

EDUCATION OF BRAZILIAN SIGN LANGUAGE/PORTUGUESE TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS: A VIEW FROM PROFESSIONALS WORKING IN THE JOB MARKET¹

FORMAÇÃO DE TRADUTORES E INTÉRPRETES DE LIBRAS-PORTUGUÊS: VISÃO DOS PROFISSIONAIS EM ATUAÇÃO NO MERCADO DE TRABALHO



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Abstract: The training of translators and interpreters of Brazilian sign language (Libras) and Portuguese language (TILSP) is a recent practice and is under increasing discussion in Brazil. In this context, the performance of the labor market of these professionals increased considerably, due to achievements of the deaf community, which began to occupy social spaces in an accessible way in Libras, which previously did not happen. With this, the training of these professionals should also improve and evolve in order to fill as many gaps as possible. That said, this study aims to analyze the vision of professional translators and interpreters of Libras-Portuguese from Federal University of Goiás (UFG) about their training process in the area. The research uses the methodology of exploratory research (Gil, 2008), with a quanti-qualitative approach through semi-structured interviews. The data analysis took place according to Bardin's (2007) structure, presenting six nuclei of meaning: practice; theory; how these professionals were formed; awareness of the need for training; continuing education and difficulties inherent to the profession, which were grouped into two categories: perspectives of the profession and professionalization. The results showed that, in the view of the professionals, the training currently proposed, at a higher level, presents a lack of practical content, having greater focus on theoretical disciplines, where the ideal would be a training with balance between practice and theory, and not prioritizing only one of the languages, since the profession involves a linguistic pair, in this case, Libras and Portuguese.

Keywords: Brazilian Sign Language. Training of translators. Interpreter training. Labor market.

Resumo: A formação de tradutores e intérpretes de língua brasileira de sinais e língua portuguesa (TILSP) é uma prática recente e está em crescente discussão no Brasil. Nesse contexto, a demanda de atuação do mercado de trabalho desse profissional aumentou consideravelmente, devido a conquistas da comunidade surda, que passou a ocupar espaços sociais de maneira acessível em Libras, o que antes não acontecia. Com isso, a formação desse profissional também deve melhorar e evoluir com o intuito de sanar o máximo de lacunas possíveis. Dito isto, este estudo tem como objetivo analisar a visão dos profissionais tradutores e intérpretes de Libras-português da Universidade Federal de Goiás (UFG) sobre seu processo de formação na área. A pesquisa utiliza a metodologia de pesquisa exploratória (Gil, 2008), com abordagem quanti-qualitativa por meio de entrevistas semiestruturadas. A análise de dados se deu conforme a estrutura de Bardin (2007), apresentando seis núcleos



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de sentido: prática; teoria; como esses profissionais se formaram; consciência da necessidade de formação; formação continuada e dificuldades inerentes à profissão, que foram agrupados em duas categorias: perspectivas da profissão e profissionalização. Os resultados mostraram que, na visão dos profissionais, a formação proposta atualmente, em nível superior, apresenta carência de conteúdos práticos, tendo maior foco em disciplinas teóricas, e que o próximo do ideal seria uma formação com equilíbrio entre prática e teoria, e não priorizado somente uma das línguas, visto que a profissão envolve um par linguístico, no caso, Libras e português.

Palavras-chaves: Língua brasileira de sinais (Libras). Formação de tradutores. Formação de intérpretes. Mercado de Trabalho.

Translation and interpretation seek to establish communication between speakers of distinct languages, as well as mediate content, transforming something that would be incomprehensible into linguistically accessible content. This definition also applies to sign languages, because translators and interpreters of Brazilian Sign Language and Portuguese (TILSP) are professionals who make possible the interaction between speakers and non-speakers of Libras, promoting the communication involving both languages (Anater & Passos, 2010; Silva et al., 2016).

