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Szakdolgozat

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angol nyelv és kultúra tanára – magyar nyelv és irodalom tanár

osztatlan tanári mesterszak

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Szakdolgozat

A történet alapú módszer hatásai az idegennyelvi tanórákon

The effect of story-based teaching in the second language classroom

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Eredetiségi nyilatkozat

Alulírott Szabó Petra (A6IE2Q) ezennel kijelentem és aláírásommal megerősítem, hogy az ELTE angol nyelv és kultúra – magyar nyelv és irodalom tanári mesterszakján írt jelen diplomamunkám saját szellemi termékem, melyet korábban más szakon még nem nyújtottam be szakdolgozatként, és amelybe mások munkáját (könyv, tanulmány, kézirat, internetes forrás, személyes közlés stb.) idézőjel és pontos hivatkozások nélkül nem építettem be.

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a hallgató aláírása

Abstract

As students become more and more overwhelmed by the expectations they face every day, educators are constantly searching for methods that can motivate them while transforming the classroom into a safe atmosphere where students are not afraid to be themselves. This thesis intends to investigate the effects on emotions and learning outcomes of a creative yet effective method, the story-based approach. Since this approach has several takes on implementing stories in the classroom, this study focuses on the usage of two of them in two different classrooms at different levels of proficiency. Data was collected via students' questionnaires, feedback sheets and classroom observation. The results indicate a strong relationship between the usage of stories and positive emotions, while also providing some data on the effectiveness for improving language skills. Students realise the potential of using stories for language acquisition, while expressing preference towards stories with certain aspects.

1 Introduction

In the 21st century, where students are desensitized by constant visual and auditory stimuli, finding new teaching techniques and strategies is becoming a pressing issue. The story-based method is an approach that might unravel the modern problem of unmotivated, bored, and burnt-out students. The interest in implementing stories in language education is based on the widespread idea that stories are a significant part of communication. By telling stories, we express emotions, convey meanings, and describe experiences and memories. In addition, telling stories has important educational values as well; it is motivating, enjoyable and it helps make sense of the world around us. Creating fictional and non-fictional stories can be a highly enjoyable process where students can use the language to create something they can be proud of (Inal & Cakir, 2014).

Research has been done in varying age groups, mainly with young or beginner learners and in different countries all over the world (Aura et al. 2020; Inal & Cakir 2014; Martínez, 2007; Mattheoudakis et al., 2007). My aim with this paper is to bring more material to the field and to try to investigate the implementation of the technique in a learning environment where students are more proficient and older than the participants of the pieces of research conducted before (Aura et. al. 2020; Mattheoudakis et al. 2007).

For this aim, the environment of the secondary grammar school where my teaching practice takes place provides an ideal opportunity to conduct this research. In this school, most of the students learn English at a higher level in their first year, hence the expectations students have to face can make learning a language a burden, instead of an exciting opportunity to acquire an important skill for their adult lives. This learning condition makes these students the perfect participants to introduce enjoyable and modern methods to. My students are in the 9th grade, being at an age between children and adolescents. Since there has been research mainly in groups of younger learners, my students can be the perfect participants to implement the technique in the case of an age group not yet studied extensively.

Considering these factors, my study proposes to investigate the effectiveness of the story-based approach and its influence for creating positive affect during English lessons. This paper focuses on theories and previously carried out research in connection to story-based methods, as well as the effect of positive affect on learning outcomes. Moreover, it shows the result of a classroom-research connected to two story-based approaches done in two groups in differing levels of English proficiency. Since this is not an extensive piece of

research with a large number of participants, it should be noted that measuring effectiveness in connection to positive affect can only be carried out in restricted ways.

All in all, this research focuses on a relatively new approach of ELT, the story-based method, concentrating on the effects it imposes on adolescents, an age group which has not been yet studied extensively in connection with the given approach.

2 Theoretical background

The story-based approach is a teaching method not yet extensively investigated. The approach itself involves different aspects of methodologies of the usage of stories in the classroom which differ in core learning conditions but not in their aims (Aura et al. 2020). Hence, it is important to highlight the methods' main purpose in developing language skills and draw up differences between the aspects of the approach.

The story-based approach aims to be effective in improving language skills; however, it also proposes an enjoyable way of language acquisition. Research shows that certain types of teaching methods are both enjoyable and effective which highly affect the learning outcomes of the students. Affect has been described as one of the key elements in successful language development which proves that students' feelings and emotions should also be the focus of language research.

Considering these factors, it is essential to review the different aspects of story-based teaching, involving their aims in language development, as well as their effect on students' emotions and feelings.

2.1 The role of affect

Studies have shown that affect is one of the most crucial components in second language acquisition that determines learning outcomes. Affect consists of emotions, defined as "intense and short-lived", and moods which are "low-intensity and having little cognitive content" elements (Imai, 2010). Imai (2010) argues that these two constituents are not solely caused by the individual's inner psyche, but they are constructed in situations where students engage in activities while communicating with each other.

The factor of affect in second language learning has been at the centre of interest among theorists which can be seen in Krashen's affective filter theory as well. This theory states that negative emotions such as lack of motivation, stress, and anxiety can block cognition, causing poor performance in the second language (Masciantonio, 1988). Hence, it is

essential for language educators to create an atmosphere in the classroom which triggers positive emotions.

One of the most researched aspects of student affect is language learning anxiety, which was investigated in research by Horwitz & Young (1991). However, Green (1993) states that almost no data has been provided to summarise students' attitudes towards second language activities. Research on anxiety can provide useful data, although, eliminating second language anxiety does not automatically indicate positive emotions.

Green (1993) carried out a study investigating the connection between enjoyment and effectiveness in the case of teaching techniques and strategies. He concluded that communicative and creative tasks were enjoyable and perceived as effective while traditional grammar and vocabulary tasks were also effective but not as enjoyable. The study, however, did not indicate the extent students believe that enjoyableness correlates with effectiveness.

As the story-based approach relies on communication between participants and is an effective tool of emotionalization (Glaser et al. 2009), it provides a great way to produce emotional responses that can positively affect language success. However, it is important to highlight that creating an atmosphere which provokes positive emotional response depends on other crucial constituents as well. Using the story-based approach can give an ideal basis for positive emotional response, however, educators need to create an atmosphere where students feel motivated and secure to fully utilise the advantages given by methods.

To be able to research positive affect in connection to effectiveness, it is crucial to investigate the aspects of a lesson which contribute to triggering positive student affect and perceived effectiveness.

2.1.1 Student motivation

In language teaching, students should be intrinsically motivated by the materials and techniques that are presented to them. Contrary to extrinsic motivation, in the case of intrinsic motivation, the reward is internal, such as joy or satisfaction (Dörnyei, 1994). Deci & Ryan (1985) argue that intrinsic motivation is possibly one of the most important elements in the educational process: "Intrinsic motivation is in evidence whenever students' natural curiosity and interest energise their learning. When the educational environment provides optimal challenges, rich sources of stimulation, and a context of autonomy, this motivational wellspring in learning is likely to flourish" (pp. 245). Dörnyei (1994) proposes a framework

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composed of three levels of student motivation in the classroom (*Language level, Learner level, Learning situation level*) and adds suggestions on achieving them.

One of these suggestions to target the *Learning situation level* is "Increasing students' interest and involvement in the task". This means introducing new, surprising, and interesting activities and elements that almost feel game-like to enhance students' willingness to use their imaginations and creativity, which will also engage their emotions (Dörnyei, 1994).

Another element of motivating students at the *Learning situation level* is "Facilitating student satisfaction" by allowing them to create a product they can be proud of. These products can be something they can display or present (Dörnyei, 1994).

The key elements of the *Learning situation level* are interest and relevance. These are important factors that contribute to student motivation in connection with the course material. Students are motivated if they feel that their desire to learn more about themselves and their environment is fulfilled. In connection to relevance, students should feel that the material is connected to their personal needs and values. This component also corresponds with instrumentality, which refers to the perceived effectiveness that contributes to achieving the aim of the course, in this case, second language proficiency (Dörnyei 1994).

2.1.2 Low-anxiety classrooms

Language anxiety has been given a lot of attention by scholars, since negative emotions seem to influence language acquisition. Young (1991) created a list of six factors that can be the source of language anxiety and gives suggestions to lower them to achieve a stress-free atmosphere in the classroom which will contribute to effective language acquisition and positive affect.

One of the key sources of anxiety is classroom procedures, which refers to the tasks and activities students are asked to do in a lesson. To lower anxiety during classroom procedures, Young (1991) suggests using language games since they emphasise problem-solving skills and reduce anxiety by creating interest, increasing motivation, and encouraging participation. Another way to lower anxiety is tailoring tasks to match the affective needs of the students, for example reducing stress during oral presentation. An effective way to achieve this is giving students space to practice in pairs or groups and preceding them with activities that build group rapport (Young 1991).

Creating a low-anxiety classroom by tailoring activities to meet student's emotional needs is essential in the study-based approach which is mainly based on oral presentation.

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To promote positive emotions which result in high levels of task-effectiveness the above-mentioned suggestions should be considered.

2.2 Usage of stories in the classroom

Teachers and educators have to face challenges in today's classrooms as groups and classes are becoming more heterogeneous. Additionally, students' attention spans have decreased radically due to the emergence of social media, video games, and video-sharing websites (Aura et al. 2020).

As these challenges are becoming more apparent, teachers need a set of tools and strategies to create a motivating environment for the student to promote learning. One approach that aims to solve these problems is the story-based approach.

Telling stories is one of the most ancient methods of communication which allows humans to make sense of the world around them (Diermyer & Blakesley 2009, Inal & Cakir, 2014). This tool is one of the best means to learn language, content, and cultural aspects, and solve everyday problems (Martínez, 2007). Stories also help with processing new information, making it more comprehensible, relevant, and relatable. If students can relate to the stories personally, they will be motivated and engaged by them (Aura et al., 2020). Brewster et al. (2002) also suggest that students can be personally involved in the plots since they identify with the characters of the story.

Mattheoudakis et al. (2007) argue that story-based teaching can create the ideal learning conditions since it provides comprehensible input which is a key element in Krashen's second language acquisition theory. This means that stories can be useful for several activities focusing on a variety of second language skills such as broadening vocabulary and introducing new structures.

2.3 What is the story-based approach?

2.3.1 Different methods

As new approaches begin to emerge to be able to satisfy the needs of heterogeneous classes, the role of positive affect has been in the centre of attention. As the previous sections list the possible and most dominant components of provoking positive affect, it seems that the usage of stories is highly suited to this SLA aim. This ideal combination created a new approach, which makes use of the characteristics of stories to help second language acquisition.

The story-based approach is based on the evidence that stories are inherent parts of everyday life and learning. They can carry different meanings, knowledge and emotions, making them the perfect teaching tool for educators (Diermyer & Blakesley, 2009). Over the years, different terminologies have been used to describe the approach such as *storytelling, narrative-centred learning environments, digital storytelling, interactive narratives*, or *storification*. These methods provide different types of strategies on how stories can be used in the classroom (Aura et al., 2020; Diermyer & Blakesley, 2009; McQiuggan et al., 2008).

Storytelling is an approach whose aim is to read, tell and listen to stories together, which will eventually enhance the receptiveness to the target language and its elements (Inal & Cakir, 2014). However, it can also be defined as the process of students creating fictional or non-fictional stories to convey information to the others. It should be highlighted that *storytelling* is not a one-way process, it is a co-creative activity in which the listener is also an active participant (Heathfield, 2015).

Narrative-centred learning environments (NLEs) are virtual environments that combine the context of a story with pedagogical support techniques to boost motivation, creating an engaging learning atmosphere (McQiuggan et al., 2008).

Digital storytelling refers to the action of creating personal narratives with the help of digital tools. Besides improving creative thinking and writing skills it aims to focus on visual and digital literacy as well, which is an essential skill to have in the 21st century (Diermyer & Blakesley, 2009).

The interactive narratives approach borrows characteristics from games and stories to create an environment where these two intersect. Interactive narratives create a system of stories where the reader can determine the ending giving the reader agency to increase engagement (Diermyer & Blakesley, 2009).

Storification emerged in connection with these story-based approaches; however, it refers to a more holistic use of stories as activities are wrapped inside a fictional or non-fictional narrative, so activities become more engaging and motivating for the students (Aura et al., 2020).

2.3.2 Characteristics of story-based methods

Glaser et al. (2009) list four characteristics that makes narrative-based knowledge acquisition different from traditional teaching methods: dramatization, emotionalization, personalisation, and fictionalisation.

Dramatization refers to the structure of the dramatic content (beginning, middle, end) including the complications, setbacks, and crises the main character is trying to eliminate. Lichtenstein & Brewer (1981) suggest that by dramatizing the contents of the story, students can be entertained and engaged with the activity, raising an emotional response as well. Deci & Ryan (1985) also found that behaviours connected to exploration and curiosity is highly motivating which triggers positive emotions. In addition, Glaser et al. (2009) suggests that dramatization can be achieved by making use of television contents as well. As series use cliff-hangers, and withhold information from the audience to build suspense, students' emotions can be stimulated the same way.

Emotionalization refers to two components; valence and arousal, which affect the emotional response connected to knowledge acquisition in different ways. Valence can have positive and negative sides which have different consequences towards knowledge acquisition. Positive emotion causes the student to be open to new experiences, people, or objects, hence broadening the width of attention. On the other hand, negative valence narrows the thought-action repertoire and focuses attention to specific actions. However, in the case of arousal levels, the intensity plays a more significant role in knowledge acquisition than the quality (negative or positive) of emotions provoked. According to Spies' hypothesis, new information is more attainable and acquirable when emotions trigger strong consolidation of learning material, moreover, emotionalization also helps making connections to existing knowledge (Glaser et al., 2009).

Personalisation is in the core of the narrative's nature: stories are about humans, so it means that recipients can take the subjective perspective and feel empathy for the character. Taking a perspective (cognitive component) and feeling empathy (affective component) are parts of identification which affect knowledge acquisition. By identifying with the characters, recipients become more engaged and interested in the story, hence acquiring knowledge in an effective way. However, it is important to highlight that studies suggest (Mayer 2005, Moreno & Mayer 2000) that conveying the narrative in a conversational style (addressing the student directly and using first and second person) is more effective than a formal style. Experiments by Moreno & Mayer (2000) show that using personalised instructions produced better problem-solving performance (Glaser et al., 2009).

Fictionalisation means closing visual gaps by adding fictional elements to factual content to help students acquire and remember the material more easily. A study by Glaser et al. (2012) suggests that fictionalisation can include visual content making it easier for the viewer to imagine educational materials facilitating construction of mental models.

