

Gebhard, Jerry G. *Teaching English as a Foreign or Second Language*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1996, 280 pp.

In this clearly written and thoroughly researched volume, G. provides a helpful source for teacher development programs and for EFL/ESL teachers who would like to refresh their knowledge. This volume serves as a guide that offers approaches and solutions to everyday classroom issues. It also includes ideas about how language teachers can teach students listening, conversation, and reading and writing.

Part I (9-46) *Self- development and exploration* uses this concept as a theme (7). The author demonstrates two different EFL classrooms to emphasize the need for self-development as teachers. The first one is the classroom of a teacher, Yoshi, who has not had the opportunity to work on the development of his teaching. According to G., Yoshi goes through his lessons in a more “lockstep fashion” and rarely breaks the step-by- step progression in the course text (13). The second one is that of a teacher, Kathy, who has taken on the responsibility for her own development. She designs her own lessons and brings creative ideas into her teaching (13). Then G. moves on to teaching skills. He sees two steps for exploring one’s teaching: Collecting descriptive samples of one’s teaching, and considering how the same lesson can be taught differently. G. thinks of these stages in a “cycle” and examines at each one in it.

Part II (49-140) *Principles of EFL/ESL teaching and learning* deals with how ESL/EFL teachers put importance on getting students involved in interacting in English. This section is based on an interactive classroom framework provided by Littlewood (1981), which he calls “precommunicative activities”. The author tells that these are primarily for beginning and intermediate level students. He adds that these activities are for the teacher to isolate specific elements of skill that leads communicative ability, giving students opportunities to practice. For

example, in the following example, the teacher's goal is to teach students how to ask about food likes and dislikes. She first teaches a grammatical item such as the use of the auxiliary verb *do* when used in a yes-no question : "You like (to eat) cake" " Do you like (to eat) cake?". Then, she does a vocabulary-building activity in which pictures of food items are put on the wall and matched such as the names of food items. Finally, she lets the students read the food items aloud and copy them while drawing their own pictures of each item. The author points out that this kind of activities encourages students both to ask about which food they like and to express In Part II, G. also addresses some of the problems that block ESL teachers from interacting with people, such as "the bandwagon", which refers to the instructor's using the latest techniques, methods, etc. G. believes that teachers should reflect on their own methodology through classroom observation. He disagrees with the idea of "jumping on a bandwagon", which doesn't allow them to make their own informed teaching decisions (61). In the "classroom management" chapter (69-88), the author discusses how teachers manage classroom teaching so that students have opportunities to interact in English in "meaningful" ways.

Part III (143-246) *Teaching language skills* focuses on four aspects of language. The first two chapters deal with listening comprehension (143-192). Conversations should be transactional, such as describing one's aches and pains to a doctor, and interactional, such as greeting, chatting with friends. There is also a focus on teaching reading for meaning. G. emphasizes that bottom-up and top-down processing interacts as we read with some degree of comprehension. The author points out that reading is done within a social context. He also addresses the reader's ability to recognize words, phrases and sentences. He says that their readers' cultural backgrounds relate to the content of their reading material. For example, a study by Kate Parry indicates that the failure of Nigerian students to achieve high scores on English

language written tests is due to cultural factors. Nigerian students come from a culture where thoughts and ideas are expressed orally (199). There are also many reading activities for ESL/EFL teachers to use as well as solutions for their problems such as reading teachers. The last chapter deals with teaching writing. G. believes that writing should focus on audience and purpose. With these two aspects of writing, the author provides several activities. One of them is called dialogue journal writing. In this activity, each student writes to the teacher, and the teacher responds with a brief, individual reply to each student.

This is an excellent book that emphasizes self-development for an ESL/EFL teacher. There is a set of questions and answers in each chapter, which includes advice on teaching problems. The references in each part are excellent. Each chapter contains activities that readers can explore in order to apply the chapter information in their own situation. A valuable appendix provides addresses, phone numbers of major publishers, and a list of professional journals and publishing houses.

Reference

Littlewood, W. *Communicative Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Tuba Celik
California State University, Fullerton