

**The *I-for-myself* of Experienced Sign Language Interpreters in Training /
O eu-para-mim de intérpretes de língua de sinais experientes em formação**

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a section of a doctoral research that discusses Brazilian sign language (Libras) and Portuguese language (PL) interpreter training. The research was carried out in a specialization (*lato sensu*) graduate course in translation and the interpretation of Libras/PL at a private institution of higher education in the city of São Paulo. The participants of the research were interpreters with a minimum of three years of experience. In a class designed to improve Libras-PL interpretation skills, six subjects, in pairs, interpreted videos and were later shown their interpretive performance through self-confrontation sessions. This article presents how the position of the subjects, confronting the “*other* of themselves” through the simple self-confrontation, relies on the constitutive otherness of the professional activity and the need for a constant process of facing oneself as *other* in order to improve professional practice.

KEYWORDS: Libras interpreters; Training; Self-confrontation; Otherness; Discourse

RESUMO

Este artigo apresenta o recorte de uma pesquisa de doutorado que discutiu a formação de intérpretes de língua brasileira de sinais (Libras) e língua portuguesa (LP). A pesquisa foi realizada em um curso de especialização em tradução e interpretação de Libras/LP, em uma instituição de ensino superior privada na cidade de São Paulo. Os participantes da pesquisa são intérpretes com, no mínimo, três anos de experiência. Em uma disciplina destinada ao aprimoramento da interpretação na direção Libras-LP, seis sujeitos interpretaram vídeos em duplas e, posteriormente, foram colocados diante da sua própria performance interpretativa por meio do dispositivo da autoconfrontação. Apresenta-se, aqui, como a posição dos sujeitos frente aos “outros de si mesmos”, reveladas na autoconfrontação simples, remete à alteridade constitutiva da atividade de trabalho, e a necessidade de um constante movimento de enfrentamento de si mesmo como outro para o aperfeiçoamento da prática profissional.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Intérpretes de Libras; Formação; Autoconfrontação; Alteridade; Discurso*

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If I am consummated and my life is consummated, I am no longer capable of living and acting. For in order to live and act, I need to be unconsummated, I need to be open for myself – at least in all the essential moments constituting my life; I have to be, for myself, someone who is axiologically yet-to-be, someone who does not coincide with his already existing makeup.
*Mikhail Bakhtin*¹

Introduction

The objective of this article is to present some results of a doctoral research² dealing with the training of Brazilian sign language (Libras) and Portuguese language (PL) interpreters (heretofore LPI) who have experience in the field. The research aims at observing the ways in which experienced LPIs mobilize, discursively, the relationship between previous knowledge about interlingual interpretation regarding Libras-PL, acquired in their practice, and the new knowledge acquired during a training course, through the technique of self-confrontation.

The research was carried out in a *lato sensu* graduate course in Translation and Interpretation in Libras/PL, offered at a private institution of higher education in the city of São Paulo. This course is one of many others of the same modality offered in the State of São Paulo by different institutions in response to the Decree 5.626/05. The decree mandates the training of translators and interpreters of Libras/PL, who are undergraduates or have a High School education, in professional training courses, university extension courses and

¹ Translator's note: Works of the Circle previously translated into English will be cited throughout this article and their references indicated in footnotes according to the norms of the journal. BAKHTIN, M. Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity. In: BAKHTIN, M. *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin. Translated by Vadim Liapunov. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1990, pp.4-256. (Slavic Series, No. 9). The quotation is on p.13.

² The doctoral research mentioned in the article was developed by me (NASCIMENTO, 2016) in the Programa de Pós-graduação em Linguística Aplicada e Estudos da Linguagem da PUC-SP [Applied Linguistics and Language Studies Graduate Program - LAEL — at São Paulo Catholic University] under the supervision of Professor Beth Brait (pen name for Elisabeth Brait). I thank CNPq (Process: 164738 / 2013-4) for having financially supported my research, based on whose results this article was written. I also thank FAPESP (Process 2017 / 21970-9) for the Regular Research Grant offered for the development of my current study entitled “Brazilian Sign Language translation in audiovisual material: window usability and verbal and visual synchrony in the translation process,” which theoretically relates to the doctoral dissertation.

continuing education courses sponsored by institutions of higher learning and credentialed by the Secretary of Education (BRAZIL, 2005).

