and dislike about their English classes. Interests are useful motivators and the use students make of English outside of class is often a clue to their interest in English as a medium of communication and to the value they place on knowing English. All the students but one in this study asserted that they are very much interested in learning English. Some of the interest the students gave are of utilitarian value, such as to study in foreign countries or get a job; some are of cultural value, such as to read English books and magazines; and some are vague reasons. Most of the students see English as a tool for personal advancement. The reasons for their interest in English are given in Table XIII.

TABLE XIII

Reasons Given for Studying English by 138 Students

<u>R e a s o n s</u>	<u>No.</u>
<u>Higher education in foreign countries</u>	<u>44</u>
<u>To read magazines, books, etc.</u>	<u>55</u>
<u>To work in American organizations</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>It is useful</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Motivation by family or teacher</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Intrinsic interest</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>To tour around the world</u>	<u>1</u>

Likes of the Students

The students were also asked to list the things they liked best about the teaching of English in their school in Iran. About thirty per cent of the students listed nothing that they liked about their English class. This may mean that they did not like English or it may mean that they were unable to mention any specific thing. Forty-one per cent of the students, however, did say that they liked no particular thing about their English classes. The rest of the students said they liked the teacher or mentioned specific activities or methods. Many answers were given by just one person, and were impossible to group in any category. These included pronunciation, vocabulary, textbooks, and the relaxed atmosphere of the class. The likes mentioned by two or more students are included in Table XIV.

TABLE XIV

The Things About English Instruction
Best Liked by 141 Iranian Students

<u>The things best liked by Iranian students</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>
<u>The teacher</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Dictation</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Reading</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Conversation</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>Written composition</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Grammar</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Translation</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>No particular thing</u>	<u>58</u>
<u>No reply</u>	<u>40</u>

Dislikes of the Students

The Iranian students were also asked to list the things they liked least about the teaching of English in their school in Iran. Again, the responses varied, but the methods of teaching, including lack of conversation and lack of interesting materials, were mentioned most frequently. Table XV gives the responses to the question, "List the things you liked least about the teaching of English".

English Proficiency of Students

Since very little oral work is done in Iranian schools, it was predicted that Iranian students could not understand English dialogue in motion pictures. To give evidence for this assumption, the Iranian students were asked, "Could

TABLE XV

The Things About English Instruction
Least Liked by 141 Students

The things least liked	No.
<u>Everything</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Methods of teaching</u>	<u>45</u>
<u>Lack of audio-visual materials</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Absence of teachers</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Grammar</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>Lack of speech, conversation</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>Laziness of the students</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Dull classes</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Textbooks</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Dictation</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Written composition</u>	<u>2</u>

you understand the English dialogue in the motion pictures when you were in Iran?". Over ninety per cent of the answers are negative, and none said he followed the dialogue "very well". Their replies to this question were:

very well	0
well	3
fairly well	6
not well	88
not at all	44

Seventy-seven Iranian students attending the American University of Beirut were asked to compare their concept of their English proficiency now that they are in the American University with what they considered their proficiency when they were in Iran. Before coming to Beirut most of the students considered their command of English to be good, but now the majority think their knowledge of English is only fair and twenty or approximately one-fourth of them consider it to be poor. Their estimate of their proficiency in English before and since they entered the American University of Beirut is compared in the Table XVI. For example, three of the students considered their English very good before coming to the American University of Beirut, but after coming they considered it only good. Eleven of the students who thought their English was good before coming, considered it good after they came, but thirty-seven who thought theirs was good considered it only fair after they attended the American University of Beirut.

It is known that in order to learn English many Iranian students find it necessary to study either privately or in some English Institutions outside the school. This was true of eighty-two per cent of the students in this study. When the students were asked, "Did you study English outside the school (in night classes, privately, etc.)", they replied as follows:

yes	116
no	25

TABLE XVI

Self-estimate of the English Proficiency
of 77 Students Before and After Coming to A.U.B.

No. of Students	Before coming to AUB				After coming to AUB			
	very good	good	fair	poor	very good	good	fair	poor
3	x					x		
4	x						x	
11		x				x		
37		x					x	
16		x						x
2			x				x	
4			x					x

The Usefulness of English to the Students

It was assumed that the English taught by the methods used in Iranian schools at present is of little value to the students. So the students were asked, "To what extent was the English taught you in the classroom useful to you outside the classroom?". Unfortunately, the responses of the students in the sample seem to substantiate this assumption. Eighty-nine per cent of the respondents said English was of little or no use to them. Their replies were as follows:

very useful	5
useful	11
of little use	65
of no use	60

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

It is difficult to teach any subject without adequate materials. This applies to the teaching of English as a foreign language as much as to social studies or science. One of the most serious deficiencies in the teaching of English in Iran is the lack of audio-visual materials, books, and library resources.

Audio-Visual Materials

Most of the students and teachers in the samples stated that audio-visual materials and devices are not employed by teachers in Iranian secondary schools.

Pictures. To the question, "Did your teacher bring helpful pictures to the class?", ninety-six per cent of the students said "never", or "not often". Their replies were:

very often	0
often	0
sometimes	5
not often	16
never	120

The teachers were asked a similar question, "Approximately how many times per year do you use pictures in class to clarify concepts?". The result again showed that few or no pictures were used. They replied as follows to this question:

not at all	28
1-5 times	9
5-10 times	3
10-15 times	2
many times	2

These data point out that sixty-four per cent of the teachers do not use pictures at all and that the rest who are using the picture, employ pictures only five to fifteen times a year; that is, once a month or less.

Films. About ninety-nine per cent of the schools do not show films in teaching English to students. To the question, "Were English films shown in your school?", they replied:

yes	2
no	139

Recordings. One of the most essential devices used in modern schools is the tape recorder for permitting students to hear their own speech defects. Recordings are even more important for training students in listening and for hearing correct rhythm in speech, articulation, and pronunciation. About ninety-nine per cent of the schools reported by the students do not use recordings. When asked, "Were recordings used in your school?", the students replied:

yes	2
no	139

Listening to radio. A very easy and effective device for improving one's command of English is to listen to English

programs on the radio. Teachers are expected to encourage students to listen to the radio program in English. The responses of the students shows that about ninety per cent of the Iranian teachers of English ignore this useful device for improving the English of their students. In answer to the question, "Did your teacher encourage you to listen to English programs on the radio?", the students replied:

very often	1
often	2
sometimes	5
not often	17
never	112
no reply	4

Textbooks

The Ministry of Education does not officially prescribe the textbooks used in English classes. However, the Ministry of Education recently advised the teachers to use the following books in the secondary schools and at specific grade levels:

<u>Essential English</u> I	1st, 2nd, 3rd grades
<u>Oxford Readers</u> I	1st grade
<u>Direct Method</u> I	1st grade
<u>Direct Method</u> II	2nd and 3rd grades
<u>Direct Method</u> III	4th grade
<u>Direct Method</u> IV	5th grade
<u>Direct Method</u> V	6th grade
<u>Essential English</u> II	4th and 5th grades
<u>Essential English</u> III	6th grade, secondary school.

This recommendation permits the teachers to choose one of two or three books. However, this list does not require teachers to teach only these books and no other. The use of the list is quite optional. When the students were asked, "What books were used in your high school English period?", they replied as follows:

<u>Essential English</u>	126
<u>Oxford Readers</u>	85
<u>New Method Readers</u>	59
<u>Brighter English</u>	2

The two books mentioned by over half of the students are on the recommended list; the others were books selected by the teacher. Several other textbooks were also mentioned by the students, but since they were mentioned by only one student, they are not included in the list.

This list shows that the textbooks published by the Ministry of Education in the period of Riza Shah are not used any more in any classes. The books used are usually published in England or the United States and then imported by Iran. However, if the books do not arrive in Iran on time, the local publishers publish the books and printing errors often occur in such books.

The Iranian teachers were asked, "Are the present English textbooks suitable for Iranians?". About eighty per cent of the teachers believe that these textbooks are not of great value to the students because either they do not take into consideration the special difficulties which Iranians

have in learning English or they deal mostly with grammar rather than everyday language. The replies to the question about the suitability of the textbooks are as follows:

suitable	9
not suitable	35

EXAMINATION

There are two different kinds of examinations given in the Iranian schools: internal and external. The questions for the internal examinations are prepared by the teachers of each class for that class. In these examinations, the teacher bases his questions on what he has taught the students. The minimum passing grade for each course is seven out of twenty. This means that if one knows one-third or thirty-three per cent of the required amount of knowledge for a course, he must pass that course. Grades are usually important tools in the hands of teachers in managing a class. Grades are used to motivate students to work better.

The Iranian teachers were asked, "Approximately how many times per year do you give objective examinations to the students?". They were asked this question because it was assumed that objective examinations are not prevalent in Iran. Eighty-six per cent of the teachers answered that they did not use them at all. Their replies are:

not at all	38
two times	4
three times	2

In the external or state examinations, the questions are prepared for all the schools by a committee assigned by the Ministry of Education. These questions are based on the expected English proficiency of students of the fifth and sixth grades. Since the questions are common for all, a study of the final examination papers may be helpful in getting an idea of the standard of English proficiency in Iranian schools. Some of these papers are given in appendix E. In these examinations, reading, dictation, translation, and compositions are each separately examined, but an average grade for the foreign language is given.

The teachers in this study were asked, "Do you think the method of evaluating students which is used in English classes in Iran is satisfactory?". All the forty-four answers were negative. The reasons given by the teachers are similar. Forty per cent of them said the tests were not objective, and approximately forty per cent of them objected because the tests did not measure the students' ability to speak English. The reasons most frequently mentioned by the forty-four teachers are given in Table XVII.

In addition to these two kinds of examinations, another examination is administered by colleges. College entrance examinations are somewhat different from the state examinations. No examination is given in dictation and

TABLE XVII
Reasons for Dissatisfaction
With Iranian Evaluation Procedures
As Stated by 44 Teachers

R e a s o n s	Number	Percen- tage
<u>Reliance on one examination</u>	6	14
<u>Emphasis on memorization</u>	7	16
<u>Chance factors in examination</u>	13	30
<u>Achievement not measured</u>	6	14
<u>Grades too important</u>	10	23
<u>Non-objective test</u>	18	40
<u>Speech not measured</u>	17	39

reading; only sentences are given for translation from English to Persian and vice versa. Also one written composition is required of each student. These tests are somewhat related to the field the student intends to study. If he is to study medicine, the subject of the composition will be something connected with medicine; if he is to study education, the questions are more about education, and so on.

SUMMARY

As the result of a study of the responses to one hundred and forty-one questionnaires given to Iranian students and the responses to forty-four questionnaires given to the

Iranian teachers of English, it is obvious that the methods of teaching English in Iran are ineffective, that teachers of English are inadequately trained both in the use of English language and in methods of teaching English, that evaluation methods are indiscriminating and unsatisfactory, and that the instructional materials are inadequate. Some methods such as silent reading, dramatization, and oral work are given little, if any, attention. On the contrary, grammar, translation, dictation, and oral reading are emphasized.

Audio-visual materials are rarely used in Iranian schools for the improvement of the teaching of English. Also, out-of-class activities are not used to increase the students' knowledge of English or to give them pleasure in using English.

CHAPTER IV

MODERN CONCEPTS AND METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The two concepts, learning and knowing, have different meanings to different people. One who adheres to essentialism has, naturally, a viewpoint opposite to that of the person who follows the pragmatic point of view. Learning and knowing mean memorization and recitation of subject matter to the former, while the follower of the latter philosophy thinks of them in terms of their application and use. The traditional school conceived of books as the main determiner of knowledge. He who could memorize books well was considered a learned man. But that time has gone. No longer is knowledge of books a power per se; application of knowledge is now the real power. One who knows something, should be capable of doing it as well.

These two philosophical views naturally have influenced the teaching of foreign languages. The traditional school prepares the students for reading important books. Students are expected to know many words in order to delve into the precious treasure of ancient knowledge. One who can read

books in a foreign language is considered a learned person. In contrast to this view, the pragmatist pays attention to the functional side of the language. He asks himself if what he knows is applicable or not in life situations. He considers language as a means of communication between two or more persons. According to this philosophy, communication of ideas is not restricted to the contents of a book. One who wants to know a language learns it as a means of thinking and communicating with others. Learning a language is a means to better communication.

PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING AND LANGUAGE

Teachers who wish to employ modern methods of teaching a foreign language must be familiar with how learning takes place and must organize learning experiences in keeping with the following principles of learning:⁹

Learning is Purposive

The first thing a teacher of foreign language should take into consideration is the "why" of learning that language. Are the students learning the foreign language for the sake of reading foreign language books? Are the students interested in speaking the language? Which part or skill in the language

9. Many of the ideas for this section on learning were taken from Lavone A. Hanna et al., Unit Teaching in the Elementary School (New York, Rinehart and Co., 1957), pp. 48-54.

is of most value to the learners? The teacher of the foreign language asks these questions of himself because he knows that students learn in terms of their goals and purposes. Any activity should be a means to achieving their goals.

A good teacher of a foreign language knows well that the interest of the learner is a valuable asset in learning the foreign language. This interest may be intrinsic or extrinsic; the need may be immediate or in the future. For example, a child may be interested in learning a language because of his immediate need to speak the language, or he may be motivated because he needs the foreign language in order to continue his study of science. The teacher cannot motivate his students unless the lesson he gives is meaningful to them in terms of their goals.

Satisfaction is a very important factor in learning. The child whose needs and interests are satisfied learns willingly and effectively. Teaching of grammar, according to the old method, was often boring because the child did not see the need for grammar or feel any satisfaction or pleasure in knowing it. The child should feel that he has learned something from each lesson, even though it is only a step in the achievement of his goal.

Learning is the Reorganization of Experience

Learning is the process by which the behaviour of the learner is changed. Learning is not a passive activity, but an active one in which the learner acts and reacts. The

individual must first want to learn, and feel blocked or frustrated because he cannot speak or read or write English. Learning as a reorganization of experience requires a change in most aspects of the mother tongue and the formation of new habits as a new language. Once the student learns how to speak or write, he practices the new skill until it becomes automatic. In the teaching of a foreign language, practice is most important, as language is a matter of habit formation and is learned through doing or practice. Harold Palmer suggests the following exercises for unconscious habit formation:¹⁰

1. Ear-training exercise
2. Articulation exercises
3. Exercises in mimicry
4. Exercises in immediate comprehension
5. Exercises in forming the right association between words and meanings.

Formation of sounds, structures, and intonation are all matters of automatic habit. If one knows how to utter a sound but he is unable to use it automatically, as a rule he has not learned that particular sound.

Learning is Multiple

Children are not bundles of entities; they are organized wholes, and it is the whole child who learns, not some part

10. Harold Palmer, The Principles of Language-Study (London, George G. Harrap & Company LTD., 1928), p. 20.

of him. He responds to a situation with his emotions as well as his mind and he learns to like or dislike a language as he learns to speak it; to appreciate or dislike English literature as he reads it; and develops attitudes about the language as he learns to use it. In learning a language, the whole child reacts as a total organism. He should listen carefully through his ears; he should see the symbols through his eyes; he should write the words or sentences with his hands; and he should utter the sounds with his vocal cords. The traditional method which neglected all parts of the child except his mind could not teach the language efficiently. Interests, appreciations, attitudes, and skills are learned simultaneously, and teachers should be aware of this multiple aspect of the learning process.

Learning is Continuous

Learning goes on all the time. The child learns at home, in the street, in the class, at the movies, on picnics, and wherever he has experience. If he wants to learn English, he must use it not only in the classroom but outside, read English newspapers and books, see films in which English is spoken, and talk to his friends in English. In order to make learning effective, there should also be continuity of experience from grade to grade and not gaps when English is not taught. One of the difficulties students of a foreign language have is that there are these gaps in their experience. They do not use a language continuously as the native speakers

of the language do. Any subject, particularly language, should be learned gradually and continuously.

Learning is by Wholes

Psychological research and experimentation show the advantages of organization and learning by wholes.^{10a} Fragmentary learning is imperfect and easily forgotten. This principle of learning has a great bearing on the teaching of English or any foreign language. Traditionally, the language was divided into four separate parts or skills: reading, writing, translation, and composition. The modern methods of foreign language instruction, on the contrary, do not divide the language into different parts of skills. As Leslie Leavitt states, "Language is a bundle of interrelated parts."¹¹ These "interrelated parts" can be taught at any time when there is an appropriate occasion.

In the old schools, the letters of the alphabet were taught before reading. The modern school does not start with memorizing the letters of the alphabet in order; children are first taught to sight read the words they need. Moreover, the emphasis no longer is on words, as the traditional school would prescribe. The sentence rather than the words is the unit of speech. This view is psychologically sound because words can have different meanings in the different contexts.

10a. Arthur Gates, Educational Psychology (New York, Macmillan and Co., 1946), pp.380-386.

11. Lecture Notes, Advanced Teaching Training Seminar, American University of Beirut, Spring Semester, 1958.

When we speak a language, we do not concentrate our attention on the words; it is sentences, the wholes which express ideas or thought.

Furthermore, the whole method of memorizing is superior to the fragmentary learning of lists of words. Association of words with one another or some idea or situation makes a whole picture of a meaningful thing or concept which is less subject to forgetting. A teacher of a foreign language should grasp the great value of Gestalt psychology and apply it in all phases of teaching the language.

The whole method of learning puts stress on speech because it is believed that speech is the most important part of the language. Although speech is the most important part of the language, the other parts get considerable attention as well. Notwithstanding the fact that the purpose of studying a foreign language is not the same for all, it seems true that speech stands foremost among the different goals. Yet, mastery of the language is acquired only if attention is given to all parts of the language.

Learning is Developmental

Readiness and maturity are essential in the learning process. One cannot expect a child of one year of age to speak well. The earlier years are, however, recognized as more suitable for learning a language correctly because the vocal muscles are more pliable and subject to new habit formation. It is known, too, that children of nine or ten

years of age are both more interested in learning a foreign language than those of thirteen or fourteen years of age and their adaptability to new elements of the foreign language is better.

