

TESOL: Techniques and Procedures

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TESOL: TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES. J. Donald Bowen, Harold Madsen and Ann Hilferty. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House, 1985. pp. 416, List Price \$16.95.

Every few years we read the results of surveys where various luminaries in the TESL field have been asked to list the ten books they would choose to take with them if they were given such a limit on their next assignment to the Australian outback or wherever. Some books have found themselves repeatedly listed in the top ten. One such book is *Adaptation in Language Teaching* by Donald Bowen and Harold Madsen. Soon there will be another book in the top ten by these authors, together with Ann Hilferty--*TESOL: Techniques and Procedures*.

The combined experience of these three authors both in the United States and overseas--in administration, teacher training, and teaching ESL/EFL classes--adds up to a wealth of techniques and procedures (as the title indicates), that many of us in the field can benefit from.

The text is not a methodology handbook in that it does not purport to be a discussion of the various methods being espoused by various individuals and institutes. Rather, it is a comprehensive treatment of various techniques, activities, lessons, ideas, etc., irrespective of method, that the authors have found to be valid and effective in the field of TESOL.

The outline of this new publication is similar to that of another "Top Ten" favorite: *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*, edited by Marianne

Celce-Murcia and Lois McIntosh (1979, Newbury House.) The approach is different, however, in that the classic 1979 text is an anthology, whereas this more recent publication is an integrated, authored text.

Bowen, Madsen, and Hilferty's text is divided into four sections: Methodological Perspectives, Oral Communication, Written Communication, and Planning & Evaluation.

The first section provides an overview of the historical trends in foreign language instruction and a brief prognosis for the future. Coverage of the "big three": Suggestology, Silent Way, and Counseling/Learning are covered with refreshing brevity (only 1-1/2 pages). After 66 pages on methods past and present (where other books have spent an inordinate number of chapters), the reader is now adequately prepared with a proper perspective to proceed on to the next two sections: to be precise, ten chapters on the modalities of communication, first oral, then written. In these sections, not only are the skill areas and their component parts discussed, but activities and procedures are presented and techniques explained for each level of language proficiency within those component areas. The inclusion of thought-provoking exercises, and discussion questions at the end of each chapter makes the text particularly useful for teacher training courses.

Techniques and Procedures diverges in a major way from the Celce-Murcia and McIntosh text in the fourth section by including substantial chapters on curriculum planning and on evaluation, thus making it unique in comparison to other methods

textbooks. This is no doubt a reflection on the particular professional interests and strengths of the authors. By the authors' own recognition, "this section, is not sufficient for the professional evaluator, but should be sufficient for the 'general practitioner' assigned as a teacher in the classroom.

While a text cannot cover all issues, or be everything to everybody, novice teachers or teachers-in-training will regret the lack of a chapter on "Classroom Skills". Issues such as learner age, learning styles, cultures, motivation, teacher-student dynamics, classroom management, etc. are dealt with summarily in the introduction to the book, with an encouragement to be friendly, well-prepared, and inspiring (though the authors do return to the learner briefly in their discussion of curriculum and evaluation in the last two chapters).

The focus, therefore, of *Techniques and Procedures* is obviously on the curriculum and the effective teaching of that curriculum, rather than on the learner and the issues of language learning. In the words of the publisher, "This basic methods book for TESOL provides teachers and teachers in training with practical information...and is designed to provide the basis for making intelligent choices appropriate to individual teachers, their goals, and their students."

On the whole, it is this reviewer's opinion that Bowen, Madsen, and Hilferty's text should do well in fulfilling that objective. And by better training those of us who have chosen TESOL as a career, it will make that career a stronger profession.