

## The Writing of deaf subjects: an investigation of authorship<sup>1 2</sup>

### *A escrita de sujeitos surdos: uma investigação sobre autoria*

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#### **Abstract:**

This article aims to track authorship cues in texts written and produced by deaf individuals in workshop situations. To do so, textual production work in Portuguese was proposed by means of the collective rewriting of an adventure story, by confabulations between deaf pairs and listening educators, using Libras as the language of interlocution. Adopting a Bakhtinian conception of language as a discursive activity, the workshops became a place of development possibilities for the deaf individuals as a user of written Portuguese, as well as being unique manifestations of linguistic expression. Thus, the rewriting, as a production activity based on an already read text (in which the deaf narrated in Libras for other deaf people to record in written Portuguese), gave the participants the opportunity to put into play the knowledge constructed from reading, comparing, contrasting, transforming, and experimenting with new modes of construction that singled out their writing.

**Keywords:** deafness, writing, authorship

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**Resumo:**

*Este artigo tem o objetivo de rastrear indícios de autoria em textos escritos e produzidos por sujeitos surdos em oficinas. Para tanto se propôs um trabalho de produção textual em português com a reescrita coletiva de uma história de aventura, por confabulações entre pares surdos e educadores ouvintes, tendo a Língua Brasileira de Sinais (Libras) como forma de interlocução. Adotando uma concepção bakhtiniana de língua como atividade discursiva, as oficinas constituíram lugares de possibilidades de desenvolvimento do sujeito surdo enquanto usuário do português escrito, bem como de manifestações singulares de expressão linguística. Assim, a reescrita – atividade de produção apoiada em um texto já lido, na qual os surdos narram em Libras para que outros surdos registrem em português escrito – proporcionou aos participantes a oportunidade de colocar em jogo os conhecimentos construídos a partir da leitura, comparando, contrastando, transformando e experimentando novos modos de construção que singularizaram sua escrita.*

**Palavras-chave:** surdez, escrita, autoria

## Introduction

Educational work with deaf students is a field open to research, due to the fact that historically the different educational proposals aimed at this public have not guaranteed the development of its potential. Despite successful initiatives in the area of deafness that emerge as islands of excellence, much of this work has still been built on pedagogical and methodological proposals and strategies that favor hegemonic ideology while neglecting the deaf student. In this sense, Lacerda (2000) reports that most Brazilian deaf people did not have access to schooling that would meet their linguistic, methodological, curricular, social and cultural specificities, and were often placed in regular schools in non-deaf student classes where they were expected to have the same behavior of listeners while submitting them to contents prepared for audients.

According to Lane (1992), the attempt to educate deaf children based on structured teaching methods and strategies for listener children has proven ineffective over the years, a fact that can be seen anywhere in the world where education for the deaf is given strictly in the national language.

Despite the similarity between the cognitive abilities of deaf and non-deaf individuals, reality shows that a significant number of deaf people still carry the burden of school failure. Such failure, however, may be the result of wrong teaching conditions to which these students are subjected.

Faced with such a panorama, it is necessary to reflect on the institutional and social dynamics carried out in the education of the deaf, considering their specificities and the different educational practices adopted, in view of this student's access to learning and curricular experiences in the school environment. The bilingual proposal for deaf education meets this demand, because in it, the learning process is based on sign language that ensures the linguistic development of the deaf subject, stimulating their social and cognitive development.

It is common to find teachers complaining about their deaf student's initial writing, singled out by grammatical aspects of sign language. However, such writing is capable of being polished, since in the activity of textual production there are social and individual aspects that drive the subjects in their communicative and interactive action. A deaf subject can reach linguistic maturity, from writing marked by the peculiarity of sign language to excellence in Portuguese, manifesting the ability to choose between the different ways of structuring a written text, using the various resources that language offers to achieve certain effects of meaning.

Thus, this article aims to track authorship evidence in texts written and produced by deaf subjects in workshops. Therefore, a textual production work in Portuguese based on the collective rewriting of an adventure story, by confabulations between deaf pairs and hearing educators and using the Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) as the form of interlocution, was proposed.

## **Bakhtin's concepts and the teaching and learning process**

The National Curriculum Parameters of Portuguese Language bring pedagogical recommendations that guide the teaching and learning of the mother tongue through discursive genres, considering them as objects of this process (Barros & Padilha, 2011). Thus, different studies have focused on the practical and theoretical implications surrounding such

recommendations, the bases of which are based on Bakhtinian conceptions of language and discursive genres. This expands the possibilities for reflection and planning of the teaching-learning of reading and written production from the valuation of the contexts of use and circulation of different texts (Rojo & Cordeiro, 2010).

To reflect on the specifics of teaching in this perspective, it is necessary to understand how Bakhtinian concepts of language and genres articulate with teaching-learning instrument and object notions.