Since maturity is relative, children are not ready for all language experience at the same time. Although young children are mature enough to learn correct pronunciation and enunciation, they are not mature enough to learn systematic grammar. Thus, ladders of difficulty should be recognized by the teacher of a foreign language in order to teach aspects of a language when the pupils are ready to accept and assimilate them.

Visual coordination, auditory discrimination, and verbal intelligence are all criteria in determining the level of maturity of children in learning a foreign language. If a teacher wants his seven year old pupil to use a dictionary, he will be disappointed because he has not realized the importance of readiness in the learning process.

Learning is always influenced by previous experience. Since language is mainly a medium for communication, it uses all fields of knowledge. Thus, one who knows something well can explain it better than the one who knows it partially. Children therefore learn words in a foreign language for things with which they are familiar more easily than words for things they do not understand. They speak more fluently about things they know than about those they have not experienced.

Accuracy, which is a fundamental aspect of the language, results primarily from exercise on a particular thing when the learner is ready to receive it. Leavitt believes that, "Theoretically a learner of English should never be allowed to make a mistake, should never be allowed to see or hear a mistake. Practically it means that we will not permit a pupil to do something he cannot do reasonably well".¹² This statement is of infinite value to a teacher of a foreign language. The teacher's pronunciation, enunciation, and mastery of language should be a model for the student. He should never repeat a mistake the student makes. He should realize the ladders of difficulty in language and not expect his pupils to do something for which they are not ready.

Learning is Personal

Learning is an individual matter because different individuals have different needs, drives, motives, and goals. Since learning results from a goal-seeking activity, no two individuals learn identically. Experience is the result of interaction of an individual with his environment. No two individuals learn, think, and grasp identically what the teacher says in the class.

The new curriculum must recognize the fact that individuals are different. Different individuals may have different aims as well as abilities. These different aims

12. Leslie W. Leavitt, The Teaching of English to Foreign Students (London, Longmans Green and Co., 1946), p. 14.

lead to various approaches in studying a foreign language. If one is interested primarily in studying foreign countries, he should pay more attention to reading than to translation and grammar. If he is to travel, he should learn the spoken language. One who is interested in making commercial use of the language, should study commercial terms, and one who is going to teach a foreign language, seeks mastery in all parts of the language. If one is going to carry on scientific research, he should learn the necessary scientific terms and acquire a vast reading knowledge. Thus, the teacher of a foreign language should bear in mind that the goals of the learner are of vital importance.

APPROACHES TO FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

The poor results of the traditional approaches to the instruction of foreign language paved the way for different methods. The most widely used of these approaches are: the natural method, the oral approach method, the direct method, the psychological method, the German reform method, and the direct-electric method. Although these modern methods are all conducive to more proficiency in language than the traditional one, there are slight differences among them. A brief explanation of these methods might help a teacher of foreign language to decide which one to follow.

Natural Method

G. Heness and M. Berlitz are the authors of this method. According to the natural method, one learns a foreign language as a child learns his maternal tongue. Reading and writing are put off entirely until the pupil learns to speak the foreign language. In the natural method there is no order, plan, or system. One learns the language at random, through "hit-and-miss" experiences. Pictures and objects are the essential instruments for learning a foreign language according to this method.¹³

Oral Approach Method

Although all the non-traditional methods stress speech, the "oral approach" method advocated by Charles Fries, is peculiar in itself for some definite reasons. In the "oral approach" method, sounds are given first consideration. No matter what the final objective or purpose of the pupil might be, phonetics and oral work are given primary attention. "The speech is the language. The written record is but a secondary representation of the language", according to Fries.¹⁴

The Direct Method

Schweitzer and Simmonot, leaders of "methode directe", devised this method in 1901, in opposition to the traditional

13. Charles Handschin, Modern Language Teaching (New York, Yonkers-on-Hudson, 1940), pp. 64-65.

14. Charles Fries, Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language (Ann Arbor, Michigan, University of Michigan Press, 1956), p.6.

method. In this method the mother tongue is completely excluded from the classroom. The foreign language is taught without using the maternal language, without any sort of translation and without the study of formal grammar. Teaching is done through conversation, discussion, and reading in the language itself. The foreign language is taught through direct association in the mind between the foreign word and the idea it represents. In the direct method, the teacher has always a plan for whatever he is going to do. Purposefulness and orderliness are two main characteristics of the direct method which differentiate it from the "natural method". Pictures are a good means of instruction, and the direct method textbooks contain many pictures in order to facilitate an understanding of the language. Dramatization and play-acting are other means for teaching by this method. Pictures are used for teaching the names of objects, and dramatization is a good device for teaching actions and movements.

Although the direct method is considered the best method of teaching a foreign language it is not so prevalent as it deserves to be because of the following objections made to it:

1. Teachers are not trained to use this method.
2. There are not enough direct-method textbooks.
3. The college entrance examinations demand grammar and translation.
4. The spoken language is much more difficult to learn than the written one.
5. Overcrowded classes make it impossible.

6. The teachers' pronunciation, intonation, and phonetics patterns are often so poor that they cannot be considered as models for students.
7. Disturbance may occur in the class.
8. The child may be confused about a particular kind of object; e.g., when the teacher says, "This is a hat.", the pupil may think that the specific object is a hat, and not know that it is a generalized term for a head covering.

Although the direct method and oral approach are very similar, there are two main differences between them. First, in the direct method, reading may form an important part of the language even in the early stages of instruction. In the oral approach method, reading will deliberately be postponed until the pupil gets a grasp of the new language, and, moreover, reading may never become an important part of language teaching. Second, although both methods disapprove of translation, it is permitted in the oral approach method to translate a word or phrase into the maternal language if it is recognized that it helps to give a better understanding of the word.¹⁵

The Psychological Method

F. Gowin, V. Betis and H. Swan introduced the "psychological" method based on the principle of mental visualization. The student should associate foreign words with pictures, gestures, actions, and actual objects and then connect the foreign word to the image acquired from that object or picture.

15. Handschin, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

It is believed that a strong tie between the foreign word and the object can be established in this way. Objects and actions of daily life are given priority over other words. This method advocates the use of gestures and pictures; but, when the meaning of the foreign word cannot be conveyed, it advises the use of the vernacular.¹⁶ This method resembles the way we learn our mother tongue and differs little from the "natural method".

The German Reform Method

Wilhelm Victor founded this method in Germany. It aims to develop the fourfold skills of hearing, speaking, reading, and writing. In contrast to the direct method developed in France, the "German Reform" method employs the native tongue in teaching difficult aspects and stages of grammar and permits some translation in the upper grades. This method is really an eclectic method. It uses pictures and objects extensively, studies grammar inductively, and encourages the study of foreign civilization and culture.¹⁷

The Direct-Eclectic Method

Charles Handschin introduced a method called "the Direct-eclectic" method. He says this method is a compromise between the European and American methods.¹⁸ Its aim is the fourfold development of language instruction. Pronunciation

16. Ibid., pp. 62-64.

17. Ibid., pp. 65-66.

18. Ibid., pp. 67-68.

receives much attention, and the study of textbooks comes after oral discussion. Reading is given relatively little stress, and there may be no reading in the earlier stages of learning a language. The mother tongue is excluded from the classroom as far as possible. Unless it is impossible to learn a new thing without the use of the vernacular, no translation is permitted. Grammar is taught inductively; that is, first, the examples and patterns are given and then the rules. Free composition is encouraged after practice in hearing and speaking because in the early stages free composition may be a practice in writing inaccurately. Realia are used frequently to teach about a foreign civilization because the understanding of the people and the culture in which the language is spoken is considered very important. This method has many positive aspects, but its most important defect is the relative little emphasis on reading.

The differences among these methods are not so sharp as to place them poles apart. In a school governed by a progressive philosophy, these methods can all serve well the purpose and objective of the school. As a matter of fact, all these methods may be used by a teacher depending upon the urgency or exigency. The common characteristics of the modern methods are as follows:

1. The foreign language skills are not separated into different parts. All language activities are interrelated and so an integrated program of foreign language exists in the school. Fluent speech, good pronunciation, correct English sentences, good spelling, and legible penmanship are all stressed whether the teacher is teaching grammar or reading.

2. Variety is an essential part of the teaching of a foreign language.
3. Students should be active in the classroom.
4. The teacher should take into consideration the interests of the students.
5. The teacher is a guide to the students, not a lecturer.
6. The teacher of a foreign language no longer knows only "something" about the language. He should have a broad education in different fields. Foreign language instruction should contribute to the general knowledge of the students.
7. The teacher's plan is flexible. If the teacher feels students are not prepared for writing a composition, he adopts another means to further the language ability of the students.
8. Translation is considered as a technique. It is avoided by all modern methods at least until the upper grades.
9. Habit formation, accuracy, and graded difficulties are all emphasized by the modern methods.
10. Comprehension of the language is considered important.

THE MODERN METHOD OF ENGLISH INSTRUCTION AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

In the traditional school, language was divided into four parts in the following order: writing, reading, speaking, and listening. This order is reversed in the modern curriculum; it is believed that nature does not teach people how to read or write. By using "studial" capacities, as Palmer puts it, we learn these skills. We should refrain from reading

or writing until we can speak the language. Reception should be before reproduction. Each of the four skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing - has components which may be common to the other skills, too. In the following pages the four key skills and their components are discussed briefly.

Listening

The first thing a pupil learns according to modern methods is the skill of listening. Listening is an aural recognition of different skills, such as, vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation, enunciation, and grammar. Listening is closely connected with speaking. The beginners in a language should hear slow speech at first because it is difficult for them to grasp the ordinary rate of speech which usually contains at least one hundred words per minute. Some people learn how to differentiate sounds better than others, because their ears are more sensitive to sounds and also, their vocal muscles are more coordinated for better speech. Listening should be acquired at three levels: first, listening to words, short sentences or phrases; second, listening to paragraphs containing the known vocabulary or phrases, but not necessarily only the known words. In this stage the listener grasps some words or phrases and infers the idea of the speech without understanding all the elements in the speech. Third, the listener does not pay attention to individual words, but gets the whole idea without thinking of each word separately.

The pupil should be trained in listening by the help of speaking. Speech clarifies many words and sounds. The

pupil may listen to a particular voice in the beginning but he should soon get used to comprehending various voices. If one does not comprehend a sentence, repetition of that sentence may help him to understand. Facial expression and gestures are also aids to better comprehension. The teacher who knows how to associate proper gestures with sounds, facilitates listening and comprehension of speech by the pupils.

Listening, like other experiences, should be continuous. It may be practiced in school, at the cinema, at home, or by listening to one whose native language is English. One may listen to his own voice or that of others on phonograph records, or when he or others read aloud. He may improve his listening skill by taking dictation. However he learns to listen, this learning should be continuous.

Speaking

The emphasis on proficiency in speech and understanding requires that teachers spend a large amount of time on oral work. One of the most important tasks of the teacher of English is to give practice in speech. It is assumed that if students can speak correctly their ability in English, on the whole, increases as well. Thus, the earlier years of learning English will be mostly devoted to oral work. Good oral work requires, on the part of the teacher, a well-prepared plan, clear and correct speech, keenness, activity, humour, and liveliness of mind and manner.

Textbooks are usually good sources for oral work. The teacher can base his questions to the students on the textbook;

the students will have had to read their textbook carefully and make use of their imagination and intelligence to answer the questions.

In oral work the teacher should be on guard to correct mispronunciation, awkward intonation or enunciation, and grammatical mistakes. The teacher can soon ascertain what the main mistakes of students are and attempt to correct them. An enthusiastic and energetic teacher has a list of the common errors of the students and never neglects stressing these weakpoints.

Oral work may be done both in the classroom and outside. A good teacher of English gets the utmost profit from every situation to improve the speech ability of the students. Oral work may be in the form of questions and answers, dramatization, imaginary conversation, exercise on pronunciation, enunciation, and intonation, making sentences by using certain words or expressions, debates, and oral reading. However, there are many opportunities out of the classroom which can improve the speech competency of pupils. Some of these activities are: affiliation with persons who speak English, speaking English in the dining room during meals, speaking English rather than the vernacular with classmates, and speaking English in clubs, games, and on picnics.

Oral work is not only an exercise in speaking, it can also be an emotional outlet for the students. They can explain their interest, needs, and feeling to the teacher. In addition, oral work has the following advantages over written work:

1. It gives students no chance of securing help from others. A pupil has to think in the foreign language and express himself on his own.
2. By oral work, a pupil makes his ideas clear first and then writes down his unclouded ideas and thoughts.
3. Bad habits secured in writing have more permanency; with oral work the chance of retaining bad habits is less.

Pronunciation. One of the most basic elements of language knowledge is correct pronunciation. The recognition and formation of sounds is difficult. A teacher of English should, first and foremost, realize the importance of the sounds himself and then make his students appreciate correct sounds. People who are learning English often have difficulty in uttering sounds like the person who speaks English as his native tongue, because either that sound does not exist in their language or two sounds are so much alike that it is difficult for the ear to discriminate between them. Usually, the similar sounds are the most difficult ones for foreigners to learn. Furthermore, those who attempt to make the sounds correctly are often laughed at by their countrymen. A teacher should fight persistently against this tendency. He should clearly show students how to open their mouths, how to elongate their lips and how to place their tongues in making certain sounds. He should be patient enough to permit his pupils to imitate him many times and to practice over and over. A teacher can also use the sound charts which are produced by experts in the language.

Phonetics can help in producing the sounds correctly. However, in countries where the signs or symbols of the phonetic sounds look like a third script to the pupils, they may not be easy to learn. Otto Jespersen is one of the strict advocates of phonetics and emphasizes that pupils should learn the sound-symbols before learning the orthographical shape.¹⁹ He believes that this practice prevents difficulties from piling up later on. If pupils learn several symbols in the beginning, they will save themselves time and energy in reading the text correctly and in speaking accurately. The teaching of phonetics depends on the age, maturity, and interest of the pupils. Granted that phonetics are helpful, their importance can be exaggerated.

Fries believes that there are five steps in learning the sounds in a foreign language: first, general imitation of the pronunciation of native speakers in order to develop the ability to recognize and discriminate the sounds of a language; second, general imitation of the stress, intonation, sequence of pitch at the end of a phrase, and so forth; third, learning the individual sound segments - vowels and consonants; fourth, exact production of the sounds and sound sequence of a foreign language; and fifth, analysis of the larger units of discourse - paragraphs or larger units of the stream of speech.²⁰

19. Otto Jespersen, How to Teach a Foreign Language (London, George Allen & Unwin LTD., 1952), p. 170.

20. Fries, op. cit., pp. 24-25.

However, correct pronunciation of a foreign language does not mean only the appropriate sound of individual letters. Pupils can often pronounce correctly the sound of a letter, such as w, th, s, or i, but when it appears in a word mispronounce it. Moreover, there are some who can pronounce individual words correctly, but when they make sentences mix up and transfer the sounds of their native tongue to the foreign language.

There are several devices for improving pronunciation. The best way is hearing someone else pronounce the words or sounds correctly and then imitating him very carefully. This practice is more psychological sound than learning phonetic sounds or symbols, because English is not a phonetic language and it is not safe to rely on symbols and signs. One may look in the mirror to see how he forms his mouth and lips and practice making the sounds correctly. Phonograph records and radio are used today in classrooms for improving pronunciation. The teacher should play a phonograph record repeatedly in order to establish the correct sound. He should draw the attention of pupils to various difficulties in the sounds.

Other devices developed in the recent years are earphones, the linguaphone, and the tape recorder by which the students hear the correct speech first and then pronounce it themselves, and finally the teacher corrects the student's speech. The tape recorder has the added advantage that students can record their speech, then listen to themselves, and analyze their speech problems. Furthermore, the system of diacritical marks

has been very effective in learning correct speech and the new textbooks usually contain such marks for furthering the accuracy of the students in speech.

Enunciation. Enunciation is as important as pronunciation. The word sounds may be pronounced correctly, but still the speech may be unintelligible. Many people pronounce the words correctly but are not understood easily, because they do not open and close their mouth properly. Syllabication of words should be carefully explained, as should the importance of word endings such as "ing" and "tion". Unfortunately, correct enunciation is often neglected by teachers of language, but it is important to have correct and intelligible speech.

Rhythm and stress. In addition to correct and proper pronunciation and enunciation, correct stress and rhythm are essential for good speech. Students should be trained consistently in stressing sounds properly. Speed is a major factor in correct rhythm. It may be necessary sometimes to speak more rapidly than is normal for training in rhythm. This practice is of considerable help in fluency of speech. Usually foreigners do not speak as rapidly as native speakers do. Overspeed in speech may compensate for slowness and after a short time, normal speed may be acquired. However, rapid speech should not be monotonous. The rise and fall of the sound should always be observed carefully by teacher and pupils themselves. The syllables of words should be separated from each other and the stress should be laid on the proper

syllable. Many nouns in English are stressed on the second or the last syllable; while nouns in Persian are usually stressed on the first syllable. Students who are accustomed to stress the first syllable rather than the proper syllable should be given enough practice to form the new habit.

Intonation. Intonation can be learned through careful listening. The teacher plays a significant role in helping students acquire correct intonation. Phonograph records are excellent devices for improving the intonation of the students. If the teacher endeavours consciously to improve the intonation of his students, he will undoubtedly succeed. A teacher as a model of proficiency in all aspects of the language can provide an excellent example for the students to imitate in learning correct speech elements.

Oral composition. Oral composition is a part of the oral work in the classroom. Sometimes, oral composition is in the form of a dialogue or a panel discussion. In this case, the students are not expected to rehearse, but should do careful pre-planning. A dialogue should last only a few minutes; a panel discussion a little longer depending on the ability of the students to speak English, the size of the class, and the subject discussed. A teacher should be alert to see that all students have an opportunity to participate in this kind of activity.