The corpus of this research was collected in a discipline that offered participants 388 class hours, divided between activities both on-site (held once a month on the weekends – Saturday and Sunday, eight hours per day) and off-site (supervised at a distance) with modules organized in two nuclei. The nuclei were as follows: (i) the basic nucleus, which offered conceptual and theoretical modules on language, languages, translation, interpretation, deafness and linguistic and discursive studies of Libras and PL; and (ii) the specific nucleus, which offered practical modules on expressivity and translation practices, and interpretation in different spheres of knowledge. The corpus was collected in the course, *Interpretation of Brazilian Sign Language into Portuguese*, allocated to the *Specific Nucleus* within the line of *Translation and Interpretation Practice*. The course required a total of 20 class hours, 16 of which were on-site and 4 of which were faculty supervised off-site activities, and aimed at providing students in training with practical experience in the interpretation of discourses in Libras to PL, orally.

All students enrolled in the course had a minimum of three years of experience as LPI in different contexts. From the entire group of participants, six interpreters formed three pairs to carry out a didactic activity in interpretation of Libras to PL. In this activity, seated side by side in the middle of the room, in front of a projection screen, the selected pair watched a video in Libras and interpreted it into PL. The videos in Libras ran for an average of five minutes. The subjects performed the interpretation, alternating their positions during the activity. The alternation was between the turn interpreter (TI) – the person who detains the word at the moment of interpretation – and the support interpreter (SI) – the person who offers the TI support when he or she does not understand something that has been said by the speaker, as well as giving immediate feedback about his or her colleague's performance (NOGUEIRA, 2016).

The interpretation practice took place at two different times during the class: at the beginning of the class, before the theory-practice discussion about possible interpretation strategies, and just before the final activity of the class, after the students had worked through the class content. The objective of this structuring strategy was to identify the

interpreters' previous knowledge regarding interpretation from Libras to PL, and the changes that occurred over the training process, through self-confrontation sessions held afterward. For these sessions, three instruments were used, as follows: (i) three audio-video cameras positioned at three objective angles; (ii) a projection screen; (iii) a computer and a projector.

At the end of the class, the students participated in a *simple self-confrontation*, in which the pair participating in the interpretation activity watched the videos of their performances and took personal notes on what they found relevant. Next, a *crossed self-confrontation* was carried out, as their classmates and the professor-researcher commented on the interpretations performed by the pairs. The commentaries formed the base of the observations, along with the personal notes taken during the showing of the video to the group. Notably, with regard to the simple self-confrontation, each one of the pair, despite having different experiences, was considered a protagonist of the activity due to the alternation of the TI and SI positions during the interpretation activity.³

This article presents the way in which the discursive-speech position, taken up by the subjects when faced with their own image in the simple self-confrontation, relies on the constitutive otherness of the LPI's activity, and the need for a constant move toward confronting oneself as *other* for the successful development of the professional practice. In this article, the discussion primarily addresses translation and interpretation as mediating discursive-speech acts from a Bakhtinian perspective and is followed by an excerpt of the simple self-confrontation analysis, through the gaze of the Bakhtinian category *I-for-myself* (BAKHTIN, 1990).⁴

Interaction, Otherness and Mediating Discursive-Speech Acts

The theoretical-methodological reflections posed by Bakhtin and his Circle, in their various works, contributed in a significant way to the understanding of discursive

³ We call attention to this fact because, traditionally, the simple self-confrontation is done with just one participant of the activity observed (FAÏTA, 2005). In the adaptation we carried out here, we considered both as protagonists of the interpretation activity.

⁴ For reference, see footnote 1.

interaction. The insistence of the members of the Circle, above all Mikhail M. Bakhtin and Valentin Voloshinov, in looking at language in use, observing the interlocutory relations, strongly suggests that interaction was one of the primary interests of this collective of Russian intellectuals. The “theory of Bakhtinian interaction,” if we can call it that, can be found in the different works left by the Circle. However, for the purpose of this article, we address just two of these works: *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language: Fundamental Problems of the Sociological Method in the Science of Language* (1973) (heretofore MPL),⁵ written by Voloshinov and published for the first time in 1929;⁶ and *The Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity*, an essay written by Bakhtin in the 1920s and included with other texts in the collection, *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays* (1990)⁷.

In *MPL*, which was the first work to arrive in the West (FARACO, 2009), Voloshinov (1973)⁸ discusses the sign, ideology, awareness, the word, language, utterance, interaction and cited discourse. The author pursues a sociological method in the realm of the philosophy of language, discussing, among other important concepts, the semiotic-ideological dimension of the word and its direct and indispensable relationship to the context in which it emerges.