For the TILSP's work, knowing two languages with excellence is important, but not enough (Almeida, 2010). On the one hand, Marques (2017) states that, in addition to fluency in both languages, these professionals need specific techniques for the processes of translation and interpretation, and also some theoretical knowledge. On the other hand, Jordão (2013) points out that the performance of the TILSP cannot be a mechanical activity, but an activity that focuses on the quality of information received by the deaf. That is, while Marques (2017) shows that theoretical knowledge is necessary, Jordão (2013) points out that it is necessary to think about what happens in practice: the information received by the deaf. Marques (2017) also highlights that higher education can be a differential for professionals, but it is worth mentioning that if higher education courses in the area of translation and interpretation follow an extremely theoretical curriculum, it may not be enough for the professional to be able to do quality work, because the job market is looking for professionals who also have practical skills in translation and interpretation.

Thinking about the job market for TILSP in Brazil, in the last few years the contexts of work increased considerably, because the deaf community has advanced in conquering social spaces previously unoccupied by them, especially in Academia, law, the arts, among others that started to be accessible in Libras. With this, the complexity of the work has also escalated, which previously was conducted in communities, which made TILSP look for more training and education. The rise in the demand for qualified professionals in the area of translation and

interpretation of Libras-Portuguese impacts the education that is offered, and, consequently, the performance of those professionals, because if the market requires better qualified professionals, the courses aimed at these professionals, both from higher education and from regular courses, must be in consonance with reality.

In this context, this research is justified by the need of discussing the education of TILSP. We defend the need to consider the practical education that comes from professionals who already work in the job market before the creation of higher learning courses specific for the area. Therefore, the problem presented in this study is: what is the view of professional TILSP working at the Federal University of Goiás (UFG) about their training and about the training that currently occurs for TILSP? In order to answer the research question, the objectives of analyzing the view of the professionals working as translators and interpreters of Libras-Portuguese at the UFG were outlined, regarding their own training process in the area.

This paper presents, initially, a brief historical context of the profession of translator and interpreter of Libras-Portuguese; then, a historical context of TILSP working at the Federal University of Goiás. Finally, we present the data analysis and final considerations.

Brief historical context of the profession

When creating a historical context of the Libras-Portuguese translation and interpretation professional, Martins and Nascimento (2015) show that the first works arose in community contexts, especially in the religious context. Interpretations were carried out, mainly, by listeners fluent in Libras who had a close relationship with the deaf community, that is, friends, relatives or children of deaf adults, so that one can already see the emergence of the first generation of translators and interpreters of Libras in Brazil.

More recently, the National Federation for Education and Integration of the Deaf (Feneis) started a training movement for the TILSP, offering the first free courses and seminars for referrals in the area (Quadros, 2004; Santos, 2010). After that period, it emerged what can be called the second generation of Libras translators and interpreters, which is quite similar to the first due to its proximity to the deaf community, but which emerged from these free courses. In this period, there was a kind of interpreting mentoring, that is, more experienced interpreters acted as mentors to less experienced interpreters, teaching, in practice, how to translate and interpret.

With the creation of undergraduate courses in the area, a third generation of Libras

translators and interpreters has emerged: those who, having no contact with the area or with deaf people, have become interested in the subject, joining bachelor's degree courses even with little or no prior knowledge about the deaf community and Libras. In this higher education courses, future professional TILSP will learn Brazilian Sign Language alongside techniques and ways of translating and interpreting, having opportunities for professional development based on theories and guided practices (such as internships and laboratories that may occur during the undergraduate course).

With regards to the specific legislation for the area, Lei 10.436 was published in 2002, recognizing Libras as a language (BRASIL, 2002). With this legal basis, Libras started to become more widespread in Brazil. The deaf community had the opportunity to take part in several new spaces, among them that of higher education (Faria & Galán-Mañas, 2018). In 2005, Decreto 5.626 (BRAZIL, 2005) was published, which, for the first time, signaled the requirement for higher education if one wanted to work professionally as a sign language translator and interpreter, as can be seen in Chapter V:

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DA FORMAÇÃO DO TRADUTOR E INTÉRPRETE DE LIBRAS - LÍNGUA PORTUGUESA²

Art. 17. A formação do tradutor e intérprete de Libras - Língua Portuguesa deve efetivar-se por meio de curso superior de Tradução e Interpretação, com habilitação em Libras - Língua Portuguesa. (BRASIL, 2005).