However, fictionalisation can have negative consequences if the fictional elements are too believable, causing the recipient to confuse facts with fiction, leading to misconception and poorer understanding.

2.4 Approaches for the current research

As mentioned above, story-based teaching cannot be defined in one specific way, since the methodology includes different types of approaches making use of stories in different ways. In this research it was not possible to test each of the approaches hence two of them were selected to try in the classroom and make comparisons of the success of provoking positive affect that can result in effective language acquisition. Choosing the two ideal approaches for this research several conditions were considered.

First, the two approaches had to be different enough to be able to make a comparison and see the differences and similarities they may have on the learning process. Second, they had to be easy to implement given the conditions in the school where the research was being carried out. Finally, one approach had to be plausible to implement at any time during a lesson, and the other had to be a more holistic one that put the whole lesson or even sequences of lessons into context.

Given the mentioned conditions, two approaches were selected to be implemented in the classroom for this research. *Storytelling* is easily implemented and provides several opportunities for usage in the class at any time during the lesson. *Storification* is the approach which gives a holistic frame to the lesson; however, it can be easily implemented in almost any conditions.

2.4.1 Storytelling

Storytelling is a creative way of communication, which, besides being a motivator of language use in the classroom, provides a great opportunity for students to express themselves. *Storytelling* is not a one-way process; the listener behaves as an active participant who also influences the outcome of the story and gives direct or indirect feedback (Heathfield, 2015; Peck, 1989). As perception is as important as production in a *storytelling* activity, non-verbal communication bears a high importance. The storyteller tries to convey meaning as successfully as they can which results in the use of non-verbal signs as gestures, eye contact and facial expressions. On the listener's part, they need to perceive these non-verbal signs to fully understand the story and all its elements (Peck, 1989).

However, for students to become storytellers themselves, they need a model which is provided by the teacher. Hence, Heathfield (2015) argues that teachers should also become storytellers to encourage students to acquire this creative way of communication. Peck (1989) also claims that *storytelling* means that the teacher also becomes a storyteller besides the students. This gives space for students to become listeners, promoting listening comprehension, as well as creators of stories, promoting productive skills.

Storytelling is a great way to engage students and improve different language skills, but it is especially beneficial to learn new words incidentally. Inal & Cakir (2014) carried out a study where an experimental group was taught new vocabulary via *storytelling* while a control group was taught using a traditional method. They concluded that a story-based approach was more effective.

This study proposed to implement *storytelling* in the group where proficiency is higher. The reason for this is that encouraging students to create comprehensive storylines is only appropriate in more advanced levels, where students frequently practise expressing their thoughts and opinions in monologues.

2.4.2 Storificiation

As its denomination suggests, *storification* emerged as a fairly new approach connected to a more-researched SLA method, gamification (Aura et al., 2020). Gamified learning environments make use of the characteristics of videogames as today's adolescents are increasingly involved in virtual worlds. Gamification has been proven effective as 21st century literacy skills are gaining importance since people are not just consumers of information but producers as well (Kingsley & Grabner-Hagen, 2015).

Just like a game-based approach, *storification* also borrows elements from a story to create an engaging learning environment. It means that the context guides the participant's interactions throughout the story, while encouraging them to complete the story with given clues (Deterding, 2016). To create the storified environment, Aura et al. (2020) lists a few characteristics that have to be considered to utilise story elements most effectively: physical environment of the classes, digital tools (e.g., websites, movies or games), social and psychological atmosphere.

On the other hand, a limited amount of research has been done to investigate the effectiveness and benefits of *storification*. The effects of stories were mostly studied in connection with game-based learning where several aspects were found beneficial. First, since people make sense of their surroundings via memorising stories, *storification* can

facilitate comprehension of materials. Moreover, a story where mystery is involved triggers engagement which leads to higher levels of motivation. Finally, the emotional factor is significant, since participants can connect with values and characters presented in the story (Deterding 2016).

Deterding (2016) adds that while research on the effects of *storification* is lacking, evidence has been found that a well-designed narrative can impact learning processes positively.

Aura et al. (2020) conducted research where a chosen school participated with all its students and teachers. In the research, classrooms in the school were decorated based on a chosen story by the teacher. For a period of time, all lessons were storified based on the decoration of the given classrooms. In their case study, one of the main benefits they observed was that students and teachers felt empowered and motivated to complete tasks in an engaging environment. They added that storified environments can vary in implementation based on the creativity and resources of the participants. While in certain schools and classrooms, it is possible to create fully decorative environments adding colourful furniture and other elements, in others, decoration is kept in a minimum level. Aura et al (2020) adds that *storification* allows a flexible approach, where other elements (seating, digital tools, props) can also be used to augment the world of a story.

This research aimed to implement *storification* in the lower proficiency level group. Since *storification* provides an enjoyable setting for the tasks to be completed it is possible to use in all levels. However, in lower levels of proficiency, there might be an increased need for enjoyment, so students stay motivated, as it is true in the group where the research was carried out. With the help of *storification*, students could feel that they are coherent parts of a given story who form the plot without being storytellers themselves.

3 Research design and method

3.1 Research questions

As mentioned above, this research focuses on the story-based method of triggering affect which has been proven to have a positive effect on language acquisition. Since the story-based method consists of numerous approaches which all have different takes on making use of stories in the classroom, two of them were selected to be tested in this research. The research focuses on whether the two different approaches have different effects

connected to positive affect in different levels of English proficiency. Based on these points, four research questions were constructed:

1. Do story-based tasks trigger positive affect in learners of English?
2. How are positive affect and learning outcomes connected in the story-based method?
3. How effective is the usage of stories at different levels of English proficiency?
4. Which story-based methods are effective in groups of differing English language proficiency?

3.2 Setting

The research was conducted in a Hungarian secondary school where I am completing my long-term teaching practice. The school is known for its many specialised classes; chemistry, biology, media, and arts, to mention a few. The school, besides offering several specialities, has options for students to start secondary school with an additional year at the beginning of their studies when they have a high number of English lessons every week. This option ensures that students make progress in their language proficiency in their first year, and by keeping the high level of the English lessons, many students can complete a C1 or even a C2 language exam by the end of their studies.

This means that the proficiency level of English in the school varies, since there are groups with high levels of proficiency, and there are ones where students are almost beginners. However, this condition gives the opportunity to test the approach in various groups and levels of proficiency. Hence, the research was conducted in two groups in the same grade, but with different language proficiency levels.

3.3 Participants

The participants of this research are 9_{th} grade students in the beginning of their years in secondary school. Participants are divided into two separate groups on different levels of language proficiency.

Group A consists of 17 students, all of them belonging to the same class of biology and chemistry specialisation. In this special class students spend their first year focusing on improving their language skills, therefore they have 11 English lessons a week. The classes are divided into two groups based on proficiency, this group being the more successful one, on a B1+-B2 level. It should be noted that students primarily apply to these classes because

of the specialisations, not because of the increased number of English lessons. Given their interests and the number of their English lessons, the learners in this group are hard-working and determined with the pressure of high expectations which might prevent them from enjoying English classes. Given their level of English proficiency *storytelling* was introduced to Group A. In this group, students speak English fluently enough to be able to express their thoughts without significant obstacles and have broader ranges of vocabulary and grammar structures. The conditions in this group are ideal to produce results for the research not affected by difficulties in expressing oneself in the target language.

Group B consists of 16 students, and they are not members of the same class, but they have 5 English lessons together every week. The combination of two different classes is divided into four groups, this group being a less proficient one, at an A2 level. Eight students are in a mathematics specialised class, and the other half attends an art specialised class. This means that the students might not share the same interests and goals in terms of learning the language. Another difficulty might be that since the students do not share the same class, they do not have the same type of relationship like students in Group A. These factors make this group highly heterogenous not just in interest and background, but in terms of language proficiency as well. Students from the art class tend to be more active and more proficient in the language, while students from the mathematics class tend to get more distracted and are not as proficient and determined with their goals in achieving a higher level of proficiency. Their differing levels of proficiency in this group calls for an approach where students can make progress on their levels while putting them in an atmosphere where studying becomes enjoyable, ensuring positive attitudes towards language learning for the future as well.

In conclusion, the students in the different groups can make ideal participants for this research, since the differences in proficiency and group-coherence can produce a variety of useful data.

3.4 Instruments and data collection

For this research, instruments are targeted to collect data from different perspectives with different tools to ensure the research is triangulated. Since the main point of this research is to investigate positive affect in connection with the usage of stories in the SL classroom, it is essential to take the perspective of the students and the educator into account by using classroom observation and student reports. Moreover, in addition to qualitative,

quantitative methods were used to collect data which allows the researcher to investigate the students' attitudes and habits connected to stories as well.

Considering the above-mentioned conditions, the nature of the topic and the research questions, three instruments were used: student questionnaires (3.4.1), feedback sheets (3.4.2) and classroom observation (3.4.3).

Students' reporting phases can be divided into three constituents: a pre-research questionnaire, during-research feedback sheet, and post-research feedback sheet. Frequent student questionnaires and feedback are significant for this research since it is mainly based on students' attitudes and perceptions in connection to the approaches. All the constructed instruments were piloted to ensure understandability and to help on deciding to delete or create additional questions. Questionnaires and feedback sheets were constructed both in English and in Hungarian, however, only the Hungarian version was used in the piloting phase and in the classroom to avoid misunderstanding.

Besides preliminary data collection on the attitudes towards stories and feedback after each story-based activity, the post-research feedback sheet provides an opportunity to investigate students' opinions and attitudes by asking them to look back on all the implemented activities. The combination of post-research feedback sheets and classroom observation allows the researcher to analyse the provided data on individual activities supported by other types of instruments as well.

3.4.1 Pre-research questionnaires (Appendix 8.2)

This part focused on attitudes towards stories and English learning from the learners' part. Pre-research questionnaires are important for the analysis of the results to understand students' attitudes and degree of success after the research. Hence, besides attitudinal questions, and open-ended clarification questions, close-ended Likert scales were also used (Dörnyei, 2007).

In the first part of the questionnaire, Students were asked to answer attitudinal questions towards stories in general. First, students were asked to write about their opinion about listening and telling stories, then, they were given short statements about stories, where they had to tick the answer (*Completely agree* to *Completely disagree*) which they can relate to the most in a scale. This Likert scale consisted of five points, which allowed students to choose the middle option to express that their feelings are neutral. In task 3, participants were asked to highlight the channels in which they encounter stories the most, then they were asked to give concrete examples for these channels.

In the second part of the questionnaire, tasks focused on the students' general attitudes towards English lessons. First, they were asked to an open-ended, attitudinal question to describe an English lesson which is ideal in their opinion. Then once again, they were given statements to answer on a five-point Likert scale from *Completely agree* to *Completely disagree*.

Overall, the aim of the preliminary questionnaire was to gather information about students' attitudes towards stories and English lessons, and to compare them to the objectives of the story-based approach. This helps the researcher to make presumptions about the success of the following activities included in the research.

3.4.2 Feedback sheets

During-research (Appendix 8.3)

These feedback sheets focused on participants' emotions, attitudes and personal opinions towards their own progress and the tasks they completed as well. The feedback sheets consisted of multiple-choice questions, open-ended questions, and Likert-scales. Students were first asked to report on how they felt during the activity, then they were given statements connected to triggered emotions and effectiveness which they could answer in a five-point scale from *Completely agree* to *Completely disagree*. Then, students were asked to choose from a list of English language skills based on their perception of the most effectively developed field. At the end, students rated the activity on a five-point Likert scale in connection to their opinion of the activity's level of difficulty.

The result of these answers was significant to make comparisons between the two groups and to make connections between attitudes and opinions as well. These feedback sheets were filled after lessons where story-based methods were applied.

Post-research (Appendix 8.4)

This part focused on the overall opinion of the students about the story-based approach after the research and its effect on their progress. This feedback sheet was completed only once after the application of the approach came to an end. It was completed in a different manner than the previous ones, since students worked in groups to help each other remember the tasks and activities applied in the classroom. This method also could give an opportunity for a different approach to the analysis since the answers painted a picture of group attitudes, as well as individual attitudes.

The sheet mainly consisted of open-ended questions since it aims to discover patterns of opinions and insights of the students after completing the implementation phase. Additionally, there were multiple-choice questions mainly focusing on differentiating between activities that were used in the classroom. The open-ended questions focused on their personal opinions on favourite activities as well as the most effective ones in terms of language development. Finally, students were asked to list the benefits of the usage of stories in the English language classroom.

3.4.2 Classroom observation

As mentioned above, besides the viewpoints of the students, the educator's insights also had to be considered. Thus, a reflective journal was created where I collected my impressions after every lesson where the story-based approach was used. This journal helped to make associations and connections between my own observations and impressions and the students' feedback.

The main objectives of the classroom observation were based on the research questions hence the following focus points were considered during the activities:

1. Do the students seem enthusiastic, carefree, and free from anxiety during the activity?
2. Do students succeed in terms of language usage when presenting their products?
3. Do students seem challenged enough during the activity?
4. Does the chosen approach fit the students' level of proficiency?

3.5 Procedures

Before the research was carried out, all questionnaires and feedback sheets were piloted. The participants of the piloting sessions were adolescents and adults so that different age groups could give feedback on the sheets from different perspectives.

The research was conducted over six weeks where three weeks of testing period was dedicated to both groups. Before starting the period of implementing the story-based activities, both groups had a preliminary questionnaire where they were asked about their opinions, attitudes and habits connected to stories and English learning (Appendix 8.2).

After each story-based lesson, students were given a short feedback sheet (Appendix 8.3) to give their opinion about the lesson and the activities. In addition, a classroom-observation journal was kept where insight on the observed focus points were summarised. After the phase of the implementation of the designed story-based activities was finished,

each group was given a post-research feedback sheet that concluded the activities from the research. In this feedback sheet, students could discuss their insights and memories with their peers, to help them refine their opinions and remember elements that they might have forgotten (Appendix 8.4).

Feedback sheets and questionnaires were all distributed in paper forms at the end of each lesson allowing students enough time to think about their opinions and express their insights without time pressure. Each feedback or questionnaire session took ten minutes, having some students completed the sheets faster than others.

3.5.2 Schedule

Story-based activities were implemented for three weeks in both experimental groups. Activities were created in regards of the topics (e.g., sports, crime, entertainment, weather) and the books (Close-up B2, Solutions Pre-Intermediate Third Edition) that were being used in the lessons. Each group had at least one story-based activity or activity-sequence each week and they were designed in a way that the activities covered different objectives of the lessons each time.

Storytelling was introduced to Group A which means that these activities were short and were sequenced with other types of activities, not strictly connected to story-based approaches. The nature of this approach gave opportunities to make use of stories in different parts of the lesson and the learning process.

