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MESTRADO EM ENSINO DE INGLÊS NO 1º CICLO DO ENSINO BÁSICO

Storiz days and the importance of context: using stories as context for comprehensible input in the young learner EFL classroom.

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To the flowers that bloom a little late, but are still just as important.

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Declaration of Honour

I hereby declare that this report is of my authorship and has not been used previously in another course, degree, curricular unit or subject, at this or any other institution.

References to other authors (statements, ideas, thoughts) scrupulously respect the rules of attribution and are duly indicated in the text and bibliographical references, in accordance with the rules of referencing. I am aware that the practice of plagiarism and self-plagiarism is an academic offence.

I further declare that I have not used generative artificial intelligence tools (chatbots based on large language models) to carry out part(s) of this report, and that all interactions (prompts and responses) have been transcribed in the annex.

[Porto, 2025]

[Liliana Maria Sousa Santos]

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Resumo

No que toca a estratégias de aquisição de linguagem para estudantes do primeiro ciclo do ensino básico, no âmbito da língua inglesa em Portugal, o uso de contexto como forma de busca de significado não é a mais comum. Em vez disso, há um foco maior na memorização de vocabulário, sem apresentar exemplos suficientes de onde esse mesmo vocabulário é usado. Uma das formas mais comuns de apresentarmos essa noção a jovens estudantes (*young learners*), é através do uso de histórias. Este estudo tem como objetivo analisar o efeito do uso de histórias na aprendizagem dos estudantes, mais especificamente alunos do primeiro ciclo do ensino básico, de forma a introduzir a procura de significado por contexto. Para tal, usamos o método de “Storiz Days”, um método que junta uma história e um quiz, cujos exercícios são resolvidos através de “comprehensible input”, dado durante a leitura da história, como imagens, gestos e mimica. Com a recolha de dados por métodos quantitativos e qualitativos, como os “Storiz” e o “Reflective Journal”, pudemos analisar o impacto que o uso de “comprehensible input” adequado, e suficiente, no método “Storiz Days” teve na aquisição de linguagem dos alunos, tal como analisar se histórias são, de facto, uma boa ferramenta para introduzir o uso de contexto na sala de aula. Os resultados foram, de maneira geral, positivos. Os alunos demonstraram interesse na atividade, e obtiveram bons resultados nos “Storiz”, com base num sistema de três categorias, demonstrando a capacidade de usar o “comprehensible input” das histórias, de modo a resolver os exercícios. Também foi possível observar e analisar o impacto que a quantidade de “comprehensible input” tem na aquisição de linguagem dos jovens estudantes, e como esse aspeto foi manifestado durante os “Storiz Days”, reconhecendo a sua importância durante o estudo.

Palavras-chave: [Histórias, Aquisição de Linguagem, Contexto, Inglês como Língua Estrangeira, Jovens Estudantes]

Abstract

When discussing EFL language acquisition strategies, specifically strategies targetted to primary students in Portugal, the use of context as a way of searching for meaning is not the most common. Instead, there is a focus on vocabulary memorisation, without sufficient examples of where that vocabulary is used in communication. One of the most common ways to introduce this notion to young learners is through the use of stories. This study aims to analyse the effect of using stories on students' learning, specifically that of primary school students, in order to introduce the search for meaning through context. To do this, I used the 'Storiz Days' method, a method that combines a story and a quiz, which exercises are done through comprehensible input given during the reading of the story, supported by illustrations, gestures and mimicry. By collecting data using quantitative and qualitative methods, we can analyse the impact that the appropriate use of comprehensible input in the 'Storiz Days' method has had on students' language acquisition, as well as analysing whether stories are, in fact, a good tool for introducing the use of context in the classroom. The results were generally positive. The students showed interest in the "Storiz Days" activity and obtained good results in the 'Storiz', according to a grade system developed for the study, showing dexterity in using the comprehensible input provided in the stories to solve the exercises. It was also possible to observe and analyse the impact that the amount of comprehensible input had on the young learners' language acquisition, and how this aspect was manifested during the 'Storiz Days', recognising its importance during the study.

Key-words: [Stories, Language Acquisition, Context, English as a Foreign Language, Young Learners]

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

AEAS	AGRUPAMENTO DE ESCOLAS AURÉLIA DE SOUSA
AECS	ATIVIDADES DE ENRIQUECIMENTO CURRICULAR
ADHD	ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER
DGE	DIREÇÃO GERAL DE EDUCAÇÃO
EB	ESCOLA BÁSICA
EB/JI	ESCOLA BÁSICA E JARDIM DE INFÂNCIA
EFL	ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
EMAI	EQUIPA MULTIDISCIPLINAR DE APOIO À EDUCAÇÃO INCLUSIVA
IH	INPUT HYPOTHESIS
IPP I	INTRODUCTION TO PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE I
IPP II	INTRODUCTION TO PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE II
L1	FIRST LANGUAGE
TOEIC	TEST OF ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION
TPR	TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE

Introduction

In a world where the use of the English language has become a common occurrence, it is important to focus on the development of good language learning strategies in an EFL setting. In Portugal, primary students have English class twice or more times a week, depending on the school, as it is believed that learning this language will bring positive outcomes in the future. Taking that into consideration, it is the role of the teacher to provide opportunities to not only explore language learning, but also language acquisition. The use of contextual clues is a good way to improve language acquisition, as well as a means to encourage young learners to search for meaning in unknown settings.

Given those statements, the aim of this Action Research project is to introduce the use of context in language acquisition, with the help of comprehensible input through stories. This would be done through the method of “Storiz Days”, a creation of my own, mixing the words “story” and “quiz”. This method entails listening to a story, and the answering of a quiz, or “Storiz”, where the students must complete exercises using the comprehensible input provided by the story. According to Krashen (2003) this comprehensible input can be supported with many techniques, like images and gestures. Furthermore, if relating to a story listening activity, intonation patterns and the storybook itself also help make the input more comprehensible. This research has the purpose of analysing if this introduction of language through comprehensible input in a story has an impact on the young learners’ language acquisition, and if stories are an appropriate way to provide the comprehensible input.

This Action Research begins with the school context of where this research took place, with a brief description of the school cluster and the individual schools, the curriculum, and the profile of the students involved in this project. Then, there is a focus on the identification of the problem, where the lack of search for meaning using contextual clues by the learners was evident, which was having a negative impact on their learning experience. Lastly, the research questions are presented.

In the second chapter, the theoretical background of this research is explored. There is a definition of all concepts and theories relevant to the project, such as comprehensible input or Comprehension Hypothesis, depending on the study, the use of stories as a tool in language teaching, the role of the teacher in supporting the students' learning experience, and responses of the learners when listening to a story.

In the third chapter of this action research, there is the description of the methodologies and data-gathering tools, as well as the justification for their selection. The intervention plan is presented, followed by an explanation of the first cycle, including the description of the "Storiz Days". Thereafter, the results of the project are analysed, interpreted and discussed.

The last and fourth chapter consists of the conclusions of this Action Research project, the limitations of the study and suggestions for a further investigation of the matter.

This action report offers an insight on how the young learners acquire language, and the requirements needed in order to do so. It explores the method of "Storiz Days" and how choosing the appropriate stories influences understanding, based on the target audience's language level, as well as how language learning and language acquisition can work together to enhance the young learners' learning experience.

1. Context of the Action Research Project

The following Action Research project, within Master's in Teaching English in the 1st Cycle of Basic Education, started in the curricular unit Introduction to Professional Practice (IPP I), where an area of intervention was identified after a thorough observation of 3rd and 4th Grade English classes. The classes observed belong to the *Agrupamento de Escolas Aurélia de Sousa (AEAS)*, and the observation period was from February of 2024 to June of 2024. In the following school year, the plan of action, that was developed during the observation process, was applied during the supervised teaching practice that took place between September and December of 2024. This plan of action was discussed throughout Introduction to Professional Practice I (IPP I), and Introduction to Professional Practice II (IPP II).

In order to better understand the area of intervention, this chapter will pore over the school context, the curriculum, as well as the profile of the students. Furthermore, this chapter will also discuss the the Action Research questions.

1.1. School Context

The following Action Research took place in two different schools. One of the schools is *Escola Básica de 1º Ciclo do Ensino Básico e Jardim de Infância (EB1/JI) da Fontinha*, and the another is *Escola Básica de 1º Ciclo Fernão de Magalhães*. Both schools belong to AEAS, and are two of the three schools that teach the first cycle, the other one being *Escola Básica de 1º CEB das Florinhas*. Besides these three schools, the school cluster also includes a school that teaches the second and third cycle, as well as a school that teaches secondary level. The secondary school is where the directive of the school cluster is located. Most of the schools within AEAS are located in Bonfim, Porto, apart from two schools (*EB1/JI da Fontinha and Escola Básica Augusto Gil*), that are located in the Union of Parishes of Cedofeita, Santo Ildefonso, Sé, Miragaia, São Nicolau and Vitória.

1.1.1. Agrupamento de Escolas Aurélia de Sousa

Being located at the center of Porto city, it allows for a more multicultural environment, providing a space where people from different economic backgrounds coexist together. According to “*Projeto Educativo 2022-2025*”, this does not constitute as a problem, as one of the principles of AEAS is “*Da igualdade de oportunidades, garantindo que a origem social não seja uma condicionante do futuro e permitindo a todos a prossecução de todas as suas expetativas*” (p.16). In accordance to the document, students should not be treated differently due to any external factor, as it is one of the main values this school cluster works hard to uphold.

At the beginning of the year, a “Plano Anual de Atividades” is discussed among teachers, where the type of activities that will take place as the year progresses are stated. These activities relate to different areas, English included, and they allow students to explore culture, art and science related topics.

Inside the school cluster there are also students with special needs, physical or psychological, who require more assistance. As such, a team of professionals in the matter (*EMAI*) was established. Its goal is to promote inclusion, autonomy, among others, within the school context, so as not to jeopardise their learning experience. This school cluster also provides psychology services to many students according to their needs.

Regarding the two schools where the Action Research took place, EB1/JI da Fontinha and EB1 Fernão de Magalhães, each school has a coordinator of their own who oversees all that is done inside the school premises, including aiding and guiding teachers when needed. These coordinators are chosen by the directive of AEAS.

1.1.2. Premises

1.1.2.1. EB1/JI da Fontinha

The school building of *EB1/JI da Fontinha* is shared by kindergarteners and first cycle students. The classrooms are of a good size, well lit, and with built-in heaters for wintertime. There are also other spaces that are equipped for different activities, depending on the subject, or need. The school also has a library with a good range of books in Portuguese, albeit only having a select few in English. The library is often used for activities related to reading, and all classes are welcome to use the space, making students familiar with the listening of stories.

This school provides a specific classroom for English lessons. The teacher either goes to the generalist teacher's classroom to get the students, or the generalist teacher sends them off on their own when it is time for the lesson. The classroom is organised in accordance with the English teacher's needs, with space for posters and materials relevant to the lessons. There are six large tables in the classroom, with up to four students sitting at each of them. Each table has a colour assigned to it, which makes group activity planning easier. As for equipment inside the classroom, each class has its own video projector, computer with Internet, and speakers, that are often used during lessons, especially for listening activities.

