

## CRITICAL LITERACY IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

### (O letramento crítico na aula de língua inglesa)

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**Resumo:** *Este artigo relata uma experiência de desenvolvimento de materiais didáticos para alunos de escolas públicas no sul do Brasil, em um projeto financiado pela SEED – Secretaria de Estado da Educação do Paraná. Os materiais foram pensados como recursos a serem utilizados pelos professores de acordo com suas necessidades locais, ao invés de constituírem-se simplesmente em um livro didático. A teoria subjacente ao projeto está baseada no letramento crítico e na concepção da língua como discurso, ou seja, uma língua repleta de valores culturais e ideológicos, os quais determinam significados e estabelecem relações de poder entre textos, entre leitores e entre textos e seus leitores, em sintonia com o conceito freiriano de *palavramundo* – “*wor(l)d*”. Os alunos leitores são, nesse sentido, coprodutores de significados e responsáveis por dar sentido à realidade. Esperamos que alunos e professores, que venham a utilizar os materiais que elaboramos, se tornem mais cientes de suas possibilidades como agentes e, desse modo, pretendemos estimular um sentido de cidadania ativa tanto em alunos quanto em professores.*

**Palavras-chave:** *letramento crítico, cidadania, ensino de inglês, escolas públicas.*

**Abstract:** *This paper reports the experience of developing teaching materials for public school teachers and students in southern Brazil in a project funded by the Education Department of Paraná State. The materials were intended as resources to be used by teachers according to their needs and those of their local communities, rather than as a textbook per se. The theory underlying this project is based on critical literacy and the idea that language is discourse, i.e. embedded in cultural and ideological values which determine its meaning and establish power relations among texts, among readers and among texts and their readers - Freirean “readers of the *wor(l)d*”. Student-readers are, in this sense, co-constructors of meanings and responsible for making sense of reality. We expect students and teachers who use the materials we designed to become more aware of their possibilities as agents and this way we intend to foster a sense of active citizenship.*

**Key-word:** *critical literacy, citizenship, english teaching, public schools.*

## OVERVIEW

The objective of this paper is to report our experience in the development of foreign language teaching materials to be used in public schools in the State of Paraná, in Southern Brazil. Such experience came from a project by the State Secretariat of Education to provide State School teachers of English and Spanish as Foreign Languages with materials to use in their classrooms. This initiative was pioneer, since foreign language teachers in State schools have had no assistance whatsoever from the State in order to obtain teaching materials, although every other school subject in the curriculum integrates a national project that provides them with textbooks for classroom use. We, the authors of this text, worked as consultants to the foreign languages team of the Secretariat of Education, a team composed of language teachers who work one shift at the office and part time in the classroom.

In section 1 of this paper we briefly describe the project in which the teaching materials were produced, pointing out our perceptions of the contexts they were aimed at. Section 2 underpins the main theoretical assumptions underlying our work, especially the concept of language as discourse, our definition of “text”, and the fundamental role of critical literacy in the process of creating meanings. We also make some considerations towards the role of the mother tongue in FL (foreign language) teaching, as well as about the role of grammar and the systematization of language in the classroom.

Section 3 brings some details about the main characteristics of the Resource Pack (the materials to be used by teachers as guidelines), as well as how it is organized and how it relates to different aspects of the critical literacy approach to language teaching and learning informing our work. At last, our final remarks point out some positive and challenging aspects of materials development as well as our expectations towards the outcomes of such experience.

## THE PROJECT

In Brazil, the teaching of at least one foreign language is compulsory in all educational levels (except for the university level), the choice as to

which language will be taught being left entirely for each school. Most of them have chosen English, especially because of the general belief that having English as a compulsory subject at school would give students more opportunities in the job market (Jordão, 2004). Setting aside considerations as to whether or not the inclusion of EFL in the school curriculum has actually given public school students more opportunities for having good jobs or better lives, the reality is that English has been far and large the main foreign language taught in schools in Brazil. However, Brazilian educational authorities have placed the area of foreign language teaching as their last priority, and EFL teachers have been mostly abandoned to their own luck. As an example of such abandonment, we can mention the National Textbook Program, a Federal project that aims at providing public school teachers and students with textbooks for classroom use. Every compulsory school subject is included in the project since it was launched (1929, according to the official Ministry of Education site<sup>1</sup>), except for foreign languages, Spanish being included in 2007, English only in 2009.