Students often make mistakes in their speech. According to the principle of accuracy, the errors students commit should not be repeated by the teacher because repetition of the error

tends to fix the inaccuracy. Mistakes may be corrected by the teacher at once, or the teacher may interrupt and ask for the correction. The teacher may ask another student who presumably knows the correct answer to correct the errors, or he may ask for volunteers. Although the correction of speech is very desirable, sometimes it is better to overlook the error deliberately at the time because the self-confidence of the student may be destroyed or he may be embarrassed.

Debate is another form of oral composition. The subject of the argument should be challenging and motivating. Students participating in the debate should give their opinions, pro and con, after which the class may vote or decide upon the winning group. Debates in the hands of a skilled teacher are often very effective. Students should understand that they need to remain on the subject and, if their opponents win the debate, they should observe courtesy and politeness.

The teacher should decide upon several things in using oral compositions. Leavitt mentions the following:²¹

1. He should decide whether the speech is to be extemporaneous or prepared. Students should be trained to speak before a group. They might make mistakes, but it does not matter. As the Slavonic proverb says, "If you wish to talk well, you must murder the

21. Lecture Notes, Advanced Teacher Training Seminar, American University of Beirut, Spring Semester, 1958.

language first".²² Let the pupils speak in the class and acquire the skill of talking before a group. However, preparation gives the students self-confidence to speak before a group, and the speaker can convey his ideas to the audience better. If the speaker is doubtful of what to say, he most probably fails in speech.

2. He should decide upon the time each student should talk. When more students take part in an activity, the better and more effective the teaching is. So, much time cannot be allotted to one student. The maximum amount of time is about five minutes per student. A long speech is often boring and the students will not profit from it in proportion to the time consumed.
3. The teacher should decide upon the number of students who should participate in speech. This is closely related to the time proportioned to each student. A skilful teacher of foreign language divides the time so that as many students as possible have an opportunity to speak.
4. The teacher should decide whether speech is to be given with or without notes. It is best that students prepare their speeches in the form of an outline which they follow in making their speeches. In the outline, definitions, items of importance, and the order in which topics are to be discussed are given. If students confine themselves to a written speech, they make their speech mechanical and uninteresting.

Choral reading. This method, at its best, is an excellent tool in the hands of an experienced teacher. Students learn to speak in phrases rather than words, to read with expression, and to enunciate properly. Since it is difficult to hear individual students in choral reading or reading in unison, many errors in pronunciation, enunciation, and sounds may be overlooked by the teacher. This practice which often

22. Jespersen, op. cit., p. 156.

is a drill in mispronunciation is very harmful because after the errors are established, it is very difficult to unlearn them. To eliminate this difficulty, only a few students should be called upon to read in chorus. The teacher should stand in a place where he can direct and hear the students.

So many teachers find it difficult to use choral reading or they use it incorrectly and for wrong purposes, that it is no longer recommended enthusiastically. If the teacher speaks rhythmically himself and insists that students speak smoothly and fluently, he probably will achieve more success with oral compositions, dramatizations, and oral reading than with choral reading.

Dramatization. One of the best devices for teaching English as a foreign language is dramatization. Words become more meaningful when they are associated with actions and movements. Consequently, more retention results. Many phrases and sentences which students learn by heart are applicable to daily life, and the fluent speech students learn in playing roles helps them develop better speech patterns. Not only does dramatization contribute to better speech, but it also has other values, such as the training of imagination, cooperation, and self-expression.

Stories and plays in the text or other supplementary readings are rich as sources for dramatization. Plays may be written either by the teacher or the students. The action may be simple, such as reading parts before the class, or more laborious, such as a play memorized and rehearsed by the students

with the teacher's help. Leavitt suggests that "several groups of pupils be asked to compete in dramatizing a scene, allowing them to provide the imagination and initiative".²³

Silent reading may precede dramatization. In this way, pupils with low intelligence or little imagination get an opportunity to grasp the story better. After silent reading, the teacher may ask questions of the students about the characters and plot of the story or play. In this way, all the class gets preparation for play-acting or for play-appreciation.

Some prose or poetical pieces may be learned and recited by interested pupils. Declamation of literary works is both interesting and instructive. When students speak before an audience, they take care to improve their pronunciation, enunciation, rhythm, and tone.

Oral reading. In the traditional school, oral reading is considered very important in learning a language. The objective is basically training in oral reading and expression. The teacher is expected to pay attention to pronunciation, enunciation, rhythm, fluency, and tone while the student is reading aloud. The usual procedure in the use of oral reading is for the teacher to explain the new words in the selection first, and then to read the selection once or more. Afterwards, the students, in turn read the text aloud, translate the meaning of the text, and the teacher corrects them when

23. Leavitt, op. cit., p. 45.

they make errors. In this way, a selection may be read many times.

While it is possible for the experienced and skilful teacher to correct the mistakes of the students who read, he wastes the time of other students who usually become passive listeners, or pay no attention at all. Since there are better ways to improve speech, the modern methods do not give oral reading the important position in the teaching of English as a foreign language which it had in traditional schools.

Where schools insist on the use of oral reading, many of the weaknesses inherent in the method can be overcome by varying the procedure. Variety can be achieved in the following ways: students can be asked to close their books and listen to the reader and try to check on his pronunciation, enunciation, rhythm, fluency, and tone, or the teacher can ask them questions about what was read. This device makes the other students active, instead of passive. The class might be divided into two groups and group competition employed. When a student in one group makes a mistake, a member of the other group starts reading. The group which has more students participating and for a greater time, wins the game. Sometimes, students are divided into small groups of four or five. Each group has one member who reads fairly well and who acts as leader in helping the others read correctly. The teacher goes from group to group, listens to them read, and checks the errors and problems of the students. Reading parts in a play, and choral reading are also other ways to add variety to oral reading.

Reading

In discussing the problem of reading, attention should be given to two aspects: first, what to read, and second, how to read.

What to read. It is obvious that all readings are not of the same difficulty. Their difficulties may be due to the vocabulary, the structure of the sentences, the nature of the subject, or the style of the writing. The background and interests of the students affect indirectly the difficulty of the reading matter as well. Therefore, teachers should select materials for students to read which are suitable to their age, interests, and knowledge of the language. Some of the criteria to use in selecting reading materials are as follows:

1. Reading matter should not contain more than five or six new words per page. One new word in every fifty running words of the text can be a criterion for the easiness or difficulty of the text. These new words should not occur in a mass to make one section more difficult than another.
2. Reading matter should be meaningful. The reader should find a meaning and purpose in what he reads.
3. Reading matter should be interesting and varied.
4. Reading matter should be connected rather than disconnected because connected materials are more interesting and the reader can get some thought out of the context if he knows only a few words or expressions.
5. Reading matter should be applicable in the everyday life of the students.

6. Reading matter should be not only in correct English, but should also be written with style and form.
7. Reading matter should be graded, that is, the reader should pass gradually from that which is easy to that which is more difficult.
8. Reading matter should be written in a natural language rather than in an artificial and stilted language.
9. Reading matter should contain idioms and common expressions which learners of a foreign language should know. Students often learn literary words and neglect the colloquial idioms and expressions.
10. Reading material should make students familiar with the culture and civilization of the English or American people.
11. Reading material published in the United States or Great Britain is preferable to that edited and published by local people.
12. Reading matter should be related to life. Newspapers and magazines are usually written in an easy language, and their content is usually good for discussion.

How to read. Many students are unwilling to read because they do not know how. There are three important rules to follow in learning to read a foreign language. Students usually get bored and discouraged in reading because they do not observe these three conditions. First, students should not look up words in the dictionary as long as they can understand the text without knowing particular words. The comprehension of the context rather than single words should be encouraged. Students should learn how to get the thought out of the context. Second, they should not be satisfied with

reading one kind of book. Variety in reading is very beneficial. Methods of reading should be varied as well. Intensive reading as well as extensive reading should be employed from time to time. Finally, students should not read too much at one time. Distributed learning is much more effective and beneficial than reading continuously for a long time.

Silent reading. Silent reading is both a means and an end in itself. Since it is a means for comprehending reading matter, it is a skill which any educated person badly needs. Silent reading may be superficial, such as scanning and skimming, or laborious, such as reading for details in a text or scholarly work, or rapid as when one reads novels for pleasure. Each of these kinds of reading requires different skills. Silent reading, in contrast to oral reading which hinders the adoption of correct reading habits and slows down the rate of reading by forcing attention to every word, cultivates appropriate reading habits and is concerned with understanding the subject rather than the words.

Silent reading may be used as a means for preparing the pupils for library reading on their own. It may be used for getting facts and information. For the purpose, the teacher is responsible for asking intelligent questions which appraise the understanding of the students. After getting some ideas about the reading ability of the students, the teacher should share the results with the pupils and make

them realize the importance of good reading habits. A teacher of English should know that the ability to comprehend is greater than the knowledge of vocabulary. So the materials for silent reading may contain more words than the students know.

Intensive and extensive reading. In the early stages of learning a foreign language, intensive reading is valuable because a few words or patterns get emphasis, and the student grasps them so well that later he can use them automatically. When the pupil has some familiarity with a language, extensive reading finds its place in language teaching. In order to get pupils to read widely they should be encouraged to read interesting novels and short stories, folk stories, fairy tales, and simplified or shortened classics. The teacher can sometimes introduce interesting books to the class by selecting short exciting passages in a story to read aloud. In upper grades, a period of story-telling or sharing enjoyment received from a book is very helpful in kindling the interest of pupils to read extensively.

Acquisition of information from books is a skill which should be developed in learners. This is a skill they will need throughout their lives. They need to know how to collect information from books, to take notes, and to use dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other reference books. Students should not copy what they read when they take notes, but should digest the material and record in their notebooks only the salient facts.

In order to encourage students to read extensively, the teacher should familiarize himself with simplified or shortened literary books. Shortened versions are usually preferable to simplified ones because the story does not lose its flavour and students read the original words of great writers. Reading English literature should be encouraged in the last years of the school because literature is valuable for its language, its ideas, the insight which it gives to human nature, and to the past and present cultures of English-speaking people. However, the teacher should be alert that the books he recommends for supplementary reading are suitable to the reading range of the students and meet the standards of good or at least acceptable English. Any material which helps the students widen their experiences is of value for extensive reading purposes.

Written Work

The aim of written work is correct and lucid communication of ideas. Never should written work be an exercise in writing inaccurately. Written work should be graded according to its difficulty for the students. The first step in writing is reproduction of materials in the book or on the blackboard. Since the student has to look at the words, he gets a mental picture of the words and consequently learns them. Answering simple questions, writing in complete sentences, is the second step. The exercises in the textbook provide good materials for writing. When the students have a sufficient vocabulary

and command of sentence structure, the teacher may assign free compositions.

Subject of the written composition. As in every aspect of school work, interest of children is a fundamental principle. Pupils should want to write something, if good written compositions are to result. Dull subjects for written compositions naturally do not lead to good writing. The subject of the composition should be challenging, instructive, and within the range of the experiences of the pupils. After seeing a stimulating picture, listening to an exciting speech or the telling of a story, students may be asked to write about the topic. The subject of the composition should enable students to handle English confidently and with ease. The grammar needed in writing should be taught beforehand and every point should be carefully preexamined to prevent making errors. Events, incidents, happenings, and motion picture stories are usually good subjects. Sometimes, the teacher may tell or read open-ended stories to the pupils and then ask them to complete the story. Even though the title of the composition may not be imaginative, it is always preferable to assign concrete, realistic, and limited subjects than to make a vague and indefinite assignment. Gurrey quotes a sentence from a teacher which is of value to a teacher of English: "choose titles which give not a wide, but a small target".²⁴

24. P. Gurrey, Teaching English as a Foreign Language (London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1956), p. 143.

Length of the written composition. The written composition should not be long. It may be a few lines or at maximum one page. At first, students should be taught to use short sentences only. Later, when they are more proficient and more familiar with word order and sentence structure they can be encouraged to use complex and compound sentences. The short written compositions should be clear, correct, meaningful, and well-organized. The students should learn how to write short and concise paragraphs about one idea before undertaking longer compositions.

Types of composition. There are four types of written composition: first, routine compositions such as book or trip reports, narration of incidents, and the like; second, letter writing; third, creative composition such as plays, radio scripts, prose, and poetry; and finally, précis writing. Muddled, loose, and vague thinking can be corrected by training in précis writing.

This classification helps the teacher to provide variety in written assignment. All four types can be written at each grade level as soon as pupils know the rudiments of written composition. Whatever the subject of the composition, the teacher should make students realize that the content of the composition is not the only important aspect of a composition. Form, style, spelling, legibility, sentence and paragraph structure, grammatical correctness, and neatness of the composition are all important. If the teacher takes

cognizance of all these points, and the students know their importance, the result will be most satisfactory.

Correction of the composition. The written composition is a good means for testing how well the pupils can apply grammar, vocabulary, or other aspects of the language in their writing. Although the teacher guides the students by pointing out the errors, pupils should acquire the habit of self-correction. There are several ways of correcting compositions:

1. The teacher adopts some symbols for common errors which the students learn: such as, p for paragraph, s for spelling, and t for wrong tenses. While the pupils write their compositions in class, the teacher moves from pupil to pupil, checking their mistakes and putting the appropriate symbol in the margin where he notes errors. Pupils are expected to find their errors by these symbols.
2. The students correct their own compositions twice and then exchange papers so that each paper is checked by another student and corrected before it is given to the teacher for correction.
3. In the lower classes, the correct form might be written on the blackboard and students copy the correct patterns or sentences.
4. The teacher assigns subjects and pupils write them at home and he corrects them later.

Teachers point out mistakes in compositions differently. Some cross out or circle the mistakes in word or structure. Some correct the wrong word, and others put down some symbol under or above the mistake or in the margin. Leavitt advises "for ordinary use a symbol in the margin",²⁵ because students

25. Leavitt, op. cit., p. 74.

will be made to find their own mistakes and correct them. If the errors are many, the student should be required to rewrite the composition completely; if there are only a few errors, the corrections can be made in the margin.

Evaluating written composition. Grading or marking the compositions is a difficult task and it is almost always subjective. This is because there are several factors to consider in correcting and marking compositions. Is the correct English of the composition more important or the idea? Is the organization of the composition more significant or the style of writing? Should spelling be given weight? If yes, is it more important than handwriting? These questions and others face a teacher of English as he decides how to grade the compositions. The good teacher of English should decide beforehand standards for marking, and let the students know them. Students can often help in setting up standards. These standards can be used by students to evaluate their written compositions before they submit them to the teacher. For example, they may ask themselves: Are the ideas clearly expressed? Are the sentences well-constructed? Is the punctuation correct? How could the idea have been said differently and more effectively? Do the paragraphs have unity and coherence? Are the words used properly? Are they spelled correctly? What parts might have been condensed or omitted? Is the paper neat and in correct form? These questions help the students evaluate their work before the

teacher evaluates it. By this procedure, the mistakes made by the pupils should be reduced; the written composition should be more legible, better organized, and contain fewer errors.

Spelling. It is better to postpone the emphasis on spelling until after other abilities are developed. This is psychologically sound because letters have no meanings by themselves. Spelling when correlated with its meaning and thought can be learned easily and more effectively. Moreover, children should be mature enough for correct spelling. It should be taught when the pupil has established a system of sound for himself and has learned the correct pronunciation of words. Spelling can also be improved by associating the words with visual images. Any sort of association is effective in better spelling.

Spelling is important only when one wishes to write. Teachers who require students to spell words orally, probably waste the time of the pupils. One can often write a word correctly but he cannot spell it orally. This is due to the fact that in writing one is less confused than in oral spelling because the visual symbols give a better image of the word.

Dictation. Dictation is desirable, but not necessary; according to the proponents of the direct methods. Dictation as used in the traditional method is practically abolished in modern methods, because the objectives of dictation can be achieved in other ways without wasting the time of the students. Dictation aids in listening carefully to what is read, comprehending rapidly, and using spelling rules and

punctuation. These aims can be attained through practice in listening and in writing compositions. Thus, instead of assigning a special period for dictation, the teacher of the foreign language who uses modern methods employs other devices at different times to achieve the fourfold aim of speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Some of the practices which have replaced dictation are as follows: the teacher dictates questions and students answer them; the teacher dictates sentences in the first person and then students write them using the second or third person; the teacher dictates from different parts of the textbook but he leaves out some important words. Students should fill in the blanks. In these ways, students have to think and employ their grammatical knowledge. However, since these practices are only partially dictation, they cannot be called "dictation" in the true sense of the word. They are exercises in writing and using the language as a whole.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is necessary in speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Students can build a large vocabulary through making up original sentences, learning words in connection with objects and pictures, acquiring a conversational vocabulary, learning proverbs and idioms, and by summarizing and paraphrasing materials and reading. Vocabulary can be developed by direct association, by translation into the vernacular, by definition, by using synonyms and antonyms, by using the

words in sentences, and by description and explanation.

Direct association between one object and a word is the best way for learning vocabulary. Translation into the vernacular should be resorted to only when there is no other way to define the words, or there is a strong probability that confusion will arise. Definition of words is often difficult, especially for pupils, and it should not be used much. Synonyms and antonyms can sometimes serve this purpose but usually synonyms do not have exactly the same meaning. Descriptions and expressions are very helpful and, although there is sometimes misunderstanding, they clarify concepts. The use of the words in the sentence is always a good way to help students understand the meaning of a new word.

The English words one learns should be practical ones rather than the stilted or literary words which are not used in daily life. The most important criterion for learning words should be their frequency of use and their applicability. Persons who associate closely with foreigners, often learn to speak the foreign language in a relatively short time although they do not know many words; they have mastery over those few words they know. Michael West believes that one can tell simple stories with 100 words and he can tell rather long stories when he knows about 1,000 words.²⁶ Of course, these words should be those which are used more often.

26. Michael West, Learning to Read a Foreign Language (London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1955), p. 19.