Having a specific classroom for English proves to be very beneficial, due to the convenience that comes with it. The teacher has not only a large space for materials, but also more freedom to display things that are pertinent to the lessons, without worrying about other subjects. It also helps with the classroom management, as the layout of the students is only up to the English teacher, who can change the seating more freely.

1.1.2.2. EB1 Fernão de Magalhães

The school facilities of *EB1 Fernão de Magalhães* are in good condition and provide a large number of rooms with different purposes. It includes a special needs classroom, where students from different classes come together at certain times of the day to do special activities. The school also provides a library, and just as in EB1/JI

Fontinha, the books in English are very limited. However, every student is welcome to borrow books there and participate in reading activities.

Regarding the English lessons, this school does not have a specific classroom for English, so the English teacher needs to move from classroom to classroom. In this way the English teacher is dependent on the generalist teacher, as they are the main occupier of the classroom. This arrangement proves to be more difficult for the English teacher due to the many limitations that come with it, such as space, time, and classroom management. Often the English teacher is only allowed to use a very small corner of the room for materials, or posters, and cannot move the students as they see fit. Regarding the lesson itself, the English teacher also wastes a lot of time setting up the materials for the classroom, especially if using a computer, video projector and so on. This makes the lesson even shorter, and harder to follow the program in a coherent way. Overall, it is not the best system for English teaching.

1.1.3. Curriculum

With regard to the curriculum, the school cluster follows the documents provided by *Direção Geral da Educação (DGE)*, such as *Aprendizagens Essenciais*, and *Perfil do Aluno à Saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória*. These documents can be found online and are to both teachers and parents. Taking these documents into account, the teacher plans the English lessons following the guidelines and aims provided for each grade. Both grades have sixty-minute English lessons, twice a week.

The coursebooks used both during the observation period, and the teaching practice, were Easy Peasy 3 for 3rd Grade, and Easy Peasy 4 for 4th Grade. Both of these books were published by Porto Editora. The teacher also made use of the materials that come with the coursebook, maximising its potential in class.

Some students also partake in extra activities, provided by the school, namely the *Atividades de Enriquecimento Curricular (AECS)*.

1.1.4. Students' Profile

After careful consideration, I chose not to limit my action research to one class, or grade alone. This choice was due to the potential results that could be lost if limited to a specific number of students, as many students had very specific learning styles. Both schools, *EB1 Fernão Magalhães* and *EB1/ JI da Fontinha* took part in my action research, and both the third and fourth grades were included in the process.

The 3rd Grade had not yet made their first contact with the language, and as such they still had not developed an established way of learning it. As their learning styles were still developing, they focused more on learning the individual words, how they sound, and how to write them. They engaged more when presented with visual support, and less when presented with written tasks.

There were a few cases of students with learning disabilities. Some cases were diagnosed, such as students with Autism, while others are still awaiting feedback from psychologists. One of the students with autism performs well in the English subject, without needing much support when doing activities. The other uses the normal coursebook, alongside a simpler variation of it, where he normally completes tasks assigned by the teacher, as he has many difficulties to write and read. The three undiagnosed students share the same difficulty, where they can barely read and write, and cannot concentrate for long periods at a time. All five cases do either adapted assessments, or have the teacher monitor their tasks in a way specific to them.

In addition to the above, there were cases of students not attending English classes altogether, due to non-verbal types of autism. These students would stay in another classroom with a specific special needs teacher during the lessons. These cases are specific to *EB1 Fernão Magalhães*.

There was also a high number of foreign students, with different alphabets, making high levels of scaffolding needed. Despite some of these foreign students having had previous contact with the English language, they could only speak but not write it. There was a total of eleven nationalities among the 3rd graders observed, including

Portuguese. Given the circumstances, I arrived at the conclusion that it would be good to work on my Action Research with them.

Amongst the 4th graders, there were a few learning patterns that stood out. Despite their fluency in writing and reading, they shared the same problem as the 3rd graders, where they focused more on each word, instead of how it is used in communication. This issue made them engage more in less cognitively demanding activities, and rather than more complex ones. Upon observation, I noticed the learners focused more on memorisation, instead of understanding. This would limit their learning potential and language acquisition, so it was fitting to have them participate in my Action Research.

About learning disabilities, there were very specific cases in this grade. Some students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) had their assessments closely monitored, while others with the same disability would be assessed without any adaptations. There were two students diagnosed with Autism that had limitations in speaking activities, one of them being semi-verbal. However, that student did not need any adaptations in written assessments, being able to complete them successfully. Moreover, there were four students, still waiting to be diagnosed, that had their assessments adapted, due to their inability to retain information and be attentive, for long periods at a time. These students would have their assessments personally monitored, in a way specific to each of them. In contrast to their 3rd Grade peers, there were no cases of students missing English class as a result of their cognitive disabilities.

Regarding nationalities, just as with the 3rd grades, there was a vast number of them, with a total of nine nationalities, including Portuguese. Some of these students were used to totally different alphabets, so writing was an issue for them. They were permitted to use any handwriting, instead of the usual cursive. This did not affect their performance during the lessons, nor during assessments. There were cases where the student had had previous contact with the English language, but while they communicated well, they struggled reading and writing. They had to listen to a lot of input in order to complete their tasks, and the more they listened, the better their task completion was.

As for external factors, such as sudden migration, the difference in level of learning between the students was high, in both grades. This resulted in a challenging environment for the teacher to plan their lessons. Furthermore, students would feel inferior to their more advanced peers. Despite that, by December most of the students, with the exception of the cases mentioned above, were at the desired level of English (A1) designed by the Common European Framework of Reference, or very close to it.

1.2. Identification of the problem and definition of the area of intervention

As the observation period in IPP I went on, there were some problems that started to become noticeable, so much so that there were many options while choosing an area of intervention. However, one problem seemed more in need of an intervention than the others, as it affected the students' learning experience, hence my choice on the matter. Reading the *Projeto Educativo 2022-2025* confirmed my decision, as one of the values mentioned is "*Querer aprender mais; desenvolver o pensamento reflexivo, crítico e criativo; procurar novas soluções e aplicações*" (pp.16).

After engaging with the students, and observing their learning styles, it was clear that they focused more on vocabulary translation, instead of how it is used in communication. This led to difficulties when the students were presented with more cognitively challenging tasks, specifically those that required interpretation. There was a need for a lot of visual support, such as videos, realia and gestures, in order to complete the task successfully. Furthermore, the students lacked a focus on context, that is, knowing where, the vocabulary they were learning, fitted when using the language.

As such, from February 2024 to June 2024, there was the possibility to observe how much the students truly understood the language and could use it successfully. There were cases where the student completed written tasks with certain words, but could not use them in their speech, and vice-versa. In other cases, the student focused solely on the word in a task, but not what the question was asking, resulting in a random answer.

Despite that, the students did not struggle with interpretation when watching a video, nor when listening to a storytelling activity. In fact, they seemed to engage very well.

As a result, I felt the need to approach this problem in my Action Research by creating an activity that would work on a way to improve this matter. That was how the concept of “Storiz Days” came to mind. Storiz Days is a concept, created by me, mixing the words “story” and “quiz”. The aim of this concept is to apply comprehensible input through a story related to a topic the students are learning and then check their understanding through a quiz. The story would be selected according to the topics taught in class, and by its potential to provide comprehensible input to the students, mixing things the learners know, and things they do not. By using a visual tool like stories, which has been proven successful with the students, there is the possibility to develop this new idea. The quiz itself would have exercises combine that known and unknown vocabulary, with enough visual support to aid the learners. The activity would help the students make use of context to answer the quiz, therefore strengthening their understanding of the language.

1.3. Action Research questions

In order to properly monitor the “Storiz Days” activity within these young learner classes, there were a number of issues to be kept in mind. One would be related to the tools used to formulate the activity, such as realia, the stories and images, and their efficiency in providing the desired comprehensible input. The other would be related to how the amount of comprehensible input had an impact on the young learners’ i. Taking that into account, the following questions were articulated:

1. How effective are stories in providing comprehensible input in the EFL classroom?
2. How does the amount of comprehensible input in the stories influence the young learners’ understanding and language acquisition during “Storiz Days”?

2. Theoretical Background

This chapter aims to provide and explore the theoretical background relevant to this project. It focuses on two main sections, one being “The Comprehension Hypothesis and Comprehensible Input”, and the other one being “Storytelling with children”. In order to successfully explore these sections, the views of some researchers on these topics will be discussed, ensuring the efficiency levels of the methods used during this action research project on younger learners.

2.1. Language learning and language acquisition

The terms “language learning” and “language acquisition” are often confused as synonyms in the EFL settings, as they share some common factors (Hussain, 2017). However, these terms are very different from each other. Language learning consists of a more formal type of language study (Kramina, 2000), as it focuses more on grammar rules, vocabulary memorisation, and sentence structures. Language learning is a theoretical process, and it often does not provide enough skills for successful communication, without the support of language acquisition. In contrast, language acquisition is a process that is said to happen naturally and subconsciously. The learner is in control of their learning, which helps achieve the desired communication skills. According to Krashen (1982) young learners use natural mechanisms in their brains, when exposed to a foreign language, in order to understand all new information. That is, the learners have a “feel” for correctness, where some structures “feel” right, and others “feel” wrong. In an EFL classroom with young learners, the exploration of language acquisition strategies can be beneficial not only for the students, but also the teachers. As stated by Bežilová (2024) “Acquisition can be used as scaffolding for language teachers, they can build so that the teaching and learning process can be more effective” (p.21.) The learners need to be exposed to the target language as much as possible in natural context, through tools such as stories, games, rhymes, and songs (Straková,

2011). A popular hypothesis that explores the notion of language acquisition is “The Comprehension Hypothesis”.

2.2. The Comprehension Hypothesis and comprehensible input

The “Comprehension Hypothesis”, or as previously known “The Input Hypothesis” (IH), is an hypothesis developed by renowned linguist Stephen Krashen in the 1970s. According to Krashen (2004) “The Comprehension Hypothesis states that we acquire language when we understand messages, when we understand what people tell us and when we understand what we read” (p.21). It is a subconscious practice, where the learner does not always know that they are acquiring language. In order to do this, there is a need for “comprehensible input”.

“Comprehensible input” is a type of input that is slightly more advanced than the learner’s current language level. Studies regarding comprehensible input often mention a “ $i+1$ ” equation, where the “ i ” stands for input, and the “ $+1$ ” represents the higher language level. Regarding that equation, Krashen (2003) states “We are able to do this with the help of our previously acquired linguistic competence, as well as our extra-linguistic knowledge, which includes our knowledge of the world and our knowledge of the situation” (p.4). In other words, learners rely heavily on contextual clues to receive this input. For younger learners, there are a few ways to help make input comprehensible, such as pictures, or gestures. A method often mentioned in comprehensible input-based studies is Total Physical Response (TPR), a method introduced by psychology professor James Asher (1969). Total Physical Response corresponds to a method that uses physical movement to enhance the language learning process, particularly for vocabulary and simple grammar. Stories also are a good way of providing comprehensible input, as mentioned by Krashen (1989) “More comprehensible input in the form of listening to stories is also associated with better vocabulary development” (p.442), as children who have access to them often grow to have richer vocabularies.