The achievements of the deaf community allowed an evolution in the scenario for professional TILSP. As stated by Martins and Nascimento (2015, p. 84), “if the discursive plane on which the deafness is allocated had not suffered ruptures, the figure of the sign language translator and interpreter would be meaningless and, we can boldly conjecture, not even have emerged”. The authors also reinforce that the deaf community's search for evolution contributed to the emergence of the professionalization of Libras-Portuguese translators and interpreters.

Finally, other legal achievements have emerged in the area, contributing to the regulation and work of Libras-Portuguese translators and interpreters, such as the *Lei de Regulamentação da Profissão* and the *Lei Brasileira de Inclusão* (BRASIL, 2010, 2015). Thus, the process of offering bachelor's degrees in translation and interpretation of Libras-Portuguese

has begun. The first of these was launched in 2008 by the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC), which, with government support through the Ministry of Education (MEC), started to offer an online bachelor's degree course in Letras-Libras.

Currently, however, there is still a large number of working professionals who have not undergone specific training at the undergraduate level, but who work on an empirical basis, that is, they are interpreters from the first and second generations, who have become professionals through practical experiences acquired in the exercise of the profession, contact with the deaf community, and learning through other courses (Lacerda & Gurgel, 2011).

Jordão (2013, p. 17) states that “being in contact with the deaf is essential for the improvement of the TILSP, and the presence of the deaf in broader social forums makes it essential to insert this professional beyond his own family or small groups.” The author also stresses that these professionals need to interpret in different contexts that add value to the acquisition of the language and knowledge of the world, performing the intermediation between deaf and hearing people (Jordão, 2013).

Although it is known that professionals in the market are, for the most part, competent to carry out their work, it is important to highlight that, with the diversification of the contexts of work, all TILSP professionals lack qualifications to exercise the profession with excellence, because the new contexts can be much more complex, with political, journalistic, poetic discourses, which require specific skills for each one of them.

The job market gets bigger every day, and it is necessary to conduct studies that are adapted to new realities and contexts. For example, the measures adopted during the Global Covid-19 Pandemic³. The fields of work, especially the translation and interpretation of online events, became considerably bigger in this period, requiring translators and interpreters to occupy spaces previously unexplored.

Thus, it is necessary to think: do even those with years of experience, but without academic education, consider themselves to be competent to act in contexts previously non-existent and, therefore, emergent and diverse? In the same way, with generalist undergraduate courses (Rodrigues, 2018) (the one offered by higher education institutions), it is not possible to be able to work in every context and, therefore, it seems necessary to think about continued education in specific contexts. In this sense, Anater and Passos (2010, p. 227), state that:

se pensarmos na profissão como um quadro pintado-a-mão [*sic*], que oscila entre a

perfeição e os vacilos, como se lhes faltasse a “firmeza” na sua formação, entenderemos que o empirismo não está somente emoldurando essa atuação, mas também tecendo todo esse trabalho, uma vez que o pano de fundo, a tela da obra, já é feita de forma “artesanal”. (Anater & Passos, 2010, p. 227)⁴.

Almeida (2010) reinforces the need for a specific training in Libras, but highlights the importance of keeping a continued education. Ferreira (2015) agrees with Almeida (2010) by stating that current bachelor’s degrees courses train professionals for generic work.

It is understood that the higher education for TILSP must encompass several areas, because the TILSP is still seen as a professional who works in any context. However, the goal of having studies focused on the area of translation and interpretation is to make evident that a specific education is needed, just as is the case for other professions (Ferreira, 2015). It is evident that the higher education courses for TILSP in Brazil are still recent, and that they offer a general education (Rodrigues, 2018), since the courses are not capable of being specialized in each area, which would fall, for example, to graduate school.