It was based on Bakhtin's work that the notion of gender reached, in Schneuwly & Dolz's (2010) opinion, probably for the first time, a considerable dimension. The concept of gender developed by Bakhtin (2006) presumes that the various fields of human activity are connected to the use of language. The manner in which such language is effective is as multiform as the fields of social activity, whose members employ language in the form of concrete utterances according to the specific conditions and purposes of these spheres of activity. That is, each communication field determines its thematic content, its language style (lexical and grammatical resource choices) and its compositional construction. Although a particular utterance is individual, each field of language use organizes its utterances, which are stabilized precariously until composing different genres.

Thus, genres are historical and social products, constituting semiotic instruments for the action of language (Schneuwly, 2010). According to Bakhtin (2006), language comes to integrate life through concrete statements (which carry it out); it is also through concrete statements that life enters the language (p. 265). Even in the most relaxed conversation, subjects shape their discourses by certain forms of genre, sometimes standardized and stereotyped, sometimes more flexible, plastic and creative (everyday communication also has creative genres).

These discourse genres are given to us in much the same way that we are given the mother tongue, which we freely master until we begin the theoretical study of grammar. The mother tongue its vocabulary composition and grammatical structure comes to our knowledge not from dictionaries and grammars but from concrete utterances that we ourselves hear and reproduce in living discursive communication with the people around us. We assimilate the forms of language only in the forms of utterances and precisely in those forms. The forms of language and the typical forms of utterances, that is, the discourse genres, come to our consciousness together and are closely linked<sup>3</sup>. (Bakhtin, 2006, p. 282)

<sup>3</sup> All quotations throughout the text have been translated from Portuguese.

Learning a language, for Bakhtin, means learning to construct utterances, since subjects do not speak by isolated clauses and words, but by utterances: genres organize discourses in much the same way as grammatical and syntactic forms. Thus, it appears that oral or written texts are produced based on certain discourse genres, which, bringing typical constructions, are socio-cognitive and cultural sources that guide the speakers in the production and understanding of different discourses in social circulation.

Based on this perspective, it can be observed that the discourses are produced, as pointed out by Schneuwly (2010), due to a situation defined by certain parameters such as purpose, recipients and content, that is, the discourses are guided by the elaboration of a discursive action, involving a subject, the speaker-enunciator, who acts discursively (speaking/writing), in a given situation, with the help of an instrument that is a genre here, a complex semiotic instrument functioning as a form of prescriptive language, that allows, at the same time, the production and comprehension of texts (p. 23).

Such discursive action inevitably takes into account the speech of others, that is, it is permeated by the speech of others. Thus, discourse exists only in the form of concrete utterances of certain speakers, the subjects of the discourse.

In this case, the listener, realizing and understanding the (linguistic) meaning of discourse, simultaneously occupies an active responsive position with respect to it: agrees or disagrees with it (wholly or partially), completes it, applies it, prepares to use it, etc. . This responsive position of the listener forms itself throughout the process of listening and understanding... (Bakhtin, 2006, p. 271)

Thus, the subjects discursively make up each other through the social relations in which they participate, incorporating different voices. The subjects act in relation to others, and this means that dialogism is the principle of representation of the individual and its action principle (Fiorin, 2008, p. 55). Thus, it can be deduced that all statements are made up from other statements. In this sense, enunciation is the product of the discursive interaction of two socially organized subjects, whose structure is determined by the most immediate social situation and the wider social environment (Bakhtin & Volochinov, 2010).

It is, therefore, in the discursive space where utterances unfold that one can, as Franchi (1987) points out, rediscover dimensions of a creative freedom regarding language practices and, by extension, the production of texts (oral, written or from signs). In this sense, Bakhtin (2006) states that although style is inextricably linked to gender, every statement is individual and

therefore may reflect the individuality of the speaker (or writer) (p. 265). Thus, Bakhtinian conceptions of language and discursive genres, taken as teaching objects, can direct, as Lima (2012) points out, a methodology of language teaching based on true language substance: verbal interaction, taking into account the implications of the statement as a real unit of discursive communication and of its corresponding context.

In the referred conception of language, the subject has a prominent role in any situation of interaction, since every utterance is the result of social work performed by active subjects who express themselves, personalizing their discourse. On the other hand, the notion of gender carries the idea of discursive action guidance since it brings together thematic content, style and compositional construction, elements that are determined by the social situation and the reciprocal relations between the participants of the communication.

In this context, the process of teaching and learning from discursive interaction is important, since the utterance is social and interactional, that is, the forms of language are assimilated into the concrete structure of the utterance, as variable and flexible signs. and not in the abstract system, as always identical forms. Bakhtin and Volochinov (2010) state: In the living practice of language, the linguistic awareness of the speaker and the receiver has nothing to do with an abstract system of normative forms, but with language in the sense of the set of possible use contexts of each particular form (p. 98). The authors conclude that linguistic forms appear to speakers who are always steeped in precise utterances and contexts.

Therefore, the teaching and learning process of reading and writing from the described articulations must take into account that the multiple relationships established between the different subjects are marked by individual values, producing different enunciative possibilities. Thus, faced with the writing of a text, every subject in an active responsive position can be discursively and creatively established, revealing the social determinations of communication, as well as the value of linguistic units and their different resources in the effective use of language.

