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**THE ROLE OF INPUT IN LEARNING ENGLISH IN AN IMMERSION CONTEXT:
A case study**

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Presented in _____.

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THE ROLE OF INPUT IN LEARNING ENGLISH IN AN IMMERSION CONTEXT: A case study

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ABSTRACT

The need for people to learn other languages is not recent. To this end, a very wide variety of methods and techniques have been studied and applied in various contexts seeking bilingualism and multilingualism. Among these, the immersion method stands out for being practical and active, where the student will spend as much time as possible in contact with the target language. In this sense, some schools offer the opportunity to acquire a second language through the content. However, most people in Brazil do not have opportunity to study in bilingual schools. In fact, studies on the immersion method in this country and the need to provide the foreign language learner with input are still scarce. This paper aims to demonstrate through a case study the development of a 10 years old child in an immersion context in the acquisition of a foreign language (English) through her sister. From the theories demonstrated during the work and the placement test that seeks to evaluate the subject's English level on an international scale and observation table, it was exposed the child's development in terms of input (comprehension), output (oral production) and structures produced by the subject.

Keywords: Immersion. Language acquisition. Input. Child.

RESUMO

A necessidade das pessoas em aprender outras línguas não é nova. Para tanto, uma variedade muito grande de métodos e técnicas foram estudadas e aplicadas em diversos contextos buscando o bilinguismo e o multilinguismo. Dentre estes, o método de imersão se destaca por ser prático e ativo, onde o aluno passará o maior período possível em contato com a língua alvo. Nesse sentido, escolas oferecem oportunidade de aquisição da segunda língua por meio do conteúdo estudado. No entanto, a maioria das pessoas no Brasil não tem oportunidade de estudarem em escolas bilíngues. De fato, ainda são escassos os estudos sobre o método de imersão neste país e a necessidade de proporcionar ao aprendiz de língua estrangeira o input. O presente trabalho busca demonstrar por meio de um estudo de caso o desenvolvimento de uma criança de 10 anos submetida a um contexto de imersão na aquisição de uma língua estrangeira (inglês) através de sua irmã. A partir das teorias demonstradas no decorrer do trabalho e do teste de nivelamento que busca avaliar o nível de inglês do sujeito em escala internacional e tabela de observação, foi explanado o desenvolvimento da criança no que se diz respeito ao input (compreensão), output (produção oral) e estruturas produzidas por ela.

Palavras-chaves: Imersão. Aquisição de Língua. Input. Criança.

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1 INTRODUCTION

“The need to acquire two or more languages is not new” (GENESE, 2008, p. 22). According to Genesee (2008) there are historical documents that show individuals and communities seeking to learn other languages for a range of motivations as “colonization, trade and intermarriage”. In the same way, promoting a second language acquisition through education is not recent. Indeed, there are many researches and methods that discussed ways of learning languages and the reasons are multiple: The growing of globalization of business and commerce, voluntary movement of people from country to country by economic reasons (educational, political and personal) and telecommunications (GENESE, 2008).

In this sense, the immersion method was implemented in the 1960s, first in Canada and, in the course of time, in other parts of the world. Currently, the method has been adapted and used in many ways as bilingual schools and language courses promoting bilingualism and multilingualism (FORTUNE; TEDICK, 2008). In addition, it is needed to consider the input and also how to make it comprehensible for learning to be effective (GASS; MACKEY, 2007), (SHRUM; GLISAN, 2016).

The aim of this article is to reflect about the role of input in the process of a 10 years old child, acquiring a foreign language from her sister through the immersion method creating an immersion context using some techniques to make the input comprehensible and by the end, verify the development of a foreign language acquisition in terms of comprehension and production.

On the development of the article we will discuss topics such as multilingualism and bilingualism in a global and local perspective, the immersion method, language acquisition of a foreign language in childhood and the role of the input will be exposed. The instruments of data collect were Placement test of Cambridge Assessment English and Observation table. The test was used to show the subject’s development in listening, reading and writing, speaking but mainly, production and comprehension in speaking and listening, respectively. It was made tables to illustrate the progress because the test was applied before and after the application of the method. The observation table was used to take notes of her production and comprehension in specific moments within the process and illustrated the date, situation, input and output and if was in Portuguese or English.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. MULTILINGUALISM AND BILINGUALISM CONCEPTS IN A GLOBAL

PERSPECTIVE

When we intend to define terms as bilingualism and multilingualism, the first answers that show up in our minds is: the ability to know two or more languages concomitantly, respectively. However, is not that simple. Bilingualism, in a general way, can be defined as “knowing” two languages (VALDEZ; FIGUEORA, 1994). Nevertheless, we can see that the term “know” might not be appropriate because we have to perceive other considerations about it as the age of acquisition, the level of proficiency in both of languages, the development of a skill above others, sociocultural aspects. In addition, Chumbow (2018) states that the relationship between language, culture, and identity, the multilingualism implies multiculturalism, ethnolinguistic and ethnocultural identity. Thus, it is so much more than simply define as “speak more than two languages”. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to define multilingualism as Chibaka (2018) that consider the speaker, group, nation, or activity/environment, where the languages (two or more) are used for communication and mentioned that in the multilingualism are types of bilingualism such as coordinate, sub coordinate and compound bilingualism that means, respectively, “a person’s learning of two languages in separate environment/contexts”, “the acquisition of the second language (L2) with the help of the first language (L1)” and “learning of two languages in the same environment, time, and even context.” Then, as point out we define multilingualism as “the simultaneous presence, availability or use of several languages in a given place, territory or nation” (DROBOT, 2018, p. 37).