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It is understood that the higher education courses aimed at TILSP, despite still being generic, with time can become adapted to the reality of the profession and to research that, like this one, may aid in this maturation. As it happens to other professions, some specificities inherent to professional work, even after changes in the already-mentioned courses, may be developed in courses of complimentary education.

Research Methodology

The question that guides this study is the following: what is the view of the TILSP professionals working at the UFG on their education and training process, and about the education and training process that currently happens in the higher learning courses for TILSP?

For the production of this paper, an exploratory research was conducted (Gil, 2008, p. 27) with quanti-qualitative approach. According to the author, “exploratory research have, as their main goal, to develop, clarify, and modify concepts and ideas, aiming at the formulation of more precise problems or researchable hypotheses for posterior study.” The methodological choice is aligned with the goal of the research of analyzing the view of the TILSP currently working in the job market in relation to their education and training processes in the area. Thus, we intend to clarify this idea and to formulate more precise problems that may be studied in

the future.

The research was developed at the Federal University of Goiás (UFG), which offers a teacher training course in Letras-Libras (since the year 2009), and is one of the seven Brazilian public universities (in 2020) that offers the specific course for the education and training of translators and interpreters of Libras-Portuguese. This course lasts for four years, with a workload of 2,704 attending hours, here excluded the hours for optative education (256 hours) (Faria & Galán-Mañas, 2018). The first class enrolled in 2014 and graduated in 2017. Ingress in the course is done through the *Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio* (ENEM), and through the *Sistema de Seleção Unificada* (SiSU). In order to join the first two classes, the candidate had to a test for Verification of Specific Skill and Knowledge (VHCE, in Portuguese), in order to show basic knowledge of Libras. However, due to low enrollment, it was necessary to suspend this test. Currently, in order to ingress in the course, candidates do not need any linguistic knowledge in Brazilian Sign Language (Libras), because it is assumed that, during the course, the student will reach fluency in Libras.

As for the syllabus, the UFG course presents 64% of subjects on linguistics and literature, since it is a course in the area of Letters. The influence of these areas in the course makes the studies about translation and interpretation difficult and generic during the course (Faria & Galán-Mañas, 2018) and it is understood that this factor may come to be detrimental to professionals when they start looking to join the job market.

According to Ferreira (2015), it is necessary to think about the learning of these students and how they achieve translation competence, since being fluent in both languages is paramount, but in order to be a quality Libras-Portuguese translator and interpreter, knowledge of the fundamentals and techniques related to the profession is essential.

The group of participants in this research is composed of translators and interpreters of Libras-Portuguese, who, at the time, worked at the UFG. At the UFG, there are two ways to hire these professionals: either as temporary workers, or as workers outsourced by a company that provides services to the institution, provided they are approved in a practical test; or as effective, through public tenders. The institution currently has 16 Libras-Portuguese translators and interpreters, of whom 11 are on temporary contracts and five are effective workers.

In order to participate in the research, first, electronic invitations were sent individually, obtaining a positive response from nine professionals, who started to constitute the sample of research subjects. Before conducting the interviews, a pilot interview was conducted with a

teacher and interpreter from the same institution, in order to validate the questions developed for the interview. It is worth mentioning that the anonymity of the participants was ensured and that this research meets the ethical criteria established by the UFG Research Ethics Committee (CEP), *Parecer* number 3.173.872.

For data collection, semi-structured interviews were carried out individually, based on a script containing ten questions, whose answers were recorded and later transcribed. Considering the specificities of the research, data collection took place from the following steps: (i) elaboration of the questions for the interviews; (ii) choosing a TILSP to conduct the pilot interview; (iii) adjustments to the questions in the interview script; (iv) identification of the UFG's TILSP professionals; (v) defining the sample of subjects and conducting the interviews; (vi) transcription of the interviews; (vii) reading and analyzing the transcripts, according to the technique of Bardin (2007).

