VOLUME 2

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CHAPTER 4

English Language Teaching through Discourse analysis in the English system

4.1 Introduction

I have reviewed educational research methodology in the previous chapter, with the objective of discovering the appropriate way of accomplishing my study as reasoned aims. In this chapter discourse analysis will be studied in order to seek the strategies for teaching English language that are suitable and applicable to the Iranian system. Related issues such as the definitions, nature, purpose and testing of oral discourse of these languages will be discussed. A summative reflection will close this chapter.

4.2 Towards defining discourse and discourse analysis

The study of language and speech in relation to discourse analysis developed from the 1970s. Amongst the definitions of discourse given Lyons (1977) argued that discourse is a "text-sentence" which is context-dependent utterance-signals (or parts of an utterance signal), aspects of which are found in particular texts. In fact, oral discourse is based on text-sentences not grammatical sentences, which Lyons called system-sentences. He argued that: "There is no reason to suppose that system-sentences, as such, play any role in the production and interpretation of utterances"

(ibid. p:25).

Regarding the definition of discourse analysis Stubbs (1983:15) has described

the use of natural language this:

> It is easy to get the impression that discourse analysis is at least a
> foolhardy, if not a quite impossible, undertaking, and that expanding the
> narrow range of phenomena that linguists study to include natural
> language in use causes all hell to break loose certainly the task is
> daunting. However, the chaos can be contained in various ways, and, in
> fact, only some hell breaks loose.

Despite Stubbs' view here which has undermined the key role of the context in

his definition he has an encouraging perspective elsewhere when he alleged

that:

> whereas linguistics studies language, discourse analysis can study the
> actual mechanisms by which communication, understanding and
> interaction are maintained. ...this means that discourse analysis must be
> concerned with ways in which information is selected, formulated and
> conveyed between speakers (ibid.:30).

These functions of discourse analysis as Stubbs pointed out indeed cover the

main factors of speech. In my study I have focused on formulating and

conveying speech events. Still another definition of discourse analysis is

introduced and discussed by Brown and Yale (1984:1):

> the analysis of discourse, is necessarily, the analysis of language in use.
> As such, it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms
> independent of the purposes or functions which these forms are designed
> to serve in human affairs.

In fact, discourse analysis should be replaced with other type of teaching approaches used before for its usefulness and effectiveness. Therefore, this type of perspective not only provides a close definition for oral discourse, but even leads to a specific type of its analysis. We may intermingle these definitions in order to provide suitable techniques to teach English language students how to produce oral discourse.

Van Dijk (1977:131) pointed out that: "just as sentences combine with sentences to form discourses, discourses combine with discourses in order to form dialogues and conversations". What he is claiming may not always be the case because some dialogues or even conversation may be limited to lesser numbers of sentences. For example, in response to a question of a partner the respondent can nod his head rather than giving a short or long sentence as an answer. He later (1985:1) discussed the variety of descriptive approaches to the levels and dimensions of discourse analysis and pointed out that:

> Discourse is first of all a form of language use, it goes without saying that linguistic methods of analysis have played a prominent role in the study of text and talk.

He also discussed the dimensions of Discourse analysis and concluded that:

> Discourse analysis is not a simple enterprise. In its full richness it involves all the levels and methods of analysis of language, cognition, interaction, society and culture. This means that integral Discourse analysis is an interdisciplinary task and also that its complexity forces us to make specific choices among the many available methods, depending on the goals and functions of our analysis (pp.10-11).

Regarding this, he believes that there are more demands for the real forms of language use, in particular for meaning interaction. I would agree with Van Dijk

on the central importance of functional usage and the dimension of language use in particular for its meaning which will be emphasised in this study.

Similarly, Cicourel (1978) argued that discourse analysis must include:

> References to autonomous rules, recognition of local features of the interaction setting, and properties of the logical reasoning and strategies that participants employ to link formal rules and higher order predicates to specific features of ongoing interactive events (in Van Dijik,1985:180).

More on this issue is given by Chafe (1980, 1987, 1992) when stated that:

> Spoken language is produced in units with intonational and semantic closure
> - not necessarily syntactic closure...if we were to focus solely on spoken language, we would be more likely to view language in terms of intonation units that reflect not underlying grammatical structures, but underlying focuses of consciousness in which information is organised (Schiffrin, 1994:25).

Whereas structurally based sentences are sometimes vague in meaning, the verbal dimension of discourse with its essential elements such as intonation, gestures, or facial expressions as well as certain other paralinguistic devices influential to learning such as the kind of contacts or technological aids, will be discussed in detail later in Chapter 8. Moreover, the main problem with structurally based definitions is what Schiffrin (1994:41) pointed out that:

> Structurally based definitions of discourse lead to analysis of constituents (smaller units) that have particular relationships with one another in a text and that can occur in a restricted set of text level arrangements.

As Schiffrin pointed out discourse analysis at sentence level does not provide full meaning and higher level is required – paragraph. Robinson (1981) stated that Discourse analysis is 'the study of 'stretches' of language, that is segments of

language longer than a sentence.' To Kramsch (1981) Discourse analysis leads us to re-examine the roles of teacher and students' verbal interaction and how verbal behaviour is attained on the part of the students in classrooms. Stubbs (1984a) emphasised the unit of analysis which was above the sentence close to the pragmatic emphasis on language in use by Brown and Yale (1984). In connection to this Schiffrin (1987:2) pointed out that:

> Discourse analysis is so vast a field, readers of Discourse analysis may find themselves unexpectedly confronted by terms, concepts, and perspectives borrowed from a home turf which is different from their own.

She also put stress on coherence and believed in basic components of talk and discourse markers such as 'then', 'well', 'now', and 'because'. For example, 'and' for continuation and 'but' for contrast, 'or' and 'so' are turn transition devices. What is most impressive in her discussion is that when markers are applied to a single clause rather than to a limited scope they provide a clearer idea and scope of use. This matches with the English context that markers should be specific for a specific situation and purpose. She later has also offered an explanatory definition that:

> Discourse analysis is widely recognised as one of the most far-reaching, but also one of the least well defined, areas in linguistics. One reason for this is that discourse itself has often been defined in two different ways: as a unit of language that is larger than the sentence, and as the use of language, whereas the former definition focuses attention mostly on the social and cultural functions underlying ways of speaking (Schiffrin, 1990: 11).

In fact, markers provide contextual co-ordinates for utterances. It is the interaction approach which describes the contexts in which language is used, and

relates the specific meaning and function of utterances to that particular context.

Later Kress (1989:6) stated that:

> Discourse studies need to take account of discourse users' membership in a
> particular social institution, with its practice, its values, its meanings, its
> demands, prohibitions, and permissions.

In this study I intend to look for easier ways of producing effective oral

performance of English by Iranian university students, rather than emphasising the

rules and structure of English. The grammatical approach has in fact, as is

indicated in interviews with Iranian graduates and teachers (see Appendices C &

D), failed. This is similar to the second type of Discourse analysis discussed by

Candlin (1985) where he wrote:

> The other working for "procedures" where "function" or "value" is not a
> product based on intuitive understanding of the utterances in question, but a
> matter of negotiative process among a variety of contextual factors all of
> which taken together lead to the establishment (or the revelation) of specific
> social relationships between the interlocutors, themselves, of course,
> powerful sources of clue to illocutionary value. Rather than providing rules
> to account for relationships between product and form (p. viii).

In other words, the oral discourse approach emphasises oral discourse

relationships and interaction. More detail is provided in Chapter 4. A similar

connection was given earlier by Austin (1962:62) that:

> Any utterance which is in fact performative should be reducible or
> expandable or analysable into a form with a verb in the first person singular
> present indicative active.

For McCarthy (1991) oral discourse has some strange grammaticalities. To him,

Discourse analysis is not an approach whereas what he actually discussed can

deserve to work as an approach. For example, he talked about the manner in

which people speak which can be considered as the process, and the activities accomplished by the students' function as the context, and his testing as the evaluation which together make up the ingredients of an approach. Wright and Bolitho (1994) wrote that it used to be essential for English teachers to know grammar, phonology and lexis, but nowadays discourse analysis has been added to these components for teaching.

As a conclusion of the section discussed above I can argue that, in fact, discourse analysis refers to a variety of activities for its different meanings, depending upon the context of situations. For example, sociolinguistics deals with social interaction and much more performed in conversation. Sociolinguists deal with transcribed spoken data and psycholinguists underline Discourse analysis as language comprehension. In general, discourse analysis deals with forms of speech to establish and maintain the required relationships of participants.

4.3 The nature of language teaching

During the 1960s, a great deal of effort was made to examine language teaching, particularly for use and meaning. Language discourse has a wide range of types. People in different social classes and areas have a variety of discourses and their speech is usually rooted in the purposes they have in mind when producing their utterances. Discourse analysis deals with a wide range of relationships in language in a purposeful context. For example, philosophical and formal linguists attempt to find out whether the semantic relations and truth-values are preserved in produced language patterns. Conceptual linguists are the most relevant specialists to English

and are concerned with the methodology of discourse production because their work is in limited contexts.

The first speech analysis was carried out by Lewis (1957) on children's speech sounds. To him the "comfort-sounds" and "discomfort-cries" are the first sign of communication. A comparison would be made between the root and reason of children's cry and that of an adult's learning a second language. They both perform a language for their needs and also utter their speech based on the input received from outside. Of course, there are differences as well. For example, adults internalise and use prior knowledge and experience to prepare their performance or learn more deliberately, whereas a young child tries to imitate with physical reaction and bodily movements whatever it hears. Intonation plays a major role in learning a language in both a child and an adult (see section 4.2.16). In general learning is deliberate and structured for adults, but for children it is less structured, natural and more imitative.

Discourse analysis provides an approach which studies the acquisition of the semantic and pragmatic functions of language, the input to the learner and the product of interaction. Thus Discourse analysis provides the opportunity to learn and use language which is appropriate to a special context. An examination of the input is important to learn the strategies the learner makes use of, such as incorporation of ordering and the use of connectives, such as 'how', and 'who'. In this connection, Swales (1988:70) stated:

It is difficult to avoid the common-sense conclusion that the object of linguistics must ultimately be the instrument of communication used by the speech community; and if we are not talking about that language, there is something trivial in our proceeding.

According to Sinclair in his earlier studies the focus was placed on questions and answers by suggesting that through examining the context, the prepositions, the intention of the participants and the available evidence, one can really understand the meaning of an utterance. Later Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), and Widdowson (1977), pointed out that Discourse analysis implies a series of utterances with higher structure pertinent to semantic cohesion, or the communicative functions of language. They found the use of discourse necessary for the combination of the functional units. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975:13) focused their system of analysis on the function of particular utterances and context. They pointed out that:

> However, the level of language function in which we are centrally interested is neither the universal functions of language, nor the detailed function of surface formal ordering within the sentence. It is rather the level of the function of a particular utterance, in a particular social situation and at a particular place in a sequence, as a specific contribution to a developing discourse.

They categorised utterances from small to large units, that is, from "acts" to "moves, exchanges, transactions, and lessons". Indeed, this kind of classification is for four types of sentences, "declarative, interrogative, imperative and moodless". Each act is either elicitation, directive or informative. In fact, the writers have dealt with the main issue of language-use in a specific context, but they have kept

their analysis at sentential level which could have been expanded beyond that up to association of utterances or paragraph. Later, Labov (1978) pointed out that the rules we need will show how things are done with words and how one interprets these utterances as actions; in other words the relationship between what is done to what is said, and vice-versa, which he calls discourse. Hatch (1978:404), as one of the pioneers of the use of discourse analysis, agrees with the production of 'topic-comment constructions' in the second language. On this, she stated that the learner learns how to do conversation, how to interact verbally and that out of this interaction syntactic structures are developed. Therefore, to her, Discourse analysis is an approach which can be applied in the English classroom. Some writers, for example Larsen-Freeman (1980), and Kramsch (1981), are influenced by the pioneers' studies who have dealt with different aspects of discourse analysis, such as Austin (1962) , Firth (1964) and Hymes (1971) which will be discussed later (see 4.4).

Van Dijk (1981) made a differentiation between macro-structures and super-structures. Macro-structure is the global meaning of a text in particular. Superstructure, on the other hand, defines form, not content, and it is more abstract. He furthers argued that discourse analysis is the 'interest in various phenomena of language use, texts, conversational interaction or communicative events' (Van Dijk 1985:1.XI).

Given the above, a foundation can be developed upon which to teach English through discourse analysis: an attempt to link linguistic form to meaning and use. In my view, Discourse analysis is a more effective means through which English can be used most meaningfully than other approaches in particular for oral performance. The problems with other approaches were discussed earlier in Chapter 2.

4.4 The components of discourse analysis

We can derive more points from Firth (1964), who believed that everyone may have a set of 'sub-sets' and special 'sets' of language use which are related and linked with specialised features of language. People may possess a variety of 'sets' of language that use different forces and factors according to the situation, with a relevant linguistic component. I can relate his 'sub-sets' to the Iranian students' characterisation of English. An application of this theory is through English to use the relevant linguistic elements which in fact are English terms in a specific situation. For example, to Firth, this is the manifestation of the 'sub-set' of language – 'the means of linking a selected input with an appropriate output. He further claimed that if the 'sets' are very much alike, the give and take of conversation is almost a preordained ritual. Each individual says more or less what the other one expects him to say, because in talking to the other person he is partly talking to himself. They are both on the same 'roundabout.'

Essentially, when a presenter has a common background with his or her listener/s, they expect to comprehend each other easier than in other situations. In fact,

expectation is one element of learning encouragement which can, therefore be used as a teaching tactic. This is because a great deal can be learned and produced through expectation. For example, in the English class, what peers expect from their peer speaker motivates them to match and construct their interpretations based on their mutual expectation.

In this relation, Firth talked about speech units and nature. He called this 'conditioned' behaviour or 'set' of the individuals. He also noted that to understand the making of a 'set' one should study 'kith and kin', that is the elements of speech-components. To him the key element in speech is a verbal component. Relevancy and situation are non-verbal ingredients of discourse. Pronunciation and intonation are the key in speech. He wrote 'For each stage or event of language there is a relevant living space, a relevant culture, a relevant language' (1964:91). He considered terminology and syntax as the 'steel frame' of science, which means to him both grammar and words are the bases of construction. I do not agree with him regarding grammar, but terminology plays an important role in providing meaning especially in the ESP context. However, his views are accepted by structuralists in the other contexts. The importance of meaning and the significance of authenticity of the language is present, which he should have considered because language is real, is used in real-life situations with its own logic. In general, he believed that speech is in sets. Each 'set' has 'sub-sets'. 'Sub-sets' form the utterances in different situations.

The basic unit of discourse to some writers such as Chalon (1970), and Labov (1970) is the utterance, whereas to others it is either smaller, such as Sinclair et al., (1972), or bigger, such as a paragraph or two utterance pairs (Sacks, 1971). Chalon (1970) writing on discourse analysis, discussed a speech act as an act of communicative realisation such as a directive act: For example, 'Look up the word in a dictionary'. He adds that the discourse analyst examines both multi-source discourse and single- source discourse. Analysts break down the discourse into units, and the utterance, not the sentence is the unit of real life conversation. Thus Chalon did not make it clear that relevant events might be used in meaningful oral 'chunks', such as 'withdrawal from school'. However, he emphasised the link between what is said and what is meant, and there are diverse terms for this purpose, such as discourse processing, communicative strategies, interpretative strategies. As a result, it can be said that the unit of discourse can be an act, a move or an exchange. However, these strategies provide an initiation and a response, where the response would be a linguistic or paralinguistic one such as a nodding.

Hymes (1971) stated that linguistics should consider the speaker's competence to utter meaningful utterances rather than grammatical sentences. He claims that all discourse can be described in terms of four dimensions: 'systematic potential', that is the range and amount of something that has been known; 'appropriateness' or fit and matching; 'occurrence', which is happening; and 'feasibility', that is the possibility to happen. Later a basic view of the various dimensions of oral

discourse was given by him (1972a), that the 'ethnography' of speaking states that ethnomethodologists study by the order of speech through particular themes, forms of topics and performance. That kind of learning and its results are the specifications of language.

However, he provided a general framework which is useful , but has not offered a model for analysing data on spoken interaction so as to establish a methodology of data analysis. This methodology will determine the purpose of a particular use of language and dictates which approach should be chosen by the tutor. This approach may meet the needs of the students as well as the programme. The way English is used in science, for example, and for other special purposes may be more aptly described as an awareness of approaches and procedures different from each other, depending upon the use of that particular language. The basic rhetorical unit is the paragraph, which may define, categorise, or offer a problem and connect other aspects of speech with a piece of specific information. That is, a paragraph could be a combination of relevant parts of speech to cover a meaningful event.

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) developed five ranks to describe new discourse data, from interaction, transaction, exchange, motion to act - from the largest part to the smallest unit of grammatical point, the morpheme. They discuss three phases in classroom discourse; these are opening, answering and follow up moves. They talked about the variety of intonational structure, form and functions of the

utterances. Discourse analysis provided three types of unit, the sentence, the exchange such as asking and answering and the pitch sequence; that is the difference of human voice which contributes to the total meaning of speech.

In fact, the main components of Discourse analysis for oral discourse are the rules of conversation, modes of speaking, and settings. The rule of conversation is the prescribed guide or procedure and order. The mode of speaking is the manner of expression, or style. Setting is the time and place. Events include speech acts, which are social actions used by the speaker when making an utterance in a special context. Utterances may consist of one word or more. The purpose of the act is referred to as the illocutionary point. Intonation plays a major role in spoken discourse meaning. For example, a falling tone is for informing and presenting something new or for correction, whereas a falling-rising tone is used for recovering. In this connection, Jacobson (1960:67) wrote:

> If a discourse emphasises or is focused upon the person speaking or writing, its function is affective, emotive and expressive; if the discourse is directed at the addressee, its function is to show purposeful advice, commands, and directions (connotive); if the discourse emphasises the message, its function is poetic; if it emphasises human contact, its function is interaction management (phatic); if it emphasises the code, then its function concerns the language itself (meta- linguistic).

What most concerns Jacobson is the relevancy of the topic, in other words the context of situation. On the discussion of 'the code' and 'its function', it seems that, when a discourse emphasises these elements, it can be used for the interpretation and meaning of those codes to transfer the information, rather than language itself.

For example, the code 'VHF' shows the rate of frequency in an electronic system. Marder (1960) pointed out that discourses are formed based on rhetoric rules that include concreteness and coherence, or on techniques of explanation such as observation, description, analysis, comparison, contrast, prediction. This view is shared by Horn (1971) and Strevens (1971), MacKay and Mountford (1976).

In fact, it is the appropriate rules of speaking that make for continuous meaning. Discourse analysis in this study is based on the use of language for meaning, in particular for academic purposes. In so doing, the learners need to be given the opportunity to choose the language they need to use, the suitable terms, style of learning and relevant subject. This was alleged earlier by Wilkins that:

> language is a social activity, and choice of language varies according to social function and personal intention. Language teaching must provide the learner with means to select language which is suitable for the circumstances in which it is used - involving command of features of dialect, register, medium and style - and which is appropriate to express his personal states and ideas - requiring mastery of range of communicative functions (1972:159).

Similar assertions are given by Hymes (1979:23) that language requires a 'sense of relation to contextual features'. Therefore, it is the context which causes language to be selected by its users.

Long et al., (1976), writing about input to learners, found that pair discourse provided greater quantity, variety of speech acts and social uses of language than did the teacher-led discussions. Jones (1977) indicated that discourse is usually

made up of networks of events and points in which the theme is the main point.

Portine (1978) stated that the rational speech and organisation of ideas influence

the way of speaking, and a well organised idea leads to an organised way of

thinking. More on this issue is discussed by Widdowson (1978:42) who wrote:

> The use of language in discourse is an essentially creative endeavour which
> involves the language user in working out propositional and illocutionary
> development

Thus he believes that speech production is an active process in which the speaker

creates some sort of utterances. In the production of discourse, cohesion and

coherence, together with an interpretative strategy are required. Morrison (1978)

recommended that discourse elements should be practised by students in natural

and contextual samples of language use. Furthermore, Morrison (1978:166)

offered the following items in relation to meaningful context:

- To increase command of lexis, with special attention to such features as nominalised groups and idiom;

- To develop ability to cope with the referential system - that is, with the cohesive devices, grammatical and lexical, in spoken discourse;

- To improve ability to recognise the significant elements in the sound system of spoken discourse such as the phonological cohesive devices characteristic of spoken discourse like contrastive and connective stress, and pitch and intonation.

Apparently, what Morrison has neglected here is coherence for meaningful spoken

discourse. He has placed an emphasis on cohesion rather than coherence. Indeed

he prefers form and structure to meaning. However, these two are not sufficient to

provide complete meanings in different situations. Moreover, linguistic models are

not sufficient to discuss interactive discourse when speaker becomes hearer. Context plays a major role in this connection.

Pickering (1980:41) asserted that 'theme, focus, and emphasis' are the most prominent values of discourse analysis. He considered these values in a theatrical sense in which 'the theme is the unfolding plot and focus is the spot light. To him, theme is the main developer of discourse, but he has not said how to develop a discourse with the theme 'value' and his scene is imaginary, not real. It may not work in a natural event, and is therefore not applicable and generalizable to other fields of reality. Rivers (1981:84) views present practices of discourse use and roles in the following way:

> Much more time is now devoted than formerly to communicative interaction among students as an indispensable element in learning to use a language, in which there is a new realisation of the active role of the language learner, as opposed to the teacher, in the language class.

He then viewed practices of discourse use and roles and suggested that much more time than formerly is now devoted to communicative interaction among students as an indispensable element in learning to use a language. There is a new realisation of the active role of the language. It is believed, from a more expansionist point of view, that discourse is the communicative function of a text in the form of paragraphs and stories which have structures different from sentences. Tarone, Frauenfelder and Selinker (1981:4) offered a clearer explanation:

There is a systematic attempt by the learner to express meaning in the target language, in situations where the appropriate systematic target language rules have not been formed.

Following this quotation, what the learners need is to interpret what they have heard and try to extract the relevant meaning out of the context. Technical divisions contain fields such as physics, medicine, chemistry, business, and groupings such as exchanging information. Palmer believed that the majority of writers suppose that text is a symbol of discourse consisting of speech performance, ideas and concepts just as structural functions containing parts of speech, symbols of concepts and ideas. Palmer suggested that 'we might define a discourse as a connected and self-contained body of language that has some identifiable instrumental or integrative purpose' (1981:. 75).

Palmer (1981:48), after a long discussion on discourse, pointed out that the prosodic and paralinguistic features provided a great deal of meaning in oral discourse, such as intonation, stress, rhythm, and loudness. He also believed that facial expressions and gestures play an effective role in the conveying of the information. He classified words into two groups. Group 1 contains full words like 'tree' and 'blue' and group 2 is formed by words which relate the different parts of the sentence. Richards and Sukwiwat (1985) contrasted grammatical competence with conversational competence in the study of conversational discourse. While grammatical competence deals with vocabulary, morphology, and syntax, conversational competence is involved with utterances, not sentences, and it refers

to speech acts applied in social situations. Related to this is a point made by Cook (1985:178):

> Discourse is an interaction between participants, an interaction sequence: at a given moment in the conversation the speaker or hearer has a choice of what to do next, a meaning potential from which to select the most appropriate next move to suit his or her goals.

However, if the discourse has to do with that which lies outside interpersonal and textual concerns, that is if it emphasises the larger socio-physical context, then its function is denotive, cognitive and referential. Its function is in a sense what Halliday (1974) called 'the ideational macro function'. It is perhaps this referential contextual function that is of the greatest concern to language course planners. Here, context is an important element which influences the interpretation and meaning which are specialised in English topics.

Kramsch (1981:28) introduced practical forms of teaching discourse in the classroom, such as: turn-taking, paragraph organisation, negotiation for meaning, word associations and kinds of games. For example 'What's my line?', 'Think Tank and Quarrels', or communication through bodily expressions, such as facial expressions, eye-contact, gestures and the like. She has developed a sophisticated method both in theory and practice on oral discourse analysis. Kramsch argued that, in L_2 teaching, adults can operate the conversation through a query. She further stated that discourse is concerned with function and use of language, and most classes are not real life situations. The speaker must speak as briefly and simply as possible. She then concluded that learning a foreign language means

learning these various treatments. Afterwards, Kramsch (1985) discussed the procedure of sensitive discourse. She said that an approach must be provided to make students construct spoken discourse, and suggested a few points for the discourse-oriented class. These are: 'discovering key words indicative of a given meaning; finding illustrations of a given motif; discovering regularities in content, sound or form'. These help the learner produce simulated discourse.

Brown and Yule (1984) stated that discourse analysis deals largely with the study of linguistic forms and the regularities of production with interpretations. They believe that the discourse analyst should study the language which is used, particularly the expression of content. They also believed that there is no great difference between written and spoken language at the academic level and there are many common points. This refers to the literary speech that academic and educated groups usually use in the way they write. What is attempted here is the consideration of linguistic form not as a static object but as a special dynamic means of expressing intended meaning (not in the broad sense as grammarians believe). Whereas Crookes (1990:183) for the units of Discourse analysis concluded that:

> The selection of a base unit is an important decision in the process of discourse analysis. A number of different units form the bases of Discourse analysis systems designed for dealing with structural characteristics of second language discourse. This paper reviews the more prominent of such units and provides arguments in favour of the selection of one in particular - the utterance.

In fact, the utterance is entailing a message or an event in speech for that context meaning. Discourse analysis is considered as a process, not a product for special intended meaning as well as the process of production by the producer and the receiver. It is also worthwhile to discuss language use in terms of its special purposes and interpretations in particular contexts, by emphasising coherence, that is more semantics and less syntax.

Having identified the views of a large group of writers in section 3.1.4 it can be concluded that all these writers in one way or other encourage the use of discourse analysis as an effective teaching approach for English. Since the discourse analysis approach has a wide scale features each of the above writers has attempted to introduce one or more of those characteristics which fit certain situation. Still there are more of such features which I will propose in Chapter 7. As a result, discourse analysis approach as an effective teaching approach can be employed and adjusted to function appropriately according to the situation and context is going to be used.

4.5 The purpose of discourse analysis

Discourse analysis has been used for a variety of purposes. The utilisation of a wide spectrum of discourse analysis has made writers and researchers speculate more on its purpose. The ultimate purpose of Discourse analysis can be for the enhancement of fluency in the use of language: what and when the user wants or requires. This is confirmed by Leeson (1975:149) as he stated that:

The aim of the programme will be to develop communicative competence in the individual, so that he can perform the necessary speech acts to achieve his goals and at the same time be cognisant of his interlocutors are expressed in their utterances: it is in this full sense that the speaker may be said to "know the language finally".

For example, Moffett's goal of discourse is to enable the student to use the whole symbolic scale. He offered terms for discourse elements such as 'informer, informed, and information; narrator, auditor, and story, and transmitter, receiver, and message'. He also believed that real life conversation is primary discourse which is performed spontaneously. Moffett (1968:92) stressed that in teaching oral discourse the main purpose is to improve 'the social art for conversations, and the intellectual art of qualifying, and the linguistic art of elaborating'. So what he actually emphasised is related to the situation and is influential in learning any language. He also recommended small classes. However, because of deficiencies of resources, this is not always possible. He asserted that teachers' knowledge must influence the learning of the learners. The key factor he discussed is that external agents impress on the internal or cognitive operations of improvisation. To him language is used to think, solve problems, influence others, and actions. He proposed that, students' seats should be facing the teacher's desk, and that the teacher should make students learn from each other.

This is a pleasing idea which can work effectively in particular in English classes because English language students are adults and have experiences which can transfer to each other, and this increases the opportunity to talk in the area of their

needs. More positive and focal points are found in Candlin (1978), who believed that the main purpose of Discourse analysis is to get the meaning and worth of speech through bigger segments than sentences. Halliday (1970a), however, points to the textual function relationship to do with making links with itself and with features of that situation in which it is used. To Halliday, the link within the text is the coherence which is used for communication. This helps the presenter to consider two factors which help learners. The first is the situational related terms; the second is the required rules of coherence for meaning. Therefore, we can conclude that the purpose of discourse in its real and natural use is to convey the meaning of information and the message.

Hatch (1978) pointed out that linguists use Discourse analysis in order to find out the meaning of utterances that extend beyond the sentential level. Hatch and Long (1980:45) argued that the unit of analysis is the discourse unit. Natural discourse has a variety of types: arguments, complaints, speech routines. They concluded that Discourse analysis was for the following purpose:

> It may result in better understanding of how we learn language(s), better understanding of how each of us as individuals, whether doctors, patients, cab drivers, passengers, or whatever interact via language; better understanding of classroom discourse, educational curricula, and materials; better understanding of how meanings get attached to sentences; and even a better understanding of sentence syntax.

In fact, they introduced a suitable teaching approach through discourse analysis. A similar discussion is provided by Robinson (1981) who believed that Discourse analysis helps students process and use the materials of the textbooks. Holec

(1981) stated that one of the aims of Discourse analysis is to find the relationships between oral discourse and the language of the utterances spoken. Kramsch (1981) pointed out that one of the major purposes of Discourse analysis is to find the ways to make coherent verbal interaction. These writers concluded that what is essential was the speech acts in sentence structure and not the outcome drawn from beyond the sentence level which I believe do not provide sufficient meaning in many events.

So far, discussion in this chapter suggests that Discourse analysis leads us to re-examine how interactions can be changed for an enhanced and higher conversation competence on the parts of the students. Discourse analysis then may be used for English propositions in functional communication with others. What I mean by 'functional' is the conceptual use of English language which offers prompt meaning in an oral discourse class. In fact, Discourse analysis is used as a means to explore the most effective approach to teach English, particularly for oral performance. In other words, the main purpose of Discourse analysis here is for proposing a new approach with specific strategies in order to use the learned language. The need for this purpose is supported by a large range of writers such as Biria & Tahririan (1994) and Stubbs (1983:129) who asserted that:

> Many structural analyses of spoken discourse have now been published, but little attempt has been made to motivate different rival analyses of the same data, and to decide which analysis is the best.

Similar to this is what Bhatia (1993:5) has offered for the description of language in use:

This is particularly significant in the context of applied discourse which has developed from a surface-level formal analysis to a deeper functional analysis, with a corresponding development in language teaching, which marks a movement from form to function, usage to use in Widdowson's terms, grammar to discourse and communication in recent years. This is particularly noticeable in the case of English courses for a variety of specific or, as Swales recently put it, specifiable purposes.

Therefore, as Bhatia indicated the current emphasis is on functional discourse analysis, because it deals with real life situations that language teachers make use of. I will develop this point in the following section so as to examine the effectiveness of oral Discourse analysis for my proposed teaching approach.

4.6 Discourse analysis and teaching approaches

Discourse analysis has a fairly long history. It was developed in the 1960s. Since it is the main topic in this study, its history is of great importance. In the following section, I wish to examine what has happened since this period. For the sake of clarification, I have divided its history into decades, in order to show the sequence of succeeding arguments.

4.6.1 Discourse analysis in the 1960s

In the wake of discourse analysis, Pratt (1956) identified a number of listening skills that were a "set":

A comfortable sitting position, keeping one's eyes focused on the speaker to observe facial expressions and gestures, willingness to listen, willingness to think about ideas expressed, and courtesy towards the

speaker, were important aspects of an adequate set for listening. (in Wilkinson 1974:64)

To Wilkinson, attentive listening to speakers can be made through encouraging the listener which resulted in the increase of learning and speech production. The speaker may also match their utterances to the level and need of the listener and through this reciprocal channel produce a more accurate output. He has introduced a general pattern: "Who communicates what to whom, how and why, and on what occasion" (ibid.:66). This is indicated in Hymes' writing (1968:8) :

> In expecting to find a scientific theory of interactions of language and social setting, one in effect expects a theory, based on successfully asking (at least as a start), what code is used, where and when, among whom, for what purposes, and with what results, to say what, in what way; subject to what norms of interaction and interpretation.

Hence, Hymes himself believed that such a systematic theory of language teaching and learning may not exist until many years after his lifetime. Indeed, this is also discussed by Brown and Yule (1984a), and they called it "message-oriented talk". Their focal point is: a). practice of language: b). exchanging the relevant information. Utterances and more focused discussion enhance the use of language. In this relation, Goffman has stated that as long as the presenter and hearers are engaged in their discussion their involved participation is relevant and expanding (in: Abdesslem, 1992).

Austin (1962) argued that oral discourse is based on the concepts of speech act, or process of conversation. For example, 'go to the blackboard' is a directive statement while the statement 'Pollution is our next topic' is a commissive one. He also believed that directive expressions can be comprehended by 'disposition' or 'intonation', connecting parts or by 'utterance conditions'. He claimed that all utterances are expressive and that a person can perform three acts at the same time:

(1) the act of saying ('locutionary') – what is said;

(2) the act of the intended action ('illocutionary') – what is meant by the speaker;

(3) the act of implementation or the result of it ('perlocutionary') – what is understood by the hearer.

In fact, his speech act theory proposed a new doctrine of what one is doing in saying something. However, there were problems with his classification, because there were no-clear cut or definite principles on the basis of which his classification of verbs was constructed and, consequently, some verbs did not fit in. For example, he listed 'describe' as demonstrating the ex-positive-functional weakness of illocutionary verbs. A stronger problem found in his theory is that he ignored the importance of meaning which is more important in certain types of language, in particular in English in which meaning is more influential than the form. This is because other elements than the form, such as intonation, context of situation or stress, may affect the meaning. For example, many researchers have

found correlations between listening ability and learning. Spearritt (1962) pointed out that there is a separate factor for listening, whereas Carroll (1968) suggested that abilities are distinct but overlapping. Listening ability can be improved through training.

Firth (1964) considered meaning as part of language. According to Firth, Socrates was the first who examined speech with a scientific ability and analysed it in order to find out whether words were used systematically or if there was a strong connection in their sequences, or poor, unmethodical coherence. To Firth, the meaning of spoken words and other supplementary relevant expressions is the directive reference towards the addressed person's attitudes. The purpose and habitual verbalisations attract the learners' attention. Utterances beyond the understanding of listeners cause them not to perceive the meaning efficiently. When spoken words are not beneficial to the listeners, those listeners lose interest. If listeners knew that there will not be an anticipation to give back or reflect on those spoken words, they would not pay much attention.

We can see this by contrasting a public lecture with a class. The audience usually does not remember as much of a public speech as learners do of a class speech. To Firth, language presents the inward working of the human mind. He tacitly ignored the use of grammar in meaning and replaced it by intonation. His writings indicate that he was looking for meaning through intonation and not grammar. For

example, stressed words change the meaning and, in fact, meaning is characterised through the mutual sharing of events, experiences and situations, not form but function. He himself did not make this clear, although he agreed that 'more plumbing, less poetry' is the motto for modern education, which puts emphasis on practice rather than theory.

He also put great stress on drawings; he said that modern civilisation is based on drawings and literacy has progressed with it. He also added that drawings and pictures could make conversations between human beings and inform them from the past, as they can be used today for conceptualisations and interpretations of events and objects. Firth considered meaning as part of language, and he quoted Plato that generally speech is regarded as a useful, practical contrivance to satisfy human wants.

He drew on Aristotle's text, The Art of Rhetoric, on the relationship between language and human nature, and asserted that 'speech is our most valuable instrument, because we can make it fit our common lives. We are not born to follow life' (Firth, 1964 : 24). Furthermore, he said that 'Although we identify our sounds by articulation likenesses and represent them by the letter, this does not really correspond with the facts of speech' (ibid.: p.49).

Apparently he is looking for meaning through intonation, stress and not grammar, as is indicated in sentences such as :

I know what you mean. You know what I mean?
I mean what you know. You I know what I mean ?
What you know I mean. What I know you mean?
What I mean you know.(ibid.: p.44)

Overall, Rivers(1968) stated that language is speech, which is suitable particularly for English when it is applied in academic fields such as scientific discussions to exchange views. Hence, the emphasis was on teaching the spoken language with a minimal amount of grammar. What seems to be ignored in this argument by Rivers is the role of context, which is essential in teaching. Accordingly, what seems to be urgent for these teachers is a new language approach to operate for these traditional and old language techniques of the early 1970s in Iranian universities.

Related to this, Searle (1969), by considering the hearer as one major part of discourse, opened an avenue to discourse analysis. He developed conversational research analysis. Searle also discussed 'how, who, when' as connectives, turn taking and all the other strategies used to regulate the understanding of conversation. He sought meaning through communicative value. As philosophers of language, Austin and Searle discussed speech acts to clarify the issue of meaning form and function. Searle categorises speech acts as 'directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations and representatives'. Searle (1969:21) associated speech act theory with the study of language based upon the speech

acts as the unit of communication. The study of language includes the study of its production, interpretation, and meaning. He wrote:

> There are a series of analytic connections between the notion of speech acts, what the speaker means, what the sentence (or other linguistic element) uttered means, what the speaker intends, what the hearer understands, and what the rules governing the linguistic elements are.

So Searle discussed the rules of speech based on intuitions through 'idealised models' and linguistic characteristics in the form of constituting in terms of definitions. Rules are extracted from the context and conditions.

We can make it clear, for example in a representative utterance, that one makes a true or false announcement, such as ' John stole my bike.' Commissives are utterances of promises, pledges in the future, for example 'We will discuss windmills next time'. The expressive speech act states feelings (for example, 'Excuse me for making you wait so long'). Declarations, such as 'Joe is the monitor of this class', are utterances describing new states. A directive is the kind of speech act which causes the listener to do or not to do something. Each of these categories includes subcategories as well.

Here we saw that Searle is explaining how we can make a variety of utterances with different forms and functions and get results with the various speech acts. The use of a speech act is important in understanding meaningful scientific discourse, as it takes place in natural situations.

4.6.2 Discourse analysis in the 1970s

More work has been focused on Discourse analysis in the 1970s. Moskowitz (1970, 1971) developed some strategies such as dealing with feelings, using the ideas of learners, asking questions and directing pattern exercises. There are also two responses for learners which are specific and open-ended responses. These elements in fact are the most influential ones. Hymes (1971) states that linguistics should consider the speaker's competence to utter correct utterances rather than grammatical sentences. He claims that all discourse can be described in terms of four dimensions: 'systematic potential', that is, the range and amount of something that has been know; 'appropriateness' – fit and matching; 'occurrence' – happenings; and, 'feasibility' the possibility to happen. Later, Hymes (1972:41) wrote about 'ways of' speaking' of which there are four stages:

> 1.the linguistic resources available to a speaker - how may different styles he can choose from,
>
> 2.supra-sentential structuring - how many differently structured linguistic events, like trials, religious ceremonies, debates, songs, are recognised,
>
> 3.the rules of interpretation by which a given set of linguistic items comes to have a given communicative value,
> 4.the norms which govern different types of interaction.

He also argued that the ethnography of speaking and rules of speaking are the way in which a presenter uses specific modes of speaking, topics, or messages with special settings and activities. According to his 'ways of speaking', there are four dimensions used in spoken language: amongst which "supra-sentential structuring, the rules of interpretation" and "the norms" handle different types of interaction, but he has not illustrated how this functions for language use. The encouraging

point in his view is that the speaker can recognise and use the required style of speaking – genre.

In fact, his "genre" can be applicable in English classes. However, it is arguable that Hymes did not discuss relating vocabulary and grammar. This is important because certain criteria of language use have impressive effects according to use. Consequently, in an effective English class, students must participate as much as possible and try to use their own knowledge and experience. Teacher's questions should stimulate utterances. Procedure is focused on initiatives, that is question and response, concerning the development of a topic. Creative and critical monitoring make language use continually possible.

Wilkins (1972a:19) developed a 'communicative notional syllabus', since then the communicative approach has progressed rapidly. To report and describe are the two common functions of teaching a foreign language. Wilkins counts the teachers' functions in classroom activity as:

> Judgement, approval, disapproval, persuasion, prediction greeting, sympathy, gratitude, flattery, hostility, information asserted, information sought, etc.

In this connection, Fillmore (1974) observed that through talk and silence at appropriate times we can enhance our use of language:

> will need to identify itself as a member of position, it will need to be able to perceive among its interlocutors whether they are people it is supposed to know, it will need to know what linguistic conventions and routines

govern conversation on these occasions, what it and its interlocutors are expected to accomplish with each contribution to the conversation, when it can be appropriately talk and when it should remain silent. (in: Willis, 1984:7)

A relevant remarkable point to the English class is that of common language which facilitates creativity and enables knowledge through community communication. The ethnography of communication is another approach to discourse for whole meaning and behaviour developed by Hymes (1972a). Conversation analysis is also called 'ethnomethodology' as introduced by writers such as Schegloff (1972a). The focal point in this approach is the way that social members perform the roles of talk in utterances. The Variationist Approach is one of the approaches to discourse which is based on linguistic usage and change. This approach is introduced by writers such as Labov (1972a). In this connection, it is argued that a child's simple language which conveys information is called the instrumental or textual function. This language is based on context and expression and, through development, changes to a complex and coded language. This language, despite its complexity in adults, may function for only a part of the information, dependent upon grammar functions which are used in a variety of contexts. In fact, his work is based on the linguistic theories which examines discourse in its various forms from "move" to "exchange" as we also have them in Sinclair and Coulthard (1975). Werth (1981) has pointed out this issue as well, but most of these writers have worked on children's learning.

According to Halliday's (1974) macro-function, an adult interprets more than one use and meaning for an expression because of the contexts. For example, 'The shell destroyed quite a number of houses' does not have the same meaning as : 'The shell is below the crust' (that is, the outermost layer of the earth). An instrumental function, however, has only one meaning for a child. The child has no idea of the rule of context and the variety of its uses. The ideational concept can be used in English classes for its communication of experience because of interpersonal functions. It is arguable that Halliday put too much stress on grammar, while in reality the use of context, intonation and stress have great roles in meaning.

However, Halliday's writing as a teacher provides impressive ways of looking at language for its relevance and use. He believes in exposing students to the particular situation and also emphasised the skill of interpretation in learning the target language. In brief, four basic functions of language are: interpersonal (relations between people), ideational (transmission of information); textual (giving shape, tone, and texture as required by the situation); and, logical (logical relations). These categories are useful practical tasks for focusing on specific interaction of interpretation and function. Together they allow the learner to be exposed to language use in context both in terms of listening and producing utterances. Indeed, context provides the learner with much more than linguistic accuracy, such as flavour, and effect of the language used. Halliday's (1978:84) model of language is as follows:

what the speaker can say, i.e. the lexicogrammatical system as a whole, operates as the realisation of the semantic system which is what the speaker can mean - what I refer to as the 'meaning potential'. I see language essentially as a system of meaning potential. Now, once we go outside the language, then we see the semantic system is itself the realisation of something beyond, which is what the speaker can do - I have referred to that as the behaviour potential.

The English learners following Halliday's model of language should apply a creative code of lexico-content system to determine the relationship between their code resources and the target semantic system.

Halliday has expressed the importance of meaning in teaching a language and argued that language has to do more than transmit knowledge, such as show the use of that language and the purpose of this use. For Halliday (1978:160) :

> A person is what he means. But individual does not exist out of context: they exist in interaction with others, and meaning is the principal form that this interaction takes. Meaning is a social act and it is constrained by people we identify ourselves with, the primary reference groups that define our semiotic environment.

Thus for Halliday meaning has to be capable of being organised as a relevant discourse not just as words or sentences in a grammar book or dictionary. Furthermore, a few writers specified some elements in this respect. For example, to Wilkinson (1974) there are arbitrary and conventional rules which can be

used in practice. However, we can say that language is a distinctive instrument for oral communication. Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) pointed out that turn-taking is context free and it can determine the kind of conversation we use. These writers put emphasis on the importance of background information or the content of discourse events and turn-taking. They also believed that a learner can take the floor at the end of a grammatical unit presented by a presenter. This can be problematic because coherent units should be preferred as they provide the learners with meanings that in most cases are indications of termination rather than grammatical units. They believed factors such as 'age', 'social class', and 'position' and 'relation' prevent turn-taking.

This case depends greatly on the culture of the society, for example in Iranian society it is difficult for children to take the floor from their parents or teachers and it is impolite to do so. In this case the speaker finishes their talk then the other party takes their turn. Discussing a topic in a classroom requires the discussant to follow the rules of turn exchange. If learners know when and how each individual should take the floor and present their contribution it prevents the waste of time. There are ways that learners can follow one another. For example, the presenter can nominate the next presenter, open the floor to general discussion, or terminate their presentation. These basic rules of governing turn-taking are also discussed by Sacks et al., (1974:12) :

1.   At initial turn-constructed unit's initial transition-relevance place:

(a)   If the turn-so-far is so constructed as to involve the use of a 'current speaker selects next' technique, then the party so selected has rights, and is obliged, to take the next turn to speak, and no others have such rights or obligations, transfer occurring at that place.

(b)   If the turn-so-far is so constructed as not to involve self-selection for next speaker ship may, but need not, be instituted, with first starter acquiring rights to a turn, transfer occurring at that place.

(c)   If the turn-so-far is so constructed as not to involve the use of a 'current speaker selects next' technique, then current speaker may, but need not, continue, unless self-selects. (Schiffrin, 1994:248).

This approach of turn-taking may happen after either sentential, clausal, phrasal or lexical construction. All of these transfer a complete piece of information which can be one or more units of oral discourse or for short elicitation. Once the speaker is satisfied, the previous speaker or presenter continues. Abe et al., (1974) believe that the learner will focus on the use of functional specifications. In fact, this prevents the wasting of time. They emphasise the interactional function, such as reciprocity through posture, orientation and gestures, or by nomination or attentional signs such as 'nods, gaze, facial expression' and the modal function such as a smile or an aggressive posture, to meaning in verbal interaction.

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) asserted that turn-taking under a teacher's control differ from real life discourse in that the teacher nominates the turn-taker. Thus students themselves should help control their arguments, that is, question, answer and comment. Turn-taking can be accomplished through signs such as a shift away of head direction, audible inhalation, initiations of gestures by using expressions such as 'excuse me', 'how about' and, 'yes but'. They also believed that the unit of

discourse in a class can vary from, an act, a move, an utterance, an exchange, a

transaction to a lesson - the largest unit of discourse.

Grice (1957; 1975), with his 'co-operative principle', gives the following

suggestions to keep the conversation as a co-operative event:

> 1.Be relevant. Make your contribution relevant to the ongoing
> conversation.
> 2.Be informative. Speakers already have a lot of shared background
> information that's not new or informative. Make your contribution as
> informative as is required, but no more informative than necessary.
> 3.Be truthful. Say things you think are true and don't say things you think
> are false or for which you have no evidence.
>
> 4.Be clear. Try to make your message clear for your listeners. Don't be
> overtly wordy, obscure, or disorganised.(Larsen Freeman, 1980:5)

What Grice discusses are the key elements applicable to English classes because of

the features indicated in his statement such as relevancy, clearness, and required

information. What seems to be neglected here is the use of language by learners,

which is the key aspect in learning, particularly in oral communication. The

problem with many English learners is not their knowledge of English but the lack

of knowing how to use that knowledge. It is through communicative use and

mastery of it that the learners can be enabled to use the language. There does not

yet exist any communicative syllabuses based on an analysis of the appropriate

discourses. According to Grice's theory (1975) it seems that utterances,

conversation and passages usually follow the 'co-operative principle'. That is,

within these performances there is a mutual direction. Perhaps this mutual

direction is the reason and purpose that both speaker and hearer are attempting to

reach and that is the element which not only strings the parts together but may extend the performance as well. That is why it can be said that talking is a special case of purposes and rational behaviour. For example, Halliday and Hasan (1976:2) pointed out that a sentence is meaningful only when it is part of a text:

> A text is best regarded as a semantic unit: a unit not of form but of meaning. Thus it is related to a clause or sentence not by size but by relation, the coding of one symbolic system in another. A text does not consist of sentences; it is relation by, or encoded in sentences.

The functional grammar of Halliday and Hasan on the intonational/informational structure of spoken language has been developed into systematic differentiations. Overall, these writers argue that a text is a passage containing more than one sentence. This discussion is accomplished by Searle (1969) earlier in speech acts governed by certain conditions. It should be added to what these writers have observed that the mutual or referential direction is in fact related to the common experience beneficial to both the speaker and hearer/s. In other words, this commonalty is the shared clues or knowledge which is and can be a base for expansion. This common information enables the hearers to interpret and infer an intended specific referent. Easiness of identification of the referent by the hearer requires a clear presentation of common information that actually enables hearer/s to correctly realise that particular referent, such as vocabulary that can be specific to that referent, and allow the hearer/s to single it out from the others. For example, we use a typewriter or computer to write to understand what a typewriter or computer is.

Therefore the function of the co-operative principle helps to produce the sequential regularities characteristic of discourse and that allows learners to use both oral text and context as a resource by which to communicate with the speaker or between themselves as learners. This co-operation also helps towards meaning and how those assumptions contribute to make sequential patterns in talk. The sequence of utterances can be shaped from top to bottom or vice versa. Each utterance is made dependent upon a previous utterance. In this way the speaker gradually proceeds to the climax which is the destination or conclusive point. In this process, contextual meanings are continually adjusted through referential terms and sequences. Of course, there can be cases when new information is presented by a speaker. In this case the duty of the speaker or presenter is more difficult to clearly state his presentation meaning because there are no shared clues that help the hearer/s to interpret or understand. It would be helpful to provide prior information on this topic to the learners. This is when a presenter or speaker makes a speech, but in class two or more parties or participants discuss a topic. Related to this, Crystal and Davy (1975:86) suggested:

> within conversation we recognise the notion of discourse, which is a continuous stretch of speech, preceded and followed by an agreed change of speaker.