Thus, bilingualism and multilingualism can imply accepting other cultures, getting to know them better, and adapting to them, their values, and their ways of life which means politically, the recognition of the way that different cultures live together and the historical basis of this symbiosis (DROBOT, 2018). What educational reflection sense can be applied to this context? What is bilingualism and multilingualism? According to Wright, Boun and García (2015), in a most simple definition, bilingual and multilingual education are the use of two languages in teaching and learning of three or more, respectively. This definition can be general, nevertheless the reasons and the need in learning other languages are specific which will be briefly explained on the methodology.

2.1.2 BILINGUALISM AND MULTILINGUALISM IN BRAZIL

Since 2012, through Law 10.436, Brazil became a bilingual country and besides the Portuguese language we have the legal recognition of the Brazilian Sign Language (LIBRAS) which is the natural tool of communication for the deaf people in the country. There are also

many cases of bilingualism a multilingualism in Brazil because of the coming of immigrants from several countries as Japan, Italy, Germany, that inclusive have an influence over the vocabulary used on Brazil and Portuguese language (COUTO, 2007).

In the same sense, talking about the indigenous people, according to IBGE (2010), the last census data apprise that Brazil is a country which have an indigenous population of 896,9 (thousand), 305 ethnicities and 274 idioms. The census states that out of the indigenous people that are 5 years old and older, 37,4% speak an indigenous language and 76,9% speak Portuguese. Talking about the indigenous people of 5 and 14 years old, the proportion is 45,9%: 59,1% in the indigenous reservation and 16,2% outside. Between 15 and 49 years old the percentage of speakers declined with increasing age (35,8% and 28,5%).

Though, the census mentioned a detail – almost all the speakers of an indigenous language do not speak Portuguese mainly the percentage related with the indigenous that are 50 or more and live in indigenous reservation, whereas the same age there is not in an indigenous reservation reveals minor percentual of speakers of just one language. It indicates that is a strong bilingualism in this case.

Santos (2011) pointed out, that the sociolinguistic richness is also seen in Pará, with 57 indigenous people, that speak 27 native languages, distributed in the linguistic trunks: Karib, Jê and Tupi Guarani. Most of the indigenous peoples can speak more than one language, particularly Wayana people that speak Aparai and Wayana language. Some can speak Tiriyo language and Portuguese, and Tiryio people that speak Tiriyo and Portuguese, not to mention the Kaxuyana people that is trilingual, and some families of these people are quadrilingual demonstrating, thus, the multilingualism present in these communities.

Similarly, it can be said that the Xingu region is a multiethnic place. Besides Indigenous tribes, there are many indigenous people that live in the cities of Altamira, Vitória do Xingu and Senador José Porfirio that speak their own languages and also speak Portuguese to understand, communicate, get rights and interact with other people because they are inserted in an immersive context in relation to the languages which in their own community they speak the native language and at the urban center they have to speak other language (GENESE, 2008).

2.2 THE IMMERSION METHOD

Despite living in a multilingual world, which a community is influenced by other indirect and direct way, most of the people does not speak other language as second, third or

fourth language (TUCKER; DUBINER, 2008). Equally, becoming bilingual, learning other languages, it is still viewed quite often, particularly in Canada and United States, as “problematic, difficult and undesirable”. In contrast, these countries are growing in terms of numbers (demographically) and with that the growing of diversity, both culturally and linguistically (TUCKER; DUBINER, 2008). The lack of learning other languages does not exclude the real need of it and this is one of the reasons that is important to have methods really effective of learning other languages.

About the teaching and learning of languages, the immersion education is a method widely granted. Increasingly, we can perceive increased demand for bilingual schools and teachers that seek not to use the traditional method of teaching as grammar translation tightly based in grammar and in the translation of the L1 to L2, direct method which focused on conversational skill but many times out of context, or the audiolingual method that give the emphasis to listening and speaking and many repetition (FLORIO-HANSEN, 2018). On the other hand, the immersion method can be an effective alternative for who have the objective to learn in an active way developing the skills needed in learning of a foreign language.

The language immersion education in a modern version as pointed by Starr (2017), is a category in dual language education and was firstly perceived in the 1960s in Canada. Canada’s foreign language immersion program model started during discussions between a small group of discontented English-speaking parents. Concerning about the rising importance of French and the bilingualism (English French) “they determined to create a more effective way to develop their English-speaking children’s bilingualism and biliteracy” (FORTUNE; TEDICK, 2008, p. 5). Then, the students had the option to learn the L2 in French immersion schools where all the instruction happened in L2 in the first grades and in the course of time the L1 was also used. In this manner, the student could have better results than the achievements at conventional foreign languages courses (few hours of instruction per week).

Looking for define the term, Starr (2017) points out that the conventional language immersion education model the student learns the language by content teaching on school as history or math and not separately. However, Starr (2017) add that the issue of the conventional immersion method does not prepared the students for real situations of conversation in L2, this because the learners just had contact with the teacher speaking formally. Nevertheless, language immersion nowadays, is more used concerning to specialized programs that the language taught (L2) is not a dominant of the community that where the learner is inserted (STARR, 2017).