Storification was introduced to Group B which gave space to build whole lessons dedicated to this approach. Since *storification* allows a more holistic view on stories, story-based occasions were selected to test them in different stages of the learning process: introducing a new topic or practising already acquired knowledge.

3.6 Creating the story-based curriculum

The research was based on implementing an approach which has no clear curricula or methodology to follow given the many different interpretations that have emerged throughout the years. Given these circumstances a short curriculum had to be designed that could give a basis for the activities or activity-sequences that were included in this research.

3.6.1 Guidelines for story-based activities

For this research, it was essential to draw guidelines concerning the provoking of positive affect and the nature of a story-based task that allowed me to investigate the topic most effectively.

What makes a task(-sequence) story-based?

Based on the comprehensive four-point list Glaser et al. (2009) constructed of the story-based approach, there are certain characteristics that a story-based activities has to have in order to take advantage of the full potential of the usage of narratives in the classroom.

Table 1
Aspects of a story-based activity

Aspect	Questions	✓
1. Dramatization	a) Is the activity(-sequence) dramatized?	
2. Emotionalization	a) Does the activity(-sequence) trigger emotions and valence?	
3. Personalization	a) Is the activity(-sequence) personalised?	
4. Fictionalization	a) Does the activity(-sequence) contain fictionalised elements?	

How does a task provoke positive affect?

In my research, my main objective was to investigate whether story-based tasks provoke positive affect making language acquisition more effective. Hence, a checklist had to be created to help me design the story-based curriculum for the classroom research. Based on the research carried out before on enjoyableness and effectiveness (Green, 1993), and motivation (Dörnyei, 1994) basic characteristics had to be listed for the checklist that helped me construct story-based tasks for my groups. Having analysed former research and theories, the following checklist concerning positive affect was followed when constructing tasks for my classroom research:

Table 2
Triggering positive affect

Aspect	Questions	✓
5. Intrinsic motivation	a) Is the activity(-sequence) interesting?	
	b) Is the activity(-sequence) challenging?	
	c) Does the activity(sequence) involve product pride?	
6. Low anxiety	a) Can students practice before presentation?	
	b) Has the rapport been built before the activity?	

3.7 Activities (Appendix 8.1)

Activities were designed based on the composed guidelines focusing on the main aspects of story-based activities, and the strategies aiming to lower anxiety and trigger positive emotions via intrinsic motivation. The designed activities were implemented in different parts of the lessons to observe effects of story-based activities in diverse contexts and in a variety of phases of the teaching process. The PPP (presentation, practise, production) model was followed when designing the activities for the groups (Harmer, 2009). However, because of the limitations of the two different approaches, it was not possible to implement both approaches in each phase of the PPP model.

In Group A, because of the nature of the *storytelling* method, the aim of improvement was language production in the form of practising speaking skills and writing skills. Since students shared their stories with each other, improving listening skills was also in the focus of the learning process. For example, the *My life with sports* activity gave space to produce language based on a previously read model which allowed students to practise a given field of vocabulary in a context.

In Group B, *storification* lessons also concentrated on language production but in a more controlled and planned way because of the language proficiency of the students in the group. The *Friends again* activity especially focused on language production, since students practised communication with a given aim. Additionally, the *storification* method provided space for the presentation and practise phase as well. The activity, titled *Spring break* allowed the group to learn culture while the new knowledge was inherently part of the story, but also providing opportunities to practise language by playing an interactive game.

In conclusion, activities were designed to be tested in different topics focusing on a variety of language skills while following the PPP model to provide more data on the opportunities to implement story-based methods.

3.8 Data analysis

Quantitative data was derived from Likert scales and multiple-choice questions present in students' questionnaires and feedback sheets. Qualitative data was collected by classroom observations and from students' questionnaires and feedback sheets since they also included open-ended questions. The usage of different instruments intended to collect quantitative and qualitative data as well from different perspectives to ensure validity and reliability by implementing triangulation (Dörnyei, 2007). Qualitative data was collected to provide examples of students' insights and opinions to support underlying patterns shown by the quantitative data about the different types of story-based approaches.

The quantitative data is presented by visual tools (figures, tables) to draw attention to the underlying patterns of student attitudes and opinions. Sometimes means were calculated to allow the researcher to make comparisons between the groups as well as contrast different aspects of the lessons. Furthermore, students' reports are also cited to support the results of quantitative data presented in the tables and figures.

The total number of the participants were 33, 17 students from Group A, and 16 students from Group B. However, there were occasions in the study where some of the participants could not be present during one of the sessions which is always indicated in the respective tables and figures. The absences on these occasions did not disturb the process of data collection so their effect is insignificant to the outcomes of the research.

It has to be noted, that this present study is a small scale piece of research in a short period of time, hence its limitations have to be taken into consideration when analysing the collected data. Thus, the data pool does not provide opportunities for generalisations, the tendencies can only be interpreted as true in the case of these particular groups.

4 Results and discussion

4.1 Results of pre-research questionnaires

Students from both groups were presented with the research and asked if they could participate by giving their opinion on certain tasks, which they gladly accepted. The pre-research questionnaire was handed out a day before starting the research. It took about 10 minutes for the students to answer the questions and choose their answers for a total of 6 questions / multiple choice tasks.

Before analysing the answers, four hypotheses were formed describing the outcome of the questionnaires.

1. Overall, students are interested and engaged by stories and have frequent contact with them.
2. Students would like to become participants of a story.
3. Students like creative lessons more than traditional approaches.
4. Students feel like they can learn better if they are engaged by the activities.

Qualitative data is presented by summarising frequently occurring points supported by some quotes that students had written down as their opinions.

Quantitative data is presented in charts where the first column includes the statements which is then divided into two sections where the results from the two groups are summarised. In the section of the groups, the number of the participants is also included, by the indicator *n*. Participants chose their degree of agreement in a scale: *Completely agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Completely disagree.* In the chart each answer is given a point in a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 equals *Completely agree*, and 1 equals *Completely disagree*. The last column presents the mean points of each group which then summarises the overall mean points for each participant taking part in the research.

In one instance, quantitative data is presented in a figures, where the x axis represents the possible answers that could be given to the question and the y axis represents the number of the choices for each category. The different groups are indicated by different colours.

4.1.1 Attitudes towards stories

Each of the students expressed a positive attitude towards listening to and telling stories. Some of them compared the two and said which they like best, even if they like fictional or

real stories more. Most of the participants mentioned aspects of stories that were practical, mostly in social engagement: "In my opinion, stories bring us together", "Even if the story is not real, we can learn something from it", "I like listening to stories, because I get to know the storyteller more". Some of them could not forget the fact that they were in in an English lesson, so they mentioned practical knowledge connected to language skills: "Writing stories in English can help us learn new words", "Listening to stories in English improves our language skills", "Stories can even help us improve our pronunciation."

Overall, the first hypothesis seems to be confirmed, since none of the students expressed a negative attitude towards stories, they even mentioned practice facts that can help them acquire or improve certain skills.

4.1.2 Attitudes and habits

In this section students read statements about stories in general. They had to tick the answer they think is true for them. The number of the students can be observed on the vertical dimension, while the possible answers are indicated on the horizontal dimension.

Attitudes and habits in connection to stories

The first five statements were aimed to discover students' attitudes and habits related to stories. The overall impression is that students are engaged by stories, and they like to find opportunities (via books, films or series) to encounter them. This is suggested by the lack of *Disagree* and *Completely disagree* answers given, and an increased number towards the *Completely agree* and *Agree* answers. However, a difference can be detected between the two groups concerning the mode of the answers. While in Group A the mode tends to be the *Completely agree* answer, in Group B students tended to tick the *Agree* answer more. This discrepancy could be explained by the heterogeneity of Group B. While Group A is homogeneous in the view of the specialities and interests, Group B has several Mathematics specialised students and several Art specialised students as well.

However, a comprehensive trend can be observed by the traditional means to encounter stories, which is reading books and watching series or films. In both groups, while The *Completely agree* answer is the most common in each category, more students chose *Disagree* or *Completely disagre*e when asked about reading books.

Observing the numbers for the given stataements, hypothesis number one seems to be confirmed. The answers also support the impression given by the first task where qualitative data was collected.

Table 3
Attitudes and habits in connection to stories

Group A n=17 Group B n=16		5	4	3	2	1	Mean/ Group	Mean/ Overall
Stories entertain me.	Group A	10	5	2	0	0	4,47	4,08
	Group B	2	7	7	0	0	3,69	
I like fictional stories.	Group A	10	5	2	0	0	4,47	4,17
	Group B	3	8	5	0	0	3,87	
I like real life stories.	Group A	9	5	3	0	0	4,35	4,21
	Group B	4	9	3	0	0	4,06	
I read books quite often for my own pleasure.	Group A	11	1	3	2	0	4,23	3,90
	Group B	6	3	3	2	2	3,56	
I watch films/series quite often.	Group A	7	7	2	1	0	4,18	4,12
	Group B	6	6	3	1	0	4,06	

Attitude towards becoming participants of a story

The last two questions were targeted to gather information about the students' attitudes related to becoming a part of a story: via becoming a storyteller or by being a character in a story. The answers to these statements show a more varied pattern than with the former statements. Observing the numbers, a generally positive attitude is still detected since 21 students answered *Completely agree* or *Agree* in question number 6, and 25 in question number 7 out of the total 33 participants.

It can be observed that the answer *Neither agree nor disagree* has an increased number in both statements. Surprisingly, comparing the groups, a more balanced spread of answers is detected. In contrast to the answers given to the statements concerning attitudes and habits related stories, both groups tend to *Agree* and *Neither agree nor disagree* instead of tending towards the *Completely agree* in these statements.

Observing the numbers, hypothesis number 2 also seems to be confirmed; however, not to the degree that was anticipated. Overall, the numbers tend to increase towards the *Completely agree* and *Agree* answers; however, *Neither agree nor disagree* has increased

and the *Completely agree* answer has decreased compared to the first part of the questionnaire.

Table 4
Attitude towards becoming participants of a story

Group A n=17 Group B n=16		5	4	3	2	1	Mean/ Group	Mean/ Overall
I like making up stories in my mind.	*Group A*	6	5	5	1	0	3,94	3,85
	Group B	4	6	5	0	1	3,75	
I would like to be a character in a story.	*Group A*	6	8	3	0	0	4,18	3,97
	Group B	3	8	4	0	1	3,75	

4.1.3 Ways of encountering stories

As it can be observed in Figure 1, students encounter stories mostly via films, series, and books. This supports the research of Glaser et. al. (2009) which suggests that story-based activities should borrow elements from fictional and non-fictional television programmes and books to heighten interest in given activity. Implementing fictionalization, dramatization and even emotionalization creates the effect of a film or book, which ensures the students feel that they are in a familiar atmosphere, hence increasing the chances to be engaged by the activity. Video games also support the implementation of story-based methods, since for example in role-play games, players usually act as a character in a story, but in other games, they can act as storytellers who can manipulate the storyline.

Figure 1
Ways of encountering a story
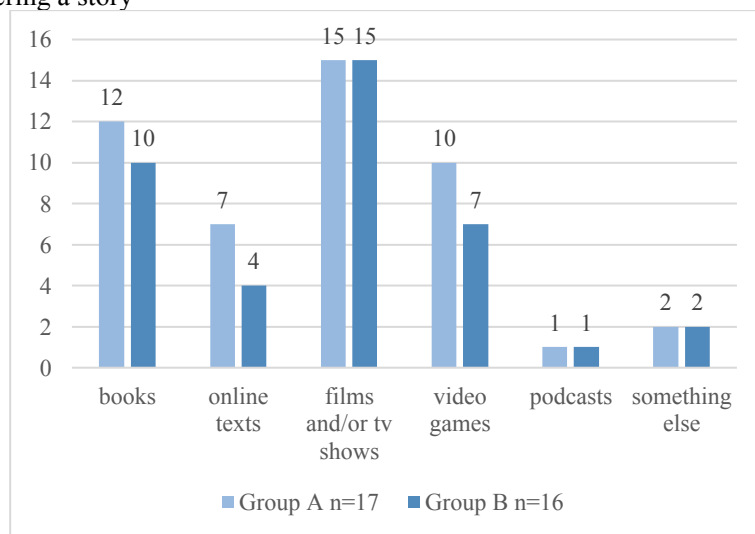
4.1.4 Examples for stories in students' lives

The aim of this question was to discover some underlying patterns of the most common forms of stories that students are engaged by. Looking at some examples provides information that can help design the types of activities students might enjoy the most. Overall, students provided a wide variety of examples in all fields; however, there were some titles that were the most common among the answers.

Concerning books, the *Harry Potter* series, *Agatha Christie* crime stories and S*tephen King* novels were the most common mentions, but some instances for *A Szent Johanna gimi* (a Hungarian teen romance series) could also be detected.

The most common titles in films and series were the *Harry Potter* films, *Stranger Things*, *Outer Banks* and *Money Heist*. The most common genres in the mentioned films and series were fantasy, thriller and adventure; and only some of the students listed romantic, comedy or drama pieces.

Specific websites for online texts were not listed, students only gave topics like life-stories or fanfictions. Podcasts were only mentioned by two participants, but both named *We are the VR* which is a podcast about gaming.

Videogames were also a commonly mentioned way of encountering stories; however, students mentioned a wide variety of videogames with a lack of cooccurring games. On the other hand, mostly first-person video games were listed in a limited set of genres: fantasy, adventure, and horror. Examples were *Ghost of Tsushima*, *Undertale* and *Dead by Daylight*.

Only 4 of the participants mentioned additional ways of encountering stories and these were dreams, creating fictional stories for fun, listening to fictional stories from friends or real-life stories from grandparents.

Overall, students have a variety of ways to encounter stories in their free time; however, some titles were more common and popular than others. In addition, based on the examples they provided, students seem to enjoy fantasy and highly fictional stories more (Harry Potter, Stranger Things, Stephen King novels, fantasy, and horror games) than ones that are closer to real life (comedies, romantic or drama films or books). However, it should also be mentioned that students might associate the term "story" more to ones that contain many fictional elements than the ones that are closer to real life, resulting in the tendency to list pieces with higher degrees of fictionality.

4.1.5 Opinions about an ideal English lesson

Students formulated two main ideas connected to English lessons. The first was that English lessons have to be effective and have to make opportunities to improve skills that are necessary for a successful English speaker: "Lessons must be a place where we learn to use new words and new grammar structures."; "We should practise speaking because communication is the most important." On the other hand, students also expressed their need to enjoy the lessons where creative and unusual approaches are used: "It's really boring if we only solve task sheets, we should always do something fun."; "I really like it when we can do something creative, for example making up stories, or acting out situations."; "I like it when we discuss interesting topics, it's always good to learn new things about the world and each other."

