Building an EFL Curriculum for Young Learners: A Brazilian experience

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Abstract

EFL curriculum construction is a process usually carried out by educational authorities. In this paper, attempt has been done to describe the experience of building a local curriculum for early English language learning in public schools in Brazil, with the participation of school teachers, university professors and educational authorities. Both, the resulting curriculum guide and the process that led to its final format are discussed, along with consideration on its implementation in a context that lacks clear educational policies toward the teaching of a foreign language to young learners. A sociocultural approach to learning was adopted as the theoretical framework, translated into several principles that guided the suggested syllabus: playful and meaningful learning, interdisciplinary knowledge construction, interactive tasks, intercultural awareness, spiral syllabus, whole person and whole language perspectives. The document, jointly constructed, was validated by the community of practitioners, thus presenting ideas that resonate with their practical experience. This “grassroots” approach to curriculum design addresses the emerging need to introduce English at early stages of schooling, due to the global pressure for access to the world that functions through that language.

Key Words: Brazilian Experience, EFL Curriculum, Young Learners, Local curriculum  
Sociocultural Approach

Suggested Citation:

1 The Project “Construindo o currículo de língua inglesa para escolas públicas de Londrina” (Building the ELT curriculum for schools in Londrina) that is reported here had the collaboration of 14 participants, who, for two years and a half, reflected on the issues addressed in this paper.