The concept of language promoted by Voloshinov in *MPL* is based on a Marxist sociological episteme and considers the interlocutory relationships established by historical and social subjects, who position themselves, act and project themselves, in speech and discursively, according to whom they are addressing as interlocutors. The concept of interaction explored here “[...] is much broader than other concepts, given that it concentrates on the *speech project* or speech/interlocutory relationship” (SOBRAL, 2011,

⁵ VOLOŠINOV, V. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language: Fundamental Problems of the Sociological Method in the Science of Language*. Translated by Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik. New York: Seminar Press Inc., 1973.

⁶ In this article, the *MPL* used is the recent translation by Sheilla Grillo and Ekaterina Vólkova Américo and published by Editora 34 in 2017. In this translation, which was done directly from the Russian, the work is signed by Valentin Voloshinov and not by Bakhtin/Voloshinov as was the first Brazilian translation which was done from a French version into Portuguese in 1979, today in its 13th edition. Notably, the reception of this work in the West was marked by tension of this authorship. Some translations maintained the original authorship as Valentin Voloshinov, while others, such as the French and Brazilian version, added the name Bakhtin, leaving, then, the work as dual authorship. For reference, see footnote 5.

⁷ For reference, see footnote 1.

⁸ For reference, see footnote 5.

p.38; emphasis in original)⁹ and takes the *word* as the constitutive aspect of the interaction. From this prism, the interaction occurs from the positioning of the subjects in determined social situations, and words are addressed to someone, in the same way that they proceed from someone. All speech, from this perspective, is addressed; “Each and every word expresses the ‘one’ in relation to the ‘other’” (VOLOSHINOV, 1973, p.86).¹⁰ What is at play in this concept of the word and of interaction are, then, the interlocutory relationships established in the immediate social situation of production. It is from the positioning of the social subject faced with the other, or others, that a project of speech will be configured, marking, with this, the entire situation of communication:

There can be no such thing as an abstract addressee, a man unto himself, so to speak. With such a person, we would indeed have no language in common, literally and figuratively. [...]. In the majority of cases, we presuppose a certain typical and stabilized *social purview* toward which the ideological creativity of our own social group and time is oriented, i.e., we assume as our addressee a contemporary of our literature, our science, our moral, and legal codes (VOLOSHINOV, 1973, pp.85-86).¹¹

It is clear that interaction in *MPL* is defined by (i) *the most immediate social situation*, which considers the positioning of the speakers in a given specific dialogical situation; (ii) *directionality of the word*, a *sine qua non* condition so that the interaction occurs, or rather, the speaker defines its form of production and expression in function of who will receive it, even if this interlocutor is the speaker himself who confronts himself with his *other* in an inner dialogue; (iii) *social horizon*, linked to the era and the social group in which the ideological creation is being carried out and which relates, in this sense, to contemporaneity, mores, customs, laws, etc.: and (iv) *social auditorium*, which reaches the spheres of reception and circulation of the utterance not just in the immediate situation, but which reverberates at an given moment, in others’ discourses and future utterances.

⁹ In the original: “[...] é bem mais amplo do que outras concepções, dado que se concentra no *projeto enunciativo* ou relação enunciativa/interlocutiva.”

¹⁰ For reference, see footnote 5.

¹¹ For reference, see footnote 5.

Voloshinov's theoretical elaboration in *MPL* points to one of the central concepts of Bakhtinian thought for the discussion of a "theory of discursive interaction": otherness. This concept, however, is not covered just by turn taking between pairs, for example, in a dialogue, but linked, above all, to different ways in which man is constituted as a subject, by language, in relation to an *other*.

In the Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity, Bakhtin (1990)¹² unravels the movements that constitute the process of authorship in aesthetic activities in general and debates the process of constituting the subject. In this text, Bakhtin explores the significant constitutive otherness of man through a rich debate on the different conditions of authorship and the positions that the author takes up in relation to the characters he constructs. Bakhtin (1990)¹³ presents, moreover, central concepts for comprehending the constitution and formation of the subject: *I-for-myself*, *I-for-the-other* and the *other-for-me*. The I-for-myself corresponds to the images and representations that the subject has about him or herself; they are aspects of the psyche that make one perceive who he or she is. The I-for-the other are representations constructed in the interactions about who the subject is to the one with whom he or she interacts. And the other-for-me is constituted in the way the subject encounters and faces the other in and through social relationships. The battle of the identity – according to Pires and Sobral (2013) – occurs between these two extremes: to be for oneself and to be for the other. According to Bakhtin:¹⁴

[...] a given inner lived experience and inner whole can be experienced concretely – can be inwardly perceived – either in the category of *I-for-myself* or in the category of the *other-for-me*, i.e., either as *my own* lived experience or as the lived experience of *this* particular and unique *other* human being. [...] The excess of my seeing in relation to another human being provides the foundation for a certain sphere of my own exclusive self-activity, i.e., all those inner and outer actions which only I can perform in relation to the other, and which are completely inaccessible to the other himself from his own place outside of me; all those actions, that is, which render the other complete precisely in those respects in which he cannot complete himself by himself (1990, p.90).

