

Preface

The teaching of 'Readings in Journalistic Material', a course for university students majoring in English literature or translation has often been unpredictable and uncharted. Randomly chosen materials presented for the course are often from newspapers and magazines which naturally have not been, and as such cannot often be, tailored to the needs of the students. Such a situation can obviously lead to a do-it-as-you-please implementation of the course with no clear-cut objectives in mind.

Furthermore, the existing foreign textbooks on journalistic material are not obviously geared towards the capabilities and probably interests of the Persian university students. Also, in the preparation of such textbooks the distinction needs to be made that material put together is not intended for a course in journalism, which is a totally different course of study. On the contrary, the intention here is to familiarize or rather immerse the students, to the extent possible, in journalistic materials in order to possibly and hopefully instill in them a 'feel-good effect' for reading newspapers and magazines. This distinction turns out to be of paramount importance.

However, the major objective of the present textbook, among others, is to characteristically provide relative self-sufficiency for the students in trying to minimize the use of dictionary by them. Students are often reluctant to make repeated references to the dictionary. Not only this, but also they tend to consult bilingual dictionaries, which can often be misleading. Even if a monolingual dictionary is used, students often fail in locating the exact meaning that fits the context they are reading. This book includes the following features:

(a) The definition of all words considered necessary have been given in a jumbled fashion and the targeted words have been highlighted in the text.

(b) Most of these words have again been presented in multiple choice tests to reinforce their understanding and retention.

(c) True/False questions have been provided because of their facilitative importance in learning and classroom discussions.

(d) Other types of questions and further activities have at times been introduced.

(e) Pieces of news from The Daily Tehran Times have been critically examined for structural, semantic, and stylistic flaws.

(f) The meanings of certain words or phrases commonly used in press have been presented.

(g) Finally, the meanings of certain idiomatic expressions common in journalistic language have been introduced with examples.

It is to be noted, however, that the exercises worked out for the first four texts are different from the others. This is because these exercises were originally presented to the Center as a sample and were approved. Then the decision was made to retain it here intact for the purpose of juxtaposition with the other exercises for the verification of the merit or demerit of the author's second thought (i.e. the issue of student self-sufficiency) through the students' judgement.

It is also very important to bear in mind that the articles, are not all intended for class work, which might not after all be practically feasible. Some of them are meant to be assigned as extensive readings for immersion purposes. A focused attention has been made to choose diverse articles that might be of interest to the students. Almost all the articles for the textbook have been extracted from the *Internet*. The author's motivation for the preparation of the textbook has originated from his long-standing involvement and interest in journalism as well as teaching the course.

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