In the 90s, “some researchers referred to ‘two-way bilingual immersion’ or simply ‘two-way immersion’; others used identifiers such as ‘dual language’ or ‘dual language

immersion'. However, today is more used 'dual language education'. About which, we can mention 3 models: one-way immersion programs for majority language students (foreign language immersion programs), developmental bilingual education for minority language students and two-way immersion programs for majority and minority language students Genesee (2008).

In the one-way immersion programs, "the students are taught academic subjects and literacy skills through a second language as well as through their native language". It can be partial which the minimum is 50% of instruction is in the foreign language, and total immersion that 100% of instruction is provided in the second language. As Genesee (2008, p. 28) "all the students in one-way immersion programs are speakers of the societally-dominant language." Moreover, this program of immersion depending on the grade that is provided can be called early, delayed and late immersion which respectively when the immersion started in the kindergarten or grade 1, middle elementary or early high school grades.

In developmental bilingual education "all the students are native speakers of a minority language" (e.g. Brazilians in the US), "and the native language along with the majority language (English in the case of the US) are used for instructional purposes, both academic and literacy instructional." About the two-way immersion program, Fortune and Tedick (2008) describe as the "amalgam" of the other two programs which "half of the students in each class are members of the majority language group" (e.g. Brazilians speakers in Brazil) and "half are members of a minority language program" (e.g. English speakers). All these programs explained have the objective to promote the bilingualism and biliteracy.

Other characteristic of dual language education is "the integration of language learning with content learning and instruction" (FORTUNE; TEDICK; WALKER, 2008). According to them, CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) is an example of this approach when the subject is taught through the target language whereas provides to learner the acquisition of language focusing on the subject/meaning. The content-based language instruction provides social interaction in class and outside inside the school when the students have the opportunity to learn using the language for interpersonal social reasons.

Therefore, in immersion education language, culture and content are integrated. This method has interactional dynamics that "encourage peer-peer communication" and "cooperative learning techniques" which "seek to build more equitable and socially respectful students relationships" (FORTUNE; TEDICK, 2008, p. 10). About childhood language acquisition, the immersion method in this regard is going to be explored below.

2.3 LANGUAGE ACQUISITION THROUGH IMMERSION METHOD IN CHILDHOOD

First, there are two main concepts about the context that we must keep in mind which will imply in the conception of language learning: The EFL and ESL context.

Basically, EFL means English a Foreign Language where the person is inserted in a context which the English is not the main language to be used in communication. Thus, it happens on non-English speaking countries. In contrast, ESL means essentially English as a Second Language when the learn of the language occurs on English speaking countries (QUIRK, 1995).

These concepts are important because depending on the context that they are inserted there is a considerable impact on the student's profiles. When the students are learning EFL, they share another language (L1) and can communicate, give instructions on the first language, they are not immersed on the target language and have limited contact with English outside of the classroom (SIFAKIS; TSANTILA, 2019). On the other hand, in an ESL context, everything around the student is in the target language, generally the students just have the target language to communicate with each other and the teacher. Thus, the main point in these definitions is not how the language is taught but where the language is taught, thus it is about the context.

In the sense of learning English as a second language, children learn the language in a more natural way that is possible not existing differences with respect to the time or period of acquisition of each language. According to De Houwer (2009), "Bilingual First Language Acquisition (BFLA) is the development of language in young children who hear two languages spoken to them from birth", in other words, "BFLA children are learning two first languages." It is important to emphasize that the bilingual children do not has to speak fluently necessarily two languages, they can understand both, but they can speak just one of the languages and can be called passive bilingual (DE HOWER, 2009). However, it is normal and more frequent children which grow up in a bilingual environment/context, can understand and speak both.

In addition, De Hower (2009) mentioned that we must consider some aspects as production and comprehension because in contrast to the fact that the child be fluent in both of languages, might not mean that the level of comprehension and production is equally well. Unfortunately, to measure the level of the first aspect is more difficult in reason of there is not many studies about it. The second, respectively and in opposed, there is more evidence to prove the differences between one language and other, that is why we can have the Language Alpha (can be the main language which the speaker is more fluent in) and Language A (the language that the speaker do product as well as language alpha).

In this sense, we can conclude that learn languages in a bilingual – or multilingual – context, where we have English as the Second Language (ESL), provide acquisition in a more natural way even if we have Early Second Language Acquisition (ESLA) which as De Houwer (2009) points out is when the “monolingual children’s environment change in such a way that they start to hear a second language (L2) with some regularity over and above their first language (L1), which can happen on day care or preschool years. At the same time, learn a language as foreign in a context that the learner is not inserted in an environment where he or she does not have are not completely immersed in the target language, where everything he or she see and listen is on their first language can be a challenge.

About the process of a child’s language learning, O’Grady (2005) pointed that “children can make and hear contrasts among dozen of speech sounds, they have learned thousands of words without having a heard a single definition, and they are able to build and understand sentences of impressive complexity.” It can be observed when a person is learning the first language, that can be happen primarily in an ESL context with two languages. That’s why is so important to have an effective method of teaching and learning which can provide acquisition even in a place that does not have the English as the Second Language but as a Foreign Language (EFL).

Although the age of acquisition in learning a foreign language is not a criteria for the success, learning a language in the childhood become easier because of a series of factors as plasticity of the brain, motivation, memory and facility of interaction of the children (SHRUM; GLISAN, 2016). Still, to be truly effective, the immersion method must be linked to a comprehensible input.

