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SIGN LANGUAGE LITERARY TRANSLATIONS - LINGUISTIC, DRAMATIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ASPECTS

TRADUÇÕES LITERÁRIAS EM LÍNGUA DE SINAIS - ASPECTOS LINGUÍSTICOS, DRAMÁTICOS E TECNOLÓGICOS

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Abstract: The research reported here considers how norms of Libras (Brazilian Sign Language) literature (Sutton-Spence, 2021) operate with deaf translation norms (Stone, 2005) and literary translation norms (Toury, 1995) to create some potential norms of deaf literary translation. Presenting some considerations upon the concept of the "visual" in Libras literature and translation, we draw upon translations in three different genres of literature, made by three deaf translators, to understand better the key multimodal relationships between signed literature, written texts, images and video editing in literary translation. Analyzed in terms of the linguistic, dramatic and technological elements (Bartolomei; Perreira, 2021), we show how the translations create acceptable target language texts by focusing on the visual esthetics of the texts.

Keywords: Deaf literature; Deaf translation; Literary translation; Libras translation.

Resumo: A pesquisa aqui relatada considera as normas da literatura em Libras (Língua Brasileira de Sinais) (Sutton-Spence, 2021) que operam com normas surdas de tradução (Stone, 2005) e normas de tradução literária (Toury, 1995) para criar potenciais normas de tradução literária surda. Apresentamos algumas considerações sobre o conceito de "visual" na literatura em Libras e na tradução literária para Libras. Recorremos a traduções em três diferentes gêneros literários, feitas por três tradutores surdos, para compreender melhor as relações multimodais fundamentais entre literatura sinalizada, textos escritos, imagens e edição de vídeo na tradução literária para Libras. Baseamos a análise em termos dos elementos linguísticos, dramáticos e tecnológicos (Bartolomei; Perreira, 2021). Mostramos que as traduções criam textos aceitáveis na língua-alvo ao focar na estética visual dos textos.

Palavras-chave: Literatura surda; Normas de tradução; Tradução literária; Tradução para libras.

Introduction

Literary translation is a widespread practice and it is generally accepted that translated literature has an established and significant role in many cultures (for example Even-Zohar 2004, Munday 2001). Literature written in spoken languages is frequently translated into sign languages, and since Ramos' (1995) pioneering work on cultural translation of a literary text from Portuguese into Libras (Brazilian Sign Language), there have been attempts to understand the processes and products of the activity. Concomitantly, literature in Libras, created and performed by deaf people, has experienced a boom in the last quarter century. As different genres are developed, taught, discussed and researched within the deaf community and by scholars, a clearer picture is emerging of contemporary deaf literary norms with respect to Libras literature. The research presented here shows how deaf translators applied norms of Libras literature (Sutton-Spence, 2021), deaf translation norms (Stone 2005) and literary translation norms (Toury, 1995) to create some potential norms of deaf literary translation. Three deaf translators (authors of this paper) worked cooperatively to translate texts from three different creative language genres into Libras to explore the processes and products of what we may term deaf literary translation norms in an attempt to identify and highlight what these norms may be.

Sign language literature and translation

Deaf literature is the body of creative language work of deaf communities. It includes both fiction and non-fiction, in the form of storytelling, poetry, jokes and other creative pieces. Generally, it is created and or performed by deaf people, is aimed at deaf audiences, has content that relates to the experiences of deaf people, and is performed in sign language as the visual language of deaf people. This last characteristic leads to the complementing concept of sign language literature. Sign language literature is the body of creative and artistic sign language composed and performed by deaf people within the norms of what the deaf community considers appropriate for the literature of deaf people. It includes original deaf-authored work and translation of literature in other languages into sign language. The creative language used in signed literature aims to do more than simply communicate information because it is particularly aesthetic, creating emotions and experiences by appealing to the senses through its powerful visual images. Creative sign language allows signers to increase the significance or communicative power of the message and prioritizes the visual image, reflecting the visual world experience of deaf people. Importantly, it often plays with sign language, exploring its creative potential, pri-

marily for the audience's pleasure (SUTTON-SPENCE, 2021).

Emphasis of the visual aspects of sign language literature should be fundamental to any translation into sign language. In certain ways, this key characteristic is shared by concrete poetry. As Waldrop (1982, cited in REIS, 1998, p52) observes: "Familiar shapes in familiar surroundings are invisible. We do not usually see words, we read them, which is to say we look through them at their significance, their contents. Concrete poetry is first of all a revolt against this transparency of the word."

In a similar way, in everyday signing, we also do not focus especially on the form of the signs, but instead on their meaning. However, in sign language literature, as in concrete poetry, signs also have this reduced "transparency" because we look at the signs as well as through them for their meaning, appreciating their visual form.

Bartolomei and Pereira (2021) have proposed that videosigned1 pieces are formed and carried by an ultimately inseparable triad of language, body and machine, and thus that analysis of original artistic Libras works may be divided into the compositional elements of linguistic, dramatic and technological. By understanding how these elements make up the norms of deaf literature we may draw upon them in our quest to understand how to create translations into Libras that follow deaf norms – in other words, norms of deaf literary translation. Especially, we focus upon the linguistic, dramatic and technological aspects that contribute to an acceptable translation (using TOURY's 1995 term) into Libras that satisfies deaf audiences.

The linguistic elements of creative sign language identified by Bartolomei and Pereira (2021) include conventional vocabulary signs, classifier constructions, "mimetic" signing (within which we include what may be termed constructed action or embodiment), speed of signing and pauses, symmetry of signing and repetition.

Classifier constructions consist of handshapes that represent a referent and the location, orientation, and movement of the handshape (that is, the entire classifier construction) to show directly, analogously with the real referent, what that entity/referent does in the event the signer is conveying (GLÜCK; PFAU, 1998; ZWITSERLOOD, 2012). Although the location, orientation and movement of the handshape are determined by the real-world position and movement of the referent, the handshape is usually conventionalized. In creative sign language, there is an opportunity for signers to produce novel classifier handshape to present a new perspective of something familiar. Using classifiers in creative sign language produces clear visual images for audiences to enjoy.

Constructed action allows the signer to take on a role, either of someone or some-

[1] Sign language recorded on video. This term is translated from Silva's (2017) term "videossinalizada".

thing mentioned in the text or of a narrator observing and reacting to the other information conveyed in the manual signs (GOSWELL, 2011; METZGER, 1995). Constructed action occurs in many registers across sign languages, not only in literary, creative work, but is especially found there (CORMIER ET AL,. 2015; JANTUNEN, 2017; RAYMAN, 1999; VAN BRANDWIJK, 2018). Because the signer inhabits the character, it blurs the boundary between what may be termed narrative (according to the mainstream European and American literary norms of hearing societies) and drama, a point that needs to be considered in deaf literary translation.

These linguistic elements have long been recognized as essential for good storytelling in sign languages. Stephen Ryan (1993) described a range of visual storytelling strategies in American Sign Language (ASL) (whether of original, translated or adapted stories) similar to the linguistic elements described here. Particularly relevant to our emphasis on the importance of creating a highly visual production, he suggested that when telling a story from a picture book (a form of translation), signers should draw upon both the illustrations and text for inspiration, adding that "If your story does not come from a picture book, imagine that you are an illustrator bringing the most important visual moments to life." (RYAN, 1993, p146). He recommended that characters should be created as they are introduced into the story, by using gestures to define each character's physical attributes and clothes. The story should mix conventional signs with classifiers and embodiment or constructed action, again, especially with the use of non-manual elements. He also recommended that storytellers should:

> Flesh out the characters. Imagine their appearance. Experiment with gestures, mime, signs and facial expression [...] Role shifting indicates who is speaking. It shows the style or special feature of each character (e.g., walk, facial expression, emotions). By changing your body position so that each character faces a different direction, you help the audience understand which character is doing the action. (RYAN, 1993 p146-147)

These linguistic elements described by Ryan need to be performed. The dramatic, performance elements of a story, poem or joke move beyond what is conventionally termed "linguistic" (if only in the more structuralist sense of a language), to include the performance space that the artist (or in a translation, the translator artist) uses, especially their positioning on screen in a recorded piece, and the use of non-manual elements, including body movement and direction of gaze, often in constructed action. Ryan highlighted the importance of exaggeration of facial expression, noting that an "inadequa-

te facial expression is like telling a story in a monotone" (RYAN, 1993, p147). The role of the torso in creative sign language should also be highlighted (NAPOLI; SUTTON-SPENCE, 2024). Batista Silva (in preparation) demonstrates the importance of theatre training for deaf and hearing translators of literary work, as it encourages them to use their whole body, not just the hands and face to create the maximum visual output for audiences. She drew upon theories from theatre studies by Eugenio Barba, Konstantin Stanislavski, Jerzy Grotowski and Étienne Decroux, all of which emphasize the use of the whole body to create meaning, to show how it can increase the emotional and visual impact of literary translation in Libras.