Regarding the teacher's role in providing comprehensible input, they can do so by using modified "teacher talk". The teacher adjusts their language level when talking to the learners, by talking slowly and using simpler language. According to Richards and Lockhart (1996) the use of "teacher talk" in the EFL classroom refers to different aspects, such as repetition, slow speaking, modified vocabulary and discourse, and clear articulation. Krashen (2009) also alludes to a similar concept defined as "Caretaker Speech". The learners only acquire language when they understand it, so the comprehensible input given must be in accordance with their language levels. If the learners do not understand, no acquisition occurs. As mentioned by Krashen (1998) "When we "just talk" to our students, if they understand, we are not only giving a language lesson, we may be giving the best possible language lesson since we will be supplying input for acquisition" (p.35). However, this does not mean that the teacher must ignore the syllabus, nor ignore the importance of lesson plans. It is simply a type of learning that focuses more on activities, rather than lists of vocabulary the students are asked to memorise. In the beginner levels, such as those of primary students, grammar is not the focus, as it might hinder the comprehension of the learners, due to the lack of advanced grammar structures in their speech.

In relation to the requirements of optimal input as discussed by Krashen (2009), there are a few things to consider. The input must be, first and foremost, comprehensible. That is, there must be a focus on communication potential, rather than grammar-translation, as it affects the natural flow of communication. This means that the students should focus on understanding what is being said, instead of getting stuck on specific words, as it would deny the student of the "i+1" needed for language acquisition. As stated by Krashen (2009) "When communication is successful, when the input is understood and there is enough of it, i+1 will be provided automatically". (p.22) The input should also be interesting to the learners, and not grammatically heavy. Furthermore, a good quantity of comprehensible input can lead to greater results on the matter, especially with younger learners, as children search for meaning in everything presented to them.

Regarding popular studies applying comprehensible input in language acquisition, one that is very relevant in supporting the theory is a study done by researchers Mason and Krashen (2019). This study analyses a case related to a Japanese student, Sawako, in EFL classes supplying rich comprehensible input in Japan. The study was divided into six phases, and took place between 1993 and 2018, with a focus on story listening and story reading. During the first phase, Sawako took four semesters of combined Story Listening and Self Selected-Reading in English, and by the end of those semesters her Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) went from 330 to 650 points. Between phases two and five, the use of the English language was reduced, and there were minimal sources of comprehensible input, which resulted in a slower increase on the TOEIC score. Lastly, Sawako returned to the Story Listening and Self Selected-Reading class from phase one, and just after one semester there was an increase of 85 points in her TOEIC. It concluded that periods where the supply of comprehensible input was high resulted in bigger, and more effective improvements in Sawako's language acquisition, in contrast to periods where the comprehensible input supply was low. Overall, the comprehensible input made the improvements much more substantial. Given this example, this action report will also compare improvements made during periods with more comprehensible input, to periods with less, with the use of stories, but targeting young learners.

With the careful selection of comprehensible input, learners become more motivated to learn, which leads to a higher level of language acquisition. As mentioned by Ranjbar et al. (2016) "When students are motivated to learn, they try harder to understand the material and thereby learn more deeply, resulting in a better ability to transfer what they have learned to new situations". (p.13) This notion is explored by many researchers, such as Dornyei (1998) and Marzban and Sadighi (2013). Krashen also refers to this theory in his "Affective Filter Hypothesis".

2.2.1. The Affective Filter Hypothesis

The “Affective Filter Hypothesis” is one of the five hypotheses presented by Krashen in the 1960s. Furthermore, it is related to the Comprehension Hypothesis, as it affects how students receive comprehensible input. This hypothesis suggests that students have a high affective filter, or a low affective filter. These filters are determined by feelings like anxiety, stress, and confidence. When a learner has a high affective filter, the anxiety and stress levels are prominent, and language acquisition is affected, as the input is not absorbed. In contrast, when the learner has a low affective filter, they feel confident and have a positive attitude towards learning, which leads to better language acquisition, as the input is successfully received. As stated by Krashen (1998) “Thus, having the right attitudes may do things for second language acquirers: it will encourage them to try to get more input, to interact with speakers of the target language with confidence, and also to be more receptive to the input they get” (p.38). A low affective filter is ideal when working with comprehensible input in the lessons, and can be attained, and maintained, with the help of the teacher, by monitoring the students. When it comes to younger learners, a good way to keep them motivated is to do activities that explore their interests but remain relevant to the lesson topic. Therefore, by using comprehensible input that is interesting to the learners, their affective filter remains low. However, sometimes interesting input is not enough to achieve optimal language acquisition. It needs to be both interesting and compelling. Krashen further explores this notion in the “Compelling Input Hypothesis”.

2.2.2. The Compelling Input Hypothesis

The “Compelling Input Hypothesis” is an hypothesis presented by researcher Krashen. It consists of the notion that in order to successfully acquire language through comprehensible input, the input must not only be interesting, but compelling. As mentioned by Krashen (2011) “Compelling means that the input is so interesting you forget that it is in another language.” (p.1) That is, the learner becomes so immersed in the lesson and in the input provided, that they end up improving their language skills whether they have the desire to do so or not.

An ideal measure for input is for it to be in equal parts comprehensible, and compelling. This ratio is what will help the learner acquire language more efficiently. The way to ensure this is for the teacher to use something known to attract learners into learning, like songs, videos or stories. The students will become so engaged that they will forget they are learning, and according to Krashen (2011) that is when true language acquisition happens. As mentioned previously, one strategy that has been proved to be successful in providing compelling comprehensible input to young learners is the use of stories.

2.3. Stories in the EFL classroom for younger learners

The use of stories in English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom, has been proven to come with many benefits. As stated by Cameron (2001) “Stories offer a whole imaginary world, created by language, that children can read and enjoy, learning language as they go”. (p.159) They provide a good amount of input to the learners, and help them develop many types of literacies, such as reading, writing, listening and spelling. Despite facing some resistance by teachers when first introduced, due to a lack of confidence and understanding of how to use them in lessons, stories have now become a recurring theme in acquisition-based methodology.

Regarding younger learners, the usage of stories has a high success rate due to a few factors, such as eagerness to predict things, familiarity with the structure, and enjoyment of the story itself. They give children an opportunity to learn about cultures and experiences, as well as to make use of their imagination in creative ways, as supported by Bland and Lütge (2013) “The relationship between images and imagining, creativity, emotions and the empowering of language learning is crucial” (p.5). Stories also give children the opportunity to understand language they might be unfamiliar with, as mentioned by Slattery and Willis (2001) “They offer children a world of supported meaning that they can relate to” (p.97). This helps motivate the learners, therefore maintaining a low affective filter and maximising their language acquisition.

2.3.1. Storybooks

One of the most common practices when using stories in EFL lessons with young learners, is the use of the storybooks (Ellis and Brewster, 2014), or also referred to as the picture book (Mourão, 2016). According to Lewis (2001) it can be defined as a text where pictures and words are dependent on each other to create meaning. The storybook gives the learners high visual support that enables them to understand the story. As mentioned by Ellis and Brewster (2014) “All children are able to understand the overall meaning of a story with the support of the teacher’s storytelling techniques and the accompanying illustrations, which give clues to meaning” (p.3). What this means is that storybooks allow the teacher to provide input that is slightly above the level of the learners. As stated by Bland (2013) this unfamiliarity with the language “challenges young learners to search for, and in the classroom negotiate for, understanding and meaning”. (p.32) That is, input is understood by the students with the right support, such as images, gestures and intonation.

Another advantage storybooks can offer are cross-curricular links. Within the stories, the learners can find topics related to maths, such as time and numbers; science, with animals and life cycles; and geography, using maps and talking about different places. These links reinforce the development of concepts and the search of contextual clues. Moreover, children take those aspects and use them to acquire language by relating things they know with things they do not know.

In relation to the learning needs of the students, storybooks serve as a great aid to their learning experience. There might be cases of learners of different English levels in the same environment, and with different learning paces. As such, the teacher must work effectively to make sure that no student is left behind, hence the use of stories as a countermeasure. The response to the story is dependent on the learner’s cognitive skills and language level. Therefore, even if two students have different levels of the language, both can understand what is being said with the help of efficient teaching strategies and materials. According to Ellis and Brewster (2014) “Children have the ability

to grasp meaning even if they do not understand all the words; clues from intonation, mime, gestures, the context and visual support help them to decode the meaning of what they have heard” (p.14). This will help reduce the disparity between them and improve their language acquisition.

When it comes to choosing a storybook to explore in a EFL lesson, there are a few criteria to keep in mind. Ellis and Brewster (2014) divide these criteria into five segments: Linguistic, Psychological, Cognitive, Cultural and Social. For the linguistic segment, the teacher must choose a storybook that is accessible to the students, while still having an appropriate level of challenge. The story must offer a good amount of comprehensible input to lead into language acquisition. The literary devices also play a part, such as repetition, predictability and the narrative. These devices will allow the learner improve pronunciation, encourage participation and maintain their concentration. The content of the story must be carefully selected, not only to ensure its relevance to the lesson, but also to engage students. These three criteria also fit into the psychological. Other criteria within the psychological segment include the illustrations and their level of support to the learners understanding of the story, educational potential and conceptual development, such as the explorations of concepts, learning strategies and different literacies, and motivation, that is, how their feelings towards the story affect the students’ language acquisition.

The remaining three segments (cognitive, cultural and social) share most of the same criteria. They focus on values and the potential of the story to develop their emotions, and on global issues, such as building awareness of the world and of others. The other criteria shared by these three segments is the language and content of the story. It deals with the authenticity and appropriateness of the story, such as accessibility in understanding the target culture.

As mentioned previously, the teacher plays a crucial role in guaranteeing the learners’ language acquisition. There must be an understanding that each learner has their own learning styles, and that an environment built on respect is essential for a proper learning experience. A story-based lesson needs to have all the materials that can

provide the students with opportunities to engage and understand what is being taught. Materials like flashcards, or images, gestures, and the teacher's own voice help to attain this goal. The teacher should also guide and encourage discussion about the story. However, with the exception of simple questions, this is harder to do in the beginner levels, due to their underdeveloped speech.