Accordingly, three elements exist affecting the learning of oral communication. These are fluency, intelligibility and appropriateness of the discourse to the

listeners. It further indicates the influence of intonation and meaning in learning discourse via the provision of a great deal of exercises.

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) argued that classroom discourse is often unlike natural events because it is controlled and structured. In a normal class, discourse openings and closings are different from normal conversations. These moves had been introduced earlier by Bellack et al., (1966). In their later work Coulthard (1975) and Sinclair (1980) developed stages for teaching: 'opening moves', 'answering moves'; 'follow up' and 'framing/focusing moves'. We cannot provide genuine communication in class until we have a natural setting for language practice, that is, the way in which students are seated and the environment in which facial or eye contact influences the discussion. Moreover, the purposes and requirements of the two different contexts are different. Despite the ongoing procedure with pre-selected texts, communication in class can determine the content of the course, and formal teaching is hampered. Attention to meaning and communication production – vertical structure – allows for less attention to form-horizontal structure.

Riley (1976) provided advice on how to do the exercises, introducing the resources and the ways to access them, using authentic materials and preparing them, as well as activities such as games and drills. In oral discourse, learners focus on vocabulary due to its significance. This way of learning is also supported by Byrne (1976) when he emphasised that presentation, practice and

production are the key figures to talk. This is workable especially for English students who already have a rich background in English , but lack the use of the language.

Clearly, cohesion and coherence differ a lot in use based on the types of discourse. Informal conversational exchanges may be very elliptical. That is, the subject and predicate may be omitted (Halliday & Hasan 1976). Furthermore, intonation plays a major role in spoken discourse meaning. A falling tone is for informing and presenting something new or for correction whereas a falling-rising tone is used for clarifying meaning. An adult may begin a conversation through signals such as a slight cough, a clearing of the throat, (an introductory 'ehhh' or 'emmm'), or a repetition of the first part of the question. For example, 'Who is, who is your English teacher'? (Keenan, 1976).

Candlin (1976) reports the activities of the students as 'turn taking, linking and expanding, negotiations, and repair'. The speaker must speak as briefly and simply as possible, and listeners should interpret when they hear a contrary topic. Candlin, then concludes that learning a foreign language means learning these varieties of verbal behaviours and much more. The oral discourse analysis approach emphasises verbal communication and use of English in English classes. In this relation Wilkins (1976) believed that the proper teaching should be focused

on enabling the language learners to communicate meaningfully. To this end, the techniques need to be assessed and also added that:

> It is not generally denied that what is learned through a grammatical syllabus is of value to the learner. It is rather suggested that this is not the necessary or the most effective way of designing language courses and that, in any case, language learning is not complete when the content of a grammatical syllabus has been mastered (p.7).

This is pointed out by Brumfit (1977) as well, when he wrote that English teaching fits firmly within the general movement towards communicative teaching.

The lack of the actual use of English in classes was also identified as a problem by Allen and Widdowson (1974a). They wrote:

> The difficulties which students encounter arise not so much from a defective knowledge of the system of English but from an unfamiliarity with English use and consequently their needs [must] be met by a course (in: Coulthard, 1977).

Anthony (1975:94) wrote:

> Whenever the outsider attempts to enter discourse among specialists, either a producer or receiver, he finds himself isolated, frightened perhaps, or perhaps resentful because of his inability to bring to the conversation the discourse words which reflect a re-structured. set of referents.

The insider English teacher can develop a problem-solving, creative, interpretative strategy by using shared knowledge or accessible resources (linguistic, communicative, schematic knowledge,). For example, video is useful for listening comprehension at two levels – extensive talk and intensive listening. Intensive listening is suitable for English, for specific terms and

phrases. The Trimbles (1977) say that in EST, the conceptual paragraph is the basic unit of discourse. One conceptual paragraph may include a few 'physical paragraphs'. They put emphasis on the variety of meanings and messages. For example, when we have the utterance 'All metals expand when heated', we can generalise it to say 'Aluminium expands when heated' or 'Steel expands when heated' , or we can even use some simpler synonyms when the term/s are complicated. An example of this may be 'Aluminium gets longer when heated'. Their rhetorical process chart has four levels:

1.level A gives the objectives;
2.level B provides the general rhetorical functions;

3.level C gives specific rhetorical functions, such as definitions and classifications;
4.and level D gives rhetorical techniques such as time and space order, causality, and comparison.

Widdowson (1978) introduced the rules of use and dimensions of discourse coherence of language. He declared that, when a person uses discourse, he at the same time produces a proposition and also an illocutionary act in producing that proposition. For example, A says: 'I will talk about 'the typewriter' in the English class tomorrow'. Now if the hearer wants to report it to the third person, they may use the following:

(i)   B: A said: 'I will talk about 'the typewriter' in the English class tomorrow.' Here B is reproducing A's statement.
(ii)   B: A said that s(he) would talk about the typewriter in the English class tomorrow. In this case B is reporting the proposition - an illocutionary act is used here.

Depending on the nature of the statement and relationships between all those who are speakers, reporters and hearers, and the emphasis put on different parts: of the sentence, a variety of forms can be used. Widdowson (1978) states that expressions and other paralinguistic phenomena, play a fundamental role in Discourse analysis and language performance as use, not usage, which is structure dependent. He offers as an example a list of vocabulary with their synonyms and phrases of that text which can be prepared in advance or by giving a list of words after each lesson, for example:

(a) approximately - about

(b) remainder - the rest of...

(c) compacted - packed together.

Widdowson also explained that a learner should extract the basic meaning from the text and use it whenever he encounters those terms. For example, the learner can use the word 'remainder' as a synonym for 'the rest of' by simplifying the text first, and then using that term while deriving meaning from context. Then students can take turns and expand the words and give definitions to vocabulary use in the text in the form of phrases or sentences as a way of producing them. A learner must also trace where a given syntactic framework appears in the passage and then use the proper proposition from the text to use it in a meaningful utterance. In addition to the composing and contextualizing, for example of sentences, the learner may make an utterance and genetic statements with vocabulary given as follows: metal, zinc. In the first step the learner can classify the words according to his own knowledge or by using a resource such as a dictionary and then make

utterances such as: 'zinc is a metal. Metals expand when heated, so zinc expands when heated'. The learner can expand sentences via generalisation + clarification + elaboration + exemplification'. For example, 'zinc is a metal used in making dishes'. Through gradual vocabulary use, a learner can expand the utterance. This is also discussed by Corder (1978) who wrote:

> Since we do not know very much about the sequence a learner's inter language development takes, the wise course would be to relax even further our control over the linguistic forms he is exposed to, indeed perhaps to abandon all control of a structural sort. (in Willis, 1984:46)

English students are normally presenting specific content from their textbooks. They put a topic forward to discuss and expand upon. Extension or elicitation is usually in the form of questions or comments by a student. In such a case, a peer student is better able to provide statements and required information, suggestion, or recommendation. An English teacher may reform the student-presenter's request and put it in general discussion. Argumentations are in the class and/or out of the classroom exercises. Therefore, in English classes most presentations are informative because they are dealing with the conveyance of information such as facts, theories and opinions on that particular topic. In relation to this, Brumfit emphasised that:

> Nonetheless, it is difficult to see how a teacher can contextualise and situationalise language without providing students with practice in using and expressing the most important notions of the language (in: Johnson & Morrow, 1981: 46).

On teaching material, which is one of the essential elements in the learning process, he found that:

> The basic question to ask is what, in the light of our present knowledge, is the best way of presenting material which summarises what needs to be known by students of a particular type. Such a summary may differ substantially in style from situation to situation, for different groups of learners need to know different things for different purposes (ibid. p. 46).

In simplification mother language (L1) contributes to learning the target language (L2) as a simplifier. For example, the transfer rules of syntax from Persian, which is However, the learner can adjust their mother tongue rules of application and use it in the target language. This is discussed on learning strategies by writers such as Ellis (1985). Ellis also put emphasis on function rather than form. This tactic can be applied to English oral discourse text.

Resulting from the use of language, talking involves both receptive and productive skills, aural and visual systems (Hatch 1978). Following this, Hatch (1978:404) claimed that a new approach could be developed through conversation analysis for second language learning. She wrote:

> It is not enough to look at input and to look at frequency; the important thing is to look at the corpus as a whole and examine the interactions that take place within conversations to see how that interaction, itself, determines the frequency of forms and how it shows language functions evolving.

Gumperz's writing (1978a, 1978b) on discourse analysis is the context-bound process of interpretation. This means that he used the contextualisation cues for discourse analysis. Most of the contextualisation cues included prosodic devices such as intonation, stress and paralinguistic ones such as pitch, register, rhythm and loudness as well as lexical or phonological voice. Gumperz discussed that the linking of paralinguistic cues and propositional content is adequate for the interpretation of specific utterances or interactive scenes.

Regarding various aspects of language, an Discourse analysis approach should be used to teach oral discourse through tactics such as information, direction and elicitation. In this respect Canale and Swain (1979:50) stated that:

> No communicative competence-theorists have devoted any detailed attention to communication strategies that speakers employ to handle breakdowns in communication; for example, other performance factors, how to avoid grammatical forms that have not been mastered fully, how to address strangers when unsure of their social status – in short, how to cope in an authentic communicative situation and how to keep the communication channel open.

The encouraging point found in this quotation is the use of little grammar in oral discourse. These writers also believe that language teachers should involve themselves in the strategic, linguistic, and communicative dimensions of language interaction.

4.6.3 Discourse analysis in the 1980s

To Sinclair (1980), a replication methodology can be applied to learn the second language. That is, the learners should learn the language through actually using the language to perform their activities which go on in their real world outside the classroom. If that authenticity does not exist in class the teacher should attempt to mediate that situation. Learners can adjust their language behaviour in the case of new confrontations. Robinson (1980) argued that the conceptual paragraph can be as a unit of scientific discourse. She also put stress on the indicators of transition from different stages of discourse in English, such as connectives like "firstly, moreover" and she adds that these are ignored in English.

Sinclair (1980) considered the value of 'outcome' as an important feature of the interaction in the classroom. The first interaction was to correct the form of the target language by the learners through the teacher's question. The second interaction was produced by the student in a role-play.

Here the aim is to produce an utterance within the constraints of the role-play exercise. The third kind of interaction was any utterances made by the students in any other activities in the class. Sinclair claims that the object, though gained through the use of language, is metalanguage. It is to win in the game, play or other activities. This object is the outcome to Sinclair and this object makes a real and natural communication which indeed incorporates the use of language outside

the classroom. Canale and Swain (1980:44) suggest that classroom activities should include:

> aspects of genuine communication such as its basis in social interaction, the relative creativity and unpredictability of utterances, its purposefulness and goal-orientation, and its authenticity.

Related to this Long(1981) pointed out that, 'the modification of interactional input is enough for second language learners to learn it.' This is debatable because learners learn a language when they practise and use that language. He also noticed that learners who can converse with native speakers experience a good opportunity to learn and understand a language. To him, input and the modification of used language are sufficient requirements for a new construction of oral discourse, but it is crucial for English teachers not to ignore the importance of the ability of English students through their prior knowledge. When learners do not produce the target language themselves there will be negative consequences from learning, because, despite learners' prior knowledge, no practice is involved. As a result, English learners have a lack of know-how in language use and are unable to use English. Holec (1981:448) discussed micro-linguistics, and explained that in a micro-linguistic approach the linguistic information was not so related as pedagogical information; that is to structure, solicit and respond. This new analysis of the function of the utterance was in relation context, situation, speakers, and non-verbal signals for language teaching. Hence, it was a means of communication. He pointed out:

There is less talk of 'grammar' and structure': the key words are 'communication' and 'discourse function'. It is no longer a matter of knowing how to build forms called 'sentences', but of knowing how to use them to good effect for the purpose of expressing certain functions.

Moreover, Brumfit (1981) said when the teacher asks students to act the thing which has not been taught, he is intervening at 'the vertical' or expansion level and when the content has been taught by the teacher, at 'the horizontal' level. This latter one can be considered as practice. Kramsch (1981) introduces practical forms of teaching discourse in the classroom, such as: turn-taking, paragraph organisation, negotiation for meaning, word associations and kinds of games, for example, 'What's My Line?' to make quarrels, or communication through bodily expressions, like facial expression, eye-contact gestures and the like. She has developed a sophisticated method, both in theory and practice, on oral discourse analysis. Kramsch argues that in L2 teaching adults can operate the conversation through a query. She further states that discourse is concerned with function and use of language, and most classes are not real life type situations. The speaker must speak as briefly and simply as possible. She then concludes that learning a foreign language means learning these various treatments. Regarding language use, many other writers have emphasised the learning of a language for its use purposes, such as Breen and Candlin (1981:64) who claim:

> If we present the learner with language only as an object, we are almost certainly postponing development of the learner's ability to communicate through the language.

To these writers learning a language is associated with understanding the meaning through the use of that language with other individuals. These issues

are discussed by both Long(1981) and Krashen (1982) as well. Krashen did not put an emphasis on speaking, in other words the speaking role is minimised. To him input is the unique salient key to learn a language. Despite Krashen's assertions obviously for English use, learners need more than just input such as practice, internalisation or interpretation. After input is received by the learner the presenter should attempt to use the previous commonly learned lexical items, in order to interpret and determine the precise meaning of those items or vocabularies. This causes the learner to recall those particular labels which enhances the interpretation and consequently the oral discourse production as well.

Further to this, Larsen-Freeman (1980: vii) defines the type of Discourse analysis which most matches and reflects the proposed approach as follows as an:

> Approach which allows the researcher to study the acquisition of the semantic. Thus communicative, and pragmatic functions of language, the input to the learner, and the learner, and the input, product interaction might yield some important insights that researchers in the second language field have been denied by focusing solely on the forms within sentences in learners' speech. An approach which supports just this is discourse analysis.

As she indicated grammar has been taught so far with no satisfactory results, particularly in oral discourse in Iran. This is also discussed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1981:28):

An informative is an act whose function it is to pass on ideas, facts, opinions, information and to which the appropriate response is simply to acknowledge that one is listening.

One aspect of the use of discourse analysis is focused on the listener as the receiver of the message. This is argued by Prabhu (1982) where he pointed out that the receptive system had to be improved for a developed production by teacher's talks and he sees it through trial and error by learners for this development. However, his main concern is on the problem-solving approach that is effective in teaching the structure of the language, that is, the "semantico-grammatical" syllabus to the Banglore project in India. Gremmo and Carton (1985) discussed an oral lesson, introducing an authentic materials handout. In the specialised oral expression class, each learner gives a short presentation to the group on his own selected topic. Lecture and discussion can be recorded and sometimes filmed for further discussion and criticism. Edmondson (1981) argued that any use of language is a communication or at least an 'attempted communication' adding that 'a series of verbal acts are made coherent by the social structure in 'which they are legalised' (p.82). To Edmondson, interactional structure is critically determined beyond act, namely the interactional move, as it is at this level that turn-taking takes place. In his writing a great unit is 'exchange' which is a combination of moves. Exchanges form linkages and phases of the conversation. Therefore, turn-taking should take place after one or more phases of conversation so that a coherent and meaningful phase of message can be presented and the floor is prepared for changes in the informative and scientific situation.

Krashen stated that an interesting way of discourse study is to examine the process of change that takes place when we move along the pragmatic presuppositional depth representation of a discourse (in: Van Dijik, 1985:245). This is also supported by Devonish (1986:45) who wrote:

> the everyday language used by ordinary members of a community is the most effective language medium for releasing creativity, initiative and productivity among the members of such a community. (ibid. p. 44-45)

Later, Prabhu (1987) discussed the 'structural-oral-situational' method (S-O-S) as a well-established method of teaching English. This method was inspired by Palmer's (1921) insight that learners of a language internalise the structure of the language spontaneously and use it in the same way in language content that can be selected for teaching a particular topic in class. Grammar can be taught with exercise patterns and will be transferred to the other parts by the learner. As Palmer says, 'we learn without knowing what we are learning' (Palmer 1921:44). Discourse analysis approach as a workable teaching method can be implemented like the S-O-S method, which has its own principles – planned progression; pre-selection; and form-focused activity. Overall, the S-O-S approach's emphasis is on internalising the form with meaning in specific situations. In this way, discourse with new structures is devised by the learner.

In fact, an effective syllabus design, prior to its implementation or teaching approach, has to match with factors such as social, political and economical features as well as the needs and interests of the students. This has been discussed

earlier by Swales (1980) who called these barriers "constraints". He emphasised these factors to be prior to teaching in the classroom. In other words, these factors are considered as prerequisite to classroom culture. Students should do most of the meaningful talking from the topic provided by the teacher. The role of the teacher as a conductor is to make all students participate in class conversation.

In relation to classroom learning and speaking, Willis (1984:32) suggests that there are three types of classroom speaking activities which can be identified as follows:

a) citation including certain activities such as repeating, transforming and expansion to propositions going on in class. For example, the teacher asks the pupil a question:
T: What am I holding in my hand?
P: English textbook
b) Simulation activities such as discussion and role-play, like
T: What are you?
P. An English student.

Such questions in fact are real and factual because they are close to real situations. However, they are not spoken by a native speaker of English and in most cases the discussion is simulated, for example, in role-play exercises where participants are not 'real' persons and therefore do not have the same feelings. In connection to this, Finocciaro and Brumfit(1984:8) argued:

Too much emphasis was often placed on mechanical repetition of the tape and the objective mastery of sentence pattern rather than creative or real communicative use of language.

So, according to these writers the communicative use of language and utterance enhances language learning, in particular fluency. Brumfit (1984) focuses on

content for sophisticated discourse, as well as the small group size of classroom whereas Crocker has given his idea on the use of language in the Means Analysis and argued that:

> The main point about a use of language is that it is motivated, that is, there is a reason why a particular thing is done in a particular way. The language sample from a domain of use is the product of that motivation as disciplined by the working procedures, the methodology, of a particular area of human activity (in Swales & Hassan Mustafa 1984:139).

Pedagogic grammar is taught through its association with a context in a way that students use the language, and form utterances when they are asked by the teacher. To him, vocabulary should be taught through the use of the word based on the meaning in a context. Evaluative acts of teachers and the exchanges between students and teachers can enhance relevant vocabulary items. In classroom discourse, teachers do not let learners take much time to create utterances. To Brumfit there is a possible content force which is problematic to the learner. That is the content should be chosen in a way that fits with the understanding level of the learner. Moreover, he puts more emphasis on thinking associated with the content of the teaching materials. Both speaker and listener make impressions on each other through verbal interaction in the process of opening, closing and reply (Riley, 1985).

Few studies have dealt with the difficulty of oral discourse. In oral discourse, in particular, authentic and natural performance is important. This is why we see today that second language learners such as English learners still have problems in

different aspects of language use from start to pause, hesitations and fluency. This could have been reduced or quite likely eliminated by the use of language and development of rules. Students should paraphrase whatever they understand from an article or heard discussion and learn to recognise the markers which connect sentences to form coherent utterances and the way vocabulary is used by the teacher, cassette or videotape. After a presentation by the teacher or one of the students, the other students can begin practising these topics in pairs. One student may summarise an article while the other student is checking the linguistic features, such as markers or signs, and the relevant meaning. These students can carry out their discussions in a kind of role-play and change roles. The teacher should go around and control the pair work, and when mistakes are noticed, question with words like 'really'? or 'how can that be?' Then, the teacher offers his comments and listens to each pair for 10 to 15 minutes. Group work is emphasised in English classes.

Going deeper into this, Klippel (1984) claimed that there are two types of activities for discussion. He called them 'the Information gap' and 'the Opinion gap'. The Information gap is used for exchanging the information to solve a problem, or giving a solution to it. 'The Opinion gap' is a type of activity used for sharing feelings, exchanging ideas, or to describe and discuss. To Klippel, teachers should not correct students immediately but let them correct themselves and only help them when really needed. Further expanding on this Willis and Willis (1988) argued that the communicative method and textbook syllabus are mismatched

because of the ever-present grammar in the syllabus. They asserted that the present textbooks have no harmony with communicative methods for their form-focused structures rather than meaning-based and or lexical language. For example, the passive and the conditional do not need to be presented as structures, because they can be simply produced by learners through meaning. This is an encouraging view which can be expanded to the other possible grammatical replacements to lexical meaning-based constructions. The reason is that the so far grammar-based syllabus has provided barriers to learning progression and has caused failures, particularly in communicative aspects.

4.6.4 Discourse analysis in 1990s

Especially in present day English programmes, teaching methods have negative outcomes in Iranian universities, in that English students cannot communicate and cannot use the learned language. Swales (1990: 29) offered a definition of community discourse:

> Common goals, participatory mechanics, information exchange, community specific genres, a highly specialised terminology and a high level of expertise.

To him a speech community is different from a discourse community, because a speech community forms in a "hereditary" way whereas a discourse community forms through " persuasion, training or a relevant qualification".

Other writers have emphasised language use such as Fasold (1990:65) who argued that Discourse analysis deals with meaning and use: "the study of discourse is the study of any aspect of language use". Indeed, utterances need no grammatical back-up. In relation to this Brown and Yule (1984:1) had stated earlier that:

> The analysis of discourse, is necessarily, the analysis of language in use. As such, it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions which these forms are designed to serve in human affairs.

More on this is offered by Bhatia (1993:148) that:

> In the late sixties and early seventies, the introduction of linguistics and Discourse analysis started having some influence on a wide range of language teaching courses, especially in the case of English courses for a variety of specific purposes. In the last twenty-five years, modes of Discourse analysis have changed considerably; however, language description continues to be the main source of strength for ESP theory and practice.

As these views indicate, the analysis of discourse is focused more on teaching through meaning, purpose and function of the language in context, not only on grammar through which specific order purpose is realised. This is supported by Beveridge (1994:96) who pointed out that:

> Where pupils have difficulties in peer relationships which interfere with their learning, it is important not only to help them as individuals to develop their confidence and social skills, but also to work with the class as a whole in order to ensure that they do not become the subject of teasing, ridicule or rejection.

As Beveridge stated, I also found in my personal teaching that encouraging silent students developed their confidence and made them an active participant rather than passive and quiet. In this connection, Langford(1994:12) argued that:

> messages can be produced to help the language learning through diverse voices such as 'whisper voice, loud voice, whining voice, laughing voice, the going up, the voice going down, the voice going up and down, stress, pause, sighs, laughter, snorts, gestures, etc'.

So, according to Langford's statement spoken language, oral discourse can be transmitted in a variety of means for analysis. This depends upon the specific purpose, kind of listener/s and the situation in which the language is used.

In relation to this, Harrison (1994) urges:

> Whatever the choice of a community or nation for a common language, the guiding principle must be that language policies should be aimed to release and empower people, to communicate in their community (in Hayhoe & Parker, 1994: 45).

In Speech Act Theory Schiffrin (1994) pointed out that both Austin (1962), and Searle (1979) discussed that language is for describing the world as well as the actions laid down in the performance of the utterances. For example 'I will see you tomorrow' is a promise speech, whereas ' Trees are fruitful' is an asserting speech. For the most part we see that, because of the variety of speech, the interpretation and understanding of speech relates to the common knowledge of the participants. Context of situation determines the meaning for the particular use of discourse. The context includes elements such as physical setting, social

roles, relationship of speech to other activity and other information, usually a link to past experience. In fact, an utterance is a combination of linguistic and situational relationships. Speech Act Theory is an approach to Discourse analysis which is based on knowledge for production and interpretation through the use of words in a context. This sort of analysis is also supported by writers in this relation such as Schiffrin (1994:419) who said :

> To understand the language of discourse, then, we need to understand the world in which it resides, we need to go outside of linguistics. When we then turn to a linguistic analysis of discourse - to an analysis of utterances as social interaction - I believe that we will find that the benefits of our journey have far outweighs its costs.

She also argued that (1994:229):

> Despite their seeming passivity pupils preferred 'active lessons' in which they could get on and do things rather than sit and listen to the teacher. That some pupils expressed a keen interest in games, PE and dance, for example, suggest a desire to be actively involved and willingness to co-operate with others.

To Collins there are four types of withdrawal from talk in class: 'being invisible, refusing to participate, hesitation and an appropriate focus'. She offered some factors of persuasion that she achieved such as teacher's support and small group work that were used to great effect in empowering quiet students to take a more active role in their learning process. She asserted that security comes from an explanatory clear and consistent way of participating. To her, teachers should take the following steps (Collins, 1994: 272):

> 1. The teachers clearly understood the principles that underlie the value of talk for learning.

2.The teachers made their views clear to their pupils, both in the way they acted and in explaining their expectations of classroom talk.

3.The lessons provided pupils with an appropriate level of security and challenge.

4.The teachers were aware of the difficulty experienced by quiet pupils and were prepared to make allowances for this during the lesson.

5.The teachers showed a genuine interest in the progress of individual pupils.

Salkie (1995: ix) pointed out discourse analysis as "one area of linguistics, the systematic study of language. Thus text and discourse analysis is about how sentences combine to form texts." He argued that discourse analysis can be used for teaching English language for providing coherent texts with appropriate links between the constituent words. In fact, to Salkie text or discourse is beyond sentence level with the participation of two or more participants. He also believes that main words would help listener for coherence through repetition. These points are encouraging in the convention of meaning because other substitutes would make the text ambiguous. For example, when we say telephone is good to talk because it would give you comfort and relief. The word "it" makes the statement not clear because this term does not show clearly that it is a substitute for telephone or for comfort or relief. However, the use of a clear synonyms is recommended. Not only synonyms but, opposites, ellipsis, connectives and simplification or the like would be employed as effective strategies in English teaching/learning. To him the knowledge and expectations of language users of a text beyond sentence level are the main coherent elements, but he has ignored to

discuss many more influential factors such as context, gestures and the like which play important role for meaning. In this connection, Ivanic (1997: 17) wrote:

> The term discourse is used as shorthand for a complex concept, and is used in many different ways by different people, usually but not always involving the use of language, often including for more than language. Like producing and receiving culturally recognised, ideologically shaped representations of reality. The term refers more to the *process* of representing reality than the product, but encompasses both.

It is interesting to know that the process which Ivanic is talking about deals with both linguistic and paralinguistic features such as visual bodily and other media for representing a discourse as an interactive process. Amongst all these discoursal analysts who mainly ignored the strategies of learning Allwright (1995) has briefly argued for strategy analysis, which is of my main concerns in this study. However, Allwright has neglected to give a detailed discussion on the use of the effective strategies through discourse when he wrote:

> This seeks to establish how the learners wish to learn rather than what they need to learn. By investigating learners' preferred learning styles and strategies we get a picture of the learner's conception of learning (in ESP Newsletter, IATEFL, Nov. 1995, p.37).

One of the main objectives in this study is to find a way or ways to improve Iranian university students' fluency through the use of discourse analysis approach. It is expected this can be fulfilled by applying a discourse analysis approach. This has been supported by some writers before such as Johnson (1979:199), as quoted by Courtney (1996:319) that:

> Fluency in communicative process can only develop within a task-oriented teaching-one which provides 'actual meaning' by focusing on tasks to be mediated through language, and where success or failure is seen to be judged in terms of whether or not these tasks are performed.

Of course, he means by 'task' in this assertion, class oral activity. Courtney pointed out that in peer group tasks where two learners negotiate the meaning actual language learning happens. In this kind of task learners try to discuss the diverse aspects of task even those unfamiliar ones in order to obtain their discussive aims. Courtney did his research with first year university students in Hong Kong and took a step further and argued that:

> Research in this tradition attempts to describe and understand how learners use language to become competent performers in social situations. This social context is seen both as a necessary and desirable pedagogic setting...peer tutoring is increasingly encouraged as of social and pedagogical benefit in relation to taught courses, but is also increasingly a feature of self-access methodologies where students are primarily responsible for organising their own learning and subsequent feedback (ibid.:320).

In this connection Boyle (1996) discussed how presentation would be patterned, 'modelling oral presentations' and quoted from Hymes (1983: 122) that:

A   A. first, begin one's argument.
    B.Next, develop that.
B   C. At the point where this development is finished, turn the idea to a sub theme where there is a connection, but not a directly connected association (to the major theme).
    D. Last, bring all this together and reach a conclusion.

Boyle deepened the argument by pointing out how logical sequence relations happen in oral presentation in which relations:

> are created when the speaker juxtaposes two or more pieces of information that are logically connected, and when one purpose of this juxtaposition is to answer the kinds of question that members of the audience consciously or unconsciously formulate as they listen (ibid.:118).

When two or more pieces combine together as Boyle has pointed out then we will find a more concrete meaning out of those pieces of utterances than their separate or individual ones. This helps provide better and closer meaning to the listener. Regarding this Boyle suggested that:

> as students learn to build clause relations into their texts and then to examine problematic utterances with clause relations in mind, their subsequent presentations display greater cohesion and clarity. ...the students have demonstrated that some aspects of this approach such as the use of the problem-solution pattern and of lexical signals, are easy to master. A number of students have remarked that the work has given them confidence, and that they have delivered presentations successfully in their own departments (ibid.: 125).

He also believed clause relations can be indicated by the use of 'subordinators, lexical signals, and lexical repetition, or by means of lexical and grammatical parallelism' (p.120). The researcher concluded:

> non-native speakers can gain a great deal of confidence as a result of giving a successful oral presentation. They can gain even more confidence if they know that the procedure they are following in the construction of their presentation and in its subsequent evaluation is based on significant research in Discourse analysis rather than the teacher's intuition...the clause relations and the lexical signals can help them (students) to project their intentions clearly (p.125).

Davies has argued that language learning is undermined in the English National Curriculum, which needs to be emphasised because it develops pupils' learning. She refuted that curriculum and suggested that teachers should take their own styles in teaching and resist the curriculum. She then continued:

> Teacher educators must resist the temptation to only explain what are the Programmes of Study and Assessment requirements. In their own practice with education institutions, as well as in their advisory capacity visiting schools, tutors must insist that student teachers focus on developing children's learning skills, rather than being slaves to the curriculum (Davies, 1996:55).

Davies has addressed certain strong and encouraging points that student teachers should use them to help their teaching. She suggested:

> In training teachers, the only responsible route to take is primarily to assist student teachers in their understanding of children and how they learn, keeping the curriculum in its rightful secondary position. The National Curriculum should not be the driving force behind what teachers do, it is the children who should be at the centre (Davies, 1996:54).

4.7 Views on input

Genuine communication would be ideal if the conditions that a few writers claimed could remain constant, but we as teachers know that this is not possible at least in the Iranian teaching programme, because both teacher and student have to follow the advanced prepared schedule as produced by syllabus designers. It is clear, on the other hand that, in natural settings both parties go on according to previous experiences. Krashen (1979a) focused on the need to manage conversation and comprehensible input. He believes conversation can be produced through monitoring input hypothesis by memorised patterns and routines. He writes that for monitor use, the rules should be learnable, and learners should be able to use those new rules. In other words learning speaking skills through memorisation, or routines and patterns needs competence. He writes that second language classroom discourse is limited even if it is very natural and authentic. Krashen has a notable view about correction in the classroom. Corrections should be done only in simple learning, and not in the complex use of learning, because ambiguous knowledge becomes clear in common communication through being exposed to comprehensible input.

What Krashen claimed is not practical, that is even if we consider 'input' as sufficient for reception we will still need other factors for production. One rationale is that in the mother tongue a child is always attempting to keep up with what is going on around them. Besides this a child is always practising what they have heard. Fraser and Rintell (1980) write about linguistic competence and pragmatic competence, that what the utterance means depends upon how, and in what context it is spoken and the extent of mutual concern between the speaker and hearers. The writers have attempted to provide the readers with a link and the context of the oral discourse. However, relevancy and shared knowledge should be more stressed for the interpretation and specific meaning as they write:

> Thus, whereas linguistic competence can be viewed as the knowledge required to construct or understand well-formed sentences of the language, pragmatic competence can be viewed as the knowledge required to determine what such sentences mean when spoken in a certain way in a certain context (p. 77).

The writers should have put more emphasis on vocabulary and coherence rather than on cohesion for relevant meaning. The English teacher should use creativity, and point out that a student can distinguish scientific phrases to use. For instance, 'deficiency, error, gap, problem, unsatisfactory, and ineffective' as negative terms. This assists students to get insights into the meaning and the way of vocabulary use as well as communicative skills. This can be done through a model presentation by the teacher, a guest speaker or a videotape. The student should choose their topic and present it for about ten minutes and engage the class in

questions. The student should consider essential vocabulary, transitional phrases or important functions and concepts and use audio-visual tools.

In addition, oral style is best when it relies upon a well-organised outline which serves to prompt the speaker's thoughts and speech. The audience or other students should prepare questions and comments. The presenter should say when the students can ask the questions during or after their presentation. The presenter should also check if the listeners understand what (s)he presents, and use visual aids, for example, to show a model or real object. The teacher can check with the presenters in the class or in private in order to assist them when they need help. Oral presentation gives confidence to the presenter in the use of language in real situations. Stevick (1980) in <u>Teaching Languages: A way and ways,</u> claims that what is the most important thing in learning a language is what goes on between the learners in the class.

The English class in the discourse analysis approach can be divided into small groups which helps the shyer students to talk more and other students to talk in the class most of the time.

Krashen (1982) proposed that learners should start their course at a level a little higher than their available knowledge of language to understand the meaning. He believes that language learners can learn a language by understanding messages, that is, by receiving comprehensible input. It is not necessary to acquire grammar,

because it is acquired through understanding a message slightly higher than the learners' level of related knowledge by extra-linguistic context. The input hypothesis has two aspects:

1). Speaking is not the cause of acquisition, rather it is its result.

2). If input is acquired, the necessary grammar is automatically learned, and he suggests that language teachers do not need to teach grammar.

Moreover, he added that learning a foreign language uniquely is accomplished through listening to an extensive input and filtering to the necessary level. Krashen believes that there is individual variation on the surface such as different sources of comprehensible input, different strategies for obtaining input, and the effect of an affective filter. He even denies practising and exercising the language. This is not acceptable because practice is necessary even in L1 where a child does a lot of practice until he or she learns the language. He compares L2 with L1 which is not true for the conditions of the learners as well as the context. There are many barriers in L2 learning that make it different from L2 learning. For example, the age, the time and budget for learning and more than all that the context and the existing relations between a child with the mother and the relations between a student and the teacher. The understanding of the learner after discussion with the speaker through crystal clear input improves the correction which replaces error with correct interpretation.

The central concern is that the teacher has been urged to provide for the active participation of the students. One way may be to use a system of vocabulary to match as accurately as possible the conversation. That is, the completion for language is through performance of conversations. One first learns how to interact verbally and then through conversation, the structural forms. Whatever presentations students make, the academic tasks play a central role in their learning, as the task directs attention to specific content through specific ways. The teacher should hold back the more talkative and draw out the timid ones. Students should require clarification by asking for repetition, 'pardon me', or for continuation with words such as 'wow' and 'that is interesting'. These are examples of conversational tools which can be applied to adjust the input and output of the discourse. The learner should make initiatives simulate the language, style, voice, manner of the teacher and shift roles, attitudes, topic, act, and express his own notions and feelings about the subject, in order to extend his discourse. English teachers and material developers and researchers should be made aware of each other's activities for better results. An oral conversation has a relation with some former speaker's speech. So there is a relevance between two speaker's minds and their familiarity and presupposition. The problem of students not using English language for communication is not exclusively dependent upon the knowledge of English of the students, but it is related to the know-how of English use in class. Krashen added that good teachers benefit from students' knowledge by discussing topics that are familiar to the students. The students' need, purposes and extensive vocabulary are emphasised as well.

Indeed, input is, as was discussed above, one of the main parameters for language learning, through Discourse analysis which must be comprehensible. Comprehensible means the language that the learner is exposed to can be understood. In classroom settings much of the input comes from the peers and the teacher. Input can be in form of confirmation checks, comprehension checks, clarification requests, repetition expansions, topic discussions, and questions. What Krashen claimed earlier was supported by writers such as Long (1981), and Swain (1984) when he pointed out that comprehensible input is necessary but not sufficient for full language development. Swain argues that input must be supplemented by output practice facilitating L2 development.

Kramsch (1985) writes about the procedure of sensitive discourse. She says that an approach must be provided to make students construct spoken discourse, and suggests a few points to help discourse-oriented class. These are discovering key words indicative of a given meaning; finding illustrations of a given motif; discovering regularities in content, sound or form. These help the learner produce simulated discourse.

I have so far viewed general aspects of the language teaching/learning process through an examination of discourse analysis in the literature. Now I will move to some specific features of language teaching through the use of Discourse analysis such as structure, and questions, to name only a few.

4.8 Views on structure

All the remarks given above indicate that Discourse analysis can be used for a wide variety of language usages. Here, a few key elements of language will be dealt with. Writers such as Gough (1975) believed that form cannot be studied apart from function. She discussed Discourse analysis, especially conversational analysis, as a method in which the researcher should consider the corpus as a whole and the interactions that determine the forms and the language function evolving from it. Scott (1981) stated that in the communicative approach, students use language. In so doing, students take on roles and interact with each other. The students will reflect their needs and the role of the teacher will subsequently change. Students in the communicative approach pass through four stages from, setting objectives, to presentation, to practice and to transfer and feedback.

For monitoring use, Krashen and Terrell (1984) grouped the students into under-users, over-users and optimal users. To the knowledge of these writers the best group is the optimal users. The other two groups of learners should adjust to fit in to the optimal users' group. They write:

> Even students who are fully capable of learning the most complex grammatical principles will not be able to utilise their knowledge very often in communicative situations. (p. 144)

They pointed out that speech errors must be accepted as a part of the natural conversational process. There seems to be an unrealistic view in McCarthy's (1991) belief in the inseparability of his sentential grammar and larger structure of

discourse and coherence of text construction. Whereas, intonation and pronunciation can constitute complete meaning without the use of such grammar. These are found in people's daily speech, for example, when the teacher asks the student 'Got the *book*? The student answers appropriately because of the context and the shared knowledge not because of the form which is affirmative structure. There is also another point in his writing which I would like to discuss, where he says:

> Active listeners, like active readers are constantly predicting what the message will be, based on the evidence of their world knowledge and the type of discourse they are engaged in. (p.142)

This is true for active readers to predict what is coming next, for structured written sentences are in front of them, but is not true for an active listener because there is not any definite unsaid text that he or she is able to predict. The presenter may bring up many new points and then it is not possible to foresee definitely. This is supported by Canale and Swain (1980).

In fact, what seems effective and most applicable for the prospective English class is to introduce the most important determinants and qualifiers of the oral discourse sounds made and heard: those are not words or sentences, but the understood specific terms in the context of the situation.

4.9 Students' questions

One of the prominent pedagogical points brought up by Barnes (1986) is teachers' reactions in dealing with learners' questions. He introduced questions such as factual (what?), reasoning (how? and why?) open and closed questions, but he did not introduce an approach to show how to teach them. In this case the questions should be put in class to be tackled by the students and, in case of need, the students should be provided with suitable directive solutions and cues for development by discussion, for example, offer a relevant topic for open questions. Learners should also use limits, 'try it out' patterns to provide feedback, but this requires a lot of time and funds.

Barnes like many other writers, believed in making principles as he said: 'if teachers work with their pupils to think rather than merely mimic, they need to find ways of making principles - the underlying rules on which their own thinking is based.' (p.64). Thus Barnes tacitly refutes rote-learning. He also stated that technical language offers just one channel to students and their learning is bound to it. He further warns that teachers are not always aware that their class discussion is not a real discussion for the learning purpose because it is usually a monologue whereas it should take place between the teacher and student and it is even much better if discussions be accomplished between the students themselves. Barnes added that true talk happens when the learners 'try it out '(in: Hayhoe & Parker,1994).

This would be more workable because of the limits of time and funding in the case of English. Concept and connotation, which he did not mention, can be the other channels for answers. For example, specific terms such as 'micro-fiche' can be defined or demonstrated to students in class via question-answer discussion.

4.10 Views on optimum learning

Kumaravadievelu (1994: 14) says, in order to maximise communicative learning, the following strategies are to be used:

Creative learning opportunities in class; utilise learning opportunities created by learner; facilitate negotiated interaction between participants and contextualizing linguistic input.

These strategies are surely workable at least partially in English classrooms. The reason I say this is that there are some other points developed in the writing of the writer above that comprehension and production involve rapid and simultaneous integration of syntactics, semantics, and discourse phenomena. This seems unrealistic for comprehension and production, at the syntactic, and semantic discourse levels do not occur simultaneously. For example, comprehension precedes production because production is the outcome of comprehension. This state is true also for discourse, semantics and syntax. Discourse should be followed by the other two related elements which together form the discourse. For instance, if syntax is taken as thesis and semantics as anti-thesis, then discourse is synthesis and these phenomena take place in various phases. These strategies are

stated in general terms and their procedures are not given in detail. Therefore, teachers find them difficult to follow.

Consequently, in an English class, discourse should be characterised by natural learner's task-centred, creative and purposeful talk. Creativity is an essential element in the production of langauge. Through creativity students find opportunities to practise language as much as possible. Students refine the exposed input to a correct and purposeful output in their class discussions. In this way the relevant grammatical and semantic and communicative elements will be practised. This results in learning a language through managing the learner's discourse in the language.

Therefore, the teacher as a manager manages learners' discourse. An English class should be focused on the basis of the discourse. For example, the English subject is used as a main source, and English as the medium. A comprehensible discourse depends upon continuity and uninterrupted connection and succession. This depends upon the uses of terms in the teaching/ learning process, such as using markers, or connectives such as 'however, then' and the like to continue the discourse.

To summarise, the discussion on optimum learning resulted in supporting the notion of using effective strategies such as question-answer, group discussion with creativity and purposefulness so as to maximise learning.

4. 11 Discourse analysis and English

We have studied English and Discourse analysis in the previous sections, now in this part I will deal with their relations. This means I shall attempt to explore how Discourse analysis can help us to teach English for its oral performance. In fact, the emphasis is on discussing how learning through the results of Discourse analysis is not separate from prior knowledge, settings, interests, and feelings for English students.

However, there is a body of knowledge and skills for English to be taught and learned. The role and relevance of learning to the prior knowledge and experience of the English learners has not been dealt with deeply enough in the English learning process. Learning deals with much more than an interaction with a massive body of knowledge. Indeed, learning can also take place out of the classroom in many situations. This involves complex and interactable issues, which need an individual as well as collective commitments and challenges. These experiences can shape and form life through learning and are dependent on the personal action and reaction in any given situation, for example, to discuss a topic in its specific workplace.

A number of writers who have studied English discussed the use of Discourse analysis in teaching English. Brumfit (1984) supports the discussion about English use that a proper pattern of education is based on analysis of the demands that can be made upon students in their future careers. This can be achieved through the manipulated and adjusted English curriculum which is not too time-consuming and brings about the optimum learning of knowledge and skills.

English in its second phase after syllabus design is mixed with discourse or rhetorical analysis. Views are given of the pioneers in this area such as Selinker, Trimble, Lackstrom whose work is linguistic analysis on textualization and the use of rhetorical devices, or Widdowson who has worked on language description from rhetorical and discourse organisation, from the general to the specific. Widdowson (1984) believed if we want to change the students from language learners to language users, we must develop a procedural way to process discourse. He also stated that students taking English courses need knowledge of the systemic and schematic features of the specific English which can be obtained through exercises of different types such as role-playing.

We can break classroom talk down into formal acts whose function is information transmission, and social relations, and informal talk with the function to keep social relationships. Robinson (1981) claimed that most work on Discourse analysis is related to general academic discourse. Robinson introduced an approach for 'the English in focus series to the reading and thinking series'. In this

approach ESP teachers usually refer to the English in focus series in the study of Discourse analysis because teachers search for explicit connectives, clear reference and the like. Moreover, he argued that students of ESP lack use of lengthy utterances. Textual-mapping devices or clarification of cognitive structuring such as embolding important sections are other factors to ease learning and understanding. His description of interactional analysis can be incorporated for the purposes of this study where he alleged that:

> However, interactional analysis is valuable for the significant contribution that it has made to the theory and practice of Discourse analysis by highlighting the interactive nature of discourse and also by focusing on the notion of structuring in language use (1993:11).

What Bhatia has offered needs to explore form-function correlations pedagogically as applied discourse in teaching as is recently explained by Biria and Tahririan (1994).

4.12 Testing oral discourse:

Iranian English teachers need to be familiarised with a suitable oral performance testing because they have not been practising this before, particularly in ESP classes. In general, testing is formally for two main purposes: first, to assess skill levels of the English students and, second, to determine if the programme has met its aims. In this way, evaluation can provide feedback both to the programme and to the learners. Oral testing can be used as a kind of progress test to show the level of oral discourse proficiency and should, therefore be appropriate to the needs required in the target language

in an interactional measurement technique. The test is performed in an orally discursive basis on covered or uncovered but relevant topics. However, a criterion-referenced test based on a restricted-response test is a suitable one to evaluate the level of language use of the English students. Certain desired variables can be measured through this testing as some are shown in the following charts.

4.13 Purposes of English students oral testing

Walker (1990:21) pointed out that:

> A direct test of oral communicative proficiency was desirable. Such a test could improve the overall accuracy of assessment and produce a general motivational effect toward seriousness. In addition, it could define what is to be learned and therefore not only orientates the student towards practising and developing oral communicative proficiency, but also directs the teacher's awareness to what she is teaching and what is being learned.

In fact, Walker has indicated positive points of oral test. In general, English students oral testing helps the following purposes:

1) To communicate with their peers, what and how they are expected to learn and perform.

2) To inform the other students of their progress and achievements.

3) To motivate and persuade each other to organise, review, and develop language learning.

4) To supply information for grouping if needed.

5) To inform the English teacher of their progress and to adjust their teaching process if necessary in order to enhance the programme.

6) To facilitate the learning through material adaptation and teacher-student interaction.

(7) To provide a representative picture of production as a whole feedback.

4.14 Critical issues in oral testing

Testing in an English programme is the measurement of student progress and achievement in the use of both English and the special subject. Evaluation is a value judgement or decision made after observation of the results obtained through English testing. It is the process of determining to what extent the objectives have been realised by the programme and the needs are met. A planned discussion that takes about 15-20 minutes during which the student's language use is exercised and rated is deemed necessary. Oral testing takes time because each individual student must be tested separately. To test English students it is necessary to design, develop and implement testing criteria and procedures which meet the expected requirements.

In fact, evaluation should be based on clear criteria which are set up and discussed by the teacher at the beginning of each term. To promote learning and make it feasible, learners' participation can be recorded on a chart during the whole term by the teacher. Usually students can be assessed through a mid-term and a final exam as well. Examination results are the key, but not the whole indicators, of the English teachers' approach, syllabus designers and students' achievements efficiency. Depending upon language teaching, there have been, by and large, alterations and modifications accordingly in the objectives and type of language tests. Regarding testing Wilkins (1976) pointed out that testing, like teaching, is broken into language components and it is used for whole language skills. This is because we would then assess the various aspects of language use by our learners such as hesitations, speed, size and length of speech or fluency particularly for meaning. Wilkins also believed that new techniques are needed for testing which will have great value and effects as follows:

> It would be a strange set of priorities that limited a teaching programme to what we were able to test effectively. But the forms of testing do have a considerable influence on the manner and the content of language teaching. Indeed, such techniques would be a valuable contribution to language testing (p.82).

In this connection Widdowson (1978) stated that recent trends in applied linguistics are aimed at teaching language as a universal and integrated

phenomenon for communicative purposes rather than teaching the structure of language with no practical use. Farhady (1980:36) believed that tests have not met the needs of real life situations. He asserted:

> However, the majority of language testing experts seem to agree on the point that DP tests (Discrete-Point test) require the examinee to manipulate highly artificial tasks which have little or no relevance to the actual use of those tasks in real life situations.

What Farhady has pointed can be changed to a normal and natural conversation which then would both party, tester and testee will benefit and enjoy of this conversation. Relevance to this type of testing is offered by Bachman (1990b) whose work focused on both competence and performance through discourse aspects. This model of testing tests the actual operation of language in real situations. However, Bachman's model had neither clear charts nor definite variables to be confirmed empirically. It had no clear explanation of the relations between discourse and its features to other elements of language test either. Therefore, it is difficult to measure the ability of a speaker's control over producing the utterances. This makes it difficult then to infer from texts and the ability to place the proper element according to the preceding context such as classification of lexical items within a hierarchy which need comprehension and paraphrasing. In addition to this, despite the idea that oral testing is difficult, it seems more pleasant. This view is agreed by some writers such as Walker (1990) whose research concluded that it is a practical

Proposition. He added that in spite of some assertions that oral testing is much more difficult than written testing this is a myth.

Testing, therefore, is the vital element in a continuous teaching-learning programme in English. It provides feedback to the learner, the teacher and the programme developer that can be used in evaluation.

4.15 Context effectiveness on English oral testing

English tests should be related to the objectives of the English programme and the process of teaching context. The weight given to testing speaking skills should have a real effect and emphasis on the classroom discussions, because the use of language is what the students are in need of. I will use both analytic and holistic rating: analytic testing for variables such as fluency and holistic testing for the whole learnt language in this proposed approach.

4.16 Instrumentality in testing

There will be a mid-term test worth 25% and a final exam 50% percent of the total mark (individual test); the other 25% of the mark will be made up of the results of students' class activities. The input is spoken in face-to-face communication. The independent variables, standardised received pronunciation use in terms of dimensions of fluency (length of utterance, speed, and

hesitation) and proper material performance (the level of special terms use and accuracy in meaning), are the other criteria of testing.