The linguistic and dramatic elements of a literary translation are essential to a good-quality, acceptable translation for deaf audiences, as they draw upon the language and performance competences of the translators, relying upon their linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge and abilities (especially to know when to narrate information and when to present it directly). The multimedia elements of translations, which may be termed the technological elements, occur outside the language skill set. They may occur live or only in videosigned translations.

For many years, in literary recordings in sign languages such as ASL and Libras, the artist simply performed the literary work and a camera recorded it. The performances sometimes used props, special backgrounds (for example, recorded in the street), lighting or costumes, but the signing did not change. From the beginning of the 21st century, edited videos increasingly have used images in the background or embedded on the screen. In recent years, advanced editing effects have become accessible to non-professionals, and we now see the widespread technological manipulation of recordings (as special effects and visual effects) especially the insertion of images in many short stories, poems and other literary works by deaf people (SUTTON- SPENCE, 2021; BARTOLOMEI, 2021; RIBEIRO, 2020; BARROS; VIEIRA, 2020; NICHOLS, 2016).

Special effects are those that are added during filming. They include interaction with props or other people, use of lighting, real effects (such as smoke) and camera work such as the angle, proximity, focus and length of camera shots, the speed of filming (for example altering the number of frames per second to create slow-motion effects when played back), sound and some graphic elements. On the other hand, visual effects are edited into the video after filming. They may include light filters, changes in speed and size of the images filmed and addition of images of various types, with which the signer may interact. Images may be static drawings or photographs, moving film or cartoons,

words or numbers. Visual effects are only possible in videosigned translations because, by definition, they cannot be performed live (Petry and Fisher 2014).

Graphic elements are particularly important as part of multimodality in a text and are highly relevant to sign language literary translations. Kelm (2021, p. 37) defines multimodality as the distinct forms and modes of representation used in the linguistic construction of a given message, such as words, pictures, colors, text formats, typography, graphic arrangement, gestures, intonation patterns and gaze behavior. Although widespread, multimodality is particularly noticeable in children's literature. Kirchof, Bonin and Silveira (2014) observed that hearing children's first experiences of written literature are multimodal, as they hear the story told, while they look at the written words and the accompanying pictures. Deaf children also experience multimodality when they see a signed story, read the printed words of its written translation and study any accompanying pictures.

According to Anstey and Bull (2010), a multimodal text combines two or more semiotic systems. They outline five semiotic systems:

> 1. Linguistic: comprising aspects such as vocabulary, generic structure and the grammar of oral and written language
> 2. Visual: comprising aspects such as colour, vectors and viewpoint in still and moving images
> 3. Audio: comprising aspects such as volume, pitch and rhythm of music and sound effects
> 4. Gestural: comprising aspects such as movement, speed and stillness in facial expression and body language
> 5. Spatial: comprising aspects such as proximity, direction, position of layout and organisation of objects in space. (ANSTEY; BULL 2010, np)

Of these five, only audio is not directly relevant to deaf audiences, but many sign language translations of a written text have an audio track of the text read aloud, and a musical track is often added.

Images, as illustrations and graphics, have long been important for children's stories (TOPPER, 1984; GANNON, 1991; NODELMAN, 1982; BOOKER, 2012). The first version of Aesop's fables printed in England in 1476 included woodcut illustrations (BUSH, 1984). Translations aimed at deaf children need to provide pictures that children can link to the signs they see, to help their understanding of the text, making them part of the cultural adaptation of the translation (HESSEL, KARNOPP, ROSA, 2007; ROSA, 2011; MOURÃO, 2011; NICHOLS, 2016). Images are less crucial for understanding

translations aimed at mature language users but when done well they are appreciated in works for older viewers, too.

Nodelman (1982) cautions that simply inserting a picture into a text does not necessarily illustrate it. He claims that

> pictures by themselves convey little. Just as our understanding of language depends on our knowledge of the grammar that gives it shape, our understanding of pictures depends on our knowledge of the conventions by which they operate [...] conventions which include how they are used in relation to words in a text. (NODELMAN, 1982, p57).

He adds "pictures can be a distraction, a pretty way of ruining good stories. Intelligent illustrators, however, understand and make use of the contradictory pull of words and pictures so that the two together tell a story that depends on their differences from each other." (Nodelman 1982, p62). These are considerations for any sign language translator who opts to use supporting images.

To help us appreciate this "contradictory pull of words and pictures", Booker (2012) draws our attention to suggestions by Nikolajeva & Scott (2001) of ways in which text and images may interact:

> 1. symmetry – the words and pictures are equal; 2. Complementary – each element provides information; 3. enhancement – each extends the meaning of the other; 4. counterpoint – the text and image tell a different story; and 5. contradiction – the words and pictures assert the opposite of each other." (Booker 2012, p2)

Booker presents these text-image relationships in the context of teaching children who are engaging with picturebooks, but we would add that they are also extremely useful for translators working from illustrated texts into sign language, who need to decide how much information that is carried in the text or in images to translate. We will see that the deaf translators in our research used a range of translation approaches to the graphic images in their source texts.

Deaf translators and deaf translation norms

Translation is usually distinguished from interpretation in that translations are prepared ahead of time and are written, while interpretations occur in real time and are spoken. Sign language literary translation can occur in the written form, using a writing

system such as SignWriting (BARROS, 2020; BARROS; SUTTON-SPENCE, 2022) but most translations are signed and filmed. Silva (2019) has highlighted the register of "videosigned"2 productions, in which the signer establishes a recognized relationship with the camera, whether or not other multimedia resources are used. Videosigned productions have developed and follow their own norms, equivalent to the norms of written forms of spoken languages.

When we translate a literary piece from a written to a signed language, we are looking to achieve equivalence in the target language. Stone (2005) observes that:

> Equivalence is achieved by the translator (or interpreter) by drawing upon their understanding of not only the text, but also their knowledge of how this information is represented culturally in a relevant way in an appropriate register or discourse style. (STONE, 2005, p33)

To achieve this, the translator needs to know the literary norms of the target Deaf community. Studies of sign language literature have progressed considerably in this century and can greatly help translators. Study of the canonical texts or original sign language productions by recognized deaf storytellers, poets and comedians, reveals the creative elements that their deaf community values, which translators can draw on to create acceptable, domesticated, satisfying literary translations that are closer to deaf literary norms. "Adequate translations" (Toury 1995) that follow hearing literary norms may convey some meaning and some elements that make the piece literary in the source text, but it's highly unlikely that the translated text will create the same pleasurable, aesthetic effect in deaf audiences.