2.3.2. Listening to stories and read-alouds

When doing a story-based lesson with children, one of the most common things is have them listening to a story. According to Ellis and Mourão (2021) "Picturebook read-alouds can be very motivating for children, as they experience a strong sense of achievement in having listened to, enjoyed and understood the gist of an authentic piece of children's literature in English" (p.23.) However, as stated by Ellis and Brewster (2014) "(...) listening to stories is not a passive activity" (p.34). As children listen, they are absorbing all the input being provided to them, by matching visuals to language, observing gestures, and predicting what is coming next. If there is an activity where they must pay attention to specific points, the learners will be able to focus on the story more effectively, thereby acquiring language, hopefully. According to Pinter (2006) by providing listening tasks that are meaning driven, the teacher offers support with bottom-up and top-down work to the learners, as to develop listening strategies. For top-down processing, the teacher uses familiar games and routines, while for bottom-up processing, the learners are given tasks that do not require manipulation of linguistic features. Children start with "listen and do" activities. Young learners are not expected to know every word in a story, especially if it contains some content unknown to them. By having an activity the learners must do while listening to a story, they will feel more confident in their learning and will be able to engage more with it, as they will not get lost in trying to understand all the unfamiliar words. In accordance with Ellis and Brewster (2014):

"Listening to stories allows the teacher to introduce or revise new vocabulary and sentence structures by exposing the children to language in

varied, memorable and familiar contexts, which will enrich their thinking and gradually enter their own speech". (p.7)

In regard to the teacher's role in the read-aloud, Ellis and Mourão (2021) have divided it into three stages. Stage one consists of what is done before the read-aloud begins. It includes the book selection and the criteria for it, as well as establishing readiness to the listening activity. The teacher should also try to spark some interest in the story, and pre-teach some key language related to it so as to provide contextual and cultural details. During stage two, the teacher begins the read-aloud, where they as the mediator use different techniques to provide a language-rich activity. The teacher makes use of the three situational factors, namely the book, and how the pictures and words contribute to meaning, the children, and knowledge and personalities, and themselves with the use of expressive techniques and read-aloud talk. Read-aloud talk consists of teacher talk that takes place during the activity and includes clarifications and comments. As stated by Ellis and Mourão (2021) "Read-aloud talk enables meaningful interaction, participation and interpretation between the teacher and the children and between the children themselves" (p.25.) The third stage takes place after the read-aloud and gives the children an opportunity to reflect on what they heard, and to make personal comments. These three stages are crucial to maintain good rapport and convey enthusiasm to young learners so that language acquisition occurs.

When it comes to the young learners' response to stories, Mourão (2016) provides an adapted version of Sipe's five response categories. The first type is an analytical response, which encompasses the narrative meaning, the illustrations, the words, the book as an object, and linguistic codes. This category alludes to the learner's predictions, the labelling of images, recognition of graphic features, such as speech bubbles, and peer interaction in order to find meaning. The second category depicts an intertextual response, where young learners make connections between texts and other links beyond the classroom, such as films, rhymes and chants. According to Mourão (2016) it is common for young EFL learners to have an associative intertextual response. The third category mentions the personal response of the learners, where the learners connect to the story on a personal level, based on personality traits or past experiences.

Their opinions on the story are subjective to their preferences, and their engagement is dependent on relatability to the illustrations or the character's choices. The fourth type of response is a transparent type of response. This type involves learners feeling like they are living the story and reacting genuinely to the plot. That is, the young learners imitate actions, are connected emotionally, and interact with the characters as if they were truly with them. The last type of response is the performative response. This type of response alludes to the behaviour of the learners while listening to the story, as well as their engagement patterns. The learners often take an aspect of the story, and create a joke, or a performance that they believe with entertain their peers. The last two types of responses are normally considered inappropriate. However, Mourão (2016) states that it is simply a different type of engagement, and learners are still using the English language, even if for personal enjoyment.

Regarding strategies for listening, there are a few ways that the teacher can help the learners maximise their listening potential. One of the most common strategies is prediction. As children are used to the structure of stories, the teacher might ask them to predict what is going to happen next. This will ensure that they will pay attention to check if their predictions are correct. Furthermore, most stories have a lot of repetition that enables the predictions. Another strategy used for listening is trying to get meaning from context. Younger learners are encouraged to look at images and focus, so as to relate what they are listening to what they are seeing and get immersed in the story, therefore improving their language acquisition. As mentioned previously, listening activities are also a good strategy as they are usually entertaining for young learners, such as "listen and draw" and "listen and stick", and as stated by Pinter (2006) "These activities not only give excellent listening practice but also offer opportunities for incorporating into the English class multiple intelligences through sticking, colouring, and making simple objects" (p.51.)

In sum, and as mentioned by Cameron (2001) "In language teaching and learning, stories and themes overlap at the macro-level of providing holistic learning experiences, but they also overlap at a more micro-level, where a story can provide a theme to be explored (...) or where a theme can be developed through the use of stories" (p.179.)

Therefore, story-based lessons are one way for young learners to make use of context, as well as a source of comprehensible input, which may help them acquire language in an EFL classroom.

3. Research Design

The following chapter will focus on the research design of the Action Research project, which includes the methodology and learning tools used, and the justification for their choice. Furthermore, the intervention plan, consisting of cycles of investigation, the results of said investigation, and the analysis and interpretation of those results are described in detail.

3.1. Methodology

The aim of the Action Research was to create a way for primary English language learners to incorporate contextual clues in their learning in the EFL classroom, as it was observed that it was something they struggled with and affected their performance. The method chosen for this was “Storiz Days”, a concept I created, mixing the words “story” and “quiz”. The main objective of this method is to use stories as a way of providing comprehensible input, and make the learners use that comprehensible input in a quiz. The learners listen to a story in a read-aloud activity, and while they listen, the learners are expected to answer a quiz about it where they will find familiar and unfamiliar vocabulary, that is, the comprehensible input. The students will have to pay attention to contextual clues in the story, in order to answer the exercises correctly. This method aims to improve the young learners’ language acquisition and reduce vocabulary translation, as well as develop their communication skills, for they will focus on language in context, instead of isolated words. Throughout the English lessons, the main goal was to reach the answer to the following Action Research questions:

1. How effective are stories in providing comprehensible input in the EFL classroom?

2. How does the amount of comprehensible input in the stories influence the young learners' understanding and language acquisition during "Storiz Days"?

Throughout the entirety of my teaching practice, the third and fourth graders from EB1/JI da Fontinha and EB1 Fernão de Magalhães had three "Storiz Days" in total, one in the 4th Grade and two in the 3rd Grade. Each "Storiz Day" lasted 60 minutes, which amounted to a whole English lesson. The topic for the stories was chosen in accordance with the curricular units at that moment in time, such as the five senses or days of the week, or any ongoing school festivities, such as Halloween, and it had to be both compelling and educational. At the end of the lesson, the "Storiz" would be collected by me, in order to analyse the results related to my research and make observations for future "Storiz Days". The results of each quiz were not divulged to the students, as it had no impact on their assessment and was purely for research purposes. Another factor that contributed to this choice was the need for students to understand that it was an informal activity, so as to make them feel more at ease and less pressured, and to keep their affective filters low.

The "Storiz Days" were conducted entirely in English, as one of the main aims of the study was to improve the learners' language acquisition, except for a few moments where L1 was used by the students to explain words among themselves. This use of L1 was inevitable, considering their current English level, but it managed to be used in a productive way, as some thematic words were harder to explain visually, even with the comprehensible input from the story. Despite the focus on the English language, the students had access to learning tools, such as flashcards of the story, realia and illustrations, to help them understand all the comprehensible input from the stories.

Regarding formal procedures, it was not necessary to notify the cluster about the activity, as it was something within the mentor's supervision, and it took place during the time of the lesson. Therefore, my mentor was given a plan of each "Storiz Day" beforehand, and we would discuss any changes that could be made, and any predictions

on the outcomes. To ensure the feasibility of the “Storiz Days”, the students were introduced to the concept before the read-alouds, that is, how it worked and what they needed to do, and were given an explanation on the exercises of the “Storiz”.

3.2. Data-gathering tools

In regard to the data-gathering tools for this Action Research Project, I chose tools that allowed me to collect both qualitative and quantitative data, as it would maximise the potential of the analysis of the results. The tools chosen were the “Storiz” themselves, focusing on the quiz half, and reflective journal entries, kept throughout the teaching practice. As a quantitative data-gathering tool, the “Storiz” provided direct results regarding the research, as the exercises chosen were based on the comprehensible input of the story. It was important to check if the story was effective in improving language acquisition, and if the exercises within the “Storiz” were appropriate for the learners. For a qualitative data-gathering tool, I chose my reflective journal entries, as they included my observations while trying the “Storiz Days” method, as well as the reaction of the students during the read-alouds. The reaction of the learners and their response to the story is pertinent to the research, responses adapted by Mourão (2016), because this allowed me to note if they understood the activity, if they enjoyed it, and what they learned from it. Their responses also helped analyse if the input in the stories was comprehensible, and not too advanced for their language level. Both data-gathering tools help ensure the validity and viability of the research, by direct and indirect methods, offering a broader analysis of the Action Research Project.

3.2.1. “Storiz”

In this Action Research Project, the “Storiz” segment from “Storiz Days” played a crucial role in gathering data. It had such an important role due to the fact that it gave me direct feedback on the “Storiz Days” method, especially regarding the understanding

of the story by the students and their task solving. It helped me to analyse if the given comprehensible input was, in fact, comprehensible, and if the learners began using contextual clues in search of meaning.

As mentioned above, the “Storiz” is a simple quiz related to a story where students must do the exercises using the comprehensible input provided during the story read-aloud. Quizzes have been proven to be very beneficial in language teaching, as they give direct feedback on the students, and learning strategies used in class. According to Sakkir et al. (2022) quizzes give information about the learners’ strengths and weaknesses, as well as the most effective approaches for each case specifically. After careful observation, prior to the study, some exercises the young learners performed the best in were selected for the quiz. I created each “Storiz” using exercises the young learners were familiar with, such as “yes or no” questions, ticking exercises, “read and colour”, and matching “words to images” (see Appendices 1,2,3.) This choice was made in order to make the “Storiz” accessible to all students, including those with learning needs, for as though the model of the exercises is simple, they were still cognitively challenging due to their dependence on comprehensible input. The “Storiz” also had an abundant use of images in the exercises, so as to guide the students during the listening segment of the “Storiz Days”, by helping them associate the illustrations on the stories to the images on the “Storiz”.

With the use of the “Storiz” I was able to see which exercises worked, and which did not, thereby helping in the making of future “Storiz”. I was also able to see how many students understood the story and how many used the comprehensible input while solving the exercises. With the “Storiz” I was also able gather enough information to answer the following Action Research question: *“How effective are stories in applying comprehensible input in the EFL classroom?”*, as well as gather some data for the second Action Research question: *“How does the amount of comprehensible input in the stories influence the young learners’ understanding and language acquisition during “Storiz Days”?”*

3.2.2. Reflective Journal

Another data-gathering tool chosen for this Action Research Project was a reflective journal, kept during my entire teaching practice. A reflective journal is a record written by researchers during a research process, such as this Action Research, and it details what was done, why and the outcomes. According to Thorpe (2004) reflective journals serve as a way for researchers to learn from what is documented, giving them an opportunity to reflect on what they are doing right or wrong.

I used my reflective journal to write my observations and lesson activities during my Action Research, as well as any information related to the young learners. In accordance with the above, it was a way for me to learn from experience and make personal reflections of my practice. I reflected whether the activities chosen were relevant for the research, if they were appropriate for the students' language level, that is, if the comprehensible input was not too advanced for the learners, and if my lessons were well organised. There is also some commentary regarding the response of the students to the "Storiz Days" and if there was any change in their learning patterns, when it comes to using comprehensible input for their language improvement.