2.4 INPUT AS ROLE MODEL

According to Zhang (2009, p. 91), “in language learning, input is the language data which the learner is exposed to”. Thus, it is positive that the input is crucial for language acquisition (GASS; MACKEY, 2007). On the word of Krashen (1981), linguist of undeniable influence in studies and researches of language acquisition and the Input Hypothesis, to have achievement in L2A (Second language acquisition), is necessary principally the exposure to a comprehensible input.

As Polat (2016) “understanding the nature of defining elements of input is a prerequisite to the ability to make input comprehensible”. In a dialogue and communication in general, to comprehend and be understood in an effectively way, we really need to know the codes and units of the language that is talked. In this sense, Polat (2016) gave this example:

“For instance, at the most basic communicative level, a child and a parent have to agree on the meaning of the utterance ‘I’m hungry’ to result in the parent giving the child food.” That’s the same in other contexts and situations for example on our daily lives, academic world with scientific communication that is used “technical terms (*register*), constitute a commonly shared basis for scientific communication among professionals in closely related fields.” (POLAT, 2016). Moreover, according to his view, input is usually used to state to “all language samples that are available to a learner in a context.”.

In addition, Met (2008) points out that the comprehension is visibly a very important step. In that way, in an immersion context one can make use of strategies to support language with the use of the visuals as “body language, pictures, diagrams, manipulatives, illustrations, overhead transparencies, graphic organizers (including charts or timelines) and concrete objects”. These strategies are going to make a comprehensible input and in consequence, facilitate the acquisition of language, the learn of vocabulary by context, deduction, etc.

As Zhang (2009), the input, interaction and output are interconnected in language acquisition. In his view, be in contact with listening and reading materials is important to receive comprehensible input, but he adds that the input alone is not enough for effective learning. In agreement, Shrum and Glisan (2016) point out that the interaction is crucial to the input. Therefore, we must recognize the importance of have really comprehensible input also because if it is not comprehensible, in other words, when a person in an immersion context is just listening and reading the language and does not understand at all, the target language is going to be just a noise. That can happen in the immersion method and it is why just being and living in foreign country that have the target language as a L1 not always provide a second language acquisition. Thus, the immersion method is good, but without a comprehensible input (CI) is not effective.

In words of Zhang (2009), when input is negotiated and in interaction the subject produces output, he/she selects parts of “comprehensible input and choose correct linguistic form to express themselves. This process makes it possible for the learners to internalize what they have learnt and experienced”. Accordingly, the CI pertains to processing and output production in the same way that the output is an instrument of the feedback and let the teacher know the students understanding of the subject. As Shrum and Glisan (2016), “by working toward comprehension, language input is made available for intake, cognitive inspection, and thus acquisition.”

3 METHODS

The purpose of this paper is to describe the development of a 10-year-old child in acquiring a foreign language in an immersion context from her sister and also the researcher, who is going to report and analyze by a case study, the process of input (how the subject receives the language) and output (oral production and feedback) during a period of two months.

The child, named here JS, is 10 years old. JS was born in a small city of the South of Brazil and live in a small town of Amazon region since 4. Her family is composed of Brazilians who have Portuguese as the L1. Then the language that the subject has been exposed to is Portuguese. Her sister has been studying English for the last 4 years and has advanced level of proficiency, though, she has never taught her. The subject has never been in another country, with a person that talks in English to her or even an English teacher. She is on the 5th grade on a school of regular education, that currently is a public school and does not provide a foreign language in the school curriculum for the elementary level. Thus, the subject's prior knowledge, in other words, the vocabulary that she knows is from her curiosity on looking for information on internet, watching videos from YouTube for a few times.

The methodology of research used for data collection was a case study that, according to Yin (2015), investigates a phenomenon considering its context, that is, performs an analysis under the real conjuncture. Thus, the approach is qualitative and quantitative considering the use of observation table with notes about the subject's development (BARDIN, 2011) and also tables that show in numbers and percentage the subject's results and progress (FACHIN, 2003). respectively.

Data Collection

The instruments for data collection in this research are placement test (annex 2) and observation tables (appendix 1).

The placement test used is from Cambridge English Qualifications, in a international scale.

The observation table was used from September to November 2019 during a period of 2 months and a half, mainly in home environment but also in other places when we went out on restaurants, on the way of school, park, supermarket. In the moments of production, notes were taken and then recorded in the observation table. Specifically, in home environments, the observation table was used in the afternoons and evenings because JS had to go to school on mornings and twice a week to Kumon in the afternoons.

3.1. Data collection procedures

Placement test

The test used in this research is a Cambridge Assessment English that take into consideration a scale/levels according to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) which is a series of skill descriptions that can be applied to any language, in this research, the English language (UCLES, 2019). These descriptors can be used to set clear goals for language learning achievements, help define language proficiency levels, and interpret language qualifications. It has become accepted as a way of assessing language ability, not only in Europe but worldwide, and plays a central role in language policy and education.

In other words, it is an international standard for defining language competence. It describes language skill on a six-point scale, from A1 for beginners, up to C2 for those who have conquered a language. JS was submitted a Pre A1 Starters Level considering her age and level of proficiency. The test applied seek to evaluate the subject's English level before the immersion period. Thus, the same test was applied on the end of the process to check subject achievements (UCLES, 2019).