Competence in the literary norms of the target culture is essential, so literary translators are usually authors and poets in the target language of their translation (TOURY, 1995). Stone (2005, 2009) described the rationale of the deaf translator in his work on deaf translation norms:

> The Deaf translation norm draws upon the Deaf T/Is ability to think like other Deaf people, relying primarily on their visual experience of the world and visual conceptualisation of information, to construct the TL as cultural insiders. (STONE 2005, p 237)

Toury remarks, translators who are not members of the target culture can "tentatively assume that role" (1995, p 179) and Stone makes it clear that hearing translators can

[2] In Portuguese "Videossinalizada".

perform successful translations that are appreciated by deaf audiences, but only if they engage sufficiently with the deaf community. Thus, hearing translators need to understand deaf literary norms and translation norms. Our focus in this research is on the productions of three deaf translators who have made in-depth study of deaf literary norms, have master's degrees in Translation Studies, are experienced translators and are recognized as creative signers in their deaf community. They are "cultural insiders" who can show others the potential for deaf literary translation norms.

Materials and method

The translators of our selected texts were the second, third and fourth authors of this paper, working collaboratively on their translations under the academic supervision of the first author. Each translator selected several texts of a different literary genre, with the intention of creating satisfyingly visual forms of translations into Libras acceptable to the deaf community. We used two main methods: commented translation in the initial phase of creating the translations and, following a method described by Ribeiro (2020), subsequent interviews with target deaf audiences where we asked for their feedback on the translations, prior to further refinements.

We selected written literary texts from three genres, aimed at different types of target audience with different objectives. Frequently, literary texts are translated into sign language within the objectives of "accessibility" for deaf people who do not read easily, especially deaf children and the aim of developing literacy in the written language. Such translations generally have a didactic purpose and frequently privilege the position of the written language in a translation, leading to bilingual texts but limiting the potential for different translation approaches. This was not our aim, but rather to use the source texts to explore the potential of literary Libras in new contexts for visual readers to enjoy new forms of art in their language.

Source texts

The first point of fundamental importance concerning the source texts is that the deaf translators chose the texts that they considered suitable for deaf audiences. This is not always the case and many translations are carried out without consulting members of the relevant deaf community to find out if the text is of interest or perceived relevance. Ananda Elias chose two story books written principally for younger audiences, although her translation was specifically aimed at teenagers rather than children. Her intention

was to help young deaf people, many of whom have only recently begun to learn Libras after an oralised school life, to learn about the beauty and potential of visually expressive creative Libras so that they can produce it themselves. The two books, Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak (1963) and Flicts by Ziraldo, have protagonists who do not fit easily into society. Max is a boy whose behavior leads his mother to declare him a monster and who runs away to find other monsters like him, while Flicts is a color that cannot fit in with other colors on Earth and finally finds its place on the far side of the moon. These are themes that can be expected to resonate with young deaf people looking for their own place in the world. Both books already have a strong emphasis on the visual. Where the Wild Things Are is a picturebook and Flicts uses abstract images, blocks of color and symbolic or conventionalized uses of color (such as in flags and traffic lights).

The aim was to translate texts that already used visual devices to explore the possibilities of creating strong images in Libras for a target audience of young deaf people who already know how to read Portuguese (even not always with a level of comfort) but who don't know Libras well because they are late learners. They like to watch Libras videos with strong and entertaining images, where there is not necessarily a lot of Libras vocabulary but more visual linguistic elements of constructed action and classifiers. Dramatic elements are mixed with editing effects. In Where the Wild Things Are, we included some the images from the books, presenting each image after the signed translation. In Flicts, we chose to represent the images (principally the colors) through direct editing effects. The translation of Where the Wild Things Are is 13:24 long (available at https://youtu.be/X3-c1eNstlA). The translation of Flicts is 12:20 long (for copyright reasons, a brief clip is currently available at https://youtu.be/X34Zi--2Lj0).

Marcos Marquioto chose to translate into videosigned Libras two concrete poems and two visual poems, three written in Portuguese and one written in Libras (thus producing both interlingual and intralingual translations). Unlike in the illustrated stories translated by Ananda Elias, the entire text of the concrete and visual poems is visible at a single glance, and the visual illustrations they include are of a very different nature. He selected four concrete poems: Lua na Água ("Moon in the water") by Paulo Leminski (1982), LINGUAVIAGEM (translated as "Tongue Voyage" by Nancy Perloff, 2021) by Augusto de Campos (1967), Reconnais-toi ("Recognise yourself") by Guillaume Apollinaire (1918), a calligram poem originally written in French but translated into Portuguese before its translation into Libras), and Ser ("To Be") by Kácio Lima (2018). These texts were translated for an audience of mature signers, with an aim to identify the

characteristics of concrete poetry in Libras and develop the art form to open the way for composition of original Libras concrete poetry. They may all be found at https://www.youtube.com/@profmarquioto4902/playlists (in the playlist "Poesia")

Lua na água presents the words in the phrase "LUA NA ÁGUA" written in black letters on a white background. Some letters are arranged in a standard and conventional way, while others are written upside down, suggesting the reflection of the moon in water. Additionally, the poem is accompanied by two black circles and a black semicircle, which evoke the idea of the moon and the phases of the moon, while (following the idea of reflection and the reverse) the white color of the moon on the black background of the sky has been inverted to create black moons in a white sky. All this information must be processed with time, but the whole image is available synoptically (Figure 1).

Figure 1 – Lua na Água.

Source: *Toda Poesia*.

LINGUAVIAGEM is a poem made of a single word, written in white on a black background. It was originally designed to be presented on folded paper, on which it is possible to read three words "viagem", "língua", "linguagem" (journey, language or tongue, language or discourse – Campos himself observed that the words do not translate willingly into English) with "via" as a key to the other words, travelling through language (Figure 2).

Figure 2 – LINGUAVIAGEM.

Source: *Revista Rosa*.

Reconnais-toi is a love-letter addressed a woman in an elegant hat. It is a visual poem in which the words about the woman are arranged on the page to create an image of this woman. The aesthetic effect of the poem lies mainly in the organization of the words. The words exist independently of the image, but without the words, the image does not exist, being created by the words themselves. It takes a while to read the words, but the effect of arranging them on the page is immediately noticeable (Figure 3).

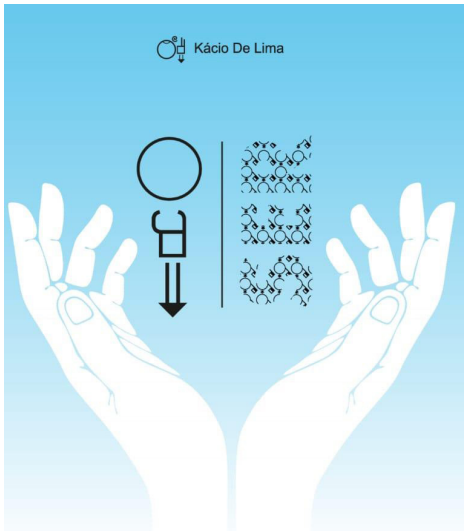
Figure 3 - *Reconnais-toi.*

Source: *Caligramas. Instituto Distrital de las Artes–Idartes*, 2015.

Ser is a bilingual poem constructed from written Libras and written Portuguese. The written Libras sign deaf ("surdo" in Portuguese) in SignWriting is repeated and organized on the page in the shape of the letters S, E and R, creating the image of the Portuguese

word "ser" (to be) by blocks of SignWriting graphemes of the sign deaf. Thus, it generates the sense of "To be deaf". As with Apollinaire's visual poems, the word "ser" does not exist without the graphemes "deaf", suggesting that the being of the deaf person does not exist without the deafness (Figure 4).

Figure 4 – Ser.



Source: www.signwriting.org

Ricardo Heberle chose the three humorous comic-strip cartoons from the book Sourds et Quiproquos ("Deaf people and misunderstandings") by the deaf Swiss author Megias Nicolas Jr (2007). The aim of these translations is not to help deaf people understand the original – the source texts are completely accessible as they are almost entirely non-verbal (apart from the French titles) – but rather to provide enjoyment and entertainment through the aesthetic form of deliberately humorous signing.