Overall, students expressed a need to learn in a way that they can use new pieces of language, but they also think they can learn if they do something different, something engaging besides traditional methods.

4.1.6 Attitudes and beliefs about English lessons

In this section, students read statements about their attitudes and opinions towards English lessons in general. They had to tick the answer that was true for them. The statements aimed to investigate attitudes towards English language learning in the classroom, and mainly it focused on two aspects: methods and enjoyment.

Methods

The first four question focused on methods which are perceived to be interesting (creativity, creating, cooperation) compared to traditional methods which are perceived as not enjoyable.

Comparing the answers given to the attitudes towards traditional methods and creative approaches, the third hypothesis seems to be confirmed. While for the first statement only 11 students were sure about their positive attitudes towards traditional methods, 16 students could not decide, and 6 students disagreed. In contrast to this, the statement connected to creative methods has received mostly agreeing answers, except for 3 students who could not decide.

When giving answers about their feelings towards certain elements of methods perceived as creative (statement 3-4) or unusual, students tended to give agreeing answers

more, which confirmed the validity of the results derived from the comparison of traditional and creative approaches.

The statement about creating something, which is a significant element of the story-based methods, received 24 agreeing answers, while only 8 could not decide, and none of the students disagreed.

When asking about their attitudes towards cooperation and learning from each other, 25 students agreed to an extent, 9 could not decide and only 1 disagreed. However, comparing the two groups a different trend can be observed in the numbers. While the numbers in Group A increase towards the positive dimension, the numbers in Group B increase towards the negative. This discrepancy can be explained by the difference between the two group's dynamics. Students from Group A come from the same class, while Group B was created by combining two different classes with significantly different interests and specialisations. The questionnaire was aiming to discover attitude generally, not connected to individual classes; however, students at this age sometimes cannot disregard their own experiences, so it is natural that they thought about their own English lessons when giving their opinion on this statement.

In conclusion, a discrepancy can be observed between traditional method and creative approaches. While students seemingly enjoy unusual and creative activities (including creating something or listening to classmates' presentations) they tend to be indecisive (choosing mainly 3) concerning traditional methods, hence hypothesis number 3 can be deemed confirmed.

Table 5
Methods

Group A n=17 Group B n=16		5	4	3	2	1	Mean/ Group	Mean/ Overall
I like studying English with traditional methods.	Group A	1	6	8	1	1	3,29	3,15
	Group B	0	4	8	4	0	3,00	
I like studying English with unusual or creative methods.	Group A	8	8	1	0	0	4,41	4,27
	Group B	4	10	2	0	0	4,13	
I like activities where I create something (tangible, intangible).	Group A	5	9	3	0	0	4,12	3,97
	Group B	2	9	5	0	0	3,81	
I can learn by listening to my classmates.	Group A	9	8	2	0	0	4,88	4,29
	Group B	4	4	7	1	0	3,69	

Enjoyment

The last two statements in this section aimed to gather information on the connection between positive affect and learning processes.

As the results show, students generally think that enjoying the lesson and immersing themselves in activities are important. They also indicated that if they enjoy the activities, they can learn better, as the numbers show all of them choose *Completely agree* or *Agree* as their answer to the statements.

The trend is slightly different in the last statements which intended to discover if students think activities are the most enjoyable when they forget the fact that they are at a lesson. A generally positive attitude can be detected here as well; however, in both groups, some students did not entirely agree, and one of them disagreed.

Aside from this, the general attitude is positive, which suggests that students feel that positive affect such as enjoyment is important from the perspective of learning processes and outcomes as well. Overall, a conclusion can be made that hypothesis number four is also confirmed, since students generally agreed more with the importance of enjoying the lesson.

Table 6
Enjoyment

Group A n=17 Group B n=16		5	4	3	2	1	Mean/ Group	Mean/ Overall
I can learn better if I enjoy myself during the lesson.	*Group A*	16	1	0	0	0	4,94	4,85
	Group B	12	4	0	0	0	4,75	
The best tasks are the ones where I forget I'm at a lesson.	*Group A*	11	3	2	1	0	4,41	4,42
	Group B	9	5	2	0	0	4,43	

4.2 Results of during-research feedback sheets – Group A

Group A was introduced to *storytelling* which was implemented by including *storytelling* activities in different topics that were learnt. Each time, students were asked to fill out a feedback sheet in Hungarian where they provided their opinions and feelings towards the currently completed story-based activity. Feedback sheets were always anonymous.

4.2.1. Triggered feelings

The first question was open-ended about their feelings during the activity to give space for students to express their ideas and opinions without guiding them to write about any specific aspect. This provided the opportunity to gather information about the students' first impressions and read about their honest feelings.

Activity 1

The first activity intended to help students practise vocabulary related to sports in a context. Students created a story about their lives with different sports, but they had to include three lies about the sports they did, which the others tried to spot while listening to their experiences.

All the students expressed satisfaction with the enjoyability of the activity, some of them also claimed that they "forgot the fact that it was a lesson at school". However, one point that almost everybody mentioned is learning new personal information about others. "It was really good to learn new things about each other"; "I enjoyed listening to my classmates talking about themselves." In addition, some of the students seemed to enjoy

sharing their life with others as well: "Sometimes, I'm afraid that I bore the others when I talk about my personal life, but now, I felt I could share a lot of things about myself." Overall, the most significantly reappearing element was the fact that the activity provided space to learn and share personal information to make stronger relationships with their peers.

Activity 2

The activity was designed to introduce students to talking about different entertainment facilities. They remembered a time where they visited such a place and told a story about that occasion. However, they had to omit the ending, so their groupmates could guess it. At the end, the storyteller told the truth.

Similarly, to the first activity, all the students reported that they enjoyed the story-based activity of the lesson. The topic and the nature of this activity entailed students learning new information about each other, which most of them mentioned in their answers: "I liked that I could learn something about my friends." However, in contrast to the first activity, almost all of them reported that the best element in the activity was that they could laugh at the funny stories: "I enjoyed listening to more people's funny experiences."; "I felt joy, since we laughed a lot with my peers which built a positive atmosphere in the classroom." In conclusion, students expressed similar experiences to the first activity, however, they also noted that listening to and presenting funny stories create a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom.

Activity 3

This activity helped students use phrasal verbs and collocations connected to crime. They were given three Dixit cards, and they created a crime story using selected phrases based on one of the cards. Then, in a groupwork, others had to guess which card from the three they used to write their story.

The third activity introduced to this group differed in one of its main objectives: students created fictional stories instead of recalling memories and experiences. This also resulted in different opinions and feelings the students described: "I felt intense focus, since I had to create a new story and make it work with the given words." Furthermore, most of the students included that they felt they were creative when working on their stories: "I like using my imagination for activities."; "I enjoyed listening to creative and exciting stories, it created a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom."; "It was a pleasant surprise to finally use our creativity in school." Overall, besides general enjoyment, students expressed a need and

satisfaction to use their imaginations and creativity to create something exciting and interesting.

4.2.2 Opinions and experiences

In this section, students read statements about the activity, and on a five-point Likert scale, they ticked the answer they agreed with the most.

Triggered affect

The numbers in given statements reflect the success in triggering positive emotions and avoiding anxiety. The means of each statement are above 4, meaning students agreed that the activities provoked positive emotions. The means in the anxiety section also point to success, since the numbers reflect an inverse proportion to the degree of success; smaller numbers indicate lower levels of perceived anxiety.

When observing the means of the answers in each statement the most noticeable difference is the deviation observed in the numbers of *Activity 3*. When gathering data about positive affect, numbers are decreased compared to *Activities 1 and 2*. The mean of the first two activities are almost similar in each case, while Activity 3 received considerably less positive feedback. However, when analysing the statement connected to anxiety, the means do not reflect the same pattern. This suggests that *Activity 3* is the second least anxiety-provoking in this list. Another deviation can be observed in the last statement in this section, where students felt they did not learn about their peers; however, this results from the nature of the activity in which students created fictional stories together rather than sharing personal experiences with each other.

It can be concluded that the lower numbers for positive affect do not correlate with higher degrees of anxiety, and activities overall succeeded in triggering positive affect and preventing anxiety. However, a tendency of decreased numbers can be seen in Activity 3 in which case the process and the aim differed from the previous activities.

Table 7
Enjoyment

n=17		5	4	3	2	1	Mean
I enjoyed the story-activity today.	*Activity 1*	14	3	0	0	0	4,82
	Activity 2	15	2	0	0	0	4,88
	Activity 3	12	4	0	1	0	4,58
I felt anxious during the activity.	*Activity 1*	0	2	2	8	5	2.06
	Activity 2	0	0	3	7	7	1,76
	Activity 3	0	1	2	8	6	1,88
We laughed a lot with my partner/group during the activity.	*Activity 1*	9	7	1	0	0	4,47
	Activity 2	13	3	1	0	0	4,7
	Activity 3	6	8	2	1	0	4,12
I learned new things about my classmates.	*Activity 1*	9	8	0	0	0	4,53
	Activity 2	9	8	0	0	0	4,53
	Activity 3	0	0	3	8	1	1,53

Attitudes towards the learning process

Observing the means in the statements concerning attitudes towards the learning process, they are almost identical. Most students chose *Agree* or *Completely agree* which reflect success in given areas. The only slight deviation can be seen in the willingness to participate in similar activities in the case of *Activity 3*. This number, however, can correlate with the degree of positive affect observed in the previous chart.

Overall, success in the field of the learning process was achieved since students felt they improved their language skills, were motivated and would participate in similar activities in the future.

Table 8
Attitudes towards the learning process

n=17		5	4	3	2	1	Mean
I would participate in similar activities again.	*Activity 1*	15	2	0	0	0	4,88
	Activity 2	15	2	0	0	0	4,88
	Activity 3	12	4	1	0	0	4,64
I felt motivated to complete the activity.	*Activity 1*	10	5	2	0	0	4,47
	Activity 2	11	3	3	0	0	4,47
	Activity 3	10	5	1	1	0	4,41
The activity improved my English language skills.	*Activity 1*	8	7	2	0	0	4,35
	Activity 2	7	7	3	0	0	4,23
	Activity 3	8	7	2	0	0	4,35

4.2.3 Improved language skills

As it can be observed on the graph, aside from reading comprehension, students felt that each language skill was improved by some or all the activities. Since *storytelling* activities were mainly designed to improve speaking skills and to help students use new vocabulary items more confidently in their speech, these skills have received most votes from the students' perspective.

Looking at Figure 2, speaking skills and listening comprehension were improved the most which means that students felt improvement in those areas which the activities intended to focus on. Vocabulary and pronunciation were other skills where students felt improvement; however, there were no specific points in the activities where pronunciation was directly affected. On the other hand, using new vocabulary items in context could include pronunciation practise, since new elements were repeatedly uttered which might contribute to pronunciation improvement.

Results of the three different activities are coherent; however, a slight deviation can be detected in Activity 3. This task provided a different perspective and method than the activities before since *storytelling* was planned and constructed with more restrictions than Activity 1 and 2.

In conclusion it can be stated that students generally felt that activities improved more skills at once and the nature of their feedbacks coincides with the intended skills improvement when designing the activities.

Figure 2
Improved language skills
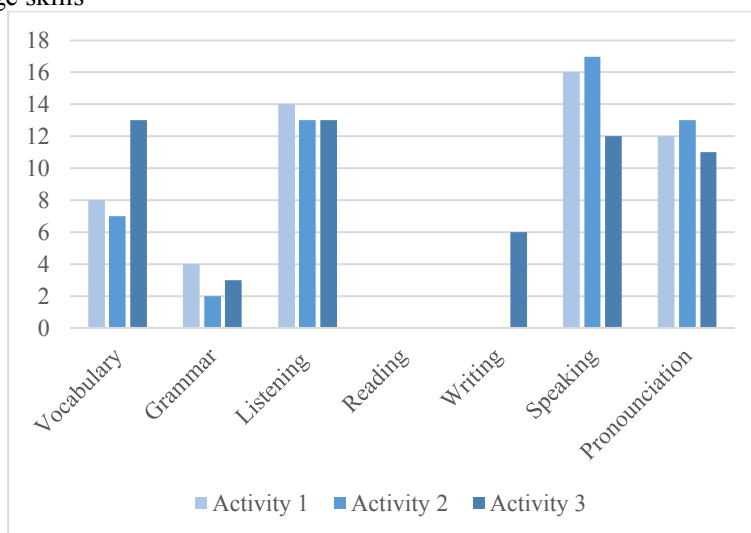
4.2.4 Sense of challenge

Concerning the difficulty of the activities, a consistent trend can be detected by looking at Figure 3.

The diagram is normally distributed which means that the mode, the median and the mean are all in central tendency. This indicates that overall, students felt that the activities were challenging enough, but not too difficult to discourage them to complete the tasks. The small amount of deviation towards each end of the scale provides insight into the overall language proficiency of the students. It shows that there are students who were more challenged by the completion of the activities than the others; however, there are also some, who felt they completed them with more ease.

All in all, the degree of difficulty in each activity seemed to be accurate for the language proficiency of the group, since there is no extreme deviation from the ideal 3 point in the graph towards either end of the scale.

Figure 3
Sense of challenge
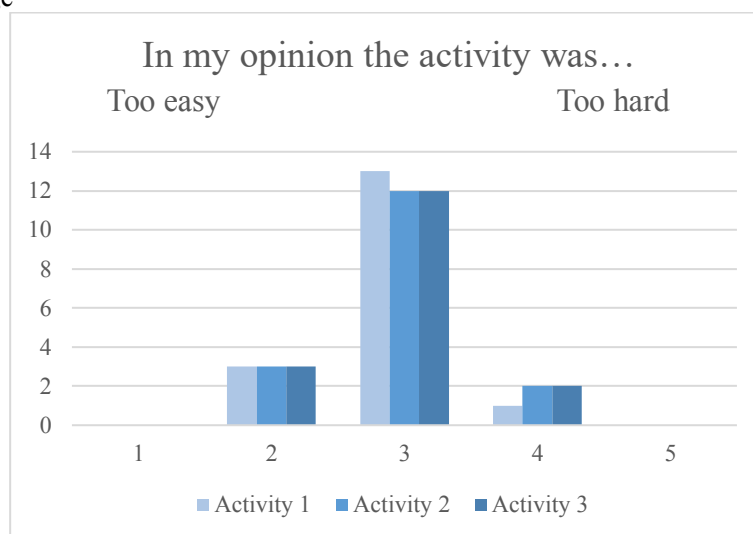
4.3 Results of classroom observation – Group A

Classroom observation was carried out by me during the lessons, I made notes of my insights after each occasion where a story-based activity was implemented.

