

development of teachers, their personal attitudes towards the items “a” to “j” listed above, and Professor Richards welcomed the feedback and questions by the participants from different educational backgrounds and work places, i.e., different educational districts in Tehran as well as different small and large cities in the country.

The workshop ended by the happy feedback of the participants who were satisfied by the discussions and who came up with more issues still to be resolved, and requested for more similar workshops in future.

Day 2, May 25: Seminar on Teacher Development and the Role of Textbooks

Day 2 of the event started at 8 a.m. with the registration of new participants, and officially started at about 9 by the verses of the Holy Quran, the National Anthem, Dr. Talaei's speech followed by Dr. Mehrmohammadi's welcome message.

Professor Richards divided his speech into two sections for ease of the audience's participation in the Q/A session. So, the morning session was exclusively on Teacher Development, which was coordinated by Dr. Anani Sarab, faculty member at Shahid Beheshti University and Dr. Akbari, faculty member at TMU as discussant.

The issues in Teacher Development were the focus of the morning seminar which concluded with the participants' questions and comments which were made orally and in the written form. The chairpersons managed the relevant questions in a way that those which were directly related to Professor Richards' speech would be addressed to him, and

those that were related to the Iranian EFL context were answered by Dr. Akbari and Dr. Anani Sarab's comments followed where necessary.

The afternoon speech exclusively dealt with the role of textbooks and issues in developing EFL materials in ESL and EFL countries. Dr. Talaei coordinated the session and another faculty member attended the panel as discussant.

Many questions addressed to Professor Richards were related to the books he authored, mainly the New Interchange Series. He answered a few of the books-specific questions and left similar ones for either face-to-face discussion or email communication.

Many MOE teachers raised questions regarding the effectiveness of the Iranian school English course books, how teachers can make most of the content, which Professor Richards referred the questions to the other discussant colleague who was familiar with the course books as well as the educational system of the country.

The seminar ended with an exciting lottery for the \$1500 and \$700 prizes that Professor Richards awarded to two winners to attend an overseas seminar.

Milad Beheshtiparvar who managed the introductions and announcements asked Professor Richards to choose the numbers from the basket and the two lucky winners received the rewards with the cheering applaud from the audience.

The participants took lots of pictures, and the workshop-seminar came to an end with new teachers networks and new friendships that are formed between people from different backgrounds but with one key thing in common: Dedicated love for teaching.

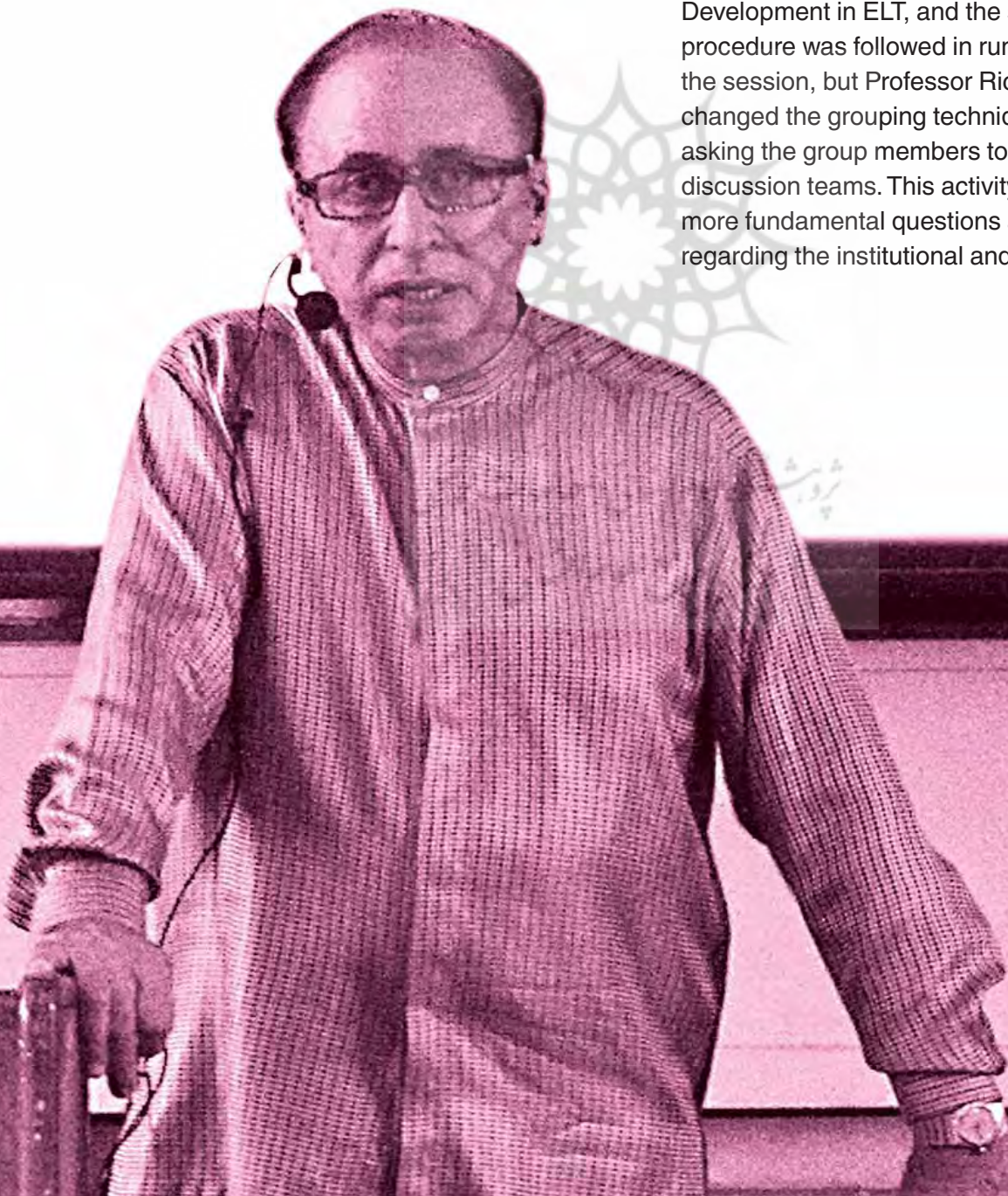
theoretical input they received for further implementation in their group work.