¹² For reference, see footnote 1.

¹³ For reference, see footnote 1.

¹⁴ For reference, see footnote 1.

All identity is marked by otherness. In Bakhtin, this is an indispensable relationship because the subject is only constituted as such thanks to the extra-positioning that it occupies in relation to the other. This extra-position will promote a movement in which the other sees in him that which he cannot see in himself and, dialectically, he sees in the other that which the other cannot access in himself. From a Bakhtinian perspective, then, subjectivity and identity can only be constituted through the social interactions constituted by language, or rather, we are speaking here of *intersubjectivity* in which the subject is a social and historical being, but that, simultaneously, is responsible for his or her acts in the world.

Every subjects' act and speech involves the *content* and the *process* of their act, united by the evaluative intonation (corresponding to the active response of the speaker): the subject evaluates his or her act according to the context of the interaction, without having an absolute value already given before the interaction, although there are contextual restrictions for the possible values (SOBRAL; GIACOMELLI, 2015, pp.210-211).¹⁵

The random words of others, and our own, are not the same in all contexts. They are organized from the relationships established *a priori*, and form the basis of our utterances in everyday life. Along these lines, it is clear that the main aspect of interaction is the relationship between subjects established in and by words, which is, according to Voloshinov (1973, p.86), the “border zone”¹⁶ between the subjects of the interaction. If there are no words, there is no interaction and, on the contrary, all interaction is imbued with the web of words, in function of whoever is going to encounter them, in the *other* who is going to receive them. All interaction, in this prism, is constituted from an intense movement of otherness because “what and how one speaks always presupposes an ‘other’ in its fundamental diversity” (AMORIM, 2007, p.11).¹⁷

¹⁵ In the original: “Todo agir e dizer do sujeito envolve o *conteúdo* e o *processo* de seu ato, unidos pela entoação avaliativa (a que corresponde à resposta ativa do interlocutor): o sujeito avalia seu ato de acordo com seu contexto de interação, não havendo um valor absoluto já dado antes da interação, embora haja restrições contextuais para os valores possíveis.”

¹⁶ For reference, see footnote 5.

¹⁷ In the original: “o quê e o como se diz supõem sempre o ‘outro’ em sua fundamental diversidade.”

Notably, however, one must recognize that within the interactional and, consequently, otherly play presented by the Circle, it is necessary to use equivalent semiosis, of a *common word* between different speakers, which is the bridge, the channel that promotes the interaction. The word in Bakhtinian thought is, singularly, the mediator of humankind, cultures and languages. It is in and by words that man interacts, forms subjects, memorizes discourses and internalizes and externalizes voices. This common territory in the interaction recovers, from each side of the bridge, utterances already spoken and makes them new, unique, because they are renewed in each utterance in a new time, space, context, and situation.

What is said, then, of the interactional need of subjects who do not share the same linguistic-enunciatory-discursive system? In dialogic situations, how does a speaker, who needs to communicate urgently, in a face-to-face situation, but who does not know the language of the subject in front him or her, interact with their pair? And when a reader cannot access a desired work because he or she does not know the language in which it was written? One must consider, then, discursive acts that establish and construct the border zone that is not established due to the absence of shared signification. This is the case with interlingual translation and interpretation.

All acts of translation and interpretation are constitutively movements of encounter with the *other* because they promote the mediation of different subjects, language systems, language usage and cultures. The translator and the interpreter – protagonist agents of these activities – take up a mediating position and can, due to the deep knowledge of languages and cultures of those involved in the interaction to be established by their discursive act, construct bridges between different worlds and realities. We can, in this line of thinking, conceive of interlingual translation and interpretation as discursive activities that promote the emergence of otherness, or rather, bring to light, for the participants in the mediated action, the *other*, through language usage, previously inaccessible due to the total or partial unfamiliarity of the linguistic plane used by their partner in the interaction.

