

## **Book reviews**

### **Hacia una didáctica del Inglés para niños en escuelas primarias**

E.N. Braun (Compiladora), Santa Rosa, Universidad Nacional de La Pampa, 2011;  
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This book compiled by Estela Braun is divided into seven chapters which tackle different aspects connected to the teaching of English at primary level, each written by recognized EFL professionals in Argentina. It starts with a prologue written by the compiler who clearly states how the book was born. It is the result of a professional development course carried out for primary teachers in the province of La Pampa. She points out the fact that teaching English to learners at primary school is a completely different endeavour from that of teaching English to older students. It is worth mentioning that even though the title of the book is in Spanish, it is entirely written in English.

Leonor Corradi opens the book by laying special emphasis on the idea that we are *educating through* English. An enormous responsibility is being placed on language teachers, we are not merely teaching a language but we are educating for the contemporary world. She also refers to the teacher's role and she places critical reflection at the core. Reflective teaching will promote professional development. If students are educated within this environment, they are more likely to transfer this openness to other areas of learning. The ideas embodied in this first chapter perfectly summarize the role of the foreign language teacher when teaching children today.

The following chapter is about the use of literature in the young learners' classrooms. The authors, Griselda Beacon and Ana María Cendoya, mention the benefits of including literature in the young learners' classroom. It contributes to the development of communicative competence, intercultural awareness and critical thinking. In other words, literary texts help the development of children's cognitive and affective side. The whole chapter is worth reading as it provides the theoretical background for the importance of confronting young learners to literary texts of various types.

Chapter 3 expands on many of the ideas expressed in the previous one. María Mercedes Pérez Berbain and Andrea Blawdziewicz de Caillón write about *Story-*

*telling in the EFL Classroom*. The authors state the reasons why story-telling should be included in the language classroom and the importance of including recognition and production activities after the telling of the story. Appendices showing sample activities are included.

*Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)* is not left aside. It was a very good decision to include the basics of implementing CLIL approaches in foreign language classes at primary level. Estela Nélide Braun and Romina Cheme Arriaga highlight that CLIL caters for different learning styles; students learn by doing, they are asked to solve meaningful and authentic activities. Assessment, a very controversial aspect within CLIL's agendas, is also tackled within this chapter.

Pronunciation is also referred to in the book. Is it relevant in a primary context, how can it be incorporated? Lilián Ariztimuño and Mauro Cóccharo answer this question by cogently addressing the importance of teaching pronunciation at an early age. They back their ideas by stating biological and neurological factors as well as psychological, personality, sociocultural and input aspects. Pronunciation should be incorporated to the syllabus and classroom activities aimed at promoting intelligible pronunciation should be designed.

In Chapter 6, "Bridging the gap: technology and EFL classrooms," María Laura García, briefly explains the advantages of incorporating technology in the EFL classroom. She considers aspects such as how to evaluate a website according to your own teaching context and she provides a list of possible websites to consult.

The author of the last chapter, Sonia Suárez Cepeda, refers to the "the developmental sequences observed in the acquisition of English as a first language (L1), which involve semantic and morphosyntactic processes". Then she turns to second language learning and she connects chunking to implicit and explicit knowledge. The chapter ends with an analysis of a traditional young learners' tests in terms of the use of explicit and implicit learning.

This book was entirely written by Argentine EFL professionals; the authors are sharing their own ideas about professional development in the Argentinian context. Each chapter is a thorough introduction to the topics included in this publication, an excellent starting point for further reading. To conclude, I would say that this book is a must-read for any teacher involved in the teaching of English at primary level. It can be an excellent tool for both trainees and in-service teachers.

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