Group work activities started at 10:30 and lasted for 2 hours. Professor Richards grouped the neighboring participants to save time, and distributed copies of sample units from two EFL course books among the groups for (1) analysis and (2) evaluation. He emphasized the difference between analysis and evaluation of course materials, a key point for teachers to bear

in mind when deciding to select a course book for a given program.

The groups first analyzed the sequence of the unit components and discussed why and how activities and tasks were ordered, whether the sequencing was justified based on learning theories, etc. About 15 to 20 minutes were allotted to each group activity, and the groups' representatives summarized their ideas, and fruitful discussions followed among the groups.

After the lunch break, the second half of the session was devoted to Professional Development in ELT, and the same procedure was followed in running the session, but Professor Richards changed the grouping techniques by asking the group members to make new discussion teams. This activity raised more fundamental questions and issues regarding the institutional and personal



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on activities. The materials included (1) Teaching speaking skills, (2) Criteria for a classroom speaking activity, and (3) Teacher learning and professional development which included:

- (a) testimonies of in-service teachers to their teaching experiences in different parts of the world, the challenges they have met in teaching and encouraging learners to speak English,
- (b) the nature of teacher development in language teaching,
- (c) teacher learning in language teaching,
- (d) instances of teacher training activities and teacher development activities,
- (e) the nature of professional

- development,
- (f) institutional and personal professionalism,
- (g) teachers learning from each other,
- (h) implementing professional development from institutional and personal perspective,
- (i) professional development and motivation, and finally,
- (j) eight strategies for personal professional development.

While discussing the key points on the power point slides, Professor Richards raised thought provoking questions and introduced brainteasers so that participants would make much of the



An overview of the Workshop and Seminar on English Language Curriculum, Professional Development,

Led by Professor Jack C. Richards

24-26 May, 2012, Tehran, Iran

Reporter by Elham Forouzandeh

The 3-day workshop-seminar on English Language Curriculum and Teacher Learning and Professional Development in May 2012 sponsored and organized by the Iranian Curriculum Studies Association (ICSA), Organization for Educational Research and Planning (OERP), and Tarbiat Modares University (TMU- University for Instructors Education) was among the most significant measures ever taken by the MOE-related (Ministry Of Education) organizations in Iran. The main goal of the event was to promote practical knowledge among the Iranian EFL teachers (in both public and private sectors), teacher educators and trainers, and ELT practitioners at different levels of professionalism.

The event was officially announced in March 2012 on ICSA website, and hundreds of requests for registration and participation were received. However, regarding the administrative and logistics limitations, the organizers decided to hold the same workshop on two days to accommodate more applicants (50 participants in each session) on May 24 and 26 in the order of receiving the complete registration application. The seminar with 200 participants was held on May 25 in Shahid Motahari

Amphitheater at Tarbiat Modares University.

What follows is a brief report on the workshop and seminar topics, Professor Richards' input to the workshop and participants' feedback and input, for that matter, and his presentation on teacher professionalism in the seminar.

Day 1, May 24: Workshop on English Language Curriculum

After the on-site registration of new comers at 8-9 a.m., the event officially started at 9:15 by Verses from the Holy Quran, a welcome message by Dr. Kaffash, the Deputy of Educational Materials and Media Development Office, and then by Dr. Mehrmohammadi and Dr. Talaei, faculty members at TMU. Dr. Talaei and Dr. Kheirabadi, the Deputy of the International Relations Office, coordinated the session.

Professor Richards started his speech at about 10:15 by greeting the audience and recalling memories from his last trip to Iran and his seminar held in Teachers House (Khane Moallem) in Tehran in 2000.

A week before the workshop, the participants had received three sets of preparatory materials for ease of following the workshop input and hands