4.17 Unit of meaning

Unit of meaning in discourse analysis is not a fixed sentence or utterance, but a portion of oral discourse which supplies a meaning to the listener. So, it may be a paragraph, a simple utterance or less. Performance examples of this can be: `Please wait, I wonder if you could teach again the differences between air, earth, and water pollution, I am not so sure about it'. An analysis example follows:

<u>Utterance:</u>   <u>Example:</u>

a) Event :   Student attending lectures, discussions

b) Activity: Asking for clarification

c) Function: Question

d) Tones: Courteous, scientific

4.18 Testing Chart

The following testing chart provides the given specification procedures for an English (oral discourse) class test.

English Specification Testing Chart

	Independent Generative	Procedural Instruction
1	Testee 1.D.	University English Student
2	Special purpose	English for Ecology Students
3	Events/Activities	Context, class discussions, field visits
4	Instrumentality	Listening & speaking face-to-face
5	The level of use	Utterance size, fluency/ 20 points scale
6	Topics	Topics covered/not covered in the class
7	Language skills	Special language patterns/discourse features
8	Language function	Fluency, appropriacy of material use
9	Format	Restricted response to topic in time limit

The following charts classify the English students in three levels:

1) Expert speaker; students who achieved 16 or more points out of 20 points.

2) Good speaker; students ranged between 12-14.5 points.

3) Poor speaker; students ranged between 8 to 11.4.

N.B.Students who obtained below 10 points must repeat their course.

4.19 English oral discourse test scale

EXPERT SPEAKER

Level	Criteria	Skill Abilities
Expert Speaker	Size: length of utterance	a) Speaks fluently and meaningfully, in length; b) speaks on a variety of topics; c) uses informal grammar-structures; d) getting to the point; e) is a responsive; f) fluent conversationalist with no problem in the English-speaking environment.
	The level of special terms used	a) Can handle and apply special terms used in class; b) uses new terms covered in class at high level use.
	Speed	a) Speaks at normal rate, neither too slowly nor hesitantly; b) responds promptly.
	Accuracy	a) Uses exact terminology with appropriate structures; b) appreciates communicative value of English utterances.
	Hesitation	a) Starts like a native speaker without delay; b) does not change what has been said according to meaning and structure; c) has confidence and is relaxed.

4.20 Good speaker

Level	Criteria	Skill Abilities
Good Speaker	The level of special terms used	a) Can easily use the special terms applied in class; b) can discuss topics in proper terms but occasionally lacks a firm point of topic; c) is disturbed by distractions and new terms.
	Speed	a) Has occasional breaks at normal level; b) slower than expert speaker, but faster than poor one.
	Accuracy	a) Uses special terms at their disposal accurately but within limitations; b) not well ready to grasp any special relevant detailed terms.
	Hesitation	a) Prone to more false starts than a normal speaker; b) occasional pauses, a little uncertain on some assertions; c) overall a useful participant in a discussion or interview; d) can offer their ideas but level of fluency lies between expert and poor.

4.21 Poor speaker

Level	Criteria	Skill Abilities
Poor Speaker	The level of special terms used	a) Cannot use proper special terms for topics discussed; b) restricted specific terms in short sentences may be used; c) no expansion, few appropriate terms used; d) limited fluency in discourse.
	Speed	a) Needs slow discussion and repetition; b) has to take time to make sentences.
	Accuracy	a) Appreciates some utterances with limited fluency; b) cannot use exact special terms in discussion.
	Hesitation	a) Has pauses to form their sentences; b) partial understanding; c) fairly often has to search for words or hold their place with "ers";"emms".
	Size (length of utterance)	a) Comprehends a few short utterances; b) has difficulty in understanding the gist of the topics; c) can make only short sentences.

(The charts are adapted from Carroll's, 1980)

4.22 Analytic Test

This test will rate and examine the students' fluency and the accuracy of context production by answering the questions similar to what has been practised in the class. Each utterance answered by the student is evaluated for proper terms and meaning. For each grammatical mistake, such as incorrect use of verbs for subjects or tenses or vocabulary mistake (not using appropriate or equivalent term.), the student will lose 1 point out of 100 and each over 10 seconds delay in starting their speech will also lose one point. Questions can be a general one:

What does pollution mean?

Or specific like:

What is the difference between water pollution and air pollution?

Or comprehensive questions may include questions like:

1) How would ozone, which is an example of a pollutant from car engines, be prevented?

2) Breathing in a polluted city is difficult, how may this be decreased or stopped?

4.23 Holistic Test

This test is performed in order to assess the English students' overall language use. In this test the teacher will ask the student to talk about one or more new or previously covered topics for 10-15 minutes. (Here again meaning and time are carefully rated just like in the analytic test and this test has 50 marks out of 100 marks total, 50 marks has been given in the class.) I have provided a few examples for this test:

> T: Could you tell me something about environmental pollution?
>
> T: What was your favourite topic in the lessons we covered in class, and tell me why?

4.24 Result of English students speaking testing

The English students' achievement shows the fluency and certain other variables in their speaking skills and this indicates how much the programme has met the needs of the English course. Testing students should be both continuous (up to 50% of the overall mark), which allows the students to be assessed on their performance in a variety of oral situations during the period of the course; and an end (25% middle-term exam and 25% final) of the course assessment integrated into a single overall grade. After a successful course the students will be able to:

1) produce meaningful utterances by recombining the given scientific terms.

2) describe a familiar situation from texts or special scientific materials.

3) relate the episodes in the text.

4) ask for information using previously learned terms.

5) interview and discuss with fellow workers.

6) participate in field arguments.

7) express their ideas, feelings and take part in specific activities, work or study requirements to the expected extent.

4.25 Summative reflection

To summarise the critical points in the chapter, I have learned that majority of the writers talk about both linguistic and non-linguistic perspectives in teaching speaking skills. Many of these writers have not clearly introduced possible solutions for problematic issues such as suitable teaching techniques. Indeed, Discourse analysis is not the analysis of sentences in isolation but it deals with real talk as used by people in real situations. The review shows that Discourse analysis is used for understanding and use of language in a better and more productive way. For example, the specialised discourse of technicians, doctors and other professionals has a contextualised meaning and utterances, because special English requires a special intuition which is pertinent to its community.

It became arguably clear that in the 1970s Discourse analysis developed and progressed a great deal. However, there have been some points about the uses of Discourse analysis which required more investigations afterwards. Discourse analysis can be considered as an art in teaching which is an important pedagogic and educational goal in itself. Ultimately, rich combinations of communication competence and useful terms are started which result in use and meaning in creative ways.

However, from the pedagogical point of view, the needs of learners are to gain mastery- and control of language production. To do so, they have to have some knowledge of its potentialities and of its limitations both as a tool of expression and as a source of knowledge. For this purpose language needs to be taught as a totality of expression and content, if it is to be of any use. It seems to be beyond the teacher's knowledge or scope to follow psychologically from perception, encoding and decoding.

For the teacher, the pedagogical perspectives of the learning should be considered the most in practice. This would be instructed through the use of the result of the oral Discourse analysis in the classes. Practice and use of language by learners can be the basic stimulates to learning. Teacher's and peer's moral and spiritual proximity motivate learning. This affects learning, particularly in Iranian society because of its cultural features. Teachers then can make appropriate language

learning environments for necessary behaviour. This will be compatible with the conditions and purposes of English teaching that exist in the Iranian setting.

The conclusion drawn from the literature review shows that the most relevant oral Discourse analysis is the one offered by McCarthy (1991:5) that:

> Discourse analysis is concerned with the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used. It grew out of work in different disciplines in the 1960s and early 1970s, discourse analysts study language in use: written texts of all kinds, and spoken data, from conversation to highly institutionalised forms of talk.

In this part of the study, we have learned that attempts have been made to use Discourse analysis in various situations. For example, a very recent investigation was carried out by Biria and Tahririan (1994) who explored whether Discourse analysis is the most efficient approach to teaching English as a target language. Amongst the strategies used in most classes, group discussion has been the most effective and popular to apply, but these writers did not indicate the strategies and their application procedure for this approach.

However, in almost all cases, in class or out of class, for discourse consistency the students have to listen attentively as an input for speaking. This process has to be accomplished in turn. That is, only one person can talk to their listener/s at a time. This needs turn-taking, which comes next in views on strategies. Certain criteria of language use have impressive effects according to use. Some of these are

emphasised in this study. To this end, a number of them are analysed as follows: turn-taking; meaning; input; structure; questions and optimum learning, to give only a few.

The critical review in this chapter demonstrated that ESL in general and ESP in particular within its life span, since the 1960s has faced a lot of deficiencies. First of all, the majority of the teachers have not experienced teacher-training for this specific task, teaching English. Secondly, the textbooks are not prepared in a way to meet the real needs and interests of the learners specifically to use the learned language. This is argued and indicated by most of the ESP interviewees discussed earlier in the chapter. ESP is an independent learning programme with its specifications which make it different from GPE (general purpose English), though they share certain common characteristics. Consequently, it needs an independent programme. Many efforts have been made to show how to transfer the prior linguistic knowledge of ESP students to the use of English language, particularly in oral communication. The significance of usage is considered and the importance of use value is more emphasised. This is why many educators and practitioners have suggested the production of special textbooks and the establishment of particular approaches. Discussion of critical ideas, concepts, transferring information to schematic form and comment on the data show that these points help students learn to

perform oral communication in a relevant sequence and only use those required parts of grammar to construct a meaningful use of English. In this chapter we have had a brief review of Discourse analysis, now it is time to study ESL/ESP in the English system for comparison in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

English Language Teaching (ELT) in Iran

5.1 Introduction

English language teaching in the English system was discussed in Chapter 4, now it is time to examine ELT in the Iranian system for a comparative study and to see if there are positive applicable teaching strategies which can relate to the Iranian system. A summative reflection closes the chapter.

There is little to be found in the Iranian education experience regarding the diverse aspects of ELT. That is my personal experience, taken from some 12 years of teaching experience at Shaheed Beheshti University (which is the second largest one in Tehran), and it is this experience which is the main source I have used for this chapter. There is no question that a well trained teacher can teach more effectively, both theoretically and practically, than the one who has not been under any kind of training. In other words, that is what initial teacher training is mainly for – ultimately to improve classroom learning and practice. Teacher education in general provides the student teachers with theory and practice. In this way the theory provides the prospective teachers with knowledge and content and a broaden insight into teaching, whereas practice helps these teachers exercise handling a class by selecting a suitable teaching strategies and methods. This is why an examination of ELT has followed the chapter on teacher-training in order to make a linked review of ELT in the two system, the English speaking system

and Iran's system. In this way I can identify teaching strategies of the English system, which are suitable and applicable to the Iranian ELT programme.

Part 2 of Chapter 1 described Iranian teacher education and the inherent problems due to the lack of teacher education and training, especially in Iranian universities. English language teaching in Iran, since its origins, has not been appropriately designed, focused and targeted to meet the real and practical needs of its learners. For example, in the Iranian university setting, the main concern at the present is for reading rather than practice and oral production skills. Oral performance activities are neither included in English course books, nor offered by the teachers of English. As a result, students have little opportunity to practise and use the language in or out of classes. These students have a fairly strong background in grammar and vocabulary, but are not able to communicate in English and express their ideas. We have seen that there are a great deal of positive and encouraging features of the teacher-training in English system, which are useful and workable in the Iranian system. For example, having more teaching practice is one of the effective factors in initial teacher-training in the English system, which is lacking in Iranian teacher education and should urgently be introduced. In addition, the introduction of speaking skills is urgent, as is indicated in the interviews (see appendices C & D).

All university students have to take a definite number of English courses (obligatory courses). While the teaching of English language to learners has been

carried out for a long time, it is only in the last two decades that professional attention has focused on the target language itself. English learners are non-English speakers and require sufficient mastery of English to meet their target language needs and purposes. Issues such as the lack of teaching approach opportunity and the need to use English in real life situations is acknowledged by writers such as Biria & Tahririan (1994).

Dramatic changes in the various aspects of Iranian society, such as political, cultural, and particularly educational, and advances in technology in the recent years demand new strategies for English teaching/learning process in particular at university level. At this level English should be seen as a "world language" to connect Iran to the world at large. The strategies that are important are those which make the teaching/learning atmosphere creative and provide a critical framework for re-thinking educational objectives.

In fact, I have been concerned with the problem of English use by the university students ever since I started my teaching at the university. In most cases the students could not even express themselves. This led me to search for a solution to solve the problem as to what teaching/learning strategies are effective and how they could be used to improve oral discourse, in particular the fluency of the Iranian university students. More precisely, this is important because it will fill the gap of the oral weaknesses of the students through the opportunities which the proposed approach offers to the students. Therefore, I shall introduce English

language teaching methods in Iran and also provide an English speaking environment in order to extract those suitable teaching strategies applicable to the Iranian university, especially for improving the fluency of speaking skills.

To this end, I have used a variety of research tools to gather data, analyse, discuss and draw conclusion and at the end of the study relate the implications of the study to the Iranian university context. To do so, a multidimensional study seemed necessary. Research similar to this has been carried out on other aspects of English language teaching, particularly for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course design, whereas this study examines English language teaching approach by using discourse analysis.

In fact, the actual use of English is considered as an essential element of teaching the subject, as is evidenced by writers such as Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), Sinclair (1980), Swales (1980), Swales & H. Mustafa (1984), Larsen-Freeman (1986), Abdesslem (1992), Biria & Tahririan (1994), Schiffrin (1994), McCarthy & Carter (1995), and Boyle (1996). In order to examine this approach to ELT and to identify other problems and issues I carried out the fieldwork for my study in Tehran Teacher Training University.

The first point to note is that there is no standard and up-to-date teaching approach used in existing English language teaching practised by the teachers at

university level. Almost all English classes are still teacher-centred in Iranian universities.

Another major difficulty of English language teaching in Iranian universities is that students who can use the most complex scientific discourse in their native language often find themselves in the situation where they cannot comprehend the academic lectures given in English or interact with others in the English language. This is true particularly for ESP students whose ability to communicate is minimal, and their oral expression poor. This is what I have encountered during my years of teaching in Iranian universities which is supported by the work of Iranian university teachers mentioned above.

Consequently, my main aim in this thesis is to propose a new approach, suitable for the needs of an English language programme for Iranian English teachers and learners. Such an approach might provide a solution to this critical problem of lacking effective communication. This is critical, because arguably the main purpose of learning any language is to interact with others in that particular language, to convey information and exchange views. Writers mentioned earlier, in addition to English teachers and also graduates I have interviewed, support this view. In studies of English language teaching, according to writers such as Widdowson (1978), Robinson (1980), Brumfit (1984), and Biria & Tahririan (1994) many key issues remain unresolved. One important deficiency is the limited use of oral discourse analysis in the majority of English language classes,

especially in Iranian universities. Although I am not using the hypothetical-deductive model of enquiry I do have a hypothesis which I wish to examine. This may be summarised as follows:

If the approach of oral discourse analysis is used in teaching English courses to Iranian university students, this may improve the students' oral ability, in particular their fluency.

I shall identify any significant difference of achievement between students using the English language in the classroom for speaking skill improvement with those using other teaching approaches. This needs to be examined practically and I shall discuss it in chronological order. In this present chapter a background to the study, and some necessary definitions are presented for clarification. A summative reflection provides a link between this chapter to the next one.

The final aim of my study is to provide the Iranian university students with the ability to use English language in a variety of situations. In practice, this means that the students should be provided with as many opportunities as possible during their course. These will include everything from giving a short talk and answering questions on it to taking part in a group discussion in response to an extract from their materials covered in class or any new subject. This means students will be looking at their ability to vary their use of spoken language according to the needs and demands of the participants – their teachers and peers. For example, it is

important to see if students handle formal situations such as giving a talk, explaining or describing how things work as well as informal situations such as interviews, or discussions in a group, with equal ease. Students need to know that, they need to:

a. Speak clearly, taking care that everyone can hear;

b. Show enthusiasm, show that the topic is interesting;

c. Be positive and friendly, with a sense of humour, and be approachable; eye contact is important;

d. Pause after an important point in order that point they may be understood by the other students and be prepared to respond to any questions.

In addition the presenter should try to deliver the topic appropriately by the use of all available materials such as pictures, diagrams, gestures and any other educational aids.

5.2 Background to the study

Iranian university English learners, even after graduation, have urgent problems in the use of English language. Even though the majority of these learners know grammar and vocabulary at an advanced level, they are unable to use this knowledge orally, a point argued and supported by Biria & Tahririan (1994). The main reason I found for this during my own teaching experience is that there are no oral practice opportunities or activities in designed course books, nor is this provided by the teachers in their teaching approaches. In fact, teaching/learning is

not focused on oral performance and use of the English language. English language teachers apply their own methods to teach the students, which may incorporate a variety of teaching methods from the Grammar-Translation to the Audio-Lingual, but none are Communicative. In brief these methods can be explained as follows:

5.2.1 The Grammar-Translation Method

This method is still used in Iranian universities nowadays. The main purpose is to familiarise the learners with translation and reading the literature, and experiencing their native language through the grammar of the target language. Both the teacher and students focus on reading the target language and translating it into the native or L1 (mother language of the learners), using this language for most of the class time. For example, an English passage is read and translated into the Persian Language (L1) by the students. The teacher normally asks the questions and answers in Persian most of the time. This method puts more emphasis on reading and writing. Therefore, the students do not usually carry out oral performance in the target language and consequently it does not prepare the students for the use of the target language (English).

5.2.2 The Direct Method

In the Direct Method, normally the main purpose has been to use the target language in class activities with certain rules and structures. Although it is claimed that all four language skills are taught through this method, oral performance is

very limited and it is insufficient for routine language use. In the Audio-Lingual method some linguistic and behavioural aspects are emphasised and less attention is paid to communication. In this method a sort of rote learning through memorisation rather than internalisation and use of English is stressed. Imitating a language without understanding it may not be useful and the learners would not be able to make new speech patterns, in other words, it is a type of parrot learning (for more details see Chomsky, 1959). Structured learning is limited and does not help the learners to be empowered to initiate new patterns. This method provides insufficient practice to prepare learners for language expansion and use.

5.2.3 The Communicative Method

This method with all its advantages over the other teaching methods of oral production is still inadequate for ideal learning, at least in Iranian universities, due to the lack of opportunities for communication. One of the advantages is that the speaker can change the level of the speech and match it with the level of understanding of the audience. Learners of this method need to have a sound knowledge of the target language. This method, however is not suitable for Iranian university students because it is time-consuming, whereas a minimum of grammar acquisition can work better especially for the ESL/ESP students who have a short time and limited courses for learning. Therefore, all current methods employ a certain set of rules and structures, which do not suit the learning process. These methods have resulted in the failure of our learning procedures in Iran. This is why the practitioners and researchers believe they need a suitable and

practical approach to learning language (Larsen-Freeman,1982 and Schiffrin 1994).

Before discussing English language programmes and their different aspects in relation to the development of a new method, I shall examine some key deficiencies of a previously well used method. The most used method, the Audio-Lingual Method, originated from the disciplines of descriptive linguistics and behavioural psychology. This method has some teaching principles similar to that of the Direct Method, yet the use of English as a target language is not incorporated. Wilkins (1976:12) discusses this issue as follows:

> The grammatical syllabus focuses learning on the core and not on the distribution of that cores in particular uses. As a result, even the learner who knows the core may not be able to communicate adequately when he finds himself in a situation requiring language.

This is also pointed out by Larsen-Freeman (1986), who stated that communication is focal in the target language.

5.2.4 The Audio-Lingual Method

Although in the Audio-Lingual Method all lessons are taught in the target language, there is inadequate use and practice of the target language by the learners. The teacher is the sole speaker in the classroom. The Communicative Approach to language teaching, which has been dominant in applied linguistics since the late 1970s (Littlewood 1981), also emphasises the importance of meaning and context. In all previously used methods the learners have no

Opportunity to use the learned language and remain unable to express their thoughts. This is not only the case in Iran or non-English speaking countries as is agreed by Stones (1992:57) who states:

> My experience with teachers in all stages in their careers suggests to me that they, too, underestimate its (teaching) complexity. This is not surprising since they have all spent a lifetime in a society that equates teaching with telling, and teachers are unlikely to have discussed such matters or to have addressed in their training the problems caused by this assumption.

The failure of the Audio-Lingual Method led practitioners to develop new approaches to teaching. The Communicative Approach has a sound basis in the use of English as a target language. However, some adherents of the Communicative Approach avoid giving a context-free focus to any element of language teaching and tend to neglect grammar altogether in favour of conversational interaction (Hatch 1978) or comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982). In fact, it is arguable that grammatical competence is only one dimension of language use, whereas other aspects are at least equally effective such as discourse competence, strategic competence or context competence. In this connection more details are given in the next section. Writers such as Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983:72-3) have identified the failures of the previous teaching approaches as follows:

1. Attends to structure and form more than meaning.

2. Tends to separate the aural medium (speaking and listening), and the visual medium.

3. Demands drilling and memorisation to the degree that students can progress like well-trained parrots. Repetition can become tedious and boring, causing fatigue and distaste on the part of the learner.

4. Seeks mastery or over-learning.

5 5. Seeks to establish a native-speaker like pronunciation - a far-reaching target.

6. Is very demanding and energy consuming on the teacher as it calls for continuous   inventiveness and resourcefulness on his part.

7. Promotes interaction with the language system through talking machines and controlled materials.

8.Limits spontaneous communication beyond the classroom walls.

Writers such as Abdesslem (1992) also discuss these failures. He writes that the critics of the Audio-Lingual Method have shown that structural practices delay the learning of a foreign language and provide less opportunity for the learner to master the use of language. He also emphasises that syllabuses in Audio-Lingual Approaches have never covered the needs of the learners, whereas the Communicative Approach attempts to do so through the rules of use and the other new dimensions of this approach.

Additionally, in some situations such as in the Iranian university, the teachers play the key role in preventing the development of use of English. This is partially because the majority of the teachers themselves have not been trained and consequently do not have sufficient practice in the language. Therefore, these teachers obviously have difficulties in using English all the time in class, and those who have been educated in foreign countries are the sole speaker most of the time. One of the other reasons is the student themselves, who prefer to be quiet and passive in class. So far, in all classroom interactions it is the teacher who decides what to do or what kind of activities should be performed in class and in the majority of classes the teacher is the sole speaker most of the time and also has the

right to speak. As a result, students have no opportunity to practise, at the very least, what has been taught in class or to participate in speaking activities.

We see here that in the process of teaching/learning the teacher has not been giving learners opportunities to practise what they have been involved in, but rather has actually been preventing talk. The teacher's role, then, has been simply to interfere in the learning process. Therefore, there has been no encouragement towards building activities or strategies of the Communicative Method into the use of English by the learners.

5.3 A Brief review of English language teaching in Iran

ESL in Iran has a long history whereas ESP was established in Iran only in 1972. English language learners in Iran are restricted in their language use generally by their textbooks, technological aids and even more so by the language teaching approaches employed by the teachers. In my experience, it is noticeable that in Iranian universities, the majority of the university students find it almost impossible to make them easily understood in a face-to-face discussion in English. They have had no opportunity to use the language either in or out of the classroom. This is chiefly due to the fact these students have been taught without using what they have learned, which has been grammar rather than content. Thus the teachers have been teaching the form of the language, rather than encouraging its use. English is not practically used as a second language in Iran; there are not many opportunities to use English in public. Many English language teachers have

no idea of English teaching or the English syllabus because most of them have not experienced any kind of training and practice.

An effective example of the link between English language teaching and teacher-training is the class seating. As you change the pattern of the seats to a circle, you will find more learning-taking place because people seem much more involved when addressing faces rather than the backs of heads in dense rows. In this kind of setting all learners become active participants. The teacher becomes a member of the circle. In this particular setting the most learning will take place. The class may experience some silence but that silence is constructive because participants have to think and prepare themselves as to how to fill the gap. This was what I have experienced occasionally in my previous years of teaching and this is why this type of classroom seating is in common use in Western countries. However, it is interesting to note that this circular type of setting is normal in most religious schools in Iran and these schools seem to have been more successful in their studies than schools using other kind of settings.

English teacher-trainees have a prior knowledge, which may well help them to contribute to missing areas of discussion. A trained teacher is an authority in terms of the speciality and training, but learners have to take responsibility for their own learning and to consult with their teacher when needed. In all situations the power of the teacher in English classes must be highly appreciated, that is, the teacher still is the great decisive authority in all activities and is heartily respected, in

particular because the class is friendly, supportive, confident and learner-centred. Learners are given the freedom to discuss topics in a supportive and reflective teaching/learning process, by using different strategies such as group work practice, simplification, synonyms, pictorials or model materials, video-tapes, cassettes, field visits and field-speakers (subject teachers). Topics are not always of the same kind, and thus require various types of means of understanding. These strategies are to be used for discussion-based issues in and out of English classes. Strategies are used to initiate and feed discussion through pithy and concise English content. English teacher-trainees would use these strategies to improve their learning which enable them to use language in their classes. Teacher education should engage prospective teachers in serious thinking, and understanding issues pertaining to curriculum and instruction so that they will be able to make reasoned judgements once in the classroom.

Teachers arguably need to know the context, subject matter and other necessary information such as the management features related to the class they are going to teach. Once teachers possess all this information they can cope better with their prospective problems, because they know the reasons and can find suitable solutions to prevent those issues. This has been discussed and supported by writers such as Rabie (1978), Robinson (1980) and Abdesslem(1992). As Robinson (1980:1) pointed out:

> English practitioners need training in ways of describing language, training in teaching language and in designing language courses. In addition, and unlike those involved in EGP (English for general purposes), they need some knowledge of, or at least access to information on, whatever it is that

students are professionally involved with, for example economics, physics, nursing, catering.

Stones does not believe in punishment as a management factor. He said punishment could never enhance learner's skills. This is very much the received view in Western culture. However, punishment as an impetus to improve or prevent learning depends very much on the culture and situation and personal characteristics of the learner. For instance, in Eastern societies we have experience with punishment, even physical ones, which have had great influence especially at elementary level. This will work better when it is used together with certain other learning factors such as motivation, reinforcement and feedback. In spite of this, Stones asserted that verbal interaction is an indispensable element in a teacher's work. He emphasised that even the most complete system of teaching goals will help little if practice when teachers have no clear image of how to obtain them. To him the control and assessment of learning and teaching should be directed to both learners and teachers, for feedback. He refuted the idea of school-based teacher education and argued that teacher education is limited to practice. In his Quality Teaching he suggested that a theory guides practice and is refined by it. He considers three kinds of teaching: "The learning of conceptual skills; problem solving and physical skills" (ibid., p. 44). He has also provides the teachers with a design for instruction. He believes that each research should entail three phases: "

preactive, interactive and postactive". In the "postactive" phase the teacher assesses the performance of the learners in the light of theory in order to strengthen the links between pedagogical principles and practice. Stones finishes his book with the comment that I agree with, that:

> It is only through the work of real teachers with some theoretical insight in real schools that there can be any substantial progress in the theory and practice of teaching (ibid.: 41).

In fact, the moral endeavour conception of teaching can work in certain cultures more effectively because of human relationships and values for desirable outcomes. However, teaching is more complex than this and it is pursued with teaching strategies and their analysis. Teaching can have various effects such as the moral endeavour teaching conception, together with the craft conception, which produce a system in which the teacher can mix their know-how with a good relationship with students.

A number of writers place their emphasis on the use of oral skills. Amongst these writers Davies has underlined the importance of the improvement of oracy. She argued that small group work in the classroom is a useful practice which is ignored by many of the language practitioners, whereas small group practice can be used as a means of facilitating learning. Her writings have helped to increase the awareness of these issues to student teachers. To her oral skill is not only important enough to be assessed, but it is also an effective tool for learning

throughout the course. On teacher education she advised teacher educators that, 'They have a duty to ensure that those who are about to enter the profession have been introduced to the principles of learning theories' (Davies, 1996, p. 33).

Another encouraging vision asserted by her is that when pupils are allowed to have discussion in small groups they will find opportunities to talk about their personal interest topics by the use of learned knowledge. This situation facilitates learning and new information is exchanged which will become deeply understood. She believes England's National Curriculum has undermined the role of language learning and attention has taken away from learners. Accordingly, her findings indicated that oral skill helped students in their written work. As she pointed out:

> Here, the student (student teacher) has commendably sought to engineer as many ways as possible of encouraging pupils to speak. However, their motives were driven by concerns to assess and the pupils were seeking to deliver the correct answers. Speculation leads one to conclude that those pupils who found it unnecessary to orally justify their work, will have found it difficult to explain in written presentations (Davies, 1996, p. 40).

She is strongly convinced that group work can improve the speaking skills of students. In group discussions are specific features which you can never find it in individual talk. More on this she added:

> The argument for consciously mixed ability teaching has sometimes been forced on the grounds that in group work, the 'brighter ones can help the slower ones'. This may well be the case, but it is an issue not worth taking too far. The children who explain something to others, are learning. If their peers are then able to phrase questions and check their understanding with children who already understand, then they too, will have learned. The talk needs to go two ways and small groups should never be seen as useful, (as they sometimes are), simply because they contain lots of little surrogate or embryonic teachers transmitting information to their passive peers (Davies, 1996: 53).

She has taken further steps to reject an undesirable approach to learning. In her view the teacher educators have to stand against such curriculum which is not useful and results in failure. As she contended:

> Teacher educators must resist the temptation to only explain what are the Programmes of Study and Assessment requirements. In their own practice within education institutions, as well as in their advisory capacity visiting schools, tutors must insist that student teachers focus on developing children's learning skills, rather than being slaves to the curriculum (Davies 1996: 55).

I need to remind you here, that though what she is suggesting is of interests to both teachers and students, it cannot be practised in many countries. For example, in Iran as an English teacher or lecturer, you have no such right to choose what you want, otherwise you may be dismissed. Therefore, her suggestions need to be adjusted and then be applied in such different situations and contexts.

English teaching would arguably involve practical face-to-face interaction in the classroom and the use of audio-visual aids for independent practice out of the classroom. English language students are really concerned about their difficulties in using English in their academic fields. This is a result of the type of approach used in English classes. The thoroughness of English learners' use of the language depends largely upon the vocabulary used in the topic under discussion. The kind of vocabulary the learners want to use for their oral discourse is frequently not offered through teaching techniques. English learners will be given a choice of the type of vocabulary they want to use. They can select equivalents from among the known vocabulary as much as possible. For example, geology students can use

"the shell" which is familiar to them rather than "the mantle" to expand their vocabulary. By teaching them how to use a variety of suitable strategies such as the use of synonyms, the students can expand their range of language used. These views are supported, as I mentioned earlier, by several writers such as Widdowson (1983).

Under the supervision of the Cultural Revolution High Council the production of textbooks was developed in English for a variety of university disciplines. For example, one textbook was established for basic sciences including physics, chemistry, mathematics, and biology. English language teachers have two main problems with these textbooks: firstly, most of them find the content difficult since it is often taken from foreign books; secondly, there is no particular approach suitable for teaching the English language content. However, no new method was developed for the new courses; this caused English teaching to become problematic in Iranian universities, particularly in the area of oral skills. The characteristics of English teaching in Iranian universities, as I have observed from my own observations and from the evidence of Iranian English language teachers interviewed (Appendices C & D) indicate it can be identified as follows:

1. English language students begin their English classes with a previously learned linguistic background known to the English teacher. Many teachers and almost all students are not fluent in English, and most of the science and technology lectures are given in Persian, containing potted information often translated from foreign textbooks or directly taken from those sources.

2. Different classes through the medium of English may use different textbooks because they are in different disciplines.

3. The traditional method of learning no doubt affected the attitudes of students towards English: they were predisposed to view it as a content subject rather than as a means of communicating and of acquiring knowledge. Students have avoided using even that small amount of language they have learned. As a result the approaches used are not communicative at all and are not planned on the basis of the English learners' needs.

4. Even students with a strong background in English cannot use the language, because of approaches in which the students do not use the target language and do not practise it.

5. English classes, like other subject classes, are conducted as if they were teacher-centred types of teaching and in fact are not suitable for learner-centred activities, so that some alterations are needed in the approach to teaching.

In addition to this, scientific concepts form the basis in English textbooks. In 1972 Martin Bates went to Tabriz University in Iran, and with his colleagues produced a series of textbooks in English, mostly for science and technology students (see MacKay and Mountford, 1978:79). Bates describes the problems of English language learning at Tabriz University as follows:

> A majority of the university students could not keep up with the continuous complicated discourse of their textbooks. An approach to texts was needed. There should be plenty of active use of English, encouraging students to

participate, giving them confidence and a feel for the communicative value of the language.

These critical issues that Bates raised, such as the need for a practical approach to active language use and communication, still remain unresolved, and demands for a solution are increasing, because of the rapid growth in the youth population. No educational technology aids are available in the classrooms – in fact some English language teachers bring their own tape recorders, but only to a limited number of classes. There is no method for developing language activities in pairs or small groups as a means of scientific discussion.

In conclusion, it can be said that Iranian students involved in English language programmes have already studied a great deal of vocabulary and grammar, but have never used it in or out of class during their guidance and high school years. This has been so because the approaches are not practical and the students have no opportunity to practice. Therefore, they have a sound background in common theoretical English but no practical experience. Thus, they urgently need to use and apply what they have learned, as well as their new university subject materials.

5.4 Teaching methods in Iran and their problems

A few Iranian linguists have influenced the teaching of English in Iran, such as Bateni (1975) who claimed that there are two characteristics of the learner which make the learning of English difficult. The first is the flexibility of the vocal tissues; the second is the strength of the mother language. He also pointed out that it is not necessary for a teacher to be a linguist. Bateni suggested a rote leaning

methodology, because his teaching method was based on identifying key patterns for memorisation. This method is not acceptable today, because we know behaviourists' methods of rote learning based on habits and imitation do not produce true and stable learning (Chomsky 1959). This is because, firstly, an adult can learn a second language more effectively in more practical learning situations; and, secondly, learning happens mostly through internalisation, understanding and practice.

In general, the problems of learning English in Iranian universities as observed and discussed by Bates and discussed earlier have not yet diminished. For example, Rabie (1978) believes that the use of visual aids facilitates speed; as illustrations can be used to stimulate the students to talk. Students can follow the patterns presented by a tape recorder, videotape or a movie. These technological aids may provide English learners with authentic speech from a native English speaker, which they may not otherwise encounter. In this connection, Soleymonpour (1981) writes that English teaching in Iran, due to the rapid growth in population, needs a radically new approach.

Azabdaftari (1986) writes that there are two approaches for foreign language learning: the behaviourist and the cognitivist. He claims that behaviourists' principles for learning a foreign language can be used in English classes as follows:

1. The learner practises lesson exercises actively.
2. No grammatical explanation is given to the learner about what he practises.

3. The learner's correct answers are reinforced in a variety of ways, such as encouraging words and bodily gestures including nodding.
4. Incorrect answers are avoided as much as possible.
5. The learning process is via induction; that is, the learner, through drills and exercise patterns ,works out a general rule

(Translated from <u>Iranian Journal of Linguistics</u>, 3,3, p. 29).

He believes that the two approaches to learning (Behaviourism and Cognitivism) are complementary to each other. In fact, these two theories of learning are opposite to each other because behaviourism deals with habits and rote-learning whereas cognitivism approaches learning through information processing and internalising, and approaches semantic learning, not through memorisation, but through understanding. His other points, such as suggesting that there is no need for 'grammatical explanation' or 'practice' and 'induction' are encouraging and supportive. Behaviourism is external, while cognitivism is an internal version of learning. However, he proposed that the learner should practise language structures with an emphasis on meaning in authentic forms. This will enable learners to use the language in related terms with proper sentences, (translated from <u>Iranian Journal of Linguistics</u>, 3,3, p. 44). In Behaviourist Approaches, applications are teacher-centred, and the teacher is the only authority in the classroom.

Here again we see that the extreme limit is a sentence and the teacher is the sole speaker, which is not enough for semantic and oral discourse. This focuses all activity on the teacher, which is not acceptable at all because the learners will not have access to the use of language. Now, we recognise that cognitive structures organise our learning and experiences. These structures are activated through

appropriate external stimuli, which can be some sort of discourse, events, or any other activity.

Faghih (1986) asserted that foreign language teaching should begin with oral language. He points out that André Martinet (1960) declared that language is a means of oral communication. Thus, if teaching and learning cannot solve the oral communication problem, then the programme is not effective. Moreover, he emphasised that, in order to use the language properly the learner should learn different aspects of language such as phonology, grammar and vocabulary, and practise them in the class, (translated from <u>Iranian Journal of Linguistics</u>, 3,1, p. 38). There are, however, certainly many other reference books in Iran, but not many up-to-date versions. English language learning difficulties in Iran, such as the need for language use and communicative approaches, still exist there and much work needs to be accomplished before they can be resolved. Likewise, technological apparatus is also scarce, as Rabie (1978) pointed out, and major measures should be taken to address this problem.

5.5 The purpose of learning English in Iran:

The university students involved in English language programmes already have studied a great deal of vocabulary and grammar from guidance to high school.

However, they have rarely used English in or out of class during their study because the approaches are not practical, and the students have no access to practice. Therefore, though they have a rather strong background of theoretical knowledge of English, they have had no real use of tehlanguage. Consequently, the adequacy of the oral discourse analysis approach can be measured against one criterion, namely its success in helping Iranian students to handle English more effectively.

Graduate students need to learn English, whether they continue their studies in Iran or abroad. This is firstly, because teaching materials at Master's or higher levels are almost all in English; and secondly, in many workplaces, English is needed. As a result, English language teaching/learning is required to be designed in a way to meet the need of speaking skills of the learners because English is a universal language.

5.6 The University English language teaching/learning process and the Cultural Revolution

In the wake of the Islamic Revolution, a nation-wide fundamental cultural movement (which was later to be called the Cultural Revolution). It was decided to co-ordinate the curricula and educational environment of the educational centres of the country with the Islamic Revolution. It was believed that the content of some courses was not useful and, in some cases, the whole course was to be omitted from the programme. Certain subjects were replaced. In this

connection, about 20 planning groups from different university faculty members were assigned to make the necessary changes in the textbooks in English. An English textbook was produced for each discipline. There was, for example, a textbook for basic sciences, including physics, chemistry, mathematics and biology, and one copy for human sciences, including history, geography and law. There is no oral activity included in these books. Then, the Cultural Revolution High Council was established in view of the sensitive role played by culture and the necessity of preserving the basic ideas of the Revolution. Although a series of textbooks was developed for English language students, there has not been a suitable professional teaching approach introduced. As a result, English courses continue with no success in oral communication.

5.7 English textbooks in Iran

There are two periods in which different writers have provided a variety of English textbooks. In the first, authors such as Bates and his colleagues produced a set of materials called 'The Nucleus Series', as mentioned earlier. The second period was after the Cultural Revolution. In this period, a variety of textbooks were prepared for different subjects such as physics, chemistry, mathematics, biology and medicine. These textbooks are provided at two levels. At level one, the books contain a collection of relevant materials. For example, one lesson is about general principles of physics while a second is about general principles of chemistry. The level one book is for all basic science students (of physics, chemistry, maths, and biology). Level two is specific to each separate discipline and contains only that

subject, such as physics or chemistry. Each lesson in these textbooks has a text as the main body of the lesson, which precedes different kinds of exercises such as comprehension questions, blank-filling exercises and short essay writing questions, but there are no communication exercises in these textbooks (see Appendices C & D).

The use of English for communication is also emphasised by writers such as Munby (1978:3):

> Those were the syllabus and materials are determined in all essentials by the prior analysis of the communicative needs of the learner. This also underlines the need for learners to put stress on oral discourse. Therefore, it is necessary that English practitioners attempt to concentrate their efforts towards enhancing this, because English learners are in need of this. All English learners have a background of grammar and vocabulary. These learners are adults and have experience, interests, motivations and intuition, intellectual power and feelings that differ from those of young learners of general English.

One difficulty in teaching English in Iran is that the advanced levels of the materials and textbooks provided do not meet the needs of the English learners, particularly for the purpose of communication. This is discussed and supported in my interviews with Iranian English teachers as well as certain English writers such as Hutchinson and Waters (1980: 3). As they have argued:

> The language used in technical education is not, except for a few examples of terminology, subject specific or even specific to technical communication. Everyday language is used. What these writers have brought up is, perhaps, not true to all course books for English. Besides, as they stated "everyday language" is not included in these sources, but in most cases it is true that the content of the materials does not fit the required needs of English learners.

In fact, English learners find themselves involved in the context of a particular situation that demands from the learners, a specific way of thinking, approaching their specific problem and behaving appropriately in that situation. English learners usually find that they know the language, but are unable to use it in discussing and debating materials in English designed for their field. This characterises English as a separate discipline. A few English writers have identified this problem. For example, Munby (1978:3) wrote:

> The growing demand for English programmes is the obvious attraction to the client or learner of custom-built courses in English that will enable him to do his job or pursue his studies, rather than the ubiquitous course in general English or general literary English whose irrelevance becomes apparent sooner or later.

Apart from what Munby wrote, certain other writers such as Strevens (1980) believed that English teaching materials are not provided according to the needs of the students in particular in speaking skills. This sometimes leads to limitations in the language skills learned. He argued that English language teaching should include the needs of the students. This need of the students still remains unresolved: that is, we do need to change the material of the university textbooks, if only parts of them at least.

5.8 The situation of English language in Iranian universities today

Almost all university students in different disciplines (except English) must take eight units (four courses) in English as their second language. Four units (two courses) are semi-scientific English and the other two courses are general English courses; these courses are at basic and advanced levels. Both courses run for the same amount of time. Textbooks, which are designed by a group of university professors and approved by the Cultural Revolution High Council, are prescribed specific textbooks such as E.S.S. (English Sentence Structure) and a reading book. Each course runs for three hours per week, for about fourteen weeks in a term.

The English courses are usually at two levels. The Level One English course includes general subject information, discussed earlier, and Level Two English uses texts that are specialised for each discipline for the same number of hours. The room arrangement is usually fixed, with a podium for the teacher in front of the class. The classes are usually taught in a combination of English and Farsi, rather than English, and are teacher-centred in approach. Recent graduate teachers of English particularly from abroad have influenced English teaching a great deal in Iran. Textbooks prepared in advance are taught from in English classes. There is no fixed or formal approach for teaching English. Each teacher applies whatever method they prefer. There is no laboratory available for these students. The utilisation of educational technology is so rare that I personally have not used any technological device for teaching during my ten years' experience – not because I did not want to use them but because there was none available. The major cause

of language learning failure is the lack of suitable approaches for use by the English instructor. The few students who can speak English fairly well are those who have been to foreign countries or have attended English institutes for a long period of time. Yet the majority of university students show great interest in learning English.

Nearly all university graduates have a basic knowledge of English but they cannot use it. When these graduates begin to work or proceed to advanced levels of study, English becomes a necessity. In many occupations, particularly in technical and medical fields, the study sources are in English. Knowing some English is a requirement for employment in many workplaces. Those who go to foreign countries for professional development have to attend English language classes in those countries for some time to be able to take university courses. Therefore, there is a vital need for a new approach in particular to enrich the speaking skills of the university students and to enable them to use the English language. Some Iranian practitioners such as Biria and Tahririan (1994) also argue for this.

In order to achieve a new approach to speaking skills I had first to identify the problem that the approach should resolve. As a result I first designed a questionnaire, which focussed on those questions. I had these questionnaires completed by Iranian English teachers and students at Tehran's Teacher-Training University, as well as in the UK (see appendices for description and discussion of

the questionnaires). I also interviewed six Iranian English teachers and a number of graduates.

5.9 Arguments against the other approaches

The other teaching methods at least in speaking skills, even in their best-developed version, had many problems. Some of these are as follows:

1. No use of real life language, the structured rote practice was artificial.

2. Learners repeated structured sentences but usually did not understand them; that is, there was no comprehension.

3. Rote learning could not last long during class time. In any particular foreign language learners had no opportunity to use the language in class because of the time limitation.

4. It was impossible to provide the learners with all the various unexpected contexts and patterns.

5. No specific training has been given to learners for oral production.

5. Classes have been teacher-centred; that is, there is little chance for learners to practise.

These issues are addressed and supported by writers such as Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983). As a consequence of these problems, learners have not been given opportunities to practise what they have been taught. All previous approaches have kept the learners passive and quiet. Teachers had to spend a lot of time and energy with no positive outcome. As a result many writers such as Widdowson

(1978), Brumfit (1984), and Biria & Tahririan (1994) discussed teaching methodology and developed new approaches, which can enable learners to become confident and use the target language. The main purpose of these approaches is to ensure that learners are given opportunities to practise what they learn and also to use what is needed in their discussion outside the classroom because they perform different types of oral activities during their learning time both in and outside the classroom. However, procedures have not been clearly developed as yet.

5.10 Summative reflection

Throughout this chapter I have established that English has been taught in Iranian universities according to the personal preferences of the teachers. Textbooks have been produced in a way that does not meet the real and practical needs of the university students, particularly for the use of English. These textbooks have been produced both before during the Cultural Revolution, but no particular approach has been introduced to English language teaching. Consequently, Iranian university English instructors have not been using an up-to-date or currently approved methods of teaching.

As a result, the majority of graduates have difficulty with oral communication in English, which is also indicated in Bates' writings and also by Iranian writers such as Rabie (1978), Biria & Tahririan (1994). One of the other reasons for this is that the allotted timetable space for English is not enough. Moreover, these writers

believed that in current approaches, there is no appropriate practice and use of English, and emphasised that the difficulties that learners have had in the past mainly derived directly from the teaching approaches that have been imposed. In fact, despite the past long history of English teaching in Iran, the following may possibly influence its improvement:

- Offer useful learning/teaching strategies.

- Assess and provide suitable teaching materials that meet the needs of the learners.

- Convince English language learners that the approach (learner-centred) works effectively and renders a maximum gain in learning such as offering them a clear opportunity for exercises in comprehension by means of listening activities, in order to utilise these as patterns for practice.

- Motivate students to learn by utilising benefits from the students' own experiences.

- Acknowledge how an open exchange views may enhance the insights of both teachers and students.

- Practise focused oral communication from the beginning in the belief that: "practice makes perfect".

The abilities, acquired as a means of expression, would enable English language students to use the English language more easily and more fluently without the need for the full mastery of grammatical structures.

I have discussed some of the more important issues which are problematic in determining teaching methods in Iran. This provides a background which helps us to propose the need for a speaking skills approach for the teaching of English in Iranian universities. In order to find out the efficacy of this approach through its application, I now need to examine the situation of English language teaching in Iran as well as in the literature. This critical literature review will help me to familiarise myself with the latest techniques used in this field and decide from that how much of it is applicable to the current Iranian cultural, social, economical, political and academic context.

The next chapter presents critical issues of teaching English in relation to English language use in which the theoretical and pedagogical issues are argued.

CHAPTER 6

ESL and ESP as a Case Study

6.1 Definitions of ESL/ESP

English as a second language (ESL) is used by people whose first language is not English and it is taught as a foreign language. ESL is not used in Iran as much as it is used in many other developing countries such as India or Pakistan. ESL is used for a variety of purposes in different situations in countries where English is not the national language. ESL, unlike ESP, is not limited to specific purposes and would be used for any occasion required.

In the view of many writers about ESP, ESP has diverse definitions though it also has certain common elements and purposes. Firth (1964:101) gave a definition of ESP and explained the use of authentic language for ESP as "the language of science". His approach to ESP has been profoundly influential, and provides examples for practical use with clear descriptions. For more precision in specialist languages, he declared:

> It will be readily agreed that such logical languages must be as free as possible from sentiment, prejudice, wishful thinking, from the shackles of the mythical, magical and fantastic. In order to be as exact and definite as. possible, they must be altogether arbitrary.

A definition is also given by Mackay (1975) that: "It is generally used to refer to the teaching/learning of a foreign language for a clearly utilitarian purpose of which there is no doubt" (in Robinson, 1980, p.6). This definition is of the kind

which would be applied to both occupational and educational purposes because it is a general type definition of ESP. A more detailed definition is offered by Fitzjohn who wrote:

> The very concept for "special purposes" implied that foreign language study is a subsidiary contribution to another, main interest and that there will normally be pressure to achieve the required level of linguistic competence in the minimum of time (in Robinson 1980, p.9).

Here this definition characterises one of the main problems for ESP at least in Iran. Still another sound definition is put forward about communicative purposes by Brumfit who acknowledged that:

> First, it is clear that an ESP course is directly concerned with the purposes for which learners need English, purposes which are usually expressed in functional terms. ESP thus fits firmly within the general movement towards "communicative" teaching of the last decade or so (in: Robinson 1980, p.11).

This definition implies the need of English use by ESP learners which is quite encouraging. Similar to this Strevens (1980:108-9) provided a working definition of ESP which he called 'functional English' as follows:

(i)   devised to meet the learner's particular needs;
(ii)   related in themes and topics to designated occupations or areas of study
(iii)   selective (i.e.'not general') as to language content
(iv)   when indicated, restricted as to the language skills included.

Indeed, Strevens' categories gave an integrative definition to ESP, which can be a special course of English to meet the specific language needs of its learners. These specific language needs differ according to the projected use of the language by the learners. For instance, a group of technicians may attend a course to learn limited terms of the system, in order to use them in their conversation which they

will be requiring for their career. In brief, ESP is a specific way of using English in both fields: occupational and education. In this connection Robinson (1980:2) stated that:

> ESP is a major activity around the world today, involving education, training and practice, and drawing upon three major realms of knowledge: language, pedagogy and the students'/practitioners' specialist areas of interest.