Nonetheless, occasional efforts from the part of educational authorities sporadically happen. In 2005 the State Secretariat of Education in Paraná started a project for the development of materials for all compulsory subjects, including Spanish and English as foreign languages. So far, teachers had been reproducing and writing their own materials individually, or adopting textbooks at their own discretion, instead of working collectively so as to find better solutions to their classroom challenges. That situation brought about many problems that the Secretariat wanted to avoid, especially the use of radically different teaching and learning approaches in different schools and the monotonous repetition of content from grade to grade and school to school.

Such project was initially understood by many of its participants and idealizers as a coursebook-writing project. However, the Secretariat of Education foreign languages team soon realized that the extension of the project wouldn't allow the development and piloting of original teaching material. In other words, the materials to be produced were to be used all over the State, a State so diverse as the county itself, a State with indigenous tribes as well as European immigrant communities, with

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1. [http://www.fnde.gov.br/home/index.jsp?arquivo=livro\\_didatico.html#pnld](http://www.fnde.gov.br/home/index.jsp?arquivo=livro_didatico.html#pnld), November, 2009.

coastal areas where part of the population is inaccessible for a long time of the year and with bilingual communities in the national border with Paraguay and Argentina, with rural and urban areas completely distinct one from another. Besides, there would be no time to adapt or use the material with actual students from these different communities. Therefore, it was a consensual decision to produce *suggestions* for teachers in dealing with a certain selection of pre-existing materials (called “texts” in a definition that will be explained in the next section of this paper) under a coherent teaching approach. Thus, teachers and students of foreign languages would be presented with a number of previously selected texts to work with in their classrooms, and the teachers’ materials would be accompanied by comments on the potentialities of the texts for foreign language teaching based on a uniform teaching approach, the critical literacy approach being selected in accordance with the State Educational Parameters recently elaborated and valid at the time (more details in section 2 below). This was where we, both consultants and the foreign languages team, started from.

The materials were then selected and commented by a group of state school teachers and consultants, who also wrote an introductory text presenting the theoretical background of the teaching and learning approach elected to inform both the selection of texts and the suggestions for the teachers. Some samples of the material were used with students in the groups taught by the state school teachers in the team, and the experience was discussed with the whole team afterwards, and the necessary changes to the material were immediately made. The different sections of the resource pack were also established by the team who elaborated the material, and will be described in more detail further in this text.

## **BACKGROUND: CRITICAL LITERACY**

Language was conceived in this materials development project, especially by the foreign language team, as *discourse*, a term we conceptualized as a dynamic, social, meaning-making practice that cannot be limited to a systemic, structural and fixed view. In such perspective, different from the concept of language as code, the concept of language as discourse leads to a perspective of language teaching as a process of teaching not only pre-existent meanings, but also a process of teaching ways in which we can create new meanings, position ourselves and construct our identities.

In other words, when language is defined as discourse, teaching a foreign language becomes teaching new ways of reinventing and representing oneself and of perceiving (and constructing) the world.

Language as discourse implies an understanding of our language practices as practices of constructing and assigning meanings to the world, to what happens in the world, to what we see and what we don't see in reality. A change in discourse practice therefore leads to a reconfiguration of our identity and the way we read the world (cf.: GEE, 1986). This is to say that, when learning a new language we learn new meanings, new (des) identifications (HALL, 2005) and new ways to understand ourselves and the “wor(l)d” (FREIRE & MACEDO, 1987).

This is to say that people are *social subjects*, at the same time subjected and subjecting to the meanings they create and reproduce. Power relations, conceived by Foucault as micro structures that exist everywhere and are potentially productive, as well as restraining (1996a), need to be acknowledged and dealt with, rather than ignored or naively attempted to be eliminated. Different meanings and different subjects are thus immersed in power relations and exist in constant battles for legitimacy. Such fights and the power relations that exist in us, therefore, are the very elements that allow meanings to be permanently produced and changed. Conflict and power, the ways they operate and possibilities of subverting them are thus fundamental concerns for anyone who wishes to understand, teach and learn languages, to understand and function in discourse and society.

We decided to have “texts” as starting points to the process of promoting better understandings of the ways discourses function in our societies. And by “text” we understand any unity of meaning realized as such by a determined social group within a certain culture. Hence, text is for us any construction of meaning to which we can attribute cohesive elements, be it verbal or non-verbal. The approach to texts we maintain in this perspective necessarily takes into account the contexts in which the texts are produced, that is, the classroom where they are interpreted, as well as the usual “who wrote the text”, its intended audience, how it was distributed, where it circulates, etc. Texts are used in the project, therefore, as opportunities for the realization of multiple contexts, for the discussion of important issues for intercultural development, what will hopefully (if

properly guided) result in critical thinking and other social practices that recognize, respect and benefit from different perspectives on the world.