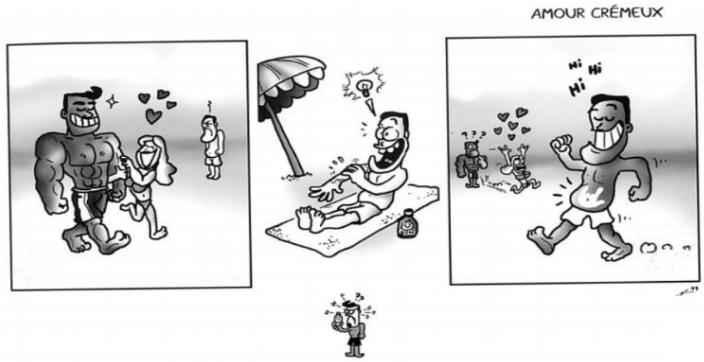
Each cartoon strip has three images in sequence. Two strips show events in the three images by chronological time. The third shows three types of situations sharing a common feature. Un coiffeur distrait ("A distracted hairdresser") shows 1) a hairdresser at work who is 2) distracted by deaf people signing so that he 3) accidentally cuts his customer's hair into the shape of a hand (Figure 5). Amour crémeux ("Suncream love") shows 1) a clearly unathletic man on a beach who enviously watches a beautiful woman on the arm of a beefcake bodybuilder. 2) While applying his suncream, he has an idea and in the final picture 3) the woman is running from the humiliated beefcake towards the man who has tanned his body leaving an untanned outline of the handshape conven-

tionally used in many deaf communities to mean "I love you" (Figure 6). Chute de bêbê ("Drop the baby") shows 1) a woman speaking while she holds her baby with two hands, 2) a woman signing cued speech with one hand while she holds her baby with the other and 3) a woman signing with two hands, so that she drops the baby (Figure 7).

Figure 5 – A Distracted Hairdresser.

Source: Megias Nicolas Jr (2007).

Figure 6 – Suncream Love.



Source: Megias Nicolas Jr (2007).

Figure 7 – Drop the Baby.

Source: Megias Nicolas Jr (2007).

The translations are available at https://youtu.be/sr8FV8ORPYI. After each signed translation of the cartoon, the original image appears.

Method

The translators studied the texts in detail, thinking about the socio-cultural context and using close reading to understand the linguistic elements of the original texts before translating them (NORD, 2016, ALBRES, 2020). Working collaboratively and alone, the translators created a visual translation, some with technological effects made at the time of recording, with and without images. The typical process was to film a draft translation, bring the version to a collaborative group for feedback, revise it and film again before returning for further feedback. This process went through several iterations. Some translations used professional editors (in the case of Ananda Elias' two translations) and a professional videographer (for LINGUAVIAGEM by Marcos Marquioto). In the case of the concrete poems, although one final version was selected for three of them, we refer here to several different versions as different translations emphasized different elements of the source text and different translation solutions. There are two final translations of the written Libras poem Ser, one a concrete poem in a mosaic format and one a more narrative recreation that uses deaf literary norms to describe the oppression and liberation of deaf people.

All of the translations aimed to be acceptable, target-culture-oriented texts. The degree of adaptation varied, but all showed considerable departure from the source texts, by using addition, omission and reordering to a considerable extent. The results section below details many of these alterations. For the concrete poems, Marcos Marquioto followed ideas of transcreation by Haroldo de Campos (2011), keeping the essence of the form of the source texts but adapting the target texts extensively to appeal to deaf audiences, while seeking parallel devices in Libras to those used in written concrete poems. Ananda Elias and Ricardo Heberle's translations had the option to translate elements of the visual images in the source texts into Libras by intersemiotic processes, in this case translating from a non-verbal system to a verbal system. In some cases, the translations faithfully recreate the images using classifiers and constructed action – a recognized and highly valued literary device in Libras - so that when audiences saw the source text images, they could derive satisfaction from seeing how closely the translators managed to match source and target text. (Most consumers of translated texts have little or no interest in the source text, as they frequently do not know its language.) Ananda Elias' translations aimed to provide these faithful visual recreations (akin to the symmetrical use of text and image described by Nikolajeva & Scott 2001) to showcase Libras' ability to

do this. In other cases, the translations deviated further from the source (more like the enhanced or counterpoint relationships between the text and images). Ricardo Heberle's translations provided many additions to make more of a story of the cartoons, for example, A Distracted Hairdresser starts with the added information that both hairdresser and client had many Instagram followers and ending with the client being delighted with her new cut. Drop the Baby required the greatest adaptation because of cultural differences between Swiss/European deaf culture and Brazilian deaf culture. In some European countries, the cued speech system is well-known and needs no explanation to be accessible to readers. It was felt that Brazilian deaf people would not be sufficiently familiar with it to follow the structure of the original cartoon. The adaptation was based on form rather than the meaning of the source text. The moving hand in the "cued speech" panel of the cartoon inspired the translator to add an entire thread to a story about mothers smoking in the presence of their babies so that the joke became a comparison of only deaf and hearing cultures, omitting cued speech entirely and relying instead on the final punchline, when using sign language causes the mother to drop her baby.

We showed all the final translations to deaf audiences and received positive feedback.

Results

The translations of all three genres used linguistic, dramatic and technical elements, selected and used to produce what the deaf translators understand to be acceptable, entertaining Libras translations for members of their deaf community, showing how they follow deaf norms of literary expression and setting norms for deaf literary translation. We describe them here with selected examples. All the images in the figures in this section are taken from the translations.

Linguistic elements

We begin with the linguistic elements the translators used to create visually appealing translations that satisfied their deaf audiences, beginning with some of the linguistic elements described by Ryan (1993) and highlighted by Bartolomei and Pereira (2021).

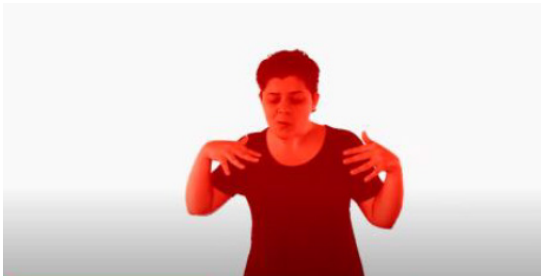
Classifier constructions

In Where the Wild Things Are, the monsters bow to Max who has declared himself their king. Ananda Elias' translation followed the illustration in the book and uses manual classifier signs to show the several monsters bowing towards Max (while embodying one of the monsters as it bows) (Figure 8).

Figure 8 - manual classifier signs showing the monsters in *Where the Wild Things Are.*

The colors in Flicts are personified and the text shows them speaking. The translation built on this personification by using classifiers that give them human form, for example in the sign several-colors/people-look-down, showing that the red color is with the other colors of the rainbow that are above Flicts (Figure 9).

Figure 9 – Classifier signs showing the personified colors in Flicts.

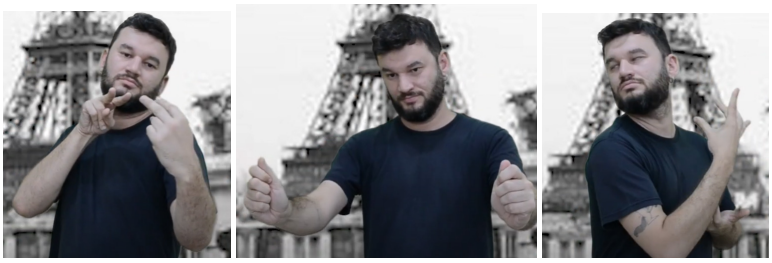


Marcos Marquioto's translations of concrete poems also make extensive use of linguistic elements. Classifier handshapes placed and moved in creative ways are used extensively in Lua na Água, showing the full and half moon (Figure 10):

Figure 10 – classifier signs showing the moon in *Lua na Água.*

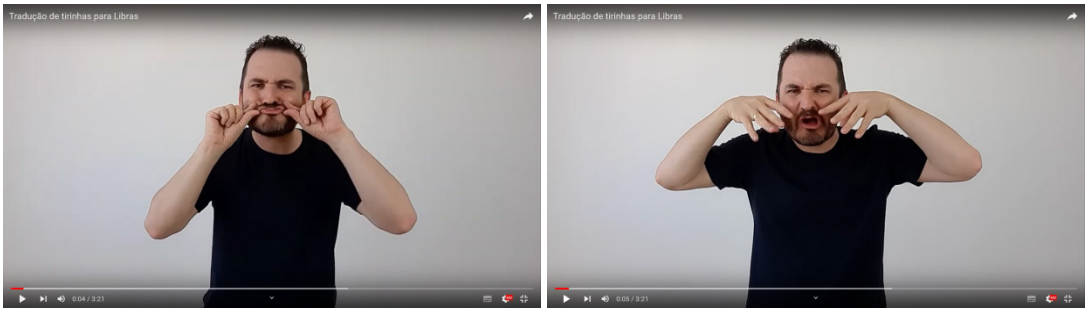
They also occur in Reconnais-toi showing the poet and the addressee looking at each other in the mirror, positioning the mirror and in the application of perfume (Figure 11).