Activity 1

The objective of the activity was to encourage students to use previously practised vocabulary, so they are confident in producing the language in a way that helps them connect to the topic.

The first task implemented in this group was not so unusual for the students. They are used to speaking in groups about their experiences and opinions; however, while introducing the task they seemed excited, especially when the fictional elements were mentioned. During the modelling, all of them paid close attention and had many ideas to guess my lies. After the modelling, in the preparation phase, all of them seemed absorbed in their work, thinking about ideas, making notes and some even smiling during the process.

When the group discussions started, the classroom became a little noisy filled with laughter and chatter. Monitoring the groups from a safe distance, I could also hear them using only English, and not their first language, which is not always the case in this group.

After the discussions, while listening to one of their peer's experiences students were still absorbed and engaged, waiting for their turn to guess all the lies each student had incorporated in his story.

When the lesson moved on to the next activity (not connected to story-based tasks) students were still distracted by the stories of their peers and the lies they incorporated.

Activity 2

The second task was implemented as a starter to a following activity which is discussing different changes that could be implemented in a leisure facility to improve it. The objective of the activity was to personalise the topic and help students remember something connected to leisure time facilities to help them complete the following task more successfully.

During the modelling of the story, students paid attention and were happy to discuss, then guess the ending of my story. Building the rapport was especially successful in the case of this activity, since sharing a funny or an embarrassing story in a positive way encourages students to view their experiences in the same way. When the activity was introduced to them and they were asked to silently think of an experience that happened to them in a leisure facility, they were so excited, I had to ask them repeatedly not to discuss their ideas with their mates yet.

During the discussions laughter and chatter filled the classroom, and even when some groups finished the activity, they carried on talking about other similar experiences or adding more detail to their recited story. Similarly to the previous story-based task, all students used the target language throughout the whole activity.

After the discussions, when I asked a volunteer to share their story, one group became persistent that we should listen to one of the member's stories since it was so colourful and funny. While sharing her story, the volunteer student was so absorbed in her story, she even acted out the funniest moments of her memory. The enthusiasm of the student made the others laugh and sit in awe while waiting for their turn to finally guess and find out the ending of the funny story.

Similarly to the previous story-based task, when moving on to the next activity, student were still distracted by the interesting recitations, it was hard to make them pay attention to the remaining part of the lesson.

Activity 3

The third activity was introduced as a practise to use phrasal verbs and prepositions with crime vocabulary in a context in a creative, but challenging way.

Similarly to the previous tasks, starting the activity by modelling the story seemed to have captured their attention at the very beginning. However, more intense enjoyment was only observed when the cards were shown to them as well. They had worked with these cards before numerous times, and they always enjoyed using them for activities. After

distributing the cards, some of the pairs were too fascinated by the visual stimulus to concentrate, so they had to be warned to keep in mind the time limit they had.

When arriving to the composing stage, students were immersed in creating a creative story, and they asked for more time so they could write something interesting. However, one pair seemed to be confused and indecisive about their ideas, so it should be kept in mind that creative tasks like this will not always appeal to everyone. Listening to each other's stories in groups and with the whole group as well, students succeeded in incorporating given phrases as well as listing them after they had heard them.

Overall, the activity was observed to be successful in terms of the previously listed objectives; students seemingly enjoyed creating interesting stories, but they also paid attention to include phrases they had just learnt.

4.4 Results of post-research feedback sheets – Group A

Post research feedback sheets were distributed after the lesson where the last story-based activity was implemented. Students were briefly reminded of the activities that were presented to them during the research, then they were instructed to fill out the feedback sheet based on their opinions. They were also told that they could discuss any of the questions with their peers.

This element was implemented since this way students could get more insight on some of the activities which might make them rethink their opinion or give them inspiration. However, they were told to only write down points they truly agree with; the opinion of the others was just there to refresh their memories.

4.4.1 Favourite and most useful activities

Figure 4 shows that usefulness does not correlate with the perception of favourite activities. While Activity 1 is the most useful in terms of language development, it is only the second in line in being favourite following Activity 2. However, it can be observed that Activity 3 received similar numbers of votes for being useful and a favourite.

It can be concluded that perceived usefulness in terms of language improvement is not in direct connection with choosing favourite activities while being the least favourite and the least useful can show some degree of correlation. It must be mentioned that the number of participants limit the ability to make accurate assumptions between the connections of certain aspects.

Figure 4

Favourite and most useful activities
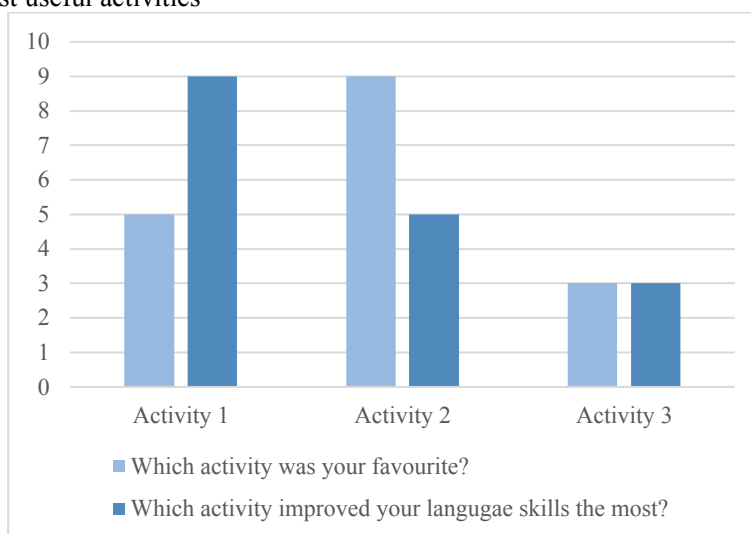
4.4.2 Reasons for favourite activities and language improvement

Activity 1

Students mentioned three main reasons why they thought the first activity was their favourite. Firstly, they felt that Activity 1 was the most entertaining and exciting, since they had to create, then spot lies, besides telling a story about themselves: "I liked to talk about my sport career, and the element of the lie made it even more entertaining." Secondly, students thought that using the previously learnt vocabulary was challenging and made them think about their personal connection to this topic: "Using the already learnt words in my personal story was enjoyable, it made me think about my past with sports." Finally, almost all students mentioned the benefit of learning about new aspects of their peers' lives: "I enjoyed learning new things about the others and getting to know them more."

For this activity, students expressed two main points of the ways this activity improved their language skills. First, mentioned the improvement in the usage of grammar structures and specific types of vocabulary. Since the topic was restricted to sports in their past, a given category of words had to be used, as well as the different types of the past tense: "We used the new vocabulary in speech, and we had to tell everything in the past so we used a variety of tenses." Second, students felt that by exchanging experiences by talking about a given field for one and a half minutes, their speaking and listening skills had also improved. They felt that the activity improved their ways of expressing themselves, and while comprehending what the others were saying, they also had to spot certain words in their speech, which made the listening experience more complex as well: "It helped me practise

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expressing my thoughts"; "We had to speak a lot and listen to the others a lot, which was complex, since we had to spot sport-related words."

In conclusion, students felt that this activity was entertaining and challenging, as well as expressed enjoyment towards the interpersonal component of the task. Moreover, most students felt that the complexity and the restricted topic of the activity helped them improve more skills at once, which made this activity the most useful in terms of skills improvement.

Activity 2

All in all, students mentioned almost similar aspects of this activity as the one before it; however, most of them also suggested that the element of mystery made the task the most enjoyable: "I felt a sense of mystery since everyone's story had a twist, and it was really exciting to try and guess the ending." Moreover, students added that they laughed a lot in the case of this activity, which helped them make bonds with their classmates besides learning about their pasts as well: "I liked listening to funny stories about my friends' pasts, I think it brought us closer to each other." Finally, students claimed that they liked that the topic was not restricted to certain specific topics, so they could think in a broader sense: "The topic was broad, so it gave us freedom to tell us more about our experiences."

Students expressed improvement in areas of grammar, especially the uses of past tenses, vocabulary, speaking and listening skills. However, some of them mentioned that this activity was more challenging, since the topic was broader, and they had to create a story without, for example, a given set of vocabulary items: "We had to come up with complex stories where the topic was not restricted, so we used a lot of words that we learned in the past."

To conclude, students enjoyed talking about entertaining stories about their lives which was complemented with a sense of mystery. They also thought that having a broader focus on the topic was enjoyable and effective.

Activity 3

Since this activity was different in the sense of personalisation, students mentioned two different aspects of this activity which made them choose this as their favourite.

First, all of them accounted for the benefit of being creative. They all liked that they had to use their imagination and create something only depending on their creativity: "I always like creative activities, and this one made me use my imagination a lot." The other aspect they included was the visual stimulation they received with the help of the colourful

cards: "It was entertaining and challenging to look at the cards, choose one, then create a story based on the pictures."

Since this activity was different from the first two, students mentioned different points on the benefits of language improvement of this activity. They mainly highlighted the usage of the new phrases in context, but also felt they were challenged by the sentence limit as well: "I learned how to use the new phrases in context, which is useful, since these words are not in everyday speech." Students felt that the activity was an ideal way to not just recognise new vocabulary but learn how to include them in produced language: "It was challenging, since we usually write longer stories than four sentences, so we had to concentrate to keep the limit but say enough so the others would understand."

Overall, students expressed their preference towards creative and imaginative stories while also highlighting the element of the cards which provided visual stimulus. What is interesting is that students who chose this activity as the most effective one thought that having more restrictions was more challenging, hence it provided more refined ways to improve their language skills. These statements contradicted the other students' insights on Activity 2, who felt that having a broader focus actually provides more space for language development.

4.4.3 Benefits of stories in the classroom

Students listed four main points when asked about their opinion on the benefits of using stories in the language classroom.

The most common point they raised was the improvement of interpersonal communication and relationships. They found it important to talk to others, and they expressed that telling and listening to stories gives them opportunity to practice communicating with others: "It gives us space to talk to each other and tell them more about ourselves."

Another benefit they mentioned is practicing language skills besides speaking. They thought that stories provide practice in certain areas, such as grammar structures or new vocabulary, and gives them the opportunity to use these language items helping them acquire the new knowledge: "It helps us practise a variety of grammar structures, especially past tenses, which I struggle with the most"; "We learn how to use new vocabulary in context."

Finally, a common point was the fact that *storytelling* helps them express themselves more fluently and accurately: "It helps us express our thoughts and opinions more seamlessly if we tell stories frequently."

The aspect which was mentioned by almost all the students was that *storytelling* makes the lesson more interesting and enjoyable. They felt that these activities provided a break from the more monotonous tasks, and they could feel free to say and share what they wanted and to laugh and talk with their friends.

4.4 Analysis of data – Group A

Based on the results provided by the various research tools (questionnaires, feedback sheets, classroom observation), some correlations can be observed. Since different types of activities were implemented with different objectives, numbers differed in ways which allowed me to observe patterns in their success.

First, numbers in triggering positive emotions are high in each task (see section 4.2.2.1) which is supported by the student reports (see section 4.2.1) and classroom observations (see section 4.3) where positive atmosphere was perceived in each case. Additionally, anxiety factors are also low in the activities; even when the mean was slightly increased compared to the other cases, higher degrees of anxiety did not result in decreasing enjoyment (see section 4.2.2). It means that occurring anxiety did not result from lack of enjoyment and anxiety did not decrease the level of enjoyment during the activities.

Second, students' answers provided an insight into the aspects of an activity which are more desirable than others. Based on the charts (see section 4.2.2) and the provided answers in the feedback sheets (see sections 4.2.1, 4.4.1, 4.4.2), students liked activities more where they had to talk about their experiences and personal information than the activity where they composed an imaginary story based on a card which reflects highly fictional and tale-like images. Moreover, they expressed in open-ended questions that communicating with others and learning about their peers provided them with joy and triggered more positive emotions (see sections 4.2.1, 4.4.2). These reports also correlate with the figures and charts where increased points of satisfaction with the tasks correlate with increased numbers of learning information about their peers and experiencing joy together (see sections 4.2.2).

Furthermore, it can be concluded that the *storytelling* approach appeared to achieve its set aims in terms of language development. Students felt they improved in speaking and listening skills which is the main objective of this method (see section 4.2.3). They also felt that *storytelling* helped them express their feelings and experiences better and they learnt when listening to others as well. They also experienced that using new vocabulary was easier when it was set in a context (see section 4.4.2).

Finally, students felt that each activity was challenging enough, and it fitted their levels of proficiency (see section 4.2.4). However, they expressed different opinions towards strict guidelines to creating stories. Some students mentioned that less rules made them feel freedom in composing a story for their own personality. In contrast, some reports expressed the need for such guidelines which made the task more challenging and improved their language skills more (see section 4.4.2). The latter opinion is also supported with a correlation between stricter guidelines and perceived improvement in skills (see section 4.2.2.2).

Overall, students benefitted from the *storytelling* approach since it triggered positive emotions while decreasing anxiety and provided a challenging opportunity to improve language skills.

4.5 Results of during-research feedback sheets – Group B

Group B was introduced to the method of *storification*, which meant that whole lessons were dedicated to this approach and different tasks were incorporated in a way that they followed as the story advanced. After each *storification* occasion, students were given a Hungarian feedback sheet where they were asked about their opinions of the story connected to triggered feelings and effectiveness.

4.5.1 Triggered feelings

The first question was open-ended about their feelings during the activity to give space for students to express their ideas and opinions without guiding them to write about any specific aspect. This provided the opportunity to gather information about the students' first impressions and read about their honest feelings.

Activity 1

In the second activity, students were introduced to a story where two friends were trying to meet after a long time not seeing each other. After communicating in letters, in person, and on the phone, they got into an argument; however, they finally made up at the end of the story.

Students mentioned three main points when listing their impressions on the activity, which was enjoyment, stress-free atmosphere, and language improvement.

First, students felt that the lesson was entertaining and unconventional with the element of becoming characters in a story, which triggered positive emotions, such as joy and

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entertainment: "We should do activities like this more, I liked that we were characters in a story"; "I think it was really entertaining, we didn't just solve tasks, but it was in a context." Second, students felt that besides positive emotions, they also felt carefree and without anxiety: "It was good to practice talking in pairs, I was more confident in speaking after that"; "I felt like I wasn't even at a lesson, but just having fun with my friend." Third, students also mentioned the improvement of their writing and speaking skills: "I think the lesson was entertaining, but still, we practised the language as well."

All in all, students accounted for the main benefits of the story-based method tested in this research, which are positive emotions, avoiding anxiety, but still improving language skills.