Data analysis and discussion of results

Here the data will be presented, divided in two categories and their respective nuclei of meaning, as per the technique for content analysis brought by Bardin (2007).

Table 1
Categorization of data

Categories	Nuclei of meaning
Perspectives of the profession	- Practice - Theory
Profissionalization	- How these professionals graduated - Awareness about the need for education and training - Continued education - Difficulties inherent to the profession

Source: Research data.

In the following section the data and the discussions based on the answers obtained in the interviews with the research sample will be presented.

Category Perspectives of the profession

This category has two nuclei of meaning: the first one is *practice* – practice that adds value to the profession, through experiences and adaptations during professional work. When questioned about the importance of this practice, all the professionals asserted that it is important, each in their own way, in reports such as these: “*It’s necessary to have more*

exposure, not only academically, in the sense of theories, in the sense of understanding how this process works, but also allying the question of practice, of contact.” (P4); *“Of course theory is always going to exist, but there needs to be practice too, offering environments where students can practice, develop [their skills]”* (P7); *“The area requires a lot of experience, learning from yourself, adaptation to interpret in the [specific] areas.”* (P3). In this research’s sample, all the professionals have already been working in the area for more than one year, and this reinforces their speeches about the profession.

This preoccupation with practical knowledge matches Lacerda (2010) when he states that the interpreter needs to master both the target and source languages, otherwise, mere linguistic knowledge does not solve all the gaps inherent to professional performance. It is the frequent quotidian use that becomes important, in several situations: *“It is necessary for them to have contact with this language all the time, and the more important thing is for these students to have contact with the language inside the classroom, especially the language of the deaf.”* (P4). According to the people interviewed, this seems to be the way for the professional to improve himself after each work.

According to Lacerda, from experience, the professional may try to foresee some problems that, depending on planning, can be avoided. In academic education, it is understood that students learn on demand, such as the importance of previous study and asking for materials previously to the act of interpreting, planning, organization, the grammar of both languages, culture, nuances and specificities, aspects that are more related to techniques discussed and taught in theoretical and reflexive ways during the education process, and that precedes or permeates the act of translating and interpreting. All this theoretical knowledge can be utilized when the student joins the job market professionally, in order to minimize the problems that can be avoided, and to be able to solve with optimization the setbacks that might appear.

The activity of translation and interpretation requires decision making at all times. In the case of translation, there is still time and the possibility of redoing, revising, analyzing and modifying it, if it is not as expected. However, in the interpretation, TILSP does not have enough time to do so, it is possible to make minimal corrections during the speeches, but a thorough review of the result is not possible. That said, the interviewees understand that by uniting theoretical and practical training, the possibility of errors can be minimized.

Thus, we enter the second nucleus of meaning in the category *Perspectives of the*

profession: theory. Theoretical knowledge is acquired during education and training, be it at a higher level or in free courses, however, not all free courses have theories in the course, some focus on language learning, as the signs for communication in the linguistic pair Libras-Portuguese. Because it is a recently regulated profession⁵, the myth that Cogas⁶ are TILSP was born. Lacerda (2010) points out being the son or daughter of deaf parents does not enable a person to work professionally as TILSP, because specific training is necessary for this.

When asked about the importance of theoretical knowledge to support professional work, all the TILSP interviewed responded that they do believe theoretical knowledge to be important: *“If the interpreter knows no theory, something will be missing . . . because there are certain things a person can acquire through practice, but without theory it will be a bit compromised in certain aspects of the work.”* (P2); *“Without the theory, we can’t imagine why some specific thing is happening, why we are interpreting in this or that way, why we are using this context to be able to interpret.”* (P3); *“We can support the decision of using a certain strategy or omitting a certain piece of information, or reformulating an idea, because through theories I can have that support.”* (P4).