## Research procedures

The present study was guided by the Bakhtinian hypotheses described and for their implementation, *Portuguese as a second language for the deaf* workshops, developed at the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar), were proposed. Responding to proposals of bilingual education for the deaf, the workshops were based on work with adventure stories, favoring discursive interactions in Libras (The Brazilian Sign Language).

From the age of 14 to 30, the seven deaf participants who attended the workshops called Denis, Dalton, Wilson, Wesley, Janaína, Miguel, and Julia for research purposes and identified in the transcripts and data analysis as P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6 and P7 had either already finished high school or were in different grades of basic education, however presented great difficulty reading and writing in Portuguese.

The workshops were coordinated by one of the authors of this work, with the participation of researchers in the field of deafness, called educators here, and known as Luna (E1), Milena (E2), Danilo (E3), Adriano (E4) and Katy (E5) and who transcribed, presented and analyzed data. We considered reading and writing in their dialogic and interdiscursive dimension in the workshops, which was the formation space, subject constitution area and discourse circulation sphere. Adopting a conception of language as a discursive activity, the workshops represented places of development possibilities for the deaf subject as a user of Portuguese in the written modality, based on a work with an adventure story: *The Seven Voyages of Simbad the Sailor* (Holeinone, 1998).

Taking Lodi's (2013) studies into account, in the universe of deaf students knowing a particular discursive genre in Portuguese means having significant contact with it, initially in Libras and later in Portuguese (p. 176), and such a relationship with the second language should initially be by reading. Based on this assumption, didactic material was set up with a video in Libras of the referred adventure story, narrated by one of the listener educators. After the activity with the deaf participants with this video, the written text was read. Following this intense work, deaf participants were challenged to jointly rewrite the story with the following proposal: narration in Libras by the deaf, with written textual destination, prepared by other deaf participants.

The jointly produced text was written on the board, allowing deaf participants to take turns in the roles of amanuenses and registrars. The process was recorded by video, so the text produced by the deaf participants could be represented at the subsequent workshop for the continuity of the writing work. The presentation of the story in Libras was also foreseen, not only to contextualize participants who might have missed the previous workshop, but also to retrace the story line of the passage to be rewritten.

In this way, deaf participants become text producers, solving certain writing problems and developing skills to better guide writing in another language. The proposal starts from the notion of language as a dynamic activity, in the process of construction itself in the interaction between the subjects. The stylistic individualization of enunciation is, according to Bakhtin and Volochinov (2010), precisely the reflection of social interrelationship, in the context in which a given enunciation is constructed.

The workshop activities took place once a week, lasting 1.5 hours, in a UFSCar study room, being video-recorded by a research assistant and later translated. In order to examine the paths taken by deaf participants in the practices with written language, the corpus for analysis was taken from workshops considered important due to showing moments of dialogue that highlight the reflective and creative process that permeated the work of reading and writing, in the workshop spaces.

For data analysis, we draw on language acquisition studies based on, more recently, a new line of research: instead of prioritizing a universal, idealized subject and controlled experimental situations based on Piagetian principles we start to focus on socio-historical processes, starting to look with interest at the unique data of the studied subject, investigating evidence that leads to a better characterization of the subject-language relationship (Barros, 2003, p. 25).

This principle is based on the indicative paradigm defended by Ginzburg (1989), whose disciplines do not absolutely meet the criteria of scientificity deduced from the Galilean paradigm, as they are eminently qualitative disciplines, whose objects are cases, situations and individual documents. achieving results with a non-eliminable margin of chance (p. 156). This is how signs and clues can allow the deciphering of an opaque reality (Ginzburg, 1989, p. 177). This principle as an instrument brings the possibility of searching, in data considered marginal, signs that point to new reflections on the construction of language written by deaf subjects.



Thus, we were interested in the detailed record, assuming the centrality of the intertwining between the historical, social, cultural and semiotic dimensions in the study of the subject's links with language. Thus, the workshops are considered contexts for interaction and learning, in order to record the progress of occurrences and identify their meanings in detail.

The approaches and procedures adopted here for the meticulous study of workshop interaction and discourse are in many ways close to the methods of ethnography and educational microethnography. According to Erickson (2001),

... The essential purposes of these approaches are to register in detail the unfolding of everyday events [to unravel] the meanings ascribed to them both by those who participate in them and by those who observe them... Work ideally involves long-term observation and participation in the setting, which is being studied with the purpose of providing familiarization with the routine patterns of action and interpretation that make up the participants' daily local world. The emphasis in this research is to discover types of things that make a difference in social life; emphasis on *qualitas* rather than *quantitas*. (p. 12)

Our study, as a long-term participant observation, allows us to familiarize ourselves with these routine patterns, enabling us to answer questions such as: what is the full range of variation of implicit and explicit meanings attributed to these various actions by the various social actors engaged in them? (Erickson, 2001, p. 13).