However, although there are activities that promote the interaction of subjects, they cannot – and should not – be observed as synonyms, from the point of view of the manifestation. If we observe interlingual interpretation, we see that the tension of the

mediation is intensified because it is read directly with the unpredictability of the face-to-face interactions. The interpreter is the subject who lives the constant drama of mobilizing an unknown utterance, inaccessible, because it is necessary to wait for the other to say it first, to then be able to interpret it. Between the speaker's speaking and the comprehension of what was said by the interpreter – and depending on the genre mobilized this can be more or less intensified – an anguishing wait is experienced, permeated with the dramatics of the yet to be manifested management of the utterances, which can totally or partially affect him or her, whether by the evaluative force of the discourse uttered by the speaker, or by its concordance with or discordance from what is necessary to mobilize it for the listener.

The effect can be identified immediately in the participants' interpretation, in the interaction through some signs such as, for example, a prolonged pause, a hesitation during the production of speech, the subtle or brusque change of body and facial expressions or fluctuations in the voice. This is possible because the interpreter, as Yakubinsky (2016, p.33) points out on discussing the mediated and unmediated dialogic forms in social interactions, is in a situation privy to “our visual and auditory perception of our interlocutor.”¹⁸ These responses – or reactions – may occur because the speech of the other is always unknown. Similarly, the reaction and response of the listener, who also needs to be interpreted in bidirectional working situations, is held in the shadows (SCHWARTZ, 2010) because it can be completely different from what the interlocutor was expecting.

Not knowing the utterance of the *other* is constitutive of all face-to-face interaction. The participants of the interaction never know “what is coming” in dialogic interaction. However, different from everyday interactions, the interpreter needs always to be “ready” to translate, on the spot, not only the speech, but the visions of the world that enter in contact and tension during the interaction. This means that this “utterance in shadow” will pass through the interpreter before arriving at the target-subject putting the interpreter, then, in a position of extreme tension and responsibility.

¹⁸ YAKUBINSKI, L. *On Dialogic Speech*. New York: Upper Westside Philosophers Inc., 2016.
118 *Bakhtiniana*, São Paulo, 13 (3): 109-128, Sept./Dec. 2018.

Translation, unlike interpretation, deals with consummated utterances (although unconsummated because the consummation will be given by the reader of the written or videotaped translated work). Translators have more time to comprehend what was said, to research terminology, with a meta-reflexive move, with the guarantee of recursive processes and revisiting and revising (PAGURA, 2015) what was translated. This difference, however, does not minimize the responsibility of the discursive movement of the mediated utterance, since, different from interpretation, the discourse can be revisited, taken up again and reread by the reader as many times as he or she finds necessary (for better or worse). In short: while translation mobilizes, in the instance of language usage, the *already said*, interpretation mobilizes the *yet-to-be*.

The translator and the interpreter, therefore, are not external agents, peripheral, in a mediated interaction. They are not phrase reproducing machines or linguistic code transmitters transposing systems (and it is for this reason that automatic and digital translators and interpreters are limited and, for the most part, insufficient for the objective of mediating interactions). The translator and the interpreter are, also, *others* that link other *others*. This means that the act of language usage of these mediating subjects is undoubtedly marked by the presence of utterances said by other subjects in different contexts.

In this sense, there is evaluation, positioning and repositioning from the position that he or she occupies that occurs in the interaction as mediator faced with different addressees. If the social interaction, which is “determined by the whole aggregate of conditions under which any given community of speakers operates” (VOLOSHINOV, 1973, p.93)¹⁹ and has as a central product the utterance, the translator and the interpreter are potential speakers who dialogue not only linguistically and culturally with their public, but construct the dialogic relationships, that “are reducible neither to logical relationships nor to relationships oriented semantically toward their referential object, relationships *in and of*

¹⁹ For reference, see footnote 5.

themselves devoid of any dialogic element” (BAKHTIN, 1984, p.183),²⁰ between the different speakers who demand from them their services.

As in the practice of these professionals, the training process is constituted by and requires a constant movement of promoting otherness. To become a translator and/or interpreter, it is necessary to master the linguistic systems spoken by the communities that one intends to mediate, as well as the cultural dimension expressed, if we think about language usage, in discursive productions in different genres. In addition to these, some other knowledge is necessary for these professionals, such as, for example, the procedural knowledge of the translation and/or interpretation, or rather, the language activity itself, and the declarative knowledge, which refers to knowing how to say what you know how to do (HURTADO ALBIR, 2005).

The research presented here focuses exclusively on interlingual interpretation precisely for presupposing, as presented in the previous discussion, that translation and interpretation are distinct conceptual and operational activities. The technique of self-confrontation, used in the research, reiterates the need for thinking about pedagogical practices specific to interpretation and how the subjects who experience these practices are allocated discursively and enunciatively within their interpretive practice and specificity of the unpredictability of this discursive act of mediation.