This is arguable because ESP does not contain all the elements she has introduced particularly in the developing countries. For example, in Iran you would find little oral practice in ESP classes. This is demonstrated in the interviews held with both Iranian English teachers and graduates (see appendices C & D). This is why the majority of the students who go abroad for their studies usually need a long period (from 3 months to 18 months) to become prepared to attend their subject courses at university.

Robinson (1980)'s definition of ESL is as follows:

> Thus the general with which we are contrasting the specific of ESP is that of general, education-for-life, culture and literature and literature oriented language course, in which language itself is the subject matter and the purpose of the course (p.6).

Markee (1993) criticised Robinson's (1991:5) definition of ESP where she said:

"Perhaps what we are really involved in as ESP practitioners is not so much teaching English for specific purposes but teaching English to specified people". In fact, this definition is a weak one because it does not consider ESP as a distinctive and independent discipline which is the typical English course

for the majority of the Iranian university students. However, both ESL and ESP are taught to their users. The ESL teaching/learning process in Iranian schools starts from guidance, that is, after elementary education and continuing into high school and university as well. Despite this long period for the learning/teaching process English is not used frequently by the general, or even by the educated, public, except particular groups such as in post students or by the few businessmen who have contacts abroad. You cannot find any Iranian families who speak English in their home unless they have foreign wives or are in touch with foreigners living in Iran. This is why even Iranian university graduates have difficulty using English. Fortunately on my recent visit to Iran, I found a great change in the use of English by some Iranian university students such as those at Tehran Teacher-Training University. This change is due to both the enthusiasm and interest of some of the members of staff who have just returned from abroad and the learners who have become aware of the needs and benefits of the use of English in their academic fields.

ESP which is used for specific or special purposes and is mostly taught in academic fields or work-places, is a part of ESL offered normally in Iranian universities. All university students are obliged to take a number of ESP courses. For this reason ESP is more fully emphasised in this study and I have examined oral discourse analysis through the literature to find the most effective strategies

to enhance English usage rather than pure theoretical study in Iranian universities. This study will first of all help me familiarise myself with research work as well as allowing me to benefit from the literature review and so be able to share the acquired information and experience with my students and colleagues in Iran.

West (1995: 32) argued that "ESP is – by definition – a diverse activity and so it is probably a contradiction to refer in the singular to either one state or one art." In fact, this writer has criticised other ESP writers that despite all the writings on ESP approaches dealing with such areas as needs analysis, genre analysis, skill and strategies and discourse analysis, none has discussed on a high level ESP texts, particularly on rhetorical coherence of discourse for pedagogical purposes. This lack of argument is indicated by his statement that "We are given little idea of how these functions combine to make longer texts" (ibid:37). In other words, as discourse analysis is based on the functional values of speech events in rhetorical analysis, a kind of strategy analysis seems necessary in which to show the learners how to learn rather than what to learn.

6.2 The nature of ESP literature

ESP was introduced universally in the 1960s. It was used for businessmen and visitors in its very early stages. ESP has grown rapidly because of its diverse use in both academic contexts and workplaces. This growth led to the publication of a large number of ESP textbooks. Many exciting new developments, such as Communicative language and teaching discourse, have been associated with ESP.

The nature of ESP literature in the UK is here discussed first because of its rich sources of information compared to what we have access to. as Iranian ESP resources. Many writers believe that the identity of ESP depends on the aims of a subject and the needs of the learner. By the 'purpose' of the subject they mean the contents in various fields such as Physics, Chemistry or Biology. This is considered by the ESP writers discussed earlier in this study. In relation to the nature of ESP we see that Firth (1964:101) emphasised some key points when he wrote:

> ordinary common tongue language and similar written language are not good enough for science. From such beginnings men have built up special languages, consequentially linked with the language of direct experience for the purposes of science. Such logico-experimental languages are not met with in general speech behaviour. Men find they must make special 'logical' languages designed for the job in hand. It is a profound mistake to regard such languages of 'reason' and logic, as 'spurious' or 'unreal'.

Clearly, Firth distinguished the diverse use of ESP and general English as two disciplines. He emphasised the time and funding limitations for ESP programmes. To implement what he offers, appropriate materials and teaching approaches are required. He also pointed out that body language such as eye contact, facial, and hand gestures are effective means of teaching, because these paralinguistic or prosodic devices keep the students' attention and enhance their learning. Wilcox (1967) discussed how ESP teaching materials should be specialised, and relevant and contain special lexis. Two elements, relevancy and communication introduced by Wilcox have key roles in the teaching/learning process of ESP. They reinforce ways of improving the oral discourse of those learners who can then use the terms in real situations to meet their needs.

The needs of English learners depend greatly upon the level of their prior or shared knowledge of English language. Furthermore, the materials are to be selected according to the profession; for example, the language used by technicians or the language of business. Selected texts may include a specialised vocabulary and relevant communicative activities. The content of English would be based on the language skill to be learned, such as listening for spoken numbers over VHF radio by a group of airport operators. In practice, it is extremely important that teachers should recognise the importance of the rhetorical, discursive, and communicative features of English, and that they be flexible in helping learners to express the purposes and roles of being a professional, by teaching scientific terminology. Iran urgently needs especially trained teachers familiar with the process and content of English language teaching. There are some influential factors in English programme such as lack of time, educational technology and shortage of funds. Almost every individual schedule allocated to ESP faces these shortcomings if not more.

However, some hold the view that putting too much of a barrier between ESP and ELT (English language teaching in general) is inappropriate, because ESP is a branch of ELT (Candlin, 1978). But the distinctive differences between the two are identified by many writers such as Robinson (1980) and Widdowson (1979a). Indeed, so far, English teaching has been considered generally for the purpose of school examinations, rather than for special purposes in the real world. MacKay

and Mountford (1978), and Crofts (1982) argued that knowledge of a foreign language can be limited to that needed for 'occupational, and professional' study. This was also supported by Widdowson (1977, 1979a, 1983), Brumfit (1977), and Allen and Widdowson (1978). ESP is an independent system as many writers have claimed, such as Ewer (1974b), Lee (1977), Drobnic (1978) and Biria & Tahririan (1994). That is, ESP has its own nature, function and application with its own particular identification. Brumfit (1986), in the preface to <u>English for the University,</u> stated that South American university English teachers believe that ESP has 'legitimised' English teaching. Brumfit has also undoubtedly systematised English teaching, and made it more purposeful. We have seen that a variety of definitions is given to ESP for their different aims; now at this point it seems necessary to have a look at the purposes of ESP in the next section.

6.3 Purposes of ESP

I found during my ESP teaching experience of several years that ESP is a specific, professional independent discipline with its own literature, context, values, approaches, social and pedagogical aspects, and participants. It occupies a particular boundary and position. ESP has its own universal features common to the ESP history, purpose and shared knowledge, but it also varies depending upon the personal methods of its teachers in relation to its learners, and content for each discipline. Practitioners in this field need to exchange views and adapt useful techniques, the content and process through a process of adoption or rejection to fit their specific situations with both learners and materials. Amongst the

definitions given of the purposes of ESP, Robinson (1992:3) offered one which, in my opinion, fits best when she said the 'objectives (of ESP) should be closely specified and their relation related to the time available.' The main purpose then of ESP is to use English in such a way as to meet ESP learners' specific wants and needs. This process operates in a specific context for ESP unlike that of general English. As a result we need to discuss the ESP context as an influential factor in the teaching/learning process as well.

6.4 Context of situation

Amongst such influential elements of ESP, context plays a vital role. It is vital because it determines the appropriate meaning to the applied language. Context is both fixed and dynamic. The topic is one of the dynamic elements of context. The situation consists of time, place and scene. The time, the place, and the link of the activity engaged upon form the setting of the text for both the speaker and the listeners. Shared knowledge once exposed to new information is reinforced. This is discussed also by Firth (1957:181) as: 'a suitable schematic construct to apply to language events'. To him a context of situation contained the following categories:

1) The relevant features of participants: persons, personalities.
2) The verbal action of the participants.
3) The non-verbal action of the participants.
4) The relevant objects.
5) The effect of the verbal action.

He argued that context greatly influences discourse analysis where it is used. In fact, context influences oral discourse more than grammar or form. Firth (1964:110) also developed a definition for the context of situation:

The people, the relevant furniture, bottles and glasses, the 'set', the specific behaviour of the companions, and the words are all component terms in what may be called the context of situation.

In his description, which seems rather general, the main point he emphasises is the understanding that people have of each other through their related conversations.

He also made it specific for language use and wrote: "Even within the language system itself what is said by one man in a conversation pretends what the other man has said before and will say afterwards".(p.220)

Here there is a strong link between this statement and what is actually going on in an ESP class conversation. ESP class discussion continues in the same manner, that is, it is affecting and effective. Thus, the context of situation must be dynamic and creative. Firth's meaning of discourse is of utmost concern and heavily influential on people, things, and events in the give and take of conversation. Firth's quotation is relevant in stressing the influence of relationships, events, and everyday communication, in creating its meaning.

For example, the word "red" means "stop", when shown by a traffic light. In the process of learning there are some aspects of learning which create a challenge in the brain of the learner. These aspects are not under the control of external pedagogical influences. The internal pedagogical influence, or what I would like to call the "special" relationship between teacher and learners, can be highly strengthened when each individual learner has confidence and support in a frank and friendly environment. This can be established in a humanised classroom where

learners are given support and self-confidence by their teacher. This situation creates a natural communicative environment in which language is used readily and naturally, because the learner has a sense of being encouraged and supported. This support comes from the teacher as well as the learner's peers. The use of language by learners may start from simple and short utterances and gradually expand in time. For example, in communicative activity, learning needs to have relevant and communicative activity. One basic coherent form can be a sequence of adjectives, or a number of nouns such as, "A nice rainy spring season" or "What a large blue water pool" which can be incorporated in a text. Hymes (1962), pointed out that context limits the interpretation of intended meaning as below:

> A context can support a range of meanings. When a form is used in a context it eliminates the meanings possible to that context other than those the form can signal: the context eliminates from consideration the meaning possible to the form other than those the context can support (in Brown and Yule, 1983:38).

In short, this example can show the distinctive importance of context in supplying meaning, such as a sign indicating " No bicycles". A clear meaning from this sign according to its form is ambiguous. But when it is at an entrance to a road, then it means that bicycles are not allowed to pass along the road. Or when it is displayed on the door of a second-hand shop, it means there are no bicycles for sale, at that time, in that shop. It may have yet another meaning on a repair shop, to show that are no facilities for bicycle repair there. All these cases show the influence of context on meaning, which is much stronger than structure and form. Context has this role in the interpretation of communication. This role then must be taken into

consideration by each speaker or presenter, in order to convey the appropriate meaning.

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) believed in the influence of context in a well-structured sentence. These writers asserted that for meaning context is a required element. They emphasised this as follows:

> A large part of the meaning of a sentence must always be determined by the context in which it is uttered, even when the most elaborated grammatical structures and most specific lexical items are employed (p. 12).

Despite their views regarding "most specific lexical items" in fact, meaning is even more dependent on context than in everyday language use, because specific items are only meaningful when used in an appropriate context. This is applicable when there is a common and shared experience of language and interpretation between speaker and audience. However, Halliday's (1970) discussion is on a synthesis of function and structure. To him functions of a clause structured for the purpose of language use would be the "ideational" expressing content; "interpersonal" for social relations; and "textual" which relates the cohesion with the situation in which the language is used. Lyons (1977) discussed an area of knowledge of language systems in particular contexts of language use. He also argued that shared or common knowledge of participants in which substantive linguistic conceptions exist is due to that context. Learners can find out that the presenter's utterance is intended as a relevant contribution to the discourse. Context plays a determining role in rendering meaning, even more strongly than do forms. Form by itself, out of a related context creates ambiguity in interpretation. This is why

various terms are used in different locations based on the previous shared information. The core element in context is coherence, as it provides the linkage for meaning between the past experience and the present related events. This is considered as basic for oral discourse. In this connection Halliday (1978:156) wrote: "A speaker may use high variants in formal contexts and low variants in informal contexts: let us call this the congruent pattern".

Moreover, how a speech community is produced by its user is also discussed by Halliday. He believed that the speech community is formed through the internalisation of a used pattern. In so doing a language user reacts to a heard pattern supplying certain variables matching some community or cultural normative values in order to make the speech production. Widdowson (1979: 206-7) pointed out:

> There are some areas of linguistic analysis in which even the first steps towards the basic invariant rules cannot be taken unless the social context of the speech event is considered. The most striking examples are in the analysis of discourse.

Related to this point, Coulthard (1992) pointed out that interaction can take place only where there is a "common ground" amongst the speaker and listeners. This statement also tacitly implies the influence of context of situation on the learning of a language.

Thus, it becomes clear that the presenter needs to be familiar with the context of discourse, then to use the appropriate language to convey the message to the

learners. When interpreting the meaning the role of context becomes clear, it would seem to be the ordinary meaning of an utterance, or the meaning it has in certain specific circumstances. For example, when I am in my friend's car and he is driving and is passing through a red light, and I say "It's red", I trust he will then stop the car. Thus what I said and what it meant, not only do these two not contradict each other, but they are matched and are complementary to one another. This is true in ESP class' performance and meaning. In fact, what is obviously ignored in ESP classes is redundancy: that is, taking off unnecessary parts of a message and using special signs instead of some grammatical markers, while the meaning is kept completely. For example, 'Red light!' can work for 'The traffic light is red'. Thus utterance meaning comes not directly from the grammatical and lexical features, but from prosodic or elliptical and paralinguistic features, which mean external elements rather than language.

So we see from her quote that ESP learners are a more specific group than other English language learners. This is true but she should also underline specific techniques for related factors such as content and purpose. However, what she claimed is partially effective but is not complete for ideal learning. For ideal learning all influential elements in learning which are mentioned above should be carefully considered. Schiffrin (1994:367) offers a comprehensive definition in that context is also a set of social circumstances in which utterances can be produced and interpreted as realisations of their underlying constitutive rules.

Indeed, context plays a vital role in the listeners' understanding of the intention of the speaker. Context is a metalinguistic factor for the use of language about both speaker's and hearer's needs and wants. Context also leads to the use of language and the interpretation of oral discourse. Context determines the specific terms and expressions that a speaker or presenter produces in the form of oral discourse and matches this with the interpretation of the hearers based on their common prior knowledge. These realisations relate the past events as a prior knowledge to future discussion or presentation. Schiffrin added:

> Speaking a language is a process that requires symbolically putting oneself in other's place in order to know how to tailor one's information (syntactically, semantically and pragmatically) so that it will be comprehensible to that other (ibid:35).

Given the above, now let us review how ESP has been taught and should be taught, in order to enable ESP learners to use English language in their academic informal discussions. For more on context, we need to discuss ESP teaching methods.

6.5 ESP teaching/learning process

As ESP became an independent discipline in the 1960s with its specific character, its way of learning and teaching varied to some extent as well. Most of the writings on English language teaching were disappointing to teachers of English. Moreover, we have not seen clear teaching methods for English courses. Many works are not usually focused on the direct use for English course work purposes or course materials are not designed to meet the real

needs of the learners. This indicates the need for an appropriate approach such as discourse analysis that can be analysed in terms of units of meaning including all or some parts of speech from the sentences, either in oral discourse or oral text. Both English teachers and learners are conscious of the oral discourse value of the language they are using in the classroom.

Mead and Lilley (1975b) claimed that the English class demands an illustrative use of language, in which language talks about language, which is a support for English use. Allen (1975), and Fox (1978) argued that there is a need for new expertise, for a functional approach to English. Wilkins (1976) has emphasised that textbooks for ESP learners should be based on the analysis of the behaviour appropriate for their needs. That is, the learners are taught how to instruct, describe or define rather than learning intensive and purely grammatical terms. However, these terms are very much dependent upon the situation and context where the language is to be used. Mead and Lilley (1977) used diagrams in economics classrooms. Writers such as Allwright (1977) believed that each course of English must vary from the others and that English must avoid generalising the teaching approach. To fulfil the purpose of English language teaching, Webb (1977) argued that English offers the possibility for new games, projects, and role-play. For instance, in role play each student adopts a persona and the teacher also assumes a role, and then they swap roles in order to practise different natural talking situations. Games and role-play are not, however, always enough. In the

Isfahan conference on English in 1977, simulation, role-play and approximation of real-life language use were also emphasised. Beardwood et al (1978), and Hara (1978) discussed the use of diagrams, both in textbooks and classrooms of technology. All of these writers using a variety of learning theories (such as the Cognitivists, the Behaviourists, or the Affectivists' theories) concluded that the learning components, such as perception and reasoning, are not known precisely.

Moreover, in connection with considerations of English teaching methodology Widdowson (1983:200) accused English practitioners of leaving 'considerations of appropriate methodology entirely out of account'. Writers such as Widdowson or Mountford believed that the main solution for an ignorance of English language methodology may be that more attention should be given to needs analysis rather than to methodological issues, particularly during the 1970s and 1980s. A few key principles for English methodology are introduced by Phillips (1982:97):

1. reality control, which relates to 'the manner in which tasks are rendered accessible to the student';
2. non-triviality, that is, the tasks must be meaningfully generated by the students' special purpose;
3. authenticity, that is, the language must be naturally generated by the students' special purpose;
4. tolerance of error errors which do not impede successful communication must be tolerated.

These principles are in fact so influential that they can be used in all English classes for efficient learning. Verbalising and oral practice are emphasised in pair and group work, but not under pressure. There are two types of activities for learning, that is: (1) psycho-motor activities,

(2) language processing activities, which are the internal processing of input to knowledge which is the important part of learning.

Listening comprehension is a basic receptive skill. This skill is influential in the production of language skills in non-native English speaking countries, and could be a cause of inappropriate learning. Therefore, English teachers must focus on it. For example, the input to the learner must be crystal clear and meaningful; this will result in the desired outcome, such as speaking fluently.

Wilson (1986), in <u>English for the University,</u> claims that English learning is 'learning by doing,' that is, students should be taught through the required communication skills, with subject materials at the appropriate level. Wilson proposes a task-based learning approach, in which the language is not atomised as in the structural approach. Task-based learning allows for practice of part or all of the language to produce meaningful communication.

Related to this, Godman and Payne (1982) offered a taxonomic approach: 'morphology', 'syntax' and 'lexis' should be combined in a scientific conversation. In their taxonomic approach for EST, grammar is in a simpler form, but morphology and lexis should be carefully considered in the text. Technical terms can be sub-grouped in a text, for example, resistor, resistance, dissimiles, and conductor, conductivity, conduct, conductance, and super-conductivity. Thus grouping scientific terms whose meanings are related to one another is a help to English

learners because they use a variety of available resources and derivations. Terms can be broken down into the general or scientific such as nouns, adjectives and verbs with their specifications. These writers have not introduced basic concepts of teaching, such as communicative issues or the importance of intonation .

McDonough (1984) stated that in a group or paired activity the purpose is not to follow grammatical practice but to negotiate in a real-world situation. Team-teaching is done by the English teacher, the subject teacher and the students. That is, the English teacher seeks help from the subject teacher, and they, together with the students, form a network. On the emergence of English McDonough (1984:2) stated that:

> the field has grown very quickly, and become fashionable in the language teaching world. Language teachers themselves are increasingly anxious not to miss the apparently new challenges and opportunities provided by English.

Recently, Biria and Tahririan (1994) claimed that communicative ability of the English learners developed the most in specific kinds of communicative teaching. Therefore, English teaching approaches according to English language writers have not met the requirements of English learners to use it practically. English teaching approaches depend greatly on the content of the taught subject. Discussion on the content of present English textbooks opens an avenue to the effectiveness of content in offering the meaning. Therefore, a short review of

the contents of English textbooks seems necessary because they play a chief role in the teaching process.

6.6 Contents of ESP textbooks in Iran

Most of the English course books nowadays are prone to inadequacies particularly in the kind of activities provided in the lessons and exercises. Even an appropriate approach to teaching English is effective, when it is compatible with appropriate teaching materials. The material is appropriate when it meets the wants and real needs of the learners. It has been about two decades since English textbooks have become generally recognised. This was due to the designation of textbooks devised by a group of university lecturers after the Islamic Revolution, 1978.

There are a few approaches to syllabus design. The well-known ones are structural, notional and situational, and there exist combinations of these. Each of these approaches has certain characteristics which may have been suitable for some particular time and for specific purposes. Each syllabus according to its features requires a special teaching approach as well. The approach in this study is oral discourse whose syllabus should be designed in such a way as to meet the requirements of this approach. Consequently, the kind of oral discourse employed in the classroom is likely to be included in the syllabus. In this approach, like other approaches, the problem of generalisation may be a difficulty for the learners but certainly the rate of this will be much less than in the other approaches because the learners are using the language. However, it is often difficult to provide a real life

context, and natural language use. In this syllabus, communicative patterns practised are dealt with. They have a salient role to play in the methodology associated with citation, simulation or replication.

The English syllabus can be practised by means of simulation in order to increase motivation, by showing how the practice of language in the classroom might relate to the world outside. To do this, students need to be able to see themselves practising and using the language in authentic situations in the target language even through the focus is on the language produced rather than on what is achieved though language. One of the other approaches for oral practise is replication. Replication activities provides a highly practical activity to enable learners to practise some topic through appropriate exercises.

In this section, I have attempted to evaluate the syllabus accurately to find if it meets English learners' needs and wants in accordance with their purposes. The context is designed for English students and its purpose is to enable the students to speak. Of relevance to the subject matter needing to be taught Lozanov (1978) wrote that:

> The material must be presented in meaningful aggregates, and must be communicative. The textbook should have motivational force, and should be entertaining and interesting to the students. Its psychological structure should be given prominence and stressed, while the language problems must be "smuggled" in unobtrusively without alarming and worrying the students (in Brumfit, 1984:200).

We have seen that if teaching materials are not designed to meet the needs of the students and when the learners feel that they are not going to use the material under discussion they get bored and show no interest in being actively involved. Brumfit added to Lozanov's points and said that:

> So we might agree that we can do without systematic exposure to the target language when we have immersion, as in second-language situations, or when we can create the conditions of immersion in the classroom. (ibid: p.200)

These books contain either the materials used in realistic situations or simulated. However, some researchers have argued that English language material must be relevant and use natural life content (Coutts 1974, Davies 1975, Sculthorp 1974, Strevens 1977b, Phillips and Shettles 1978, Abbot 1978). Although these writers discussed the fact that English teaching material needs to be focused on the real language use of the learners, they did not introduce patterns from which English learners would be able to generalise these patterns. Many writers claim that English teaching materials should be provided 'tailor-made' by the institute (for example, Munby 1978, Robinson 1980). According to Munby(1978), needs are determined by factors:

1) a priori parameters;
2) participants' individual information and characteristics;
3) setting including both physical and psychological;
4) purpose of English study;
5) interaction with those who are engaged in specific English fields through channelling verbal communication, such as face to face or using a tape-recorder;
6) a posterior parameters;
7) dialect and vernacular language in use ;
8) target level;
9) oral discourse episodes involved;

10) tone or key of communication in relation to the rules of the participants: these should result in mastery by the learner.

One of the objectives of the learner-centred class is that English teachers encourage their students and make them think and use their prior knowledge and experience in relation to the teaching material. In this way the experience and prior knowledge of English students will be incorporated in the English programme resulting in more interest and higher motivation. This enriches their ability to learn and practise. Munby (1979:3) stated that: "Any English syllabus design should start with the learner and end with the target communicative competence".

Not only the learner, but also the teacher, needs be aware of the syllabus: as Robinson (1980:34) pointed out an English teacher should also be familiar with writing material:

> Despite the growing number of published English textbooks, a great many subject specialisms are still not catered for, and even textbooks which are appropriate in terms of level, or function and of skills. It thus seems to be an unavoidable facet of the English teacher/course director that he should be a materials writer as well.

Indeed, English teachers may lend a hand to English textbook designers to provide adequately for English students. This is helpful because these teachers at least know what their students require. Provision of material by students seems problematic since, firstly, the students do not have enough information; secondly, the students might not know the correct use of English; thirdly, it is easier to examine students' achievement than use the unsystematic material likely to be

provided by the learners themselves, who do not have enough experience in this. It is also less costly. Wilkins (1976) argues that only specific and necessary materials should be taught in the English class, because of the allotted time. For example; telling the time, numbers and dates and seasons such as spring, summer, fall (autumn) and winter should be taught.

The needs of English learners for special materials were stressed in almost all English definitions, by many writers such as Strevens (1977b, 1980), Munby (1978), Bates (1978), Robinson (1980), Hutchinson and Waters (1987). Currie et al. (1974) claimed that in most English textbooks, vocabulary and structure are emphasised, and no one book is complete for all the needs of English. The new textbooks need to prescribe the level and exercises in the material; whereas many writers believe that routine practice in, for example, describing, questioning, socialising, offering, refusing and the like, should be taught in English classes (Halliday 1973, 1978). This was an encouraging view, since it places students in a variety of situations for discussions and debates which enhance their conversational skills, just as in a real life context. Bloor (1984) argued that the English syllabus, because of its needs analysis stress, varies from the ELT syllabus and emphasised that at present the focus of English material is towards more 'practice/exposure' to target language activities without inspecting their ideal inherent specifications. Through Bloor's discussion a comparison and a contrast were found to form the main body of the material. These are not always enough, however. The use of connecting phrases and terms such as "firstly", "moreover",

and the like have been emphasised by many writers such as MacKay (1973) and Porter (1976), because of their scientific usage in English textbooks.

Certain writers have held the view that authentic materials have two advantages. Firstly, they offer realistic situations and secondly, they answer the needs of the specific learners if chosen carefully. Grammar and translation are not emphasised, other than the small amount of grammar necessary to convey the message. In textbooks written by Bates (1978) in the 'Nucleus Series', communication about scientific and factual matters was emphasised and the content of English teaching material was based on the specifications necessary for appropriate tasks: that is, the terms and expressions which students will deal with in their real life situations are contained in their textbooks. These are called 'restricted languages'. Munby (1978:228) wrote:

> The syllabus specification is directly derivable from the prior identification of the communication needs of that particular participant or participant stereotype.

These are encouraging points discussed by the English writers because they deal with real needs and situations. These points assist good English teaching and they enhance the learning.

Wilkins (1976) used terms such as 'notions', and 'functions' in contextualised forms as scientific discourse. Either describing text or using the textualization, the approach for course design is a goal-oriented approach based on the content of the lessons. Since English teachers, like teachers of other subjects, are the key

figures in the process of teaching, and are more influential than a particular teaching approach or the content of the taught subject, a review on them and discussing the relevant issues will be of help in this study. Johnson (1979) discussed the needs of the learners for communication, as well as the role of context in learning a language, as below:

> Are there then two types of communicative language teaching? There certainly seem to be in practice two broad approaches. One is characterised by the rigorous specification of communicative needs typical of much English work, but often coupled with a methodology which is not significantly unlike traditional methodology. The other proposes methodological procedures that are quite often revolutionary, but equally often remain uncommitted on questions of syllabus design. It is a situation that certainly the two approaches is, what the methodological implications of the "teaching context" solution are, and what the methodologically-based solutions imply in terms of syllabus design. (in Willis 1983:5)

In other words, we as language teachers will be threatening the learning process as having some purposeful reality instead of continuing its existence through interaction and usage. In this connection Crocker has worked on LSP teaching material provision and put emphasis on the use of language in which the students' interest is of main concern. He believed that teaching materials are a prerequisite for the process and for appropriate course design, summarising that:

> Basically, then the two major approaches to LSP course design are content-based, which is probably still the standard LSP paradigm, and context- . based, where factors of course implementation may, at times, be seen as having a more significant influence on the design solution than the content

matter of the anticipated domain of use (in Swales & Hassan Mustafa 1984:133).

The very point which this writer has put forward is that of the physical factors of the environment such as facilities, and the time available. These two, in fact, are the very essentials in Iranian universities which have to be taken into consideration carefully by our curriculum designers. This is the rationale which is supported by recent practitioners and experienced teachers such as Crocker (1984), Brindley (1994) and Nunan (1989) who have offered the 'consulted forms' of curricula achieved via consultation with the teachers and students instead of outside designers. Nunan (1989:29) wrote:

> While a learner-centred curriculum will contain similar elements and processes to traditional curricula, a key difference will be that information by and from learners will be built into every phase of the curriculum processes. Curriculum development becomes a collaborative effort between teachers and learners, since learners will be involved in decisions on content selection, methodology and evaluation.

This approach is useful when it is adapted for use in the situations and context in all English classes. What Nunan is omitting in his curriculum development is the role of the subject specialist teachers for ESL students, which is essential, because these teachers are better grounded in the scientific terms and expressions than are the English teachers, and therefore can contribute to working out the transcribed texts from the textbooks.

The review of the English syllabus demonstrated the necessity of a major change in English course books. The English syllabus with its design and objectives has not been that successful, particularly in developing speaking skills in the Iranian universities. This is supported in the interviews with Iranian English teachers and graduates which will be discussed later. It seems necessary to insert some sort of oral skills objectives and the relevant exercises and activities in our textbooks in such a way as to meet the oral communication needs of the English students. I believe more emphasis should be put on oral skills rather than other skills because speaking English is not performed even as a foreign language in Iran. Consequently, in most cases the only opportunity students have to practise English is within class time. Oral skills can be based on not merely linguistic features but paralinguistic devices as well. This helps the students to accelerate their learning in a limited time and on the courses they go through.

In natural speech we compose the text in small chunks, a few words at a time to convey our intended message to our listeners. Pauses may occur at natural utterance intervals. These pauses are helpful both to the speaker and audience. It helps the former to prepare what he/she wants to say next, and allows the listeners to catch up with what is being said. Pauses are filled with a variety of pause fillers such as 'eh', 'er', 'emm', or phrases such as 'you know', 'I mean', 'I should add'. Our expectations of what utterances and longer chunks of language to use are based on the background knowledge of English learners, through learning and practising patterns. These patterns with their intonation help give meaning to the

learners. For example, an ending rise in intonation indicates a sense of continuation such as "I finally got the book". Different types of speech use different intonation, for example, a falling intonation may come with 'wh' questions such as: 'What is the time?' 'Where is your book?' An English user may also use Yes or No questions alternatives for the rise, such as: 'are you going with him, he wants to go now?' or 'What would you like: tea or coffee?'

Meaning in oral discourse is conveyed through the relationship between a total range of means of communication including: tone of voice, gesture, physical setting, posture, body movements, physical approach, eye contact and facial expression. For example, nodding can convey a message for positive or negative response. This is a non-linguistic device which is easier and faster than any linguistic one. Therefore, we see that such strategies are indeed the effective way in which certain essential aspects of language can be learned. However, I believe the textbooks in Iranian universities could be adapted for realistic English use by the teachers, therefore, the following points should be incorporated:

a. identifying the problem/s and purpose of learning in terms of using the target language to match it with teaching approach activities and product.

b. identifying the context in terms of means and technology available for course material implementation.

c. identification of influential variables throughout the course, such as the appropriate quality and level of learner/teacher and material required to reach the objectives, with feedback.

6.7 The teacher of English

Every individual English teacher has the responsibility to ensure that English students can cope with their educational and special professional needs as regards the English language after completing their English courses. English teachers should also attempt to advance their professional development for teaching English with new ideas and approaches in order to make maximum use of previous experiences and of adaptations for practical application. There are also further factors regarding the teacher. For instance, a teacher's appearance, voice, behaviour, and most of all, enthusiasm are emphasised. Riley (1982) argued that the teacher has to provide optimum conditions for learning via modelling. He added that the English teacher can get help from the students who already know the text and their own needs. He further added that the teacher should help students incorporate their own learning techniques. However, the teacher should make students speak or keep quiet, that is, either talk or listen.

Relevant to this, Wilson (1986) proposed that teachers of English should have a sound knowledge of the scientific concepts in which their students need to be specialised. In addition, a teacher should know how to use technological tools such as an overhead projector, a tape recorder, or a video-tape to show authentic

situations to enhance learning, and to interest students, such as by showing a variety of field scenes to suit their interests. The teacher in a conversation class should influence and intervene at minimal level. Questions can be in 'wh'-forms, 'who'; 'why'; 'when'; 'where'; 'what'; 'how'; and 'which' for development of the topic through speech. The teacher takes note of errors which can be dealt with after class. Expansion techniques should be used in conversation lessons, and group work is emphasised. These points are supportive and it must be recognised that ESL and particularly ESP are specialised and need extensively qualified teachers and well prepared students; therefore, English language teachers must have specific training. The English teacher is the bridge between subject specialist teacher and English language students. These characteristics separate ESP from general English, as confirmed by many writers on ESP such as Strevens (1980).

Moreover, English teachers believe that ESP itself is not an approach to teaching, nor is it associated with any particular pedagogical technique, but it is an instrument to transfer and discuss scientific information. Widdowson (1978) writes that the teaching of 'use' includes the learning of usage, because the latter is a basic part of the former. Therefore, texts and approaches for teaching English can be designed for the purpose of use, through task-based materials, or authentic materials, (Wilson, 1986). The approach of use was supported by the majority of English writers (Strevens, 1977b; Davies, 1975). MacKay and Mountford (1978) believe that English teachers are engaged more with strategies for transfer than with skills. ESP then becomes a means to transmit knowledge for English rather

than a narrow teaching objective. It is emphasised that the use of language be mainly in oral communication (Brumfit, 1984). Therefore, English teaching approaches must focus on the use of language by English students. The important aims in English teaching are:

(1) to assess and provide suitable teaching materials that meet the needs of English learners.

(2) to convince English learners that the approach works effectively and renders the maximum gain in learning.

(3) to motivate students in learning and benefit from students' experiences regarding their expertise.

(4) to practise focused oral communication from the beginning.

(5) to provide a learner-centred class.

These are positive techniques to English teaching which English teachers need to know and implement in their classrooms. Since English teachers' knowledge of these issues directly affects their teaching, then we may briefly discuss this in the following section.

6.8 Teachers' awareness of English context

English has its own context characteristics discussed earlier, whereby English teachers should have familiarity with such things as teaching atmosphere, syllabus and setting. The use of English will contribute significantly to English language learning, that is, English is used to gain knowledge and transfer thoughts and views. English as perceived through an interpretation process would help an

effective teaching approach. English teachers, especially ESP practitioners, should be aware of this and also of its usage, because of time limits and terminology limitations for English language students' courses. English teachers should know that English learners have prior knowledge because it would speed up the meaning which is an outcome of a specialised context. This context is arguably more effective if learner-centred in order to make English students independent, creative and fluent users of English topics. Independent creativity is the key element in learning. Regarding the expertise of English teachers Strevens (1980:222) wrote that:

> The English task requires teachers to accept right from the outset that they will never be specialised in the learners' subjects - but they have also to learn that this does not matter. Yet, English teachers should, at least, have adequate knowledge of the syllabus and possess an accepted eclectic approach to teaching.

In other words, those who lack these basic and necessary qualities will lose their confidence, reputation and credibility. These teachers not only suffer themselves, but also cause others in contact with them to suffer as well. In this case it is better to leave the English teaching to subject specialists as McDonough (1984:232) argued that:

> Learners being taught by a scientist with some language training will definitely have greater 'face validity' than lessons with a language teacher unwilling or unable to engage in scientific procedure.

However, as McDonough emphasises in the training of a scientist, this emphasis can be put on the training language teacher, because it will be much easier for English language teachers to familiarise themselves with limited scientific terms

than the subject teacher. It is easier for a teacher to be a trained teacher than a specialist to be a teacher because of their experiences. Ewer (1983) provided answers to this problem by suggesting that teachers can be trained through visiting laboratories and factories and showing scientific films. In fact, it is suggested that an English teacher first of all should have the belief that he/she can be an effective teacher. With persistence this can be achieved through reading textbooks, relevant periodicals and some related subject books, and studies as well as field discussions, and exchanging views with other English practitioners and specialists. Yet, after training the ESP teacher should consider that he/she is an English language teacher, not a specialist who knows the basic concepts and fundamental principles of English.

As a result, English learners must make use of all available means such as peers, teachers (English teachers and subject teachers), materials and all other possible facilities to make themselves understood, and fluent. In this context English teachers ought to become attentive listeners and students to be the users or presenters of English. These teachers should expect their pupils to present some simple or short utterances from the beginning because they have some experience and a sound background in this field. Teachers should expect and encourage them to make rapid progress. English learners should correct, reorganise and represent the information themselves and get help from the teacher when needed. ESP learners need to be aware that they are to be inducted in real field situations sooner or later. English learners would then blend their experience with

conceptualisations offered by English of the use of means and generalise those terms and patterns and use them as a resource.

Teachers should avoid causing problems for students, particularly when most English teachers do not have an in-depth knowledge of the subject area and/or are non-native English speakers. These are the two main problems that most Iranian English teachers confront, which often results in failure because of their ineffectiveness. Thus it is clear that all English teachers need to be trained appropriately in order to become acquainted with the required English context. These teachers should also apply interpretation in the process. Barnes (1986) wrote that teachers should consider learners' interpretations. In other words, they should make students " interpret the information into their own frame of reference by acting upon it." (p.252). He attempted to put conceptualisation and internalisation together with interpretation; this applies especially to ESP where terms have limited interpretation, because of the specific circumstances of their utterance, construction and use. Thus the teaching process must be emphasised in these classes. The other key issue is the lack of mutual trust between teachers, and students which can cause failure in learning particularly in oral communication. This is indicated by students who have been interviewed and go abroad for further and higher education (see Appendices C & D) as it usually takes them six to eighteen months to be able to speak fluently and attend the university subject courses. Many of the Iranian English teachers have lost their confidence in their students and students have lost their trust in and respect for their teachers in many

cases, because these teachers still need to achieve genuinely equal and non-discriminative behaviour with their students.

Nevertheless, in Iranian religious schools (Houze-y-Elmiyeh), where there has been trust and reciprocal respect between teachers and learners, successful learning has resulted. When learners have confidence during the process of learning and when they feel they are in an atmosphere of trust, they feel free, their morale is high, and success follows. One of the other reasons for loss of respect and trust is the hostile behaviour of the ESP teacher facing subject matter in which their students have prior knowledge. The solution seems to be the study of those subjects by teachers in advance rather than showing disagreement or discouraging the students. Here, the personality of these teachers may be of more importance than their knowledge. This issue was discussed by Britton (1986), when he addressed the essential and substantial elements of the transformation from thought to action; he said that teachers must show and prove that they are as good as their word." This type of treatment affects English students much more, as they are older and have greater experience in understanding and analysing the treatment of the subject.

My own view is that English language students must be informed that their teachers' expectations for the improvement of their oral discourse ability will involve being tested. These expectations motivate the learners and in consequence enhance the learning. Furthermore, English teachers should be aware of the

diversity and richness of activities in the field and of the extent of autonomous learning possible out of the classroom. Teachers should also know how they can best help learners to learn from their prior knowledge by using this in conversation as well as the peer-pair discussions. In fact, utilising past experience is far more pervasive and beneficial than most other exercises going on in class, because of its experiential informative learning potential. Wright and Bolitho (1993:192) wrote:

> Indeed, we suspect that successful communicative teaching depends more than ever on a high level of language awareness in a teacher due to the richness and complexity of a "communicative view".

These writers also believe that language awareness causes changes in attitudes and beliefs. An aware teacher can contribute to all aspects of learning or context from material preparation, adapting, adopting, implementing, understanding, interpreting and evaluating the programme by assessing the learners and giving them feedback.

In fact, the type of awareness involved in ESP language teaching depends greatly upon the needs of the learners and familiarity with special terms and rules of the use of oral discourse which provides confidence and support to the learners. Teachers' awareness, therefore, can become a system through which language use and patterns are to be practised. Teacher awareness of the English context can ease the emerging problems during the whole process of learning from listening, encoding, interpreting, decoding, understanding and production. Context awareness expands the insights and thinking, because it links the prior

knowledge of the past experience with the present issue and makes a new avenue of learning. In almost all English programmes time and funds are restricted. This awareness of the teachers, therefore helps the teachers and learners to focus on the topic for complete implementation of the programme. The following quotation highlights some points of awareness:

1. Talking about language is not only acceptable, it is valuable, it can increase a trainer's confidence, and it is often enjoyable. Talk itself may be treated as exploratory.

2. Language awareness has cognitive dimensions it encourages thinking at various levels and of various types. It has an affective element-it engages and helps to evolve attitudes and values.

3. Language interaction of two broad areas of the mind : it is logical and rational in the best senses of these terms. It may also involve the right brain: it involves intuition and the unexpected. Both can be encouraged by tasks.

4. Finally, it seems important to help trainee participants to ask questions about language-ones that will enable them to be effective teachers, and also ones that will help them develop their analytical powers. (Wright and Bolitho, 1993:199)

6.9 Summative reflection

First of all, I have concluded by examining the material in this chapter that the awareness of English teachers of context in language teaching especially of ESL and ESP teachers contributes greatly in enhancing comprehension and oral

production. Overall this awareness is a useful strategy which makes the English learners sensitive to learning. However, it can be assumed that the fulfilment of even one of these points should be influential for some amount of implementation of topic to take place. Oral discourse analysis can work as a separate approach with certain common grounds with other approaches in particular speech act theory, conversation analysis and pragmatics for students studying English in particular ESL and ESP students. Their common grounds is that how a person can produce and interpret an utterance according to the knowledge level of the presenter. However, oral discourse analysis is used in this study in a different way to provide the students with a model for learning. The model will be used by students to improve their oral abilities, particularly their fluency.

To summarise, I have cited Schiffrin(1994:420) to clarify the previous discussion:

> Given the vastness and variety of topics and issues that fall under the label "discourse analysis", it should not be surprising that a wide range of data can be used to illustrate how to go about doing an analysis of discourse.

It is only when all the points are considered, adapted and used that one can be assured that the teachers' awareness like other features of discourse analysis approach will lead directly to proficiency in the use of the interactive skills. This concludes my discussion of the awareness of context. It is now time to examine how English language teaching has been worked out through discourse analysis – fusing theory to practice , which will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 7

Fusing Theory to Practice

7.1 Introduction

Very few studies have explored what strategies second language teachers or students actually use to produce utterances. Teaching strategies and styles are an integral part of lesson construction. Most discourse analysis studies have looked mainly at syntactical or phonological aspects rather than language-use strategies such as those by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) or Stubbs (1983). My analysis here, which is based on utterances producing strategies, provides a useful framework for introducing new strategies and techniques. To focus on discourse analysis in this chapter, I have examined the relation of theoretical issues to practical fieldwork so as to provide the direction and clues to the empirical study discussed in the next chapter. ESL students in general, and ESP learners in particular have had problems in both understanding academic lectures and in using prior and/or learned language in Iranian universities. To this end, I have introduced certain dimensions of the discourse analysis such as appropriateness of speech in a community, which has special features related to that particular community. This 'community speech' would be uttered in specific terms from its acts to its events. These terms are usable by the members of the society, such as the learning or speech community of physicists or chemists. Learning/teaching beyond the sentence, at the level of speech events, paragraph or oral passage,

cause the learner to perceive, store and use the target language more easily because in this way meaning is contextualised and students do not need to know the meaning of all of the vocabulary used and the specific terms, separately. The reason is that when words used in an association form strategy, the learner can get the meaning of the unfamiliar words from the context, getting meaning from context. What is emphasised amongst the features of language aspects is the language use, ethnography of speaking and the strategies used to facilitate the use of English in Iranian universities. In fact, context plays the major role in this process.

The background to the study, the proposed teaching techniques, and relevant pedagogical elements are analysed in this present chapter. Peer-group and the other class discussions, some influential paralinguistic factors and finally a summative refection are attached to the end of the chapter.

7.2 Background

Hymes (1971) has discussed in an analysis of discourse, that utterances can be studied for their various aspects such as systematic potential; appropriateness; occurrence and feasibility. In order to improve the level of English use we can also make use of Grice's (1975) maxims in which he asserted that: "relation; quality; quantity and manner" are the main areas of language for study.

Moreover, in this study I have examined the diverse factors and means affecting English learning, in particular the use of English. In fact, terms and expressions taught in chunks can help students to maintain, retrieve and use them more easily than those taught in single words. One reason is that the chunks provide a concrete meaning and structure as well, which speeds up the speaking of the students. In this regard Becker (1975:72) wrote:

> that the process of speaking is compositional: we start with the information we wish to express or evoke, and we haul out of our phrasal lexicon some patterns that can provide the major elements of this expression. Then the problem is to stitch these together into something roughly grammatical, to fill the blanks with the particulars of the case at hand, to modify the phrases if need be, and if all else fails to generate phrases from scratch to smooth over the transitions and fill in any remaining conceptual holes.

Lexical phrases help the learners, as Becker has indicated, but more important than this is the need for practice with a variety of prior and newly learned vocabulary. This is because firstly, if students use the same phrase frequently they get bored as the audio-lingual methods have shown and, secondly, the students in Iranian universities have limited time, limited access to the use of technology, few English courses to go through and participants to communicate with outside of the classroom. Therefore, these students need to use language as much as possible. A similar teaching approach to the suggestions I have introduced in this study has been discussed by Wilkins (1976:79) who wrote:

> However, the essence of the semantic approach is that we do envisage the possibility of immediate language use. This in turn means that the learner will have to try to understand for more varied forms of language than he is capable of producing himself.

We cannot normally afford to give the learner a receptive repertoire that is as limited as his productive repertoire will be.

In fact, if what Wilkins suggested were to be adopted and experienced by my Iranian learners, they would not face as many difficulties as they usually do, particularly when contacting a native speaker. If our language learners use the language as it is used by the native speakers then these learners would be better able to use the language in situations required by them in real life. Moreover, a discourse analysis approach deals with larger units than a sentence, that is utterance production, in the form of macro-structures which have meaning status. It is intended to introduce specific categories of teaching strategies to characterise specific types of oral discourse which normally happen in real life situations. I have discussed certain aspects and techniques that would help improve Iranian university teaching/learning process regarding the use of English as a foreign language.

The discourse analysis approach develops new techniques of teaching/learning as a solution to the problems in Iranian universities mentioned earlier. These techniques would help the learners to overcome their problems in using the target language. Techniques such as the use of word association or teaching and learning through manageable pieces of language may enhance both comprehension and production. This is supported also by writers such as Chaudron and Richards

(1986:113) who use the term "macro markers" for teaching lexical phrases and point out that:

> the growing demand for specialised English courses has led to the need for research into the processes underlying academic performance, including the processes involved in comprehending academic lectures.

Later, Decarrico and Nattinger (1988) worked on teaching lexical phrases which they called "macro-organisers". They categorised these phrases into eight groups amongst which their "conversational style" category is most suitable for classroom discussions because a lot of informal speaking and more interactions take place in it. Lexical phrases such as 'the point is that', 'in fact', 'okay', 'that is', 'let me start with', 'so there you've got...' are generalizable and could be used by students in their own language situations. However, these phrases would be used as pause fillers or as patterned structures in order to help the learners to speed up and use the language with a higher degree of fluency. The phrases would be used as "topic markers, topic shifters, summarises, exemplifiers, relators, evaluators, qualifiers, and aside markers" according to their groupings. These terms may help the students to utter and make a longer and continuous speech, and so, in this case, these phrases may better be described as "utterance-organisers". However, the main point is the use of vocabulary which the students need to use in their discussions and thread together alongside these organisers. Although these phrases cannot be taught for the whole session, they should be employed as a supplementary part in teaching, because of the limited time and number of English courses for Iranian university students. The use of lexical phrases would be in patterned practice drills, with many substitutes. This is because the students need

to use as many words as possible, which may occur in small group discussions. This kind of practice increases the fluency of the students. This is also agreed by Nattinger (1988).

There are writers and practitioners who have different views on aspects of the above issue. For example, Halliday (1978) believed that the meaning of a language greatly depends on the functional components of that language, which would be logical, semiotic and textual. By textual he meant the use of language. He emphasised that the experiential and logical components are strongly interwoven. To him utterances or speech process are performed through the experiential component and this is reported in the logical system. Halliday found language meaning in the information system. This system is similar to the methods I have introduced in this study, which employ a variety of linguistic and paralinguistic devices, which will be discussed in detail below. To him text meant "language in operation" or a semantic unit made up of textual components and also 'text was meaning and meaning was choice'. He pointed out:

> The information system, which derives from the textual component, determines how the text is organised as a flow of messages. It does not operate through a unit on the lexicogrammatical rank scale but specifies a distinct constituent structure of its own, which we refer to as "information structure". the information structure is realised through the intonation system of the phonology; and the structure unit (ibid. 132-133).

Several of the vantage points which Halliday mentioned match with the specifications I have given to teaching through discourse analysis, such as the

specifications of the participants and the generic structure which is outside the linguistic system, including the length, roles and the morals. This level of language use is meaningful when elements such as context, play a role in providing the meaning in any particular situation. As well as grammar, he also believed in some other elements such as speaker-hearer relationships. In this connection he said:

> But we are likely to find this unity reflected also in its ideational and interpersonal meanings, so that its quality as a text is reinforced by a continuity of context and of its environment, and its functions in that environment (ibid.p.136).

Discourse analysis teaching has recently been revised by Sinclair (1992). He argued that the exchange with its three moves or stages including initiation, response and follow-up, supply a linguistic context for understanding speech events. He has found that exchange would be more efficient if used in learning than act or move. This is similar to word association structure as is used in the teaching sessions (for further information see Chapter 9).