Activity 2

In the second activity, students were told a story where a group of friends got into a lockdown. They had to come up with plans and communicate with each other using modals of obligation and necessity, as well as adjectives with negative prefixes.

In this activity, students highlighted two main points, which were immersion into an exciting context and cooperation.

First, most students mentioned the fact that the context in which they were participants was exciting and full of mystery. Students felt that they were engaged by the story, so it was easier and more motivating to complete tasks: "It was really exciting that we decided what happened next."; "The activities were embedded in a context, so I felt like I'm not even at an English lesson." Second, students highlighted that working in small groups benefited them in completing the activities, as well as required them to cooperate which was entertaining and useful in their opinion: "It was more efficient to work in groups"; "Working with my partners was enjoyable, I think these creative tasks are better this way."

All in all, students expressed positive experiences connected to working with partners and enjoying the context of the activities.

Activity 3

This activity's focus was for students to practice making comparisons and using vocabulary items connected to weather in a context. They did this while being teenagers who were planning their spring break choosing between different destinations and programmes.

From the students' feedback on this activity two common impressions were observed; one of them was a personal connection to the topic and the other was the lesson being

unconventional. More students mentioned that they enjoyed the lesson and the story because they could connect to the story on a personal level. They said that travelling and attractions in other countries are interesting for them, so being in a story travelling to an unknown place provided a pleasant atmosphere: "I could personally connect to this topic, and I felt confident in solving the activities because of this." Another opinion was that they felt that the lesson was unconventional and creative which was motivating them to be active: "This wasn't an everyday English lesson, it was really creative." However, two students felt that in some parts the lesson became monotonous because they had to wait for the others to finish their work.

All in all, students expressed their liking towards a creative concept and highlighted the positive effect of personal connection to the topic.

4.5.2 Opinions and experiences

In this section, students read statements about the activity, and they ticked the one they agreed with the most. In the charts statements can be seen and numbers indicating the number of students who chose individual answers. The numbers 5 to 1 indicate the possible answers of *Completely agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree* and *Completely disagree.* Above the statements the maximum number of participants (n=) is shown in the case of each activity. The number varies since in this group some students were absent in two occasions (Activity 1 and 2). In the last column the mean value of each statement can be observed.

Triggered affect

Analysing the means, a mostly coherent trend could be observed with a few irregular cases. Students mostly enjoyed all the activities, but the least enjoyable one tended to be Activity 2; however, we cannot observe other deviations in this activity in any other statements. It can be concluded that the decrease in positive feedback is not directly connected to other components, for example, anxiety during the activity. On the other hand, observing the numbers connected to anxiety, Activity 1 seemed to be the most triggering, although no close connection could be observed with other aspects. An assumption for the slightly increased number can be the fact that this activity demanded more verbal communication and discussions with exam-type tasks, which might be triggering for some, considering that speaking skills are not the strongest side of the students in this group. Moreover, a slight increase in numbers can also be seen in the interpersonal component for Activtiy 3, since students felt they learned more about their peers even though the activities did not include any personal questions. They might have felt they learned about each other

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due to the part of expressing preferences towards ways to spend their spring break in order to decide which destinations they were going to write about.

Overall, it can be stated that the numbers in each activity are mostly consistent, and the lessons can be deemed successful in regard to the aims of triggering positive emotions and decreasing anxiety.

Table 9
Triggered affect

Activity 1 n=15 Activity 2 n=13 Activity 3 n=16		**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**Mean**
I enjoyed the story-activity today.	*Activity 1*	9	6	0	0	0	4,60
	Activity 2	8	3	2	0	0	4,23
	Activity 3	7	8	1	0	0	4,56
I felt anxious during the activity.	*Activity 1*	0	2	4	6	3	2,33
	Activity 2	0	0	2	4	7	1,62
	Activity 3	0	0	1	8	7	1,63
We laughed a lot with my partner/group during the activity.	*Activity 1*	9	3	2	1	0	4,33
	Activity 2	8	3	2	0	0	4,46
	Activity 3	4	7	5	1	0	4,06
I learned new things about my classmates.	*Activity 1*	0	1	6	8	0	2,13
	Activity 2	0	1	2	6	4	2,00
	Activity 3	0	3	10	2	1	2,94

Attitudes towards the learning process

Table 9 suggests that each component of the expected attitudes to the learning process was successful and there are not noticeable deviations when comparing the results of each activity. The means in each aspect are above 4 which indicates positive opinions about the degree of language development, motivation, and satisfaction with task-type. The means in the components are almost identical which suggests equal success in the areas of

expectations. Overall, the chart is a comprehensive indicator of the positive trends towards given aspects of the learning process where no major differences are observed between the different activities.

Table 9
Attitudes towards the learning process

Activity 1 n=15 Activity 2 n=13 Activity 3 n=16		5	4	3	2	1	Mean
I would participate in similar activities again.	*Activity 1*	8	6	1	0	0	4,46
	Activity 2	8	5	0	0	0	4,62
	Activity 3	10	6	0	0	0	4,63
I felt motivated to complete the activity.	*Activity 1*	5	7	2	1	0	4,06
	Activity 2	3	7	3	0	0	4,00
	Activity 3	4	8	4	0	0	4,00
The activity improved my English language skills.	*Activity 1*	6	6	3	0	0	4,2
	Activity 2	4	7	2	0	0	4,15
	Activity 3	4	11	1	0	0	4,19

4.5.3 Improved language skills

Figure 5 suggests patterns of commonly perceived language skills improvement which tend to be speaking skills, writing skills, and listening skills.

Students felt that productive skills were developed during the activities in similar degrees. In the lessons, students mainly practised using already acquired language items in context which made them feel that expressing themselves in speech and writing was improved. Besides producing language, peers also had to perceive it, so they felt that listening skills were also developed, however not in a degree as they expressed it with the productive skills. Since students mainly practised learnt vocabulary and grammar structures in context, these skills were also improved in their opinion.

Overall, it can be stated that productive skills were the ones students felt were mostly improved; however, listening skills, vocabulary and grammar were also developed.

Figure 5
Improved language skills
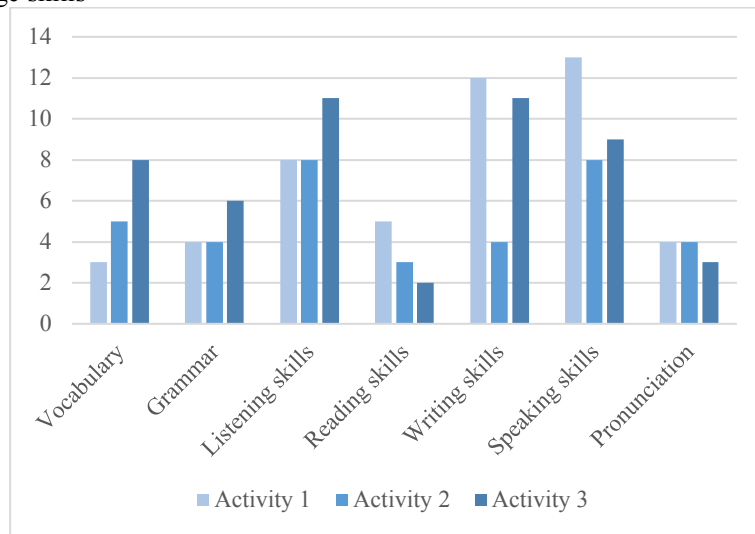
4.5.4 Sense of challenge

Figure 6 shows that the data is normally distributed, meaning that the mean, the mode and the median are in central tendency, indicating that the most likely answer was three in a scale one to five. This means that the difficulty of the tasks was high enough to be motivating but not too low to be demotivating. On the other hand, giving 2 points to express that the activities were easy was also common, which could be a result of the heterogeneity of the group. There are some students whose proficiency is more advanced than others which causes them to solve tasks with more ease than others.

Overall, each activity was challenging enough for most of the students which provided space for language improvement, although, some of them expressed that they might have needed more challenge to improve.

Figure 6
Sense of challenge
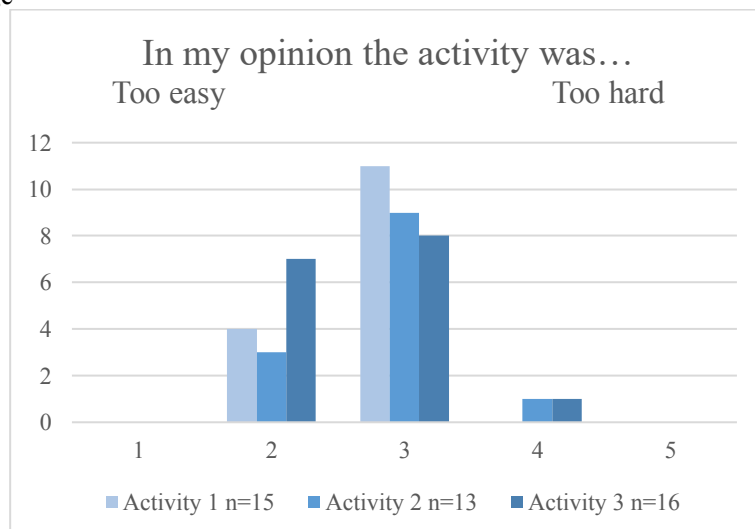
4.6 Results of classroom observation – Group B

Activity 1

The first *storification* activity was introduced as a practise for writing and speaking skills with the aim of making monotonous or stressful tasks more enjoyable.

By starting the lesson with the introduction: "Let me tell you a story, titled …" students seemed surprised and highly focused on the sentences I uttered to introduce the story. Each time, when the context was given to them by carrying on with the story and introducing the new activity they had to continue the story, students sat in awe and seemed excited. It is usually not the case with this group; many times, their attention has to be fought for, especially on those occasions when the English lesson is their last lesson for the day (such as this story-based lesson was). The most intense reaction from the students' side was evoked by the turn of events in the story, and after learning about the characters' difficulties they seemed even more engaged in the task.

When given the opportunity to give themselves fictional names, students seemed excited, and were quicker in their decisions than it was anticipated and it was a great opportunity to implement a cultural element as well. During the presentation of their products, students seemed more confident to show their work than experienced before and were more willing to pay attention to each other's solutions. Introducing the ending of the story, suggesting a happy outcome, some students even cheered and laughed, which was surprising because excitement in this degree was rarely experienced from this group before.

In summary, the objective was observed to be fulfilled since previously monotonously perceived activities were made interesting and motivating which shows the *storification* lesson to be successful.

Activity 2

The objectives of this activity-sequence were to make revision for an upcoming progress test, covering each section of the unit that would be included in the test. After completing multiple choice and fill-the blank quizzes, the aim of this lesson was to encourage students to use new skills and knowledge when producing language with guidelines.

Starting the lesson with a slideshow with colourful images and telling the backstory of the plot, students seemed excited and curious. When asked to give their group names, similarly to the previous story-based lesson, they quickly decided and provided creative or

funny names. Personalising a story seems to have positive effects since they tend to be more hesitant when asked about ideas; however, the motion of creating identities motivated them each time. When completing tasks, groups did not struggle to provide ideas, they even needed more time to select the best options from what they listed. At the presentation of each section, students were more likely to volunteer to share their ideas than it is usually experienced, and the audience was more willing to pay attention and give feedback to the presenting group.

Accuracy in terms of the target language skills was also ideal for the objective of the activity-sequence. However, students sometimes forgot about the aspects they needed to follow when completing their task, since they were more immersed in the creative side of the activity than the language development. Hence, for further practices, it is suggested to emphasise the importance of the target language skill during the activity as well.

Overall, the objective of the activity was fulfilled, since students were able to use the target elements when producing language in a way that motivated them by the activity-sequence being interesting and enjoyable.

Activity 3

The objective of the lesson was for students to practise recently studied material which was vocabulary connected to weather, and comparative adjectives and structures for comparison. The material was already practised via students' book tasks; hence, the aim of this lesson was to put the learnt material in a context where students also produced language.

By starting the activity with the personalised element of choosing a nationality, students seemed motivated and excited to take part in another *storification* lesson. Their willingness to participate actively seemed to rise when the short clip from a famous sitcom was played for them. During the activities students seemed cheerful and engaged, they even asked to play the "videogame" one more time. When presenting their sentences they wrote as a group, few mistakes were detected; overall, students were successful in producing the language which was the focus of this lesson.

Overall, the objectives of the activity-sequence were fulfilled, and, moreover, students were engaged by the activities which could lead to high levels of motivation to complete the tasks.

4.7 Results of post-research feedback sheets– Group B

4.7.1 Favourite and most useful activities

Analysing Figure 7, it can be observed that large degrees of deviation are not present in terms of choosing a favourite, but it can be detected in the case of usefulness.

There are no clear distinctions between the numbers of choosing favourite activities which suggest that in terms of enjoyment each activity triggered similar degrees of positive affect. On the other hand, students deemed the first activity the most useful in connection to their language skills. Therefore, the figure does not suggest correlation between perceived usefulness and being a favourite activity.

Figure 7
Favourite and most useful activities
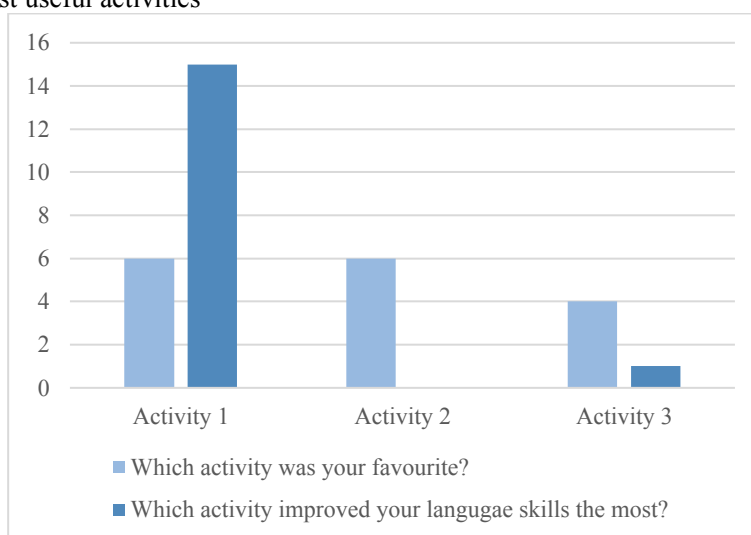
4.7.2 Reasons for favourite activities and language improvement

Activity 1

Students mentioned two main points to explain their choice which are positive emotions during the lesson and the storyline. The first activity was considered the most enjoyable and the funniest from the perspective of the students who chose this to be their favourite: "I enjoyed working on the activities with my partner"; "I think this activity was the funniest, we laughed the most during this lesson." Another point was the storyline, which students found the most entertaining overall: "The backstory was entertaining."; "The context was lovely and full of surprises."