2 The Self-confrontation as an Otherness Revealing Mechanism: The *I-for-myself* and the Knowledge about Interpreting Sign Language

The technique of self-confrontation has utterance-discourse and otherness dimensions because it invites/invokes subjects to watch a particular activity, resuming the discourses produced in it, and, also looking at oneself producing new discourses about what they learned in the activity they carried out. Faïta (2005, p.70), on discussing the use of this technique in the analysis of professional situations, notes that the discursive schemes constitute the “[...] confrontation between the subject, caught (betrayed, we could say) by

²⁰BAKHTIN, M. *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*. Translated by Caryl Emerson. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

his practices, and the way that the practices adhere to the ways of being and acting established by the work culture, or contrary to it, distinguish themselves.”²¹

Our corpus revealed a rich and useful dialogic arena with marks of otherness through the structure of quotations, as they are singular subjects speaking “*others* of themselves” and listening to *others* speaking about them. These subjects, in their turn, mobilized, through the interpretive activity, discourses by *other* speakers in a network of signification and meanings marked, among other aspects, by the awareness of the space-time of each participant. In other words, everyone knew that they were in the condition of subjects in training and that they would be reflecting on their own knowledge as interpreters. Even those who were in the position of merely “spectators,” of the pairs who took the position of interpreters in the middle of the classroom, and who did not participate in the interpretive activity itself, were active subjects in the otherness regarding the interpretive knowledge coming from the practice and protagonists of the encounter of this knowledge with those who were mobilized in this educational context. This means that even these participants, allocated enunciatively in an extraposition in relation to those who were positioned as protagonists of the interpretive activity, saw themselves before the challenge of facing the *other*, such as work colleagues and classmates, in the perspective of speaking about what he or she would be doing and, with this, see in them reflexions and refractions of their own knowledge and experiences.

In the simple self-confrontation, this extraposition is well delimited and visible since it is the subject of the face-to-face activity in which the subject narrates, comments, describes and relives what he or she observes. This experience generates diverse types of behavior and sensations that range from acceptance to repulsion of what is being watched by the subject mobilizing it, then, to the production of the discourses that reveal how *I-for-myself* is constituted before and during the observation. This *I-for-myself*, however, is revealed and materialized from the internal discourse to the external discourse when the subject is moved from his or her position as the portayed to the contemplator. The exteriorization of this discourse does not occur, as Yakubinsky defends (2016, p.35), only

²¹ In the original: “[...] confrontação entre o sujeito, pego (traído, poderíamos dizer) por suas práticas, e a forma com que as práticas aderem às maneiras de ser e de agir estabilizadas pelo meio de trabalho, ou ao contrário dele, se distinguem.”

through the verbal dimension, as “facial expressions and gestures sometimes make responding with words unnecessary.”²² In other words, the way the self-confronted reacts, from the physical standpoint, also reveals parts of confronting the *I-for-myself*.

In the self-confrontation carried out with the first pair, the subjects watched the video without commenting between themselves during the showing and remained with their arms crossed on the table and with their bodies leaning toward the video for most of the showing. With few reactions during the showing and very concentrated, the pair watched from beginning to end without saying a word. At the end of the video, the professor-researcher (PR) asked if they would like to comment on what they saw first or go directly to the second video. The PR’s proposal was to present the two videos first so that afterward the two could comment, but, in this case, the first pair said that they preferred to talk about the first video before watching the second. Thus, Cristiane and Rose²³ decided to talk about what they saw in themselves in the first videos presented:

EXCERPT 1 – SIMPLE SELF-CONFRONTATION D1²⁴

Cristiane/ ((They begin watching the video))

Rose

PP Do you want to comment now already the first/or... [

Rose No words ((everybody laughs)) ... I think that the second was even worse, but okay

PP Do you want to comment on this one?

Cristiane I want to talk about my part, can I? Right... I agree with everything you said that we don’t realize how much we know and this was something that :: surprised me a lot, Cristiane, because I didn’t know that I would be able to do it the way I did because many people in the room came telling me ‘wow, you did really well, you interpreted really well’ and it was something that I didn’t expect from anybody

AOI And you didn’t want to do it

Cristiane And I didn’t want to do it because/I never had done this it was the first time in my life that I did voice like that, then, it :: the reverberation of this for me was really important and I think this made me demand a little more of the video from yesterday to do the second video, because I wanted to maintain this surprise that everybody/because I think that people are surprised by me and I didn’t expect that, in fact I didn’t expect that of myself either, so I also surprised myself... it is :: then, in my opinion that’s what I have to say ((getting choked up))

²² For reference, see footnote 18.