One of the influential factors in a teaching approach is the choice of teaching materials which are already prepared and being used. Change or modification of these materials needs a great deal of time and funds in order to adapt them to students' needs and interests. However, the best and easiest way is to use these materials to accomplish the tasks and activities. In this way students would benefit from the body of the texts for opening, negotiating and follow up. They would use partial or whole association of the text. That is, the students would employ a

phrase or more including a combination of vocabulary and the other parts of language to produce what to say. I here prefer to quote Crocker who stated that:

> Although LSP requires a principled design leading to explicit procedures for course implementation, these principles and procedures derive from explicit decisions, ultimating subjective and pragmatic, concerning what to include, what to exclude, what to give value and how to relate the components together. The prime imperative is to come up with a workable solution to a specific problem that is acceptable to all parties involved, and effective in relation to anticipated outcomes (in Swales & Hassan Mustafa 1984: 146).

In my personal experience, the other effective variables in the fluent use of language and efficiency consist of students' and teachers' commitment, expectations, attention, quality of the process, motivation, and fitting contexts, these also include decreasing the size of the class, or shifting the major variables of learning, for example, from reading to communication, factors which I have discussed earlier in this study. This view is supported by Crocker, who categorised information for methodology consideration.

One of the other influential factors in learning a target language is intonation. Intonation would help learners as a useful technique to transfer meaning, where particularly grammar is likely to be problematic. We may use intonation in a question-answer strategy, as for example question intonation which would be a rise or fall-rise. For example, if I ask my friend: "*Got* the book?" I put emphasis on the word "got" because he has been waiting for it for such a long time and now finally has got it. Or "Are you leaving *tomorrow*?!" Here "tomorrow" is stressed because of being an unexpected time. Both of these questions have a predictable reply. But when the answer is not predictable, which means either a positive or a

negative response may be given to the question, in this case the question is asked with no stress, thus: "Are you going to visit your family this summer?" In this way intonation would help both the speaker and the audience for both apprehension and production. A focus on the nature of ESP, and how knowledge of that can effectively be learned/taught and used in particular institutional, educational and social contexts such as Iran, is essential to all practitioners and participants involved. More than anything else an appropriate approach is needed. The case is similarly also argued by Quirk et al. (1985) and earlier than that, by Crocker who wrote:

> My own feeling is that it is not a matter of splitting, but merely one of what is felt to be the most appropriate approach, that is, a training context can more frequently accept a direct course-to-use relationship than an education context, where a less direct approach, based upon feasibilities of implementation within a fixed environment, might more frequently be required (in Swales & Hassan Mustafa 1984:23).

Accordingly, in each particular context a specific programme needs to be adjusted to suit the training, containing the features of that particular society in order to fortify the practical work. Analyses of certain means and techniques are essential to be discussed in order to fortify the practical work.

In the previous section we have argued the importance of teaching/learning elements. Now I want to show how these should be used and applied in English classes. This is why it is time to introduce the strategies whose proposed application made a significant difference to teaching English to Iranian university

students. These strategies are used for various stages in the process. Careful implementation of these strategies are essential parts of the process. The application of each individual strategy in teaching, arguably results in improving the use of English, which verifies the validity of the strategies' applicability. However, teaching/learning a language, in particular in ESL with the complexity of language and all the other difficulties that exist for adults, is not so simple. As confirmed by ESL practitioners, ESL learners do not learn their second language in the same way as they learn their mother language. ESL learning depends on other criteria and influential elements such as age, personality characteristics, intelligence, aptitude, motivation, and attitudes (Lightbown and Spada, 1993). Discourse analysis has been used for a wide range of purposes, variables and implications. This is confirmed by Kaplan who contended that the use of discourse analysis in research, should be applied to large systems. He added that Tannen observed:

> Discourse analysis is uniquely heterogeneous among the many sub-disciplines of linguistics. In comparison to other sub-disciplines of the field, it may seem almost dismayingly diverse.

A similar assertion is given by Swales (1990: 201) that:

> not only is discourse analysis extraordinary diverse, but given both the scale and variability of work in discourse and the profession, it is not surprising to find that many potentially valuable connections and cross references are missed.

A further position in the same direction for the provision of teaching/learning techniques used as facilitating instruments for the purpose of giving coherence and integration to utterance production. Utterances are made on the bases of the producer's intention through conventionalised strategies such as structure,

meaning and phonological markers, or strategies like the use of various rules and prosody for description, exposition and narration in face-to-face conversation. Conversation analysis is often a foundation for discourse analysis. Accordingly, a range of strategies in discourse analysis are introduced below, to improve the use of English language by ESL students. Strategies and activities associated with discourse analysis when implemented appropriately would be a rich and vast source for directing ESL/ESP students to produce their speech events fluently and meaningfully because such strategies provide enormous opportunities for real-life situations, conversations. The use of discourse analysis in classroom contexts is discussed and approved by a number of researchers such as Hatch, Flashner and Hunt (1986) as a way to improve language through experience. Riggenbach (1990: 153-4)) points out that the communicative movement itself supports the use of discourse analytic techniques by language learners in order :

1. To delegate more responsibility to the language students, implying less of a reliance on more traditional teacher-dominated approaches; and

2. to use meaningful "authentic" language material and language activities, excluding a dependence on the kinds of context-less drills used by proponents of audio-lingual methodology. The use of discourse analysis in the language classroom can address both of these issues. Discourse analytic techniques can help language learners become conscious of the processes that operate to produce the language that they hear and use. At the "macro" level, for example, the examination of an authentic "thanking" sequence by native speakers may help learners begin to see how, in English, this particular speech act is structured. At a finer "micro" level, learners may analyse the strategies which speakers use to maintain discourse (e.g., "stalling" mechanisms and repair phenomena). Or they may notice that different rules of grammar seem to be operating in spoken English than in written English.

I used a number of the strategies outlined in the nine teaching sessions for data collection. These strategies enhanced the learner's ability to produce the construction not only with linguistic devices, but also with the situational and linguistic context semantically and pragmatically as well as grammatically.

Therefore, teachers of ESL/ESP students in Iranian universities need new strategies in order to enable these students to use English as and when required in any situation. This requires a productive and generative competence which would be gained through the analyses of spoken language. Students need to be exposed to intensive experience of the language use so that inductive learning process may function properly. This analysis and use of English provides students with internalised patterns and signals, opportunities to practise the demanded skills to the full subsequent utilisation of the productive capacity. The establishment of linguistic competence with the proposed strategies for intensifying experience of the language will form a basis of the teaching/learning process towards the goal of the fluent speaker. That is, the students will be enabled to use English in the situations they face. These teaching/learning factors will be more stylistic subtleties for performance than basic competence elements. Learning strategies for ESL learners are employed as tools for active learning and for student- directed involvement, which enhances oral ability. A number of proposed influential strategies for Iranian universities follow.

7.3 Class initiatives:

Fundamental elements of teaching, particularly for an English class, which have not been discussed so far, are discussed here to show their importance in the teaching/learning process. Gaining the learners' understanding and giving initiative to students are the main roles of the English teachers. English propositions can be in the form of explanatory and defining discussions in class. One other way of presenting a topic is through simplification. In this way, complex terms will be transformed into simple equivalents at a learners' communicative understanding level. This helps learners' creative ability to use English for communicating new meanings in complicated situations, and thus for specific needs. Language use activities would resemble sharing and exchanging information between a pair or a group of learners to meet their needs. The stimulus for communication comes from the need to discuss and clarify a problem such as problem-solving activities. To be more focused on strategies used in the proposed approach we can refer to the following steps:

1) English teachers are aware of the ongoing activity in the class and make the students understand the purpose of the English classes.

2) Teachers in English classes use diverse means such as describing pictures, using students' shared knowledge to facilitate utterances.

3) Teachers/learners focus on functional communication for meaning.

4) Teachers provide students with a situation in which they will find themselves, in a confident and friendly environment; and also explain to the students the rationale of such classes.

5) Teachers assign the students to explore various ways and strategies to achieve a particular goal. They give them the opportunity of acting the roles assigned to them. Students move towards a shared goal, that is an activity that promotes interaction. The English learners have a common goal. This is the use of target language in each individual discipline such as community speech.

7.4 Analysing content: Meaning

Having briefly discussed class initiatives, it is now time to argue for another focal point, the meaning of the material used in the initiative. When "class initiative" is offered to the English students the second step is to develop the meaning of what has been introduced. This is through the sequential analysis of meaningful utterances (paragraphs) that we can formulate a sort of rules to follow and generalise to more utterances. By the use of correlations about utterances-act evaluation, we can initiate some rules for furthering oral discourse expansion, following similar or simulated routines. For example, for a question type of utterance production the English learners should have an understanding of the event's background. An example would be the question, 'Got the book?' which is lacking information in cohesive-linguistic form, but still is meaningful to both

parties, or we may use a linguistic feature such as 'Will we discuss typing on a computer tomorrow?' In the former example one can make a coherent type question with rising intonation or stress on the first word 'Got' or on the last word: 'We will discuss the typewriter tomorrow?'. On this Halliday (1978:139) asserted that:

> Reality consists of meanings, and the fact meanings are essentially indeterminate and unbounded is what gives rise to that strand in human thought - philosophical, religious, scientific - in which the emphasis is on the dynamic, wave like aspect of reality, its constant restructuring, its periodicity without recurrence, its continuity in time and space. Here there is no distinction between relations among symbols and relations among the "things" that they symbolise - because both are of the same order; both the things and the symbols are meanings.

This is also shown by Guy et al. (1986) who argue that intonation can serve as an illocutionary force, indicating a device based on the role of an utterance in an exchange, whose role is to complete the contribution of prepositional content to oral discourse function.

However, commitment and sincerity are required to obtain information through questions for completing a pattern as an essential type of rule. These influential elements are not considered in discourse analysis literature. Elicitation is not only to fulfil deficient knowledge, but also to show how the response is produced by the respondent. In some cases an evaluation of the responder is based on information provided both for language and metalanguage use. In English classes the presentation in any form of statement, question or request is more situational than grammatical. This is determined through the context of situation, and

intonation more than grammar. To illustrate a clarification of oral discourse, the speaker is asked not for correction but for other clarifying devices as well such as paralinguistic devices.

The main purpose of discourse analysis is to study the language beyond sentential units in a more systematic and coherent way than other approaches. Indeed, words function benefit from speech in longer utterances. In fact, the Speech Act Theory and the Pragmatic Approach are the approaches which deal with the analyses of language in use or in context. A number of writers have dealt with units which have not gone beyond sentences, as we see in Sinclair and Coulthard (1975,1980). The smallest coherent, meaningful, utterance/s can be a unit of independent Proposition. For example, a question and its response can form a unit of discourse, if these two complete a meaningful proposition.

McCarthy and Carter (1994:29) quoted from Christie and Rothery (1989) to put forward a theory of meaning. This statement describes and argues a perspective of genre theorists as follows:

> Ours is a systemic linguistic theory which holds that language is a resource people use for the construction and negotiation of meaning. The theory holds further that because the language is used to build meaning the people in any given culture develop characteristically patterned ways of using language in order to serve the complex set of functions humans have. Such characteristic patterns, then, are social constructions, fashioned out of the constant and ongoing need of people to organise, control and hence make sense of their world.

In fact, semantic, communicative, and pragmatic functions of language deal with the meaning, interpretation and use of oral discourse. These are essential elements that set up the productive rules which provide the sequences as linguistic forms. Metalinguistic factors such as turn-taking and bodily movements (for example, nodding, eye contact, and other gestures) are used for corrections or attention in the study of discourse analysis. The semantic function of language indicates the effect of parameters such as pronunciation, intonation, stress, and the situational context. Accordingly, English learners need to practice various collocations and utterances related to their field and gradually acquire a repertoire of oral discourse. The teacher uses logical connectors such as 'if', 'then', 'given that', 'however' and so via deductive, inductive and analytical procedures, as well as causal and logical relations she/he can show the relationships between propositions. Moreover, students recognise scientific qualifiers such as adjectives or a word group like "magnetic-core", "multi -stratum", "composite photograph". .

On the other hand, we know that English is used chiefly in developing countries. Many English writers have not been to these countries, and are not familiar with problems of feasibility and their meanings in those places. Consequently, many meaningful contextual and local problems of English teaching are not considered,. for example, the nature of English teachers' qualifications. Therefore, what is written is not workable in many areas of use. It seems to be more influential if

writers are insiders rather than outsiders. This is supported by writers from inside and outside as well, such as Schiffrin (1994).

The Interactional Sociolinguistics Approach is another theory influential to discourse which is used for the variety of meanings in different societies (Gumperz 1982a). This approach deals with physical settings, social roles and the relationship of speech to other activities. English needs a great deal of listening and speaking to understand and respond - receiving and producing skills. There exist several types of scientific discourse: for research; for communicating to a wider field; for information transmission; and for pedagogical language for popularised science. These are all theoretical discourses. Spoken discourse differs from written discourse and necessitates more than instrumental terms. It requires the elaboration of concepts and skills in listening, attending, and adapting. The notional/functional debate is pertinent to discourse - the text beyond the sentence. The precise direction that scientific language teaching should take has still to be determined. Scientific discourse is normally impersonal, and objectivized. Pedagogical discourse is more impersonal and objectivized than the authentic communication for meaningful utterances. Users of scientific discourse need to use the required linguistic resources as well. Students' adaptation to specific purposes through the organisation of language for performance and progression is focused on meaning. Eventually, university students will be able to use the language of 'real-life' conditions effectively. What seems more relevant to

classroom discourse analysis is its linguistic and, more than that, its pedagogic aspects in classroom interactions. Certainly the aspects mentioned above, influence learning in English classes, because they are related to the situation or participants who interact within that situation.

Moreover, clear and precise meaning can be obtained more from paralinguistic devices rather than from grammar. For example, an utterance such as " Got the *book?*" is grammatically not interrogative, whereas in terms of pronunciation and stress, the utterance is in question form in which the word "book" is who stressed. Furthermore, a book is a known object for both the speaker and listener, appreciates the meaning. Shared knowledge between the speaker and listener as context, paralinguistic, offers a sound interpretation. Here we see that English learners do not rely only upon linguistic elements of utterances or the performance of transcribed passages. They also need literary interpretation and understanding. This is supported by Lyons (1977), Robins (1984), Abdesslem (1992), and Schiffrin (1994). In relation to this Widdowson (1983:30) stated that:

> This shift of emphasis (on communicative language teaching) has had the effect of identifying objectives more closely with aims.

In Widdowson's writing, although certain influential elements such as authenticity or needs of learners are discussed, some impressive elements such

as context of situation, and coherence are missing. This is also discussed by Littlewood (1981) where he observed communicative activities in which learners are encouraged to get their meaning across, for example, to "disagree, to convince, and to dissuade". The functional effectiveness of language is of importance to Littlewood. Thus we can say that functions and notions must be situationally and personally relevant and appropriately matched. Sometimes in the Communicative Approach there may be a gap for concentration. This gap may be between two topics which can be filled by students' personal interests. That is, each individual may pick any related subject and work on it and present it in the class to his/her peers. If needed the teacher can direct them on how to do that.

With regard to the above, the methodology for English is essentially the study of activities performed by English participants. These activities are determined by English teachers who use all the available resources to clarify meaning. These resources are teaching materials, teaching aids and the students who hope to achieve the objectives of the programme. The ultimate aim is to change students' specific behaviour. Each class then may have a different aim according to university students' needs and wants.

In this approach, English is a medium to use English content, in spoken language. English students must use their workplace, field or academically specific, English terms as authentic material in class. This practice prepares them for future discussions, because language is for meaning and the purpose of a situation. Therefore, language learning occurs through actual use. English students attempt to use the language in any possible way with no correction at the beginning by the teacher. That is, learners use a little grammar with specific terms.

English employs a restricted range of language use related to specific situations and purposes. English course books are the main sources for work in these classes. Topics covered in the teaching materials are selective. In relation to this Brumfit (1977:71) stated: 'An English course is directly concerned with the purposes for which learners need English, purposes which are usually expressed in functional terms.' This statement reveals that the purposes and functional use of English courses are the core content of English.

7.5 Analysing educational technology

One facilitator of good teaching is sound technology properly used. That is, the type of technology which provides the students with their real needs. Nowadays, educational technology plays a vital role in the promotion of the learning process; although these instruments are hardly available in our Iranian English classes. Nevertheless, it is recommended to use any available technology because sometimes they can be helpful in a unique way, for example, hearing an English

native speaker's voice. These tools, cassettes, videos, computers and projectors, can be used both in class and/or out of class at home such as in the car or wherever possible. For example, video provides English learners with real communicative situations in which the learner can shift the role. Becoming an active participant, rather than a passive observer, promotes productive oral skills. It also helps the students to regain their emotional composure and motivation. Video is useful in enhancing vocabulary, structures, functions and paralinguistic features, that is, vocal effects which change the meaning and via discussion, register.

English learners are provided with freedom of expression and opportunity to exchange their views in the classroom. Most of the tasks and activities are accomplished by the learners. This is fulfilled through the teacher's established facilities as well as those of the learners. These facilities can be provided through co-learning opportunities between English learners, the English teacher and a subject teacher. This collaboration and team-work maximises the learning potential. These kinds of facilities involve the learners in discourse negotiations such as comprehension, initiations, extensions, repairing and conclusions in their discussions.

7.6 Analysing structure

Structure is placed here, after other learning elements, because it has been used and emphasised, but has not been as successful, particularly in the area of oral discourse. On the other hand we know that it is important and is necessary to some extent at all levels. The prevailing view of grammar is that it operates exclusively at the sentence level without regard for meaning or context. That is, for teachers to focus on grammar is viewed as being somehow incompatible with communicative or oral discourse analysis approaches in language teaching. Besides this, students can focus on the actual utterances used and the kinds of non-verbal behaviour which accompany these utterances. Halliday demonstrated the extent that grammar and discourse together make the use of language complete. He also pointed out cohesive ties:

1. Reference (pronouns, demonstratives, definite article, etc);

2. Substitution (nominal 'one/s', verbal 'do', clausal 'so';

3. Ellipsis

4. Conjunction (a word or expression that signals the type of link a sentence or clause has with the preceding sentence or text;

5. Lexical cohesion (how words relate to each other).

These ties would help ESL learners, particularly when they are internalized by these students as have Levinson's (1983) or Stubbs's (1983). For example, basic coherent forms such as a sequence of adjectives (such as "a nice rainy spring

season") or a series of nouns (such as "what a large blue water pool!") are some kinds of example to practise. It is crucial for learners to use aspects of the target language whenever possible. It seems reasonable to attempt to provide the best possible conditions for such practice to occur, such as in a small class with authentic and relevant materials, and discussion. Questions give students the chance to express their opinions. The practice of language is incorporated with already learned grammatical patterns of English. That is, students are expected to use their prior knowledge and apply it to express relevant subjects in English. These practices are performed through the collocation rules and in relation to special contexts. For example, "Air pollution and water pollution are two of the main harmful elements in life today". In addition to vocabulary, the main verbs form the structure of the utterances. For example, "Use a low gear on a steep road".

Listening precedes speaking, for which it is a very basic requirement. English learners have already been involved in listening practice in their prior knowledge of English language from guidance (the level after the elementary level and is for three years) to high school and through university. All three main features of the English language (vocabulary, sound and form) are fundamental elements on which English students should concentrate. In the first

instance, grammar exists within the texture of language. Secondly, grammar has long been taught with no satisfactory results. Hence, English learners must attentively listen to patterns, in particular new terms, for the right pronunciation used by the teacher in questions; and then use these terms in their answers. Students focus on the use of specific terms. In this approach teaching is based on the latest effective strategies for English (which are not being used in Iranian universities) as well as experience and intuitively held criteria.

For speech practice, it is suggested that teachers and students sometimes participate in a dialogue and exchange their roles. This motivates students to acquire speaking skills. Moreover, students must become good listeners before they are good speakers. If students are to be good speakers they must understand first by asking for repetition or clarification. The teacher should ask for a volunteer to talk in early sessions. Discussion practice can be as follows:

1) Decide on a topic and choose a simple part of the topic on which each student will be able to say something. English teachers teach their students how to solve a simple problem by defining the nature of a difficulty and suggesting solutions purposefully. English learners improve their vocabulary through greater use of a combination of nouns and adjectives in the simple present tense. They also attempt to use a variety of markers and connectives for different purposes, such as 'because' and 'so that'. This is done frequently in order to organise a well practised combination of specialised terms.

2) Determine the size of each group: grouping, can be done based on various factors such as class setting and the number of students.

3) Assign and explain the roles of participants in a discussion.

4) Establish a time limit for the small-group discussions.

5) When time is up, the class listens to the reporters from each group.

6) Comment on the way the discussions were carried out.

Different voices can help the students get the meaning through certain words. The teacher expects students to pay attention all the time so that they will use the patterns in retelling the topic. This paraphrasing can be extended with longer texts. Students use their own dictionaries if needed. Regarding spoken grammar, McCarthy and Carter (1995: 207) have pointed out that:

> One teaching outcome of circular discussion is that there are dangers, in both English as a mother tongue and ESL/ESP domains, of producing speakers of English modelled on an almost exclusively written version of the language.

These writers also analysed a spoken dialogue which showed that in spoken language we have a great deal of ellipses. This elliptic grammar is important to 'textual ellipsis'. They alleged also that:

In our spoken data it is of major importance. It is also not random, occurring in particular in fixed phrases and related lexical formulae and routines (ibid: 209).

They analysed that learners of English need to have an awareness of such distinctions and choices. To them all this resulted in 'rapid acquisition by learners of fluent, accurate and naturalistic conversational and communicative skills' (p.218).

Here, I agree with their fluency in speaking, but it is necessary to mention that fluency does not go hand-in-hand with accuracy. That is when a learner attempts to keep accuracy of speaking, the fluency would not improve as expected.

7.7 Level of effective and purposeful input

The main aim in oral discourse analysis for English classes is to enable students to speak fluently and purposefully. Speaking is a productive skill that presupposes a basic receptive skill readiness. Receptive skills such as listening and comprehending must be well practised for sense and specific information, to prepare for a sound productive skill. Therefore, the first element which influences these skills is effective input. This is together with the ability to

listen because a good listener through production practice will become a good speaker. Thus, input must be clear in production and simple in structure with key vocabulary. This activates thinking about the topic and matching information. Listening faculties must be sensitive to perceive and internalise the input efficiently. Listeners are attentive and rehearse the main sounds and the key words.

The receptive system must operate precisely, in order to provide appropriate initiatives to oral discourse production. The reason a person is unable to perform what s/he has been exposed to is mainly the result of unclear input. We usually attempt to receive the language in immediate response in discussion, but even this may be put at risk if the presentation extends too long. The attention capacity is limited and listening is the first step towards oral discourse production and use. In this relation, the receptive system can be considered as a receiver and the received information is processed and stored through the cognitive system, producing a message. Listening then becomes fundamental in this active process. The optimum result is achieved when the whole organic system functions properly. Listening should operate for both receiving and responding to the production, and it varies amongst individuals according to their aptitudes. In this way interactionists argue that a meaningful and comprehensive input through conversations with teacher and peers is necessary to learn and produce ESL (Lightbown and Spada 1993).

To summarise, this strategy effectively improves English students' oral discourse. This is because English learners are required to receive clear and correct pronunciation, true effective input by their teachers or through educational aids using a native speaker's voice, and to practise accordingly. Oral fluency is the main concern in this study which incorporates rapidness, natural production, and the reception of contextualised and meaningful language. In fact, fluency versus accuracy is a feature of English courses. For most language use we need to improve fluency more than other parts of language. Fluency increases through practice and attention to the use of rules. Less attention is paid to accuracy because too much attention to accuracy hampers fluency. This is supported by writers mentioned in earlier chapters.

Meanwhile, in many cases, we find the clear meaning through comprehensible semantic structure even with some errors in grammar. In this connection, Byrne (1980:87,92) wrote that when someone says, "I go yesterday", or says, "Look at that sheep sailing slowly out of the harbour", these are clear utterances and we find a lot of this type of utterance in vernacular and native speakers' speech. These type of patterns are completely comprehensible and normal. That is, the meaning is obtained through semantics and the context of these utterances, not

merely the grammar. English learners begin to say something even a word/s from the very beginning. These students proceed as fast as they can, to obtain the required abilities to express their world with confidence and support.

Although listening is needed as much as speaking, or perhaps even more so, all students can listen to one presenter whereas not more than one person can talk at a time. However, Iranian university students need to familiarise themselves with lectures or presentations going on in their classes or conferences. In order to get the salient views and key points they need to be prepared for the input, particularly for the meaning. This requires an investigation as to how students can benefit from them most, for example, by taking notes of the main points.

Input given to learners obviously helps learners to make use of the language particularly in short conversations, in the form of questions and answers. Krashen's (1982) "monitor model" put too much emphasis on input which includes:

1. the acquisition-learning hypothesis;

2. the monitor hypothesis;

3. the natural order hypothesis;

4. the input hypothesis.

To him the acquired system acts to initiate the speaker's utterances and is responsible for fluency and correctness and the learned system. Krashen's claim that learning is not acquisition, which means a fast grasp in learning. This is difficult to examine though. He also asserted that comprehensible input is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for acquisition. The other factors to him are motives, needs, attitudes, and emotional states. Slobin (1982b) as cited by Larsen-Freeman (1991) called input "scaffolding". Whereas, Flowerdew has gone further and argued that:

> the need for further research into second language lectures before meaningful statements can be made about lectures which will have concrete effects on pedagogy (1992:19).

Thus, talking requires more time for practise if all the students are to become active presenters. One strategy used for this purpose is the "question-answer" technique which comes next.

7.8 Level of use and practice : question and answer strategy

The question and answer strategy is a strong practice technique. This practice is performed by asking for volunteer students at the very beginning, and varies

between simple questions to lengthy ones. Afterwards, students may be asked various questions by the teacher, peers or visitors. Materials in textbooks may be used in the form of questions for practise. In particular, when materials are provided in a way to meet the needs of the students, they help the students to focus on suitable chosen topics. This saves students' time searching for relevant topics. This is backed up by many practitioners such as Stubbs (1996), Berry (1981a), Bublitz (1980) and Searle (1976:11) when he said, 'Questions are a species of directive since they are attempts by S to get H to answer, for example, to perform a speech act.'

The example quoted and the rest of the above discussion concludes that, in a discourse analysis approach, the amount of grammar is minimal because grammar exists naturally in utterances. In fact, a two-way role play can be accomplished through question-answer type utterances. In this kind of exercise, questions are directive, which is helpful to the hearer for their response. Consequently, it is useful to make utterances and to practise a function of speech whether to provide information or a service. Furthermore, in English classes the shared knowledge is transferred from the speaker to the listeners. In this way, the presenter attempts to put his/her peer-pair in an ongoing discussion which helps improve fluency and reduce hesitations. English learners through this approach not only perform what they have already learned but also transfer new messages to each other.

Therefore, use and appropriateness are emphasised. It is deemed that authentic communication results in meaningful performances based on pedagogical functional communications. As Hymes (1974) wrote there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless. In this sample, efforts have been made to blend the proposed approach criteria both in the production of the sample material and the operation of it in the class.

Once language is put to use in the form of question-answer, it takes on meaning. This meaning is indeed the context of the subject under discussion. In English the purpose is rather clearly set out in the subject by the syllabus designer/s. We can have confidence that the English text has a self-contained content which accelerates learning and the frequency of use. This is perhaps because of the general and specific purposes of the language in transferring meaning and a body of knowledge by asking and eliciting students' answers. The specific needs of the students are carefully determined and included in questions in English classes. The English teacher sets the scope of language use and the level at which language will be used in future. For example, a real radio conversation should be provided for those who will study or work in that area. To do this, appropriate materials are provided by the course book designers and perhaps supplementary materials by the English teacher. The

content for discussion in the question-answer technique must be relevant to that

particular group of learners' specific use of English, based on their future

needs. An eclectic model introduces teaching English in such a way that language

and content are questioned. The use of this strategy is backed up by Stones

(1992:256&282) who alleged:

> Allied to this are the perceptions of learners about where the control over
> their learning condition lies. If they have no part in the way their learning is
> structured, if the teaching is unresponsive to their individual needs, they are
> once again in a no-win situation. But language cannot be used in such ways
> unless it springs from a firm grasp of pedagogical principles and those
> principles imply active learners and two-way interaction, not passive
> receivers and one-way transmitters.

Therefore, it is expected that our teachers use all possible and available

resources to enhance learning in particular for its practice.

7.9 Level of simplification use

ESL students, in particular students with low competence, would use

simplification strategy to use simplified terms at the beginning and gradually

substitute them for the appropriate technical terms, because specific lexis/terms

conventionally signify concepts to efficient utterances within a specific context.

Hence, the simplification strategy facilitates oral presentation and the use of

teaching materials. This strategy suits the text of both lexical and structural

formation as well as the students' needs and situations, level of knowledge and

conceptualised context. Simplification enhances the development of language

use. It varies according to specific context, topics, facilities, time, environment, and discipline, teaching style, and expectation. This strategy moves from analysis to synthesis, by splitting a text into simple parts. The rationale for the use of simplification is that in English programme, the allotted time is not sufficient to perform all and every individual task of the material and related activities.

The use of this strategy is supported by many writers. For example, Johns and Mayers (1990) asserted that summarization (which is a task in classes) is not realised as it should be and little is known about summary processes and products of university ESL learners. These writers, cited by McAnulty (1990: 253) argue that:

> A summary is a condensed version, in your own words, of the writing of someone else, a condensation that reproduces the thought, emphasis, and tone of the original. It abstracts all the significant facts of the original - overall thesis, main points, important supporting details - but, unlike a paragraph, it omits and /or condenses amplifications such as descriptive details.

Through simplification, students stick to the main topic and skim the material to get rid of complex structures and scan the rules to practise and expand. In synonymous strategy, students start with terms and vocabulary that they already know, instead of using complicated words. However, three key tasks are normally carried out, in the form of deletion of the unimportant parts and

expanding the desired points and inserting relevant external phrases. The users gradually move to specific terms afterwards. Of course, as a teacher I use these strategies first to show the students how to do them. In this way students with both low and high proficiency levels can benefit from this technique. That is, low proficiency students may use simple and familiar terms and the other group of students can use more original terms in producing their own speech.

In fact, summarisation in form of simplification can work reasonably and effectively as one of the main strategies, in which we cut any complex and redundant words to provide simple, usually known, equivalents to make learning situations easier. Simplification narrows down the passages to clear main points. This helps English students to get rid of the complicated parts of a locution. Consequently, this decreases any ambiguity of the utterances.

Transfer is one form of simplification in which the learner uses his/her first language to conform to the rules for target language performance. Generalisation is another form of simplification strategy in which the English students use a simplified pattern or rule to practise more texts. For simplicity we can use all verbs in the simple present tense. English teachers may use paralinguistic devices and gestures such as hand movements and eye-contact as

simplification devices. These attract learners' attention and control the class. Of course, hesitations, repetitions, and pauses are fillers of this strategy for oral discourse. One way of using these is to filter input to facilitate learning of methods of language use. That is, adult learners know that language is basically an essential means of communication. Therefore, the learner perceives new simple patterns and rules for continuity of discussion.

In this way learners learn codes of speaking before they start speaking. Discriminative processing of phonetic, phonemic, syntactic and semantic information is employed in this technique to understand guessing, predicting, matching, and refining of utterances. The strategy of simplifying a text is also discussed and agreed in one way or another by writers such as Hatch (1978) and Widdowson (1978): as he pointed out simplified versions are:

> passages derived from genuine instances of discourse by a process of lexical and syntactic substitution, and hence are regarded as alternative textualizations of a given authentic discourse (p.88).

Context of situation plays a great role in simplification . It is an underlying element on which the programme is based. Context helps the technique of simplification, because it contains the learners, the setting, and their relations, as well as the conversation experienced there. The presenter simplifies the text according to the level of the contextual elements. The English teacher teaches the foreign language learner how to simplify a text to exploit the knowledge in a particular topic.

Discourse analysis in English is a logical argument that uses certain rules to simplify a scientific fact. This is based on the premise of deduction, which means; governing principle, fact statement and conclusion.

Simplification rules, or codes of rules, smooth out the roughness of the terms to speak on an even line with ease. Indeed, it facilitates the communication from linguistic usage to communicative use. This technique is one of the main strategies in the manifestation of oral discourse. It is through simplification that the language user adjusts their language behaviour in the interests of communicative fluency. English learners do not need to practise utterances with exact detailed structure at the beginning. They rather produce meaningful simplified utterances which make it easy for them to correct themselves. Otherwise a rough passage makes language use difficult and frustrates the learner. In fact, students can skim the material and discussion in order to find what is actually needed and get rid of redundant and complex terms. Students scan the rules and find patterns to practise and expand in real situations. Use of simplification strategy leads English learners to infer noun phrases as initial definite which contribute learners to use their shared background and knowledge as well. Specific common disciplinary information allows English students to infer the existence of a specific referent. The natural word order. sequence of the specialised terms are patterns in which English students apply their practices of class discussions. This type of language use is in the form of semiotic systems, using signs and referential pictures. The focus of oral discourse

analysis is on the process of language, both of what English learners know and understand how to use, as well as partially similar to the functionalists' view with the emphasis on utterances.

This approach to discourse analysis has basic shared principles with other types of analysis. This is because this approach contributes to discourse coherence by supplementing meaning with contextualising factors through teaching techniques. In relation to this, what has been emphasised is meaning potential and its context. This is carried out over from quite short, to lengthy sections of interaction. Key points in the topic might be underlined as well. This is because if English learners lose key items the whole text then may appear difficult. Simplified forms of text help the English learners to achieve better learning and more success in their oral activities. The use of simplification as a useful means and strategy for the purpose of language use is supported by Lightbown and Spada (1993) and Bhatia (1993:145) where the latter wrote:

> Simplification, as generally understood and frequently practised in language-teaching pedagogy, is a special form of intra-lingual translation, the purpose of which is to make a given text simpler in terms of its content and/or form.

In fact, too difficult, or too easy tasks are not a suitable challenge and they may cause frustration. Therefore, oral activity tasks are designed to a level which is to some extent higher than the students' level of knowledge of English through the means of simplification.

This strategy is carried out through the following guidelines:

1) emphasise the title, and purpose of the written text in a clear voice with the use of simple vocabulary;

2) categorise the main points of the text in paragraphs by following the order of the original, dates and source from which the text is extracted or adapted;

3) define the significant results and usefulness of the text;

4) add required and relevant transitions;

5) avoid simplifying the text to one that is too technical;

6) emphasise opening, discussing and closing expressions as rules of use; for example, 'Are you all ready to begin?', 'the key point is ...', and 'to summarise the text' respectively;

7) analyse the results and provide further research suggestions.

7.10 Level of synonymous use

Use of the synonym is one of the other strategies that would help the learners to fill the pauses which would be caused by unfamiliar words. This strategy also enables the learners to perform continuous utterances. Learners, through the use of synonyms, would make some usage patterns, such as using a series of connectives, affixes or propositions. This has also been supported by Martin

(1976) and Nattinger (1988). It is better for English learners to begin with the use of terms familiar to them and move on to specialised terms gradually. This helps the students to make utterances more easily and to proceed toward longer and more specific oral discourse. For instance, they can make an utterance with words such as 'a dark colour duck' rather than 'mallard' or use 'salt' for 'maleate'. Although synonyms sometimes cannot provide an exact meaning instead of, or define the word accurately, they are easier to use and speak. English learners can have continuous lectures through synonyms, because they do not have to search for vocabulary which is not familiar to them.

The high-level words can be changed to routine terms by the learner, for instance in theological, cultural and other technical terms, 'repent' becomes 'turn away from our sins'. These types of term changes can be done as paraphrasing by a non-native speaker. The use of synonyms in English teaching/learning is intentional, limited and purposeful. English classes should create new experiences for English· learners by enabling the learners with regard to any unexpected events. The past experience and potential of learners are sound facilitators in most current English classes, whereas these influential factors can heighten the awareness of both teachers and learners. The use of prior knowledge particularly in ESP classes is encouraged by Bhatia (1993: 147) when he asserted that:

> Pre-knowledge of formal and content schemata can facilitate not only the learning of generic conventions and rhetorical action but also the linguistic resources to realise them.

This strategy can be used in the form of pictures when needed, and then explanation be given on these pictorially. For example, a picture of a dark coloured duck would clarify the specialised term 'mallard'. Otherwise the learner has to take some time to concentrate and prepare the required term. Whereas the colour and kind of the bird help a picture itself transfer some part of the information through conceptualised context. Perhaps this is why it is said that 'a picture's worth a thousand words'.

A number of writers still believe in the use of synonyms and range of words that should be developed by their users at early stage. This is indicated in Redman and Ellis (1989,1990) that encouraging recognition of the communicative value of these lexical relations can start at quite an early stage when it is needed. To these writers simple cue and response drills for pair work can train the learner to use synonyms or equivalents.

7.11 Level of silent persuasion and activities

A major problem in the Iranian university setting is the tendency of students to be silent in class. This is especially true for female students and those male students whose English is poor, in particular when these students are in a class with some students who can hardly converse with their teacher. To be silent is a

kind of isolation of the learner, producing remoteness, hiding, shyness, and/or insecurity and fear in the learners. Teaching shy and silent students varies considerably in its character in different settings. Shyness and silence are usually rooted in the social and familial background and are continued in the classroom. Teachers find it difficult to teach these groups, in particular where the language under instruction is a foreign language and is little used outside the classroom.

A mismatch between English students' experiential knowledge and the textbook is a cause of silent behaviour. This can be relieved through the matching of these two factors, by syllabus designers of English textbooks and teachers. Students should study the most suitable and relevant topics as their supplementary subject. This can be carried out by getting help from both their English and subject teachers, peers, and even family members. This encouragement can be reinforced by providing honest relationships and good behaviour. English students should do their best to overcome the silence by showing their presence in class activities, such as giving ideas and making suggestions. These students can introduce new topics or exchange views with their English teacher and/or peers.

Consequently, the assigned teachers ought to be familiar with all those problematic characteristics of English in order to tackle them in an appropriate manner. Many Iranian English learners are silent and quiet. This is perhaps rooted in our culture and also in a society where English is not normally used. As a result, there seems to be a strong feeling amongst English practitioners (indicated in questionnaires and interviews) regarding this problem and I have attempted to examine this issue in the next section of the study.

7.12 Silent students' persuasion activities:

Silent students are unwilling to speak in English, or make mistakes in their speech with their peers or English teacher. They appear not to be encouraged through correction or controlled feedback by their teacher or peers. This is one reason for the disruption to their learning. English teachers do not have sufficient time to discuss with English learners individually, because each English class has thirty-five to sixty students. The habitually quiet behaviour of these types of silent learners acts as a preventive mechanism which prevents them from practice and participation, and consequently prevents their use of language.

Models of encoding information of the language are a crucial question for English students in the university. The class is learner-centred; that is, everything is arranged to maximise the use of English language by the students. Use of language is segmented into fragments as functional units. When students' language skill needs have been determined by the designer/s the appropriate teaching method must be employed to meet these needs. Class activities gradually improve by the English students' participation. Students attempt to speak in meaningful phrases even in the very first session. In practising this, the more able students initiate the discourse first. Students should attempt to follow the discussion in longer phrases without interruption. Students speak at the first possible opportunity. This means they use English language even in an informal manner. This can be done by choosing and using familiar terms and expressions. Students use contextualised speech and appropriate linguistic resources. When a discourse gap occurs, students use expressions such as 'pardon me', 'say it again please' and the like to continue their discussion. Class activities involve common subject topic presentations to the class or sometimes listening to a taped native speaker's voice. The latter is for authenticity of performance of passages and discussions.

Experience of personal discussion experience identifies the role of peer group relationships in offering support to quiet learners. Although most silent learners seem reluctant to initiate a conversation with their classmates, these students

would engage in private talk and in particular chat with their peers when put into small groups. They give a direct response to a specific question from their teacher. Silent students usually either offer a minimal response or refuse to talk at all.

Unfortunately, talking in Iranian pedagogical settings is not encouraged by most English language teachers. This background and inability or unwillingness to communicate freely with teacher and peers, reduces small group talk and activities. Small group discussions commence with clear and easily attainable tasks. It is also vital that the teacher initiates discussion and provides a model to show such discussion. The second session might begin with the learners being given an individual activity. Each learner gets a choice of topic and a peer to talk to. Both of these facilitate the process of learning. The next phase is participation in groups to discuss the same topic in the simplification form. During this activity, students feel comfortable because both the topic and partner are of their own choice. Besides, there are no right or wrong answers. A student discusses her/his ideas with the rest of the group. The others are encouraged to ask appropriate questions to find out more about how the individuals feel in these situations. The teacher's role is to encourage the students to participate in the activity, and take their turn in discussions. This

activity provides an environment in which all the students are able to express an opinion about their experience of talking in a variety of situations. Indeed, this is an essential procedure to follow.

There are some students who are more reluctant than others. All students should accomplish their assigned task and expand their topic and/or answer their peers' questions. At the same time, all the students take turns in asking questions and seeking additional relevant information by the end of the session. This activity usually follows the fact that the students share similar experiences and concerns as they possess common prior knowledge of English and subject matter of their discipline. I personally believe that this type of class activity not only makes all students participate in class discussion, but also provides a friendly environment and a foundation of friendship for all and in particular for those who had previously been isolated in the classroom. In fact, in this activity oral discourse regarding supra-sentential elements, particularly coherence, is the primary concern of the participants. In addition to experience of asking questions, students are encouraged to listen attentively to the presenter in order to prepare a discussion. This means obtaining correct pronunciation, correction, connectors, fillers and intonation. Afterwards, when students bring up their own topics to talk about and ask questions of the others, the situation and class

environment becomes naturalistic. Students in independent groups have responsibility for their own group activities.

Assigning a more active role in their activities improves their language learning. In interviews, the silent students indicated that they were aware of the way they were isolated during discussion. This has been because of their lack of self-esteem, willingness or ability to practise and self-confidence. This needs to be increased through both their teacher's and peers' support. The significance of active learner participation and the corresponding importance of peer talk in class has been recognised. Silent students can tape record their participation within their group discussion and use it out of the class in the car, at home or wherever and whenever possible. This can work as feedback to these students to evaluate and reinforce themselves for progress and improvement. Silent English students can control and direct the shape of their discussion through asking relevant questions.

Empowering English silent learners also requires a shift of emphasis. This is fulfilled by the teacher as the facilitator of any questions rather than as the holder of absolute power through knowledge. Asking these students to work in co-operative small groups is effectively giving them greater control over their

own learning, because they choose their own ways to fulfil their needs and interests. Group work for learning results in a greater quantity of production and variety of speech than the teacher- centred class (see Lightbown and Spada 1993).

Oral discourse is a means through which relationships and the exchange of ideas in class are sustained. Indeed, mutual trust between peers and their teacher is one of the most efficient factors in learning. This results in a feeling of ownership and participation by silent students. This mutual trust can be provided through the promotion of spiritual, moral, pastoral, and technical developments. When the English teacher dominates and controls classroom talk, quiet and shy students are deprived of an opportunity to speak. They are, therefore, withdrawn from discussion. Calling students to respond, randomly by name, should take place after students have had a few sessions, practice in pairs or small groups and have achieved some experience of talking in the English language. This strategy then encourages these students to participate, in particular when supported by their teachers and peers.

English teachers should provide increasing opportunities for the use of oral discourse, such as presenting new research findings or any other relevant and

necessary experiences. English learners must learn about how the meanings of words change, the use of new words in combination, and how vocabulary and context in consequence vary.

Activities include the related hypotheses, debate and development of free thinking for possible improvised discussions. Interestingly, through role-play models students gain confidence by producing natural conversation rather than talking loudly. In natural talk, these students can pause for a moment to collect and organise their thoughts and at the same time relax for a more clear, natural conversational tone. Silent students' issues were discussed and supported by Collins (1994).

My teaching experience suggests that English students with shyness and poor self-confidence, benefit from being able to control the pace of oral discourse activities themselves, in order to meet their individual and specific needs. However, this type of opportunity is greatly dependent on the teacher's chosen behaviour, which reinforces or denies the students' participation in such activities and learning environments.

Harrison (1989) argued that teachers appeared to experience difficulty in bringing their "authentic loving selves" to their relationships with students. To me as an English teacher, the emphasis of small group activities should be on their perspectives and topics amongst the prepared lessons.

Consequently, I am listening to students rather than talking to them about what they need to say. In a real sense, I believe that the agenda is theirs not mine. I shall strive to put this into practice in any way possible and invite my colleagues to practise it. To this end, I have to make a conscious effort to establish a change in repeating and evaluating the students' participation in the discussion. This is agreed in chapters later. I feel that this becomes easier as the learning progresses. Moreover, I shall be changing the way I behave towards the students before I will become increasingly tolerant of allowing fairly long pauses in the discussion, letting them take their time to talk, rather than asking them a few peripheral questions to explicate the matter.

In fact, this keeps the discussion moving on the assigned topic. Such students seem to benefit from time for reflection unlike more vocal students. This attitude creates a good basis for developing a close relationship between myself and the students to exchange views about a wide range of topics. This treatment

allows the relationship to continue outside the classroom and they can contact me at any time. As a consequence of being my "authentic loving self" I feel more relaxed, understanding, and efficient at being myself in the classroom. Consequently, the application of these strategies by English teachers reduces deficiencies of English students such as lack of conversation skill, poor self - esteem and lack of English oral discourse.

7.13 Analysing question/answer techniques in group work

Generally, a discussion offers the students the opportunity to demonstrate their oral skills in situations where collaboration and co-operation with other students and peers is important. Students need to be prepared and list their points, if any, they want to discuss; sit in a semi-circle; try to use facts to follow up and support others' views. In particular, they should encourage the reluctant members of the group. It is basically a friendly atmosphere to exchange views on the topic in which students put forward, defend and/or adapt their views and also listen to the opinion of others. All students in a group have to be ready to contribute according to the level of their prior knowledge. The main concern in group work is focused on making as many students as possible say as much as they can. This means because of time constraints more students can practise in class. Once a class is split into groups, which are as small as possible, more

students can talk at the same time. Group discussion will be most fruitful and will be maximised when discussion is with attention, motivation, and purpose. For example, the topic under discussion is of interest to the students. In this process collective speaking occurs in which students, especially shy and silent ones, feel more comfortable to talk. This technique lets all the learners get thoroughly familiarised with the use of the material. The key point is that English students do their best to make a concrete statement to express specialised propositions.

In class settings, like these in Iran, in which students usually sit in close rows and not in a circle, it is better to practise in small groups of 3 to 5 in order to have access to each other conveniently. The activities and the limits of each task given to each group, or to all groups, are fulfilled by the teacher and afterwards organised by the head of the group as co-ordinator. In group discussion, all participants study the information, and the purpose of the discussion before the discussion begins. Then group members work together to prepare themselves for the discussion. Following each presentation or discussion, the listeners feel free to ask, extend or suggest any relevant ideas. Group discussion may begin with an introduction by the lead group or by a

volunteer. Discussion continues in turn with every individual in the group. The following steps are taken before each presentation:

1) class organisation by the teacher who instructs on how to carry out the presentation.

2) preparing for the discussion: group members take a few minutes to read the written text individually or together. The group leader determines the role and the task to be accomplished by each student in turn as well.

3) follow-up to the discussion: after participating in the discussion, all group members complete the participation by offering feedback in the group. Feedback helps the students to reinforce the strong points and reduces weakness in their future discussions.

The teacher controls each group, helps when required and participates in their group discussion. She/he makes sure every student takes part in oral work. Oral practice may take half of the class time, because the other skills are to be performed as well. The use of specific expressions clarifies the intention of the speaker to the listener/s in group discussion. Listeners usually find it easier to understand the flow of the discussion with more clearly connected points. Patterns of use such as "I think so"; "you are right"; "I agree with you"; "I think so, too"; "I could not agree with you more" are patterns to practise for

agreement. Therefore, English learners learn these kind of expressions by heart and use them in appropriate situations.

Students are attentive in listening and rehearsing the structures and facets of the speech acts used by the teacher or their peers. The teacher is the facilitator, and is the one who defines or initiates the topic. Students are likely to participate actively in oral discourse. This participation will fill a large portion of the class time, because they enjoy discussing their area of interest and show commitment. The teacher facilitates classroom interaction and gives the students hints to correct and improve their discourse themselves. To this end, the teacher leaves the students to form their own groups. The whole class is divided into three or four groups. This assists the students to choose those who can easily converse with each other, with no teasing and no bullying. First, three to four students, according to the size of the class should be chosen as head of their groups; they then consult with the rest to choose their groups in such a way that no one is left out. This type of group formation helps the students, in particular silent students, to be supported by their group participants and, as a result, they do not feel alone.

Students are told how to co-operate and participate in their group. Group participation is accomplished inside and can be organised outside the classroom as well. This saves the class time which usually is short, and it is not sufficient to practise with every individual due to large size classes. This also helps the Iranian university English teachers to cover the whole assigned syllabus. In each class time, all the English learners have the opportunity to utter something, even if in short and simple chunks, and not necessarily in any particular order. This can be fulfilled randomly. No value judgements are made about the quality of students' participation. The teacher provides the students with timely paralinguistic devices, such as eye contact. Each student gets an opportunity to talk in each session. In group work, a variety of techniques are employed. Group working is also advocated by Ames, who asserted:

> Co-operative working, especially when the group is working on a group task, is particularly motivating. It has the effect of moderating positive and negative self-perceptions resulting from individual performance, and it reduces performance anxiety. There is also evidence that co-operative learning is more enjoyable than learning individually and that this tends to enhance intrinsic motivation for learning (In: Stones, 1992:257).