## Authorship Issues

Thinking about authorship based on the Bakhtinian format implies thinking on the context of the workshops in which the deaf participants took part. As a discursive practice, collective writing considers different subjects in meaning production work, permeated by different social voices, but each one imprinting its individuality and uniqueness. This process refers to the dialogical principle, the social and historical elements that formed the workshops and the uniqueness of each participant. For Bakhtin (2006), in each utterance, the discursive will of the speaker can be felt, who, when speaking discursively, performs a work of authorship from a project of saying (what to say thematic content, and how to say style). Therefore, facing the enunciative choices, the subjects register uniqueness, individualizing their utterances.

Every discourse genre, according to Bakhtin (2006), brings its own style of enunciation, within which the individual style is built. From this enunciative-discursive gender vision, every utterance may reflect the individuality of its producer, that is, it may have an individual style. Although style is an integral element of the genre, this does not mean, according to Bakhtin (2006), that the language style of the enunciator cannot be the object of the study, since within the produced genres the effects of individuality may emerge.

Fiorin (2008) shows that style, from the Bakhtinian perspective, is a set of utterance finishing procedures, resulting from a selection of linguistic resources that the enunciator uses. That is, it represents the set of phonic, morphological, syntactic, semantic, lexical, enunciative, discursive traits that marks the specificity of an utterance, generating a sense of individuality effect (p. 46). Such discursive and textual particularities can confirm the author's marks in his text. However, for Fiorin, Bakhtin does not deny that dialogism is a constitutive element of the utterance, since style is defined dialogically, in partnership with the other's discourse.

When discussing issues related to the structured language style of science, Possenti (1993), referring to Granger's *Philosophy of Style* (1974), originally published in 1968, shows that for a researcher to discover the mark of a work he/she must compare the stages, the mishaps, the progress, the changes in direction (p. 156), that is, to analyze all attempts made to reach the structure that represents the phenomenon. Such work reveals the subtle play of form and content. Thus Possenti's (1993) stance is:

Now, an approach to style, in order to have some meaning and not only from the perspective of discourse analysis, must consider the role of form in the setting up of meaning and the pressure of meaning, its role, as one of the conditions of selection, of the choice of a format. (p. 170)

Reflecting, therefore, on the modalities of differentiation of the subject in language from Granger (1974), Possenti (1993) opts for the notion of choice as a basic constitutive style trait, considering the process of language construction and not only the final product in this work. In this sense, Possenti (2002) argues that it is not enough to meet the grammatical requirements for a text to be considered good, although the idea that knowledge of the language (of grammatical rules) makes a text a text is still supported. The author also warns: it is not enough to satisfy the textual requirements, that is, to present cohesive links and to obey the coherence for a text to be considered high quality. Possenti (2002) concludes that a text can be absolutely

dull (which does not mean only inelegant), for example because it does not mark the position of the author; in short, because it bears no resemblance to the texts that were consecrated as good texts (p. 112).

Still according to Possenti (2002), the concepts taken into account to give substance to authorship are related to the speaker's conceptions, while an expression that designates the speaker as being responsible for what he/she says, and for uniqueness in that, in some way it draws attention, in a somewhat peculiar way, to the author being present in the text (p. 107). The real authorship marks are the order of discourse, therefore, it is making entities and actions that appear in a text exactly have historicity and meaning (p. 112). To make the notion of authorship objective, Possenti (2002) considers the idea of uniqueness, bringing it closer to style issues:

In short: there are signs of authorship when various language resources are more or less personally managed which could imply that it is personal knowledge that is operated according to a taste criterion. But at the same time, the appeal to such resources only produces authorship effects when broached from historical constraints, because only then do they make sense. (p. 121)

Based on these concepts, we will seek authorship or evidence of it in the statements and texts, written and produced by the deaf participants in the workshops that make up the *corpus* of our research. Despite the deaf participants uttering from a given text, the search for evidence of authorship is possible, since the subjects always enunciate from specific historical positions and distinct social horizons. In this way, deaf participants were not prevented from enunciating in other ways of saying, although they followed a given story. This exercise approached the activity proposed by the Planning and Teaching Guidebook of the Reading and Writing Program (São Paulo, 2014), in which students, based on the oral production of a story that was read, dictated to the teacher, reproduce the source text, seeking different ways to express that content, without, however, learning it off by heart.

The rewriting exercise undertaken by deaf participants brought together, as Teberosky (2003, p. 94) shows, a more general procedure, giving rise to quotation, imitation, simulation, paraphrasing. Thus, the proposed rewriting based on the Libras/Portuguese language exchange was characterized as a particular way of textual production, as both signers and writers were

authors of the new text and knew that they could venture into a production that would identify itself with the story read.

To trace evidence of authorship in the texts written and produced by deaf participants, we presumed that their efforts to produce a good text already point towards authorship. The collective rewriting of an adventure story made it possible for them to become effective agents and speakers of a text that became unique from the original story read. Thus, we start from the concept of authorship as a process under construction, linked to the uniqueness and the project of enunciation of each deaf participant. The text produced collectively contemplated peculiar aspects of each participant who there imprinted their will, their knowledge about the Portuguese language and their knowledge built within different social practices.