As a qualitative data-gathering tool, it allowed for a deeper understanding of my research, as well as a deeper connection between me as the teachers and the targeted students. It also allowed me to answer my second Action Research question: *"How does the amount of comprehensible input in the stories influence the young learners' understanding and language acquisition during "Storiz Days"?"*

3.3. Intervention Plan

Within Introduction to Professional Practice I (IPP I) there was a need for the conception of an Action Research Project, which was continued during Introduction to Professional Practice II (IPP II). In IPP I, during a zero cycle, the student teachers could

observe some lessons administered by the selected mentor, and then select an area in need of an intervention, thereby beginning an Action Research Project. After careful consideration, I chose to work on improving the learners' language acquisition through the use of contextual clues, providing comprehensible input during the lessons. With some research on the matter, I deemed stories to be a good way of providing said comprehensible input, as they were tools that sparked interest within the young learners. That decision led to the creation of "Storiz Days", the main method of this Action Research Project, where stories and comprehensible input meet. All evidence for this Action Research project was gathered during IPP II.

As part of the zero cycle, I wrote the students' profile, with all the relevant information about them to the project. The annotations revealed a tendency for grammar and vocabulary translation, leading to a hyperfocus on certain words by the students. This made them not look for what the tasks in front of them were asking, ignoring whole sentences, which resulted in wrong answers. Despite that hyperfocus, the learners could read accordingly to their age, which led me to discard the option that it could be an issue related to the act of reading. The main issue was that the learners were not using contextual clues in the tasks to their advantage. Based on the evidence gathered, I began the next step, which consisted of developing an intervention plan and selecting the methodology for the project.

The intervention plan was divided into three cycles: The zero cycle, the first cycle, and the analysis of the results. As mentioned before, the zero cycle, that took place in IPP I, consisted of evidence gathering, the making of the students' profile, and selection of an area of intervention. Furthermore, the planning of the activities for the project also fell in this category. These activities would happen during the "Storiz Days" lessons. The "Storiz Days" were planned according to the syllabus of the English class, including topics present in the units. The learners would listen to a story, then answer a quiz, where they had to understand the comprehensible input to reach those answers. Afterwards, the statistics of the "Storiz" were documented and analysed for the Action Research Project.

The first cycle took place during IPP II, where most of the Action Research Project happened. Considering that there were some new classes, and I chose to work with both

the third and fourth grade, I extended my students' profile to include all new students. As I did not know these students as much as the ones I observed during IPP I, I had to adapt my planning, to meet their learning needs and ensure the success of this Action Research Project. There was a total of three "Storiz Days", one for fourth grade students, and two for third grade students. As I had to share the lessons with two other people, including my mentor, my time was more limited, and I could not do more "Storiz Days". Regarding the fourth grade, the topic selected for the "Storiz Days" was "The Five Senses", with the story "I Hear a Pickle (and Smell, See, Touch, & Taste It, Too!)" by Rachel Isadora. In the quiz section, the students were expected to select the right images for each sense. The learners knew 3rd grade vocabulary, in accordance with their coursebook at the time (see Appendix 1.) and the five senses. The comprehensible input in this story included vocabulary such as pickle, sick, and dark, so they had to remember what each sense was related to. As for the third grade, the first "Storiz Days" happened during "Halloween", and taking advantage of that topic, the story chosen was "Room on the Broom" by Julia Donaldson. The young learners knew vocabulary related to Halloween, such as witch, broom, and cauldron, and the unknown vocabulary was related to animals, such as frog, dog, dragon, among others. This story also had many grammatical structures and unknown verbs. For the third "Storiz Days", in third grade, the story chosen was "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" by Eric Carle, during the Unit related to the "Days of the Week". In this "Storiz", the students were expected to use both the days of the week for their answers, as well as food, such as strawberry, pear, apple, among others, this latter being the comprehensible input in the story. At the end of each lesson, the "Storiz" were collected to be corrected and analysed, so as to write down any information related to the Action Research Project and reflect on any improvements that could be made. The following section will provide a detailed description of what was done during the first cycle.

3.4. First Cycle of the Action Research

In this section, I shall provide detailed information regarding the first cycle of this Action Research Project, which took place between September 2024 and December 2024. This cycle consisted of the development of the “Storiz Days”, as well as data-gathering. I will give a description of the lessons, present the data gathered, and interpret the results of the project.

3.4.1. “Storiz Days” 1

The first “Storiz Days” took place on the 16th of October of 2024 in *EB1/JI da Fontinha*, and on the 17th of October of 2024 in EB1 Fernão de Magalhães, in two classes of fourth graders. The topic at hand was “The Five Senses”, and the story chosen for it was “I Hear a Pickle (and Smell, See, Touch, & Taste It, Too!)” by Rachel Isadora. This book was chosen due to the many examples it provides regarding how each sense manifests in communication, as well as the illustrations that accompanied those examples. The lessons first began with the introduction of the topic, followed by some drilling and grammar exercises about it. Then, the students were introduced to the “Storiz Days”, where they were told that they would listen to a story and answer a quiz about it. (see Appendix 2.) They were told to pay attention, as they needed to listen well to complete it. The term “Storiz Days” was also written on the board to avoid any confusion later.

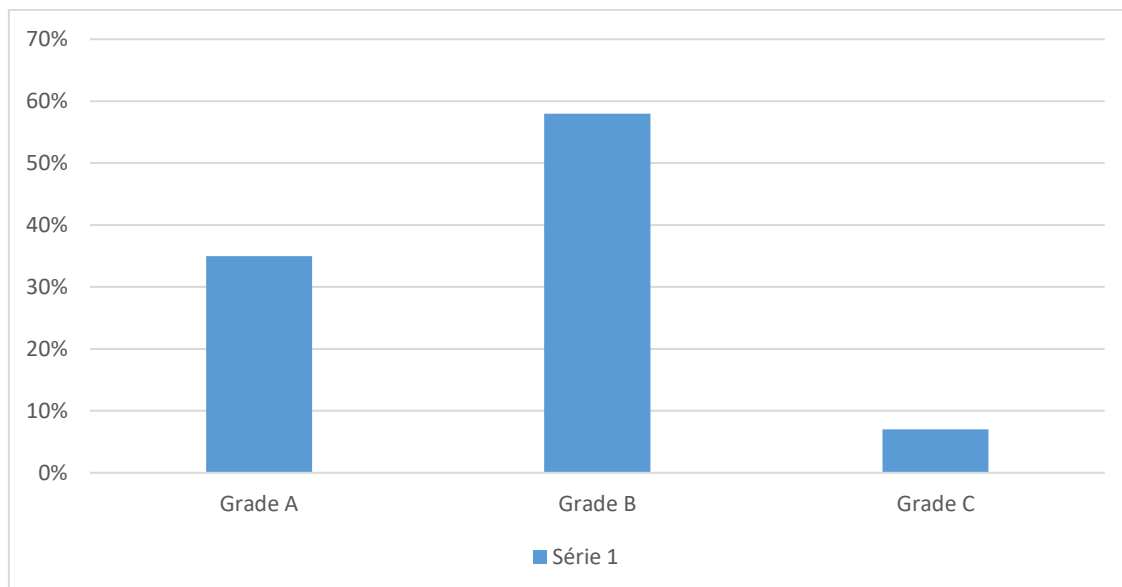
Before the read-aloud started, I explained the exercises on the “Storiz” the students were given, to make sure they understood all of it. As mentioned before, the criteria for selecting the exercises was the learners’ familiarity with their structure. This “Storiz” included only one exercise, where they had to choose the correct option for each sense. Regarding the read-aloud, as I could not get the book in time, I played a video of the read-aloud to the students. The read-aloud was taken from “Heather’s Story Time Corner” on YouTube, with a flip-through of the book. The vocabulary and verbs from the story can be divided into the following segments:

Known vocabulary and verbs	Comprehensible Input
-To (hear, smell, see, touch and taste). - Pizza, apple, water, ice cream. - Snow, rain, flowers, ocean, moon. -Music -Airplane - Notebook, ball.	- (being) sick -Bubbles -(being) in the dark -cactus -pickle

Table 1- Vocabulary and Comprehensible Input from “Storiz Days” 1

The main sources of aid for the comprehensible input during the read-aloud were intonation variation, the illustrations in the book, and interjections, such as “yummy” and “bang”. As mentioned previously, the exercise on this “Storiz” was one where the learners had to pick the correct options for each sense, and the “Storiz” were given during different times in each class. For class A, the “Storiz” was given after the read-aloud, but it proved to be very time consuming, and the learners finished at different times, which left the fast-finishers waiting. For class B, the “Storiz” was given before the read-aloud, and this change proved to be much more productive in keeping the learners’ focused, while also being time-efficient. While I monitored the activity, I made sure the audio was good and that the learners could see the video. I also explained each question again, eliciting the vocabulary taught during the lesson related to the five senses. All the “Storiz” were collected at the end of the lesson, signalling the end of the first “Storiz Days”.

The first “Storiz Days” finished with 46 answered quizzes, between the two classes. The “Storiz” had a total of 12 points, that were divided into three grades. Grade A was 12-9 points, Grade B was 8-5, and Grade C was 4-0. After checking all the “Storiz” these were the results for “Storiz Days” 1:



Graph.1 – Results of the first “Storiz Days”

The majority of the “Storiz” got Grade B (58%), followed by Grade A (35%), and lastly Grade C (7%). This first “Storiz” was a little confusing to the students, as most of them only selected one option, instead of the two asked, as seen below, in figure 1:

Class: 4^o A₃

Storiz Days

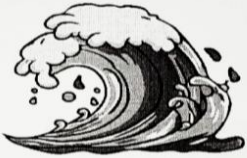
“I Hear a Pickle” by Rachel Isadora

1. Read and tick (✓) the correct options.

I HEAR...



... the music ☒



... the ocean ☒



... the snow ☐

I SMELL...



... the pizza ☒



... the flowers ☒



... when I'm sick ☐

Figure 1-Exercise 1

This led me to reflect on the making of the exercises and its appropriateness and to write down observations for the future. This story also had little comprehensible input, as most vocabulary was already known by the students, which might have been the reason for disinterest in the lesson and a low level of language acquisition.