Pre A1 Starters is the first of three Cambridge English Qualifications designed for young learners. These tests introduce children to their everyday English writing and speaking skills and are excellent for gaining confidence and improving their language skills (UCLES, 2019). The tests are designed based on familiar subjects and focus on the skills required for effective English communication through listening, listening, reading and writing practices. This test is applied for approximately 45 minutes with 3 phases that are Listening, Reading and Writing and Speaking. The Listening stage has 5 parts with 5 questions each stage; Reading and Writing have 5 parts with 5 questions each stage and then is a Speaking stage when the subject answers some questions are asked by the people who are evaluating. In this research the test had been applied by the sister. It is important to consider that in this test there is no pass or fail and it is just to show the evolution of the subject.

Observation table

The observation table is an instrument of data collect with a qualitative approach (BARDIN, 2011) and was used for taking notes of the subject's production (output) during the input, and the spontaneous productions when JS was not specifically being stimulated to talk in English. Thus, it is possible to perceive if the input was comprehensible or not. The table was used in a period of two months and a half. Most part of the input happened in home

environment. However, there were moments of production outside that showed that the subject received a comprehensible input and then, I took notes of it in the observation table.

This instrument of data collect worked in this way: the table is divided in 10 columns that seek to explain the entire context in which the subject's production occurred that are 1) N* Data, 2) Week, 3) Date, 4) Production (P) and Comprehension (C), 5) Situation, 6) Word/sentence, 7) Input language (E=English) or (P=Portuguese), 8) Success (Y=Yes), (N=No) or (P=Partially), 9) Output language (P=Portuguese) or (E=English) and 10) Output production which means respectively the number of the data to facilitate the listing and verification; the number of the week and the date, then, I can also verify the evaluation of the subject; If it was a situation of production or comprehension; The situation to contextualize the learning; The word or sentence that was said that generated the production; If the input was in Portuguese or in English; If was successful or not and even a partial success; If the output language was in English or in Portuguese and what was produced by JS.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

First placement test

The test was applied for the first time in the afternoon of September 15th at home to expose the level of English proficiency before the period of the research. Aiming at demonstrating the results of the subject, it was made three tables considering the parts of the test that is divided in 3 parts: Listening, with 20 questions; Reading and Writing, composed of 5 questions and lastly; Speaking that is a conversation with the researcher asking questions about the image on the test, the objects and some questions related to the subject, her own information. The tables have four columns, one to each part of the test: Listening, reading/writing and speaking.

First, the listening part focused on the learner's understanding. As we can see in the table below, the level of hits of the subject was higher than the level of mistakes.

Table 1: Cambridge Assessment first test results – LISTENING.

Listening	Date	Hits (%)	Mistakes (%)
(0-100%)	September 15 th	70	30

Source: Author (2019)

Although the subject has never taken English class at school or a specific course to learn English, she has free internet access and know how to look for videos that teach English vocabulary and sometimes asked her sister to tell her how to say some word in English. JS lives with her sister who has been studying English for the last 4 years at college. This situation may have aroused her interest about the language. Learning happens through interaction with others and significant coexistence with knowledge (SCHLATTER & GARCEZ, 2012). It is also important to take into consideration that the level of difficulty of the test is the most basic, Pre A1 Starters (UCLES, 2018).

As we can in the Table 2, in the reading and writing part, the level of hits was considered lower than the listening part. Indeed, the subject did not have experience in writing and reading in English language before the period of this research. At the same time, in the test were a lot of images and cognate words that the subject could recognize and relate to them. In this sense, Groot (2015) points out that associate a word to the image and the meaning is a step of the acquisition a L2.

Table 2: Cambridge Assessment first test results – READING AND WRITING

Reading and Writing	Date	Hits (%)	Mistakes (%)
	September 15 th	56	44

Author (2019)

In contrast, the performance of JS in the speaking part, in the test applied for the first time was lower than the other two parts. The table was divided differently of the others concerning to the subjectivism of this part. Thus, there are 7 columns. The first is to identify which skill is being evaluated; Second, the date; Third, number of questions and requests that were made; Fourth, the number of questions that were answered correctly, of which the subject fulfilled the request or answered orally; Fifth, questions which the subject answered, but the answers showed that she did not understand; Sixth column, part reserved to the number of questions that the subject showed the understand the question but did not how to answer fully; Seventh, number of unanswered questions.

Table 3: Cambridge Assessment first test results – SPEAKING

Speaking	Date	Number of Questions	Questions	Questions	Questions	No
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	questions and requests	answered correctly	answered wrongly	answered partially	answer
Sep. 15 th	28	12	9	2	4

Source: Author (2019)

There were 28 questions and requests that the subject should have answered. Of the questions that were answered correctly, most of that she could only 1-word utterances. Below we can see two examples of questions asked that had this kind of structure.

25th question:

Sister: Do you have a big family?

JS: Yes!

15th question:

Sister: JS, Tell me about these shoes.

JS: Black.

Thus, in this moment, the subject cannot produce complete sentences yet. JS has never been induced to talk in English and her interest before the research about the language is just to learn vocabulary, isolated words, which can be proved on the previous test.

Observation table

The data collected during the process of immersion by an observation table was structured in a table that embrace the months of collection (September, October and November). There were 37 fragments of information collected during a period of two months and a half that here is going to be exposed 11 parts which are considered relevant for this research.