Figure 11 – classifier signs showing the two characters in *Reconnais-toi.*



Following deaf literary norms (and as recommended by Ryan, 1993) Ricardo Heberle's translation of A Distracted Hairdresser uses classifiers to describe the physical characteristics of the hairdresser, for example detailing the size and shape of his moustache. Additionally, in keeping with norms of deaf humor, the size of the moustache is exaggerated (Figure 12).

Figure 12 – classifier signs showing a moustache in *A Distracted Hairdresser.*



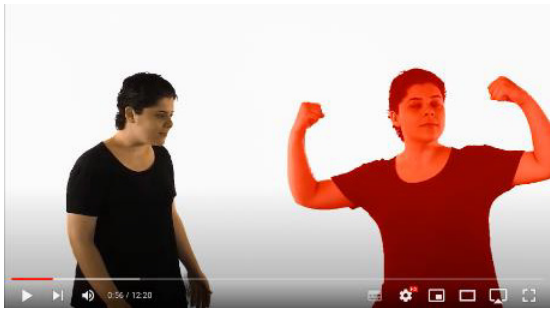
Constructed action

The translation of Where the Wild Things Are embodies Max as he tries to be a monster, showing him ready to devour his mother with a huge mouth. The handshape is the wide-open hand with the fingers crooked, as if they were teeth of a monster. However, as Max is only a boy and does not have the body of a monster, the translation uses exaggeration of the hands and movement to highlight this (Figure 13).

Figure 13 – Constructed action showing Max as a monster in *Where the Wild Things Are.*

In Flicts, constructed action also allows the translator to show the personified colors through anthropomorphism. We should note that the entire translated story is told, not in the third person of the original (which begins, "Once upon a time, there was a very rare and very sad color who was called Flicts…") but as direct first-person presentation (beginning with "I am Flicts"). This translation follows deaf literary norms of embodying characters and is made possible by extensive anthropomorphic constructed action. In this example, Red is shown as strong and muscular, even though a color does not have a body or muscles. The color Flicts is also anthropomorphised, looking on in dejection at his own physical weakness (Figure 14).

Figure 14 – Flicts and Red anthropomorphised through constructed action in *Flicts.*



The same approach is taken in Where the Wild Things Are, whose original text opens with "The night Max wore his wolf suit and made mischief of one kind and another his mother called him 'WILD THING!'" but is translated with the opening signs "I am Max" and a clear visual description of the boy in his wolf suit as he makes mischief.

The source text of Reconnais-toi, a visual calligram, refers to a human form, which Marcos Marquioto exploits because it already chimes with deaf literary norms of cons-

tructed action (although he plays with the reader by embodying both the observer and the observed, and as it is all in a mirror, we cannot tell at any moment who is who). All the translations of the other concrete poems embody characters, shown through constructed action, even though they are not present in the source texts (apart from a faint hint in Ser). As in Ananda Elias' translations, the poems start immediately with embodiment and no narration, in keeping with deaf literary norms.

In Lua na Água, the head and face show the anthropomorphised moon that finds itself in the water. This anthropomorphisation of the moon is not present in the source text (Figure 15).

Figure 15 – The anthropomorphised moon in Lua na Água.

In LINGUAVIAGEM the human character is also embodied, travelling from outside the television into the imaginary space between languages, shown here, entering the television screen. The single word of the source text makes no direct reference to any human form (Figure 16).

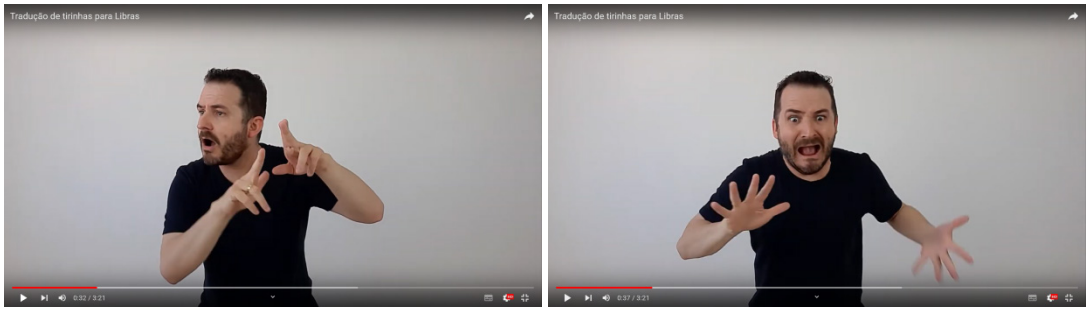
Figure 16 – constructed action showing the human traveller in *LINGUAVIAGEM*.

The source text of Ser is written in SignWriting ideograms, which are motivated by the human form. In its translation, the protagonist suffering oralist interventions and discovering a deaf identity is permanently embodied. In the examples below, we can see that the non-manual elements are also exaggerated (Figure 17).

Figure 17 - constructed action showing exaggerated non-manual elements in *Ser.*

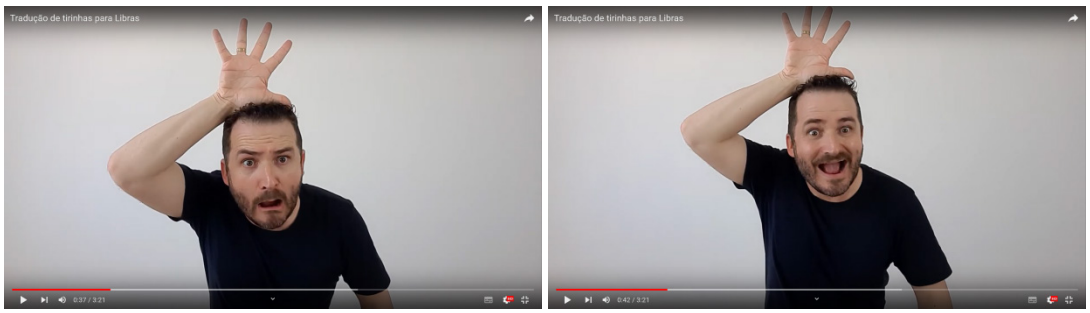
There is also considerable use of constructed action in the humorous texts, for example as the hairdresser abstractedly cuts the client's hair while watching the deaf people signing and his horror when he realizes what he has done (Figure 18).

Figure 18 –Constructed action in A Distracted Hairdresser



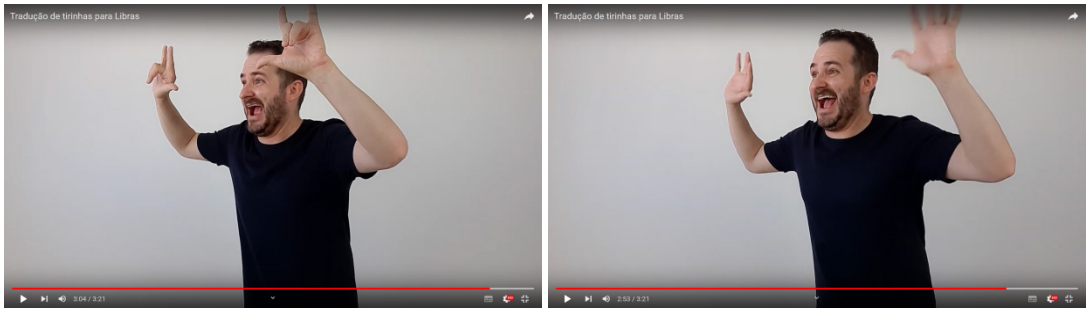
There is careful blending of the classifier sign for the shape of the haircut and the reaction of the two people. In the first picture, the facial expression is of the embodied character of the hairdresser, looking aghast at the haircut while, using partitioned space, the classifier for the haircut on the signer's head is understood to be on the client's head. This partitioning is resolved when the role shifts to the client being delighted by her cut, so the hand, head and face all refer to the client (Figure 19).