Every teacher should be familiar with Lorge and Thorndike's work. Lorge and Thorndike read many books and counted the frequency of each word per millions. A teacher of English can find in their book, "The Teacher's Word Book of 30,000 Words",²⁷ the words most useful for the students. Carnegie also made a report of 2,000 words according to their frequency, which can be of great help to a teacher of English.²⁸

Grammar

Is grammar dull? Is grammar nonsense? Some believe that grammar is both dull and nonsense. As a matter of fact, it is the method or approach to grammar which makes it dull or interesting, not the grammar per se. Nevertheless, it should be admitted that sometimes, the materials introduced as grammar are really nonsense. Grammar is valuable only if it is used. Students do not need grammar which is never or rarely used by native speakers or writers. Moreover, grammar can be interesting if concrete and useful examples are given to students. Stories, objects, pictures, and audio-visual materials can all help to make grammar interesting. Grammar should not be taught as intellectual knowledge. It is a means toward better communication, not an end by itself. If regarded as theoretical knowledge, the teaching

27. Edward Thorndike and Lorge, (New York, Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1944).

28. West, op. cit., p. 51.

of grammar can be called an "intensively stupid custom", as Herbert Spencer called it.

The advocates of the direct method believe that grammar should be taught after the child has learned the language. Rules or principles in grammar are never given to pupils for memorization. Grammar is taught inductively rather than deductively, that is, examples are given prior to the rules. Patterns rather than paradigms are given to the students first. Pupils are never expected to rote-memorize the verb tenses, such as "I have, you have ...", etc. These paradigms are never used in daily conversational speech as such. Rather, pupils are given some patterns such as "I have a book, you have a book ..." without necessarily learning them in order. These patterns when learned well can be generalized. According to this method, grammar only systematizes what is already known. The importance of patterns lies in the fact that they are sentences or phrases rather than words.

Although the proponents of the direct methods recommend that grammar be taught the children in later stages, they do not object to the teaching of grammar in the earlier stages to adults because their span of attention is longer than that of children and they can see the connection between things better. However, drill and practice are essential in correct usage whatever the age or maturity of the learner.

Grammar should be put into action as soon as it is taught. A corollary to this rule is that grammar should not

be taught until it is felt to be needed by the pupils. So, the order of teaching grammar is very important. Nouns and personal pronouns usually come first, the present continuous tense precedes the simple present tense, and the past perfect tense follows the present perfect tense. Everything should be taught according to its frequency of use.

Investigation has shown that many of the errors of students are in the use of irregular words and tenses because they tend to do everything according to the "rules". In language, the "exceptions" do not mean expressions of inferior value, but they may have even more value than regular forms in current usage. Thus, some irregularities are taught very early in the language and sometimes even before the regular forms. Students should be given the reasons for irregularities wherever possible. Some of the irregularities are laid to phonetics or derivations from the roots, or they are due to easy pronunciation or spelling.

Some advocates of the modern methods believe that grammar should be taught through the vernacular because the grammatical rules and terms are often difficult for students to grasp and this difficulty distracts their attention. The uninterested students are likely to be encouraged to give more attention to grammar, if it is taught in the native language.

Translation

Observation, demonstration, and audio-visual materials have replaced translation in the modern school. Instead of

translation, it is recommended that direct association be established between words and the ideas, objects, or actions for which they stand. Translation is avoided because it makes one think in his mother tongue, wastes the time which could be devoted to speech or other skills of language, and demands the meaning of words rather than the comprehension of sentences.

Translation may have some advantages such as giving the meaning to abstract words, helping in self-learning a foreign language, and giving the equivalents of proverbs or idioms. However, these values are not so weighty as to compensate for its disadvantages. Translation might be permitted occasionally in the upper grades if it is obligatory to teach it in the school.

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

Books

Among the present textbooks, Oxford Readers by Faucett, Direct Method by Gatenby, Exercises in English Conversation by Dixon, and Elementary Readers in English by Charles Dixon are based on the direct methods of teaching English.

In addition to these textbooks, a teacher of English should encourage his students to read plays, novels, short stories, and English newspapers and magazines. Many of the classics have been published in shortened or simplified form and these are excellent books for students to read.

One of the most important tools in the hands of students and teachers of a language is the dictionary. The teacher should make the students realize the value of the dictionary. Also, he should teach the students how to use a dictionary skillfully. Many exercises can be given by teachers to ensure that pupils learn how to use dictionaries. It is better to use English rather than Persian-English or English-Persian dictionaries. The latter are subject to error and moreover, their use is an exercise in translation. However, if not overused, the English-Persian and Persian-English dictionaries may be helpful. The good dictionaries for the students of the secondary school to use are: Concise Oxford Dictionary, Shorter Oxford Dictionary, Webster Dictionary, Thorndike Dictionary, and Little Oxford Dictionary.

A modern school should have at least one or two encyclopedias in its library. The Encyclopedia Britannica is an excellent encyclopedia but probably too difficult for Iranian students to use. The Junior Encyclopedia Britannica, The Children's Encyclopedia, Oxford's Junior Encyclopedia, and The World Book are more useful for secondary students in Iran.

Subscription to some English and American newspapers and magazines is essential. The teacher can take these publications to class for discussion of articles or stories. The students can make use of these publications in the library as well. The Reader's Digest, and Life Magazine are good magazines for students. The British newspapers such as

The London Times, and the Manchester Guardian, and American and British Schools magazines, such as Scholastic and School Friend are also suitable for the pupils.

Audio-Visual Materials

Comenius made an era in educational history by issuing a language book containing pictures of the things discussed in the book. Today, the use of pictures, realia, and other audio-visual materials make the lesson more meaningful, interesting, and concrete to the students. Realia or visual and tangible equipment such as pictures, models, dolls, statues, and costumes are all of inestimable value in teaching. Students can become familiar with American and British civilization through these media. Pupils may draw maps of various kinds: commercial, political, literary, and places of interest. Pupils can collect pictures and materials about the English or American people and display them in the class. Bulletin board displays of interesting things about American and British life and people give students something to talk about.

Films and slides are very helpful in showing the culture of the foreign country and for training pupils in listening. Films of stories or novels as well as travel films might be shown. Educational films are preferable to other kinds of films for school purposes.

Chalkboard

The chalkboard is an invaluable tool of any classroom. Although, there are chalkboards in all schools, many teachers

do not use the chalkboard efficiently or enough. A teacher of English can write and draw pictures on the blackboard many times during a class period without spending any money or time. Teachers of English should make the utmost use of this device. They should be careful in their handwriting because it is more difficult to write well on the chalkboard than on the paper.

Bulletin Board

The classroom should be equipped with adequate bulletin boards. The teacher of English can collect posters, pictures, and charts dealing with English and American culture, preferably with English captions. Newspapers and magazine articles can also be displayed. Students can be of great help to the teacher of English in collecting material for the bulletin board and displaying them on the bulletin board. Displays of this kind make the classroom attractive as well as stimulate interest. When students work is displayed, the bulletin board can also motivate students to do better and more creative work.

OUT-OF-CLASS ACTIVITIES

The modern schools provide activities outside the classroom for different purposes. Teachers of English in a modern school have language clubs for the improvement of the English abilities of the pupils in these clubs. The students often organize their club according to the rules and government

of Great Britain or the United States and elect a prime minister or president to preside at club meetings. These elected pupils administer the club with the guidance of the teacher of English. One of the devices often used for learning English in these clubs is to respond to roll-call by giving a quotation, proverb, or idiom.

The first requirement for membership in this club should be the ability to speak in English and those who violate this rule are obliged to pay some fine or are expelled from the club. In clubs of this kind, students are often encouraged to correspond with foreign students. The teacher may help students write such letters.

Another out-of-class activity which some schools encourage is a newspaper in English. Some of the students look after the publication or mimeographing of the paper; others write and collect materials or pictures for the paper; some act as editors, and others write the headlines and advertisements. These activities help the students learn social cooperation as well as English.

The English club may celebrate the national holidays of Great Britain and the United States. In these celebrations, the pupils interested in music will sing English and American songs; others will act in a play in English, and those who can write stories or essays well will read them before the audience which may be comprised of the parents, the staff, and the students.

Games are very interesting to students; they should be encouraged to read books on games and play them in the club.

This activity improves the reading and the speech of the students. Psychologically too, games are good for the development of personality.

SUMMARY

This chapter deals with the modern methods of teaching English as a foreign language and with the application of modern principles of learning to the instruction of English. The aim of the modern methods of language instruction is the education of the whole learner to listen discriminatively, to speak fluently, to read intelligently, and to write correctly. All modern methods emphasize the ability to speak as the most important skill in learning a language. But they also emphasize the abilities to read and write, and to understand the language. Translation and dictation are rejected by these methods and in their place speech, conversation, silent reading, explored composition, and language construction patterns are employed. Audio-visual materials are used extensively in order to make lessons more interesting and meaningful. Activities outside the classroom are considered very important in providing opportunities for the students to speak and study the language.

CHAPTER V

SOME PROPOSALS FOR A REVISION OF THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM

The Iranian teachers participating in this study believe that the most serious shortcomings of the present English syllabuses are the demand for translation and dictation by the Ministry of Education, the emphasis on teaching grammatical rules, the short periods of English instruction per week, and the emphasis on grades and examinations. These criticisms, a comparison between modern methods and the methods used in Iran as revealed by the responses to the questionnaires to both teachers and students, the narrow objectives of the English curriculum, and a study of the common errors made by Iranians, all point to the need for a revision in the English curriculum and suggest the kind of revision needed.

It is not the purpose of this study to design an English curriculum for Iranian schools. This is a task for curriculum experts and teachers of experience. The proposals made here are for the consideration of future curriculum committees who, it is hoped, will undertake to make a thorough revision of the English syllabuses.

COMMON ERRORS MADE BY IRANIANS

In addition to the data gathered from the questionnaires and interviews, a study was made of the common errors made by Iranians in written English. This should not only be helpful to the teachers of English who wish to improve their teaching but should also be a basis for curriculum revision and for writing textbooks. Most of the errors reported in this section were drawn from 113 papers of 9 Iranian Special Form students at the American University of Beirut. This is a small sample from which to show the errors commonly made by Iranians, but it points the direction for a more extensive research project which needs to be done before a new curriculum can be designed and textbooks can be written which meet the needs of Iranian students.

Sentence Structure

The most frequent error made by Iranians is in the structure of sentences. In Persian, the order of a sentence is: subject, object, verb. In English, the verb comes before the object. This change in the order of parts of speech is very confusing to Iranian students, and it takes a fairly long time to establish the new habit. For example, an Iranian student says, "I water drink", or, "You walking are", or "He book me gave".

Another common structure error is made with adjectives. In contrast to Persian where the adjective follows the noun, in English the adjective precedes the noun. This often causes

Iranians to make awkward sentences. The following examples are taken from the written papers of Iranians in the American University of Beirut:

1. He is a boy, very nice.
2. These flowers, red, are on the table.
3. My mother has a dress new on.

Incorrect Usage of Words

Foreigners, including Iranians, often use words which are correct in meaning but are not part of the common and accepted language patterns. For example, they use literary, colloquial, and even slang expressions. Sometimes, even in the same sentence. The following sentences are taken from spoken or written statements by Iranians attending the American University of Beirut.

1. This nasty guy is my foe.
2. Why are you lamenting, honey?
3. He is absolutely forlorn. I am mad with him.
4. Your hands are untidy. Why do not you lave them?
5. Take it easy. I do not like to see you woeful.
6. Hi, Professor X.

There are expressions in Persian, particularly those taken from Arabic, which are made by a combination of certain verbs and a noun. These verbs are usually: to do, to give, to become, to be, to eat, to beat, and to have. These combined verbs and nouns cause Iranian students to make many mistakes in English; e.g., they may say, "to do play" instead of "to play", or "to beat the door" meaning "to knock on the door",

or "to give hands" instead of "to shake hands".

In English, a definite article can precede an adjective and make it a collective noun; e.g., "the rich" means "the rich people" or "the poor" stands for "the poor men" and so forth. In Persian, one cannot say "the poor" meaning "the poor people". He either says "poors" or "poor people". The differences in the two languages cause people to make so many mistakes that even advanced students do not always avoid them.

Mistakes in the use of the definite article the is a common error among Iranians. This is because an article is not used in Persian as it is used in English. In the writings of Iranian students, it was noted that they either overuse the definite article or they omit it where it should be used; e.g., "I went to office and met the guests", or "He has the two pencils".

Should, must, have to, and ought to are frequently mistaken by Iranian students because in Persian there is no exact differentiation between these words. It is very common for Iranian student to say, "I should go", when he means "I have to go", or "You must do this", instead of "You ought to do this.", and so forth.

Incorrect or inappropriate use of words is a very common mistake because students do not learn words in an English speaking environment, and consequently do not grasp their real meaning. This is a limitation of the translation method which teaches the literal translation of many words and does not distinguish between shades of meaning or the

appropriate use of a word in a given context or at a particular time. In the following list, other examples of mistakes of this kind are given:

<u>Persian</u>	<u>English</u>
to <u>give</u> examination	to <u>take</u> an examination
to <u>do</u> mistake	to <u>make</u> a mistake
to <u>light</u> the radio	to <u>turn on</u> the radio
to <u>extinguish</u> the radio	to <u>turn off</u> the radio
to <u>accept</u>	to <u>agree</u>
to <u>like very much</u> or	to <u>love</u>
to <u>worship</u>	to <u>love</u>
to <u>read</u>	to <u>study</u>
to <u>write</u>	to <u>type</u>
paint, hue	colour
stranger	foreigner
door	window
table	desk
small	young
all time	always

Grammar

The common grammatical errors made by Iranians are also mainly related to the difference in construction of the Persian and English languages. These errors are made in different aspects of grammar: verb tenses, pronouns, conjunctions, and adverbs.

Verb tenses. The present continuous tense in English is constructed by the auxiliary verb to be. In Persian this

tense is made in two ways. In literary language, one says, "I am in the process of going; you are in the process of eating, etc.". In the colloquial language this tense is made by the verb to have, e.g. "I have go" or "you have eat". This difference in the two languages is conducive to many errors which take time to eliminate.

The present perfect tense is another example where differences in the two languages cause confusion. In Persian one says, "I am gone" instead of "I have gone"; or "you are eaten" in place of "you have eaten". Students should be given much practice in using the correct auxiliary verb. This tense is also confused with the present passive voice. An Iranian is very likely to say: "I am beaten", when he means "I have beaten".

The past perfect tense construction is also subject to error by Iranians. In Persian, they say, "you were gone" with the same meaning of "you had gone", i.e., the past perfect tense is made by the auxiliary verb to be where in English it is made by the verb to have. Again this tense is confused with the past passive tense; e.g., "I was beaten" said by an Iranian may mean "I had beaten".

In English when two verbs follow each other, the second one is an infinitive. In Persian the second verb is never an infinitive. Iranians often say, "I am very glad that I see you", or "I am happy of knowing you" instead of "I am very glad to see you" or "I am happy to know you".

In English, tenses do not always correspond with time element; e.g., "He told me that he would certainly do it tomorrow". An Iranian is very likely to say "He told me that he will certainly do it tomorrow".

Pronouns. The third personal pronoun in English is both he and she. In Persian, there is one pronoun used for both masculine and feminine gender. Many Iranians get confused with this change in the language. Similarly the possessive pronouns, his and her and the objective pronouns, him and her, are difficult for Iranians to use correctly.

Relative pronouns such as whom, who, which, that, and whose are also often misused by Iranians. In Persian, there are not different words such as who and whom for the subjective and objective case. In Persian another word, called Ra, is added after who to distinguish who from whom. However, Iranians often confuse these two pronouns.

Conjunctions. The conjunction, when and where are often not used correctly by Iranians, e.g., "I met him ten years ago that I was in Iran" using that for when, or "I brought a book from the library that we went the other day".

Adverbs. Mistakes in the use of adverbs are often made by Iranians. The following errors taken from the papers of students at the American University of Beirut are very common:

1. He easily can be seen through the window.
2. My mother yesterday left the town.
3. Often, he is in the school.

4. All time, they were working hard.
5. Your sister does not swim ever.

Punctuation

In Persian there are no punctuation marks such as exist in English. Although punctuation in writing seems quite logical, no commas, colons, semicolons, and the like are used in Persian. There is a recent tendency to use some punctuation in Persian, but Iranian students have difficulty learning to use punctuation marks correctly in their writings.

Prepositions

Prepositions in various languages are employed differently. The following examples taken from the papers of the Special Form students are some of the most common mistakes which Iranians make in using prepositions in English:

<u>Persian</u>	<u>English</u>
To be interested <u>to</u>	To be interested <u>in</u>
To be astonished <u>from</u>	To be astonished <u>at</u>
To be a friend <u>for</u>	To be a friend <u>of</u>
To shout <u>to</u>	To shout <u>at</u>
To answer <u>to</u> a question	To answer a question
To subscribe a newspaper	To subscribe <u>to</u>
To be angry <u>from</u>	To be angry <u>with</u>
To be obliged <u>to</u> or <u>from</u>	To be obliged <u>to</u>
To see <u>from</u> the window	To see <u>through</u> the window
To insist <u>to</u>	To insist <u>on</u>
To teach <u>in</u> or <u>to</u> English	To teach <u>through</u> English
To help <u>to</u>	To help

<u>Persian</u>	<u>English</u>
To fight <u>with</u>	To fight <u>against</u>
To believe	To believe <u>in</u>
To laugh <u>to</u>	To laugh <u>at</u>
To divide <u>between</u> or <u>to</u>	To divide <u>into</u>
To look <u>to</u>	To look <u>at</u>
To distribute <u>between</u> three	To distribute <u>among</u> three
To ask <u>from</u>	To ask <u>of</u> , or to ask
<u>To</u> proportion	In proportion to
To touch <u>to</u> something	To touch something
<u>With</u> reference to	<u>In</u> reference to
To consist something	To consist <u>of</u> something
<u>To</u> my opinion	<u>In</u> my opinion
To correspond <u>to</u>	To correspond <u>with</u>
To search something	To search <u>for</u> something
To be worried <u>from</u>	To be worried <u>about</u> or <u>for</u>
To avoid <u>from</u>	To avoid
To be fond <u>to</u>	To be fond <u>of</u>
To approve something	To approve <u>of</u>
To intend	To intend <u>to</u>
To drive ten miles per hour	To drive <u>at</u> ten miles per hour
To think <u>about</u>	To think <u>of</u>
To decide <u>about</u>	To decide
To arrive <u>to</u>	To arrive <u>in</u> or <u>at</u>
To teach <u>to</u> someone	To teach someone
To oppose <u>with</u> something	To oppose something
To marry <u>with</u>	To marry

PersianTo strike to a rockTo multiply inEnglish

To strike a rock

To multiply byPronunciation Errors

Some English sounds do not exist in Persian. These sounds are especially difficult because Iranian teachers cannot distinguish the correct sounds themselves, and, after students learn a wrong pronunciation of a certain sound, it is difficult for them to unlearn it later. The most common errors in sound made by Iranians are w, and th, which do not exist in Persian. Some vowels and diphtongs, such as i, e, ea, and ing are usually confusing to students because they have difficulty in distinguishing between these sounds.