3.4.2. “Storiz Days” 2

The second “Storiz Days” took place on the 29th of October of 2024 in EB1 Fernão de Magalhães, and on the 30th of October of 2024 in EB1/JI da Fontinha, in two classes of third graders. This was during Halloween week, which is celebrated in both schools. Therefore, the story chosen was Halloween-related. The story chosen for this second “Storiz Days” was “Room on the Broom” by Julia Donaldson. This story was chosen due to its relevancy to the topic, the vibrant illustrations in it, and its potential for providing comprehensible input. I have a shortened version of the story in a book called “Treasure of Songs”, by the same author. However, after discussing with my mentor, we arrived at the conclusion that it would be better to give the learners the full story. My mentor also recommended the animated read-aloud of the book, as she had used it once before with other third graders and it had gone well. The lessons began with the introduction of Halloween Week and some Halloween vocabulary. Afterwards, the students were introduced to “Storiz Days”, having been explained the whole concept of it, and after handing them the quizzes (see Appendix 3.) and checking the audio, the animated read-aloud began. The vocabulary and grammatical structures in the story can be divided into the following segments:

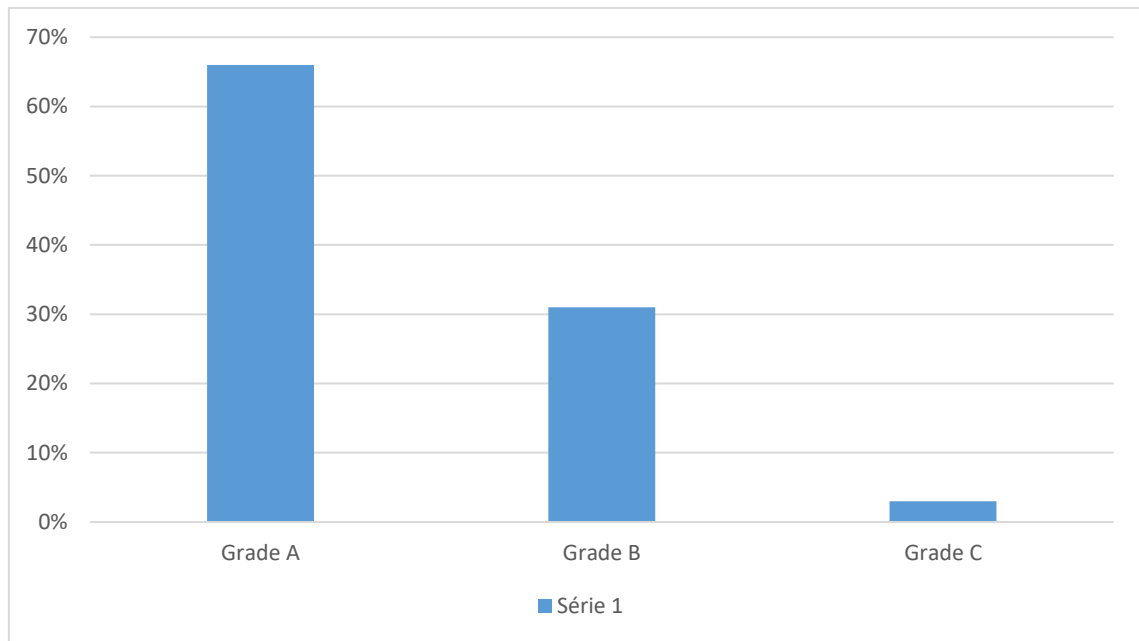
Known vocabulary	Comprehensible Input
-Witch, broom, hat, wand, cauldron. -Colours. -Emotions.	-Cat, dog, frog, bird, dragon. - Room (in the concept of space). -Weather. -Food.

	-Physical descriptions. - Verb (to) fly. - Verb (to) find. - Verb (to) search. - Verb (to) drop.
--	--

Table 2- Vocabulary and Comprehensible Input from “Storiz Days” 2

As there was vocabulary related to animals in the story, a topic unfamiliar to them and present in the “Storiz”, whenever the animal was introduced, I mimicked the sound they make and did some gestures. This was done to make input comprehensible, so they understood what was being asked in the exercises. The exercises in this “Storiz” included a matching “words to images” exercise about the animals in the story, and circling exercise, where they had to select the animals that had “room” on the broom. Both exercises had structures familiar to the learners. At the end of the lesson, the “Storiz” were collected, and the students gave some positive feedback on the activity. In relation to changes between the two lessons of this “Storiz Days”, while both classes received their “Storiz” before the read-aloud, there were some changes related to language learning. For class C, the learners were not given any complementary explanations about the comprehensible input in the story, which affected their understanding as the comprehensible input level was too high for their English language level. In contrast, some language learning took place in class D, specifically on some verbs (see Table 2.), to help the learners’ understanding of the high amount of comprehensible input in the story. However, the difference in results between the two classes was minimal.

There were 29 quizzes in total for the second “Storiz Days”, between both classes. Following the same grade system from the first “Storiz Days”, this “Storiz” had a total of 18 points total, and was divided into these grades: Grade A was 18-12 points; Grade B was 11 to 7 points; and Grade C was 6 to 0 points. After checking all the “Storiz”, these were the results for “Storiz Days” 2:



Graph.2 – Results of the second “Storiz Days”

For the second “Storiz Days”, the most common grade was Grade A (66%), followed by Grade B (31%), and lastly Grade C (3%). This “Storiz Days” had a higher level of engagement, which might have been influenced by the higher level of support during the lesson, such as mimicry and illustrations. However, there was still room for improvement, as there was one common mistake in the learners’ answers related to exercise two, as seen in the following figure:

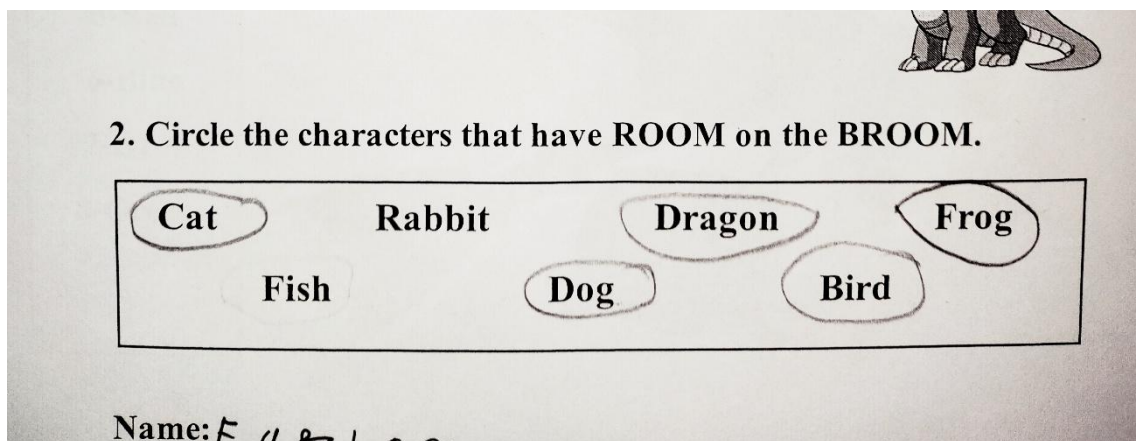


Figure 2- Exercise 2

As seen in Figure 2, a recurring mistake in this exercise was the selection of all the animals in the story, instead of the ones that “have room on the broom”. My understanding is that the learners misunderstood the question itself, which led to them choosing all the options they heard throughout the read-aloud. This revealed that not all students understood the comprehensible input in the story, as there were many language elements unknown to them, making the comprehensible input too advanced for their level. Once again, there was a need to ensure that the comprehensible input was both appropriate and accessible to the learners, especially considering their English language level.

3.4.3. “Storiz Days” 3

The third and final “Storiz Days” in this Action Research Project, took place on the 4th of December of 2024 in EB1/JI da Fontinha, and on the 5th of December of 2024 in EB1 Fernão de Magalhães, in two other classes of third graders. The topic selected was related to “The Days of the Week”, and the story chosen was “The Very Hungry Caterpillar”, by Eric Carle. The criteria for choosing this book were the simple narrative structure, its relevance to the topic of “Days of the Week”, its clear and vibrant illustrations, and the amount of comprehensible input for the target learners. There were also no changes made between the two lessons of this “Storiz Days”. In contrast to the previous “Storiz Days”, I was the one doing the read-aloud with a physical copy of the book. The read-aloud was carefully prepared beforehand, in accordance with recommendations from researchers in the realm of storytelling, such as Ellis and Brewster (2014) and Ellis and Mourão (2021), so as to guarantee a positive experience for the students and the success of my research. The lessons began with the introduction of the topic “The Days of the Week”, followed by drilling and grammar exercises related to it. Then, the students were introduced to the “Storiz Days” concept, including the read-aloud and the answering of the “Storiz”. This “Storiz” consisted of three exercises: a matching “words to images” exercise, where they had to match the day of the week to the correspondent food eaten that day, a “yes or no” exercise, where the students

read sentences about the actions in the story and wrote yes or no, and a “read and colour” exercise about the fruits in the story. For this read-aloud I prepared some flashcards of the story (figure 3), that were stuck on the board as the read-aloud progressed:



Figure 3- “The Very Hungry Caterpillar” Flashcards

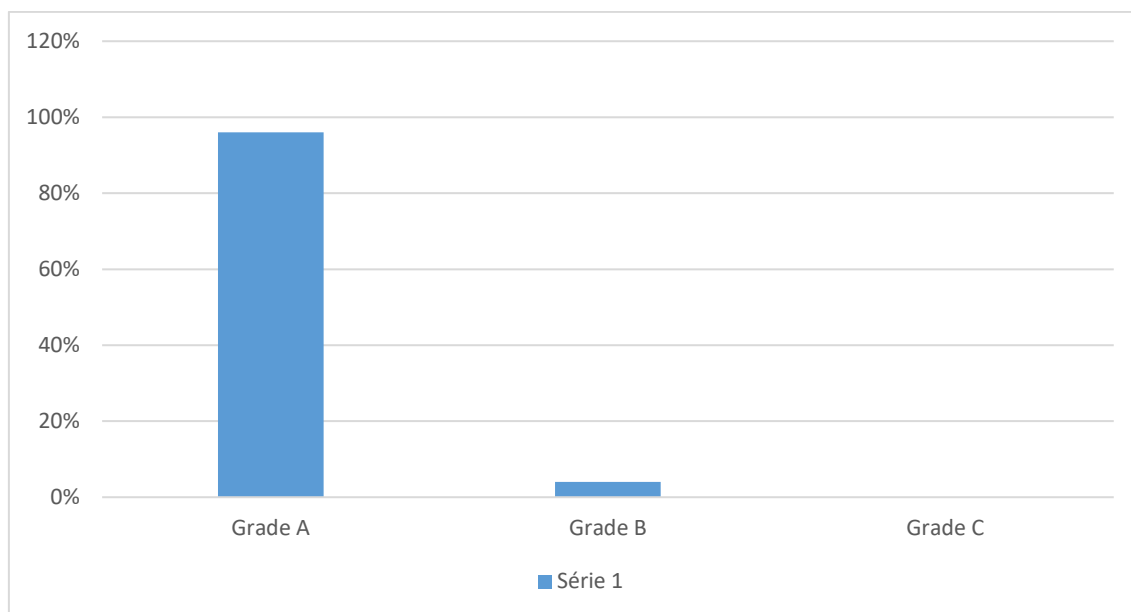
These flashcards stayed on the board until the end of the lesson and were used to offer additional support to the comprehensible input present in the story. The vocabulary and verbs in the story can be divided into the following segments:

Known vocabulary and verbs	Comprehensible Input
-Days of the week. -Numbers (0-50). - Sizes (Big, small and tiny). - verb (to be) hungry. -Colours (Green).	- verb (to) eat. - Caterpillar, cocoon, butterfly. -Apple, pear, plum, strawberry, orange, cake, ice cream. -Stomach ache - Leaf

Table 3- Vocabulary and Comprehensible Input from “Storiz Days” 3

Before the read-aloud began, the students were given the “Storiz” (Check Appendix 4.) that contained some labelled images on the topic of food, to provide some support on what the learners were listening, and for the completion of the exercises. However, this support did not hinder the use of comprehensible input in the exercise, as contextual clues were the key to complete them. At the end of the lesson, the “Storiz” were collected, and some positive feedback was given by the students, in relation to their enjoyment of the story.