Texts are to be perceived as culturally produced units of meaning, constructed in specific social and historical moments, establishing and being established by the interplay of many discourses. This view claims that the subject has an active role in understanding the world and in interpreting texts. Hence the need for students, when reading in the classroom, to have opportunities to establish connections in the multiverse (MATURANA, 2001a, b) of the process of building meanings with a text, and to perceive themselves as an active part of the social and discursive practices within which they function, so as to realize their existence simultaneously as subjects and objects. We believe with Freire that

One of the most important tasks of critical educational practice is to make possible the conditions in which the learners, in their interaction with one another and with their teachers, engage in the experience of assuming themselves as social, historical, thinking, communicating, transformative, creative persons; dreamers of possible utopias, capable of being angry because of a capacity to love. Capable of assuming themselves as subjects because of the capacity to recognize themselves as objects. All this, while bearing in mind that the assumption of oneself does not signify the exclusion of others. Because it is the otherness of the not-I or the you that makes me assume the radicality of the I. (FREIRE. 1998: 45-6)

As an active agent in the reading process, the reader has his/her culture to rely on for the validation of interpretative procedures, as well as for establishing different ways of constructing socially accepted meanings. Reading is viewed here as a process of interaction, though not only between the reader, the author and the text, but also and most importantly between them and society and its different contexts, texts and discourses, possible meanings and power relations. This is thus different from the interactionist view of reading<sup>2</sup>, in that we are conceiving reading as going beyond the

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2. Interactive approaches to reading comprehension, as seen by Grabe (1991) and Bock (1992), refer mainly to two different conceptions. The first one refers to the interaction between the reader and the text: the reader constructs meanings based on the background (previous) knowledge s/he possesses on the subject and also based on the information drawn from the text. In the second view, it refers to the interactivity occurring between the various cognitive skills involved in reading comprehension. Thus we can summarize interactive approaches as the interactive process between the reader and the text, which involves both bottom-up and top-down processing: the reader interacts with the text by actively using both processes.

mere establishment of relationships among previously existent entities such as subjects or meanings, but instead we propose that the reading process be seen as a process for enlarging the perception of the reader as a constructor of meanings. However, and possibly differently from many interactionist perspectives, we do understand that, as a creator of meanings, the reader is constrained by the interpretive procedures of the various communities which s/he is part of. In this sense, reading is a space not only to perceive different perspectives, but also to (re)inscribe our positions as subjects and the social representations of our identities.

This view requires a different perception also of the role of the teacher in the process. In order to work with this discursive view of reading, the teacher needs to respect and encourage the students' readings of texts, to understand the relations the students establish between a given text, their life experiences, their knowledges<sup>3</sup>, or, as stated by Freire (1986), to reread the world and their own experiences. The teacher is to provide students with opportunities to collectively construct and negotiate meanings, to constantly revisit their assumptions and question the implications of their world views. The creation of such opportunities in the classroom is directly related to how the teacher conducts the class and to her/his attitudes to what happens in and out of the school. Depending on the teacher's attitudes in the classroom, the students may have more or less room to question and transform legitimate meanings, creating new ones or complying to the meanings assigned by others to the world.

This educational approach is generally known as critical literacy. It is based on a discursive view of the world, which attributes to language a fundamental role in the process of understanding or interpreting our experience. According to Cervetti et al (2001), reading itself is an act of coming to know the world (as well as the word) and a means to social transformation<sup>4</sup>.

In such perspective, education needs to cater for different ways people can use to cope with the huge masses of information we are bombarded with, regardless of the communities where we live and the kind of information we are submitted to. Whether we live in a huge metropolis or in a quiet

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3. "Knowledges" is intentionally being used in the plural form in order to emphasize the idea that there are multiple kinds of knowledge at play in our societies.

4. Available at <http://www.readingonline.org/articles/cervetti/#literacy>.

country village, there is an enormous load of information activating our senses in different ways. Reading this information and making sense of it in legitimate ways is part of what we need in order to experience citizenship as an active process that we can benefit from. It is through the awareness-raising of the discursive aspects of human life that citizenship might be actually experienced by our students, in schools and in society in general. Perceiving language use as a social practice which is also cultural, contextualized and heterogeneous can lead to the awareness of our active role in society and to a legitimate experience of citizenship.