In many countries there are special charts for phonetics prepared and published by experts in the field of language. A special chart of the common errors of Iranians in pronunciation and intonation and ways of making these sounds correctly would help the students and teachers of English a great deal. The experts in English phonetics should study carefully the possibility of making such charts. This is a very important step toward the improvement of the pronunciation of Iranians.

OBJECTIVES FOR ENGLISH INSTRUCTION

The first thing a curriculum planner must decide upon in developing a new curriculum or revising an old one

is the objectives of the subject. After deciding on the goals, he can then determine the teaching-learning experiences by which the objectives or goals can best be achieved. The principal aims of teaching English as a second language are fourfold: to understand spoken English; to speak correctly; to comprehend written English; and to write correctly. Each of these four aims must be analyzed into its component parts so that a teacher of English knows what behaviours are expected when one speaks correctly or when one comprehends written English. Only when these four aims have been broken down into the specific behaviours involved can the teacher plan concrete learning experiences to enable students to achieve them.

Understands Spoken English

The person who understands spoken English increasingly: listens carefully when others speak; associates spoken words with objects, pictures, places, and movements; distinguishes between sounds which are similar but different; works to increase his vocabulary; gives attention to syllables and stresses; understands the sentences and words which he has learned to speak; listens carefully to radio and motion picture dialogue; listens to lectures in English; seeks conversation with English speaking people; uses records to hear correct speech.

Speaks English Correctly

The person who speaks correctly increasingly: enunciates

clearly; pronounces words correctly; speaks with rhythm and emphasis; uses words correctly; speaks in complete sentences; uses correct grammatical construction; speaks fluently at a rate easily understood; uses language suitable for the occasion; fights against shyness in speaking; tries to speak correctly but is not afraid of speaking even incorrectly; participates in language clubs; practises the new words he hears; articulates each word clearly; organizes his ideas before speaking; expresses what he wishes to say simply and directly; expresses what he reads in his own words; speaks before the class without embarrassment or fear; gives reports in his own words, without memorizing the material; avoids slang expressions in his conversation; speaks extemporaneously about his opinions and ideas; uses idioms correctly.

Comprehends Written English

The person who understands written English increasingly: studies purposefully; reads with his eyes, without moving his head or his lips; reads phrases rather than each word; looks for ideas in printed material; uses pronunciation to comprehend written material; gets the meaning of new words through context; reads aloud clearly with correct expression, pronunciation and intonation; reads newspapers, magazines, and books with a critical attitude and does not believe without finding out the truth for himself; adjusts his reading rate according to his purpose in reading; skims, reads carefully for meaning, or reads rapidly for pleasure as occasion demands.

Writes English Correctly

The person who writes English correctly increasingly: writes legibly and neatly, spells correctly those words that he uses; uses the dictionary when in doubt; capitalizes where necessary; uses appropriate punctuations; writes well organized compositions on subjects of interest to him; knows how to use paragraphs; expresses his ideas clearly and concisely; uses new words in his own sentences correctly; constructs integrated and meaningful sentences; knows the principles of grammar (especially forms of verbs and tenses) and can apply them in his composition; acquires a style of his own in written English; and uses simple and clear sentences with a view to express, not to impress others with a heavy complicated style.

In addition to the four basic goals of English instruction, there are other objectives which should concern the teachers of English. Every English teacher should expect that each student increasingly: uses good study habits, understands British and American culture, appreciates and enjoys English and American literature, cooperates with others, assumes responsibility for his own actions, disciplines himself, keeps himself well-informed, thinks critically and creatively, and is socially sensitive.

Uses Good Work Habits

The student who has good work habits and study skills increasingly: uses a library efficiently; concentrates on the task at hand; uses a dictionary to find the exact meaning of

words and their pronunciation; uses diacritical markings to pronounce new words; keeps his note-book up-to-date; does his assignments on time and to the best of his ability; works independently and without supervision; uses library and community resources in conducting research; reads with comprehension; observes accurately; listens attentively and critically; computes accurately in English.

Understands British and American Cultures

The student who understands British and American culture increasingly: understands the differences and similarities between British and Iranian culture, and between American and Iranian culture; appreciates the democratic principles and values which are a part of Western tradition; seeks to understand the motivating values of British and American people by reading novels and drama of life in English speaking countries and by reading English language newspapers and magazines; appreciates the problems, aspirations, fears, and achievements of English speaking nations.

Appreciates and Enjoys English and American Literature

The student who enjoys English and American literature: reads widely on his own; enjoys discussing books he reads; attends the cinema to see films of books he has read; reads a variety of books and plays by a variety of authors; identifies himself with the people in the stories he reads; is familiar with the works of contemporary writers as well as many of the classics in English and American literature;

differentiates between good and shoddy writing according to standards of excellency.

Cooperates with Others

The student who cooperates with others increasingly: shares the ideas, information and materials which he gets from the books or other sources with students; works with interest for the improvement of English in the classroom or in the language clubs; participates in the discussion and work of the class freely and effectively; proves to be a useful and active member of the English class; sacrifices his personal interests for the progress of the class; respects the ideas of his opponents in the debates; observes courtesy and politeness in his writings and speech; helps with the decoration and display of pictures, posters, or other materials on the bulletin board; fulfills his promise or undertaking in providing certain opportunities for improvement of English instruction; participates actively in picnics or field trips.

Assumes Responsibility for his own Actions

The student who assumes responsibility increasingly: accepts duties assigned to him by the group and does them sincerely; attends the class or other activities on time; takes initiative in group activities and helps his classmates do the same; abides by the regulations of the class and English clubs; respects the property of people whether in the classroom, the library, or other places; upholds and respects the law; performs his assignments and homework;

tries to fulfill undertakings he accepts even though very difficult; keeps his books and notebooks neat and orderly; feels responsible to listen to English speaking people; is conscious of his need to improve his English and works at it; solves his problems independently without bothering other students or the teacher unnecessarily.

Disciplines Himself

The student who disciplines himself increasingly: concentrates on the job at hand, such as the assignment or the classroom talk; is industrious in his work and respects the time of others; observes social amenities, such as police regulations or school disciplinary rules; controls his behaviour and emotions in the class or outside; is critical of his own judgments and decisions; acts consistently with his accepted philosophy of life; is temperate in classwork and out-of-class activities; pursues what he believes to be right without being affected by propaganda or pressure; meets his obligations without outside pressure; appreciates the others' criticisms of his own actions.

Keeps Himself Well-informed

The student who keeps himself well-informed increasingly: understands human behaviour and treats other people on a basis of his understanding; reads widely; knows how to behave effectively in the groups to which he belongs, such as family, peer, and community; understands the importance of health and cleanliness in life of an individual; understands scientific

principles and the scientific method; understands the agencies by which public opinion is formed; understands the tradition, heritage, aspirations and ideals of Persian government and people; understands the current issues in Iran and the world at large; understands the part Iran can play in maintaining good and peaceful international relations; recognizes that due to the invention of destructive weapons, war should be avoided at all costs; understands the interdependence of the nations of the world by reading books on social and international affairs; uses his ideas concisely in his writings; argues logically and scientifically in order to clarify concepts for himself; works to improve his knowledge and eliminate his misunderstandings.

Thinks Critically and Creatively

The student who thinks critically and creatively increasingly: is imaginative; produces new solutions to problems by analyzing the situations; originates and carries out ideas and course of action; expresses himself in new and original ways; encourages other students to be original by giving new ideas and stimulating them; differentiates between propaganda and facts; or between facts and opinion; suspends judgments until he has all possible evidence and has examined all points of view; sets up hypotheses and gathers evidence in terms of each; uses logical arguments to defend his point of view whether in written or oral work; sees pros and cons of controversial issues; analyzes and solves problems he faces

in the class or outside; differentiates between logical reasons and irrelevant and untenable ones by reading purposefully and profoundly; draws conclusions on basis of sound arguments; acts in accordance with his conclusions; re-examines his conclusions on basis of new evidence.

Is Socially Sensitive

The student who is socially sensitive increasingly: respects ideas of his classmates when they argue or debate on something; is serious, fair, and open-minded in criticizing other's views; believes in diversity of human abilities and interests and acts accordingly; uses criticism and advice to improve himself; is interested in the contributions of other members of the class; is modest of own talents; is tactful in embarrassing situations; holds no prejudice because of colour, race, religion, creed, or handicap; understands defence mechanisms and makes allowance for their use by other people; understands English-speaking people and cultures, their problems, needs, and aspirations; looks upon social problems as capable of being solved; adapts to new situations easily; takes responsibility for making new students feel at home; understands the principles of democracy and the close relation between education and democracy; understands and practises measures for the conservation of natural resources, such as oil and wood; knows how various economic systems operate including their political and social consequences; knows how his government functions and how various other political systems operate

and their social and economic consequences by reading books and newspapers or magazines; understands, critically evaluates, and supports promising efforts to promote peace and international understanding including the United Nations and its agencies.

SUGGESTIONS FOR REVISION OF ENGLISH CURRICULUM

One of the reasons for the inability of Iranian students to use English effectively is the short time they have to study English. At present, English is taught only in the secondary school, for four to six hours per week. This amount of time seems insufficient for learning a language properly. Therefore, English instruction should be started in the fourth grade of the elementary school and continue up to the sixth grade of the secondary school. Since the preliminary stages of learning a language need more time than later stages, it is suggested that English be taught for six hours a week in the elementary school. Later on, in the secondary school, it may be taught for four hours a week because students can work on the language by themselves and the teacher's help is comparatively less needed.

English Program in the Elementary School

In the elementary school, the aim of teaching English is mainly to enable students to distinguish English sounds and pronounce them correctly and to speak simple sentences. The methods of approach to these goals should be based on the needs and interests of the pupils and the teacher should

use concrete objects and experiences as much as possible.

Speech. Accuracy in pronunciation, stress, and intonation is required at this level. Correct speech should be practiced so often that pupils utter sounds correctly and speak with a fair degree of fluency. Peculiarities of the English language which cause Iranians trouble, such as w, th, i, s, should be given much stress. Patterns of speech should be given by the teacher first, and then practiced consistently by the students.

Songs, dramas, rhythmic verses, and short dialogues are all suitable means for teaching correct and fluent speech. Choral speech, if used in small groups, is interesting to students and gives individual students confidence.

Audio-visual materials such as pictures, charts, posters, tape recorders, and linguaphones should be used as much as possible. The English names of objects in the immediate environment of the students should be taught through demonstration and association of objects with English names. The roll-call should be made in English and the responses of students should vary so that their answers are not mere repetitions. For example, one day the teacher might ask the pupils to answer, "yes" when their names are called; another day, the students might answer "present", and the third day, "yes, I am present", "No, he is not present", or "He is absent", and so on.

Games are excellent for teaching English at the elementary levels. A teacher of English in the elementary

school should know a variety of games which require familiarity with English words and which children will enjoy. The following game is typical of the kind elementary school children like to play and is called "Mr. X. Says." In this game pupils are divided into two groups. The teacher stands in front of the class and says, "Mr. X. says, stand up", "Mr. X. says, sit down", and so on. The students should carry out these instructions. If somebody does not do them, he is excluded from the game. Also, if the teacher says a sentence without using "Mr. X. says", the students should not obey that order. In this game, the group which makes the fewest errors and outlasts the other, wins. There are many games similar to this which make the pupils listen carefully and speak eagerly.

Reading. The textbooks should be based on modern methods. In addition, students should be encouraged to read stories with a simple English vocabulary and appeal to children. The silent reading of books increases the vocabulary and provides examples of language patterns for children to use. Some supplementary readings, such as Traveller's Tales, The Mystery of the Island, Nine Fairy Tales, Seven Little Boys, Magic Slippers, A Second Book of English, and A Third Book of English (Leavitt) are suitable books for use in the elementary school. Discussion and conversation should follow the reading of these books.

Written Work. Written compositions should be alert, with emphasis on simple sentences. The teacher should correct

the errors carefully and give practice in the corrected errors on the "black list". Elementary school pupils should be familiar with the written symbols for the people or objects in their immediate environment, and should learn how to write the names of such objects or people. Spelling and handwriting are important skills and should be given considerable attention. Print script as well as cursive writing should be posted on the wall for all to see and use. The teacher should take care with his own writing to set good standards, and should provide time for practice so that right habits in writing are developed. Before writing compositions, the subjects should be explored fully in order that students know what to write about. Moreover, the explored composition will clarify and develop many new concepts for the students.

Medium of instruction. No attempt should be made to translate words, sentences, or phrases into Persian. The medium of instruction should always be English. Persian should be used only when there seems no other alternative for explaining or clarifying a meaning. Pictures, objects, gestures, games, and mimicry are the devices for clarification and explanation of ideas.

Grammar. Systematic grammar should not be required in the elementary school, but various patterns should be given and practiced. The more examples and practices that are given, the better will be the results obtained.

English Program in Junior Secondary School

In the first three years of the secondary school, the general aims should be the same as in the elementary school. Speech and oral communication should continue to receive major emphasis. However, the methods of approach should differ slightly. The students in these years have different needs and interests. These should be cultivated and used as motivation for greater learning.

Reading. Reading should be stressed more in these years than in the elementary school. Both intensive and extensive reading are necessary. Silent reading followed by questions helps the teacher to measure the comprehension of the students. Sometimes dramatization may follow silent reading.

Students of the junior secondary school should be exposed to simplified and shortened literary books; stories of travel and adventure appeal to junior high school students. Books, such as The Count of Monte Cristo, She, Round the World in Eighty Days, and King Solomon's Mines, which are shortened for students are suitable for supplementary reading.

Writing. Free composition should be required and practice should be given to overcome the errors. The teacher should now make the students familiar with some of the rules for correct writing. Students in the junior secondary school should understand and use different kinds of sentences. Therefore, the grammatical rules for these sentences can be given and students should be encouraged to use a variety of sentences

in their writing in order to obtain accuracy and mastery.

On the whole, the teacher of English has the obligation of teaching English so well during these three years that the graduates of the junior secondary school can speak English fluently, read without difficulty, and write expressively. Speaking and writing should be given particular attention as means of communication. The students who leave the junior school should be able to express themselves naturally and easily.

The English program in the Senior Secondary School

The English program in the senior secondary school should aim at preparation of students for college. The three different branches of the secondary school - Literary, Physical Sciences, and Mathematics - should use books which familiarize the students with the vocabulary and expressions of their fields. Field trips to museums, to the libraries, to offices, to historical places and the like are very helpful to students and serve as a basis for reports, free compositions, discussion, and follow-up activities. These activities, along with the use of the library and research, are very desirable and should be encouraged as excellent preparation for college work.

Reading. Classics such as Shakespeare's works might be used in this period, but more modern and contemporary literary writings, such as those of Edgar Allan Poe and Ernest Hemingway are preferable - particularly for those who are not majoring in literature.

Students in the last years of school are developing a philosophical view of life for themselves. The teacher of English can help students in this regard by encouraging them to read and discuss appropriate books in class. Students should observe courtesy and respect for the ideas of others in their discussions. Oral reports and panel discussions which require students to think and express themselves before a group clearly and logically are good activities for students in the senior school.

Written work. Individuals learn to write by writing, so there should be many opportunities to write about things which interest the students. Writing is written communication, consequently students write better when they have something to communicate. Précis writing is a good device for teaching clear writing. Slovenly and loose sentences can be improved by exercises in précis writing.

Systematic and functional grammar should be presented during this period. Systematic grammar organizes the useful patterns of speech that the students have learned so far in order to give them the rules of the language. But students should not be required to learn grammar or vocabulary which is of no value to them in communication.

Translation. Translation as a technique may be taught in the last year of the secondary school. The teacher should explain the art of translation to the students and then give practice in translation. Translation in the last year of school does not cause students to think in Persian, because they supposedly have already learned to think in English.

Units of Work

Modern schools put much emphasis upon organizing related learning experiences into units or units-of-work. Unit organization has grown in popularity with the acceptance of the learning principle that learning is by wholes and that learning is facilitated and made more permanent when the learner sees the meaningfulness of a total situation and the relationship of one experience to another. Just as the emphasis is on words rather than letters, and on sentences rather than words, so learning experiences become more meaningful when they are organized into a unitary whole. While it has long been customary, in the United States particularly, to organize social studies and science experiences into units, English instruction in Iran has continued to be taught in segmental daily assignments of translation, dictation, oral reading, and composition.

Unit teaching can be as effective in the teaching of English as it has proved to be in science and the social studies. The assumption underlying unit organization is that students will learn the skills of speaking, reading, writing, and listening English better if they are working on a topic in which they are interested. The length of time spent on a unit will depend on the interest of the students, the scope and importance of the unit, and the materials available for them to use. Some units may last only one or two weeks; others may last six or eight weeks or even longer.

Although it is recognized that teachers who have had no training in unit teaching may have difficulty changing from old methods to new ones, the values inherent in unit teaching are so great that its use is strongly recommended as a method for teaching English in Iran. In the beginning, teachers should probably experiment with short units organized around familiar topics. As they gain experience and confidence and as materials are developed, they can try longer and more complex units. The following units are suggested as appropriate for use in English classes in the secondary school. Some suggestions are also made for the content and activities of each unit.