Table 4: Observation table data analysis.

Data	Date	Situation	Input/Dialogue	Understanding (Y=Yes, N=No, P=Partially)	Production
A	SEP 16 th	Sister asked JS to close the door.	<i>Sister: JS, can you close the door, please?</i>	N	-

B	SEP 18 th	Sister asked JS to turn off the light.	<i>Sister: JS, turn off the light before you go to the kitchen!</i> <i>JS: Oi?</i> <i>Sister take JS's hand and say again while is turning off the light.</i> <i>JS: Ah! Ok!</i>	P	1-word sentence
C	SEP 21 st	Talking in the room.	<i>JS: Class!</i> <i>Sister: Ok! So, close the door.</i> <i>JS: Yes! (JS ran and closed the door).</i>	Y	1-word sentence
D	SEP 29 th	Looking for cellphone's mother	<i>Sister: Where is mom's cellphone?</i> <i>JS: Acho que não está no carro.</i>	Y	-
E	OCT 1 st	Playing twister (looking at the roulette indicating the next step of the game that has no written instructions.	<i>JS: Right hand, green!</i>	Y	3-words sentence.
F	OCT 5 th	Playing UNO	<i>Sister: Seven cards for you! One, two... What is the next?</i> <i>JS: Three, four, five, six and seven!</i>	Y	5-words sentence.
G	OCT 7 th	Singing a song	<i>JS: It is hard.</i>	-	3 words sentence.
H	OCT 13 th	Talking about family members	<i>JS: Maninha, you is my best friend!</i>	-	5 words sentence.
I	NOV 6 th	Talking in the garden	<i>Sister: What's your cat's name, JS?</i> <i>JS: Sugar! You are sweet, Sugar!</i>	Y	5 words sentence.
J	NOV 19 th	Playing a game	<i>Sister: Oh, no! I fell!</i> <i>JS: Uhul! I win! I am amazing!</i>	Y	5 words sentence.
K	NOV 25 th	JS leaving the room	<i>JS: Open the door and close the door.</i>	-	8 words sentence.

Zhang (2009), discussing about the role of input in language acquisition, affirms the importance of the input also be comprehensible. In Data A, the input was not understandable for the subject. In this moment, she has never been exposed to this structure yet and although she knows the word “door”, she had never listened this word in a sentence, in other words, in a context. Consequently, she could not make any production about the request.

Similarly, concerning to the Data B, the input occurred, however at first, the subject did not understand. Then the sister interacted with JS, speaking and acting, so that the input became understandable. As Zhang (2009) input and interaction must be linked so that the input becomes understandable and output takes place which in this case occurred in the target language with a 1-word utterance considering that the word “Ok” wasn't part of JS's everyday vocabulary.

Data C shows the initiative to talking in English, asking for have class with a 1-word sentence. As stated by O' Grady (2005) “children are most likely to talk freely and naturally when they are in a familiar place (like home) with people who they know well”. This was the context that JS was inserted learning the target language. Then, when her sister gave a condition to attend what she wanted, JS speak 1-word utterance responding the question and request also indicating that she realized the input provided.

Data D is related to the need to communication when she resorts to mother tongue to answer a question of her sister. According to Gordon (year) there are many researches that treats of the behavior of the children when they are beginning to speak on a L2 in an immersion context. In her view, “this strategy is known as *home language*”. JS is 10 years old and “have already acquired some mastery of their mother tongue”. Therefore, it is common to recourse to the mother tongue in second language acquisition.

In Data E, the subject is giving instructions to her sister just looking at images and deducing the meaning. So, the input was not provided orally but only by images. In addition, in this game the repetition of the instructions is very strong. In the case of repetition in the acquisition of the second language, Swain & Lapkin (2008) considerate this strategy, concerning the improvement of the learner's performance with additional opportunities to firm the input.

Shrum and Glisan (2016) recognize the importance of interacting with others as a criterion to have an achievement on language learning of children. They pointed out that a

collaborative learning can be a collaborative and social achievement. In Data F it is possible to perceive that the subject was induced to collaborate with the sister. About it is said “collaboration allows students to use language to mediate their language learning, because in collaboration students use language to reflect on the language they are learning” (SHRUM; GLISAN, 2016). Concerning to the input, the subject could understand that the researcher was asking her to continue to count the number of cards. Regarding production, the subject said 5 words.

From Data G, JS starts to say small sentences of 3 words. In the moment of this production, the sister was making a kind of game, which the subject had to try to sing while obeyed commands from her sister as “jump”, “run” and “dance”. Even doing other things, she could answer the commands correctly and produced a correct structure of sentence. When the learners are singing songs and inventing that too, playing games, “they are engaging in ludic play, and are mediating learning as a result of reflecting upon language, exploring the language, and learning it” (SHRUM; GLISAN, 2016). According to them, all of this participated of the L1 acquisition and can also contribute to L2. They add that the humor is important to engage the students and keep them motivated to learn. Thus, the affective activities as games made the subject to feel engaged and comfortable to talk and interact in English and the input in these situations can maximize the L2 acquisition.