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Debona et al. (2016) point out that, in the process of learning theory, professionals also learn about the grammar of languages in order to, during translation and/or interpretation, act according to the target language, because each language has a grammar of its own, and that must be taken into consideration.

In this case, however, a gap pointed out in the speech of the participants was the lack of study of Portuguese in the current graduate courses for TILSP: *“This is something I see, there is not enough Portuguese [in the courses]. During my education, for instance, there was no Portuguese during the graduate course.”* (P2). Lacerda (2010) states that it is essential to master both languages for the TILSP profession, however, he emphasizes that commonly, higher education courses aimed at these professionals do not have the goal of teaching languages. Therefore, if a professional graduate and has no mastery of the language pair he will use in the day-to-day of his profession, the execution of translations and interpretations will not be of quality. It is worth noting that bachelor's courses for training Libras and Portuguese translators and interpreters do not require the student to enter with any level of knowledge of Libras. Thus, it is understood that the curriculum of the course should include teaching the language, in addition to teaching the activity of translation and interpretation involving this language.

That said, the data allow us to identify that, in the view of the participants, theory and practice must be aligned during education and training, since one complements the other. In that regard, Moraes (n.d., p. 7) points out that practice must be distributed through the disciplines of the graduate course, instead of being clustered in only one or a few disciplines, always showing correlation between theory and practice.

To complement: in order for the TILSP profession to obtain a good basis and quality in the act of translating and/or interpreting, he needs to unite theory and practice, considering them as interdependent things, unable to be separated in the search for quality. According to Adorno (1969, p. 1), “an awareness of theory and praxis should be formed that did not separate them in a way that made theory impotent and praxis, arbitrary”.

Category Professionalization

This category presented four nuclei of meaning, with the first one being *How these professionals graduated*. About their academic education, six out of the nine professionals interviewed graduated in the teacher training course of Letras-Libras, an expressive number that is believed to be on the rise, considering the significant increase in the search for specific education in the area of Libras. It is worth mentioning that teacher training courses are aimed to the education and training of teachers, not of translators and interpreters.

The majority of the people interviewed graduated in the teacher training modality, which is not coherent with professional work. It must be highlighted that, in principle, the course of Translation and Interpretation Libras-Portuguese is the specific higher-level education for professional translators and interpreters of Libras-Portuguese. The result obtained may be justified by the fact that the bachelor's degree course is more recent in Brazil than the teacher training course. In this region of Brazil, the UFG is the only university that offers both courses: the teacher training degree started being offered in 2009, while the bachelor's degree course only started in 2014.

Five of the professionals interviewed have more than one graduate degree in distinct areas, indicating that there is a search for knowledge, improvement, and technical basis for the practice of the activities inherent to the profession. Besides graduation, all participants had finished some sort of free course, and only one did not have *lato sensu* specialization. These data corroborate what Santos (2010, p. 158) states when highlighting that “professional education is a factor that, without a doubt, provides subsidies for the work of translators and

interpreters, and which legitimates the practice [of the profession], as well as any profession”.

The second nucleus of meaning is the *Awareness about the need for education and training*. In this nucleus, the answers went in the direction that a quality education contributes and adds value to the professional’s work: “*Graduation collaborates because it shows you a universe that exists . . . however, it won’t give you the experience for you to go. It will only give you a lexicon and you’ll have to act and look for experience.*” (P3); “*Education is extremely important, because we go beyond growing in content and knowledge: we can unite practice and theory, and then we can master subjects we previously didn’t.*” (P5); “*You have to be graduated, to know what you are, to have theoretical knowledge beyond the practical so you can position yourself correctly.*” (P7); “*Education is important because it generates knowledge brings alternatives, takes a quality learning for the professional so he can work in the job market.*” (P8).

Martins and Nascimento (2015) also affirm that, during training, it is necessary to promote real experiences between undergraduate students and the deaf community, with the idea that future translators and interpreters are aware of the deaf reality and its particularities, since only university education does not completely prepare this professional to interact with the deaf.