Our community. In this unit the students learn the English names for the things of everyday life which they see around them. They learn the names of directions, streets, buildings, shops, and the like. The teacher can take the students to a bakery, a grocery, a butchery, the tailors, or to other interesting places in the community. These field trips provide many opportunities for the students to learn how to talk to the people, if they know English, and how they satisfy their daily needs. The students might be taken to the original sources from which they get materials and products, such as a textile factory or a farm. After these trips, students might write reports of these visits and they might discuss in the class what they have seen.

Our school. This unit starts with learning the names of things in the classroom and in the school. Students learn

simple directions and to answer roll-call. School is a place which can be easily visited by the students. Students can get information about the administration of the school, budgeting in the school, recreation and clubs in the school, parents' meetings, and the library. Not only can students learn many things in these visits, but they can also write meaningful and interesting stories and reports after visiting the different sections of the school. The teacher can lead the activities and the discussion. Groups of students may visit different sections of the school, and compete to see which one can give to the class the best and most comprehensive report in English of what they have seen.

Recreation. Students are certainly interested in aspects of recreation such as the cinema, the theater, picnics, parties, music, travel, clubs, sports, and hobbies. Only one of these interests might result in a unit or the varied interests of the class might result in a unit on recreation which would include several interests.

The cinema and the theater may be sub-topics in the unit on recreation or separate units. Students can read about the history of the motion picture industry and the theater. They can read some of Shakespeare's plays or plays by modern dramatists. They can dramatize one-act plays; they can read newspapers and magazines and get information about actors and actresses, and outstanding plays and drama. Afterwards, students might be taken to an English speaking cinema

or a theater. The follow-up discussion and written composition about a certain film are both interesting to the students and provide an effective learning situation. The principle of learning as a whole takes place in this field trip. The teaching of English extends from the classroom to outside, and the fourfold aim of learning a foreign language can be achieved.

Clubs in the school, such as music, dramatic, debating, folk dances, chess, arts and so on, can be visited and discussed in the class and the students might organize an English club. Students who make a hobby of collecting can show their collections to the class and explain them. Stamp collections can familiarize the students with foreign countries and how to correspond with foreigners. This correspondence may create an interest in other students to collect stamps and write to pen-pals.

Students may talk about their favourite sports, the advantages of particular sports, and then debate the merits of different sports. The students might decide to conclude the unit with a picnic. Not only would they need to learn the names of the food for the picnic, but they would have to plan the amount needed and where and when to go, they could read about the history and geography of the place where they are going, study the means of transportation, and decide which kind to use. They could discuss what games to play on the picnic and perhaps learn new ones. After the picnic, they can discuss, and write about their experience.

The teacher will have opportunities to teach the names of the objects seen during the trip. Students will speak, write, and read in English as well as learn many social behaviours.

My family relations. Students can read books on the duties of parents and children, the relations of siblings, and of other close relatives. There are interesting stories, novels, and plays about family life which a teacher of English can suggest to the students to read. These stories can serve as the basis for class discussions. The students might write compositions about "Why I like my father, or mother", or "Why I like my home". They may dramatize home situations and work out solutions to family problems in sociodramas.

Health. This unit can be very interesting and helpful to students. They can read books about the importance of health, cleanliness, health habits, sanitation, safety, diet, and the like. Students can prepare posters about the prevention of diseases or other problems related to health. They can discuss different health and sanitation topics in the class. There are plenty of subjects suitable for written composition and for oral reports in this unit. Biographies of doctors and nurses or books like Hunger Fighters and Microbe Hunters might be read.

Mass communication. Students can read books on the invention of the radio; they can discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the radio, and can take a trip to a broadcasting station. After becoming familiar with radio apparatus

and sets, those who are interested in science might read books on the mechanical structure of the radio. They can prepare plays and news reports for broadcasting to the class with the use of a make-believe microphone. Dramatization and speeches over the radio are excellent means of improving the English of students.

Students can read books on the history of printing; they can learn how to use newspapers and magazines in the library; they can write editorials, news stories, headlines, advertisements, and collect materials and photos for a newspaper of their own. They can visit a newspaper office and discuss and evaluate the trip. They can mimeograph a newspaper for the school which they have written in English.

The telephone, telegraph, and television are other topics for reading, speaking, and writing in English. Students can read about the history of the telephone and telegraph; they can visit the telephone and telegraph centres or departments; they can discuss the advantages and limitations of telephone and dramatize and evaluate telephone conversations.

International relations. The United Nations organization and its importance may be discussed in the class after the students have read about it. "War and peace" is a good topic for both discussion and writing composition. Also films about the war and about the United Nations and its agencies may be shown, and evaluation discussions may follow the showing of the films. Students may write letters to their

pen-pals in the foreign countries and discuss some current problems of the world. Stories in English about people in other nations should be read not only to improve the reading ability of students but also to deepen their understanding and empathy for other people.

Study of values or a philosophy of life. This is an excellent topic for reading, writing and speaking in English. Comparative studies of religions and religious values and of democracy and totalitarianism are interesting and useful subjects to students and might serve as the core of the units.

Seeking a job. Most graduates of the secondary school quit school after graduation. They need to look for jobs but they almost always have difficulties in finding jobs. This unit can prepare them for seeking and finding a job. Students may visit an industry, an office, a farm, and stores. They may write applications to these offices or stores applying for a job. They may dramatize an interview between an employer and an employee. They can discuss characteristics employers want in employees, the importance of appearance, speech, promptness, self discipline, and relationship with others in getting and keeping jobs. If they know how to type in English they can write a typed letter to a friend notifying him of their new job; if they do not know how, they can write a letter in long hand. This unit can provide many occasions for students to write, to read, and to speak in English as well as teach them how to secure a

job which is of vital importance to them after finishing the school.

Understanding ourselves and others. This is an excellent unit suitable for all grades in the school. Students read stories about great men or other literary work about human relations and discuss in class the qualities which make for "greatness", why human beings behave as they do, the effect of what people do upon others as well as upon themselves. There are excellent motion pictures on this topic to see and discuss. Sometimes, the students may dramatize a play in class. The content, activities, and reading materials in this unit should be graded according to their difficulty for the students and suitable ones should be used at appropriate times in the various grades.

Resource Units

The above units are only a few examples of units teachers can use to motivate students to improve their ability to communicate in English. There are numerous other units which a teacher of English could use. Many resource units, should be developed for teachers to consult so that teachers would have confidence and feel secure in using units and could select the ones most suitable for their particular class.

A resource unit is a compilation of content, activities, books, and audio-visual materials which teachers might find useful in planning a unit for a particular class. It is organized for convenient use by teachers and contains many

more suggestions for content and activities than any one teacher would use. The objectives for each unit should be stated in behavioural terms and suggestions should be made for ways of evaluating student progress in the objectives.

Resource units can be developed by one teacher, but are probably richer in suggestions when developed by committee of teachers who pool their ideas. When a school has a file of resource units for teachers to consult, they are better able to plan teaching units to meet students' needs.

Out-of-class Activities

The modern school extends its activities to the community and utilizes community resources. The teaching of English should no longer be confined to the walls of the classroom or the school. There are many possibilities for extending the activities of the classroom into the community and of utilizing the resources of the community, in order to make the teaching of English more effective. Field trips in the community provide experiences for written and oral work, increase vocabulary, and give students an opportunity to converse with persons in business or industry who speak English. Outside speakers can be invited to speak to the class and to explain to them the importance of knowing the English language in their field of work. Travellers to England or the United States of America or British and American citizens living in Iran can speak to the class about the customs and living conditions of their country.

The students who know English fairly well, enjoy belonging to English speaking clubs where games, debates, conversation, and dramatics are carried on in English. Students should be encouraged to attend English speaking motion pictures and to listen to radio broadcasts in English. The English teacher can tie these out-of-class activities in with classroom work by having the pupils discuss in the classroom what they hear and see out of class.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are important instructional tools for the teacher of English. Good textbooks are essential. At present, there are many books written in Persian, as well as translations from English into Persian dealing with teaching the English language. The interest of people in learning English has caused publishers to look for people who know English to write books for use in teaching Iranians. If this interest of the public is exploited in the right way, a revolution in the teaching of English and a general improvement in English usage can take place.

Textbook writers should base their books not only on what research says about modern methods of teaching English, but also upon the needs of Iranian people. One excellent field for investigation of Iranian needs is in the examination of the common errors which Iranians make in English. Experienced teachers can collect and organize the common errors made by Iranians, and make suggestions about how to correct

them. Undoubtedly every language has peculiarities of its own which can only be found by a study of the difficulties people have in learning another language. When these difficulties have been located, drill and practice can be provided. Special textbooks can be written for Iranian students which emphasize the common difficulties encountered by them. Discovery of common errors made by Iranians is therefore the first step in developing good textbooks for Iranian schools.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD ENGLISH TEACHERS

The teacher is the key person in providing a good environment for learning. The curriculum may be good on paper, but if the teacher is weak, little learning takes place. A good teacher, on the other hand, may motivate and stimulate students to work hard and learn much, even though the curriculum is unsatisfactory. What are the characteristics of a good teacher? Why do some succeed, while others fail? These questions entail a description of the characteristics of a good teacher. Some of these characteristics are common to all teachers regardless of their field and some are specific to the teachers of English.

General Characteristics

A good teacher is interested in dealing with children; is resourceful; is intelligent; has a broad knowledge about the modern philosophy and psychology of education; knows his

subject matter well; is imaginative and humorous; knows the native language of the students; is vital, energetic, and enthusiastic; uses necessary materials effectively; gives plenty of samples and models and consequent practice; lets as many students as possible participate in activities; criticizes and evaluates himself after each lesson he gives; keeps his class active; stimulates imagination and will-to-do in his students; lets his students know what his aims are for a certain lesson; never underestimates the learning power of his students; does not assign a certain number of pages to be read by all students; reviews the lessons from time to time; never passes from one lesson to another until that lesson is thoroughly understood by the students; goes through the next lesson at the beginning of the period when both he and his pupils are fresh; and does not employ one method, but uses many methods according to his needs.

Some Specific Characteristics

In addition to the above characteristics a good teacher of English: 1) Starts oral work from the first day, and before reading or writing about something, he usually tries to give some oral exercises. 2) Keeps his students aware of the values of learning English. Many students do not participate in activities eagerly, because they do not know why they are studying English. Students must realize the importance of language in order to work willingly and not for the sake of passing the examinations. 3) Realizes

the grades of difficulty for the students and moves up the ladder gradually, from easy to the difficult assignments. Gives so much valuable drill and practice to the students that they climb the ladder easily. 4) Gives a chance to all students to speak English. Concentration on bright students is undemocratic and harmful. The weak students need more practice, and they should get this chance. 5) Does not talk too much. Forces himself to talk less and less so that students get more opportunity for speaking or other activities. 6) Stresses the difficulties or peculiarities of the language, such as the sounds of w, th, and s, or the difficulties in construction of sentences, and so on. 7) Teaches correct study habits to the students. Iranian students often do not know how to study and they develop bad habits of study. A teacher of English is in a position to develop this habit in the students. 8) Does not interrupt the stories or plays in the text by grammar lessons. Stories lose their flavour and interest when separated by a grammar lesson. Grammar may be included in a text, it can be taught at any time when the teacher feels that students need it and can use it. 9) Does not give too many varieties of construction patterns at a time. Too many are confusing to students, especially beginners. 10) Teaches the new words and phrases by sounds. When the students can imitate the sound correctly, he shows them the written symbols. 11) Gives easy readings to the slow readers in the beginning and encourages them in their achievement. 12) When several students make the same

mistake, drills on the error so much that students learn the correct way. Uses the chalkboard for correction and exercises. 13) Does not correct students constantly. When students are interested in a subject and are eager to express themselves, to distract the attention with too many corrections, destroys their self-confidence. 14) Has his students participate in making interesting bulletin board displays. Newspapers, magazines, pictures, and articles are interesting and suitable materials for decoration of the classroom. 15) Makes a library for his classroom. Provides a supply of novels and short stories for his class and encourages his students to read them either at home or in the school. Students should take care of the books. 16) Invites some visitors from outside to talk in his class. People who have travelled abroad or have relatives there can give information about English and American culture to the students. 17) Organizes and directs societies, assemblies, and an English club for the students. Students learn many things in these clubs which they cannot learn in an ordinary classroom. 18) Uses games to clarify many concepts and to motivate students to read and speak English. Experiences of children can be a basis for many simple games. 19) Visits the classes of other English teachers, discusses the lesson and learns new ideas from the discussion. 20) Continues his studies of modern literature, and methods of teaching English. A teacher who is satisfied with what he knows, cannot be helpful to the students.

Stagnation should be avoided by further study. 21) Puts his emphasis on practice rather than on memorization of lists of words and rules. Concentration on lists of words and rules is a waste of time. Functional knowledge should be learned. 22) Teaches the idioms or proverbs, as well as words, in their context or natural setting and if he finds that these parallel idioms or proverbs in Persian, occasionally, gives their translation. 23) Meets the requirements of the Ministry of Education to translate by letting his pupils read a whole passage in Persian and translate the idea, into English. He never uses word by word translation. Oral translation is less harmful than written translation. 24) Recognizes that dictation for the purpose of practice in spelling is a waste of time and emphasizes other values in dictation such as penmanship, translation of oral language into written, and punctuation, if he considers dictation desirable or necessary. 25) Requires notebooks for vocabulary, dictation, written composition, and assignments, and checks notebooks for accuracy, handwriting, and neatness. 26) Does not let his pupils translate words into Persian in their notebooks or books. 27) Uses a variety of ways to evaluate the progress of the students in terms of the objectives decided upon. Examinations should be discriminative, objective, and comprehensive. 28) Has his students read both orally and silently. Oral reading as well as silent reading should be employed from time to time. 29) Corrects papers in the margin and not on the reverse side. 30) Avoids having

students correct each others' papers. Students seldom correct the paper of the other students, as well as their own, carefully.

SUMMARY

The limitations Iranian teachers mentioned in their criticisms of the present curriculum give some direction to curriculum people for the revision of the English syllabuses. Other suggestions for revision can be inferred from the errors Iranians make in their written work, and from the data gathered from the questionnaires. Although the purpose of the thesis was not to propose a new curriculum, it seemed appropriate to make some proposals on the basis of the evidence gathered about: 1) the kind of objectives and behaviours English instruction in Iran should attempt to achieve; 2) the direction curriculum revision should take; 3) the need for textbook revision, and the characteristics good teacher of English should have to achieve the objectives.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The data obtained from Iranian students and teachers of English show that there are many shortcomings in the teaching of English in Iran. These shortcomings appear particularly serious when judged in the light of modern methods of teaching English. From a study of the data, it is possible to draw some conclusions about English instruction in Iranian schools and to propose recommendation for improving it.

CONCLUSIONS

A comparison between methods and activities used in Iran and modern methods as suggested by authorities in the field of English instruction shows that the teaching of English is very unsatisfactory. The present curriculum, the methods of teaching, the inadequately trained teachers, the overcrowded classes, and the lack of necessary materials explain why the graduates of Iranian secondary schools do not speak and write English well.

A general survey of the data in the study suggests that there are strong points about English instruction in Iran. However, these few "above par" aspects are not strong enough to outweigh the weak points.

Strong Points

The good things about the teaching of English in Iran are more in terms of intent rather than actual practice. This is important, however, because without a desire to improve and without support from the Ministry of Education little could be accomplished.

1. The objective of English instruction is "the ability to speak the English language correctly", according to the curriculum published by the Ministry of Education in 1956. This objective is good and desirable, but there is little relationship between it and present school practices. The fact that it is the official goal of English instruction and that 100 per cent of the teachers in this study believe that the emphasis should be placed on pronunciation and oral communication rather than on translation and dictation, as is true at present, is a promising sign for the future of English instruction in Iran.

2. Vocabulary building is considered so important by teachers that seventy-seven per cent of them spend twenty-five to forty minutes per week on vocabulary building, and fifty-seven per cent of the students said their teachers emphasized this skill. This practice is praiseworthy because

words are necessary for communication and expression. However, more emphasis needs to be given to the words needed in every day conversation and less emphasis to literary words, if students are to be able to communicate their ideas fluently.

3. The Iranian students ranked instruction in grammar as the method most emphasized in the teaching of English. It is commendable that teachers insist on grammatically correct English, but it is doubtful if the learning of rules per se will result in correct usage. An Iranian may know almost all the grammatical rules, but not be able to apply them in his speech and written work. It would be better if Iranian teachers of English spent less time on teaching grammar rules and more time on the application of the rules in oral and written composition.

4. The 1956 curriculum recommends the use of direct methods in the junior secondary schools. This, too, is praiseworthy, but they must be put into practice to affect English instruction. The data show that modern methods are not used in spite of the recommendation of the Ministry. This may be due to the fact that enough time has not elapsed for teachers to learn how to use direct methods and for practices to change. However, the 1956 curriculum is contradictory in itself. Although the direct method is recommended, translation from Persian into English and vice versa, dictation, grammar, and oral reading are prescribed from the first grade of the secondary school.

5. The Iranian teachers usually require notebooks. This practice is also commendable provided that it is done purposefully for the improvement of the students' English. The teachers in the study did not reveal clearly what their purposes are in requiring notebooks, but it is assumed that notebooks served a worthy purpose.

6. All the Iranian teachers participating in this study report that they are conscientious about improving their own English by studying books, listening to English programs on the radio, and finding opportunities to talk with English speaking people. This is praiseworthy and should result in increasing the fluency with which English teachers speak English, even though it has little effect upon their ability to teach it.

7. Almost all the Iranian students in the study stated that they are interested in learning English, that they want practice in oral composition and conversation, and that they have a strong personal need to know English. These interests are of great value to a teacher of English. Motivation of students through the use of their interests can bring conspicuous results.