Finally, the class behaves with prior knowledge and equal opportunity of language use. Like any community, there may be complaints by some vocal students explaining that class discussion is dominated by a particular group, but through progression of the class, all students get used to working together and silent students become fewer. This then proves the effectiveness of the teaching strategies which have been used in both small group and whole class context. I then will feel that I am encouraging the withdrawn students to play an active role and engage in the activity of class discussion. At the same time, the vocal students learn how to tolerate, respect, and listen to their peers' opinions that could provide them with different perspectives.

In brief, in group work, motivation is the first step. This can be achieved through group competition. Pattern practising, and reiterating creatively and purposefully are the most effective ways to exercise language use to reach the main objective of the study-oral fluency. Optimum oral fluency is obtained when learners speak gently and easily, without being treated harshly or becoming bored; not necessarily with absolute grammatical or even exact pronunciation correctness, but only in terms of fluency and comprehensibility. This is mainly up to the English learners and teacher to provide an oral communicative atmosphere that encourages and permits the learners to act.

Group work activities have been supported for a long time by many writers such as Rivers(1968), Jolly and Early(1974), Brumfit (1984:77) and Collins (1994).

Given all of the above, we have seen that through this technique, group work increases the participation and involvement of the individual pupil in the task of using a target language. Students are different, some are more intelligent than others, while some others are more gifted in learning and using languages. There are students who are outgoing and communicative, while others are shy and quiet. In small groups, all these types of students learn using the language together, compensating for one another's strong points and deficiencies.

7.14 Level of the available resources: instruction and use

The teacher shows English students how to use the available resources such as audio-visual aids, books, and dictionaries. Students need to be trained by expert librarians to find books. The English teacher uses dictionaries, periodicals and gets help from the technicians to use the language laboratory technology properly.

Visual aids help English learners to understand and remember the message better because the senses of sight and sound, as well as their attention and interest are involved. There is a great variety of visual aids such as different types of boards, charts, models, photographs, pictures, projectors, films and slides, handouts and even objects can be used for this purpose.

The teacher needs to continue talking while showing the visual aid. We explain and describe the topic through visual aids. We can use a pointer to refer to details without blocking someone's view. We are facing the listeners all the time because this keeps their attention and interest. We use boards for writing brief notes while we are talking. Or in case of projector use, in order to save time, we set it up and check to see if everyone is able to read the transparency before beginning our presentation. Regarding handouts, we distribute the handout after the presentation because this prevents disruption.

Use of meaningful and natural oral discourse is the focus in this approach . That is, the utterances are essentially based on the conveyance of meaning, not on grammar. In this relation, intonation, pronunciation and context of situation play major roles in discourse. For teaching intonation, the teacher can use audio-visual aids, perhaps with authentic native speakers' voices such as videos,

films, recordings, or any other available means. Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983:8) pointed out that the use of educational technology, such as tapes, film-strips, projectors and laboratory equipment, are influential in the process of learning a foreign language. The failures and drawbacks in the developing countries where English is taught as a foreign or second language prove this reality. Lack of language use also requires the replacement of teaching approaches in universities.

7.15 Level of prior knowledge use: out of class exercises

The teacher uses the students' experiences to develop and facilitate appropriate discussions. English learners can keep a continuum of style in talk by paying attention to what is being said in the classroom. We, as English teachers, know that timetabled English classes do not have sufficient time to cover all activities of the English syllabus in the class. Thus, we can plan to make the students spend some portion of their out of class time on practising their English materials. Auditory technological education aids such as cassettes can help effectively. We can provide cassettes for each English language student, to be recorded by language laboratory technicians or by a volunteer student. Each student may have two cassettes in order to have one cassette free for each class. Out of class exercises are only one type of exercise used here for the English students to fulfil. This drill is taped or copied for the number of the students in the class.

Indeed students should practise this exercise out of the classroom and bring it back to their next session. This exercise is on the same topic that students have been discussing in class. This exercise is of the ``Question-Pause-Answer" type, that is, a question is asked about the subject covered on that day and a pause is left for the answer and then a suitable response is given in native speaker or local voice which students can check and compare with. The returned cassettes may be checked by either a technician or students themselves. In relation to this Corder (1968:48) stated that:

> In every true sense a great part of the whole teaching operation is now done outside the classroom, and certainly most of the important decisions about teaching those which govern its development as a profession are made outside.

The key point is to commit ourselves to close checks of the accomplishments of the various exercises and in particular by allocating a portion of the total score of mark to these activities. I would like to draw further attention to the use of any potential capability of our English students. For example split them into groups to do their exercises or we can assign the able students to check the cassettes recorded by the students. Furthermore, the use of terms and performance must be taken into consideration through eclectic pedagogic grammar. In other words, ensure the most language performance with the least need for grammar.

These exercises are accomplished with the maximum of language performance, yet with little direct grammar teaching. For example, simplification rules or codes of

rules enable the user to speak on a steady level with ease. Thus simplification facilitates communication from linguistic usage to communicative use. It is through oral discourse teaching techniques such as simplification, that the language user adjusts language behaviour in the interests of communicative fluency. English learners do not need to utter complex structural patterns while producing meaningful simplified utterances, because corrections make the language use difficult and perhaps frustrate the learner.

English learners are to exercise what they have learned out of the classroom as well. At the beginning, students just listen to a pre-recorded tape. This tape includes some basic patterns for practice which is recorded in either their English teacher's or an English speaker's voice. This is because one task at a time facilitates the beginners' learning. Afterwards, the students attempt to utter what they hear and record it. They practise their own voices speaking English on the tape while they feel secure because they are alone. They practise the patterns already recorded and compare them to correct their speech. Use of audio and video tapes are also agreed by Riggenbach (1990) as an effective activity and source material for comprehension strategies. In this way these students use their out of class time to save their classroom practice. This out of class exercise enables the students to participate in class discussions easily with more confidence and security. Besides which, this technique prevents learners

from being dependent on the teacher or the class, and this allows them some independence. This helps English students to take advantage of their free time, and to improve their English.

7.16 The level of the use of underlining

Underlining is an important tactic to be used in English classes to increase English students' attention and empower their retention. Underlining concentrates students' attention to main ideas as subtopics of the passages, but must be carefully accomplished. This approach needs to recognise the main ideas from the minor ones. When this task is not carried out accurately, not only does it not help the learners, it may even harm the learning process and consequently decrease the transfer of knowledge. This is because the students then miss the chief opinions and focus on sub-ideas and minute points. Underlined texts are better remembered and recalled than those which are not underlined or highlighted. This accelerates the fluency and readiness of language use. In English texts main patterns and coherent phrases should be underlined, and practised to generalise with more utterances. Besides, underlining narrows down lengthy passages which helps students to limit patterns and use of structure. English students and teachers use underlining rules and strategies for meaningful utterances rather than the subject structure.

They focus on process rather than the form. In this tactic, students substitute possible parts of the speech.

In conclusion, through this strategy English students can improve both their English use of text and also knowledge of their subject. This is supported by writers such as Wallace (1965), Ausubel (1968), Nist & Hogrebe (1987), and Reway (1992).

7.17 Level of pastoral contact

One focal point in this discourse analysis approach is that the teacher provides a strong personal connection with his/her students through his/her open, friendly, frank and truthful treatment and behaviour. That is, a strong feeling exists between the teacher and students through reciprocal respect. In this relation, the teacher is, of course, the ultimate authority. On the other hand, the teacher has an enthusiastic compassion towards his/her students and a willingness to listen or act on constructive criticism. Through pastoral care students can develop their self-esteem which motivates them to fulfil their real needs. This strategy will help students to voice their views about the area in which they need help and students feel valued. Teachers with high morale and friendlier behaviour get better responses from their students as they experience success. This

strategy is supported by practitioners such as Raymond (1985). All these strategies help prevent fear of exams. The teacher makes the learners aware that assessment is a help to the teacher and learners, as well as the whole programme. It is through assessment that problematic issues would be removed, better accomplished, and constructive feedback provided. More details on testing and assessment are discussed in a separate chapters in this study.

An English teacher has to allocate some hours in addition to the time he/she spends in the classroom with the students. The teacher spends a few hours in listening to not only learning problems, but other personal issues of the students. This approach offers students comfort and consequently encourages their learning. It motivates students to learn, and feel more responsibility towards their learning. Pastoral contact requires the teacher to be sensitive, concerned, and involved with students' vital needs and feelings. This provides them with support, peace of mind, and confidence.

English teachers allocate some of their free hours to see students in private and strive to facilitate not only their educational but their personal problems as much as possible. Another responsibility is to know them on a personal basis,

caring for their achievements and being forbearing about their mistakes, which

gives students internal and spiritual confidence and a feeling of well-being.

This strategy, in the form of an influential factor in learning, that is, providing

an encouraging, supportive and humane relation with students, is agreed by

writers such as Stones (1992:249) where he argued that:

> Many reinforcers are within the teacher's grasp and, with understanding,
> can be used to develop interests that become an abiding part of the
> learner's fundamental attitudes. However, in all the talk about motivation
> and reinforcers in teaching, one makes a very important assumption. That
> is that the basic needs of the learners, such as the need for food, shelter,
> warmth and so on, are satisfied and that praise, attention and
> encouragement, together with such things as satisfaction of curiosity and
> the competent execution of tasks, will act as reinforcers in the classroom.

Indeed, this is the situation we are facing and we do need to change in ways

offered by Stones in one way or another, but perhaps this is not what we

encounter in Western universities.

7.18 Level of integration: culture, and contexts

This will be culturally and psychologically more effective if the required environment is provided by a teacher trained in, or at least highly familiar with, the cultural and psychological context. This context of familiarity includes both the scientific and cultural environment in which the students are likely to perform. These features may be constant for any type of English instruction, but the mechanism for their application can be adjusted depending upon the local situations from place to place which may be illustrated as follows.

A functional and use approach to language learning places major emphasis on the communicative purpose(s) of a speech act. It focuses on what English students want to do or want to accomplish through their speech. Regarding this Halliday put strong stress on context including: "field, tenor, and mode". His field consists of social context of language; tenor of roles and the mode "genre 2' contained symbolic organisation which all these elements constitute the context of situation. These three factors of the context provide options to the experiential, interpersonal and textual meanings respectively. This issue is also supported and argued by certain writers such as Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983). Regarding this: that language is taught to help learners communicate with each other in their community for specific purposes such as the community of chemists or physicists, Brown and Yule (1983) have carried out extensive

research into the factors of speaking tasks through games which although containing many encouraging points, is used with native speakers and so is not suitable for ESL learners. The strategies of formulaic utterances through memorization and developmental sequence and relexification can enhance ESL learners' fluency, as is confirmed by writers such as Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991). Allison cited Swales (1990:9), who argued earlier that English teaching is "to help people to develop their academic communicative competence". In fact, what Swales asserted is referred to as a pragmatic approach towards educational goals for discourse, and conversation in communities. Bhatia worked on genres for their social - cultural factors which has great importance in both teaching and research settings. His linguistic analysis of text is inspiring to English teachers and students for its lexico-grammar, describing text-patterning or form-function relations; and determining cognitive move structures. However, his explanations are not so clear in particular to non-English speakers.

This problematic issue makes it difficult to follow. The cultural approaches to ESL learning and practice affect greatly the possible domain of inquiry within teacher-student classroom discourse. Researchers in this area such as Poole (1990) suggested that understanding and using second language from both the

teaching and learning views have much to gain from attention to the cultural findings regarding the interface of language and culture. Commenting on Bhatia's differentiating genres for communicative purpose Drury (1995: 258) claims that:

> the second and third parts contain a rich fund of examples of how to analyse genres and how to use genre analysis in teaching or language reform situations.

A relevant issue pointed out by Bhatia is his cross-cultural variation in genres and how they can be analysed and used. Amongst them are creativity and orthodoxy, but he concluded that in general, academic and professional genres do not seem to vary systematically across cultures. This is arguable and I believe that this does not work in different cultures because orthodoxy is not the same in different societies as it depends upon their specific cultural features. More on this is offered by Ellis (1996: 217-18) where it is concluded that:

> It is inevitable that ESL/EFL teachers working in an Asian setting will have cultural biases about the soundness of their educational practices. however, 'mediating' is an important aspect of their work, without which their professional knowledge cannot be easily applied. When teaching cross-culturally, it is not enough to operate purely in a theoretical mode, clinging to a single concept of good teaching – in this case the communicative approach. Once this is understood, then points of integration between Western and Eastern teaching practices can be jointly explored.

In fact, in applying any teaching approach teachers need to adapt that particular approach to suit their own situations in order to meet their own as well as their students' needs.

7.19 Use of paralinguistic and prosodic elements, stress, intonation, and body movements

We, as English teachers, or students, make our presentation more effective by showing interest in our subject matter through some kind of paralinguistic devices. We clearly introduce our topic purpose, application, and importance to our listeners in order to realise them via diverse instructional aids. This helps listeners to concentrate their attention on the presentation. We tell our audience to feel free to interrupt with questions and share their experience and knowledge in discussion. Each English presenter makes an effective delivery by taking a positive, confident and enthusiastic approach. This makes the listeners interested in what is being discussed in the classroom. The way we use our eyes, voices and other bodily movements while we are talking to a peer, a small group or the whole class affects learning. This is because each of these devices motivates learners. For example, eye contact draws learners' attention to what we are talking about. At the same time, we can also see whether or not listeners are following our presentation by looking at their faces, or moving around the

class and helping in a friendly and clear way those who need help. This encourages the students to participate more actively because they know that you are concerned in their discussions. A feedback is given for each discussion for its strengths and weaknesses to adjust and use the target language more appropriately in their future talks. This is discussed and supported by Halliday (1978:139) as well where he wrote:

> The fact that aspects of reality can be digitalized and reduced to ordered operations on symbols is still consistent with the views of reality as meaning: certain aspects of meaning are also captured in this way.

This issue, the use of symbols is also argued and agreed by Stones (1992:252) when he pointed out:

> But, as many psychologists would argue, much of human learning, being conceptual and dependent on symbols, cannot be explained or controlled in the same way.

Relevance to this, Leeson (1975) asserted that devices such as maps, timetables, forms, tickets, advertising leaflets and so on can stimulate a great amount of general discussion. Or photographs, cartoons, slide sequences, cine-film and video recordings represent other possibilities offering graduated exercises in creative, productive use of language suitable to students at different levels of performance. Of relevance to this Schiffrin (1990: 100) pointed out that:

> Some problems are often posed in narrow linguistic terms such as word order, hypotaxis and parataxis, and ellipsis alongside problems traditionally posed in broad terms, e.g. sequencing patterns, topic continuity and change, and pragmatic particles.

However, such problems require to go outside linguistics in order to understand the relationship between structure and function as is argued by Bavelas (1990; 5ff) that:

> face to face communication cannot be studied adequately through transcriptions of only the words...what each individual "said" is both auditory and visual. Especially the gestures and facial expressions, but also many of the head, body, and eye movements must be included, not as separate channels, but as part of a precisely integrated whole. The participants use all of these actions together; we separate them analytically at our own risk.

It seems more effective to use these with a variety of linguistic devices such as intonation and other symbols to enhance the receiving and production of English language.

7.20 Use of rules: ways of expressions

These expressions are characterised by specific speech acts including: defining, informing, explaining, questioning, correcting, prompting, ordering, apologising, requesting, and the like. Therefore, the whole purpose of the procedure is to lead to the listener's initiative which can be the base to produce new constructions in the performance of an utterance. Teachers must produce a defensible curriculum and teaching devices for English through the new approach to use language in English classes. Therefore, the intention is to enable the English learners to communicate in specific situations with specific

rules and patterns which are not common to speakers of general English language.

Prior specifications of the learners' particular purposes delimits and restricts English materials. This means to render all learning relevant interests, and therefore, ensure good motivations and potentially leads to relatively high rates of achievement and learner satisfaction. For instance, in "Heat expands iron"; one student may say "Heat expands copper as well"; and some other student may say " Heat expands metals". In this way many other sentences may be uttered throughout a circle in a class. As a result, patterns and rules help English students to expand their use of English language and accordingly the speed of talk.

There are a variety of discussion techniques which English learners can consider as rules to practise patterns with them. English students attentively learn a variety of expressions to generalise in different situations. For example, asking questions is a common way to bring participants into discussion. A series of transitions can be used for this purpose such as:

1) What is your opinion of ...?

2) What do you think about ...?

3) What is your idea...?

4) What do you suggest ...?

Or asking for information we can use expressions such as: 'What...?, Why...?, How...?, How often...?, How much...?, How many .../, How long...?, Where...?, When...?, Which...?'

Or asking about support we use expressions:

'What is your idea about...?'

'What do you think of ...?'

'Are you in favour of ...?'

'Do you agree with ...?'

Expressions in supporting an idea such as:

'I believe in what you ...because ....' ; 'I am for ...because ....'; 'I support ...because....'; 'The positive point of ...is that....';

Or to oppose an idea we can use transitions such as:

'I think ... is not a reasonable idea because ....'; 'I am not in favour of ... because of ....'; 'I can not agree with ... because ....'; 'The discouraging point is ....'.

Also, asking for things English students can use the following:

1) I don't suppose there are any other ...; 2) I was wondering if anyone could introduce any other ...; 3) no chance of other...I suppose

These techniques help to keep the discussion continuing. It is usually the group leader(representative) teacher's responsibility to keep the discussion moving. The following comments can be used to keep the discussion moving:

'We can move to the next point in the topic....'; 'To discuss another point,...'; 'Let's go to the next issue,....'; 'I think we have discussed the point enough, now we move to ....'.

Discussion techniques used for disagreement can be:

'Even if that is so,...., But still,..., Still,...Nevertheless,...In any case,...Anyway,....'

Or for summarisation English learners use expressions such as:

'To summarise, ...'; 'To sum up, ...'; 'In conclusion, ...'; 'In summary,....'

So we have seen that these transition expressions are useful patterns which can be generalised and used in their right places by English learners.

7.21 Turn-taking

Turn-taking itself needs no learning, but its specific linguistic relations are the points that the students need to learn and practise in classrooms. There are certain facts and features in all oral discourse which are influential and therefore, need to be discussed. Turn-taking is a norm which needs to be practised in class for "real use" preparation. Turn-taking is used as a conversational rule. This rule is used differently in different environments, in most cases there is only one speaker at a

particular time concerned with points of likely completion or called on by the previous presenter. Turn-taking also is considered is one of the main strategies used in discourse analysis. To use this strategy to its best effectiveness, teachers attempt to encourage learners to participate in the learning process in turns. Teachers themselves take the role of seminar leaders. This is used comprehensively in English classes in order to encourage students to participate actively in class discussion. The teacher provides proper feedback by accepting or rejecting what students say and by making them correct their own errors. Moreover, students interpret each other according to their shared background, taking turns to respond and expand their conversation. In this way, both the productive skills and receptive skills will develop.

In turn-taking, familiarity with the knowledge of the topic for the turn-taking is necessary. In other words, (s)he should perceive the discussion and try to take the floor. As is indicated also by Coulthard (1977:55):

> The ability to come in as soon as a speaker has reached a possible completion requires a high degree of skill on the part of participants-they need to be able to analyse and understand an ongoing sentence in order to recognise when it is possibly complete, and also to produce immediately a relevant verbal utterance.

This strategy has been confirmed by researchers such as Mehan (1979) who in his detailed research account in which the "lesson" is the unit of analysis in the lesson context. In his analysis teacher-student turn-taking is in the form of "initiation-reply-evaluation (IRE) sequences. Sato (1990: 156) also found turn-taking a useful strategy for backchanneling, attending, agreeing or disagreeing.

Turn-taking is also talked about by McCarthy (1991) in relation to discourse analysis. He believed that how each speaker addresses the other will determine the next speaker's turn, and the timing of turns by turn-taking signals. Therefore, a model is needed which can elicit a series of fairly related utterances. In turn-taking the participants can play different roles which may be in the form of games and other exercises that I need to deal with further.

7.22 Use of games and exercises

A general readiness of English students to discuss and interact can be developed through certain games and exercises. These help students increase their listening skills and their ability to use their imagination to use English for its purported goals. For this purpose, these are not concentrated on grammar, but on the transmission of meaning through functions. Developing a new series of games for the classroom, for instance word associations such as "gear, low-gear, high-gear"; or "air pollution prevention, pollutants-disposal dumps, listeners' feedback" are such examples which strengthen students' utterance expansions. In word associations, one student uses a series of specialised terms, the second student finds a relevant association to develop vocabulary and lexical awareness. In an oral discourse analysis class, this can be practised with a sequence of meaningful and relevant sentences rather than just single words.

For example, if one student says "An alloy of metals", the second student could say " An alloy of metals used in making cars" or "Iron and aluminium are the main bases of most alloys used in the metallic industry". These types of exercises help learners think quickly and retrieve vocabulary and synonyms to expand their conversation. Scientific discussion games are applied to develop and extend the discussion on a particular topic. In this game, students can exchange their ideas, and reverse their roles. For example, one student or a group of students plays the 'pro-technology' role and the other plays the role 'against'. One group discusses the advantages and the other group talks about the disadvantages of technology.

Exercises such as listeners' feedback are for active listening and immediate responses for turn-taking and keeping the floor. This exercise enhances inventiveness in thought and speech. Or the purpose of a game is to keep on talking at all costs in turns with another group or person as partners. The use of meaningful speech for more practice in patterns is recommended in this approach, such as:

(a) "Air pollution disturbs hearing through parasites and it is harmful to the ears", instead of saying "Air pollution is dangerous".

(b) "Unwanted frequency wave is one kind of air contaminates" instead of "Unclear voice";

(c) "Unwanted frequency wave pollutes the sound of voices over the radio" in place of "We cannot hear well" which creates ambiguity for listener/s.

Conversation management exercises can work very effectively because learners manage their discourse in the same way that the teacher or another presenter talks in class. These exercises are also used for practising relevant vocabulary, and other specific characteristics of speech. In such an exercise, simplification can be used as a communication strategy by which the learner paraphrases the utterance or the text materials with a meaningful simpler utterance to give the gist of the topic.

7.23 Summative reflection

This present chapter, in terms of findings and recommendations, has dealt with a number of important critical and pedagogical issues. The techniques of proposed approaches which in Iran have neither been introduced, nor used before, enhances the English learning towards an improvement of language use in Iranian universities. Such an endeavour is characterised and limited to the Iranian academic and cultural contexts. In consequence, the learners in each stage of each

lesson or topic are to elaborate and extend the oral practice sequence. In as much as the students can work their way towards the target language use is sufficient. Accuracy has been used not as an end in itself but as a means to achieve a satisfactory fluency. Indeed, this would be a productive policy to improve fluency through the design of syllabus evidence not used before. Learners may become more fluent in their use of language with one another in peer-pair or small group discussions. In this way, there will be no conflicting forces to the language use. As a result it is expected that:

1. Teachers are expected to make sure that learners really understand the concepts and activities of the topic they discuss in classroom.

2. Teachers need concentrate on meaningful but not necessarily on grammatically exact responses.

3. Teachers should know that learners learn a lot through interacting with one another, especially through discussion and group work.

4. Teachers should know that learning focused on meaning and use is more meaningful and lasting than teachers' initiatives.

English is acquired on the basis of organisation via a process of learning. The learner first perceives the knowledge and then internalises it, which may involve a strategy of learning such as process of simplification. Simplification can be presenting input data in a comprehensible form which suits with learners' code level or familiarisation with terms such as simplifying the vocabulary to the level

he/she possesses. Taken together this approach is more open to meaningful use of language for teaching the target language.

Closing this chapter I wish to emphasise discourse analysis as one of the main divisions of applied linguistics which has only recently been the subject of study. In my study discourse analysis is being examined both for its linguistic as well as paralinguistic aspects. Concentration of the study is focused on the practical production and interpretation of utterances in both the classroom and real-life practice. In this relation, oral discourse is discussed in a systematic and specific way as a tool for analysis, to provide a sound approach for the purpose of oral production in English classes.

A sketch of oral discourse production is illustrated in a symbolic diagram to make it clear:

Processing Systems
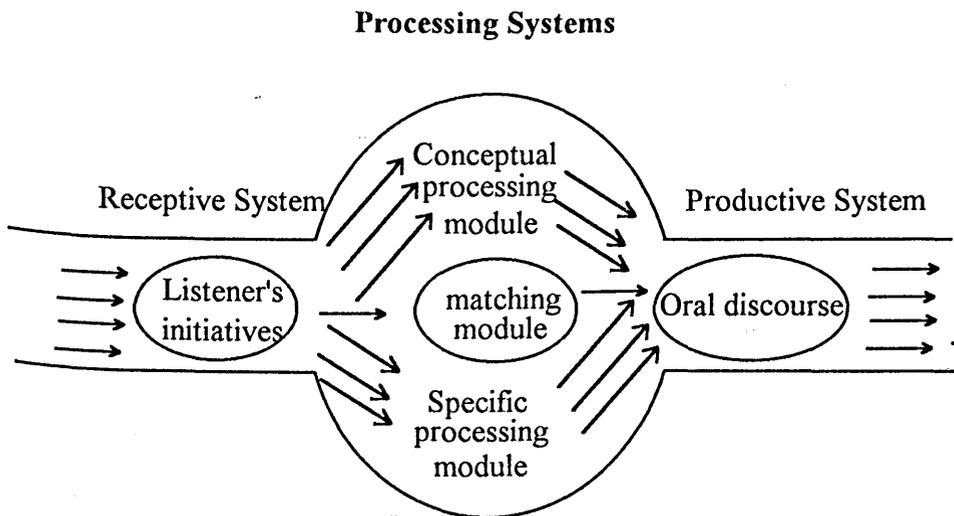
(figure 5).

To summarise: It has been argued that there is nothing so practical as a rich oral discourse teaching approach. The theoretical framework was discussed with its impressive elements including teaching techniques/strategies. Amongst these are key practical elements such as group work discussions, simplification, question-answer, or synonym use essential for fluency practice. We have seen throughout this chapter that in all situations the teacher has been, and still is, the great power and the cornerstone of the teaching/learning process. All in all this type of approach is interactional, underlying language use and dealing with the way of improving fluency and expressing meaning situated in contexts in order to use and relate the specific meaning to that context.

Unfortunately, as was declared by the teachers in the interviews, most of the Iranian English teachers have not been trained for this professional purpose. Lack of teacher-training has resulted in the failure of the English learning/teaching process particularly in speaking skills. Since this is essential to the study, I have allotted the next chapter to open up this issue, for the sake of clarification, to Iranian English programmers, trainers and trainees.

We will find in the next chapter that the analyses of group discussions and lesson events are in terms of the circumstances, intention and expectations which are specialised for the circumstances of Iranian society. These analyses are descriptive

and comprehensive, and not just a linguistic framework, but move to combine speech events. The analysis is also informative, with paralinguistically constructed features such as intonation, gestures and the like in order to provide information about, or draw the attention of, the students.

CHAPTER 8

Field-Work: Practice: Interviews and Teaching Sessions

8.1 Introduction:

In this part of the study, the practical field work I have used an action research approach as a suitable method to accomplish my research because it incorporates methodology which is essential in English language teaching. This method requires commitment by the participants in particular the university teachers to the research outcomes. In fact, a combination of action research and case study are used to accomplish this research, because it can enable the students as well as teachers involved to become aware of the process through which the oral discourse analysis influenced the group discussions. That part of the research based on the investigation is a case study since it has dealt with the pre- and post-test, two types of questionnaires and interviews as steps in the teaching sessions used to identify Iranian university students' difficulties in using their prior-learned English. I have examined the effectiveness of the use of oral discourse analysis to encourage students, as well as teachers to overcome the problem of using English, particularly in speaking skills. Students and teachers participating in this study were randomly chosen.

Here, I am at a point where I can examine the introduction of an approach to teaching English which reflects the learning/teaching experience and teachers'

observation. To this end, I used two types of questionnaires, interviews and observations. The questionnaires and interviews have been used mainly to answer the following interconnected research questions:

1. Have the Iranian university English teachers been provided with sufficient training, materials and technology to implement the prescribed syllabus?

2. Will the introductory strategies be adequate to meet the Iranian university learners' real needs for English?

3. How far can this approach provide sufficient opportunities for the use of English by Iranian university students?

4. To what extent is the introductory teaching programme effective?

5. To what extent have the university students been assessed for their oral capabilities?

6. Do the majority of the Iranian university English learners prefer to be passive and silent in the class?

It was impossible to measure all the variables affecting this approach. The questions in the questionnaires or interviews are not equally valuable to this study. However, the points of concern will be discussed in the following sections, as Brumfit (1984:112) pointed out that: 'we can concentrate on enabling learners to use the language tokens presented in their language work for purposes which they will develop themselves.' The participating teacher-training students who were

enrolled in their 3rd year of study, usually take their general English in their first or second year. In this chapter the views of an English head teacher and five students are presented. I have also discussed the questionnaires and interviews of some English students as well as teachers.

8.2 The general aims of the field-work

In this part of the study, the effectiveness of the proposed approach, oral discourse analysis is shown in the teaching of English to Iranian university students, in nine sessions in Tehran Teacher Training University. I have demonstrated this by employing some strategies of the proposed approach, such as simplification, use of synonyms, question-answer and group work strategies.

The field study was designed to examine the validity of the problem introduced in the beginning of the study in a way that investigates:

1. Does the use of oral discourse really represent an alternative to and an improvement on the previous English teaching in Iranian universities?

2. How far does the oral discourse cater for the development of the speaking skills, particularly in fluency and meaning?

8.3 Background

In the introductory section at the outset of this study, I discussed how Iranian university students have not been as successful in using English as a second

language as expected, even after graduation. It was agreed that the lack of target language use by graduates mostly depends upon the approach used in teaching ESL/ESP (as has been supported by Mackay & Mountford, 1978; Widdowson, 1982, and Biria & Tahririan, 1994). This is also apparent through experience in Iranian universities. This was because the majority of Iranian university English teachers are not trained in the application of effective teaching approaches. Consequently, each teacher teaches as she/he feels inclined. The approaches employed vary from the grammar-translation method to the communicative approach. Unfortunately, quite often other approaches are used rather than the communicative one. A communicative approach may be used, but in a way not focused on oral discourse, rather on language use, that is, neither teacher nor students use English in class, but rather Farsi. Students do not participate in class activities and the teacher is still the sole speaker. Despite the time and finance invested, the majority of the university students are not enabled to express their thoughts. This affected especially those graduates who depart to foreign countries for further study. This is why these students usually have to spend at least one and usually more terms in preparation to take their subject courses.

Moreover, in Iranian universities, the teacher has usually performed almost all the activities in the class. Students usually have had no opportunity to practise in class. In addition to this, the lack of educational language teaching/learning aids and teacher training programmes have caused the failure of English use as

indicated earlier by Iranian writers, Biria & Tahririan (1994). This was also claimed by Strevens (1977) and Brumfit (1984) who declared that the emphasis should be on the learner and ways of learning. This demands examination of all necessary learning requirements such as the needs of the students, the preparation of suitable textbooks, training of teachers with appropriate teaching approaches and the provision of other learning facilities. These facilities can include language laboratories equipped with the required learning aids, overhead projectors, computers, dictionaries and relevant books and periodicals.

So far, English courses in Iranian universities, and in particular ESP, have been designed to meet the reading needs of Iranian university students. In contrast, nowadays, the majority of both teachers and students believe that the spoken English is more necessary than reading. This is clearly stated in both teachers' and graduates' interviews (see Appendices C & D). This aspect of language need, was felt through experience by these teachers and students and caused difficulties during their further education. The lack of English use by ESL/ESP students is also supported by writers such as Hutchinson and Waters, 1981, Nunan, 1988 and Biria &Tahririan (1994), who emphasised the practical dimensions of education.

The academic and occupational needs for English language use support the claim for a change in the teaching approach. As background to this claim, this useful theoretical view needs to be practically examined. The nine-sessions of teaching

were planned to find out what the significance is, if any, in this claim. I have used a limited number of suitable research tools to conduct the research throughout. The teaching sessions ran with 30 students (22 males and 8 females), the student subjects of the study, with different levels of English. They were randomly selected by their teachers from a population of about 236 male and female, all 3rd year students studying at Tehran Teacher Training University. This medium size of class was designed to help me exercise better control over applying techniques through individual, pair and group-work. This method of selection was chosen to achieve generalisability and applicability of the teaching results to all prospective university students in Iran. A pre-test was given to the participating students before the class sessions commence in order to be contrasted/compared with the post-test given after the teaching sessions to find out the effectiveness of the proposed approach.

A specific type of qualitative method was used as a sound measurement supported by recent writers on research methods Denzin and Lincoln (1994). These writers believe that meaning and understanding can be searched for through qualitative methods through which we can explore the interpretation and meaning which may be placed upon thought and behaviour viewed in an appropriate context.

8.4 Pre-test

I prepared some questions to ask the students in our first meeting. This was to discover the students' oral strengths and weaknesses before attending the classes and contrast/compare their pre-test speaking skills with their post-test discussions following teaching sessions. A contrast between the pre-and post-tests is made later in this section of the study.

8.5 Pre-test and post-test conversation analysis: contrasts

When we contrast the pre-test conversation of student No 1 with that of the post-test conversation, we see that in the pre-test, the subject has answered the questions in short utterances. This was performed in a way that the student neither used proper terms nor meaningful utterances. In addition to this, the subject had a slow discussion with many repetitions and hesitations as follows:

1. S1A1: Second-year physics student.

2. S1A2:

I passed English course regarding speaking in two terms and I don't I don't any I don't enough speaking English very well. I don't learn speaking English very well.

3. S1A3:

Yes, English in my studies is very useful lessons because I need to progress in my course and my studies very need to learn English. Because passage, English passage in physics is very is very useful in my studies and my learn into my learn into English eh need to learn English.

4. S1A4:

Eh I don't know what this question what what did he say and I don't know to. I don't know to answer this question, excuse me.

5. S1A5:

Yes my course book is very difficulty because in English English book is very hard eh hard lessons. I think and I don't know very good work in this in this lesson.

6. S1A6:

No, I have never been orally tested in this in classes by my teacher and I am very weakness in this lesson.

We see that the subject cannot even express his ideas in meaningful utterances because he was unable to say that he had passed his English course two terms ago. The same student (S1) uttered a fairly long discussion and offered solutions to learning/teaching in the post-test:

In my opinion the students at the schools eh teaching should be given a good teaching by teachers. Students eh always watches or shows the

teaching of teachers. In the other words, eh in the other word eh they should they eh observes what the teacher says. What the teacher says. They should observe what the teacher says or teach to them. Students eh always eager to learn lessons, but some of them were, students was the teachers eh should be given to them. It is not possible for the students eh eh to understand lessons. For the students eh eh to understand lessons without teaching of the teacher. The teaching of the teacher, eh but eh eh the kind teachers, the kind of teach that had been given to them varies each other. If the kind of teach that want the teacher give to them was is good and the students will understand the matter very well. But if the kind teach that the teach give to them is not eh good student won't understand lessons. Teachers should have eh should have eh ways to control the class to control the class and to educate to the students very well. Education in the school varies from one teacher to another.

Of course, the purpose and the definition of education eh eh haven't donated yet. And any one know. Any one knows the purpose and definition of education. But important than this is the technician, technician on (techniques) of education. The technician of education also varies from a teacher to another, from one teacher to another. Emm if one teacher were have understood the matter and be able to teach the matter but have not eh the ways or technique of teachings of education. He did not success, haven't succeed. He want succeed, he want succeed. My students problem is this that they haven't eh purpose or eh they haven't purpose to education, of course. Parents eh wants to spent children to school or to educate only for educate them. But they think education is not an end but is means to an end is means to an end.

It's not enough for us to follow the way of education of the past or follow the education in present. The way of education should should be related to the matter to the position of the students. Eh to the teacher and to the eh kind of expressing of education, education. And to some extent it's related to problem in the society. For example, for example, students are interested in are interesting in eh social, sociology than other matters. And for example, they aren't interesting in logos (logic) or philosophy because this matters because this matters this is not belong to them. But belong to the society.

So the contrasts of the groups discussions indicated that the group discussions have been improved, as the quality of discussions have clearly changed. For example, the contrast analyses of S2A4 in the pre-test and post-test or the contrast of group 1 discussions in pre- and post-test showed the differences. The improvement of the students and the efficacy of the applied approach is also indicated in many of the students' post-test discussions (see Appendix F).

8.6 Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was prepared and self-administered. The purpose was to gather data on teachers' qualifications (both academic and professional) and their teaching experience plus their perspectives, if any, on the problems of teaching and learning English. The questionnaire was shown to colleagues in the English unit of the Language Department, University of Teacher-Training in Tehran, so the individual items could be looked at objectively for any ambiguities. As a data collection plan, it was considered to have face validity as well content and concurrent validity. At the same time, the validity of the study was also investigated to make sure that it measured what it was supposed to measure in the form of description.

The English teachers' questionnaire was intended to investigate English teaching approaches. The questionnaire was tried out on 20 English teachers in Teacher-Training University in Tehran. No Farsi translation of the questions seemed

necessary. The questionnaire was administered to current teachers of English. The questions were designed to elicit answers about English teaching problems. These questions sought information on the nature of oral performance in both the teaching approaches and textbooks. The hypotheses related to teachers' questionnaire were as follows:

a. Most of the Iranian university English teachers are qualified, but have not been trained for this purpose.

b. The majority of the teachers strongly believe that training is necessary.

c. These teachers believe that the course books and approach of the teaching are not adequate to learn/teach English for all aspects of the language.

d. There is a considerable imbalance between the oral teaching materials already provided and corresponding testing and evaluation.

In order to implement the questionnaire properly, I planned to justify the rules applied to the questions. The rules and their principles are manifested as follows:

Rule	Principle
1. Focus the questions to the target points.	1. To avoid going off the topic.
2. Make sure the questions are understood by the respondents.	2. To get right answers.
3. Clarify unclear questions.	3. To get relevant responses.
4. Avoid repeating the question/s.	4. To depend on the respondents' reply.
5. Repeat or make clear the questions to which an inadequate response is given.	5. To get optimum feedback.
6. Show satisfaction and thank respondents for their co-operation.	6. To give a rewarding experience to the respondents.

8. Express the worth of the interviews.	8. To provide the respondent with encouragement.

8.7 Teachers' interviews

This research was carried out with experienced English teachers who had been teaching English for some years. This is critical because these experienced persons can make important contributions by giving their views on teaching English. These views help provide the further development of learning. The critical case sampling interview is one of the major means used to test the hypotheses of the research under study. This is because the experienced practitioners here are well aware of the difficulties in the process of teaching English. Consequently, their perspectives are useful in clarifying the criteria, or questions introduced in the study. I have used the perspectives of the experienced English teachers for research purposes, but at the same time the research would help these teachers to understand how they view their own teaching process as a kind of feedback. Therefore, the key points argued by these teachers with their perspectives which are extracted from the raw transcribed text are worth citing as worthy of further investigation for this study. For example, subject no.1 who has five years of English teaching experience in Yazd University responded to the questions as follows:

Q1: Would you state the nature of oral discourse in the English teaching/learning process in your Iranian University, please?

T1A1(T1 refers to teacher subject no.1; A1 to answer to question no.1):

Yes, it is necessary. That is, we need really know, if want to know how to talk. They should think about the techniques and strategies like this (oral discourse) and use them as they fit. I think the atmosphere at least should be native like, if it is not exactly as native speaker or native situation it should be native like.

Q2: What difficulties regarding oral discourse have you experienced during your experience of English teaching/learning ?

T1A2:

We want to draw the answer from the students. How? By discussion, by co-discussion and sure that this can help a lot to the extent we have more discussion we have more involvement from the part of the student. Considering the use of English or Farsi it depends on the situation that we are located. If the students to some extent are lower than what we expect, I think shift to Farsi, because we have lack of time and we have not enough classes during the week.

Q3: What techniques/strategies would you prefer in oral discourse analysis in order to enable English students to use the language fluently?

T1A3:

I am sure that the students take part in the class that they should feel that what they say can be accepted by their teacher can be approved by the teacher. It is, I think a very important thing, the teacher should not try to control all the time, the students in the class, try to remove errors and mistakes that the students have. They should feel free, so this works. As I said the atmosphere should be motivated and the motivation should be high, it should be a friendly class.

Q4: What is your view of the question and answer strategy to teach oral discourse to English students? Should this be accomplished in English or Farsi or both?

T1A4:

It is not important that we see the grammar or the pattern they used they are correct or wrong because even those who are native Farsi speakers they even may have a lot of mistakes in their conversation. We expect the second hand speak fluently without any mistakes in grammar, though it is not important, because the message is important, we should focus on the message as long as the message is correct.

Q5: How about teaching oral skills to silent English students, I mean what techniques would work the best to obtain the most oral development?

T1A5:

I mean the pictures in the class, everything which can help to utter the message to the students and voice the message from the students. I think we trying to help, rather than just focusing on the grammar.

Q8: Which one do you prefer: a. teacher-centred or b. student-centred class, and why?

T1A8:

So, it is good as a technique, use the group discussion and we can for example, divide the students into different groups. Let's say allocate a kind of specific topic into ground and ask them to discuss about it, but the oral language of the teacher is very important because the students feel that someone should be in the class in order to look at him as a kind of pattern and sample (model).

Q10: Do you think that the existing English textbooks are appropriate to meet the oral needs of the students ?

T1A10:

Unfortunately, no. Because, as you know the majority of the teachers have been trained and have been educated in Iran and to some extent they have

service-training for our teachers, even among the university teachers, in order to provide them with more training.

8.8 Key points asserted by teacher subject no.2 are as below:

T2A2:

The important thing is the teachers themselves. We don't have skilled and trained staff for this, the teacher themselves are not aware of the foundation of the principles of oral discourse themselves. And another problem is the textbooks, I can claim that none of our textbooks are based on the oral discourse principles.

T2A5:

Well, I think the group works, group activity might be one way to invite them for a group discussion, to a participation in the discussions. And the teacher's responsibility might be to control the activity, rather than eh directly be involved in the activities.

T2A8:

I think, as I said from the beginning it has been the case our teachers are the only control of the learning activities in the classrooms. This doesn't correspond to the modern teaching methodologies. Now it is encouraged that the teachers should lose their role as the sole control of the classes, or has the sole control of the learning process.

T2A14:

If I were to present a lesson to my students on the basis of oral discourse, · my first step would be to present the material orally to the class before using any book, written page, yeah, you might use blackboard, you may use charts, and you might use other visual aids. Yeah, by visual aids I mean pictures, slides, and many other things. Once the students get familiar with whole idea you are trying to convey. Well, testing should be a reflection of your classroom procedure, it shouldn't be different from what you have done during your teaching process. So if you choose oral discourse methods, you have to use oral testing method in your testing as well.

8.9 Teacher subject no.3 's assertions on some questions are as follows

In response to Q2 and Q3 teacher subject no.3 assertedthat:

T3A2&3:

> Yes, of course they are, these strategies are useful and to my experience, all of these strategies can be effective in enabling Iranian students to help them to speak in the target language and to acquire the knowledge that is expressed by means of English textbooks. So if the teacher can apply some strategies like simplification inside the classroom that will be helpful to the students to capture the meaning of ,to pick up the meaning of the technical terms to use synonyms are, I think might be the most effective ways to help the students to learn the meaning of the technical terms in the English classes.

Q7: Can we use prosodic factors such as intonation, gestures and pictorials rather than grammar? Give your reasons please.

T3A7:

> So using some prosodic factors like like intonation, gestures and and stress for example are very important. I mean they have some syntactic and semantic eh significance, so they are very important as far as speaking and oral communication or discourse are concerned.

T3A8:

> It's better to focus on the students rather than the teacher, because the teacher is speaker or could answer particularly, particularly and with special focus on oral discourse. We do not teach to be just monologue speakers.

T3A9:

> Well, the best thing I think is to bring some communicative activities inside the classroom, but not for developing the students' general language proficiency, just for with special focus on the content of the English texts that we are teaching inside the classrooms.

proficiency, just for with special focus on the content of the English texts that we are teaching inside the classrooms.

T3A10:

No, unfortunately I have to say that as far as oral discourse is concerned the existing textbooks are not adequate and appropriate at all.

T3A12:

Yes, if we are going to focus on the oral production inside the classroom, English classroom, we have to motivate our students to talk, not to stop them. If we stop them, how can we expect them to to improve their oral production?

8.10 Teacher subject no. 5 contended:

T5A1:

Actually, there are no oral discourse practices. Students just read a text and are just asked questions about the article. Teaching is confined to the university textbooks and the students are not exposed to real English.

T5A3:

No, these techniques have not been used as you meant in oral production, but I believe these will certainly enhance English learners' oral discourse, if applied appropriately with suitable materials.

T5A4:

I believe the question and answer strategy should be in English. However, in practice, as the students are not familiar with this sort of exercise and the Persian environment also has a negative influence. Teachers are persuaded to use some Persian words to make certain points clear.

T5A5:

I think silent English students, firstly, should be placed in pair groupings. Secondly, they should be allowed to participate in large groups. And, finally, in whole class.

Yes, we can. These factors are very helpful and improve students' receptive and productive systems.

T5A8:

I prefer a student-centred class, because this will give the students the opportunity to practise their English and improve their oral skills.

T5A9:

The fluency of the students can be improved through regular class activities, for example, oral practice of the students with each other inside the classroom and with their friends outside the classroom. Teachers can also provide the students with audio and videotapes for homework. Films, relevant to the use of common technical words in English should be shown in class so that the students become aware of the usage of technical words in different contexts.

T5A 11: I haven't done such testing before.

T5A13:

No, an English teacher should never stop a student's utterance for the purpose of correcting him or her because this action will result in frustration and losing the confidence in the student.

T5A14:

The greatest difficulty that English teachers face in Iran is the lack of educational equipment for their teaching aims. The lack of audio-visual equipment as well as lack of access to recent textbooks and films affects their teaching. The teachers themselves also need refreshes courses and continuous contact with native English speakers. The relationships between teachers and students should be friendly that students feel free to ask questions and improve their English.

8.11 Head of English in Teacher Training University : Interview

Q 1: Would you please offer your general opinion of English classes?

A1:

English classes are usually over-crowded, and we do not have enough teachers and facilities to split the classes.

Q2 : How about educational aids such as recorders, projectors, computers and should these be provided for English students?

A2 :

Majority of the university students are under English teaching which therefore, demand more facilities, and in fact there is no such aids available to English students.

Q3 : Would you express your idea about English teacher training?

A3 :

Well, eh, I strongly believe that English teachers should spend a lot of time on training eh and to familiarise themselves with new rules, all these specifications are to be more suitable than any other teachers to teach English.

Q4 : What do you think of other facilities for English students?

A 4:

I see English students are complaining for short time and insufficient facilities, emm we have started to provide some facilities for these students who form the largest population of the students and are in need of a lot of educational assistance.

Q 5 : How about teaching oral skills?

A 5:

Respect to speaking skills we have deficiencies regarding teacher training because most of our teachers have not been out to any foreign country.

8.12 An open interview with five English students:

In response to the following question:

Q: What is your idea about the teaching approach, syllabus, and activities in

English classes?

student 1 :

> I enjoy the teacher who plays games in class and make us to play roles; and speak English for some time, but not always and also does his best to correct us.

student 3:

> My problem is with my speaking that I can not talk to foreigners. Therefore, I prefer the teacher who makes a lot of efforts to make us talk in class and also practise out of class.

student 4:

> I am pleased with a lesson which is explained and discussed in English except where we can not understand it that then should be explained in Farsi to clarify it.

student 5:

> The English subject that I prefer is the one which is: student-centred and we participate whenever we feel ready to say something and the teacher assess our participation during the whole term not only on a definite day that we may not be ready.

8.13 Simplifying a Text:

As an English teacher I have used the following procedures to simplify my lesson for the students to understand more easily. These parts of the simplification can be considered as "opening, discussing ,and closing" acts as below:

1. The initiative act is to present the title of the text which provides me as presenter with the core of the discussion. Each topic is distinctive and separate from other materials.

2. The directive part which determines the aspect of the title upon which the discussion is going to depend.

3. The discussive part is the main body of the text which focuses the main discussions on it. This stage is longer and involves more detail than the other parts of the lesson.

4. The last part is the conclusive section of the discussion. This section is for giving a brief result of the discussion in the class, the sum up.

8.14 Teaching Sessions

In the nine teaching sessions I chose some topics which were common to the participating students. I used a recorder to record the sessions. In these sessions I have tried to use the introduced techniques and show the students how to use these techniques in their future classes. As I have mentioned earlier it was a difficult task to be a researcher teacher in recording the details and handling the class as appropriately as it should be. I could not even achieve total coverage of the classes, that is, some portions have not been recorded because of the limited reach of the recorder. Therefore the following are transcribed parts of what I have covered in those sessions. This was talked about earlier by Ledema (1996:183), cited in Berstein, who discussed pedagogic discourse as the means through which knowledge transfers to the classroom context:

> Pedagogic discourse is a principle for appropriating other discourses and bringing them into a special relation with each other for the purposes of the selective transmission and acquisition.

In the nine teaching sessions I left discussions mostly with the students to share their prior knowledge with each other and develop their talking. This technique was agreed earlier by Hunter (1994:89) that students 'must first become the kind of people capable of attending to and governing their own conduct'.

8.14.1 Session one

In the first session, I handed out two paragraphs on 'education', which was a general topic with which most of the students were familiar. I read it to them for listening and pronunciation clarification and then simplified the topic with use of some equivalents as clearly as I could. Afterwards, I split the class into paired groups and gave them ten minutes to discuss the topic in English. At this stage not all the students showed interest in participating, but the better ones volunteered and discussed in groups. Eventually, all the students were encouraged to join in the discussion. I began the above as in the following transcription:

'I'm going to introduce a few paragraphs about education. A general topic for most of the students who can use it. I'm going to have a bit of discussion from the book for the students of social sciences'.

