

## Introduction

This textbook contains fifteen units which are almost independent of each other. Each unit consists of a passage followed by three types of exercises. The passages have been selected in a way to introduce the readers to the different major schools of literary criticism, some of the great and well-known figures in Persian literature and some of the Iranian languages. The passages of units one to six, extracted from Aryanpour (1973), introduce six famous Iranian poets, i.e. Rudaki, Ferdowsi, Khayyam, Sa'di, Hafez and Rumi, whose works are well read by Persian literature students. Unit seven which is on mysticism and sufism, adopted from Chittick (1983), explains sufism teaching briefly. Persian and Avesta, as two important old Iranian languages, are dealt with and introduced in the texts of units eight and nine. These texts were extracted from Encyclopedia Americana, volumes 21 and 29. The texts of units ten to fifteen, adopted from Abrams (1993) and Hopkins (2001), mainly focus on the concepts of text, literary criticism and literary schools of criticism.

The exercises in part I of each unit consist of three kinds of reading comprehension questions: true/false, multiple choice and explanatory questions. The first two types of questions are supposed to persuade the students to read the passages carefully in order to comprehend the whole text. Some of these questions are controversial enough to motivate the students to discuss and take different positions with feasible reasons to defend their own understanding of the texts. It is suggested that the students answer these questions once without using dictionaries and once with the help of dictionaries at home. Finally, they should check and discuss these questions in the class. The explanatory questions which should be answered orally in the class can encourage the students to improve their speaking ability.

Sections A and B of the Language Practice exercises can be useful to increase the number of vocabulary of the learners and draw their attention to how to use different parts of speech in various structures. Some of the exercises of these sections are taken from Markstein and Hirasawa (1982) and Kurilecz (1976). Sections C and D of the Language Practice exercises intend to show the significance of paragraph development in reading comprehension. Completing the paragraphs and organizing the disordered sentences into well-formed paragraphs can help the students to understand the importance of topic sentences and the organization of paragraphs in reading comprehension. We believe that not only do these sections improve the diction and grammar of students but also they involve them to practice to organize scattered ideas into coherent and larger units. In preparing these sections, we used Arnaudet and Barrett (1990) Varzegar et al. (1991). These sections are followed by another group of exercises and grammatical points, extracted from Frank (1972), Arnold and Gimson (1982) and Hornby (2000), which are to improve the pronunciation and reading ability of the learners.

The last part of each unit is a translation task which persuades the students to learn technical literary terms and translate some short paragraphs on literary terms. The literary terms in this part and section C of part II were taken from Abrams (1993), Murphy (1996), De Andrea (1994), Harman (1996) and Legman (1970).