²³ The names used to identify the participating subjects of the research in this article, as well as in the thesis, were their real names. Participants authorized usage in signing a Term of Consent. Their real names were kept to give authorship to the utterances analyzed, since images of the speaking subjects in Libras and PL were simultaneously analyzed at other moments.

²⁴ The oral data were transcribed according to the proposal of the studies carried out by the NURC/USP Group (PRETTI, 2003).

- I needed a lot ((hugging Rose)) Rose at some moments as support interpreter, there were times when I used Rose and I think that the chemistry between the two interpreters I thought it was cool. We managed to work well together and each one helping the other when it was necessary, because it's:: I'm used to working in a team, my whole life in my profession I worked in teams, so for me it's very easy to share and work in a team, so for me Rose's presence was fundamental to help me
- Rose* Wow, thanks! (Laughs) Thank you really it was very good. It's::listening to what Cris said it's what I say I think I feel more comfortable when I am in the support, I think this way seems I have greater clarity about the discourse when I am in the support than when it is my turn. Later I'll comment about Ronice's discourse, like that, about my difficulties, but I feel that I have greater clarity when I'm not in the position of conflict also this question of support and all, I think that the support it isn't only vocabulary support
- Cristiane* It's moral! ((Hugs Rose))
- Rose* It's moral ((laughs)) so you are are there, take the hand of the person nod your head and all, and this I don't know it's a thing that sometimes a person needs.
- Cristiane* Even because I don't think I was as good a support for her as she was for me I'm aware of this, I think that I could have been better as support for her
- Rose* That's why/I... [I repeat again, it isn't a question of vocabulary or and of being and all, but the fact that you are with this contact like this ((touches Cristiane)) you say "the person's here with me" then nod the head and continues and this is important...

As we can see in the excerpt of the dialogue above, the pair decided to comment on the first video before proceeding to the next. The first utterance was by Cristiane, who was completely surprised by her performance in the first interpretation activity. This surprise was marked, especially, by the way in which she was able to carry out the interpretation from Libras to PL. By reviewing the discourse provided by the PR during the classes about practical knowledge in all of the students of that group and the direct discourse in the citation, "wow, you were really good, you interpreted really well," which showed the reaction and repercussions of the colleagues regarding her performance, Cristiane took the self-enunciating-contemplating position. Before doing the self-confrontation, Cristiane's *I-for-myself* was formed by her certainty of the impossibility of carrying out an interpretation from Libras to PL, which was reinforced by the relationship that she herself established with this activity. As a speech therapist and interpreter, her experience in interpretation was less than her direct communication with the deaf in clinical contexts, even though she had already had experience as an interpreter in some contexts.

When the PR invited them to form three pairs, in the initial moments of the first class, in order to carry out the activity, Cristiane was the last to volunteer. Her partner, *Bakhtiniana*, São Paulo, 13 (3): 109-128, Sept./Dec. 2018. 123

Rose, was the one who convinced her to join her in this task. While Rose led her to the chair in the middle of the room, Cristiane announced that she really didn't know how to do interpretation from Libras to PL, and that she was much more comfortable with interpretation in the other direction, PL to Libras. Cristiane's fear, revealed in the preparation of recording the first video marked an *I-for-myself* characterized by the possibility – and just possibility since, according to her, it was the first time, in fact, that she had confronted something of this nature – of not being able to carry out the interpretation. Her internal discourse was on her incapacity and lack of competence to carry out the interpretation, perceivable by the utterance “*I didn't even expect this of myself, so I also was surprised with myself...*,” or rather, she, similar to her colleagues, was surprised by her own performance.