8. One of the new books recommended by the Ministry of Education, Direct Method by Gatenby, is written according to the new methods of teaching a foreign language. The adoption of this book is an important step toward the improvement of English instruction. It is hoped that teachers of English will use this book as a guide in changing from traditional to modern methods.

Weak Points

The weak points in the teaching of English as revealed by the data are so many that they far outweigh the strong points. Consequently, English instruction in Iran has to be considered unsatisfactory for the following reasons.

1. The goals of English instruction are not stated clearly or comprehensively. The goal, "to speak correctly", as stated in the program of 1956 is too narrow. There is nothing about the three other important goals of learning English: listening, writing, and reading. Neither is there any evidence that teachers have defined the specific behaviours involved in listening, speaking, reading, and writing so that they and the students know the outcomes they seek, the reason for certain learning experiences, or how successful these experiences are in changing the behaviour of the learner.

2. The methods used by Iranian teachers of English are inappropriate for achieving the goals of English instruction. About half of the teachers spend three-fourths of the time devoted to English on translation, dictation, and oral reading. Consequently some useful methods, such as silent reading, oral and written composition, conversation, and dramatization are neglected.

3. The language of instruction used in English classes is Persian. All the Iranian teachers in this study admitted that they spend from one to three of the four hours allotted to English in speaking Persian. This is the weakest point in

teaching English. English cannot be taught through Persian.

4. The method of teaching reading is also unsatisfactory. Over seventy-five per cent of the students in this study stated that teachers ask the students to read a passage aloud one after another. This method wastes time as too few students have a chance to read aloud and most students become passive and disinterested listeners. Silent reading is used by only six per cent of the teachers with any degree of frequency and reading interests and comprehension are not developed. Sixty per cent of the schools lack libraries, and in approximately three-fourths of the schools there are no library books in English. Moreover, over eighty per cent of the students in this study state that they do not use the English books in the two important foreign libraries in Iran. Supplementary readings are not required by over ninety per cent of the teachers, and over ninety per cent of the students replied that reading comprehension is not tested by teachers.

5. Correct written English although required by the curriculum is neglected by teachers of English in Iran. About one-third of teachers stated that they do not use written composition at all, and those who assign subjects for written composition use a wrong method in correcting the papers. Teacher can not correct a paper well by merely listening while the student reads it aloud. Compositions must be read if faulty punctuation and spelling are to be noted. Moreover, more than half of the students state that their teachers correct written compositions during the class period and

about seventy per cent complained that the papers were not carefully corrected. Almost ninety per cent of the students reported that their teachers did not emphasize spelling.

6. Iranian teachers are especially careless about giving students practice in correct pronunciation. Over sixty per cent of the students said that their teachers do not often emphasize the correct pronunciation of difficult sounds such as w and th. Other skills in speech, such as enunciation, intonation, and conversation are also ranked by Iranian students as the skills least stressed by the teachers.

7. Teachers of English are inadequately trained and overburdened. Some speak English but have had no education in how to teach; some are graduates of high school with no college education; and some are teachers of other subjects with little knowledge of English. Furthermore, since the salary of teachers is low, over ninety per cent of the teachers either teach extra hours or have other jobs to supplement their low salaries.

8. The English taught in the schools is not related to the everyday life of the students so that they learn to speak, understand, and carry on a conversation in English. Ninety per cent of the students answered that the English taught in the school is of little, if any, value to them. The ability to understand spoken English is given so little attention that ninety per cent of the students can not understand the motion picture dialogue of English films. Over

ninety per cent of the students said that their teachers do not encourage them to listen to English program on the radio. Because listening plays such an important part in learning a language, this shortcoming is very grave.

9. Teaching materials for English instruction are very inadequate. Over ninety-five per cent of students said that audio-visual materials, such as pictures, films, and recording, are not frequently used in the schools. Some textbooks used in the schools are not suitable for Iranian students. They are either written for adults or for foreigners in general and do not emphasize the particular problems of Iranians. There is often a shortage of textbooks published in England or the United States, and textbooks written in Iran are full of errors.

10. Most of the schools have more than fifty students in a classroom, according to the data. Accordingly, classes are too large for good teaching or for effective learning. Large classes result in lack of space for different types of activities in the classroom, less opportunity for student participation, and less attention by the teacher to individual differences.

11. The emphasis placed on end examinations and on requirements of colleges and state examinations encourages the instruction of English in the traditional method. In these examinations students are tested on dictation, translation, oral reading and written composition.

12. Teachers are not supervised, according to the responses of ninety-nine per cent of the students in this

study. This is a real weakness when many of the teachers are not proficient in the use of English language and have had little or no education in how to teach it. This lack of supervision not only makes teachers feel irresponsible and careless, but also results in no in-service education for those inadequately educated.

13. The teacher training colleges have many shortcomings in different phases of educating teachers. The content of the curriculum, the method of instruction, the selection of students, and the evaluation procedures need revision. The teaching staff are not competent in English, classes are too large, and equipment and materials are inadequate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The numerous shortcomings in the teaching of English in Iran require many changes in the present situations, particularly in the curriculum, in the administration of the program, and in teacher training. Recommendations for improving the teaching of English in Iran, therefore, are restricted to these three aspects of the program.

Curriculum

The present curriculum is inadequate as to objectives and materials and is inappropriate in methods and scope. The objective, the sequence and scope of experiences, the methods, and the organization of the present program all need to be revised.

Objectives. The objective of English instruction should be fourfold: understanding spoken English, speaking correctly, comprehending written English, and writing correctly. In addition, teachers of English should be concerned that students cooperate, assume responsibility, appreciate English and American literature, think critically, consider the rights of others, and use good study habits. All methods and activities in the curriculum should contribute to the achievement of these goals. Each of them should be defined in terms of specific behaviours which become the subsidiary or particular aims which a teacher of English uses in planning learning experiences. Each lesson should be directed toward the achievement of one or more of these immediate aims. It is, therefore, recommended that the Ministry of Education broaden the goals of English instruction and define them in terms of the specific behaviours involved so that both students and teachers know the goals toward which they are working.

Revision of curriculum. A new curriculum based on the philosophy of progressivism, on modern principles of learning, and on modern methods of English instruction should be made in order to achieve the goals of teaching English in Iran. The English language should be treated as a whole, i.e., it should not be broken into segmentary parts of translation, dictation, and the like. Unit teaching which would focus reading, writing, speaking, and listening upon topics of interest to the students should be encouraged by training

teachers in the art of unit teaching and by providing resource units for them to use. The new curriculum should be life-centered; i.e., the students' needs and interests should be taken into account and there should be a connection between what they learn in class and the actual use of the English language.

English in the elementary school. Psychologically, it is sounder to teach foreign languages in early childhood than to postpone it until children are older. The age of twelve or thirteen is physiologically too late to develop some sounds which do not exist in the native language. It is, therefore, recommended that the teaching of English start in the fourth grade of the elementary school. Since the supply of teachers of English is not enough for all elementary schools and most elementary teachers can not speak English, it is recommended that, at present, English be taught only in elementary schools in the large cities. Pupils who come from the villages to attend the secondary school will need to take special courses in English in the secondary school.

Methods. The modern methods of English instruction should replace the present unsatisfactory methods. Stress should be put on correct speech and writing. The time spent on translation, dictation and oral reading should be spent on more effective methods, such as conversation, oral composition, discussion, silent reading, dramatization, explored

composition, and handwriting. Grammar should be taught inductively after language patterns have been developed, rather than by learning rules per se.

Medium of instruction. The medium of instruction in English classes should be English. Moreover, since some students wish to go abroad to continue their studies and because English is fast becoming the international language of science, trade, and transportation, it is recommended that some schools experiment with the use of English as the medium of instruction in subjects other than English for those who are interested and want to use English.

Decentralized curriculum. The present centralized system of education in Iran has had some serious effects on education in general and on English instruction in particular. Since education is financed from the central budget, local interests are disregarded. People are not interested in educational affairs and do not take part in them directly because they think the government is responsible. Teachers are required to teach according to the formal program of the Ministry of Education and to prepare students for state-wide examinations. If efficient teaching is desired, the Ministry of Education should give more freedom and responsibility to local departments of Education and to teachers to adjust their instruction to local needs. The form of examination should be changed and should evaluate how well students speak, read, and write English.

Administration and Organization

The administration of the school can contribute to the improvement of English instruction in the school. Some limitations on the effectiveness of English instruction, such as size of the class, lack of audio-visual materials, lack of equipment and library in the school, and absence of supervision are primarily administrative problems and need administrative action to correct.

Size of the class. The classrooms should be large enough to give enough space for a variety of activities. The number of students in a class should not be more than thirty. Rather than place large numbers of students in a class with the result that each student has little opportunity to participate actively, it is recommended that the school day be extended, and that classes be staggered so that some students come early in the morning and others stay until late in the day. This practice is more beneficial to the students than the present situation which forces the teacher to behave authoritatively in order to keep discipline in the classroom.

Equipment and materials. The lack of libraries and reading materials and of audio-visual materials and equipment in the schools naturally retards efficient teaching. It is, therefore, recommended that all schools have libraries containing good English books, projectors, tape recorders, linguaphones, gramophones, films and slides showing American and British cultures, useful pictures and realia, good chalkboards, mimeograph machines, and bulletin boards.

In-service education. Since there are many inexperienced or inadequately trained teachers of English in Iran, it is recommended that in-service education be provided for teachers during the summers and during the school year. The present function of "inspection" in the schools, should change to that of "supervision". Supervisors could help teachers during the school year to use modern methods and secure necessary materials, and could arrange for meeting of English teachers to discuss instructional problems. It would help, too, if English departments were organized in each school and if the chairman felt responsible for helping new teachers, as well as more experienced teachers, to use modern methods.

Proposals for Teacher Training College

The adequate preparation of teachers is essential for the improvement of the present situation. The teacher training colleges should assume responsibility for improving the teaching of English in Iran. The following recommendations are therefore made:

Selection. The entrance examination to the college should be more difficult and discriminating than it is now. A comprehensive and objective test on functional grammar, and an oral and written composition in English should replace the current entrance examinations.

Program. The present program for teachers of English in teacher training colleges in Iran should be revised. More courses should be offered in English conversation and in oral and written composition, and about American or British cultures

and peoples. In the professional program, students should have more courses in educational psychology and philosophy and methods of teaching and more opportunity to observe classes in secondary school and to do student teaching under supervision than they have under the present program.

The medium of instruction in classes for teachers of English should be English. Therefore, it is recommended that American or British professors be invited to teach in these colleges and that the Iranian teachers speak, read, and write English fluently.

Instructors. Many teachers in these colleges spend most of their time on either political activities or in individual enterprises. This naturally affects the teaching of English. It is therefore recommended that these teachers be required to spend their times only on work related to their teaching; that is study, preparation for teaching, research, and writing, rather than in working for the government or business firms. Of course, this necessitates better salaries for the teachers.

An important problem regarding the teachers is their attitude toward students. The relation between teacher and student should be democratic. The present practice which separates teachers from students and discourages rapport between them should be given up. Teachers should serve as guides to the students.

Overcrowded classes. In the classes of teacher training colleges, the number of students should not exceed fifty. In

a class with two or three hundred students, it is impossible to teach effectively. In order to establish rapport between teacher and student and better educational results, the number of students in a class should be limited.

Materials. The teacher training colleges should be furnished with adequate materials in order to make teaching more effective and meaningful. The following changes should be made: 1) A laboratory of language should be established for the improvement of pronunciation and the oral speech of students. Tape recorders, linguaphone, and recordings should be provided for this laboratory. 2) A well-equipped library properly administered should be provided for the colleges. 3) Audio-visual materials should be available in the college and students should be taught how to use them. Cooperation with the United States Information Service and the British Council could make good films and material available at the Audio-visual Center of the college.

Examinations. The present practice of examining just once at the end of the year should be replaced by the more objective examinations during the year and more comprehensive evaluation. The emphasis on grades should also be replaced by motivation which leads to intrinsic interest in the students to study more willingly and purposefully.

Allowances. At present, the teacher training colleges in Iran are paying about sixty Lebanese Pounds per month to all students as allowances. The data showed that many students entered teachers' colleges for the sake of this allowance.

In this case, the quantity of teachers is considered more important than their quality. It is recommended that the policy of granting allowances to all prospective teachers regardless of their need be reexamined in order that the quality of teachers be improved. For example, it might be more profitable to spend an equal amount to send able seniors to England for a few months to attend special seminars.

Out-of-class activities. The teacher training colleges should provide many out-of-class activities for students. English clubs and assemblies can play important roles in increasing the standard of English in the college. Community resources should be used for the attainment of the goals of the college. Americans and Britishers who are in Iran, provide excellent opportunities for students to speak in English and to acquire information on different aspects of their cultures and civilization. Weekly or monthly lectures by these people would be very helpful to students.

Demonstration school. A demonstration school should be established for experimenting with the applicability of modern methods of English instruction. The results of this experimentation would probably encourage the other schools to use modern methods, too. The demonstration school could be used for observation by pre-service and in-service-teachers.

Future Research Studies

This thesis has mainly discussed two aspects of the teaching of English in Iran: methods and teachers. Certainly,

this problem is subject to more investigation. There are still many aspects of the teaching of English in Iran which should be studied carefully. Two fields of research are recommended here: 1) A thorough study of common errors made by Iranians is necessary to discover the shortcomings of the curriculum. Such a study is necessary before textbooks can be written for Iranians on the basis of the particular difficulties of Iranians in learning English language and before curriculum revision can be completed. 2) Whenever new methods are adopted it is necessary to find out how successful they are. Therefore, it is necessary that the Ministry of Education plan ways of collecting evidence on the effectiveness of the teaching of English according to modern methods, if and when these methods are put into use in Iranian schools.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRES

APPENDIX A

TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN IRAN

A Questionnaire for
Iranian Students

1. Name _____
2. Sex: Male _____ Female _____
3. Date of Birth _____
4. Where did you study English and for how long?
 1. Name of Place _____ Length of time _____
 2. Name of place _____ Length of time _____
 3. Name of place _____ Length of time _____
5. What was the name and kind of school you attended for the longest period?

Name of school _____ Public school _____
Private school _____
Mission school _____
6. What was your approximate average grade in English while you were in Iran? _____
7. How did you feel about the quality of your English while you were in Iran?
 1. Very good _____
 2. Good _____
 3. Fair _____
 4. Poor _____

NOTE: If you are now in Iran, omit questions 8 and 9.

8. What has been your approximate average English grade in A.U.B.? _____.

9. How do you feel about the quality of your English now that you are in AUB?

- 1. Very good _____
- 2. Good _____
- 3. Fair _____
- 4. Poor _____

10. Please think carefully about the English teacher who taught you English for the longest period, then answer the following questions about him or her (please check only one).

A. Did this teacher speak English

- 1. fluently? _____
- 2. well, but not fluently? _____
- 3. rather poorly? _____
- 4. very poorly? _____

B. Was this teacher

- 1. better than the teachers of other subjects? _____
- 2. almost the same as the teachers of other subjects? _____
- 3. not as good as the teachers of other subjects? _____

C. Did this teacher make efficient use of the class period

- 1. very often? _____
- 2. often? _____
- 3. sometimes? _____
- 4. not often? _____
- 5. never? _____

D. Did this teacher have a 'Licence' in English?

- Yes _____
- No _____
- I do not know _____

E. Did this teacher have an outside job?

- Yes _____
- No _____
- I do not know _____

11. Please answer the following questions about the methods used by this teacher of English:

A. Did this teacher dictate a previously announced part of the book and ask you to write what was dictated?

1. very often _____
2. often _____
3. sometimes _____
4. not often _____
5. never _____

B. Did this teacher dictate from sources other than textbook?

1. very often _____
2. often _____
3. sometimes _____
4. not often _____
5. never _____

C. Did this teacher have you translate sentences from Persian to English?

1. very often _____
2. often _____
3. sometimes _____
4. not often _____
5. never _____

D. Did this teacher have you translate sentences from English to Persian?

1. very often _____
2. often _____
3. sometimes _____
4. not often _____
5. never _____

E. Did this teacher correct translations?

1. very carefully _____
2. carefully _____
3. somewhat carelessly _____
4. carelessly _____

F. Did this teacher assign subjects for written composition and then ask you to read your composition aloud?

1. very often _____
2. often _____
3. sometimes _____
4. not often _____
5. never _____

G. Did this teacher correct your compositions?

1. very carefully _____
2. carefully _____
3. somewhat carelessly _____
4. carelessly _____

- H. When did this teacher correct compositions?
1. always outside the class period _____
 2. mostly outside the class period _____
 3. mostly during the class period _____
 4. always during the class period _____
- I. Did this teacher ask you to prepare a classroom talk in English?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- J. Did this teacher use Persian in the class?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- K. Did this teacher give you practice in speaking English?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- L. Did this teacher read a passage aloud to the class and then ask the students to read it aloud one after another?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- M. Did this teacher give you practice in silent reading?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- N. Did this teacher check up on supplementary reading?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____

- O. Did this teacher explain the meaning of English words in English?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- P. Did this teacher explain the meaning of English words in Persian?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- Q. Did this teacher give you practice in grammar?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- R. Did this teacher emphasize difficulties in English pronunciation such as the sounds of w, th, ing, etc?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- S. Did this teacher insist that you improve your English pronunciation?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- T. Did this teacher emphasize the improvement of spelling?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- U. Did this teacher concern himself with enlarging your vocabulary?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____

- V. Did this teacher test your comprehension of English sentences?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- W. Did this teacher use play-acting in the class to improve your English?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- X. Did this teacher bring helpful pictures to the class?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- Y. Did this teacher encourage you to listen to the English program on the radio?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
- Z. Which three of the following did this teacher stress most? (Please check only three)
1. Grammar _____
 2. Translation _____
 3. Pronunciation _____
 4. Spelling _____
 5. Written composition _____
 6. Oral composition _____
 7. Enunciation _____
 8. Comprehension _____
 9. Intonation _____
 10. Conversation _____
 11. Reading aloud _____
 12. Reading silently _____
 13. Vocabulary _____
 14. Dramatization _____
 15. Listening _____