Under these conditions, the texts produced became a suitable *locus* for the reflection of individuality in language, and may reveal, as Bakhtin (2006) points out, different layers and aspects of an individual personality, since the author is the one who reveals himself as an organizer of discourses, whose style is shown by the selection of linguistic and enunciative resources offered by the language.

After this, we will trace some marks left by the deaf participants as signs of authorship in the unfolding of the analyzed scenes.

## Data Presentation and Analysis

Aiming at reflections on authorship, we will analyze, through the highlighted scenes, the way the deaf participants weaved their discursive relations, specifying their statements in the above-mentioned workshops. It is important to note that the signs of authorship are emerging throughout the workshops, as participants gradually occupy their places as language subjects. However, for the purpose of visibility and didactic organization, we will group the episodes that bring authorship effects based on deaf participants. Without disregarding the participation of all the subjects who at one time or another stood out for their uniqueness, the following list of participants was chosen for the performance that met, in the restricted and specific context of this cutout, the theoretical parameters that guided us in the concept of authorship.

The *corpus* for this analysis was made up of scenes that were selected from workshops that presented important moments of dialogue, showing sequences of the reflection process around the redrafting and the collective textual reelaboration. To overcome and present the data of this work, a table with four columns was used, entitled: *Who Signals, Translation, Who to Signal to and Written Text produced by deaf participants*.

The importance of the *Who Signals, and Who to Signal to* columns lies in the need to consider the position and intentionality of the enunciating subject, as the enunciation is shaped by the situation that guides or imposes the repercussions of voices, directing agreements, requests, guidance, expressions of doubts or certainties, of enlightenment or confusion, of insecurity or empowerment. It is the set of auditions that determines that the inner speech is carried out in a certain outer expression (Bakhtin & Volochinov, 2010).

The translation column aims to lead the reader through the enunciative clues followed by the deaf, as the first enunciator of the text. The enunciative marks registered by the translation reveal the participation of the deaf participants in an individual moment of language use, trying to capture the unpredictability and the ephemerality of the enunciation. The last column brings the written record produced by the deaf participants, the result of the utterances that characterized each one's writing process.

In this process of translation, the gesture-visual modality of sign language was considered, given the need to clarify, to the reader, certain routes used by deaf participants when they make their utterances. For example, when these and the hearing educators took advantage of typing, such words were capitalized with hyphenated letters, while their oral interventions were recorded in italics.

## Denis in scene – P1

We will identify in the following three scenes, Denis' uniqueness (P1) as a result of his work with language in choosing between multiple possibilities of expression. In scene 1, we observe his agencying of expressive resources, seeking to produce meaning effect based on the use of adjectives.

**Table 1 – Transcription of scene 1**

Who signals	Translation	Who to Signal to	Written text produced by deaf participants - registrar P6
P5	I-S-L-A-N-D	P6	The ship's boss told them throw anchor water, afterwards the people land
P5	I-S-L-A-N-D	P6	
P1	You need to write that the island was beautiful	P2	
P5	I-S	P6	The ship's boss told them throw anchor water, afterwards the people land island
P5	Is Yes	P6	

In this scene, the deaf participants reported the landing of Simbad the sailor with his crew on an alleged island., when they dropped anchor at the commander's command. P5 signals the word island, through typing, to the already registered text, so that P6 completes the text. In order to characterize the island, P1 suggests the adjective beautiful, which would certainly give the text a new meaning effect, a more poetic effect. The choice as a work mark, characterizing preferences in the way of representing a phenomenon, can be detected when P1 selects the expressive resources: You need to write that the island was beautiful. Admitting that the diversity of resources is a constitutive source of language, the choice of the adjective beautiful, among other possibilities, highlights the work of language construction carried out by P1.

Possenti (2002) states that if the speaker seeks, among the possible options, one of the effects he wants to produce to the disadvantage of others, he will have to choose between the available resources, he will have to work the language to obtain the effect he intends to. Therein lies the style, concludes Possenti, in how the speaker sets up his statement to obtain the effect he wants to achieve (p. 158). P1's enunciation reveals him to be a discourse articulator aware of the expressive elements, and such a process of choice emerges as being a constitutive style. Thus, it can be considered that there is style and evidence of authorship, since there are P1's work marks in the language. P1's observation implies in the recognition of textual elaboration procedures and the awareness of aesthetic choices, seeking expressive resources that would personalize their writing, based on their project of saying, even if it is a rewrite. The choice to characterize the island with the word beautiful, among other options such as pretty, lovely or enchanting, given by the original text, is not only intended for contextual adaptation, but as a process of choice, and implies the linguistic activity of a subject seeking to create a discursive *ethos*. By designating the island as beautiful, P1 details, characterizes and contextualizes the space

where the characters act, bringing the reader closer to the text. This sense effect sought by P1 shows a certain communicative competence that marks his language construction work.

In scene 2, we analyze the meaning effect that P1 seeks to imprint on the context, considering, discursive relations besides semantic ones.