Figure 19 – a) the hand shows the client's hair and the facial expression shows the hairdresser's; b) the hand and facial expression both refer to the client.



After the initial scene-setting vocabulary signs explaining that the action happens at the beach, Suncream Love does not use narration and is told entirely through constructed action (Figure 20).

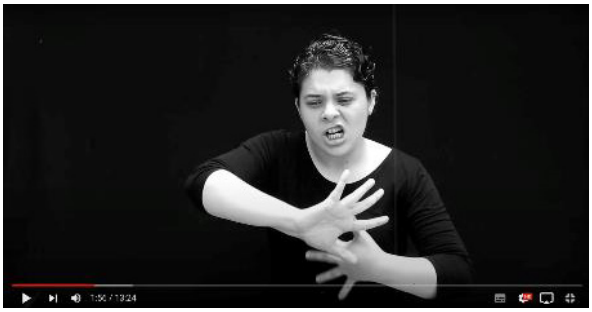
Figure 20 – constructed action in *Suncream Love*



Conventional signs

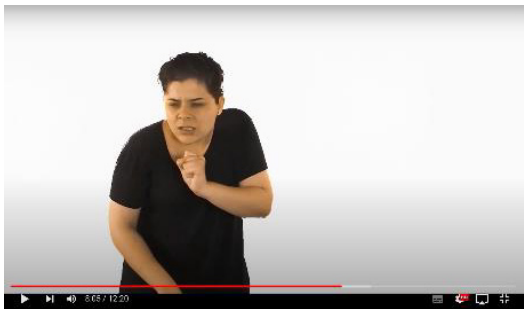
There were relatively few conventional signs in the translation of Where the Wild Things Are. The sign translating the original English text's words "wild rumpus" uses the established Libras sign meaning "mess" or "rowdiness". However, given the degree of rowdiness, the translator opted to intensify the size of the sign and the non-manual features to go with it (Figure 21).

Figure 21 – Intensification of the conventional sign ROWDINESS.



The translation in Flicts uses conventional signs, such as "alone" or "old", but the nature of the literary translation always required extra facial and/or body expression because the objective was a translation that focused on translational aesthetics. The sign "old" was made with a raised shoulder and a sad facial expression, creating a highly emotional and visual scene, that goes beyond merely identifying the term "old" (Figure 22).

Figure 22 – Conventional sign OLD with additional non-manual elements.



Although concrete poetry aims to rupture the form of the lexical word, there are conventional signs in the poems translated by Marcos Marquioto, such as travel, language (tongue), language (discourse), sun, moon, stars in LINGUAVIAGEM. Following deaf literary norms, the translation uses a single handshape throughout (Figure 23).

Figure 23 – Conventional signs in *LINGUAVIAGEM* using the same handshape

The translations, however, also deliberately include linguistic borrowing, such as the ASL signs whirlwind in LINGUAVIAGEM and community in Ser. There was also deliberate foreignization, for example, when maintaining the form of the Portuguese word "ser" in the mosaic translation of the signs (Figure 24) or in LINGUAVIAGEM when gradually revealing the words of the source text: "viagem", "língua" and "linguagem" (Figure 25).

Figure 24 – The mosaic translation of *Ser* retaining the source text word.

Figure 25 – Revealing elements of the source text in *LINGUAVIAGEM*.

Ricardo Heberle's translations of the three cartoons into humorous Libras used the greatest number of conventional Libras signs of all the translations described here because his aim was to use signed narratives to explore the humorous devices of the language. When the translations use a narrative role (which we see in both A Distracted Hairdresser and Drop the Baby), there are many vocabulary signs.

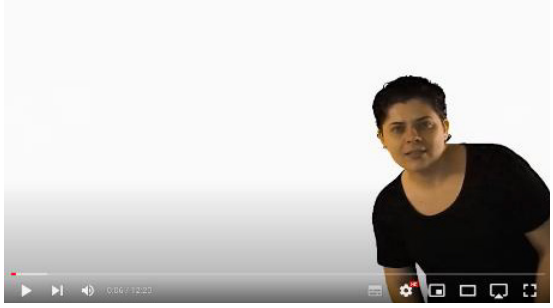
The examples described here show clearly the importance of the deaf translators' extensive knowledge of, and skills in using, Libras. Their translations draw on their in-depth knowledge of the language's vocabulary and its variants, as well as their ability to create and use classifier constructions and constructed action in original, entertaining and aesthetically appealing ways. These highly advanced language skills are essential for choosing and using linguistic elements in the translations.

Dramatic elements

Although it is possible to separate linguistic and dramatic effects completely (because we cannot separate language from the body in signed Libras), we will now turn to the key dramatic elements that highlight the use of the body, including the positioning of the body in space and the production of non-manual elements that are outside what classical structuralist linguistics understand to be part of language.

Ananda Elias' translations show dramatic elements in unusual positioning of the body. For example, in Flicts, the signer enters from the side of the frame, rather than beginning in the center of the screen, as expected in most videosigned pieces, including translations (Figure 26).

Figure 26 – Unusual body positioning in *Flicts* (entering from the side).



In the beginning of the translation of Where the Wild Things Are, the translator appears as the narrator of the story, emerging from below the screen, as though climbing a rope. This paratext is added to the translation for the entertainment of the audience and to get their attention by the unusual maneuver, although it presages the vines that grow later in the forest in Max's bedroom (Figure 27).

Figure 27 – Unusual body positioning in *Where the Wild Things Are* (entering from below)

Later, when Max's boat is blown across the water by the sea monster, the translator performer moves sideways across the filming space while embodying Max in the boat, until she leaves the screen completely (Figure 28).

Figure 28 – Unusual body positioning in *Where the Wild Things Are* (leaving from the side)

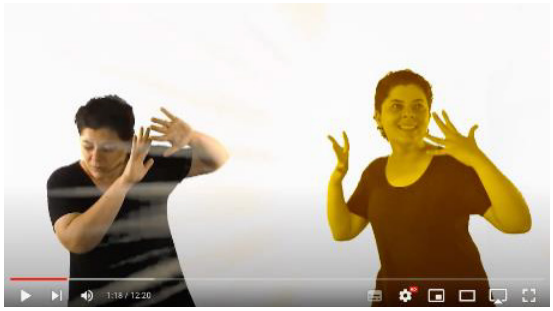
Marcos Marquioto's translations of concrete poems also use dramatic elements, with positioning the body in space, facial expression and body movement. LINGUAVIAGEM opens with the character watching television and then running through sand dunes to get to a beach. Although there is no signing in this introductory paratext, it sets the context with the signer's body moving in a way that would not be expected in another style of translation.

Ricardo Heberle's translations of the cartoons position the body in different places within the screen space to show the different characters in Suncream Love (Figure 29).

Figure 29 – Different positions in space showing two characters in *Suncream Love*.

In the translation of Flicts, Yellow shines with a happy expression, representing light, while Flicts (wearing black) is the opposite, showing darkness, sadness and loneliness. The original text did not describe the characteristics of each color, but they were added in the translation. The figure below shows the body twisted away from the front and angled forward and backward to show the characters' emotions (Figure 30).

Figure 30 - Enhanced facial expression and body movement in *Flicts*.