> Here, the term education can be used in two senses. In one sense it can be designated to all the influences or factors which are continually subjected by the physical, biological and social environments in which one lives. So here three aspects of education have been considered. I am going to give you a general definition of education, we can answer the question: Where have

you been educated? Or, for example, On what form of application have you been educated? Or, What kind of education system have you been under for so long?

'These are particular questions about education and then, as you know the term education has not been always fixed for the definition from time to time. However, every teacher or student may ask himself some questions about the philosophy of education and then each individual person may have a particular definition, for example':

> If I ask you, What's your purpose of studying? What's your purpose of education here in this university? Each of you may have different definitions, and may have different purposes for being here, but since all of you are teacher-training students perhaps you also have a general idea that, for example, we have been here to be trained to teach at the university for high school students. This is a general term, so philosophy of education is not fixed and, as I said, according to the eh profession of the people or to the common or layman, if you ask about education they may have different ideas.

'So this policy or philosophy of education or nature of education will go to the routine or career of the people who are under that particular training for that purpose and time and this is not training, education or educating in university. Sometimes, even experiences, for example, if we consider the common people we know that everybody has his own individual experiences so these experiences can be as a kind of education because through life everyone has learning something not for the purpose of learning but even through the experience. For example, if you consider the

car mechanic we will see for example through his experience he's going to

learn something new in his career, in his profession'.

So this is different. Education may sometimes be purposefully for some
definite definition, sometimes, be very general according to the purpose that
person is going to use it for in the future.

'So this was a few paragraphs I just mentioned about education. Now I would like

you to use these paragraphs in discussion with your neighbours. You can discuss

in pairs and then, later perhaps in about ten minutes time from now, I'm going to

ask you some questions to see that how much you understood, what did you get

from what I have told you. All right ? Thanks'.

8.14.2 Session Two

In this session I just covered a short general discussion about the types of mail and

the rates, but the focal point was on giving instruction, of how and what strategy,

to be employed for better practice in pair group discussions.

Alright, I just wanted to tell you a bit about how we can send something or
how can we mail or post an item from a place to another place for example
if you have some friends you want to send them some books from Iran to
another country. There are a few ways you can send them.

For example, if you want to send them through the land we can call them

regular mail for example sending books or any other packages through land

vehicles such as trailers for books to another country or sometimes we can send them through freights. Freight means through ship, you ship them something to your friend and the price also is not fixed. Sometimes we have different types of posting and postage. Sometimes you need something be sent very fast to your friend, and this is what we call express mail or a first class.

Perhaps we have this kind of posting in Iran what do we call it in Farsi (پست) means something that you send it that is going very fast it takes perhaps two days that you can send it from here to one of the European country in Europe, right.
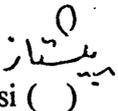
'So now I think you had also a bit discussion about this topic in last class and I would like you as far as you understood what you have covered what you have learnt from the session you can have it in discussion with your neighbour as your partner so you can do it in a dialogue in each two group or pair dialogue. I'm not going to talk more about this. I am going to be waiting for your question if have any after you have the dialogue together in each pair of groups. I'm going to give you 10 minutes time so that you two of you can work as a group together and also ask each other some questions regarding posting or mailing something from a country to another country then if you have any other question I'm here you can ask – alright? You can also share your ideas with your next student and then I'm

going to ask you some questions about this later. Now you can use your past experience and also use the lessons we had regarding this, so your time starts from now'.

'Now I'm going to ask you some questions about how did you have dialogue with your neighbour. As your pair-group or partner you are going to answer the last question, that is how was pair-dialogue useful, how is going to help the students? So if you have your headphones on then you can answer these questions'.

8.14.2.1 Input clarification and some learning instruction

TR (Teacher Researcher): Alright thanks very much for your conversations you had with each other in the class and I really enjoyed because I really found that some of you had very noble, very genuine and original idea about teaching and learning and having conversation with each other in the class. For example, some of you asked if we could use English language all the time. Sometimes Farsi is necessary this is true for some complex terms as I said before and also some of you mentioned that memorisation is going to help us - perhaps this is not that much true today as most of the educators do not believe that memorisation is going to help you that much but internalisation means understanding the structure

of the sentences and using them and practising is going to help you more than memorisation.

But, anyhow the points and the views that you had particularly developing and improving your English conversation has in fact collected some of the points that I had brought before in my writing which is going to help. For example, points such as listening as you just mentioned or, for example, out of class exercises that some of the friends mentioned in the dormitory, outside, anywhere that we could have access to conversation with each other in English language is going to help us. It is true this can be a part of the classrooms exercise.

You can also expect help from your teacher. You ask your teacher to provide some of the materials. For example, not only as part of your main topic but as a supplementary material subject teaching so that you can have practise outside and out of the class. As you mentioned, some of you, that in the class we have a short time. We have a limited time to practise English which is not enough. So this is true, if you have, for example, tapes to take outside even, for example, in your car, at your bed then you have access to them so you can practise with yourself or with your friend and also this is a good point. When you want to practise with your friends this will reduce your shyness and silence. That means, for example, you may feel shy in front of a large group or in front of a class but when you are together with your close friends even if you make mistakes it doesn't matter.

There was another point that I found through discussion. Some of you said that if we try not to say that I'm speaking better than you or you are speaking better it doesn't matter really. The important thing is that we try to speak with each other naturally, as a natural language. How do we speak Farsi, do we say that you speak better than I, no, we don't say that, we just try to understand each other. We just try to say what we want exactly and so use the term that we need, which is very important.

But anyhow thanks very much and for the next session I hope that we be able to cover more points about the teaching since you're teacher-training students. So you are going to help me a lot because I can get some of your ideas and you can use them in your future careers - thank you.

8.14.3 Session Six:

A few paragraphs from a textbook which was familiar to almost all the students attending the teaching session was chosen and taught in this session. Listening to input, use of simplification, synonyms, practice and some other techniques were used here to help students' learning as well as a brief explanation of the text. I tried not to take much time in the session and left it to the students to participate as much as they could. This was performed as follows:

So the topic is, the title of the topic is "The Development of Personality. The development of personality is partly due to inherited characteristics and partly due to experience. The child inherits from his parents, his physical characteristics, his temperament, his intelligence and his potential talents. These form the raw material of personality. That is, they determine the way in which the child responds to his experiences, for example a child with an extroverted disposition will find it easier to make friends than a child with an introverted disposition. A child who is by this disposition is very sensitive, because of those inborn differences. We can not say definitely that a certain kind of experience will have exactly the same effect on the child as it will on another. For instance, the fact that he is not allowed the independence he desires he may cause a child become rebellious against authority, but it may cause another to lose the desire for independence."

'So this was the topic about the development of personality. As you found usually the experts or the scientists believe that two ways we can get our personality. One is through the genetics which is inherited characteristics from the parents and the other one is through the experience, otherwise through the environment. For example, whatever you do in the society the society, is going to put effects on your personality and the amount of these factors and influence is going to be different and perhaps is not still exactly known that how much is gained through the genetics and how much is through the environment. But this is true and well known that for sure each person has gained his characteristics, his features, his personality through these two factors'.

So then I 'm going to give you some of the vocabulary that we had here. Perhaps the equivalent of that and then you could use them. If:

For example, you want to look for inherited as I said inherited characteristics. So instead of 'inherited', you can use 'inborn'. This means

something you get from being born. When your mother gives birth, you are going to get that characteristics from your parents and the word, for example 'characteristics', means the general physical and mental personality. This is called characteristics and temperament is a part of the personality. Temperament is usually from inside of a person, temperament is usually transferred, is usually gained through parents and then 'introverted' and 'extroverted'. 'Introverted' means mostly you rely on your inside force, but 'extroverted' means you are dependent on outside factors. You believe that outside factor's going to influence on your personality and the one, for instance you can use, for example or when you say independence means you are going to do it your own, we can say, for example, separately, individually, personally, so this is independence. As you know, independence is a very common political word that most of the politicians use this word independence. For example, we say all the countries or every nation like their own country to be independent. Means to be separated from other countries and every individual characteristics of that society be of its own or influence means affect, impact, inspire, some put effect on something else.

So I just used some of these, some of the simplified discussions according to my idea that simplified terms help understanding. If you are not able to use those terms that we had in the topic, you'll be able to use some of the equivalents, some of the synonyms that I gave you. So now, I would like you to move into groups so that you can work with each other in pairs. You can talk about the topic we had discussed and can ask each other some of the questions regarding this. Later on, I'm going to ask you to give your ideas about this topic. So you have about 10 minutes time to do your discussions.

8.15 Summative reflection and analysis

One main objective of oral discourse analysis is to search and find the best way into the specific techniques to teach English. I have attempted to fulfil this through focusing on meaning. This specific meaning varies depending on the context which is strikingly related to its discipline. Coherence is one of the focal factor in this analysis which can be derived from intonation, gestures, existing rules and grammar of the utterances. Efforts have been made to recognise those dimensions of utterances that contribute to leaning. To this end, I have introduced a variety of teaching techniques, such as group work activities, use of synonymous, supportive teacher-student relationship. All introduced teaching techniques work in a logical process during the class session.

Regarding the assumptions in the English teachers' questionnaire; most English teachers are not trained to teach English, though because of teaching experience they are still teaching. The majority of the English teachers strongly believe that in-service training is necessary. They also believe that:

1: The number of the English courses are not enough for the students to learn the required skills;

2: Out of class activity can help a lot the progressing of language use;

3: There is no oral discourse exercises or activity in the present teaching course books.

This qualitative research contained some quantified data as well. This focuses on the linguistic content, form construction of what is discussed orally. One application of oral discourse analysis has been a means of supplementing data. For example, in the field of testing and evaluation, the validity of the charts and instrument and the reliability of judgements are specifically important. This approach focused on the extent to which we can be certain that assessment of ability and oral performance are consistent. Collecting the data and consent for the research was required, and was obtained from the Teacher Training University in Tehran.

In this chapter I introduced the application of research tools to collect data for analysis and discussion. These research instruments helped me to investigate the problem with real elements which have been involved in and the effectiveness of the teaching sessions' application. The analysis, discussion and more arguments will be brought into the next chapter.

Chapter 9

Discussion

9.1 Introduction:

The theoretical perspectives supporting the problematic issues of this study need to be applied to prove their applicability in real situations. In the chapter previous to this, I have discussed the use of students' and teachers' questionnaires and interviews to present a background to the teaching approach. The purpose of this section is discussed, the method as well as the oral discourse pre- and post-test and that of selected teaching sessions with the group discussions. Furthermore, there will be a discussion of the contrasts of the teaching sessions, discourse analyses of the group discussions and of selected utterances of some of the students, followed by a general discussion. Lastly, I have contrasted differing group discussions of the teaching sessions as well as the pre- and post-test conversations as further evidence for the hypotheses and indicated the significant differences of students' utterances.

9.2 The system for discourse analyses:

In order to establish a qualitative oral discourse analysis method, a system was used to describe functional units of the used language with the techniques applied. That is, to elicit meaningful performance of utterances in group or individual

discussions as much as possible. This descriptive system of discourse analysis indicated the describing, directing and explaining sections of speech produced by the participant students in the teaching sessions. This system focused on the meaning and fluency of the utterances used by the students rather than grammatical complexity. This was also discussed earlier by Hartland (1994) - who cited from Garfinkel (1967), who introduced the core idea of ethnomethodology - that talk is methodic. This argument draws on ethnomethodology, which has always been concerned with descriptions, in examining different methods of describing. This reorientates both ethnomethodology and in particular discourse analysis. Using different methods of descriptions can change discourse analysis. The important point in this study related to this was that producing complicated terms necessitated the use of different methods for descriptions. For example, simplification, the use of synonyms were effective techniques in most cases.

This kind of analysis has been used for communicative purposes such as giving information about the topic, scope, structure, and aims of the lecture. These create an outline for the listener to reply as they listen and respond to the rest of the ongoing speech events. The principles of the utterances helped the students to understand the importance of each component of the proposition, in the context of the class presentation. This analysis also prepared them for the depth of the coverage devoted to each lesson demonstration and to relate some new information to the prior knowledge. This was done in order to preserve the

participants' talk and to facilitate their interruption. The focus was on how the participants were able to sustain the continuity and fluency of the utterances by applying one or more of the techniques introduced to them during the first meeting and teaching sessions. I have contrasted group 1 discussions in session 1, 2 and 6 as well as their pre-and post-test discussions, with the help of oral discourse testing charts, introduced in this study in order to show the efficacy of the proposed approach. An example of the teacher investigator's comments is forwarded for the future generalisation and implementation of the used techniques. **Note:** in Table 9.1, S1G1 stands for: Session 1 Group 1; TI; teacher investigator and U.T. refers to used technique no.

Utterance	TI's Comment	U.T.
1) S1: (she is asking her peer what is university teacher in English in the Farsi language).	1) Didn't know the English equivalent, asked for it.	5.2.10
2) S2: Professor, professor.	2) Provided equivalent and repeated it.	5.2.8
3) S1: Professor?	3) Asked for confirmation	5.2.10
4) S2: Yes	4) Supported the pair.	5.2.9
5) S1: You professor, hah hah(laughter).	5) Attempted to imitate	5.2.17
6) S2: The professor said that eh eh	6) An initiating move to start S1.	5.2.10
7) S1: About philosophy (long pause).	7) Started with hesitation	5.2.6
8) S1: Asked the peer 'What is recording in English?'.	8) Asked for English equivalent.	5.2.8
9) S2: (no answer long pause).	9) Discussion interrupted.	

In this way, I was able to find out which technique (5.2.10.)was used the most, which can be generalised and applied in more classes, because it was preferred by the students perhaps for the ease or familiarity of use. More examples are provided to provide sufficient evidence of this kind later in this section.

9.3 Discussion on teaching sessions conversations:

Words used in the spoken language form of text contributed to the listener interpreting the text through their conceptualisation. For example, in a descriptive state words such as 'design, influence, aspects, consider, general, definition, purpose, application' (extracted from the session one in Chapter 8), are used to provide the introductory paragraph of the session. At the same time, these items of vocabulary informed the listener about the topic under discussion. These words can change to some other words: take 'difficulty, concern, problem' to state a problem and words such as 'find, change, respond, answer', are used in answering the problem in a problem-solution case. Similarly, words such as 'so', 'hence', 'therefore', 'consequently', 'outcome', 'solution', etcetera can be used to show the solution of a problem. Or vocabulary such as 'manage, succeed, workable, conclusion and result' can be applied to render the evaluation. In teaching sessions employing words such as 'alright; so; thanks' are markers to the students with clear signals. These words when used with the other terms form a model/pattern for the students to practise. These can be used for a start and finish in a question-

answer strategy. These clarify that students need to enrich their vocabulary in order to be able to use the appropriate terms when required in both cases: speaking and interpreting. The use of equivalents can be used for modals as well. For example, we can use 'inevitably' rather than 'must' or 'possibly' for 'may' or 'might'. This means that the functional words can be replaced with modals if they are familiar to the user. In particular, the role of vocabulary in organising speech offers an alternative interest. This depends greatly upon the context of adaptation, the user's knowledge and the situation.

Of course, different situations will require different patterns depending upon the roles and settings. Obviously, there are numerous other features in the speech events such as: intonation, gestures and the use of other paralinguistic devices which make the presenter more confident. This is a part of what the students must bring to their utterances which make cognitive links further than the semantic links between sequential events of speech. This informative talk is coherent and is useful to the language learners as the pattern of oral discourse. In fact, coherent talk in lessons was the feeling that impinged together to make sense and it was not just the use of associated words. So cohesion was associated with coherence to provide meaningful utterances. In other words, the surface or form of utterances was indicated by some markers which chained together items that were related. For example, the 'ed' for the past tense or the 'ing' of the present continuous verb are cohesive markers which create a sense of interpretation to the listener.

Interpretation was seen as a set of approaches to the analysis of spoken discourse. These sets determined the mental activities and the role of the listener. Interpretation depended chiefly upon the prior knowledge and experience of the listener and the characteristics used by the presenter which was the role of background knowledge in macro-level speech. In the body of the lessons, there were also cause-effect relationships between the different paragraphs, because normally a subsequent paragraph provided a reason for the former one in order to give a logical sequence. Each paragraph was the cognitive supporting evidence for the previous one/s. Repetition was also a signal of attention to a comparison or contrast. These utterances were deeply ingrained as parts of our cultural knowledge and our teaching context which occurred between conversations.

The description of language in use description showed how discourse proceeded from one speech event to another and how parts had the function of offering specific discourse meaning amongst participants. Discourse, or debate in class, can improve either through expansion or reduction of a topic both of which lengthen the oral production by the learners. It was arguably confirmed that the use of a topic at length provided the speaker with such characterisation that was not found in separate utterances, because of the coherent and cohesive relations amongst the different parts of the whole text. Each part of this utterance was a unit of the analysis. Similar rationalisation is forwarded by Halliday (1971) where he pointed out that in the significant linguistic stylistic studies of literary texts the concern has

to be with the interpretation of the whole work which has immediate results for producing of 'corpora'.

Or as Swales (1990) claimed as an example, that marked lexical and syntactic differences are often found between abstract, introduction, main argument and conclusion. In all nine teaching sessions I attempted to avoid using disoriented references. Hence, you can find the body of the lessons constructed explicitly. In case of complex terms, I tried to either use simplified forms or use the synonyms. In this way the students perceived the familiar terms more easily than the complex ones. For example, I used nouns rather than references, because it is accepted that the use of references makes understanding ambiguous. At the same time, I did my best to employ the least grammar with certain necessary conjunctive words, 'and; but; so; then'.

Small group discussions worked as an effective strategy of producing speech samples in which students outlined the structure of the talk and discussed problems. Students also commented on discourse features of the speech previously stressed as important, such as features related to content, organisation, and delivery. In some cases they even evaluated linguistic skills, which offered sound feedback on their performance. The contrast also showed that the group had a better conversation in their second session than in the first one, as indicated in the earlier discussions. The groups' discussions gradually changed in the 2nd

and 6th sessions from silence to long utterances. I examined group discussions and found that discussions and interest were promoted. That is, the students were able to produce longer utterances with fewer hesitations in later sessions than in earlier ones. For example, discussions in session two are longer with higher speed (fluency) and fewer hesitations than in session one (see Appendix E). This means students used English with a greater length of utterance, better fluency and greater coherence of material by answering the restricted questions within the time limit.

Moreover, gradually students spoke more fluently and meaningfully at length on a variety of topics in a rather natural language. For example, in session one group one had spoken ten times with short utterances whereas the same group talked for longer time with longer utterances and more natural talk in session two. This was because this group had fewer hesitations and interruptions in session two than in session one. The same group talked more fluently at length and with a variety of utterances getting to the point with the least grammar similar to natural language in session six. For example, at the start, S1 in group one discussion of session one used Farsi rather than English as shown in the following:

Note: S1S1 refers to student 1 and session 1, S2 S1 to student 2 session 1.

    1. S1S1: 'What is a university teacher?' (asked in Farsi).

    2. S2S1: Professor, professor.

    Or both students used one word or two words such as:

3. S1S1: Professor?

4. S2S1: Yes.

The same group had a better and longer discussion in the 2nd session as follows:

1. S1S2: I think we have to learn something before this, something in advance, something about this and then speak about it.

2. S2S2: But some students can't speak.

3. S1S2: Yes, that's I think some students speak wrongly.

4. S2S2: That's okay but ...(a long pause).

From a look at this group's discussion in the sixth session we see the discussion with even better fluency, fewer hesitations and pauses with more meaningful, longer and faster utterances than sessions one and two. The group used terms covered in class easily, but within limitations. This is also shown below:

1. S1S6: What's your opinion about this matter, the purposes?
2. S2S6: Character, my character is influenced by genetic, society, environment, eheh.

3. S1S6:
Yes some other things. *yes,* now I gave that eheh characteristics eh eh hu human the character of human beings is based of the many things. For example, is based of the eh genetic eh eh is based of the society. For example, we are character our characters some part of our character is based of our those things that we get from our parents. For example, it is inherited, yes and many other things is based of the things that experience that we get from the society. For example, we if the society has many, some

condition to learn some condition the people can learn and use some acts, it
is clear.

We see in the above utterances and the comments that certain techniques are used

most of the time. A comparison between S1G1 discussion and that of S2G2

makes this clearer, which consequently demonstrates the effectiveness of S2G1

and S6G1's discourse analysis approach.

However, I have not dealt with phonology because I believe semantic grouping of

lexis can help students more than phonology. In other words, meaningful

utterances are more effective than intonation features. This was also found by

researchers such as Henning (1974) whose assertion is cited by Hsia, Chung and

Wong (1995:83) that:

> More advanced students (therefore more proficient) tend to rely more on
> shared semantic features in recognising and grouping words while less
> advanced students tend to rely more on sound similarities.

9.4 Discussion on Achievements:

Group discussion can provide the members of the group with opportunities for

listening and exchanging views through language use. Listening carefully helped

students utter whatever they wanted to say. In friendly groups, members gained

support and their confidence was encouraged. Group talks gave more students a

role, and more opportunity to contribute their ideas, than would be possible in a

whole-class discussion. The class activities, performed mostly by the students

themselves, made them more autonomous, practical and motivated. It is important

to prepare such a friendly atmosphere so that every individual is allowed to talk which helps them to establish rules such as talking in turns, questioning, answering and giving feedback by both peers and the teacher. It is interesting to note that this contribution made by the students participating in classes gave me extra flexibility and the opportunity to encourage and support more students in each class session.

Students often gained a greater appreciation of the interpretation and interrelation of conversations while discussing in class. They put certain general rules together for particular speech events, and found the distinctions between specific utterances which they had decided to use in the situations. The benefit of having students work with their own language samples demonstrated that they had heard it for themselves. They believed both the regularity of discourse patterns and the frequency of occurrence for certain utterances helped give them more opportunities for language production. The students participated in discussion actively, and potentially ambiguous utterances were eradicated by using simple specific terms. There was a major interaction between students themselves rather than teacher/student. This study would help the linguistic theory not linguistics itself. The study of utterances was in the form of paragraphs which have no structure and can be in a dialogue form. This kind of analysis was introduced earlier by McCarthy (1991).

9.5 Analysis and Discussion of Students' Questionnaire

Question 1 indicates that out of 32 students in class only 12 students (37.50%) are male and 20 (62.5%) females. This helps the materials designer to provide the required material suitable to both groups in particular for role play in class as most of female students are silent and need more encouragement. Question 5 showed that 97.5 % of the students have a tendency to continue their studies. This requires better skills in English language in order to be able to benefit from foreign resources and enjoy contact in English through oral discourse and communicating with people, in particular their peers and teachers. Question 9 determines that there is a strong tendency towards English learning and 90% chose 'very necessary'. Question 9 required students to indicate their preferences concerning the language skills in which 25% chose speaking skill. 46.67% of the students preferred 'listening'. This is because they need a sound input as a receptive skill for speaking, first they should listen and then utter in response. In other words, a good listener becomes a good speaker. This question then confirmed the necessity of the oral discourse in and out of the class to meet the students' needs. The level of language use is more exposed when these students graduate and pursue their studies in particular in foreign countries where they have to contact with English speaking people. Consequently, this supports one of the hypotheses of the thesis. Question 10 shows that merely 6.25 % of English class time had been used in pure English as the medium of instruction, and only 50 % of the class time, used English only. Whilst due to the allocated time to English, it should have been used

all or as much as possible in order to enable English learners to communicate in English. Question 11 aimed at eliciting information concerning the usefulness of English; here 10 students or 31.2 % of the students answered 'very useful' and 16 % of the students said 'not useful' and 42.9 % 'useful' which indicates that English programmes seem necessary.

Question 12 requested the English students' opinions on the relevancy of the syllabus:

4 out of 32 students or 12.5 % answered 'very relevant'; and 16.5 % 'relevant' , and 66 % 'relevant to some extent' and 3 students had given 'irrelevant' as responses. Thus, the majority of the students considered the syllabus of the English courses was of least relevance. Question 13 showed that the majority (75%) of the students chose 'inadequate' and only 6.25 % responded 'adequate' for course books. Thus, changes are required to English course books. The same percentage (75%) also believed that the evaluation method was 'inadequate', it was strange that no one chose 'very adequate' as their answer.

Question 14 is asking one of the key questions which is about the use of language that: 6.25 % said 'always'; 15.6 % answered 'frequently'; and 19.7 % said 'rarely' whereas 50 % of the students chose 'sometimes'. In Question 17 all of the students chose the 'never' choice that indicates 100 % of the English classes are not using any educational aids and have no access to these very useful tools which

must be considered by all of the English participants; English teachers, students, and administrators.

Question 18 asks the students about English teachers' knowledge of the content: 7 of the students which makes 21.9 % chose 'very adequate'; 21 or 65.4 % of the students answered 'adequate'; 7.1 % 'adequate to some extent' and only 5.7 % replied 'inadequate'. Question 19 is about the use of Farsi in English classes for which only 3 students (9.3%) answered 'always' and 4 students (12.5%) chose 'frequently'; 12 students or 37.5 % 'sometimes'; 13 students(40.6%) answered 'rarely'. In Question 20 students are required to indicate if they have been using cassettes as a homework activity out of the classroom only 1 student (3.1%) responded 'frequently' and the rest chose 'never'. Question 22 asked students if the evaluation method was to their satisfaction: 3 students said it was 'very adequate'; 9 students replied 'adequate' and 21 students or 65.6 % answered 'inadequate'. This result also proves that changes in the testing method seems necessary according to the English students.

In Question 23, 97.5 % preferred to take English courses even if these courses were optional which indicates the need of the English courses by these students. Data obtained from Question 24 shows that only 12.5 % preferred subject teacher to language teacher, and the great majority (97.5%) chose 'language teacher'. Responses given to Question 25 showed that 69.75 % of the students asserted

that English course are not sufficient for them to meet their needs, and the same percentage believed that the contact hours with English teachers are not enough.

The data obtained from the above responses show that the majority of the sample questioned desired the use of the target language in their classes. It also indicated that not many English teachers are speaking Farsi in class. The key factor of the problem, the approach to English language use which has caused the problematic nature of speaking skills still exists.

The tables below illustrate some of the core questions of the English students' questionnaire: Table: 9.2 Use of English in class

How often did you speak English in Class?		
	No. of Students	%
a. Always	2	6.25
b. Frequently	5	15.62
c. Sometimes˜	16	50
d. Rarely	6	19.75
e. Never	6	19.75
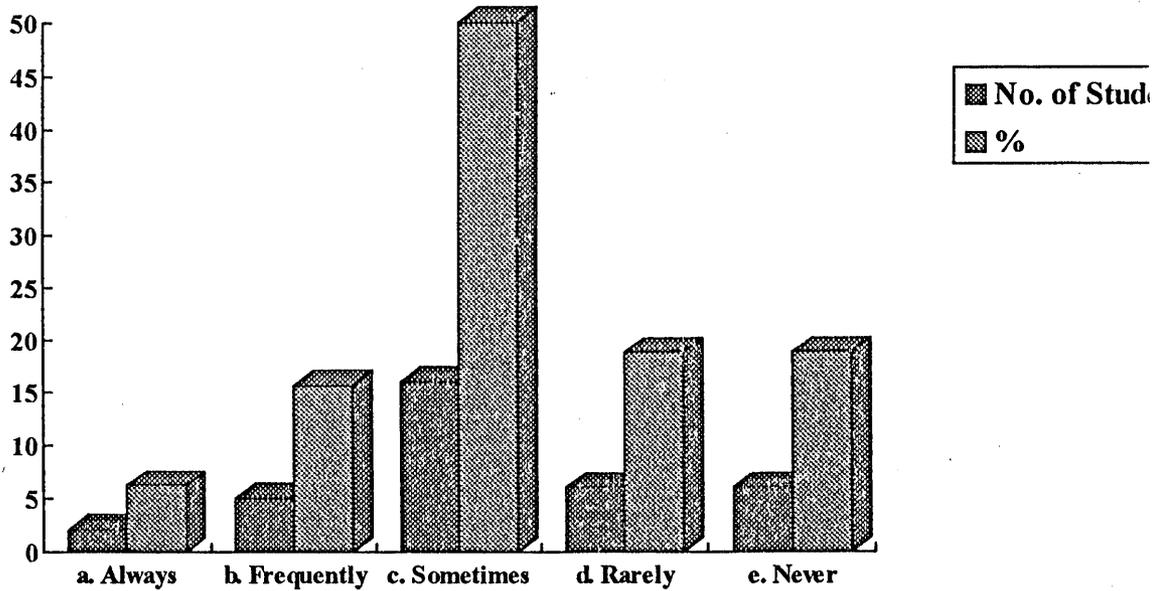
Responses to the above question have shown:

a. 19.75 % of the students have not been using English as the language of instruction.

b. half of the classes used English 'sometimes', which proves that English is used in class but not in a proper manner with a suitable approach. This, then requires a new method for teaching which consequently verifies one of the hypotheses of the proposed approach. This chart can be shown as follows: Table 9.3

What is your aim in attending University?		
	Number of Students	%
a. to obtain a certificate	4	12.5
b. to pursue education	29	97.5
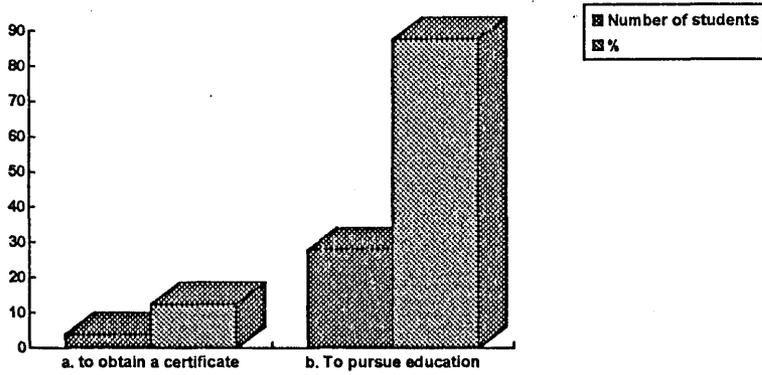
Table 9.4

How relevant is the English syllabus?	Number of Students	%
a) very relevant	4	12.5
b) relevant	5	16.5
c) relevant to some extent	20	66
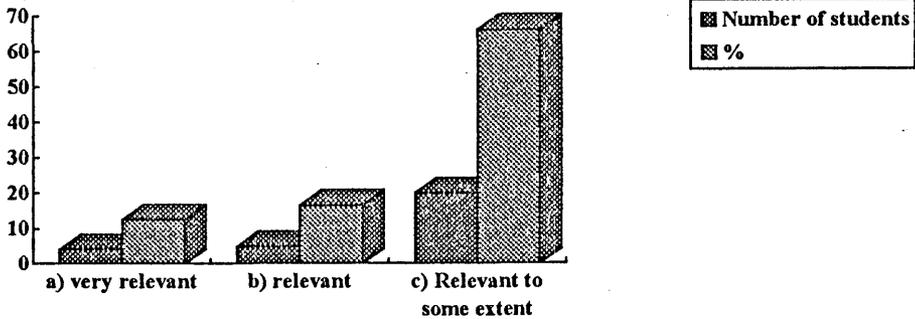
On the question of relevancy 66 % answered 'Relevant to some extent', 3 students opened a new column to add 'Irrelevant' as their choice. This shows that 9.3 % of the students believe that the teaching material is not related to the needs of the students.

9.6 Analysis: Discussion and conclusion of teachers' questionnaire

The common themes are listed and then connections are sought between them. Related topics were put together and given a shared table. Data obtained from the previous table indicated the following:

Question 4 indicated that only 4 out of 12 (33.3 %) English teachers have been to foreign countries to be trained, and 66.7 % of English teachers then either have been trained inside Iran (7 out of 12) where the English language is not even considered as a second language, but a foreign language. This results in a lack of experience of English use, making the language training problematic. This is one of the reasons that most of the English classes are conducted in a mixture of the

two languages, English and Farsi. In Question 5 we see that 16.6 % of methods are communicative, not even this many are fully carried out in English. Question 19 showed that 33.3 % chose 'frequently', and 16.6 % 'always', 41.6 % 'sometimes' and no one chose 'never'. Data obtained from Question 6 resulted in 9 out of 12 (66.6%) teachers who believed that both content and language are aspects of some difficulty, which means that the English syllabus needs to be changed in a way that meets the needs of the students. This is also verified through Question 7 in which 41.6 % of the teachers responded that the English programme does not meet the wants of the learners. For methodology 9 out of 12 (75 %) of teachers selected 'To a great extent' which was the greatest request for change from the responses. These two Questions (6 & 9) strikingly supported the hypotheses of the study. On skill preference, Question (4) showed that 7 out of 12 (59 %) teachers responded that reading is the most useful skill for English learners. Question 17 which is about the use of educational aids, only one teacher has used one type of educational technology, in other words only 9.3 % of English classes have used some type of apparatus, which supports one of the other hypotheses of the study. On the evaluation question, 75 % of teachers have not assigned their students to use any educational aids such as cassettes out of their classes, and 41.6 % of teachers have never evaluated their students for oral performance. Also the data obtained showed that Farsi is combined with English almost all the time, and that the majority of these teachers believed a great change was needed in the English syllabus.

9.7 Analysis Discussion on Interviews

It is precisely the experiential intuitional knowledge that has been reflected by English teachers in their analysis of questions. The difficulties some English teachers draw attention to are difficulties in spotting some questions, and responding to those questions regarding listing the difficulties and introducing a suitable approach to teaching English, during the course of interviews. It is important to note that when we (interviewer & interviewees) were making our interviews about English teaching and dealing with open-ended type of questions, both parties were completely aware of the English teaching process in Iranian Universities. I have analysed the views of the English teachers separately.

9.8 Investigator's Comment

Subject No. 1 started with an initiating move to begin the discussion, by raising a new issue on pre-determined emphasis on reading skill rather than other skills, at the same time s/he qualifies the issue questioned, then acknowledges the validity of the question by stating that :

> It's to the students to focus on aim you want by participating discussion and the use of oral. Yes, it is necessary , that is, we need really know, we want to know how to talk. We should know how the others say.

Of relevance to the use of teaching techniques, the subject indicates his agreement and supplies supporting evidences. He also extends the idea towards subjective experience, and suggests another detail for further explanation by asserting that:

> They (administrators) should think about the techniques and strategies like this and use them as they fit. I think the atmosphere should be native-like, if it is not exactly as native speaker or native situation. We can use simplification , we can use for example some initiatives in Farsi. We can explain something in simpler language(synonyms use). Of course, the input can become in our techniques.

Obviously, the subject accepts the techniques which leads to an extending of the concept of the criteria to include the regulation of ongoing procedures of English classrooms.

In relation to the use of discussion by the students the subject indicates his interest and introduces new viewpoints which challenge the offer to show that sometimes use of mother tongue helps the learning process and stresses that:

> Because through the discussion the students face that they are part of the class, can be more motivated in order to talk, in order to express themselves. Considering the use of English or Farsi it depends on the situation to use more or less of each language.

In connection with participation, he reinforces part of what was questioned, but suggests making the necessary distinction of silence and agrees with the question. He also extends this line of thought and claims that:

> They are free to say what they want to say, it is the role of the teacher, let's say the technique of the teacher which creates such atmosphere.

In this part of the subjects' assertion, we find that the problem of shortage of time in the English programme means that the teacher cannot allow the students to talk

outside the topic. Students should discuss their own textbook material as they are supposed to cover all of this, but they should not be interrupted about their mistakes. The subject puts more emphasis on content than grammar and adds:

> I think it's much better to put emphasis on content and meaning,...it is not important that we see the grammar or the pattern they (English students) used they are correct or wrong, because even native Farsi speakers, ...may have a lot of mistakes...even in Persian, ...the message is important.

Use of intonation, gestures, illustrations are agreed by the subject and he supplies supportive evidences, offering reasons for support and attempts to put forward the contribution of these techniques and devices in a voice when he says:

> I think we're trying to help, rather than just focusing on the grammar, because as you know through gestures, through different intonations you can express different names, and it is part of language.

On textbooks and teaching techniques of the present time he believes that:

> To some extent there is no material or technique which has been mentioned to improve the oral discussion.

He accepts the focus , but qualifies the approval with a criticism of the presenting teacher in the classroom and believes that the teacher should be in the class to control it, otherwise the class will get out of control. He also points out that:

> So how can we guarantee that what we are doing is right or wrong? It is the role of the existence of the teacher, otherwise we cannot find a class.

A lack of educational technology is vividly shown in his discussion when he rejects what has been accomplished before up to now in his university (Yazd University). He clarifies that:

> I think if we can use the video-tape, yes, we have some in Yazd University, of course. But, unfortunately it is not tried to use them.

Regarding English teachers' training and qualifications in teaching English courses, he shows himself to be aware of the situation and complains that English teachers are lacking the required proficiency. And he then attempts to justify the deficiencies by explaining the educational and other difficulties these teachers have faced. He contends that these persons are not the problem, but that the educational system, through which the teachers are trained has not been assigned in such a way as to meet the needs of teacher trainees. He believes that English teachers must be trained in a native English speaking environment, even for a short time to overcome these types of difficulties. He then argues that:

> Unfortunately, no, because as you know the majority of the teachers have been trained and have been educated in Iran and to some extent they have no mastery of English.

9.13 Subject no. 2: This subject has seven years of English teaching experience in Tabriz Teacher Training University in Iran. In relation to the nature of oral discourse in English courses the subject begins to make the contribution attempted in the question and makes explicit appreciation and emphasises that:

> None of our colleagues paid attention to it (oral discourse). So this is why we haven't been using it in our classes.

About the difficulties existing in Iranian English classes, he focuses on two main parameters in the teaching process. One is the English teachers who he believes are not aware enough of the oral discourse to use it in their classes and the teachers themselves who have not been trained. Consequently, they are not skilled and qualified to perform this task. The second factor is the present textbooks which are prepared in advance and the real needs of English students have not been considered in these books. Therefore, they do not meet the required skills of today's students who usually desire to study abroad. He asserts that:

> The important thing is the teachers themselves. We don't have eh skilled and trained staff for this (oral discourse), eh ...and problem is the textbooks, I can claim that none of our textbooks are based on the oral discourse principles.

On techniques of teaching, he begins to make clear that the proposed techniques such as simplification, use of synonyms have to be applied by English teachers and points out as the central responsibility in their teaching process, that English learners should also use them more than their teachers. He warns the teachers while using these techniques should not ignore technical terms which are very important to English learners. He believes that the English teacher can use Farsi to explain the complicated terms, but should use it sparingly and use English most of the time. The subject agrees with group work and discussion in class and attempts to give an explanation for English learners, in particular for silent students. He

refutes teaching grammar, but emphasises content and the whole meaning. As he

contends:

> This is the teacher's responsibility, but what teacher can do, can make the
> students, the silent English students involved in group discussions and elicit
> many eh answers in the form of questions and answers. I can see no helpful
> process in focusing in only grammar. Grammar has done so much to our
> learners, but if we concentrate on the content instead, and the whole
> meaning, it will be better.

He also tries to frame his objections in moderate terms and says:

> The only thing they (English teachers) need is shift from grammar university
> level to the whole content. And now you inevitably will use other
> techniques to make your students understanding what you mean.

Moreover, he suggests finding solutions for better controlling the English classes,

and he discusses more difficulties in English teaching and offers some solutions for

them. He believes that the present methods in English classes do not match the

situation. He puts more emphasis on fluency and suggests techniques to improve

the fluency of the students by contending:

> Now, it is encouraged that the teachers (English teachers) should lose their
> role as the sole control of the classes. If you wish to go beyond that to train
> some fluent learners of English, then you have to spend more time and
> more energy. You have to create a situation in which your students can
> produce their statements.

On the suitability of English textbooks, the subject is dissatisfied with the current

English textbooks and attempts to indicate disagreement. He supplies supporting

evidences and extends the idea towards subjective experience and makes an

explicit appreciation. He also offers some solutions for overcoming the issue. He

believes that an extensive change in English textbooks is necessary to meet the oral needs of the English students. He considers it as a basic need of the teaching process for English learners in the present situation. He then further states as follows:

> Unfortunately, as far as eh I can remember those books (English textbooks) all of them are based on some grammatical oriented activities and exercises. So if you wish to use an oral methodology, an oral approach in your teaching methodology, the first thing you should do is to choose appropriate materials for this.

On class exercises, he believes, also need to be considered as a part of the learning process. He asserts that as we practise English oral activities in the class it needs to be practised out of class as well.

Regarding English learners' talk control, he identifies the question and agrees with the need "not to control the students' talk while talking". He underlines that students should not be stopped for correction. In his opinion errors stimulate learning and argues that:

> Errors are the sign of learning. So if you stop this sign you are in fact ruling out the possibility of learning.

He further suggests that English teachers and learners should use other facilities such as the blackboard, charts, pictures, and use of other visual aids, the language laboratory and slides for English classes.

9.9 Discussion of the classroom teaching/observation

The data on which the practical research work of this study is based were collected by a pre- and post-test, followed by teaching sessions and audio-recording. The classroom teaching and observation were done over a period of about nine weeks in Tehran Teacher Training University. I taught English to the students of this university for nine sessions and recorded the work with the help of the language lab technician. We recorded small group discussions, in pairs or in fours, in order to obtain higher quality recordings that were often possible in normal classes. The samples of data are then compatible for generalisation purposes.

However, we had technical limitations and some portions of the recordings were so poor that I could not use them. I had to spend more than an hour on transcribing each five minutes' recording, and even more in some cases. One of the other difficulties I faced with recording was that non-verbal behaviour could not be recorded. Still another problem, perhaps, is that it is assumed that university classrooms are familiar to readers and they have a stereotypical expectation about teacher-student discourse, but such expectations may not be communicated in a written form (for example, the elliptic syntax which we use in class). It is the task of discourse analysts to study how this script is constructed and related through utterances and also to investigate its effectiveness as an input for the classrooms. This more detailed analysis was accomplished over a period of

nine lessons. An analysis was, therefore, carried out of selected parts of the transcribed parts of the nine sessions of teaching.

9.10 Discussion of the Teachers' Interviews

Teachers' views were examined and showed that English teaching still faces problems. Not only one current teaching methods are not effective particularly for oral purposes but also textbooks are not suitable to meet the oral needs of the students. These teachers unanimously agreed with a change in teaching approach. They also suggested in-service training for the teachers to qualify them at professional level. Two of the subjects agreed with the use of L1 in complicated cases. The majority still believe that even in difficult cases the teacher needs to use English language but a suitable teaching technique should be administered. They all agreed with the proposed teaching approach. However, subject no.4 in response to question no.4, "Use of other facilities"; has responded that " It depends on the teaching situation". This means the teachers need to be flexible and limit themselves perhaps to the available facilities which are unfortunately lacking. This is arguably acceptable that the teachers have to adapt resources to meet the needs of the learners, but need not sacrifice learning facilities. Some views of a few of these teachers are not practicable. For example, subject no.5 in response to question 1 said "If we try to create the kind of native atmosphere in the class". This condition is impossible at the present time in Iran. Or subject no.2 in response to question 8 believes that teachers should still be the sole controller

of the class which simply does not agree with ther principle of student-centred classes.

In general, teachers agreed with the proposed teaching approach for oral teaching. The majority of them believed that the teaching strategies will work effectively. All of them asserted that a change in teaching methods as well as a change in textbooks is necessary. To them oral activities need to be placed in the teaching programme. The majority arguably showed that group work can work better in our classes.

The research findings will be applied in real teaching situations in Iranian universities. The accuracy of the results comes partially from personal interpretations with evidence in the text. Eliciting oral discourse from English students provides utterances and rules. Interpretations are derived from the responses of the questionnaires, interviews, and results of the teaching sessions as well as from the topics introduced by the English learners and teachers. The conclusions and recommendations of the study will be introduced in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 10

Conclusions and Recommendations

10.1 Conclusions drawn from questionnaires and interviews

Having reviewed the relevant literature of both systems, the UK and Iranian, (Chapters 1 and 2), I have extracted the positive and applicable teaching points of both the English teacher training system and the English ELT techniques which could be employed in the Iranian system. Admittedly, good teacher education enhances and enables the prospective teachers to handle their class in such a way as to result in desirable outcome. The reason is that teachers during their training improve both their grasp of the theory and practice of education. Teacher education is especially effective when there is a balance between theory and practice. However, in Iranian teacher education there is a lack of practice, just the very opposite of the English system where theory has lost whatever dominance it may have once had, as the result of centralised governmental control over teacher education. In the Iranian system the lack of practice has caused the failures indicated in the interviews with Iranian university teachers and graduates. Leaving teacher education mainly in schools, as is happening in the UK system recently, will also place teacher education at risk, as discussed earlier (see Chapter 1 for the details). Consequently, teacher education should as far as possible be independent of political intervention.

In Chapter 2 I have argued that teacher education is an essential and dynamic national programme in each society. Obviously, the programme is planned to prepare teachers who inculcate the theory of teaching in the minds of the future generation through practice. Thus the importance of teacher education is clear to every individual in all societies. Accordingly, it is vital to establish how, by whom, what and why teacher education is carried out. Consequently, it is strikingly important to all government and nations to consider, treat and provide their best to carry out teacher education in a way which will achieve an optimum outcome for educational purposes. This can be achieved through well qualified and experienced educators teaching in school classrooms, which will in turn require good training and practice in knowledge and the many skills of teaching.

My main focus in this study was on speaking skills as I have mentioned in Chapter 1 and 5, because we have had problems with Iranian university students and graduates actually using the English language. I have also examined the points practically by using them in my teaching sessions (see Chapter 8). The conclusions for Iranian universities can be summarised in this chapter as follows:

- English teachers in Iran feel that the English courses have not provided enough practice in the oral performance skills.

- Class activities and language games do not suit the nature of the students in English courses at the Iranian universities. Accordingly, speaking in English is not usually undertaken in and out of the classroom.

- Iranian Students prefer learner-centred classes, not the class where the teacher controls the whole learning situation and uses basic methods of teaching, something like 'the Grammar-translation Method'.

- There is a great interest in Iran in developing some sort of language experience activities out of the classroom.

- English teachers feel that the speaking skills need more attention from the syllabus designers.

- The majority of English teachers and most English learners are not well motivated, and are insufficiently prepared for the current teaching/learning process.

- Authentic material, language, and discipline specifications have to be carefully chosen and thoroughly explained to the teachers and students of English.

- Teaching English courses demands and requires a variety of oral teaching aids such as educational technology as mentioned earlier which are not available to the learners.

- The prepared specific aims and objectives of the courses have not been achieved, nor are they supported by the participants in the programme.

- There is a serious imbalance between the teaching materials, testing and evaluation.

- The majority of the current English classes are overcrowded which makes oral activities difficult to perform.

- All interviewees unanimously agreed with the proposed teaching strategies.

- The majority of subjects believed that these strategies are applicable and can work effectively.

Despite differences of opinion on the criteria used in the identification of the outcome, English teachers agreed that the questions exist and there is a place for research (for details see 8.7-10). They also agreed that a change is necessary in both teaching techniques and textbooks. To them the techniques introduced in this study are essential and can significantly affect English teaching in Iranian universities.

As a result these assertions and comments can sensitise ESL/ESP practitioners (both teachers and students as well as researchers) to the importance of implementing oral discourse analysis teaching strategies in producing and interpreting utterances as argued earlier in Chapter 4. Therefore, it is not always easy to apply different strategies to develop talk across time within an individual from different discourse styles in order to accomplish desired communicative tasks. Many efforts have been made to show how to transfer the prior linguistic knowledge of ESP students to the use of English language, particularly in oral communication. The significance of usage is considered and the importance of use value is more emphasised. This is why many educators and practitioners have

suggested the production of special textbooks and the establishment of particular approaches. Discussion of critical ideas, concepts, transferring information to schematic form and comment on the data show that these points help students learn to perform oral communication in a relevant sequence and only use those required parts of grammar to construct a meaningful use of English. Therefore, sound and balanced teacher training can influence the teaching and its outcome which learning and practice in class. This was the reason why ELT was studied after analysing the different forms of teacher education in this thesis.

The contrasts between the result of my pre-test and post-test and the results of the questionnaires and interviews (see sections 8.4 and 8.5), indicated that it is indeed possible to improve the learning process in oral frequency.

10.2 Conclusion drawn from the classroom teaching and observation

Oral discourse analysis in this study has been interchangeable with the use of English language (refer to Chapter 4). Analyses of the transcribed data helped to formulate models for teaching and patterns for practice in our classrooms. The utterances were produced and interpreted by the participant students (for further information see 8.14, 8.14.1-3) . These strategies made the presenter's intention recognisable. The meanings and functions of utterances were formed and interpreted according to the level of attention, function and context through verbal

and nonverbal devices. The sequential utterances helped the students to find out how to discover and remember how the applied rules and expressions underlying the construction have been used in following each other. These patterns also helped the students to find out how a particular construction can contribute to their knowledge of form and meaning: in fact, to understand the relationship between discourse, meaning and construction of the used language. The analyses of spoken language show that in the first paragraph of each lesson the key points are presented as a topic or theme of the paragraph. It became clear that there is a close connection between the used grammar and discourse function units. In fact, there were observable correlations between grammatical points, though at tenses and discourse segments. Besides these, when there is a relation between the prior knowledge and the presented content, a shared framework makes the interpretation easier for the receiver. Discourse analysis helped to make the relationship between the concept of contained elements and the discourse as a whole understandable.