### **CRITICAL LITERACY, EFL AND CITIZENSHIP**

We believe that a sense of active citizenship needs to be developed and schools have an important role in the process. If we agree that language is discourse, and that it is in discourse that we construct our meanings, then we may perceive the foreign language classrooms in our schools as an ideal space for discussing the procedures for ascribing meanings to the world. In a foreign language we learn different interpretive procedures, different ways to understand the world. If our foreign language teaching happens in a critical literacy perspective, then we also learn that such different ways to interpret reality are legitimized and valued according to socially and historically constructed criteria that can be collectively reproduced and accepted or questioned and changed. Hence our view of the EFL classroom, at least in Brazil, as an ideal space for the development of citizenship: the EFL classrooms can adopt a critical discursive view of reality that helps students see claims to truth as arbitrary, and power as a transitory force which, although being always present, is also in permanent change, in a movement that constantly allows for radical transformation (Foucault, 1996 a, b). The EFL classroom can thus raise students' perception of their role in the transformation of society, once it might provide them with a space where they are able to challenge their own views, to question where different perspectives (including those allegedly present in the texts) come from and where they lead to. By questioning their assumptions and those perceived in the texts, and in doing so also broadening their views, we claim students will be able to see themselves as critical subjects, capable of acting upon the world.



Foreign language teachers often question the relevance of the use of the foreign language in the critical literacy approach, once this approach was initially developed to teach the mother tongue and the discussions in the classroom would hardly ever happen in the foreign language. Some of the proposed activities in this project were centered on theme discussions and the development of students' perceptions towards their communities, and may in fact be more effectively achieved through the mother tongue. In fact, we do not subscribe to the view that the foreign language is the only way to achieve such goals.

The role of the mother tongue in this process is fundamental and its overt use in the classroom presents one of the main aspects of criticism directed to critical approaches to the teaching of foreign languages. We believe that there is nothing wrong with using the mother tongue in the foreign language classroom, since strictly speaking, the mother tongue is also foreign – it's not “mine”, but “my mother's”: it was therefore foreign as I first learned it and while I was learning to use its interpretive procedures (BAKHTIN, 1988). When using critical literacy in the teaching of foreign languages we assume that a great part of the discussions proposed in the FL class may happen in the mother tongue. Such discussions will bring meaning to the classroom, moving away from the notion that only simple ideas can be dealt with in the FL lesson because of the students' lack of proficiency to produce deeper meanings and thoughts in the FL. Since the stress involved in trying to understand a foreign language is eased, students will be able to bring their “real” world to their English lessons and, by so doing, discussions in the mother tongue will help students learn English as a social practice of meaning-making. As an example, when dealing with the topic “family”, common to most classrooms in Brazil, rather than simply teaching relevant vocabulary and structures, the teacher could initiate a discussion, using Portuguese, around different family configurations, relationships in the family, social representations and values attributed to various types of family, and so on. Such discussion, if done mostly in the students' mother tongue, could more easily provide them with opportunities to engage in the meaning-making processes and thus to “read the wor(l)d” (FREIRE & MACEDO, 1987). In other words, this would help students and teachers attribute meaning to their social practices and therefore connect the English lessons to their lives inside and outside school. It must be mentioned, however, that students also need exposure to the FL they are learning, so it

is of paramount importance that the lessons alternate moments in English with moments in the students' first language.

Another controversial topic is the role of grammar in the EFL classroom. We suggest that grammar be treated according to the students' real needs, if we are to be coherent with the notion of language as discourse, an idea that emphasizes the unpredictability of language and the flexibility and constant change of meaning-making practices. Rather than aiming at adapting readers to texts, merely leading them to recognize text genres or fixed text formats, our perspective focuses on developing ownership of texts, which implies more than the possibility of "understanding" texts. Above all, it aims at understanding how and why certain meanings are considered legitimate and others are not: the main objective of reading, in this perspective, would be to develop the readers' ability to see themselves (and others) constructing and attributing meanings to texts or, yet, in Souza's words,

Critical literacy consists of not only reading, but to "read oneself reading", that is, to be aware, all the time, of how I am reading, how I am making meaning... and not to assume that reading is a transparent process, that what I read is what is written... To always think: why have I understood it like that? Why do I think like that? Where have my ideas come from, my interpretations? (translated from SOUZA, 2011, p.296)<sup>5</sup>