Reconnais-toi uses classifiers on the hands and embodiment of the character, but with exaggerated body movement and facial expression in signs like putting on a hat and opening a fan. The exaggerated non-manual elements in the embodied signs highlight the esthetic impact of the translation (Figure 31).

Figure 31 - Enhanced facial expression and body movement in *Reconnais-toi*

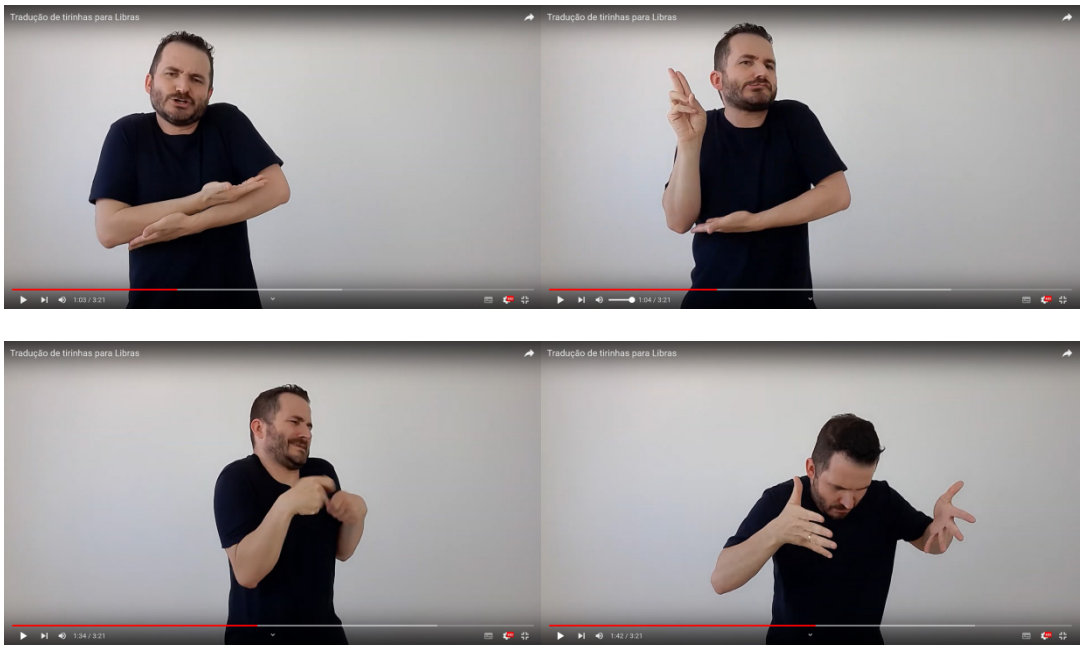
In Lua na Água the facial expression is more neutral when the signer is in the role of narrator and is much more pronounced when he is in the role of the moon, afraid to enter the rough water and looking at its reflection. The wink at the end of one version may be seen as dramatic rather than linguistic (Figure 32).

Figure 32 - Enhanced facial expression and body movement in *Lua na Água*.

In Ser, the translation uses extensive body movement to show the imposition of a non-deaf identity and the character's resistance to it. The exaggerated body and head movements and facial expression (as shown in the figures above) add emotional impact to the translation. The original text has no implied emotion, being made of only two words "be" and "deaf", but these emotions are added to appeal more to the deaf audience.

The dramatic elements contribute vastly to humorous Libras. Exaggerated non-manual elements are key to Ricardo Heberle's translations of the cartoon strips. In each role that he takes, any facial expression or body movement is amplified to generate more humor. The examples here show the hearing person rocking the baby and smoking and the deaf person signing so that she drops the baby, all with exaggeration (Figure 33).

Figure 33 - Enhanced facial expression and body movement in *Drop the Baby*.



The examples from the translations described in this section clearly show that enhanced facial expression and body movement may be considered the principal aspect of all the dramatic elements, and the translator's performance skills work with their linguistic skills to produce the highly visual translations. However, other performance elements such as position and movement of the whole body also contribute.

Technological elements

The technological elements of these translations have been implicitly shown in many of the examples shown above. Now, however, we will focus upon them. Special effects are present in the translations, although not always especially evident, and visual effects are used in all three. although they are less apparent in Ricardo Heberle's humorous translations. Advanced video editing technique is an integral part of Ananda Elias' translations, especially in Flicts. Marcos Marquioto makes extensive use of visual effects in his translations of concrete poems because he uses the disruption that they create as an analogy with the disruptions caused in written concrete poetry with typographical effects.

Clothing and props were rarely used as special effects in these productions. All three translators performed their work in the black t-shirts that light-skinned signers are expected to wear in videosigned pieces, following this translation norm. However, literary translation can go against these clothing norms and in LINGUAVIAGEM Marcos Marquioto wears a white t-shirt and torn dungarees, a hat and jacket, and carries a backpack (which he throws down) (Figure 34).

Figure 34 – Clothing added to the translation of LINGUAVIAGEM.

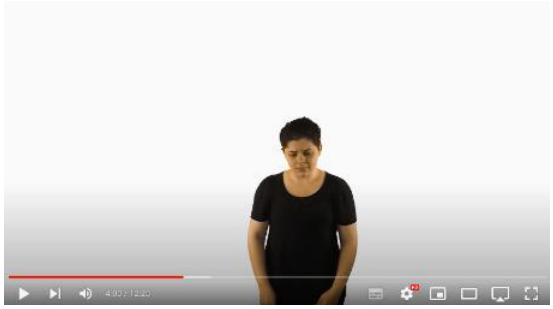
The paper on which the source text is reproduced is held as a prop, which the translator-performer interacts with as he unfolds it to reveal the different elements of the poem. The sea is also used as a type of prop at the end of the film, as it washes over the word LINGUAVIAGEM, as though taking it further on its travels (Figure 35).

Figure 35 – The sea and a piece of paper as props in LINGUAVIAGEM.

Not all backgrounds are a significant part of the translation. Ricardo Heberle's translations, for example, are performed against a plain white wall, simply for clarity of the signing. However, different backgrounds may be chosen when filming as meaningful special effects in the translation. In Where the Wild Things Are, Ananda Elias wears a black t-shirt against a black background to emphasize the darkness of the story full of monsters. In contrast, the translated text of Flicts uses a white background in keeping with the white pages of the book. Many of the pages of the source text are of different colors but studio conditions did not permit filming against all the different colors, so only white was used. Marcos Marquioto's concrete poem translations usually use visual effects for the backgrounds (which we will address next), but in LINGUAVIAGEM the translation is performed at a beach as a holiday location where one could travel to.

Visual effects are used in all the translations. These include changes in speed and size of the images filmed, zooming in on certain parts of the image, light filters, and addition of images of various types. The only translations to use speed changes as a visual effect here are those in Ricardo Heberle's cartoon strip pieces where editing increases the speed of the signing. It is well-recognized that increased speed of a film can increase humor (as seen in the great black and white comedy films of Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton and Harold Lloyd and in subsequent comedy, such as the Benny Hill Show) and the translations exploit this. The size of images is altered in Flicts and in the cartoon strip translations. The size of the signer was shrunk using editing effects, rather than at the time of filming. Shrinking the signer in the frame showed the humiliation and low self-esteem that the Flicts character felt – literally "feeling small" – rather than signing this information (Figure 36).

Figure 36 – Shrinking the signer in *Flicts* to show humiliation.