**Table 2 – Transcription of scene 2**

Who signals	Translation	Who to Signal to	Written text produced by deaf participants - registrar P6
P2	Write it down, wait, write, they didn't warn a person, they warned a lot of people.	P6	The ship's boss told them throw anchor water, afterwards the people land island make fire, afterwards hear shout.
P2	They warned many people and not one person.	P6	
P2	Put the letter S	P6	
P6	Where?	P2	The ship's boss told them throw anchor water, afterwards the people land island make fire, afterwards hear shout.
P1	It is not to make a fire, you need to put what is to light, understood?	P2	

Expressing linguistic-discursive preferences, now seeking meaning for himself and others, P1 marks his position as a language subject. The episode in which the ship's crew lit a fire for cooking was set out in the text produced by the deaf participants as **people to land island make fire**<sup>4</sup>. Face to face with the text, P1 pronounces: It is not to make fire, you need to put that it is to light it, understand?. The content to be expressed takes a social place of personal and cultural relations as a reference. Presuming that the form of making fire is not so usual, P1 incorporates the most current, or closest-seeming speech - to light the fire. According to Possenti (1993), linguistic forms bring a story in which ... carry marks like old trees full of parasites, and these marks are responsible for selecting a word from a group of words that could consider themselves synonymous (p. 205). Based on his knowledge of the world and his reading of the text, P1 chooses the form that he considers most suitable. Even opting for the most current discourse, using social memory and world knowledge, one can glimpse the role of the author in the position of subject invested by P1, who not only repeats the usual discourse, but positions himself in the social-historical context contesting the enunciation of his partners. In

<sup>4</sup> The texts written by the deaf participants are in Arial font.

this way, P1 can transpose his speech to the text that is being produced collectively, facing the opposing positions of the workshop participants.

In scene 3, we can observe the change of text direction by a detail that P1 provides, adding information and references to readers.

**Table 3 – Transcription of scene 3**

Who signals	Translation	Who to Signal to	Written text produced by deaf participants -registrar P1
P2	The man T-H-E-M-A-N	P1	Sinbad found real island. Afterwards found man
P1	No... wait	P2	
P1	The man found an island, but didn't find the man, he found a horse, he found the man's horse.	Everyone	

Starting from Possenti's (2002) assumptions and taking authorship as a process under construction, linked to the individuality of the registrar who pronounced himself in a text produced collectively, we sought in this scene to analyze *how* P1 constructs his statement before P2's given statement. In narrating that Simbad would have found a man upon arrival on the island, P2 does not contemplate a certain fact that P1 considers important for the outcome of the episode. In an attempt to bring density to the text and add information that would move the narrative, P1 counteracts: No... wait. The man found an island, but did not find the man, found a horse, he found the man's horse. The sequence offered by P1 gives new direction to the narrated facts, placing him as an active subject that outlines his *meaning*, signaling signs of authorship under construction.

### **Dalton in scene – P2**

Scenes 4 and 5, presented below, refer to the occurrences that personalized Dalton (P2) in the writing process. We will follow the steps taken by the participant, in whose footsteps may be the distinctive marks of his form of enunciation.



In scene 4, two episodes draw attention to Dalton's work: the restructuring of the text given his discursive project and the different discursive effects achieved by the use of the adjective.

**Table 4 – Transcription of scene 4**

Who signals	Translation	Who to Signal to	Written text produced by deaf participants – registrars P2 and P6
E2	Sinbad didn't manage to get back to the ship. What did he do? What happened?	Everyone	Person shouted no this is not an island it is a fish sleeping in the water a lot of time goes quicker on the ship. Simbig didn't make it to the ship
P2	Drown?	E2	
E2	Drown	P2	
P2	Is it to drown?	P6	
P6	Does he hold on to the barrel?	P2	
P2	No, put D - R - O - W - N	P6	(P6 gets mixed up and P2 makes the register) I drown.
P5	What? Erase it, he didn't drown, he didn't die.	P6	
P2	He did drown, Y - E - S.	P5	
P5	He found... He swam afterwards he found a barrel.	P2	
P2	Yes.	P5	I drown afterwards I found the barrel.
P5	Yes, that's right	P2	
P6	He held on to the barrel, he held on to the barrel, didn't he?	P2	I drown, afterwards I found the barrel and good wind, I found an island.

A work of enunciative choices and interlocutor positions seeking to produce meaning can be retrieved in the sequence in which P2 and P5 defend their different ways of representing a phenomenon, according to their conjectures. The sequence refers to the episode where Simbad falls into the sea and cannot return to the ship. Given P2's register, **I drown**, P5 asserts himself: What? Erase it, he didn't drown, he didn't die. The sequence of discussions advances between arguments and counterarguments resulting from inferences about the verb **drown**. However, the analysis undertaken here is not restricted to whether Simbad has died or not, but tries to reach the interlocutors as being responsible for what they say and the personalization by which they are present in the text, with its interfering concepts, conditions and restrictions in its possibilities of choice. Marking his position, which reveals another understanding of the verb **drown**, distinct from the one presented by P5, P2 completes: **I drowned later I found the barrel**.

Keeping the verb, P2 not only marks his understanding of the utterance, but also restructures the text according to the purpose of his discourse.