There was a total of 27 quizzes for the third “Storiz Days” among both classes, and just as the previous two, this “Storiz” followed the “grade” system. There was a total of 18 points, divided into three grades: Grade A was 18-12 points, Grade B was 11-7 points, and Grade C was 6-0 points. After checking all the “Storiz” these were the results for the third “Storiz Days”:



Graph.3 – Results of the third “Storiz Days”

The most common grade in the third “Storiz Days” was Grade A (96%), followed by Grade B (4%), with no students with Grade C. There were no recurring mistakes in the exercises, and even students with learning difficulties managed to reach the top grade. This factor could be attributed to the suitable level of comprehensible input provided throughout the story, as it was not too high nor too low, as well as the selection of tools to support it.

3.4.4. Analysis and interpretation of the results (1st cycle)

Considering the results presented in the three graphs, the “Storiz Days” lessons had an overall positive outcome with the learners. They were not used to the method, so they were a little confused, and needed some more explanation at times, but still engaged with it. The unfamiliarity the learners had with using context in search of meaning did not stop them from completing the tasks. Despite that, the appropriateness level of the comprehensible input in the stories heavily influenced the results on the “Storiz”, revealing its importance in the method.

Regarding the types of responses from the students to the stories, there were a few types worth discussing. These responses are categorised using an adaption of Sipe’s five response categories by Mourão (2016). The two most common responses from the

young learners were the analytical and intertextual responses. For the analytical response, the young learners often labelled images, interacted with peers to find meaning, and made some predictions. As for the intertextual response, the learners made many associations with other stories and links beyond the classroom, such as films. This response was the most common during the second “Storiz Days”, where they related things they heard and saw in the story to other things they knew. Another type of response observed, though not as common, was the performative response. Some students would get a little agitated and try to mimic things they heard, so as to get a reaction from their peers. However, those situations did not get out of control. Out of the three “Storiz Days”, the one with the least engagement was the first one, related to the five senses. The motive could be related to the story chosen, which did not spark interest among the learners, the lack of tools supporting the comprehensible input of the story, when compared to the following “Storiz Days”, or the amount of the comprehensible input itself.

While comparing the results of the “Storiz Days”, there is a significant difference between the first and third one. The first time this method was applied, the results were average, with many students falling into the Grade B category. The questions needed to be reformulated, as many students did not understand them, there was not an appropriate amount of comprehensible input, given the learners’ level, and the story was not compelling to the students. In contrast, the third “Storiz Days” had many sources of support for the comprehensible input, such as flashcards of the story, gestures, and a theatrical read-aloud. The comprehensible input in the story was not too advanced for the young learners, in relation to the vocabulary and structures they knew. The learners demonstrated a good understanding of the story and the exercises in the “Storiz” and engaged well with the teacher, which led almost all of them to attain a Grade A. The affective filters of the learners were also low, and they were motivated to learn. As for the second “Storiz Days”, the grade system showed higher results compared to the first one, but the younger learners revealed trouble understanding the comprehensible input when completing the exercises. Taking into consideration that the amount of comprehensible input was bigger than the known vocabulary of the learners,

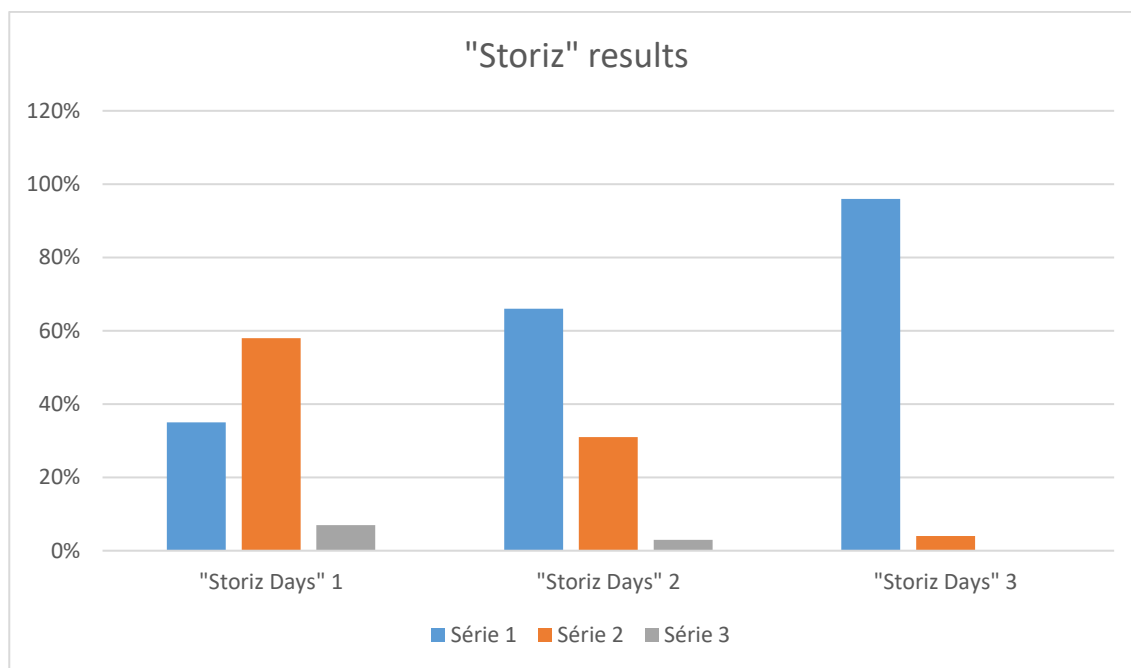
it can be said that it was too advanced for their language level, which restricted their language acquisition potential. Therefore, choosing a story with suitable amount of comprehensible input, in accordance with the young learners' language level, is what enables language acquisition.

3.5. Global discussion of the results

The main aims of this Action Research Project were to see if it was possible to introduce the use of context in a younger learner's learning environment, through stories and comprehensible input, and to check how the amount of comprehensible input in the stories influences the learners' understanding of them and the learners' language acquisition. Given those aims, the following Action Research questions were formulated:

1. How effective are stories in providing comprehensible input in the EFL classroom?
2. How does the amount of comprehensible input in the stories influence the young learners' understanding and language acquisition during "Storiz Days"?

Regarding the first Action Research question, "How effective are stories in providing comprehensible input in the EFL classroom?", the results of the "Storiz Days" prove the effectiveness of stories in providing comprehensible input in the EFL classroom. These results were due to the tools used to make the comprehensible input in the stories, comprehensible, such as the storybook itself, its illustrations, flashcards of the story, and many others. The young learners reacted differently with each story, and the language acquisition levels varied throughout the "Storiz Days". The following graph shows the results of each "Storiz Days", divided into the grade system explained previously, where Grade A is the highest results and Grade C the lowest results:

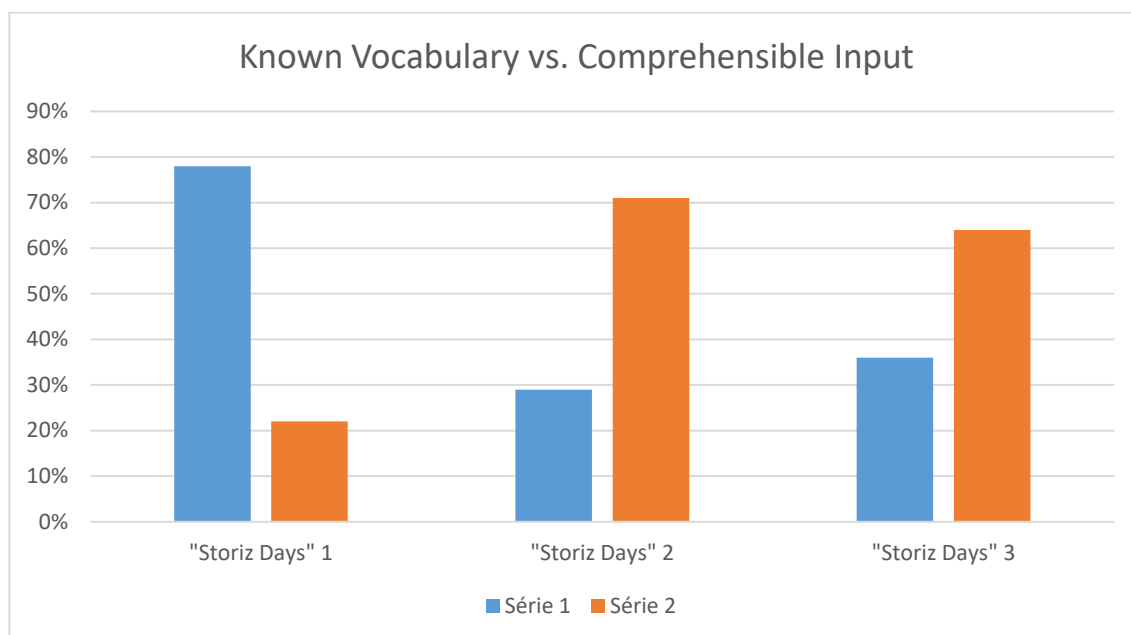


Graph. 4 – Overview of the “Storiz Days” results

This graph demonstrates a fluctuation of results when comparing each “Storiz Days” lesson, which were influenced by each story’s ability to provide comprehensible input. The most common grade among all the “Storiz” is Grade A (60%), followed by Grade B (36%), and lastly Grade C (4%). These results indicate a positive view on the story-based method of “Storiz Days” overall, even after taking into consideration the mentioned fluctuation of results. In general, the young learners’ were able to use the comprehensible input required in the “Storiz”, which they could only get through the stories themselves. Therefore, it can be concluded through these stories, that stories can be an effective way of providing comprehensible input in the EFL classroom.

In regard to the second Action Research question, “How does the amount of comprehensible input in the stories influence the young learners’ understanding and language acquisition during “Storiz Days”?”, this research reveals that the level of the comprehensible input in the stories is indeed a factor that heavily influences not only the young learners’ understanding of the story, but also their language acquisition. Each “Storiz Days” included a story with a different amount of comprehensible input compared to the young learners’ language level and vocabulary they knew (see table 1,2,3.). The following graph shows the difference between known vocabulary and

comprehensible input from the stories, in the three “Storiz Days” lessons, given the information on the tables mentioned above:



Graph.5 – Known Vocabulary vs. Comprehensible Input

In this graph, the first column represents all the know vocabulary by the young learners, prior to the “Storiz”, and the second column represents the amount of comprehensible input provided in the story. The percentages were based on the list in the section of each “Storiz Days” (see tables 1,2,3.), where the vocabulary corresponds to one point, and verbs correspond to two points, as the latter is more difficult for younger learners in EFL. As demonstrated in the graph, in the first “Storiz Days” the learners knew most of the vocabulary (78%), and the comprehensible input was low (22%). This situation was inversed during the second “Storiz Days”, where the comprehensible input was high (71%), when compared to the knowledge of the young learners (29%). Lastly, for the third “Storiz Days”, while the knowledge of the young learners was lower (36%) than the amount of comprehensible input (64%), the difference was adequate for language acquisition to occur (see graph. 3).