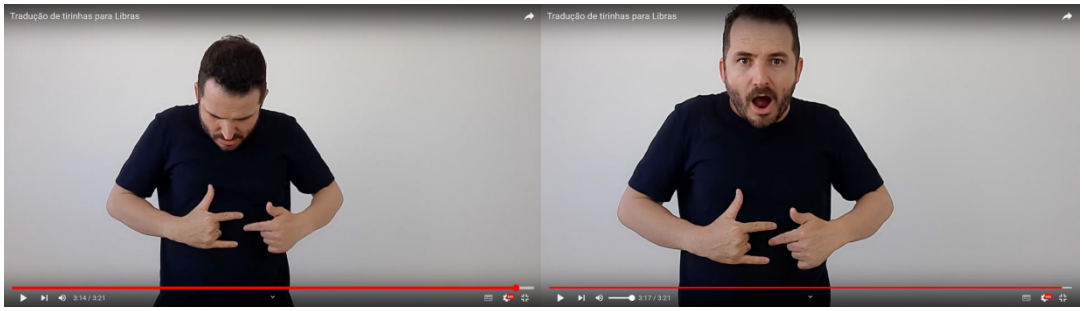


Conversely, the size of the image is increased in two of the cartoon strip translations. In A Distracted Hairdresser, the image is increased when the hairdresser realizes what he has done to his client's hair, which adds to the climax of the joke. Zoom at this moment emphasizes the dramatic elements and allows the audience to see what the hairdresser has just noticed (Figure 37).

Figure 37 – Enlarging the signer in A Distracted Hairdresser for emphasis.

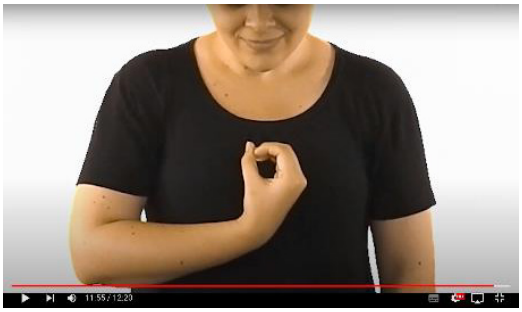
At the end of Suncream Love, it is also used to show the pride of the ordinary man when he realizes that he has unwittingly "got his girl". Again, there is no need to sign "proud" because the visual effects give this information (Figure 38).

Figure 38 – Enlarging the signer in *Suncream Love* to show pride.



Cutting off parts of the image of the signer is an editing effect to focus the shot on a sign. This is seen in the final sign "Flicts", where the focus is essentially on the hands to emphasize that the character finally has its own identity as Flicts, but there is just enough of the translator's face visible to see that the character is smiling peacefully (Figure 39).

Figure 39 – Focusing on the hand and lower part of the face in *Flicts.*



The same device of cutting out parts of the image of the signer is used in Lua na Água. In the editing and addition of other graphics, there are cuts to only the arms or face, disrupting the grammar of the concrete poems, highlighting certain elements of the signs and metaphorically hiding and revealing different parts, as the phases of the moon hide and reveal it (Figure 40).

Figure 40 – Cutting out parts of the signer in *Lua na Água,* metaphorically hiding and revealing.

Graphic elements take various forms and can be added in various ways. All three translators used images, inserted in different ways. The target texts of Where the Wild Things Are and all three cartoon strips presented the source text of the intersemiotic translations as images edited into the whole screen – but always after its signed translation, not during it, to allow complete focus on the signing. After the translation of Lua na Água, the source text and images (which are both part of the concrete poem) are edited in.

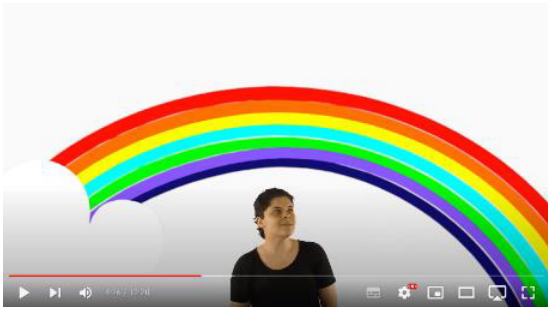
The background images against which Marcos Marquioto presents his translations are important for setting the scene. The background of the Eifel Tower in Paris for Reconnais-toi has no relevance to the content of the poem but contextualizes the poem as being of French origin, even though it is presented in Libras. The different phases of the moon in the background (and the images of the sea of some versions) of Lua na Água directly refer to the images and words in the source text. (Figure 41).

Figure 41 – Images of the moon and sea as background in Lua na Água.

The background color in Ser changes from black (while the poem deals with the question of oppression of deaf identity) to blue (when it describes deaf liberation). This edit to change background color is a deliberate metaphorical device, referring to the blue of the Deaf Pride movement, which is also the background color of the source text.

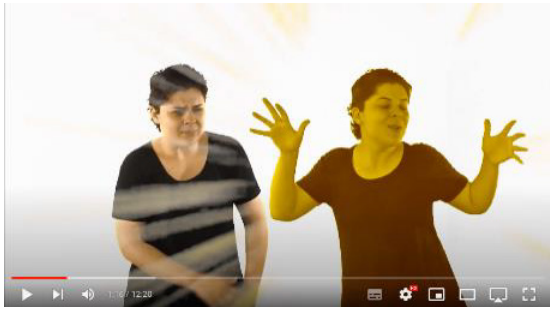
Other graphic elements include words, for example to show the translator's name in the paratexts. In Flicts, the translator interacts with the graphic elements, such as when she looks up at the rainbow (Figure 42).

Figure 42 – The signer interacts with graphics in *Flicts*.



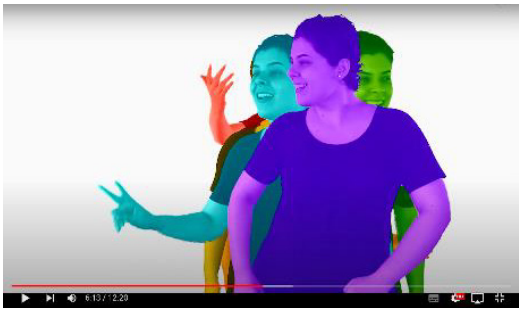
Editing adds a "glitch" effect to the film to give the translation of Where the Wild Things Are an old-fashioned appearance. Color effects also allowed each color character to be colored accordingly. The figure below shows this and a further effect of "shining" illumination (Figure 43).

Figure 43 – The "shining" effect in *Flicts*.



This shot of Flicts and Yellow shows a further visual effect of superimposition of multiple images. It also allowed all the colors of the rainbow to enter the same shot, despite being filmed (and colored) separately (Figure 44).

Figure 44 – Superimposed images of the colors in *Flicts*.



Marcos Marquioto's creation of the mosaic version of Ser is entirely dependent on visual effects of editing as the gif file that shows the sign "deaf" is repeated multiple times across a single screen, arranged in the shape of the letters S E and R (See Figure 24). Significantly for this translation, the person signing deaf is deaf. In the abstraction of SignWriting, the deaf status (or otherwise) of the source text author is not apparent or necessarily relevant. In the videosigned target text, it is clear and central.

The examples above show that special and visual effects are not essential for a Libras literary translation to be effective. However, translators use them to enhance the aesthetic effect of the linguistic and performance elements or to substitute linguistic elements in a highly visual way. Once again, we can see that the contributions from film and editing technology allow the deaf translators to produce translations that conform to deaf literary norms of multimodality.

Conclusion

These examples of literary translations into Libras by three deaf translators highlight some deaf norms of literary translation in a range of creative genres. All translators were working into their first language, as recommended for most literary translations. Whether we consider the linguistic, dramatic or technological components of the translations, the objective is always to create highly visual esthetic images that are calculated by the deaf translators to be acceptable to deaf audiences. The examples support Stone's (2005) observation that deaf translators not only understand the source text but also know how to transfer and represent the literary information in a culturally relevant way. The translations analyzed provide concrete, practical examples of ways in which this culturally relevant, appropriate translation can be produced. The translators' understanding of the aesthetic elements used in Libras literature provides a crucial basis for translations that satisfy deaf audiences. The three genres we chose here are only a small subset of the literary genres in Brazilian Portuguese and further study of other genres will reveal more examples of norms of translations that satisfy deaf audiences. It is clear, however, that studying the processes and products of deaf translators reveals certain deaf translation norms in the field of literature, which can guide hearing translators for whom Libras is not their first language and novice deaf translators. Thus, we can hope to see more literary translations that satisfy the literary expectations of deaf audiences.

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