In Data H, according to Gordon (2007) can be classified as bilingual discourse which happens “when bilingual discourse is being used, young children initiate an exchange in their home language and adults or other children respond in theirs”. About the structure produced by JS have 5-words utterance that semantically is not correct. In the moment of this output the subject were having a conversation (input) about the family members using sentences as “the father is nice” and “the sister is angry”. Then, the subject thought that could use the same structure for the sentence that she produced instead of “you are my best friend”. Indeed, Gordon (2007) affirms that “learners make these errors in the process of *Creative Construction*, that is, the process whereby the learner analyzes the target language and creates a hypothesis as to what its morphological and syntactic rules might be all about”.

In contrast, in Data I had an evolution in terms that structure and number of the words produced. Concerning to the input, the subject already demonstrate facility in understand the question made by the sister. In the same way, in Data J and Data K, which JS was exposed a comprehensible input and could produce 5 and 8-words sentences respectively. The evolution of the subject occurred precisely because of the input and the exposure to the target language through the immersion context.

Final placement test

The same test that was applied on the beginning of the process in September 15th, has been applied on the end of the immersion context period, in November 29th. Unlike the tables made in the topic of placement applied for the first time on data collection analysis and to compare the results of each time that the test was applied three tables were made with the difference that there is also the previous result. Therefore, only one line was added to place the final test result.

The listening and reading/writing tables has four columns and two lines to compare the results in both tests. The table was divided in: Listening/Reading and Writing (part of the test to be exposed), Date (first and last date that the test was applied), Hits (the level of hits in percentage) and Mistakes (the level of mistakes in percentage).

As we can see in the Table 5, the final result of the test in listening skill was higher than the first test applied. Then, there is an evolution in this skill after the period of immersion context.

Table 5: Cambridge Assessment final test results - LISTENING

Listening (0 – 100%)	Date	Hits (%)	Mistakes (%)
	September 15 th	70	30
	November 29 th	95	5

Source: Author (2019)

According to Met (2008), once students have detected a word in the input, they have to repeatedly retrieve it from memory. In her words, this retrieve can be receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing). The subject had gone through the testing stage before and had had experiences with the same vocabulary in the immersion period in another context. Then, JS retrieved from memory the vocabulary and structures acquired by the input provided by her sister in different ways and situations and finally showed progress in listening skill.

In Table 6, we can see progress in reading and writing skills as well. As well as the analyze of the test applied for the first time, the improvement was not as extensive as the others because the skills most worked by her sister were listening and speaking skills by input. It is important to emphasize that the daily activities of the subject do not involve many reading and writing tasks. However, these skills were not excluded and the progress is evident.

Table 6: Cambridge Assessment final test results - READING AND WRITING

Reading and Writing (%)	Date	Hits (%)	Mistakes (%)
	September 15 th	56	44
	November 29 th	60	40

Source: Author (2019)

Students learning the second language can know the meaning of many new words just by knowing their native language (MET, 2008). For learners who have native and new languages related in some way, cognates can really be a source of vocabulary and even recognizing the affixes per example. In addition to recognizing the vocabulary she already knew, JS made use of these strategies at the time of testing.

The last part of the test is to evaluate the speaking skill. As others, it was made a table with the results obtained in the first test. Below, it is possible to see the great progress of JS in this skill.

Table 7: Cambridge Assessment final test results - SPEAKING

Date	Number of questions and requests	Questions answered correctly	Questions answered wrongly	Questions answered partially	No answer
Sep. 15 th	28	12	9	2	4
Nov. 29 th	25	23	0	2	0

Source: Author (2019)

In the Table 7, we can perceive that the number of questions and requests changed from one result to other. The number of questions asked in the first test is higher than the last one. This is because of the subjectivity of the test and the interview. Nevertheless, this factor will not impair or alter its analysis because the difference between the number of questions is not large.

Concerning to the questions answered correctly, JS showed great progress. At first, the subject would make sentences of 1 and 2-words and in the final test JS could made more complex sentences, from 1-word to 11-word utterances as we can verify in the examples below:

First test – 21st question:

Sister: Which sports do you like?

JS: Voley.

Final test - 17th question:

Sister: Tell me about the chair.

JS: The chair is next to the table. The chair is red.

There is no answer that showed that JS did not understand the questions and make sentences totally equivocated. The input in the moment of the test was comprehensible also because of the time of exposure to the target language before the test. All the terms in the level of the Pre A1 Starters were known by the subject and it create confidence to answer correctly (UCLES, 2018). In addition, the development of oral production is closely tied to a comprehensible input with interaction what occurred in the period of immersion context (ZHANG, 2009).

The number of questions answered partially do not change. Still, the structures of the sentences produced by JS were more complete which is proved in the following examples:

First test - 25th question:

Sister: JS, tell me about the clock.

JS: Blue, é 8:45.

Final test - 15th question:

Sister: What do you like to eat for lunch?

JS: Pasta wis (with) cheese.

On the first example, JS shows that understood the request but did not have vocabulary to answer the question on the target language, then, she used her mother language. The answer was considered partially correct because she understood the question and give one adjective in English. Relating to the second example, there was a mistake of pronunciation of the word “with”. Though, she also demonstrated that realized what the sister wanted to know and tried answer with a more complex structure than the answer in the first example.

About the unanswered questions, JS on the final test answered all the questions and requests while on the first test, remained silent in four of the questions which means that she had at least a general idea of what was being requested and understood most of all the questions

made.

The speaking part of the test also involves the listening skill. This happens in the moment that input occurs and the kind of questions that was made. The Table 8 can show this in a more enlightening way concerning to JS' understanding and the understanding that generated production in the final test.