Grammar, therefore, comes to the scene in so far as it is needed in order to construct meaning *with* the text – there is no previous "natural" order of grammar structures to be followed, neither these structures should guide the teacher in her/his choice of texts and topics. Formal grammatical knowledge must be subordinated to discursive knowledge: it is important that students are able to use English in communicative contexts in which meanings and the necessary interpretative procedures to construct them are emphasized, rather than isolated grammatical structures. This is why we always introduce the texts in the Resource Pack from a discursive point of view, foregrounding their social roles and possible meanings, in the

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5. In the original: "Letramento crítico consiste em não apenas ler, mas ler se lendo, ou seja, ficar consciente o tempo inteiro de como eu estou lendo, como eu estou construindo o significado... e não achar que leitura é um processo transparente, o que eu leio é aquilo que está escrito... Pensar sempre: por que entendi assim? Por que acho isso? De onde vieram as minhas ideias, as minhas interpretações?"

expectation that the texts and themes selected can help students develop a critical attitude towards reading and meaning-making, taking such attitude beyond the school walls. As pointed out by Lankshear e Knobel (2008, p.11), new literacy practices demand a “redefined academic culture, that [is] less about acquiring, remembering and repeating subject content per se, and more about active participation in scholarly ways of doing and being”. This attitude towards school knowledge can enable students to redefine the social practices they experience inside and outside school, since by experimenting a critical attitude in school they may envisage (and demand) possibilities of implementing them in other contexts as well.

### HOW THE RESOURCE PACK IS ORGANIZED

We adopted the same model for all the activities proposed in the Resource Pack in an attempt to present the teachers with a minimum structure through the sections of each text activity. However, we presented different suggestions for them to approach each text in the classroom and tried to contemplate the specific features of each text. This was intended as an opportunity for teachers to have more choices than they would, if compared to traditional textbooks which present more controlled structures. We hope this will also enable them to make better informed decisions as far as how to approach the texts and which ones to choose for their classes as well.

Each unit of the Resource Pack is composed of specific sections which are presented as a possible framework, or blueprint for teachers when planning their classes<sup>6</sup>. The sections are: a) preparation; b) text exploration; c) problematization; d) and hints to the teacher. We believe that when preparing a class teachers need to take into account different moments, each one with a different role in class. All the texts included in the Resource Pack also bring an introductory part which presents relevant information on the themes to be discussed in the activities in order to help the teacher focus on specific aspects concerning the tasks. This, hopefully, will help them choose the texts according to their relevance to the students and the contexts in which they live.

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6. We included one of the texts and the framework sent to the teachers in an appendix at the end of this article, as an example. However, the comments to the teachers do not always follow the same structure and may vary according to the text they refer to.

The first section, called *Preparation*, is intended as a motivation for teachers and students to get engaged with the topic of the unit. This section helps set the mood to the whole lesson by relating its theme to the students' reality and thus making it more meaningful. It consists basically of activities to be done in order to prepare students for an initial contact with the texts, enabling them to think about their representations of the world and their previous knowledge and to share those representations with their colleagues and teacher. Some activities suggested in this section were based on general discussions about the theme; others recommend a more specifically linguistic work (with lexical items or verbs, for instance) so that the students may have a contextualized practice with the elements of the language that will enable them to read the texts more confidently. Different resources such as pictures, songs, videos, objects, audio recordings are used in different occasions in order to prepare students for their readings of the text.

The section *Text Exploration* brings activities which focus on some of the discursive aspects of each text and on the negotiation of meanings in the process of assigning/constructing meanings to/with the texts. Nonetheless, we would like to stress that we do not disregard the traditional approaches to reading comprehension, which usually involve bottom-up and top-down processing. Teachers are welcome to prepare general and detailed comprehension activities as well, according to the needs of their groups of students, whenever they find appropriate and are invited to vary their approach so that students are exposed to different forms of attributing meaning to texts. This section includes expansion activities, which aim at establishing a relationship between what students produce in the classroom and other social spaces. It also presents teachers with an opportunity for them to systematize and appropriate the linguistic elements introduced by the texts, as students actually produce their own texts through written or oral tasks. Assuming that knowledge is socially constructed and needs to be negotiated, several tasks involving group work and the collective production of meanings are suggested.

