

ABSTRACT

**“Once upon a time they wrote,
now we (sign) write!”**

by

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Children's literature has always played an important role in relation to child development, whether it is at the linguistic level, cognitive and even at the social level. Introducing children at a very early stage to books that can develop their imagination and that will stimulate their train of thought is one of the strategies used by both educators and caregivers. Besides that, the early exposure to their natural writing language system is fundamental for the children's literacy.

Reading stories to hearing children is an easy task to perform, since there are so many available tools. However, when the child is deaf, there are obvious obstacles to begin with: reading the story is not an option, since the child can't have access to audio information; therefore the story has to be presented as visual information, which takes effect by using the sign language.

Simultaneously, and as mentioned before, the deaf child as well as the hearing one, shall be exposed and have early contact with her/his natural writing language system, the signwriting. By doing so, we are fostering the acquisition of the deaf child language, allowing her/him to have an equal linguistic development as the hearing child.

The work that is intended to be presented is in regards to the ideas previously explained, in particularly in the edition of a children's book, which tell the story of a princess that couldn't hear and that has three formats: the written story in Portuguese, the story taped and told in Portuguese Sign Language and finally the written story in SignWriting.

This book is in the first place, the result of a group of individuals dream to make SignWriting a reality in Portugal, and second, for the lack of the existence of deaf children's literature, as well as of the clear need to create any education tools in this area. The lack of learning tools that should allow parents and educators to work with deaf children is a reality in Portugal and needs to be reversed. With that in mind, this project is relevant since it can be used as a model to others that may arise in the future.

With this being a pioneer idea, and the fact that this will be the first time occurring in Portugal, what is intended is, to explain the entire process from the book drafting to the final product. Need to emphasize that even though we thoroughly believe on this project's advantages and practical utility, the results will only be proven and seen with time.