Cristiane's self-confrontation in this first video was constituted by surprise with what she saw in herself, with the repercussion of her task before her colleagues, and with her ability and her knowledge faced with the unpredictable, during the interpretation. Taking up an extra positioning in relation to the activity completed, Cristiane could see that the fears she had about doing the interpretation crowded her imagination and did not correspond to the reality of her ability as an interpreter since, according to the narrative, this had been her first time acting as an interpreter of Libras to PL with a text that had a high degree of formality. On this Bakhtin (1990, p.37) writes, “while my mental representation of another human being corresponds quite adequately to the fullness of my actual seeing of him, my *self-representation* is contrived and does not correspond to any actual perception. The most essential part of my actual experience of myself is excluded from outward seeing.”²⁵ When Cristiane changed her position from subject doing the activity to subject reflecting on her own performance, she was then able to give her *I-interpreter* the consummation, deconstructing the previous self-representation of incapacity. This consummation, as can be seen in her utterance, was marked by the place she occupied outside of the interpretative activity. Along with not having experienced interpretation before with the language pairs Libras to PL, Cristiane seemed never to have

²⁵ For reference, see footnote 1.
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seen herself acting as an interpreter, which, according to the narrative, was a positive surprise. This means that her professional identity in this function passed from a *yet-to-be* to an *already-am* mobilizing, through the training and the self-confrontation, to an *I-for-myself* as a professional in the field of sign language interpretation with the potential ability to mobilize discourses in the direction covered in the class in question.

Confronting the random gaze in the situation constructed for the didactic activity was another extremely relevant aspect for the interpreters. Being under evaluation, a constitutive aspect of any communicative situation, in this case, was highlighted due to the characteristics of the training context, and weighed over the subjects revealing a fearful and reticent *I-for-myself* faced with the gaze of the other. Carol, of the second pair, expressed this feeling when she spoke and justified some of the choices she made during the interpretation activity:

EXCERPT 2 – SIMPLE SELF-CONFRONTATION D2

Carol [...] And I have a very big problem/I was talking with my classmates who is going to be evaluated, I have this problem... Whenever I go... take a test, for evaluation I get/start to tremble ((hits her hands on the table and shakes her body)) like this/I always talk like this/if there is a deaf person in front of me and I have to sign for him it's one thing another thing it's if I know that I have a panel watching me and evaluating me/it's something very difficult for me, so it's because of this that I really wanted/I wanted to do this so-called test/this testing myself really about feeling/knowing that there are people who are going to watch my video calmly and are going to say "look, she did this"/this leaves me in such a nervous state that you can't believe, to know that the class is going to talk about me, you know, like, I get feeling very pressured by this/it's something that I am trying to work on and improve.

In the excerpt above, Carol presents her discomfort in the situation in which she perceives there is a planned assessment, such as the self-confrontation, even without this being the objective of the proposed activity. The opportunity, in this sense, experiencing the encounter with one's own activity would make possible, in her view, a change in the *I-for-myself*, giving her an opportunity to test her limits as an interpreter and as a subject who fears the gaze of the other. The fact that Carol has accepted the role/position of the interpreter in the activity proposed, shows how the self-confrontation technique, in the

context of training, motivates the subjects to test their limits, confronting their resistance and fear, since the experience of self-confrontation can “[...] moves us to a shift to explore, for the first time, the reasons for our choices” (FAÏTA, 2005, p.73).²⁶

Final Considerations

The distance between what was expected and what was encountered in the situations analyzed demonstrates that self-confrontation as a training technique changed the interpreters’ internal and external representations, both positively and negatively. In the first case, raising the interpreter’s awareness of the position never before experienced, and in the second case, confronting herself in the context of being evaluated, points to the Bakhtinian thesis that “not only its outward expression but also its inner experience are social territory” (VOLOSHINOV, 1973, p.90).²⁷ In other words, whatever the subject constructs internally about him or herself is marked by his or her relationship to the external, with the other, and with the context. This mental activity, generated by the confrontation of seeing oneself, contributed to the interpreters’ ability to redevelop an *I-for-myself* with professionals in the field of interpretation, whether they are *yet-to-be*, or *already-am*.

The self-confrontations that were carried out after the interpretive activities revealed, through these utterances about the *I-for-myself* as part of the training of these interpreters, in the featured context, promoted the encounters and mobilizations, in the didactic activity, between the knowledge invested, those acquired in the practice, experience and instituted knowledge, and those acquired in formal contexts (SCHWARTZ, 2010). The research presented subjects who were constituted as practicing interpreters – and thus mediated, before entering in a training course, on the plane of invested knowledge – and who desired to reconfigure this practice through training, access to instituted knowledge. The academic education of the subjects who participated in this research, which

²⁶ In the Portuguese: “[...] nos impulsionar a um deslocamento para explorar, de forma inédita, as razões de nossas escolhas.”

²⁷ For reference, see footnote 5.

was diverse and far from the activities of translation and interpretation, demonstrates that the knowledge about these activities was learned solely on the dimension of experience – the practice. Thus, then, the *I-for-myself* of these subjects can be seen as an I who needs to revisit his or her own experience to improve his or her technical skills in interpretation.

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