This discourse approach also offered the priorities of parts of speech usage such as word order, articles, simplification, synonyms and the other aspects of coherence and cohesion. However, I have attempted to use functional analysis in all sessions. Functional analysis was more related to the purpose of the study, that is, to identify and analyse actions for certain purposes and interpretations of meaning for the participant students involved in class. This was a difficult process

because I had to deal with analysing form and function. I did this in such a way because it was necessary for context, situation and knowledge consideration, that is, contextualised analysis. In other words, the analysis was limited and focused on a specific function in a particular context for functional and structural roles. The classroom behaviour observation suggests that there is considerable scope within the English classroom for providing real life situations. In this approach, the English learners are supposed to have a crucial role as the main source of comprehensible initiatives of English language.

However, as a teacher researcher I tried to be a confident and adaptable foreign language facilitator. In this way not only were speaking skills improved, but also students' listening ability was enhanced. The main objective of the teaching, to improve the fluency of the students, was achieved. I used ways of analysing talks in class to establish oral discourse models for the students to highlight the intended parts. This type of analysis and discussion of the approaches outlined here can be a base to practise.

Applying the oral discourse analysis approach to teaching does not mean ignoring teaching other skills or parts of speech. Vocabulary, intonation, gesture and even the least required grammar will still be used as the elements in tackling a topic. These elements will have their place in an oral discourse-oriented syllabus, but they will be a challenge. That is, the teaching approach makes a suitable

relationship amongst these elements to suit the specific context. For example, for vocabulary the approach offers a synonyms strategy to provide specific relationships with equivalents rather than the use of complicated terms. This strategy helped those students with lower levels of vocabulary knowledge through the use of their prior vocabulary. In the case of repetition or complex terms the students, or even the teacher, used a general term rather than specific ones. This was because in the early sessions it was difficult for the students not only to understand but also to pronounce the unfamiliar words (see sections 7.9 and 7.10). One of the recurring problems for the learners was that they had to spend a great deal of time learning and using those new terms later. This was necessary because they needed those terms in their future sessions as well as in their career.

The use of familiar equivalents expanded the topic discussion and helped the presentation to be developed coherently as a seamless whole. In this way the participant students and myself expanded our talks. In such an atmosphere any initiated utterance was an invitation to the other students to participate because they felt they could use the words they knew and make utterances using them which were relevant and contributed to the forward movement of the discourse. I tried to prevent the conversation branching off because of the shortage of time. I have attempted to supply the appropriate content schemata for all possible encounters, that is, to lock the students into the world of the speech to predict the

interpretation and at the same time prepare patterns for them to follow as you can find in Chapter 8.2 .

Spoken discourse analyses used in this research helped provide activity patterns and the linguistic relations accompanying them. The analyses also contributed to managing speaking skills to result in using language in as meaningful and fluent a way as possible. The procedure was carried out from simple functional units to longer stretches of paragraphs. This data acquired could not be achieved in any other way. It also provided the research participants, the teacher researcher and the participant students with descriptive insights before taking them wholly to heart. This procedure presented the participants with a radically different way of looking at language, compared with the previous models, in which grammar, lexis and phonology still play the fundamental roles. The emphasis here is put on the relationship between language, particularly lexis and the specific users in the specific context. Of course, the application depends greatly on the particular context, the situation and knowledge of the learners. Each part of the action research resulted in conclusions which together indicated the applicability and effectiveness of the proposed teaching methods. I shall present them separately in order to show the effects of the research tools individually which resulted in the conclusions of the study. The implications for the future will be added at the end of the chapter.

Oral discourse analysis also helped the students to relate their prior knowledge (as discussed in 7.15) to the context of vocabulary learning to form meaningful patterns for new practice. This may have challenged the students' existing schema to form the patterns for them. I found also that textbooks can help students to some extent with a vocabulary which went in a sequence to form patterns. The results of teaching sessions proved the validity and reliability of the hypotheses of the study introduced earlier on in the introduction. This means that oral discourse analysis and functions with the least required grammar can be used as an effective integrated approach to teach English in Iranian universities for the purpose of English use. I have demonstrated that spoken discourse is open to analysis which is illustrative rather than systematic. That is, I have proposed an analysis which does not give a comprehensive description of the data, but have shown briefly how a student could move further towards a lengthier and more comprehensive description. In fact, discourse analytic strategies with ESL students forced them to explore the macro-mechanics of language application and also lent them tools for finding out how language functions, both at the micro (sentence) and macro (discourse) levels. Such techniques and efforts are also compatible with the teaching objectives shared by teachers who aspire to give their students greater responsibility in determining their own language, suitable for their needs and performance. This is indeed a solution for ESL students, to use the learning strategies associated with discourse analysis in class. The results of the discussions based on the contrasts between the pre- and post-test and teaching sessions have also shown that some students could be categorised from poor speakers to good

speakers or some as good speakers to excellent speakers. The effectiveness of the introduced approach has been asserted and supported by the interviewees and participants as well (for more details see Appendices C, D and F).

A better achievement through interaction resulted from meaningful utterances which followed specific reactions, actions, feelings, and expectations of teaching. This means, the interaction between subject and context such as English learners and their specific terms or the subjectivity of a specific subject and the position were dependent upon meaningful discourse. It was also relevant to the integration of symbolic, or conceptual interactions and the context which formed through the informal rules and interpretation. The analysis I used enhanced the learning and use of language, because it not only clarifies the communicative purposes of the discourse, but also the class strategies employed by both students and teachers to achieve their goals.

One of the limitations of this approach seems to be that it might encourage prescribed strategies rather than creativity in application. However, it is expected that university students would be more effectively creative and generative in using the language when they are well aware of using sets of learning rules and techniques. Additionally, it is not the intention to follow strictly all the strategies introduced earlier. Teachers need to be flexible in using the proposed teaching strategies depending on the context, situation and knowledge of the students. So

the procedure can be used selectively and in a flexible manner, based on the students' knowledge level, interest and the other influential elements.

One of the shortcomings of this study was that I found it impossible to deal with discourse analysis involving phonology because of the short time limit Iranian students have for learning English. Another shortcoming was that although discourse analysis highlighted problems, the solutions found may not seem clear and easy to implement in class. However, the proposed teaching strategies worked effectively. For example, turn-taking and group work discussion worked particularly well because the students took turns and talked in sequences of short turns. This was because in group talk there was no dominant speaker and all students in groups participated to perform something. One of the other reasons that the teaching was successful was the friendly atmosphere, which the students found useful. The result was that the utterances lengthened as did their enjoyment and interest. Consequently, the speech amongst the students increased a great deal and fluency improved. The students' group talks showed that they produced short utterances at the start, and gradually lengthened, that is, from one or two words to paragraphs. This was mentioned earlier: that the unit of oral discourse in this study was not constant. Although I have attempted to focus the analysis beyond sentence level to the paragraph, the paragraphs were not always constant. At each level, of course, there was also the case of a unit filled by a minimal constituent. Thus, a simple or short paragraph may have consisted of only one sentence. Or a

simple sentence consisted of only one clause, or a simple discourse of only one paragraph.

The main contribution of oral discourse analysis was to the lexical aspect for its important role in the speech event and less as to grammar. Building elaborate models and co-operating in the management of discourse in the classroom were emphasised as well. That is, I have attempted to show the students through practice how utterances were related to each other, how certain strategies such as simplification, synonyms or turn-taking (explained more in 7.21) affected the opening, closing and follow-up in classroom speech.

Therefore, oral discourse analysis was effective when used to clarify the participants' intention about the use of language. There was an interesting point about agreement on the use of proposed teaching techniques between the interviewees. Speech events that were divided into clearly related units, paragraphs, were easier to understand and also to produce. This provided the students with the continuity of shared knowledge and the building of a context as a joint activity and discourse process. In developing a shared vocabulary for experience and future use, and a jointly held version of speech events in the classroom, teacher and students constructed together models of topics that reflected both sides of the process.

Discourse analysis, as was shown in the interviews (see 8.7-8.12), was a more humanistically based interpretative effort to indicate the presenters' purpose. This type of interpretative efforts showed the way utterances were situated in a specific context, as well as a kind of semantic interpretation for the oral discourse or speech construction analysis. Furthermore, each utterance was used in a sequence by a prior utterance context which in turn provides a context for the next utterance. In this way meanings and knowledge were continually adjusted and sequentially produced. This context was assumed to consider the specific situation and knowledge.

The situation dealt with textbooks, size of the class, and the availability of the other educational aids as well as teacher's qualification and the English knowledge level and the needs of the students (as you can find more in 5.7 and 5.8). This made a significant difference between discourse analysis and conversation analysis. The conversation analysis view of interaction is a structural view. For example, it pays little attention to social context, that is, the identities of the participants and setting. This means in oral discourse analysis theory there is a controversy as to which participants' identities played the greatest role in forming and producing the context. Moreover, the findings of conversation analysis cannot easily be generalised, because they ignore the characteristics of the participants. No one would deny that the context in which language is spoken and the identities of the individuals speaking greatly influence what is said and how it is interpreted. If we

compare or generalise achieved models of talk without considering participants' identities we will indeed be comparing "apples and oranges". At the same time, it is hard to study, for example, memory, the interest and motivation of the individual student, or the background knowledge or beliefs, and the complexity of the topics as well as the oral skills and knowledge of the students. However, a general orientation of the students can help the teacher to adjust the teaching approach to be effective. Conversation analysis shares certain aspects of language use with discourse analysis such as sequencing utterances. This is indicated by Schiffrin (1994:236), cited from Heritage (1984a), who lists three assumptions of conversation analysis as follows:

a. interaction is structurally organised;

b. contributions to interaction are contextually oriented;

c. these two properties inhere in the details of interaction so that no order of detail can be dismissed, a priori, as disorderly, accidental, or irrelevant.

Heritage's (1984:243) conclusion of conversation analysis has also common elements with the conclusion of discourse analysis as shown below:

Furthermore, what is said provides not only the data underlying analysis, but also the evidence for hypotheses and conclusions: it is participants' conduct itself that must provide evidence for the presence of units, existence of patterns, and formulation of rules.

In fact, every individual utterance is contextualised and, at the same time, contextualising the following utterance. One of the other strategies used, turn-taking, has also been introduced earlier by another conversation analyst, Schegloff (1992). Schegloff believed that a previous utterance provides the next turn-taker

with relevant information and understanding. This was partially due to English exposure because I used English in the teaching sessions all the time except in the few cases that I had to employ certain Farsi expressions (for example, for 'Express Post', I used its Farsi equivalent which I believed could clarify the meaning of the term). Indeed, exposure to language can affect learning greatly as it happens in real life situations to any native speakers who are exposed to and draw upon a wide range of discourse forms which permit them to manage, manipulate and adapt their language across different tasks and contexts.

In fact, the paragraph was a discourse unit that was not specified by the content of the speech events. The size of paragraphs affected the importance of the points. The space between paragraphs was a signal for the students to co-ordinate and subordinate the parts comprising: definitions, classifications, illustration, comparison, contrast, narration or elaboration incorporated in a paragraph. Long pauses worked as cues to different paragraphs. These pauses helped the students to catch up and assimilate the information of the current paragraph and get prepared for the next. The paragraphs showed that the materials were coherent and in line with each other. The paragraphs provided semantic relations between different sentences which could not be perceived in the single sentences, but in the whole. All this helped the students to perceive how sentences are related to each other in a paragraph to give a concrete meaning. ESL/ESP learners as well can be exposed to as much practice and language use as possible by using the various

proposed teaching strategies, in particular group work discussions (see Chapter 8 for more). The study also explored the issue of quality, its relation to Iranian cultural values, needs and interests of the university students. As an overall conclusion of the study, oral discourse analysis can be used as an applicable and significantly effective alternative approach for learning/teaching English in Iranian universities.

The use of oral discourse strategies were generally very much favoured by both teachers and graduates. There are significant relationships between competence and use of language. The low exposure to English among Iranian students is the outcome of changes in language programmes. The limited sphere of international relations with the lack of awareness of the English school system, and direct contact with English have reduced to English exposure tremendously. These have brought about a negative impact on ESL learning. With the constraints of examination requirements, teachers as well as students have no alternative, but to follow and tackle the examination type of questions and exercises of which most are only written. Certainly, in such a situation very little real teaching or learning is taking place.

To improve the situation, teaching techniques and individual differences in language learning should be taken into account. This means that, there is a necessity to devise a new teaching approach and syllabus for university English

courses. The aim of ESL/ESP learning to enable students as fluent speakers of English needs to be given urgent thought. Class size has to be reduced which will ease the teacher in performing his task. Teacher qualifications need to be improved by sending more teachers for in-service courses or to provide more opportunities for them to go for further studies. An English teacher should have acquired an understanding of current theories of language acquisition and teaching techniques as well as cultural traditions. The possibility of getting assistance from English-speaking countries should also be looked into. Teacher attitudes and expectations of students' performance need to be suitably adjusted to meet the current ESL/ESP learning situation. Creating appropriate situations and role play can provide the opportunity for the students to practise speaking. As the English class does not function as a real life situation there can be simulated practice. This simulated class can use audio-cassettes or video tapes as a vital tool in listening to native speaker voice exercises which are the input for speaking.

An effective teaching/learning class should facilitate student learning. A skilful teacher with suitable teaching approaches can succeed even with unsatisfactory teaching materials. Teaching approaches and other means have to be sought to compensate for the insufficient amount of exposure to English, at least in class. This can be by providing as many opportunities for language use as possible. Finally, to speak is the best way to learn to speak. The speaking task given should

be within the students' ability to perform. Success in students' performance will create interest and confidence.

Given the above, we have seen that one effect of this was that the majority of the participant students at least felt that the teaching approach used gave them the confidence and opportunity to express their views in their own ability. The inadequate matching of textbooks provided insufficient differentiation for the needs of students. Of the 20 English teachers interviewed in this study at least five found the approach suitable. In view of the large numbers in the groups it is clearly an advantage to the teacher that the teacher need not talk all the time and can help those who are in need to develop their discussions. This might encourage teachers to adapt their particular teaching methods. It will be the responsibility of the teachers to create such an atmosphere in which students can develop attitudes within themselves. This means teaching students according to their needs. ESL/ESP teachers themselves would explore the key items, that is, purpose/s, need/s, and level of knowledge of their learners, then make efforts to use the most suitable teaching strategies to fulfil the required needs.

10.3 Overall Conclusion

An overall conclusion can be drawn from an examination of the results of the comparative study of the teacher education in the English system and in Iran. As indicated in the summative reflection of Chapter 1, teacher education is a necessary and effective programme through which teachers are trained and are

prepared for better teaching. However, teacher training will be effective when the programme is designed and implemented appropriately. That is, the programme should be designed by qualified programmers and specifically for educational purposes. It should not be the focus of political or other social party aims as is recently occurring in the UK teacher education system in which majority of the qualified teacher educators are not participating. Nor should teacher education chiefly emphasise the theoretical aspect of the training and ignore the practice dimension, as is happening in Iranian teacher education. Thus there needs to be a balance of participation of both parties, teacher educators and higher education lecturers and experienced school teachers. This participation can be achieved through a co-operative programme, teacher educators for theoretical courses and school experienced teachers for practice to make a sound balance between theory and practice.

I faced problems in the study of both systems of teacher education. That is, in the English system the theoretical aspect of the training which is vitally important because it provides the trainees with broaden insight and understanding is weakly dealt with as there is little time for it to be taught. As argued in Chapter 1 there is another party that plays a major role in the teacher training programme, the inspectors. If inspectors act unfairly and are biased they can easily spoil the whole programme. It seems then necessary that educated people in each society participate and observe the teacher programme if designed for education and national benefit purposes. When teachers are trained in such a way and for educational purposes they can provide their students with effective and useful

instruction through their teaching. A good teacher can make a good student. So teacher education changes the classroom practice by employing suitable teaching methods adjusted to their class situation.

The literature review of the teacher training and English language teaching in the English system helped me to identify and introduce those suitable teaching approaches in general and oral discourse analysis in particular that are applicable to the Iranian system. As discussed earlier, discourse analysis in this study explained linguistic analysis from description to explanation, its pedagogical aspects and certain influential and relevant paralinguistic factors. In fact, discourse analysis is a wide area within linguistics covering the micro- to macro-levels of speech. That is, from act, move, exchange, transaction to large paragraphs. Although the shift in framework in chapters led to a shift in issues, yet there was consistent relevancy between the issues argued. A summative reflection was provided at the end of each chapter. The main purpose of the study was to show the effectiveness of the oral discourse analysis as a teaching means with the proposed strategies for improving the fluency of the students. To examine this I used a variety of research tools which are mentioned earlier in the study. The transcribed version of the data was analysed, discussed and conclusions drawn. The implications of the findings were presented at the end of the study.

Ultimately, it became clearer that ESL/ESP learners/teachers can employ oral discourse analysis as an effective approach in Iranian universities. In particular, the students can participate in classroom oral discussions to improve their ability to talk meaningfully and fluently in the subject matter. In this way not only speaking skills will improve, but also students' listening ability will be enhanced as well. All this leads to the conclusion that oral discourse analysis as a teaching approach was both effective and informative, because teachers and students identified the relations between language elements, in particular improvement in fluency. However, this should be seen as an addition to conventional teaching rather than a replacement for it.

10.4 Recommendations

Teacher education and training strikingly depend on policy and practice. My literature review of the two systems, the UK and Iranian, show that despite cultural and governmental differences they can exchange their experiences. In particular, many of the advanced and sophisticated developments in the UK system may well be applied to benefit the Iranian teacher education system. However, teacher education in the UK, despite its long history and advances, recently found itself being shifted towards centralised control. The professionals and educators seem to be losing their authority and the government is wresting the control of teacher education from departments of education in higher education and universities and placing it in schools. This seems to place teacher education at

risk. The governmental intervention and control is creating problems in teacher education as is indicated by the majority of the professionals and teacher educators (see Chapter 1). It is obviously clear that when this very important task, teacher training, is left to non-professionals and governmental agencies for reasons other than educational ones teacher training may well face problems. Thus it would be beneficial to the nation that government consider the situation and look back to the successful periods in the past when control over teacher education was in the hands of educators before it is too late. Observing the UK system from an Iranian perspective it would appear that the following steps would be useful if applied appropriately in the UK:

1. All student teachers do need appropriate training in order to fulfil their teaching in a way so as to result in optimum outcomes as teachers.

2. The government should value the expertise of teacher educators, who have been practising for years and are well qualified and experienced.

3. Teachers, educators in general and student teachers in particular should know that they form an enormous population in all societies and so can play a strong role in electing the government who should appreciate their political power. This can be achieved through educational community organisation, perhaps through a General Teaching Council.

4. The government should recognise that what teacher educators and other educational professionals are seeking to perform will benefit the state

5. The government should not create problems by placing teacher educators under unnecessary pressure or treat them as 'the enemy'.

6. A practical and suitable partnership between teachers and educators would reduce all the unnecessary tensions identified in Chapter 1. This partnership needs to be constructed in such a way as to provide a balance between theory and practice so as to broaden the knowledge and skills of teaching.

7. Teachers' careers should be made permanent rather than subject to market forces. This will provide them with peace of mind and allow them to concentrate on their teaching tasks

The following ideas taken from an analysis of English teacher training can be useful to Iranian teacher education:

A. Iranian teacher training programme needs to introduce a considerable amount of actual classroom practice.

B. The majority of the Iranian university lecturers who have not experienced any kind of training need in-service teacher training.

C. A link between Iranian teacher education and overseas teacher educators would provide opportunities to exchange views and apply those experiences of the overseas system that are applicable and useful. This can be through adaptation or adjusting the programme to the Iranian situation and context.

D. Iranian university lecturers of English need to be exposed to an English speaking environment and real life situations so as to experience even for a short period the language in a 'live' situation.

E. The introduction of educational technology and its appropriate use is an urgent need in Iranian teacher education. It can provide both the trainers and trainees with versatile technological instruments for learning and research in teacher education.

Additionally, a chief aims of this study was to introduce an outline of proposed in-service training for ESL/ESP teachers in Iranian universities. The objectives of the programme will be to familiarise the teachers with the use of ESL/ESP language through the oral discourse analysis approach discussed in the thesis. After the completion of in-service training the ESL/ESP teachers are expected to:

i.   use English language as the teaching medium in class all the time and give more time to students to practise ESL/ESP terms.

ii.   use this new approach for all aspects of their teaching (the teaching should adapt the approach to their specific conditions in the class).

iii. use appropriate and relevant materials so as to cover the predetermined volume of the materials and individual student interests as well.

iv.   use the available educational technology, if any, so as to provide the ESL/ESP students with recorded tapes to practise out of the class as part of their assignments.

v.   evaluate the learners during the term as well as at the mid-term and final exams so as to provide formative and summative evaluations.

Other more detailed proposals for in-service training classes would be as follows:

- Participants: 20 ESL/ESP teachers

- Duration: 6 hours per week for three months.

- Frequency: The programme can be completed in summer vacation time or during the intervals between terms.

- Location: In the universities' available rooms.

- Facilities: A lecture hall or classroom with the required educational aids such as recorders or videos.

- Teaching staff: Trained and experienced university teachers.

- Instructional Methods: Lectures; Seminars/Small groups; Workshops; Micro-teaching; Peer teaching; Demonstration/Observational lessons; Field visits; with some authentic recorded voices.

- Programme components: The adapted tactics and techniques of the introduced approach.

- Evaluation: according to the charts provided in the approach described in Chapter 4, pp.211-213.

As a result, the resourceful teacher can help students to manipulate and reorganise the new vocabulary in as many ways as possible to provide the maximum benefits. Two instructional variables, teachers' qualifications and teaching experience have also been briefly highlighted in this research, but need a more detailed investigation, particularly teacher attitudes and their relationships with students are worth considering. Other instructional variables such as oral teaching materials, intensity of teaching/learning, and means of oral evaluation and testing should be give sufficient attention.

Recommendations for future research and instruction require further investigation if learning strategy instruction is to fulfil its potential. New frameworks for contextualising learning strategies, as well as methods of research and procedures for training these strategies, are in demand. Future research would help suggest solutions for any possible difficulties of implementing the introduced teaching approach. It seems that more investigation is required to find solutions to the limitations of this approach which may hamper its implementation especially as the use of English language is increasingly in great demand. It is hoped that this study will serve as an effective guide for teaching English in Iranian universities and an incentive for further discussion, study and research.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Teachers' Questionnaire
Introduction:
The English teachers' questionnaire is used as a technique for investigating English teaching approaches. The questionnaire was tried out on 20 English teachers in the Teacher-Training University in Tehran. No Farsi translation of questions seemed necessary. The questionnaire was administered to present English teachers. There are obvious advantages in having prepared in advance questionnaires and having them amended afterwards. The questions were designed to elicit answers about English teaching problems. These questions sought information on the nature of oral performance in both textbooks and in classroom activities.

H.J.Avanaki
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To colleagues:
Dear colleagues as you know, English programmes in Iran have encountered problems. There has been little research done in Iranian universities, on English. This questionnaire is to investigate the quality of English and teacher- training by enquiring into teachers' views, attitudes, and awareness of English courses. It is designed to reflect the opinions of trained and untrained teachers, and to identify their training needs in English, in particular oral discourse in their classes. Your answers will be kept confidential, and used only for this study.

Q.l). Please tick appropriately, your gender .
a) Male
2) Female

Q.2). What is your age group?:
a) 25-30
b) 3 1-34
c) 35-40
d)4 1-45
e)over 45

Q.3). Please indicate your qualifications and field of study:
a) BA in . . .
b) MA in. . .
c) MED in...
d) MPhil in...
e) Ph.D. in...
f) others, specify please

Q.4). Have you been under any English training?:
a) inside Iran
b) abroad (where)
c) for how long
d) none

Q.5). Which method/s do you usually use in your classes?:
a) Grammar Translation
b) Direct Method
c) Audio-lingual
d) Communication
e) Eclectic

Q.6). What is/are the aspects of difficulty?
a) Content (understanding the meaning of the text)
b) Language (structural problems)
c) Both

Q.7). Do you think that the learners' needs have been seriously considered in the process of materials and programme design of your teaching textbook?
a) To a great extent
b) To some extent
c) Not at all

Q.8). Are he English courses you teach?:
a) Functionally oriented (are they based on meaning and use)
b) Structurally oriented (based on grammar)
c) Functionally and Structurally oriented

Q.9). Does English teaching require a specific type of methodology which differs from that of general English?
a) To a great extent
b) To some extent
c) Not at all

Q. 10). How about reading English books and periodicals.
a) Daily
b) Weekly
c) Monthly
d) Occasionally
e) Never

Q.11). Who is better qualified to teach English?
a) English language teacher
b) Subject specialist
c) Why:

Q.12). What is your main purpose of teaching English courses?
a) Writing assignments/projects
b) Passing English language tests
c) Participating in academic discussions
d) Reading reference works
e) Helping study specialist courses

Q.13). Why English is important to study?
a) The main language of a job is English
b) To communicate with colleagues verbally
c) To communicate in writing
d) To read job related materials
e) To attend meetings
f) To attend training courses

Q.14.) Which of the four skills is the most important and why?
a) Listening
b) Speaking
c) Reading
d) Writing

Q.15). Which aspect/s of the English teachers' role have you been involved in?
a) Syllabus design
b) Materials production
c) Course book selection/adaptation
d) Evaluation/of course book analysis

Q.16). Which of the following activities do you use more in your class?
a) Simulations
b) Role play
c) Group work
d) Information transfer exercise

Q.17). Which of the following educational technology aids have you been using in your class?
a) Overhead projector
b) Audiocassette recorder
c) Videocassette recorder
d) Language laboratory
e) Other: charts/maps
f) None: why?

Q.18). How often do you use Farsi in your class?
a) Always
b) Frequently
c) Sometimes

d) Rarely

e) Never

f) Why

Q.l9). Have you been providing your students with audiocassettes to use out of the class?

a) Always

b) Frequently

c) Sometimes

d) Rarely

e) Never

Q. 20). Have you evaluated your students in oral performance?

a) Always

b) Frequently

c) Sometimes

d) Rarely

e) Never

Q.21). Have you ever analysed your students' needs?

a) Yes

b) No

Q.22). Did you take any action towards those needs?

a) Yes/what?

b) No/why?

Q.23). What skill is the most problem?

a) Listening

b) Speaking

c) Reading

e) Writing

Q.24). How have you been allocating your class time to each of the skills? Please indicate in per cent.

a) Listening

b) Speaking

c) Reading

d) Writing

e) Why? (please specify)

Q.25). How do you relate with subject teacher?

a) Team-teaching

b) Referring to subject teacher for content

c) Consult with subject teacher in advance

Q.26). Which skill/s have you been specialised in?

a) Teaching listening

b) Teaching speaking
c) Teaching reading
d) Teaching writing
e) None

Q.27). The material in the coursebook is:
a) Relevant to students' needs
b) Irrelevant to students' needs
c) For verbal communication
d) For writing

Q.28). Which approach /technique have you been using most?
a) Lectures
b)Seminars/group discussions
c) Workshops
d) Peer teaching
e) Demonstration/ observation lessons
f) Field visits

Q.29). What do you see as main problems?
a) Syllabus
b) approach

Q.30). Please, offer your suggestion/solutions.

Appendix B
Students' Questionnaire

Introduction:
The English learners are adults who have a prior knowledge of English and their own specialist subject, that is, a chemistry student knows more or less about chemistry and a mathematician about mathematics. Thus a questionnaire filled out by these experienced students certainly will provide the investigator with useful and factual data. This data would help with the improvement of both the English material and approach of teaching. There are a few open questions in order to avoid taking a long time to answer them.

Selection of Subjects
The questionnaires were completed by 3 categories of English students:
1) the freshmen;
2) the students halfway through the course;
3) senior students taking their final course in English. This third group of students is preferred because of their experiences through the English courses.

Preparation and Administration of English Students' Questionnaire
It is probably better to provide a Farsi translation of the questionnaire for confidence and comfort. This will also help prevent any misunderstanding throughout the questionnaire. Then I shall ask the responsible involved to carry out the study.

Objectives: This questionnaire is prepared for the following objectives: to ascertain English students' attitudes to learning English and the importance and role of it in the specific situation; this helps design the level of needs and interest materials. It is also, to identify students' opinions about English courses and teaching materials as well as teaching and evaluation methods to adjust and

introduce the appropriate approach. It is also to adjust the use of education aids for better achievement, and finally, to obtain feedback from students in the form of suggestions for raising standards in the use of English and comments on the English language teaching situations in Iran.

Note: Dear students:

The questionnaire you are filling out is part of a research study that will be submitted to the University of Sheffield, U.K. for English teaching improvement. The research is introducing an approach to English teaching in Iranian universities. Your precise answer to each question is of great value in the result of exact findings. Your response is assured to be in confidence and only for the purposes of this study. I wish you success in your studies and thanks for your co-operation.

Questions:
Please, tick the appropriate answer for each question:
Q.l). Please mark your gender:
a) Male
b) Female

Q.2). Please mark your age group:
a) 20-22
b) 23-26

Q. 3). Year of enrolment: what year are you in?
a) year 3
b) year 4

Q.4) What discipline are you in? What is your field of study?
a) Basic science
b) Human science
c) Specifically
d) Other, specify please

Q.5). What is your aim of attending university?
a) To obtain a certificate
b) To pursue my education for further study
c) To go abroad

Q.6). What was your score for ESP1 ?
a) A= what number
b) B= what number
c) C= what number
d) D= what number
e) F= what number

Q.7) What was your mark for ESP2?
a) A= what number
b) B= what number
c) C= what number
d) D= what number
e) F= what number

Q.8) How necessary was English for you to learn and why?
a) Very necessary
b) Necessary
c) Necessary to some extent
d) Unnecessary

Q.9) Which skill was the most important to you?
a) Listening
b) Speaking
c) Reading
d) Writing

Q.10) How often did you speak English in class?
a) Always
b) Frequently
c) Sometimes
d) Rarely
e) Never

Q.11) How useful did you find the English?
a) Very useful
b) Useful
c) Useful to some extent
d) None useful

Q.12) How relevant is the English syllabus?
a) Very relevant
b) Relevant
c) Relevant to some extent
d) Irrelevant

Q.13) How adequate are the course books in terms of information transfer exercises?
a) Very adequate
b) Adequate
c) Adequate to some extent
d) Inadequate

Q.14) How often did you use English (speak) in class?
a) Always

b) Frequently
c) Sometimes
d) Rarely
e) Never

Q.15) Which skill is the most problem?
a) Listening
b) Speaking
c) Reading
d) Writing

Q.16) Which skill is your most useful one?
a) Listening
b) Speaking
c) Reading
d) Writing

Q.17) How frequently did you use educational technology such as cassettes, videos, overheads, etc... in class?
a) Always
b) Frequently
c) Sometimes
d) Rarely
e) Never
f) Why?

Q.18) How much knowledge of the content or language did your English teacher have?
a) Very adequate
b) Adequate
c) Adequate to some extent
d) Inadequate

Q.I9) How often did your English teacher use Farsi in class?
a) Always
b) Frequently
c) Sometimes
d) Rarely
e) Never

Q.20) Have you ever received a cassette to do some kind of exercise out of **class** by your teacher?
a) Always
b) Frequently
c) Sometimes
d) Rarely

e) Never

Q.21) How frequently have you been asked to conduct your project or present your topic in English in class?
a) Always
b) Frequently
c) Sometimes
d) Rarely
e) Never

Q.22) How was your evaluation method?
a) Very adequate
b) Adequate
c) Inadequate
d) Why (specify)

Q.23) Will you take English courses if they are optional:
a) Yes
b) No
c) Why?

Q.24) Should English be taught by:
a) Subject teacher
b) Language teacher
c) Why?

Q.25) How about English credit courses were they:
a) Adequate
b) Adequate to some extent
c) Inadequate

Q.26) Should the contact hours with teacher be:
a) Increased
b) Decreased
c) Why?
Q.27) How about oral (speaking) skills in your course book?
a) There are enough lessons on oral skills.
b) They need to be increased in number of lessons.
c) They need more oral exercises.

Q.28) How much of your class time is allocated to oral skills exercises?
a) Half of the time
b) Less than half
c) More than half
d) Not at all

Q.29) Which skill is your most needed?
a) Listening
b) Speaking
c) Reading
d) Writing
Q.30) Please, write down your suggestions and comments on teaching English.

Appendix C
Teachers' Interviews:
Questions For Interviews with Iranian English Teachers &Graduates:

Q1). Would you state the nature of oral discourse in the English teaching/learning process in the Iranian university, please?

Q2). What difficulties regarding oral discourse have you felt during your experience of English teaching/learning ?

Q3). What techniques/strategies would you prefer in oral discourse analysis in order to enable English students to use the language fluently?

Q4). What is your perspective of question and answer strategy to teach oral discourse to English students? Should this be accomplished in English or Farsi or both?

Q5). How about teaching oral skills to silent English students, I mean what techniques would work the best to obtain the most oral development?

Q6). Which do you prefer to emphasise more in teaching/learning oral skills; content and meaning or grammar?

Q7). Can we use prosodic factors such as intonation, gestures and pictorials rather than grammar? Give your reasons please.

Q8). Which one do you prefer: a. teacher-centred or b. student-centred class, and why?

Q9). How do you see the fluency of the English students, how can an English teacher improve it through group work in class?

Q10). Do you think that the existing English textbooks are appropriate to meet the oral needs of the students ?

Q11). How about oral discourse testing, how have you evaluated English oral skills?

Q12). Do you agree with out of class exercises?

Q13). What do you think of control, that is , English teacher should stop students' utterances and correct them or should make them speak and gradually students correct themselves?

Q14). Would you please make your suggestions about the use of oral discourse analysis in brief?

Transcription of Teachers' Interviews

Subject no. 1 : An English teacher who has five years of English teaching experience, from Yazd University.

Note: T stands for teacher, and A 1 refers to answer to question 1.

T1A3 : I think we should understand the reason of the silence, why they are silent in the class, if we can understand it, we we can find some techniques in order to

remove the cause, eh I think those students who are silent in the class they have not been given enough opportunity outside the class, before the class. So in the class if the students feel that they have expressed themselves and they are free to say what they want to say it is the role of the teacher, let's say eh the technique of the teacher which creates such atmosphere, I am sure that the students take part in the class that they should feel that what they say can be accepted by their teacher can be approved by the teacher, it is I think very important thing, the teacher should not try to control all the time, the students in the class, try to remove errors and mistakes that the students have , they should feel free, so this works. As I said the atmosphere should be motivated and the motivation should be high, it should be friendly class, or the class as we said, and eh eh of course the group discussion can improve a lot can improve impact on students' performance.

T1A4: I think it's much better to put emphasis on content and meaning, because we want students to express themselves, it is not important that we see the grammar or the pattern they used they are correct or wrong because even those who are native Farsi speakers they even may have a lot of mistakes in their conversation, even in Persian, so how do we expect the second hand speak fluently without any mistakes in grammar, though it is not important, because the message is important, we should focus on the message as long as the message is correct, and what they say is correct, it is the meaning of the passage or what they are discussing about the topic aim. So it is good as a technique, can can use the group discussion and we can for example, divide the students into different groups, and let's say allocate a kind of specific topic into ground and ask them to discuss about it, but the eh oral of the teacher is very important because the students feel that someone should be in the class in order to look at him as a kind of pattern and sample. We should approve what they say and we should support them, we should not stop them as or what you said is wrong.

T1A 9 We can view tapes and bring some films, for example in the class and the students see them and students see how they discuss a topic that we want to discuss in order to teach them, how they can use the language from it's practical situation. We can, for example take the students to some necessary factory, and to some necessary places and then for example in respect of the facilities .and the instrument that are available, and we can for example point toward them and show them and in this way we can I think improve them.

Teacher Subject no. 2: This subject is a male who has five years of English teaching experience in Tabriz Teacher-Training University.

T2A 1: I think oral discourse is eh to a great extent ignored in our universities, although I have been trying to use it, to use the oral discourse in my English

courses, I think for some reasons it hasn't been successful, it is perhaps due to the surroundings, to the whole situation. None of our colleges paid attention to it, so this is why we haven't been using it, in our classes.

T2A 3: As far as the understanding of the eh technical texts are concerned, yes, I agree with the presentation of the materials in synonyms forms, paraphrases or simplifications. It is it should be done in the understanding phase of teaching, I mean you have to do this , because your students' language level is not so high, so you should do that, but the technical terms themselves should not be neglected, because they are very very important, in their later phase of reading, personal or individual environment in reading. So both should be paid attention, but I think the technical terms themselves should be given great rate and value, because it will play a greater role in their subsequent reading activities and individual reading.

T2A 5 : Well, I think the group works, group activity might be one way to invite them for a group discussion, to a participation in the discussions, and the teacher's responsibility might be to control the activity, rather than eh directly involved in the in the activities.

T2A8: I think, as I said from the beginning it has been the case our teachers are the only control of the learning activities in the classrooms. This doesn't correspond to the modern teaching methodologies, now it is encouraged that the teachers should lose their roles as the sole control of the classes, or the sole control of the learning process. So this is the learner who learns, they should have time and space to do so, so I think the question is answered.

T2A14: You mean how to, yeah, well let me divide it into some sections for the reason of clarity: **If I here to present a lesson to my students on the basis of oral discourse, my first step would be to present the material orally to the class before using any book, written page, yeah, you might use blackboard, you may use charts, and you might use other visual aids. Yeah, by visual aids I mean pictures, slides, and many other things. Once the students get familiar with whole idea you are trying to convey you are in a point to show** them the printed page, then it's time to open the books and then read through the text and according to your explanations, your visual aids , the students now have got some knowledge in their minds to correspond then to the printed page. Many of the ambiguities of the printed page would be quite clear for him , because they already have got some idea about the whole content that they have read . .

Teacher Subject no. 3 : This subject has six years of teaching English in Iranian universities

T3A1: Well, as you know the the reasons behind the designing some English courses and the English itself for non-native English speakers are to enable them how to express themselves orally or in written, the the academic achievements in using to be able to communicate their academic knowledge.

T3A2&3: Yes, of course they are, these strategies are useful and to my experience, all of these strategies can be effective in 'enabling in enabling Iranian students to help them to speak in the target language and to acquire the knowledge that are expressed by the means of English textbooks.

T3A4: Yes, yes, well when we teach English ah eh , then if we ask some questions and answer to the questions, this is a motivation. This may motivate them to communicate inside the class and to their how to put their knowledge in target language which is English which is taught them inside the classroom. So eh asking the students to mention briefly the the text or the passage that has been taught to them inside the classroom or to summarise or to ask them question from the content of the passage that is taught to them inside the the classroom, all of these are good procedures to have some very good communicative activities inside classrooms.

T3A8: Well, apparently to have a learner-centred class is more preferable, but for me as an English teacher because we want our students to be active inside classroom, not passive as are showed, so in order to have an active class with active students, it's better to focus on the students rather than the teacher, because the teacher is speaker or could answer particularly, particularly and with special focus on oral discourse we do not teaches to be just the monologue speakers. So it's better to leave the class with the students and the teacher can just be a conductor rather than the speaker or a monologue.

T3A10: No, unfortunately I have to say that as far as oral discourse is concerned the existing textbooks, English textbooks are not adequate and appropriate at all. Unfortunately nothing, nothing had been designed in order to , in order to provide students and the teacher with the opportunity to have some exercise inside classroom to their oral discourse or oral performance.

T3A12: Yes, if we are going to focus on the oral production inside the classroom, English classroom, we have to motivate our students to talk about not to stop them, if we stop them, how can we expect them to improve their oral production, in order to improve their oral production we have to motivate them, and require them to communicate in the target language inside the English classrooms.

T4A2: Yes, one very important problem that all the students have is that they are not able to express themselves in English classes in the target language, when the teacher asks question and want them to ehe answer the question in the target language. Unfortunately they are not able and sometimes, I have come to some students that they are not able to say even one word in target language in order to express themselves in the specialist eh area of interest, so these are the deep hazards that English teachers usually have.

T4A7: Yes, particularly when we are going to focus on communication rather than teaching just grammar or vocabulary to students, some part of communication is paralinguistic factors which influence communication conveying the meaning that speaker has in mind, so all of these, gestures for example , some kind of gesture to enable the speaker to visualise things the concept that he intends to express, intonation of course has a very important role in communication. Sometimes intonation has some grammatical significance as it may have some semantic significance.

T4A8: Yes, usually experts believe that teacher-centred classrooms are old fashion of language teaching , in such classes usually teachers expresses everything and say everything and students are so closed just listen to what teachers say, but the recent tendency in teaching methodology and learning.

T4A13: For the topic and as far as topic is concerned we have to keep in mind that our English class is not a language class in its general term, but it is an English as well.

Teacher Subject no. 5 :
T5A1: Actually, there are no oral discourse practices, in the way you mean, in teaching English in Iranian universities. Students just read a text and are just asked questions about the article. Teaching is confined to the university textbooks and the students are not exposed to 'real' English.

T5A3: No, these techniques have not been used as you meant in oral production , but I believe these will certainly enhance English learners' oral discourse, if applied appropriately with suitable materials.

T5A4: I believe that the question and answer strategy should be in English. However, in practice, as the students are not familiar with this sort of exercise and the Persian environment also has a negative influence, teachers are persuaded to use some Persian words to make certain points clear.

T5A5: I think silent English students, firstly, should be involved in pair groupings, secondly, they should be allowed to participate in large groups and, finally, in entire class activities.

T5A9: I prefer a student-centred class because this will give the students the opportunity to practise English and improve their oral skills.

T5A9: The fluency of the English students can be improved through regular oral practice in the class with all the students and outside the class with their friends.

T5A13: No, an English teacher should never stop a student's utterance for the purpose of correcting him or her because this action will result in frustration and lack of confidence in the student.

T5A14: The greatest difficulty that English teachers face in Iran is the lack of educational equipment for their teaching aims.

T6A6.

Well, these students I think must be a sort of in use, they must be using some product to actually to sort of provoke the students. Usually, ask the students to answer certain questions, eh sometimes this can be done voluntarily, have some questions and have the students to raise up their hands and the volunteers to say, who are not shy, but for the students who are not willing to take part in discussions , I think you have to just call on them. Yes, group work is more effective, because in a small group, the first thing is that the teacher is not in that group because in most cases the students are shy because they see the teacher in front of them, but in a small group the teacher is not there, teacher is absent in that group, the students don't feel shy, because students are around him. Then I think this increases the interest of these students in discussion.

T6A9. I would rather say learning-centred, actually not learner-centred but leaning-centred, I prefer this one, well, when you are talking about teacher-centred or learner-centred or you call student-centred, what comes to mind is that the implication is that either the teacher or the student should decide what is going in the classroom, in other words, they should determine it..

T6A12.

I am afraid not, because this has not so far been included as one of the skills to be evaluated, the only skills they usually evaluated are comprehension skills, vocabulary, grammar and to some extent translation, other skills are not regarded as well, not being unimportant, but not considered.

T6A14.

By talking I mean relevant talking. Well, I think that's a good technique, or a good approach to developing oral skills in the students, especially, when you are talking about a subject matter in which they are interested. Therefore, yes, it is necessary, I mean to have courses particularly organised for these teachers, teachers of English as a second language and in particular English courses. Yes, that's an important point.

Appendix D
Interviews with English graduates
Introduction:
Six English graduates who are studying for their Ph.D. In the University of Sheffield were interviewed. These graduates are valuable sources to give their comments and evaluate the English programme because they are exposed to an English speaking environment and are feeling the lack and deficiencies of English courses which they have passed in Iranian Universities.

G1A1: (graduate answer 1): We usually had rare speaking in our English classes in Iran.

G1A2: Eh, we had many problems with discourse especially with using it in different areas of our subjects, for example we didn't have seminars or meetings in English.

G1A3: I think in my case it would be better to have much more oral communication during the course, and out of it as well.

G1A4: No, it's better to have questions and answering, we had some examples in this technique but it was very useful if we had to have questioning and answering to the questions. It's most of our course we were passing the course, but unfortunately we didn't have enough.

G1A5: Yes, it is better to give them some exercises and make them have discussions in the class.

G1A6: Right, yes, in this case we had learned many grammar courses since the early stages of high school, but it has not helped the class to speak, so I prefer content. It's very better than things.

G1A7: Yes, of course, I think these techniques have more effect on words than grammar.

G1A9: I prefer student-centred speaking , because it enhances the ability of the students in speaking, and improves their confidence in it.

G1A9: It's better to have more practice.

G1A10: I think, these textbooks lack enough oral exercises for speaking activities, it's better to put some exercises for oral speaking texts.

G1A11: No, no, I haven't been evaluated for oral, or speaking.

A4: I think student student asks from students is better.

A5: I think the class should have permission to speak and discuss with the another in small groups, in big groups.

A6: I prefer meaning, because I can speak in simple terms.

A7: eh, no, because grammar is too important.

A9: I prefer, emm student-centred class, because the students can make better relationship with each other in discussing any subject.

A9: I think the fluency, the fluency of the English students is weak and the group work can can enhance the speaking of the students.

A10: no, the oral skill couldn't be improved from the textbooks.

A11: no, no, I haven't been tested orally, yeah.

A12: yes, arrange I think the trips to related fields to have practice and discussion on their topics, be useful.

A13: no, no, I think the teacher should repeat the students sentence again correctly, because if the eh teacher eh said this sentence not correct may be the student ashamed (shy) from speaking in the eh next class.

A14: I think oral skill can be more influential for for the language skills, because it is the base of them (language), no, oral is the base of others, yeah.

GS4:

A1: There is no oral discourse in teaching English in Iranian universities at all .

A2: There are a few activities regarding speaking English such as:

a) the teachers themselves did not speak English all the times, they may have had some short speech, but the students have never been asked to speak.

b) the English course books had no exercises in oral discourse;

c) there has not been any useful facilities available, although we had some earphones that we never used them.

A3: I think strategies such as group work participation and giving presentation by English students can improve speaking skills of these students.

A4: I think this strategy can work, but I think it causes some stress to student who is going to answer in front of the class, if that strategy is applied in class is better in English not in Persian.

A5: If group work is practised for a while then students will get ready to present to class.

A6: I think grammar should be taught along with content, if there is enough time , I mean by grammar some required grammar in speaking.

A7: To me, these factors can help students to understand .

A9: Student-centred can work better if it is justified to both teacher and students.

A9: Group work is useful when supplementary material is given to the students to discuss a project and then put them together in discussion.

Session One

Group 1:

1) S1:   (she is asking her peer in Farsi "what is university teacher in English").

2) S2: professor, professor.

3) S1: professor?

4) S2: yes.

5) S1: you professor, hah hah (laughter).

6) S2: the professor said that eh eh .

7) S1: about philosophy (long pause).

8) S1: (Asked the peer "What is recording in English?".)

10) S2: (no answer long pause).

Session Two

Group discussions

Group 1:

S1: I think we have to learn something before this something in advance something about this and then speak about it.

S2: but some students can't speak.

S1: yes that's I think some students speak wrongly.

S2: that's okay but...(long pause).

Group 6:

S11: for conversation I think it is better to have two classmates be room-mate in the dormitory and in the class it is better to have all the students in conversation everyday.

S12: tell me how it can be useful conversation between you and me for example.

S11: it can be useful when the topic of it be useful and the two classmates be very friend with each other and when they want to help each other and when speak to each other wherever I saw saw two pupils that were speaking when they are eating in the self.

S12: okay when are speaking English we can correct each other do you believe me for example when I am wrong when i say a sentence or a word that is wrong that you correct me or...

S11: it is learning English is like it should be learning like the child's and it is and it shouldn't be very important to understand English but it takes hours and we haven't time enough to spend the time to English because we have so much to do these and those I think.

S12: no you for example you can everywhere you came to class when you are walking you just going out go shopping and go another with your friend you can speak and tell the price of the things the name of the things you see the other things it is very good.

Group 2:

S3: After 10 years (then says this in Farsi language   ), yes after (youth in Farsi).

S4: The youth.

S3: Yes, and the young in the young years ehe h young age. We live in society and and other thing, all thing affect for eh eh for us.

S4: Eh and I say the character of anybody not similar, isn't similar and it's different person one person to person. It depend on the the general genetic of the eh his parents and eh mentally and the physical and it's depend on the of the his society who lives in this and his eheh.

Pre-test: conversation (S2)

S2A1: A second-year literature student.

S2A2: I don't regard the course English but I very like the course English because I like speak English. I read about the English in my school eh I given but I give information but I give about information a little eh, if willing God I will read about the course English in my university. And I will read eh the voyager English in my country because I wait at this moment the course literature, and I like very like my course because my course is language general.

S2A3: - No answer.

S2A4: What are going to deal with English? What we discover with it in class that's my point.

S2A5: I can not speak English.

S2A6: I did any activities in English, I can not speak English.

Pre-test: conversation (S4)

S4A1: a second-year English student.

S4A2: I have studied English about courses in English laboratory in our classes. We had conversation and problem-solving , discussing about some major eh topics and eh for a community also we had some dialogue lectures and we played the role of a teacher in a play.

S4A3: I'm trying to be a good teacher, I think that then we should we should try to learn English eh in a good way.

S4A4: yes the last topic that we covered covered eh eh was about eh cognition eh conclusion to teaching like the Audio-visual and the Communicative. Also about grammar and about other topics of life and rationality.

Pre-test: conversation (S5)

S5A1: an English student.

Pre-test is not available (post-test is recorded over pre-test).

Post-test: conversation (S5)

About past English course I think in the last course which had I improved and from before eh and about. I'm going to do graduation, I'm going to be a teacher and regarding to this point I think I should improve my English because we need it at the future it and because I'm going to be a teacher and I'm going to work the student and ah which are going to learn English then I should try to improve my English.