Table 8: Understanding and understanding with oral production – SPEAKING – Final Test

Speaking	Understanding	Understanding and oral production
	6	19

Source: Author (2019)

There were 6 requests that JS showed understanding and 19 questions that were answered, of which 7 answers was 1-word utterance; 4 utterances of 2 words, 2 utterances of 3 words, 1 utterance of 4 words, 2 utterances of 5 words, 1 utterance of 6 words and 1 utterance 11 words. JS can exchange information on familiar topics using simple phrases which include some correct structures. She uses isolated words but can make simple utterances associated with the level A1. The immersion method involves interaction, and this will cause impact on learner. “Productive retrieval requires students to recall words and their meanings from storage and use them in their output” (MET, 2008). Thus, the input provided on the period of immersion, was comprehensible in the test and create a production (output).

FINAL REMARKS

This research aimed to reflect, through a case study, about the role of input in foreign language acquisition, in this case, the English language, using the immersion method creating a context in this sense, where the child would receive input as much as possible provided by her sister and, therefore, check her development in this acquisition by the analyze of her understanding and production.

According to the analyze of data collect we can perceive that the subject has a linear and constant evolution in terms of understanding. Before the period of input through the immersion method, she could understand only familiar words and after the study she started to

understand more complex sentences. The input provided by sister and the use of techniques used to make it understandable led to the development of the subject in the listening skill as demonstrated in the final result of the assessment test.

The data collected shows that at times comprehension of the input generated output, in other words, the production, which was spontaneous or in a situation when her sister was talking to her in the target language. Input was based on the subject using what was acquired by her through input, that is, output through interaction in this context of immersion. Thus, in terms of production, before being submitted to an immersion context with input in English language, the subject could produce sentences of 1 word and in the end of the period she was able to produce sentences of up to 11 words because the input provided to her through immersion context which was exposed for 2½ months, during this research.

Concerning the reading and writing, the progress was not as extensive as the other skills because most of all the tasks developed by the subject were not with this focus. Although, some activities with as read books and write letters could be introduced so that there would be further progress in these skills as well.

Concatenated arguments converged for the feasibility of applying the immersion method linked to a comprehensible input as foreign language acquisition strategy. It is expected that the analyzes and discussions presented will remain and this research will be amplified, so that it contributes in the area of the immersion method and the role of input.

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ANNEX – Informed Consent

TERMO DE ASSENTIMENTO LIVRE E ESCLARECIDO PARA MENORES DE IDADE

Caro Responsável/Representante Legal:

Gostaríamos de obter o seu consentimento para o menor _____, participar como voluntário da pesquisa intitulada Insira neste campo o título da sua pesquisa, que se refere a um projeto de (Escolha uma categoria) O(s) objetivo(s) deste estudo Informe neste campo o que pretende conhecer e obter com a sua pesquisa.. Os resultados contribuirão para Informe neste campo a relevância e a justificativa da pesquisa.

A forma de participação consiste em Descrever neste campo com linguagem acessível os procedimentos que serão utilizados, bem como os métodos alternativos, caso existam, enfim, qual o caminho a ser percorrido para condução da pesquisa.

O nome não será utilizado em qualquer fase da pesquisa o que garante o anonimato e a divulgação dos resultados será feita de forma a não identificar os voluntários.

Não será cobrado nada, não haverá gastos decorrentes de sua participação, se houver algum dano decorrente da pesquisa, o participante será indenizado nos termos da Lei.

Considerando que toda pesquisa oferece algum tipo de risco, nesta pesquisa o risco pode ser avaliado como: (Escolha uma categoria) e descreva os possíveis desconfortos e riscos decorrentes da participação na pesquisa.

São esperados os seguintes benefícios da participação: Informe neste campo os benefícios imediatos ao menor voluntário pela participação.

Gostaríamos de deixar claro que a participação é voluntária e que poderá deixar de participar ou retirar o consentimento, ou ainda descontinuar a participação se assim o preferir, sem penalização alguma ou sem prejuízo de qualquer natureza.

Desde já, agradecemos a atenção e a da participação e colocamo-nos à disposição para maiores informações.

Esse termo terá suas páginas rubricadas pelo pesquisador principal e será assinado em duas vias, das quais uma ficará com o participante e a outra com pesquisador principal. Insira neste campo o nome completo, endereço e telefone do Pesquisador Principal.

Eu, _____ (nome do responsável ou representante legal), portador do RG nº: _____, confirmo que Insira neste campo o(s) nome(s) do(s) Pesquisador(es) explicou-me os objetivos desta pesquisa, bem como, a forma de participação. As alternativas para participação do menor _____ (nome do participante da pesquisa menor de idade) também foram discutidas. Eu li e compreendi este Termo de Consentimento, portanto, eu concordo em dar meu consentimento para o menor participar como voluntário desta pesquisa.

Local e data: _____, de _____ de 20__ .

(Assinatura responsável ou representante legal)

Eu, _____ (nome do membro da equipe que
apresentar o TCLE) obtive de forma apropriada e voluntária o Consentimento Livre e
Esclarecido do sujeito da pesquisa ou representante legal para a participação na pesquisa.

(Assinatura do membro da equipe que apresentar o TCLE)

(Identificação e assinatura do pesquisador responsável)