The section called *Problematization* aims at discussing common sense assumptions about the world. In the words of Brookfield<sup>7</sup> (1995)

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7. Available at [http://www.nl.edu/academics/cas/ace/facultypapers/StephenBrookfield\\_Wisdom.cfm](http://www.nl.edu/academics/cas/ace/facultypapers/StephenBrookfield_Wisdom.cfm)

“assumptions are the taken-for-granted beliefs about the world, and our place within it, that seem so obvious to us as not to need to be stated explicitly”. So, this section is an opportunity for the students and the teacher to discuss their assumptions and those implied by the texts in order to make sense of their own social contexts. As Freire and Macedo (1987:29) put it, “reading does not consist merely of decoding the written word or language; rather it is preceded by and intertwined with knowledge of the world. Language and reality are dramatically intertwined”.

The idea, in the Foucaultian sense, is not to *solve* problems, to follow a methodic search for a solution, or to replace one solution by another one, but to establish a critical distance in order to *problematize* the world (REVEL, 2005). So, we do not subscribe to the idea that truth has to be found, but instead we want knowledge to be critically challenged in its forms of production, circulation, maintenance and transformation in society. We believe that knowledge is always partial and incomplete, since reality is not permanent; everyone, regardless of who they are and which position they occupy in the social scene, possesses some form of knowledge, and all kinds of knowledge deserve respect. However, respect is demonstrated by engagement, by struggling with difference and trying to make sense of it – not by ignoring, disengaging or despising opinions different than our own. It is by challenging our assumptions when encountering other assumptions that we construct new meanings, which will in their turn be challenged again and again.

The classroom should be the ideal and safe space for reflection and for problematizing issues, where students should feel comfortable to engage with difference and to question themselves and others. While other social spaces may be threatening, in the sense that some hegemonic discourses might prevail and impose themselves in some contexts, in the classroom all the opinions should be welcome.<sup>8</sup> We believe this section will mostly be

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8. When using the idea of a safe space for the classroom, we do not mean to imply that it is possible or desirable to eliminate power from the classroom. We do believe, with Foucault, that the classroom, just like any other space, is always subjected to power relations. And that such relations are potentially restrictive and potentially productive at the same time. Their effects depend on how they are dealt with by the participants. What we mean to create in the classroom is a space where students and teachers do not feel threatened or restrained by the power structures that are constructed there, where subjects can deal with power in a productive way, using it to create new meanings, to see things from different perspectives, to act critically on their meanings and those constructed by others.

conducted in the mother tongue, since students do not yet have enough command of the language so as to be able to discuss the topics in the FL.

## FINAL REMARKS

The process of developing EFL teaching and learning materials has been a very rewarding learning experience, though not always an easy one. There are too many variables we have to take into account when planning materials that will be used by so many different subjects in the most diverse contexts. Although we have designed the materials bearing in mind that they should be explored in different ways according to local needs, we had to assume that they contemplated a minimum of possibilities that all contexts could benefit from. And this has been a great challenge.

We do not expect, by any means, that the materials are seen as a solution to all teaching and learning contexts and that they will be regarded as sources to be followed uncritically. That is why we have chosen not to write a coursebook, but rather a Resource Pack with activities and texts that may be used whenever teachers find them appropriate and whenever the local contexts allow them to.

In any event, we also believe that the development of EFL teaching materials should be the first step towards a more intensive dialogue among legislators, academics and teachers towards finding better solutions that will enable teachers and students to establish and achieve their learning goals. We believe that other opportunities such as teachers meetings and seminars should be provided, so that opinions can be exchanged and we may have plenty of feedback from those who are actually using the materials, their doubts, suggestions, reports on their experiences, and so on.

Unfortunately, up to the present time since the set of materials was conceived (almost 4 years), teachers have not had the opportunity to use and experiment with it. The project was not implemented yet and although it is all formatted and ready to be printed, it sadly lies somewhere in the Secretariat of Education, probably lost in piles of red tape. As it usually happens in our State system, the institution underwent a rearrangement in which many people, including those who commissioned these materials, left their positions and thus the interest in the materials was also lost.

Unfortunately, it won't be possible for us to reproduce any of the texts or activities suggested in the materials in this article, since the State Secretariat has not replied to our request for permission and they have the rights of use over the Resource Pack we produced.

However, we still hope that after the material is printed and that it gets to the teachers (not as "the" only source they will resort to), it may contribute as a real possibility to be used in public schools. We hope that after it is experienced by a larger number of schools more light into these issues may be shed and that we may find out whether or not critical literacy, citizenship and EFL teaching will form a happy love triangle.

Recebido em março de 2011

Aprovado em junho de 2011

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