Almost every student chose this task as the most useful from the perspective of language development and they listed two main aspects: speaking skills and writing skills. First, every

student mentioned the element of fluent communication. They felt that by having to react to their peers instantly they improved in their speaking skills: "We were in pairs which meant that we had to put more effort into the activities, especially into the speaking tasks. If you aren't saying anything, the task can't be completed." Second, students mentioned that composing a letter in the classroom improved their writing skills as well: "Besides speaking, we also had to write a letter, and I think I improved a lot."

Overall, students thought that Activity 1 was the most entertaining while also improving language skills.

Activity 2

Similarly to the first activity, students expressed two main ideas; Activity 2 being the most exciting and having the most fun with their groups.

All students who chose Activity 2 as their favourite mentioned excitement and mystery during this lesson and they highlighted the creativity of the storyline: "This story was the most exciting."; "I felt I was a part of the story, so I was excited about what would happen next." Another point they mentioned was having fun with their groups while working together on a task: "We had lots of fun with my peers while also completing useful exercises." None of the students chose this activity as the most useful one; however, one student mentioned in their feedback that each activity improved their language skills in the same degree.: "Honestly, it is hard to choose, since each of them improved my language skills in almost the same degree."

Overall, students expressed similar feelings towards the storyline as in the first activity, but in this case they highlighted the positive effect of working in groups as well. On the other hand, they felt that other activities improved their language skills more.

Activity 3

In this activity, students mentioned one main point, the benefits of personalisation. Students felt that the activity was more personalised than the others because they could decide what to do in each situation: "I liked that we could discuss our opinions and decide between options." They also mentioned the wide variety of different stories that were created by the groups: "I think it was good that everybody had a slightly different storyline with slightly different endings." Additionally, one student mentioned the aspect of doing their own research before completing the tasks: "I enjoyed that we had to search for information before completing the task." Only one student chose Activity 3 as the most useful one

because of the wide range of vocabulary they had to use: "We had to use learnt vocabulary while also composing sentences."

It can be concluded that students highlighted the positive effect of personalisation by mentioning different aspects of the process; however, only one student felt that it was the most useful in terms of language development.

4.7.3 Benefits of stories in the classroom

Students mentioned three main benefits of using stories in the classroom, the most common opinion being entertainment followed by language in context and language improvement.

First, almost every student mentioned the aspect of entertainment and avoiding boredom or monotonous lessons. They felt that if they enjoy the lesson, they are more motivated to complete certain tasks making the learning process more effective: "You can feel like you are playing a game, but this is what makes it effective"; "If the lesson is exciting, it is so much easier to acquire language and remember the material"; "These lessons are eventful and diverse; it gives me more motivation to learn."

Second, students felt that they understand the material more if it is in a context. They felt that this way, language is not isolated but embedded in situations which gives them more confidence to communicate if similar events happen to them in real life: "I can connect language to situations and contexts which helps me remember and understand the material more"; "We can try ourselves in different situations before something like that happens in real life."

Finally, students felt that it improves various skills, for example, communication and using vocabulary and grammar in sentences: "We can practise speaking in a context which can build confidence in our abilities"; "It helps us improve composing sentences and texts using learnt vocabulary and grammar."

To conclude, students felt that the most important benefit of using stories in the language classroom is triggering positive emotions such as enjoyment and excitement, but they also felt that it helps them see and use language in a context while improving their language skills.

4.8 Analysis of data – Group B

Based on the collected data, some correlations can be drawn as well as deductions can be made about students' opinions about *storification* and its benefits.

First, based on the chart (see section 4.5.2) *storification* lessons triggered positive emotions, such as enjoyment which is confirmed by classroom observations (see section 4.6) and student reports (see sections 4.5.1, 4.7.1) on the benefits of story-based activities. Students found that implementing a story made the lesson more exciting and they were less likely to become bored. Moreover, the chart (see section 4.5.2) showed that students felt motivated which is supported by feedbacks in the post-research feedback sheets (see sections 4.7.1, 4.7.2) and classroom observation (see section 4.6) as well. In contrast to the degree of triggered positive emotions, anxiety was decreased in each case. Additionally, slight increases in the mean score of anxiety did not lead to a corresponding decrease in the score of positive emotions (see section 4.5.2).

Second, students felt that their language skills improved, especially in the lesson where written and verbal communication were in the focus. In the post-research questionnaire, they added that language elements were more comprehendible when put in a context, helping them remember rules and usage of phrases more effectively (see sections 4.5.2, 4.5.3, 4.7.2, 4.7.3). This supports the set aims of the *storification* method which highlights the usage of context to deliver and practise language in a meaningful way.

Finally, students thought that activities were challenging enough for their proficiency levels; however, in some instances the level of difficulty was found lower than optimal (see section 4.5.4). On the other hand, a correlation cannot be drawn between the levels of motivation and enjoyment, and the perceived level of task difficulty (see section 4.5.2). This means that although more proficient students found some activities easier, their willingness to participate and enjoy the lesson was not decreased.

In summary, the objectives of the *storification* method implemented in Group B were deemed successful, since positive emotions were triggered, anxiety was lowered, and students felt they improved their language skills while finding the activities challenging enough for their abilities for most of the students.

5 Conclusion

The aim of this research was to investigate the possible effects of two story-based methods in groups with different proficiency levels. The paper intended to concentrate on the effect on emotions and anxiety as well as the efficiency in improving language skills. With the help of the chosen research instruments, data was collected to investigate the perspective of students as well as the observer.

5.1 Do story-based tasks trigger positive affect in learners of English?

Based on the collected data it can be stated that story-based methods trigger positive emotions in a variety of ways. Students felt entertained by the storyline they were part of (*storification* method) and by exchanging experiences and stories with their peers (*storytelling* method). Moreover, students felt a personal connection to the stories when they had to report on their past experiences (*storytelling* method) and when they felt they are characters in a story acting like the people in imaginary situations. Additionally, students reported on feeling a sense of mystery when elements of a story were ambiguous or to be discovered (*storytelling* method) and when they faced a turning of events before the finale (*storification* method).

Besides triggering positive emotions, the data shows the decrease in the level of anxiety which is supported by the students' accounts on feeling carefree and forgetting the fact that they are in a lesson. Classroom observation provided the same perspective on the emotional impact which was further supported by participant reports in post-research feedback sheets.

5.2 How are positive affect and learning outcomes connected in the story-based method?

The data shows some degree of correlation between positive affect and learning outcomes; however, the quantitative data does not provide enough insight to be able to draw clear conclusions. In one instance students' reports show that perceived usefulness and increased levels of positive emotions correlate, while in another case perceived usefulness and enjoyment are decreased in the same level.

On the other hand, qualitative data on the attitudes and opinions of students show some degree of correlation between language outcomes and positive affect. Students reported that usage of new language items is more memorable if the activity is entertaining. They also

added that structures and vocabulary are more comprehensible when they are put in an exciting and creative story.

5.3 How effective is the usage of stories at different levels of English proficiency?

Two different story-based approaches were implemented in two groups of different proficiency levels. The methods were chosen to match the students' abilities and they were observed in terms of effectiveness.

It was found that *storytelling* was effective in Group A since the activities were challenging enough while also improving language skills which are in special focus in this approach. Since students had to create stories based on some guidelines and rules, they practised monologic speech with the implementation of different language items. Moreover, listening comprehension was also involved since in each case students had to actively pay attention to each other. The implementation of the objectives in the *storytelling* method were successful which is further supported by students' accounts on the learning process and outcomes.

Storification was also found effective in Group B since it matched the abilities of the participants while also providing motivation to complete tasks. Group B's proficiency level is lower than Group A's, hence complex activities with many language production parts could not be implemented. In this group, students are more anxious when asked to produce language since they are not confident in their abilities; however, they reported that an entertaining context gave them the opportunity to speak in a non-threatening atmosphere. *Storification* provided a safe and entertaining space to practise language production in a way that students used knowledge they had acquired before.

5.4 Which story-based methods are effective in groups of differing English language proficiency?

Based on students' accounts and classroom observations, the two chosen story-based approaches fit the level of proficiency of the students in the different groups. While *storytelling* provided space to practise language production in a challenging way, *storification* provided a safe and motivating atmosphere for students who battle with their confidence to perform in front of others. Overall, the two approaches both seemed to trigger motivation because of their interesting nature; however, while *storytelling* encouraged

students to step out their comfort zones, *storification* let students work in their own bubble with students they were confident with.

Based on these observations, it can be concluded that while the approaches fit the students' abilities, they also suited the nature of the two groups. In Group A students feel confident working with each other and tend to require social interactions during the lesson, while students in Group B need a safe space with peers they know well to work effectively.

Overall, when choosing between story-based approaches, educators have to pay attention to the aspects of the method to suit the nature of the classroom atmosphere not selecting an approach merely by concentrating on the proficiency of the students.

5.5 Limitations

While this research may contribute to the field on the effects of story-based teaching, limitations also have to be mentioned. Since it is a small-scale research, results and conclusions are only true in the case of the observed participants. Moreover, data is only based on the perceptions of the students concentrating on specific occasions in a short period of time, meaning that clear correlations cannot be observed between some aspects of the story-based approach.

First, the connection between anxiety levels and positive emotions is not clear from this research since anxiety was not measured in types of activities other than story-based tasks. Moreover, data was not collected about the objective degrees of language improvement; results are only based on students' perceptions about their own development. Finally, possible bias is to be considered from the students' and the teacher's side when analysing provided data on the activities.

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, further research is suggested in a few areas possibly in a quantitative manner. Investigating the correlation between anxiety and story-based pedagogy as well as gathering data on learning outcomes with the help of a control group should be carried out.

On balance, the most significant implication of this study is that implementing stories in the language classroom – whether shorter activities or contexts for whole lessons – provides benefits to the students in many ways. Besides feeling they are improving their language skills, they also learn about each other and themselves. As Inal and Cakir (2014) put it: "Stories help us to make out the sense of our world. The more stories we study, the more we realize our individuality in significant ways" (pp. 676).

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6 Appendix

6.1 Activities: Storytelling – Group A

Activities were designed based on the composed story-based curriculum with regards to the currently studied topics to incorporate them to the usual flow of the lesson.

My life story with sports

The first task for this group was connected to sports since the topic the group was dealing with at the time was free time activities and doing sports. The activity was done before a test, after learning and practising new words connected to different sports, to help students practise talking about real experiences they had with different sports throughout their lives.

Step 1

Students were introduced the task by the teacher telling them a personal story connected to sports throughout her life. However, while listening to the story, students had to spot two lies the teacher incorporated in the story. By introducing the activity this way, the teacher modelled the story which is an important part of encouraging students to become storytellers themselves as well (Heathfield 2015). Moreover, it built rapport (guideline 6.b) by making a closer connection between students and teacher (the sharing of personal information) and student and student as well (by guessing together).

Step 2

Students were told to create a similar story and make notes of their experiences which they could use while they were presenting their story. Students had to include two lies and make them seem like they are true to try to make it harder for their peers to guess them. Incorporating the lies ensured the element of fictionalisation (guideline 4.a), however it was also personalised (guideline 3.a) since students had to tell a story about their own lives.

Making use of real and fictionalised elements made the activity interesting as well, since students could share personal details about their lives but also were given the opportunity to trick others (guideline 5.a). Writing a note also allowed them time to practise and think through their presentation before speaking in front of their peers (guideline 6.a).

<u>Step 3</u>

Students were told to share their stories with their groupmates in groups of 4. While listening, the others had to write down all the mentioned sports and highlight the ones they think were lies. After the presentation the listeners and the speaker discussed the truths and the lies. Finding out if they were correct about the lies incorporated a sense of mystery, building the dramatization effect (guideline 1.a), while also making the task challenging since students had to play close attention to their peers (guideline 5.b).

Listening to and presenting personal stories also triggered emotions (guideline 2.a) and involved product pride (5.c) since students could feel that they were creating something that they could present in front of others.

<u>Step 4</u>

Each group was asked to point out a person whose lies were the hardest to spot. Then the teacher asked one of the four students to share their story with the class so everyone could think about the lies. This part of the activity also triggered emotions (guideline 2.a) since students could feel connected with the speaker, listening to his personal experiences, and to each other as well, trying to guess the lies together.

Guess what happened in the end!

The second activity for this group was dedicated to introducing talking about free time facilities and their experiences connected to them. The inspiration and the structure of the task was created based on the story-based activity section of Heathfield (2015).

<u>Step 1</u>

The teacher told a personal story connecting to her experiences in a leisure time facility. Before ending the story, the teacher stopped and said "Guess what happened in the end!" Then, she instructed the students to talk in pairs and come up with two different endings to the story that might have happened to their teacher. After the short discussion, the students shared their ideas, and finally, the teacher told them the ending that happened. By telling a personal story and letting students guess, the teacher builds rapport (guideline 6.a) to give the courage to the students to share a similar story, but also models the procedure of telling a personal story.

Students had a few minutes to think of a personal experience (guideline 2.a) they had in a leisure time facility for which the teacher listed some examples to help (amusement park, water park, adventure park, playground, etc). By thinking back to a personal experience, emotions could be triggered, such as joy or excitement (guideline 2.a).

<u>Step 3</u>

Students were instructed to form groups with three or four people and tell their stories to each other, but before ending it, they should say: "Guess what happened in the end!" Then, the other members of the group should come up with two or three different endings to the story before the speaker reveals the truth. By knowing that the speaker would not share the end of the story, the activity triggered a sense of mystery, hence dramatizing it (guideline 1.a). In addition, since students had to come up with different endings, some fictional elements had to be created making the task even more interesting (guideline 4.a, 5.a).

When the story was finally completed and the ending was revealed in front of the others, the speaker could also feel product pride (guideline 5.c) especially if the ending was something that nobody expected, or it was funny for their peers. The activity was also challenging since students had to create and tell a story in a way that the ending is not given, but the listeners were challenged as well as they were trying to come up with a realistic ending to the story (guideline 5.b).

Step 4

After each group finished the discussion, they were asked to say the name of the person whose ending was the most interesting or hardest to guess. These students then were asked to tell their stories in front of the class so everybody could try and guess the ending. Since students were given the opportunity to first think through then practise their stories in their small groups, anxiety could be lowered (guideline 6.b).

A crime story

At the time of the implementation of the activity, students were learning and practising vocabulary connected to crime. The major topic for the lesson was using prepositions and phrasal verbs that can be used to describe criminal activities. After learning and practising the new vocabulary items in writing, a story-based activity was introduced to the students to encourage the usage of these phrases as well.

