

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN BRAZIL AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Abstract: The present work aims to investigate in some ways why don't the Brazilian students at public schools get fluent in the English language, besides studying it for many years, and give some possible solutions for that situation. The goal is promoting some strategies that can be used by the teachers to help the students and propitiate the "communicative approach" as the BNCC terms explain by improving the English Language teaching and learning in Brazil at public schools.

Keywords: Brazil; English; Public Schools; BNCC.

Why don't the students reach the fluency

In Brazil, people have been studying English at least for 7 following years at public schools including the Fundamental School and High School. But no one gets fluent. Despite of these many years spent studying the English Language, it's very common, we listen to the students saying "We've learned just the verb To Be". So, Why Does this kind of thing happen? What should we do to make the situation better? Unfortunately, many things contribute for this sad situation. I'd like to mention based in

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my own experience as a teacher for many years, a few amount of actions that can be taken in order to reduce the problem.

We can start by the teachers and students beliefs by themselves. There is a belief that, we can't learn English at public schools. People think that we have to pay an English course in some famous English school in order to be fluent as well. Because of that, teachers and students are not encourage to study and practice the four abilities at school: reading, speaking, listening and writing. They use to practice and study just grammar in most of the cases.

At public schools, the English classes use to start late, just in Fundamental 2, in the sixth grade. The students are 12 years old by that time. So, we lose precious time before that, when the children are younger, the

brain is more acceptable to learn a foreign language easier and the teachers could teach using ludic and effective strategies.

Other circumstances that keep the English teaching this way are the number of the classes in a week. At the Fundamental Schools students usually have English twice a week. But at the High School in public schools, they usually have just one English class a week depending on the state. In Minas Gerais, for example, where I used to teach, High School students have just one English class a week. It's very little and not enough to reach the fluency. Students stay a week or even fifteen days without seeing English. When there is a holiday, for example.

Another challenge we have to face here to solve this situation is the students' behavior. Students, in general, don't want

to copy anymore, they don't read the texts at home, they usually don't do homework, and don't pay attention to the classes, they are absent at many times too. Most of them think the classes in general are boring, and some of them say that "They won't use English, so They don't need to learn". It's very sad and common we listen to them saying: "I don't know Portuguese, why should I know English?" This is very hard to fight against it.

And last but not least, the teachers use not to be prepared to deal to situations I mentioned before. And most of them are not fluent too. So, They try to do their best, but they need much more support in many ways. Despite of all those things mentioned before, English is an obligatory subject in Brazil and It's in the BNCC (Base Nacional Comum Curricular / The National com-

mon Curricular Base) terms.

Strategies to improve the English Language teaching and learning in Brazil at public schools.

Instead of keep this culture on, we should start by encourage the teachers to use the "communicative approach" as the BNCC terms explain. To reach that level they need support by many ways. For example, the Education Minister, States and cities should promote free English courses to the teachers focused on the communicative approach and pronounce, so the teachers themselves will be self-confidents to teach. They should be prepared in a permanent formation in order to keep them actualized not just about the language itself, but about teaching programs, didactics, BNCC terms, and others. Some interchange virtual programs in partner-

ship with many countries with English speakers should be created, to help the ones who can't stay in another country by many reasons. Or the government and other institutions could finance vacation programs in order to help the teachers stay at least a month abroad practicing the language and staying in contact to the culture. They need financial support for that because the Brazilian teachers' salary in general don't allow them to experience life abroad.

To help the Brazilian students to behave better and be more interested in the English learning, teachers have to be creative, variate the ways of teaching, and use the technology as an ally creating a place to talk and practicing the conversation in English the better way as it's possible. They have to explain about the huge importance of learning

another language too. By explain about the jobs, the market in general and all the financial and cultural possibilities we can have when we speak English. And It's very important to start teaching English while the children are still little, at the Fundamental 1. They can learn a lot of vocabulary and pronounce before getting the Fundamental 2. Which is going to let them a great scaffolding to got deeper in the learning language in The Fundamental 2 and High School. To reach the fluency, we need practice, so we should have at least 3 or 4 English classes a week.

In conclusion, these are not hundred percent solution, but a way to get the situation better and really help the teachers and the students to deal with problems around the teaching and learning process of the English Language in Brazil.

Bibliography

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