The role of comprehensible input in the learners’ language acquisition becomes limited if not used properly, and it becomes even more evident during a story-based activity. If the amount of comprehensible input is too high, the learners do not

understand the story, nor the comprehensible input itself, thereby not acquiring much language. When this happens, there might be a need to introduce and explain some elements of comprehensible input, using language learning strategies, such as the introduction of verbs, as “bridge” for language acquisition. If the comprehensible input is too low, the learners’ will also not acquire much language, and will not be too motivated during the lesson. By choosing a story with enough comprehensible input, in accordance with the target’s language levels, the young learners will understand the story, engage with it and language acquisition will occur naturally. As mentioned in my Reflective Journal about the “Storiz”, “I was a little bit afraid that they would be too challenging for the students. (...) However, to my surprise, they could do those exercises perfectly well, even the students that usually struggle a little more. The foreign words did not stop them from understanding the story, nor the exercises, and the results were very good” (14th December 2024). When the learners understand the information presented to them, they start to engage more in the lessons, are motivated to keep learning, and aim to improve, as also stated in my Reflective Journal “This increases the students’ confidence and motivates them to keep growing and learning the language” (14th December 2024).

In conclusion, it is possible to use stories as a way to introduce the notion of searching for meaning through context, using the comprehensible input provided in them. The “Storiz Days” was a method I created for this purpose, and it gave me the opportunity to try something the students were not used to. It was also possible to analyse the importance of appropriate comprehensible input, when using this method, and how it can influence the students’ language acquisition, based on their understanding of the story. Moreover, activities using stories keep the students motivated to learn, if well prepared, as they are something children enjoy, which helps them acquire language in fun ways.

4. Conclusions

This Action Research project gave the opportunity to explore a new method, “The Storiz Days”, but it also gave the opportunity to immerse myself in the mind of the learners. Thinking of ways to introduce the use of contextual clues in a way that could be accessible was challenging but rewarding. It showed how important it is to choose suitable tools, which in this case was stories, to explore all the comprehensible input within them, and how different levels of comprehensible input can totally affect the learners’ understanding of them, which can lead to the use of language learning strategies instead. However, even if not commonly focused on, this project showed how important the use of contextual clues can be.

By trying the “Storiz Days” method, it was possible to explore stories in a way that allowed me to gather many observations, not only about the students, but also myself as the teacher. Comparing the results from the first and the last “Storiz Days”, the difference between them is evident. As the research progressed, I was able to polish my questions, select more appropriate stories, prepare the right resources for the read-alouds, and investigate engagement strategies. The students began to interact more, showing different types of responses, and began to understand the stories more, using the comprehensible input in them. They became more motivated to learn, enjoying the process, and acquired language more easily. These reactions demonstrated that these unusual types of learning strategies are relevant in the teaching world and should not be avoided.

The use of stories as a way of providing comprehensible input proved to be a positive experience, giving the opportunity to explore its impact on the learners’ language acquisition. This research demonstrates that doing these types of experiments can be beneficial as to try different learning strategies with young learners, that could work better for them. Overall, it was a good starting point regarding the topic at hand, with the potential for other and more in-depth conclusions in future investigations.

4.1. Limitations of the study

Regarding the limitations of the study, there were some issues that made this Action Research project more challenging.

One of the biggest limitations, was the short period of time for the project. The project had a duration of three months, but the lessons had to be split between three people. Apart from my mentor, there was also another colleague doing an Action Research project in the same schools. This made the short period of time even shorter, which affected some of my planning for the project. It was only possible to do three “Storiz Days”, which limited the amount of data that could be gathered for the project. The learners still needed to follow the syllabus, as well as do assessments for English class. Therefore, the number of lessons dedicated to the Action Research project was too little.

Another key limitation was my lack of experience in teaching, as it was my first contact with it. This made certain problems harder to predict, which led to me change my lesson plans very often. It was difficult to see from the perspective of a beginner, after studying the English language for so many years, and this affected my teaching a lot in the beginning. I had to be mindful of the needs of every learner, while still trying to understand what strategies worked best for teaching. This lack of experience also affected my Action Research project, especially when preparing the “Storiz Days”, as my expectations often did not meet reality. Questions I thought were well formulated needed improving, the language used in class needed to be simplified, and the students required much more support than predicted.

The lack of data-gathering tools, such as observation sheets, was also a limitation within this project, as it would have been more beneficial to use more, so as to gather more data on the results. With more data there could have been more conclusions that I was not able to get, thereby getting more insight on the impact this research had on the young learners.

Regarding other limitations, it could be better to try this method with only one class, or only one grade, in the future. The data-gathering process would be more

specific, and the results could be more conclusive, as there would be the possibility to compare different “Storiz Days” in the same class and check the improvement levels among the students.

4.2. Suggestions for future research

When it comes to research, there are always many opportunities for change or improvement, and this Action Research is no different.

Some suggestions that could be explored in the future, regarding the “Storiz Days” and the use of comprehensible input in stories, are the changing of the sample size, that is, choosing one class to apply the research, and doing “Storiz Days” once in each Unit, such as a “Storiz Days” about pets, or about family. The students could also be given a choice on the stories, with the teacher choosing some titles for them to select from. It could make them look forward to the activity and be more motivated, as they had a choice in the matter.

Another suggestion for future research would be the addition of more data-gathering tools, such as observation sheets, with a selected group of students, or self-assessment sheets, to get the young learners’ point of view of how the lesson went, and how much they think they learned. These additional sources of data would give more conclusions about the study, and further insight on the method used.

Doing an Action Research project like this helped me improve as a teacher and helped me become more connected to the students, as I not only had to plan the lessons according to their needs but also encourage them to try a different method with “Storiz Days”. I look forward to continuing experimenting with this method and to keep helping young learners improving their language acquisition.

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Appendices

Appendix 1- "Easy Peasy English 3- Units"

Appendix 2- "Storiz" 1

Appendix 3- "Storiz" 2

Appendix 4- "Storiz" 3

Appendix 1 – “Easy Peasy English 3- Units”

PROFESSOR + ALUNO	English around us	4
	The United Kingdom	6
Unit 1 Me, myself and I		
Vocabulary	Greetings and Farewells	10
	Name	11
Song	How are you?	12
Story	Welcome!	14
Cross Curricular	Countries and nationalities	16
Song	What's your nationality?	17
Vocabulary	Colours	18
	Shapes	19
Write & Tell	An identification card	20
Arts & Crafts	My friends	21
Culture	Famous people	22
Show & Tell		23
Study Time		24
Let's Check		25
Let's have fun		26
Unit 2 Numbers and dates		
Vocabulary	Numbers	30
Song	How old are you?	32
Vocabulary	Days of the week	34
Values	Hearing a different opinion	35
Story	Magic club day!	36
Vocabulary	Months of the year	38
Arts & Crafts	Speaking dice	39
Write & Tell	A birthday party invitation	41
Culture	Lucky numbers	42
Show & Tell		43
Study Time		44
Let's Check		45
Let's have fun		46
Unit 3 School and means of transport		
Vocabulary	School supplies	50
Song	School supplies	52
Vocabulary	Prepositions: on, in, under, near	54
Arts & Crafts	Puzzle	55
Story	Homework trouble...	56
Vocabulary	Means of transport	58
Cross Curricular	Measures and distance	59
Write & Tell	A phone chat	61
Culture	Going to school	62
Show & Tell		63
Study Time		64
Let's Check		65
Let's have fun		66

Unit 4 Family and routines

Vocabulary	Family	70
Song	Family	72
Values	Modern families	75
Story	Magic coins!	76
Vocabulary	Family routines	78
Write & Tell	An email	81
Culture	The British Royal family	82
Show & Tell		83
Study Time		84
Let's Check		85
Let's have fun		86

Unit 5 Pets and games

Vocabulary	Pets	90
Song	Pets / Activities	92
Story	Hide-and-seek	94
Vocabulary	Games and activities	96
Cross Curricular	Interpreting information	97
Write & Tell	A message: My friends and I	99
Culture	International animals	100
Show & Tell		101
Study Time		102
Let's Check		103
Let's have fun		104

Unit 6 Seasons, weather and clothes

Vocabulary	Seasons	108
	Temperature	109
Song	The weather	110
Story	A Magic Party Trick	112
Vocabulary	Clothes and footwear	114
Arts & Crafts	My collection of clothes	115
Write & Tell	A diary entry: My best friend	117
Culture	Typical clothes around the world	118
Show & Tell		119
Study Time		120
Let's Check		121
Let's have fun		122

Festivities

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Halloween	124
Christmas	125
Valentine's Day	126
St Patrick's day	127
May Day	128

PROFESSOR + ALUNO

EXCLUSIVO PROFESSOR

Appendix 2- "Storiz" 1

Name:

Class:

Storiz Days

"I Hear a Pickle" by Rachel Isadora

1. Read and tick (✓) the correct options.

I HEAR...



... the music ☐



... the ocean ☐



... the snow ☐

I SMELL...



... the pizza ☐



... the flowers ☐



... when I'm sick ☐

I SEE...



... in the dark ☐



... the airplane ☐



... the moon ☐

I TOUCH...



... the rain ☐



... the cactus ☐



... the bubbles ☐

I TASTE...



... the apple ☐



... the water ☐



... the ice cream ☐

I TASTE, SMELL, SEE, TOUCH, AND HEAR...



... the notebook ☐



... the ball ☐



... the pickle ☐

Good luck!

Appendix 3- “Storiz” 2

“Room on the Broom”
by Julia Donaldson

Storiz Days

1. Match the words to the correct image.

Frog



Dragon



Dog



Bird



Cat



2. Circle the characters that have ROOM on the BROOM.

Cat	Rabbit	Dragon	Frog
Fish	Dog	Bird	

Name:
Class:

Appendix 4- “Storiz” 3

NAME:

Storiz Days

“The Very Hungry Caterpillar” by Eric Carle



APPLE



PEAR



STRAWBERRY



ORANGE



PLUM



CAKE AND
ICE CREAM



LEAF

1. Match the fruits to the correct day of the week, according to the story.



MONDAY



TUESDAY



WEDNESDAY



THURSDAY

FRIDAY



SATURDAY

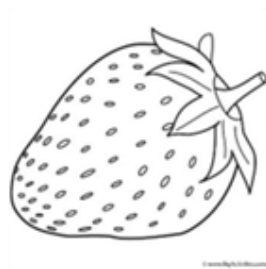
SUNDAY



2. Look at exercise one. Read and write YES or NO.

The caterpillar ate <u>two oranges</u> on <u>Friday</u> .	<u>NO</u>
The caterpillar ate <u>three plums</u> on <u>Wednesday</u> .	_____
The caterpillar ate <u>cake and ice cream</u> on <u>Saturday</u> .	_____
The caterpillar ate <u>one apple</u> on <u>Thursday</u> .	_____
The caterpillar ate <u>one leaf</u> on <u>Sunday</u> .	_____
The caterpillar ate <u>four pears</u> on <u>Tuesday</u> .	_____
The caterpillar ate <u>five strawberries</u> on <u>Monday</u> .	_____

3. Read and colour.



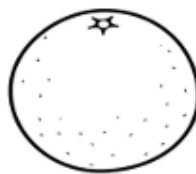
The strawberry is red.



The apple is yellow.



The pear is green.



The orange is orange.



The plum is purple.

Good luck!