Step 1

Students were told a four-sentence short story about a crime where four of the learnt phrases were incorporated. Students were instructed to listen to the story and try to remember the phrases that were used in the story. After listing the four phrases, students were shown three cards with pictures on them (cards from a popular board game named *Dixit*) and were asked to guess which card was the story about. This step ensured that rapport had been built (guideline 6b).

Step 2

After guessing the card, pairs were given three cards and were instructed to create a four-sentence fictional story (guideline 4a) about one of the cards where they incorporated the learnt vocabulary items in each of their sentences. It was also suggested to try and create a story in a way that it is challenging to guess the correct card. By choosing their own card, the activity was personalised (guideline 3a), and by instructing them to incorporate given phrases in a way that it included ambiguity concerning the other cards, it was challenging enough as well (guideline 5b). By including the element of the cards, the activity was aimed to be more interesting (guideline 5a), than without this type of restriction.

The finished product could also trigger product pride (guideline 5c) since their finished projects included the element of creativity (the story), language use (the new phrases) and a chosen visual aid (the cards). Emotionalization (guideline 2a) was also ensured because students chose cards from a variety which suggested different emotions. By creating a story to match the suggested emotion, students should think in different perspectives as well.

Step 3

After finishing their stories, groups were created so in each one there were two stories to be told. Students were instructed to tell their stories without showing the cards and ask their group members to list the new phrases they could hear. After listing them, students showed their cards and asked their partners to guess the card the story was about. As students were listening to stories and only receiving a full picture of the plot by guessing the correct card, dramatization was also included (guideline 1a), since it provided a sense of mystery.

After the groups had finished the *storytelling*, pairs were asked to put up their hands if their partners could not guess their cards. By this time students had practised telling their stories with their partners and with their small groups, hence lowering anxiety to present in front of the group was ensured (6a). The whole group listened to their *storytelling*, and first, listed the phrases, then guessed the correct cards.

6.2 Activities: Storification – Group B

Friends again

The first activity-sequence was introduced to group B in connection with writing skills and speaking skills. The class had been practising reaching agreement in given topics (eg. which movie they should watch, what they should do at the weekend), and had been practising writing friendly letters to a friend in almost the same topic (inviting someone to a programme) before the *storification* lesson took place. Given the low level of the group they need more practise in certain areas, especially the productive skills.

The activity-sequence was introduced as a story about two friends who tried to meet up after not seeing each other for so long but failed in each attempt.

Step 1

Students were introduced a story, titled *Friends again* about two friends, whose names started with A and B. The first task was to give themselves names starting with the letter assigned to them (A or B, paired with each other). This ensured personalisation (guideline 3a) and fictionalisation (guideline 4a) as well, since students could be someone else for a lesson, but still be able to choose their own identity in the form of choosing a name for themselves. Then, their names were acknowledged and praised for being creative, which was a step to build rapport (6b).

Step 2

Carrying on with the story, students were told that they had not seen their friend in a long time, so they decided to write them a letter. For this, students were given a decorated letter paper which could be folded in a form of a real letter with a stamp. After the students had written the letter with the help of letter plan, they had written, they could colour and decorate the stamp to be personalised. This step ensured that students feel product pride

(guideline 5c) since the medium was not their usually notebook, but a letter paper that they could customise (guideline 3a).

Step 3

Students were told that the friends mailed the letter, but as a great surprise, getting home from the post office, they found a letter from their beloved friend. At this point, students switched their letters with their partners and started to read it. At this point, by getting a letter from a fictional named friend they could feel that they were in a fictionalized environment even more, which made the process of writing and reading letters more interesting and enjoyable (5a).

Step 4

After listening to one of the letters, students were told that they accidentally met their friend in the supermarket, so they started chatting about their programme together, and agreed that they were going to play video games. Students now, using the formerly prepared notes, started discussing the details of this programme. They had time to do the discussion two times with their partners (guideline 6a), and after that, the group listened to two discussions together.

Step 5

After the discussions, the students were told that everything was going great for the friends, but the next morning something happened. This phase of the story built suspense which ensured dramatization (guideline 1a) by incorporating a setback or complication often applied in movies, series or books. Students had to make a phone call with their partner using their cue cards which contained a big argument between the friends.

This point was unexpected from the story's and the students' perspectives as well, so it ensured that they activity-sequences had challenging parts which the students had to solve without any detailed preparations (guideline 5b). It also triggered emotions, because in contrast to the idyllic and friendly conversations in the former activities, they had to act angry and upset, which could make the students laugh a lot (guideline 2a).

Step 6

Students were told that the friends started to miss each other and regretted their actions so they decided to write another letter. The story was finished by saying that hopefully after

the letter, they would make up and become *Friends again*. The happy ending also triggered emotions, since after the setback, a positive outcome was suggested (guideline 2a).

Lockdown

For the second *storification* activity-sequence, a lesson was designed to make revision for a unit test including vocabulary and grammar structures the students had been learning for a month.

Step 1

Students were introduced to a film in which the characters were played by them. The story included a group of teenagers who had to survive in a lockdown, solving different problems to deal with the situation. First, student created a group name, something the teenagers called themselves in the film. This ensured that the story was personalised (guideline 3a), and fictionalised (guideline 4a) as well, since students faced some challenges in an imaginary situation. By asking their group names and writing them on the board as a label they were going to use in that lesson, rapport was also built between the students and the teacher (guideline 6b).

Step 2

Students were told that chaos started to increase in their home, and they needed to design a rule-sheet that could be hanged on the wall for everyone to see. For this, they received a designed rule-sheet where they had to come up with rules using the modals of necessity and obligation. By having a separate sheet where they could carefully design their rules, triggering product pride was ensured (guideline 5c). After finishing their sheets, a common list of rules was created on the blackboard where each group could add their most important ideas.

Step 3

Students were told that after finishing the list of rules, they needed to gather everyday items that can be used to protect themselves if anything happens. They were instructed to create a conversation between the teenagers where they talk about gathering the objects using quantifiers. For this, they received a card with a minimal dictionary where useful objects

were listed. They practised their conversation after writing a draft (guideline 6a), then the class listened to two groups' conversations.

Step 4

The final task for the teenagers was to invent a plan if the catastrophe happened, but by doing so, they had to include vocabulary items with negative prefixes such as *unsafe*, *impossible* or *improbable*. This made the task challenging (guideline 5b), since the plan needed to be designed in balance with the chosen vocabulary items. After finishing their plans two group were asked to present their ideas. This step also enhanced the effect of dramatization (guideline 1a), emotionalization (guideline 2a) and made the task more interesting (guideline 5a). Students could feel that they were almost in control of the flow of the story and by creating plans to avoid a catastrophe, it built excitement towards their efforts to protect their characters.

Step 5

Students were told that their elaborate plans saved them from a tragedy and the story had a happy ending.

Spring break

The last activity for this group was a few days before spring break and a test of some vocabulary and grammar structures. The aim of this lesson was to practise before the test while also including some cultural knowledge.

Step 1

Students were told that they are characters in a story about teenagers who are from different countries. A set of flags were shown to the students and were instructed to choose a country and names from that nationality using their mobile phones. This was a first step to personalise (guideline 3a) and fictionalise the environment (guideline 4a).

Step 2

The story began on a lovely day, just before spring break where teenagers were watching a well-known sitcom about spring break. Here a short clip of the sitcom was shown to put students into a safe atmosphere and to introduce the topic. Then, based on the clip, students were told that they were interested in the difference between spring break and spring

vacation, so they search it on the internet. Then, two article extracts were shown to them to show the difference, then were told that they could not decide which one they wanted to do, so they decided to settle the argument by playing a game. This step built rapport since the teacher and the students were part of the story together, watching a clip and talking about the differences together (guideline 6b).

Step 3

Students were invited to play a game on *Blooket*, an interactive application for education where the tasks were directed to the target vocabulary, the weather. After the game, students were instructed to check their points and the highest point in each group decided the type of getaway they were going to attend. This step included the sense of challenge (guideline 5b).

Step 4

After the game, students were show two destinations for each type of getaway, then were instructed to write sentences to compare the two destinations in the listed categories (weather, programmes, crowd). For this step, they could use their phones to search information about each place, which made the activity interesting (guideline 5a) and added the element of product pride since their sentences were based on their own research and creativity (5c). After listening to some of the created sentences, students were told to choose one destination based on their comparing sentences. This further ensured personalisation of the activity (guideline 3a).

Step 5

After choosing their destinations, there were a turn of events since the airline company had cancelled their flights. This turn ensured the dramatization of the storyline (guideline 1a). Therefore, students were offered to travel to the other destination without paying extra fees. To lower their disappointment students were told that they decided to come up with sentences that show some aspects that are better in their new destinations than the original one. At this step students could also practise saying their sentences before telling them in front of the classroom (guideline 6a). At the end, students were told that the really enjoyed their getaway and came back safe to their home countries.

6.3 Pre-research questionnaires

English version

1) How do you feel about telling and listening to real-life or fictional stories?

_____

_____

_____

2) Please tick the answer that is true for you!

	Completely agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Completely disagree
Stories entertain me.					
I like fictional stories.					
I like real life stories.					
I read books quite often for my own pleasure.					
I watch films/series quite often.					
I like making up stories in my mind.					
I would like to be a character in a story.					

3) How do you usually encounter stories?

 a, books   b, online texts   c, films/series d, videogames   e, podcasts   f, something else

4) For your answer to the previous question, please give some examples for each item you selected. (For example, if selected "books", please give the titles of some story books you have read.)

_____

_____

_____

5) What makes a good English lesson for you?

_____

_____

_____

6) Please tick the answer that is true for you!

	Completely agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Completely disagree
I like studying English with traditional methods.					
I like studying English with unusual or creative methods.					
I like activities where I create something (tangible, intangible).					
I can learn by listening to my classmates.					

I can learn better if I enjoy myself during the lesson.					
The best tasks are the ones where I forget I'm at a lesson.					

Hungarian version

1) Mi a véleményed kitalált/valóságos történetek hallgatásáról/meséléséről?

_____

_____

_____

2) Kérlek, jelöld be azt a választ, amelyik igaz rád!

	Teljesen egyetértek	Egyetértek	Egyet is értek meg nem is	Nem értek egyet	Egyáltalán nem értek egyet
A történetek szórakoztatnak engem.					
Szeretem a kitalált történeteket.					
Szeretem az igaz történeteket.					
Elég sokszor olvasok könyvet saját kedvtelésemből.					
Elég sokszor nézek filmeket vagy sorozatokat.					

Szeretek történeteket kitalálni.					
Szívesen belebújnék egy történet szereplőjének a bőrébe.					

3) Általában milyen módon találkozol történetekkel?

a, könyvek b, online szövegek   c, filmek/sorozatok d, videójátékok e, podcastek   f, más

4) Kérlek, írj konkrét példákat az előző kérdésre adott válaszodra. (Például, ha azt jelölted be, hogy *könyvek*, írd le néhány könyvnek a címét, amit olvastál.)

_____

_____

_____

5) Véleményed szerint milyen egy jó angol óra?

_____

_____

_____

6) Kérlek, jelöld be azt a választ, amelyik igaz rád!

	Teljesen egyetértek	Egyetértek	Egyet is értek meg nem is	Nem értek egyet	Egyáltalán nem értek egyet
Szeretek angolt tanulni hagyományos módszerekkel.					
Szeretek angolt tanulni szokatlan és kreatív módszerekkel.					

Szeretem azokat a feladatokat, amikor valamit alkotnom kell (megfogható, megfoghatatlan).					
Tudok tanulni azáltal, hogy hallgatom a társaimat.					
Jobban tudok tanulni, ha élvezem az órát.					
Azok a legjobb feladatok, amelyek közben elfelejtem, hogy tanórán vagyok.					

6.4 During research feedback sheet

English version
1) How did you feel during the task(s)?

_____

_____

_____

2) Please tick the answer that is true for you!

	Completely agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Completely disagree
I enjoyed the story activity today.					

I felt anxious during the activity.					
We laughed a lot with my partner/group.					
I learned new things about my classmates.					
I would participate in similar activities again.					
I was motivated to do the activity.					
The activity improved my English skills.					

3) Which English language skills were improved by the task(s) in your opinion? You can choose more than one.

 a, vocabulary b, grammar c, listening   d, reading   e, writing f, speaking g, pronunciation

4) In my opinion the task(s) was/were...

              Too easy   Too hard

                        1   2   3   4   5

Hungarian version

1) Hogyan érezted magad a feladat(ok) közben?

_____

_____

_____

2) Kérlek, jelöld be azt a választ, amelyik igaz rád!

	Teljesen egyetértek	Egyetértek	Egyet is értek meg nem is	Nem értek egyet	Egyáltalán nem értek egyet
Élveztem a mai történetes feladatot.					
Ideges voltam a feladat közben.					
Sokat nevettünk a párommal/ csoporttársaimmal a feladat elvégzése közben.					
Új dolgokat tudtam meg az osztálytársaimról.					
Szívesen részt vennék megint egy hasonló feladatban.					
Motiváltnak éreztem magam, hogy teljesítsem a feladatot.					
A feladat fejlesztette az angol nyelvi készségeimet.					

3) Véleményed szerint mely angol nyelvi készségeid fejlődtek leginkább a feladat elvégzése közben? Többet is bejelölhetsz!

a, szókincs   b, nyelvtan   c, hallgatás   d, olvasás   e, írás   f, beszéd   g, kiejtés

4) Véleményem szerint a feladat/feladatok nehézségi szintje ...

       Túl könnyű   Túl nehéz

                    1   2   3   4   5

6.5 Post-research feedback sheet

English version

1. Which activity was your favourite?

a, Activity 1

b, Activity 2

c, Activity 3

2. Why?

_____

_____

_____

3. Which activity improved your language skills the most?

a, Activity 1

b, Activity 2

c, Activity 3

4. How did this activity improve your language skills in your opinion?

_____

_____

_____

5. In your opinion, what are the benefits of using stories in the English language classroom?

_____

_____

_____

Hungarian version

1. Melyik feladat tetszett a legjobban?

a, 1. feladat

b, 2. feladat

c, 3. feladat

2. Miért?

_____

_____

_____

3. Melyik feladat fejlesztette legjobban a nyelvi készségeidet?

a, 1. feladat

b, 2. feladat

c, 3. feladat

4. Véleményed szerint hogyan fejlesztette nyelvi készségeidet ez a feladat?

_____

_____

_____

5. Véleményed szerint mik az előnyei történetek alkalmazásának nyelvi órákon?

_____

_____

_____