Considering the importance of working with the text, manifested in the choices of different ways of saying, as pointed out by Possenti (1993), we will analyze the extent of the event described from the effects of an expressive component that personalizes P2's utterance. The example comes from the record made by this registrar: I drown then found the barrel and good wind, found an island. The adjective good, used by P2, brings a certain discursive meaning that translates into the form of representation of the noun wind, anticipating the favorable and suitable conditions of the current that led Simbad to a real island. Here is the role of the format of the meaning (content) set up, and the pressure of meaning, conditioning the selection of format, as Possenti (1993) points out:

... A format does not mirror, does not reflect, nor, on the other hand, does it create content: it provokes it, makes it appear. And the reverse path is also relevant: content gives rise to a form, that is, there is a preference for a certain expression, requires a work of choice to find the best way to make itself appear. With this, it forces the direction of format selection. (p. 171)

Scene 5 reveals an episode of creativity when Dalton breaks with the source text, undoing its structure.

**Table 5 – Transcription of scene 5**

Who signals	Translation	Who to Signal to	Written text produced by the deaf participants
P2	Simbad found a real island. ... afterwards a curious man asked: – What are you doing here? – I am a castaway	Everyone	

Still on the path of enunciative choices that leads to different ways of saying, we will follow the creativity work left by P2's point of view in a different version of the story. The task of deaf participants was not restricted to a mechanical transcription of the original text, thus, within the threads of history, improvisation was not forbidden. The sequence narrated by P2, in scene 5, which refers to a curious man who Simbad encountered upon arriving on the island, differs from the original version and can be taken as an indication of authorship, since in the text read, the curious character is Simbad himself. According to the Bakhtinian principle, every utterance is dialogical and is formed by another utterance and can, as an active reaction, preserve

the integrity and authenticity of the other's discourse or undo its given structure through elements of language that allow the author meaning sliding. In this way, the P2 version breaks the boundaries of the original story in opposition to it. The creative activity, says Franchi (1987), develops in dialogue and contradiction, in the counterpoint of a discourse that is updated in a well-defined context (p. 12).

### Janaína in scene – P5

In search of signs capable of indicating the singular position of an enunciator, we will describe the episodes in which P5 shows expression competence, starting from scenes 6 and 7.

**Table 6 – Transcription of scene 6**

Who signals	Translation	Who to Signal to	Written text produced by the deaf participants – registrar P1
E2	The man came in through the gate and saw high trees, flowers and a water fount, afterwards he saw a group, who were these people?	Everyone	
P5	Water fount	E2	
E2	Which group did he see?	Everyone	
P5	Men with elegant clothes.	E2	
E2	Did you see what she said?	P1	
P1	I did.	E2	
E2	A man with elegant clothes.	P1	Man
P5	Elegant clothes.	E2/P1	
E2	He saw a man with elegant clothes.	P1	
P5	Elegant clothes.	E2	
P5	Elegant, elegant clothes.	E2	He saw a man.

In this scene, marking his position as a distinctive enunciator, P5 refers to the men in elegant clothing, answering E2's question about the group Simbad would have seen as he entered the palace gates. The episode here, taken as an example, is representative, since the original text refers to the group of elegant men. Thus, the noun clothing, as P5's option and, therefore, a demonstration of individuality, arises not only from the illustrations of the book and the video narrated in Libras, but also from its relationship with cultural elements, translating into the discourse that elegance is inherent to clothing.

In scene 7, once again we observe the insertion of lexical items brokered by cultural and historical elements.

**Table 7 – Transcription of scene 7**

Who signals	Translation	Who to Signal to	Written text produced by the deaf participants – registrar P1
P5	The pages serve food and drink. The pages serve sweets, food and drink.	P1	
E3	The pages used to serve. In Brazilian sign language.	P5	
E2	Pages	P5	
P2	Simbad the porter, then the page used to serve drink, sweets and food.	Everyone	
E2	Simbad the porter, saw men with elegant clothes, afterwards he observed the pages.	P1	
P1	Here	Everyone	
P1	Comma? Is there a comma here?	Everyone	He saw the men elegant clothes,

Signaling expression competence, P5 introduces an element in stating the pages' action serving the group of elegant men. Thus, by adding the noun food between sweets and drinks that were being served, P5 not only inserts supplementary information into the original text, but also communicates knowledge to us, trying to incorporate it into a discourse that brings historicity to the text, taking up current opinions that no one lives on sweets and drinks alone.

The brief episodes highlighted to mark P5's performance as a text producer are fraught with significance. Talking about text quality, Possenti (2002) takes the following position:

A good text can only be evaluated in discursive terms. This means that the question of the quality of the text necessarily involves the question of subjectivity and its insertion in a historical framework - that is, in a discourse - that gives it meaning. What could be interpreted thus: it is both about singularity and taking of position. (p. 109)

Following Possenti (2002) paths, we can state that P5's interventions and his suggestions for inserting extra elements pervade the text with density and characterization, giving life and motivation to the characters, besides presenting relationships with cultural elements and other discourses.

### Julia in scene – P7

We now go through the events that show that P7 imprinted his position as a writing subject as a result of his work with language on the text. In scene 8, we observe P7's interference adding expressive values to the narrative.