ZZ. Which three of the following did this teacher stress least? (Please check only three)

1. Grammar _____
2. Translation _____
3. Pronunciation _____
4. Spelling _____
5. Written composition _____
6. Oral composition _____
7. Enunciation _____
8. Comprehension _____
9. Intonation _____
10. Conversation _____
11. Reading aloud _____
12. Reading silently _____
13. Vocabulary _____
14. Dramatization _____
15. Listening _____

12. To what extent was the English taught you in the classroom useful to you outside the classroom?

1. very useful _____
2. useful _____
3. of little use _____
4. of no use _____

13. What books were used in your high school English period?

1. Oxford Readers _____
2. New Method Readers _____
3. Essential English _____
4. Other books (Please give titles) _____

14. Did you study a book completely during a school year?

1. very often _____
2. often _____
3. sometimes _____
4. not often _____
5. never _____

15. Were you encouraged to read English books, magazines and newspapers in addition to your regular books?

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------|----------|
| 1. Magazines | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| 2. Newspapers | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| 3. Books | Yes _____ | No _____ |

16. Did you read English books other than text books outside of class?

1. very often _____
2. often _____
3. sometimes _____
4. not often _____
5. never _____

17. Were you taught how to use dictionaries? Yes _____ No _____
18. Was there a library in the school you attended for the longest period? Yes _____ No _____
19. Did this library contain English books? Yes _____ No _____
20. Did you use the books of the USIS library of British Council?
1. very often _____
 2. often _____
 3. sometimes _____
 4. not often _____
 5. never _____
21. How many hours per week did you have English classes in the first three years of high school? _____
the second three years of high school? _____
22. In the first three years of high school, how many hours per week did you have
- Translation? _____
 - Dictation? _____
 - Reading? _____
 - Composition? _____
 - Conversation? _____
 - Grammar? _____
23. In the second three years of high school, how many hours per week did you have
- Translation? _____
 - Dictation? _____
 - Reading? _____
 - Composition? _____
 - Conversation? _____
 - Grammar? _____
24. Approximately how many students were there in your English classes usually? _____
25. Did you study English outside the school (in night classes, privately, etc.)?
- Yes _____
No _____
26. Were English films shown in your school for the improvement of your English?
- Yes _____
No _____

27. Were recordings used in your school for the improvement of your pronunciation, enunciation, and intonation?
Yes _____
No _____
28. Could you understand the English dialogue in the motion pictures when you were in Iran?
1. very well _____
2. well _____
3. fairly well _____
4. not well _____
5. not at all _____
29. Were there supervisors to supervise the teaching of English in your school?
Yes _____
No _____
30. Were you very much interested in learning English?
Yes _____
No _____

Please write here the reason for your answer:

31. Please list the things you liked best about the teaching of English in your school in Iran.

32. Please list the things you liked least about the teaching of English in your school in Iran.

10. How do you enjoy your job as a teacher?

a. very much _____

b. much _____

c. a little _____

d. not at all _____

11. Do you have another job at the same time you are teaching
in the secondary school? Yes _____ No _____

Please state your teaching load per week _____

12. Will you teach after going back to Iran? Yes _____ No _____
Why?

13. After each of the activities in the following list, please
state the approximate number of minutes per week you devote
to it; (If an activity is mentioned which you do not use,
simply place a zero in the space).

a. Dictating a previously announced part of the book
and asking your students to write what was dictated.
_____ minutes per week.

b. Dictating from sources other than textbook. _____
minutes per week.

c. Asking your students to translate from Persian to
English. _____ minutes per week.

d. Asking your students to translate from English to
Persian. _____ minutes per week.

e. Having students read aloud the written composition
which you assigned. _____ minutes per week.

f. Correcting compositions during the class period
_____ minutes per week.

- g. Using Persian in the class. _____ minutes per week
- h. Giving practice in speaking English to your students. _____ minutes per week
- i. Reading a passage aloud to the class and then asking your students to read it aloud one after another. _____ minutes per week
- j. Giving practice in grammar. _____ minutes per week
- k. Giving practice in silent reading to your students. _____ minutes per week
- l. Emphasizing difficulties in English pronunciation such as the sounds w, th, etc. _____ minutes per week
- m. Improving the vocabulary of your students, _____ minutes per week
- n. Emphasizing the improvement of spelling. _____ minutes per week
- o. Enlarging the vocabulary of your students. _____ minutes per week.
- p. Testing the comprehension of your students. _____ minutes per week
- q. Using play-acting in the class. _____ minutes per week

14. What methods do you use in dictation other than those mentioned in question No. 14, a. and b.?

15. What methods do you use in translation other than those mentioned in question No. 14, c. and d.?
16. What methods do you use in composition other than those mentioned in question No. 14, e. and f.?
17. What methods do you use in reading other than those mentioned in question No. 14, i. and k.?
18. Approximately how many sentences do you assign to be translated per week? _____ sentences per week.
19. Approximately how many times per year
- a. Does each student give classroom talks in English _____ times per year
 - b. Do you assign supplementary readings? _____ times per year
 - c. Do you check up on the supplementary readings? _____ times per year
 - d. Do you use pictures in class to clarify concepts? _____ times per year
 - e. Do you check the notebooks of the students? _____ times per year
 - f. Do you give objective examinations to the students? _____ times per year

20. How often do you explain the meaning of English words in English?
- a. very often _____
 - b. often _____
 - c. sometimes _____
 - d. not often _____
 - e. never _____
21. How often do you explain the meaning of English words in Persian?
- a. very often _____
 - b. often _____
 - c. sometimes _____
 - d. not often _____
 - e. never _____
22. In addition to Reading, Dictation, Translation, and Composition, what other methods do you employ?
23. What methods do you emphasize most? (e.g. reading, grammar, etc.)
24. What methods do you emphasize least? (e.g. reading, grammar, etc.)
25. In your opinion how competent are Iranians generally with the English language?

- a. highly skilled _____
- b. well-skilled _____
- c. fairly skilled _____
- d. just able to get by _____
- e. unskilled _____

26. How do you explain their competence or lack of competence?

27. Do you require your students to keep a notebook?

- a. always _____
- b. sometimes _____
- c. never _____

28. If you require a notebook, what is your purpose?

29. Do you check notebooks for

- a. neatness? _____
- b. accuracy? _____
- c. penmanship? _____
- d. completeness of assignment? _____
- e. other things?

30. Are the present English textbooks suitable for Iranians?

Why?

31. Do you try to improve your English now that you are teaching?

How?

32. If you are a graduate from Tehran Teachers' College, what are your criticisms of the training of teachers of English which is given there?
33. What are your suggestions for its improvement?
34. If you are a graduate of an Iranian Teacher Training College, do you think you were able to apply what you learned in your college, in the high schools? Why?
35. If you find that a student is not interested in learning English, how do you treat him?
36. How often do you use corporal punishment in the school?
- a. very often _____
 - b. often _____
 - c. sometimes _____
 - d. not often _____
 - e. never _____

37. What are the limitations of the secondary English syllabuses?
38. Do you think that the emphasis on translation and dictation should be replaced by an emphasis on pronunciation, conversation, and oral work? Why?
39. Should English instruction be started in the elementary school? If yes, in what grade do you propose to begin it?
40. Do you think the method of evaluating students which is used in English classes in Iran, is satisfactory? Why?
41. What proposals would you make for the improvement of evaluation methods?
42. What are your suggestions for improving English language usage by Iranians?

43. If you are now at AUB, do you think you will be able to apply what you have learned when you return to Iran to teach? If no, why?

44. On the whole, how good is the teaching of English in Iran, in your opinion? Why?

APPENDIX B

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

APPENDIX B

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

1. In the countries where the medium of instruction is the vernacular and students are expected to read English well rather than speak well, what should be the main aim of teaching English? Why? Can Direct Methods serve that purpose well?
2. Gurrey believes that one of the characteristics of a good teacher of English is possession of a sense of humour. If a teacher of English knows the subject matter well, his methods are good and is familiar with theories of learning but lacks the sense of humour Gurrey believes important, does he fail in his teaching? In addition to these characteristics, what else makes a teacher of English "an ideal" teacher?
3. If a student is very interested in learning a foreign language well enough to speak and write it well but his teachers are not good and there are not necessary means available to him, how can he remove or diminish this difficulty?

4. Modern linguists believe that first or even the second year of teaching a foreign language should be devoted to practice in listening and speaking correctly. If you believe in this, do you think that reading and writing should entirely be excluded from the curriculum in first or second year?
5. In some countries such as Iran, translation of scientific or literary books is considered quite important in order to import the civilization of the West into the country. If students in such countries are trained in translating well, some people believe, they can serve their countrymen better. What is your opinion about this problem? If we select the direct method approach, it is probable that we may neglect translation. So, how can we compromise these two ideas: "translation" and "anti-translation" methods?
6. Many teachers believe that if administration of the school helps them in their teaching, they will be able to work and teach better. In what respects can the administration of the school be helpful to a teacher of English?
7. Management of the crowded classes seems to be difficult. If there are over sixty students in a classroom, how can a teacher interest an uninterested child?
8. In the upper classes of secondary schools in Iran, there is usually a wide gap among the students' proficiency in English. Motivation of all students in such classes seems to be very difficult. Will you suggest a few ways for filling this gap among students?

9. Do you think that dictation is necessary? If yes, what grade do you suggest to start dictating? And do you prefer dictating from sources other than textbook or dictating from a previously announced part of the textbook?
10. French believes that the vernacular is not a cause of errors in English. How far do you agree with him? Why?
11. In the present English syllabus in Iran, there is no provision for evaluating the speech competence of students. What suggestions would you make for solving this problem?
12. Will you please state your own general impression of the English proficiency of Iranian students with whom you have had contacts as a teacher?
13. In Iran, the English Department of Teacher Training College gives two sorts of examination to students upon their entrance to the college:
 - a. A written composition in English.
 - b. A written composition in Persian.

Do you think that these requirements are adequate for showing the qualifications of a prospective teacher of English? What requirements would you require?

14. At present, few teachers of English, in Iran, can pronounce correctly sounds such as w, th, s, i. How can a teacher whose own pronunciation is wrong teach these sounds correctly? Is there any way of eliminating this difficulty?
15. Do you think that English instruction should be started in elementary school? What grade level? Why? How long should a foreign language be taught formally in the school?

16. Is it necessary or desirable to teach phonetics? If yes, at what grade level should phonetics be started? How can teachers who have never studied phonetics make up this deficiency?

APPENDIX C

LETTERS FOR INFORMATION

APPENDIX C

March 4, 1958

D.A.A. Traversi, Esq.,
The British Council Representative,
701, Avenue Ferdowsi,
P.O. Box No. 1589.
Tehran, Iran.

Dear Sir,

I am an Iranian student at the American University of Beirut, As a part of my work for the Masters Degree in Education, I am writing a thesis on the "Teaching of English in Iran.". Since the British Council has played a great role in the improvement of the teaching of English in Iran, I wish to get some information about this institution, the English classes for teachers and students, statistics about the measures you have taken so far, what you are planning to do in the future for the improvement of teaching of English in Iran, the general information about the teaching of English, and your suggestions for the improvement of the teaching of English. Also, I have worked out two separate questionnaires for Iranian teachers of English and students. If I send these questionnaires to you, could you give them to your students to be filled out and returned to me. If so, I will send the number you need as soon as I have your reply.

2/...

March 4, 1958

Your information about the work and success of the British Council in this field and the return of the completed questionnaires will contribute greatly to my thesis. I hope this thesis can point out the present shortcomings in the teaching of English in Iranian schools and that the suggestions made in the thesis will result in an improvement in the teaching of English in Iran. Because I hope to complete my thesis in June, I would appreciate a reply at your earliest convenience. Also, your contribution to the thesis will be appreciated very much.

Sincerely Yours,

A. Fattahipour Fard

A.F. Fard,
A.U.B.
P.O. Box No. 297,
Beirut, Lebanon

NOTE: A similar letter was sent to the Iran-America Society, Tehran.

March 5, 1958

Dr. Alaeddin Pazargadi
Teacher Training College,
Tehran University,
Tehran, Iran.

Dear Dr. Pazargadi,

As I wrote you before, I am expected to complete my M.A. work in June, 1958. The subject of my thesis is, "The Teaching of English in Iran". I chose this topic because I hope I can contribute to the improvement of English instruction in Iran. As you are an authority in this field, I will appreciate it very much if you will send me some information about the selection and preparation of teachers in the Teacher Training College in Tehran, your opinion about the use of the direct method in the Iranian schools, and suggestions for the improvement of the teaching of English in Iran. Since I have to finish my work in a near future, I will appreciate it very much if you send this information as soon as possible.

Yours very truly,

A. Fattahipour Fard

A.F. Fard,
A.U.B.
P.O. Box No. 297
Beirut, Lebanon

March 2, 1958

Mr. Javad Fazel
Rahnama School,
Amirieh Avenue,
Tehran, Iran.

Dear Mr. Fazel,

As you know, my work is going to be finished by next June. Now is the time when I must get help from you. To write my thesis, on "The Teaching of English in Iran", I badly need your help in providing me with some samples of English examination questions and the use of the direct method in Iranian schools. Moreover, I am going to send you some questionnaires to be distributed among your students and I wish you would send them back to me before May 1958. I will appreciate it very much if, as soon as possible, you will send me the information and let me know the possibility of distributing the papers.

Yours very truly,

A. Fattahipour Fard

A.F. Fard,
A.U.B.
P.O. Box No. 297,
Beirut, Lebanon

APPENDIX D

EXCERPTS FROM CURRICULUM OF 1950 AND 1956

APPENDIX D

EXCERPTS FROM CURRICULUM 1950

(Translated from Persian)

The purpose of teaching a foreign language is both the ability to speak and to make analysis and syntax. To achieve this aim, more attention should be given to the correct pronunciation of words, frequently used words, and simple sentences during the first three years. In the fourth and fifth years of the secondary school, the reading of selected materials and grammar should be paid attention to....

Method of teaching. Students should first learn how to pronounce correctly and then the teacher should write the words on the blackboard and make students write correctly.... Dictation and grammar should be the subjects of attention during the first three years.... Translation from Persian into English and vice versa is of great importance during the senior secondary school.... Memorization of some proper literal selections is very important and students should be required to memorize some literary pieces every year in terms of their ability in the foreign language....

EXCERPTS FROM CURRICULUM 1956

JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

The aim of teaching a foreign language is the ability to speak the foreign language. The correct pronunciation of the frequently used words and the construction of simple sentences should be given much attention....

Method of teaching. Experience has shown the instruction of foreign language is more effective by the direct method. Teachers are recommended to teach by this method....

In the first year, sounds should be taught and students should learn how to read simple words and phrases.... Students are supposed to learn from 800 to 1000 words (nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and verbs) by direct demonstration of objects.... Dictation from previously-announced parts is required in this year.

.... Translation from Persian into English and vice versa is recommended in order to discipline the mind of students....

In the second year correct pronunciation of sounds and revision of all the materials learned during the first year is of primary importance.... A study of grammar (pronouns, verb tenses, active and passive voice) is necessary.... More complex written exercises should be given to students in this year.... Dictation from appropriate pieces and the words students have already learned is required. Conversation on the materials learned in this year is desirable....

In the third year, correct pronunciation, making students familiar with idioms for which there is no literal translation, and familiarizing the students with the foreign culture and civilization are very important....

A comprehensive grammar, translation from Persian into English and vice versa, and dictation are required....

Note. The mark for foreign language is the average of reading, translation, and dictation grades.

APPENDIX E

SAMPLES OF EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

APPENDIX E

ENGLISH DICTATION EXAMINATION

September 1957

Sixth Grade of Secondary School
(Literature and Physical Science)

Time: $\frac{1}{2}$ hr.

WANT OF COMMON SENSE

A farmer's wife in the absence of her husband, agreed to sell two cows to a passing dealer. The dealer, much to his own surprize, as he pritended, faounde he had forgotten to bring his mony with him, and propozed to take away the cows on the promis that he would pay for them the next day. She had sence enouf to refuze, "Very well then", he said "I will take only one cow, and leeve the othere as sekurity." He said this with such an air of honesty, and the propozal seamed so reesonable, that she alowed one of the cows to go.

Sixth Grade of Secondary School
(Mathematics)Time: $\frac{1}{2}$ hr.

THE MARKET OF OUR TOWN

Every day, on my way to and from school, I pass the market. The main road which passes through the market is lined on either side with shops of every kind. Whether it is clothes, grain, shoes, or vegetables that you want, you are sure to find a shop in the market where you can purchase them, most of the shops have large and painted signboards to attract the notice of the public. During the busy hours, buyers, onlookers, passers-by, noisy beggars and carts, carriages and motor cars help to make a great deal of noise.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AND COMPOSITION
EXAMINATION

September, 1957

(Literature and Physical Science)

Time: 2 hrs.

1. Translate the following sentences into English:

(Here are five Persian sentences)

2. Translate the following into Persian:

A crow was so thirsty that he thought he would die if he did not soon find water. After some time he saw a jar of water but when he flew down to it, he found that the water was too low in the jar for him to be able to reach it. Then he thought of a plan. He gathered a few pebbles and dropped them one by one into the jar. This made the water rise high enough for him to be able to reach it.

SUBJECT OF COMPOSITION

"How did you spend your summer vacation?"

(Mathematics)

Time: 2 hrs.

1. Translate the following sentences into English:

(Here are five Persian sentences)

2. Translate the following into Persian:

THE TWO SEATS

There was once a very fat man who wished to go to the theatre and, that he might sit in comfort, thought he would have two seats. He said to his servant, "Go to the theatre and buy me two tickets for the play to-night." Shortly after, the man returned and said "I have carried out your orders, sir; but as the seats were nearly all taken before I arrived, I had to take one in the front row and one in the third.

SUBJECT OF COMPOSITION

"Autumn"

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