**Table 8 – Transcription of scene 8**

Who signals	Translation	Who to Signal to	Written text produced by the deaf participants – registrars P1 and P2
P2	It is A	P1	Sinbad found a real island then found a female horse
P7	The horse crosses	P1	
P1	Cross		
P1	And afterwards waits	P7	
P1	Tied around the neck	Everyone	
P7	Tied to the trunk by the neck.	P1	
-----	-----	-----	-----
P1	Tied by the neck	E3	
P2	Tied by the neck	E3	
P7	Tied to a wooden stump	Everyone	

In the scene presented, deaf participants discuss the episode in which Simbad is led by the king's groom into a cave and encounters a trapped animal. P1 states that the mare was tied by the neck. In turn, P7 adds: tied to the trunk by the neck and, later on, completes: tied to the wooden stump. Although the information somehow coincides, P7's clarification adds elements (neck, wood) that give more life and characterization to the narrative. The components added to the story by P7's intervention, and as significant values, are signs of authorship, since the original text only tells us about an animal tied to a stake by the sea.

The fact that the detail comes from the illustration of the book, not the written text, does not detract from the data in terms of authorship, after all, the creativity of the transposition of the visual (illustration) to the written text is characterized. Therefore, it is P7's uniqueness in taking over the language, since the text (or the accompanying image) does not present itself to all participants in the same way. Possenti (1993), based on Umberto Eco, tells us how the same work can be read in different ways, according to each reader, or according to the different interpretations that the same reader gives to the text read. Understanding, says Fiorin (2008), is to participate in a dialogue with the text. Thus, the peculiarity of P7's utterance, as a style, is a result of his reading.

In scene 9, P7's intervention in creative strategies to access the lexicon is highlighted.

**Table 9 – Transcription of scene 9**

Who signals	Translation	Who to Signal to	Written text produced by the deaf participants – registrar P2
			– What are you doing here? – I drowned in the sea – Come with me
E3	So?	Everyone	
P1	Round house	Everyone	
P7	Stone	P1	
P1	No, It's not made of stone, it is a round house.	P7	– What are you doing here – I drowned in the sea – Come with me to the house
P1	Stone	P2	
P7	See, it's made of stone.	P1	

Starting from the principle that authorship and style in language are the result of the work of its builders/users (Possenti, 1993, p. 167), P7's attempt to access the written word cave, concept under construction, emerges as an original strategy. Seeking to answer where Simbad had been taken by the king's groom, the deaf participants referred to the round house. Adding elements that would characterize the already constructed image, P7 positions itself: Stone.

The fact that P7 resorted to the video in Libras, which brought such an element in the representation of a cave, does not detract from the quality of his intervention or diminish his authorship work. The uniqueness of the intervention resulted, as Possenti (1993) argues, from a choice as a result of the work of preferentially representing a phenomenon in some way and

producing certain effects in relation to other possible ones (p. 167). The fusion of the representations round house and stone house was the motto for cave to enter the vocabulary of deaf participants. Both episodes in scene allowed us to follow P7's work in language, enriching the utterances on the screen, from the moment in which he provides details about the trapped animal to contributing to the complex process of concept formation.

## Final Considerations

Adopting a conception of language as a discursive activity, the workshops allowed the development of the deaf subject as a user of Portuguese in the written modality, as well as allowing unique manifestations of linguistic expression.

The writing situation in which the deaf were challenged to jointly rewrite the story gave learners the exercise of constructing meaning in another language. Rewriting a production activity based on a text already read, in which deaf people narrate in Libras so that other deaf people can record it in written Portuguese provided deaf participants with the opportunity of bringing into play the knowledge built from reading, comparing, contrasting, transforming and experimenting with new modes of construction. This exercise allowed them to focus their efforts on producing ideas in Libras, as well as how to express them in another modality, the Portuguese written language. They could share the way of producing a written text, composing together the knowledge about this language. The Libras/Portuguese language exercise provided the tuning of the genre's characteristic resources and its own written registration code.

Presuming that each one defines his/her utterances by his/her own appreciative accents, directed, however, through the dialectically widening social horizon, we trace the displacements and customizations of the workshop participants in the dialogue process that presided over the written textual production.

Thus, the linguistic and discursive attacks of the deaf participants became individualized as they took up their places as discourse subjects. As text producers, deaf participants left clues as to their enunciative mode. Thus it was possible to trace the peculiar manifestations, identifying them based on selection work of expressive resources, going through the restructuring of the text to meet individual objectives in the pursuit of different narrative effects,

even to breaking with the base text. The different resonances - aesthetic and expressive choices, insertions and complementary information, preferences and selection of linguistic resources, negotiations, search for meaning effect, positioning, argumentation and counter-argumentation, among others - make each deaf participant's writing unique.

Such interventions, marked by the insertion of elements that brought historicity, density and characterization to the new text, allowed us to discover true marks of authorship, since these are from the discourse order. Our intention is that the experience of these workshops and their results collaborate to train teachers capable of working Portuguese as a second language with deaf students.

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