However, in higher education courses, there is still a discrepancy between the practice in Libras and the practice in Portuguese. It is worth reflecting on whether it is implied that students who enter the course of Letters: Translation and Interpretation in Libras-Portuguese, in Brazil, are experts in Portuguese. It is a fact that we have identified that in federal universities in Brazil (Rodrigues, 2018) it is not mandatory to know Libras to join the course. It is understood that knowing both languages makes a person bilingual, not necessarily competent as a translator and/or interpreter, which highlights the need for professional training. In this sense, Albres and Souza Junior (2019, p. 170) state:

Dessa forma, o currículo, a didática e o ensino devem conduzir o aprendiz de TILS a se preparar para enfrentar o jogo das enunciações tanto de português para Libras quanto de Libras para português. De tal modo, a prática e a teoria são indissociáveis. A partir da prática, se compreende o que já se construiu como teoria para o campo, e a teoria só se sustenta embasada em uma prática de tradução ou de interpretação.⁷

From the nine people interviewed, six stated with vehemence that practice is the most

fundamental and relevant. These answers do not disagree with Albres and Souza Junior (2019, p. 170), when they state that:

Para o ensino de seu uso em processos de tradução e interpretação, a linguagem deve ser vivida, experienciada em seu processo de versão de uma língua em outra, de sua articulação com outras linguagens, o que prova que se não se aprende apenas pela teoria e, sim, pela experiência, pois na prática social de uso da linguagem se aprende a interpretar interpretando.⁸

The third nucleus of meaning, *Continued education*, or education throughout the profession, refers to the need for professionals, after concluding their higher education, to continue looking for knowledge and improving their professional practices: “*He should look for this education not only within universities, but also through practice, in an extension course in Libras, in the opportunity to translate in some institution, whether philanthropic or professional, so he can develop his work.*” (P8); “*Education could help by making more experiences of translation and interpretation possible for different audiences, not thinking that the interpreter is going to work only in the academic context, of conferences and such.*” (P2); “*The job market is very wide both in the area of health and the arts, and if they are prepared to act in the job market, I don’t know if this specific education is focused on this wide market.*” (P4).

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During the undergraduate course to become a TILSP, students learn and receive content in a generic way over varied contexts of professional practice, spanning as many contexts as possible for four years of study. But, when this professional enters the job market, he is faced with a much wider range of diversity of demands, and this requires specific knowledge from the professional that is practically impossible to be acquired only at the undergraduate course. Therefore, it is essential that these TILSPs continue to seek knowledge, courses, seminars, events in the area, in order to always be in search of improvement (Lacerda et al., 2016).

The fourth and final nucleus of meaning is *Difficulties inherent to the profession*. Answers were diverse, showing the dynamism of professional education, because every human being has a different experience from his colleagues. A recurring fact in the daily life of the profession is the lack of knowledge in relation to professional TILSP. The profession of spoken language translators and interpreters is more consolidated in the market, however, sign

language interpreters are still taking slow steps to be recognized as professionals, in an attempt to break the barrier and the myth that what they do, should be done as assistentialism.

Many times, it can be noted that they are not always treated with professionalism by the people involved: *“Sometimes the lack of anticipated material, sometimes the unfamiliarity with the area, the people who hire us because of accessibility, but don’t know how to contextualize us in the environment, and that’s a problem, and many times this hinders the interpretation because of positioning, lights, cameras, and other things. Actually, you’re being hired because of accessibility, to fill this gap, but you’re still inaccessible.”* (P1); *“The greatest difficulty we face is not receiving material. Sometimes we have no anticipated contact with the material that is going to be shown.”* (P7); *“When the teachers don’t make the material available, you have no previous knowledge about what is going to happen during classes . . .”* (P5); *“The role of the interpreter is still quite unknown by other people, so, frequently, we always, always have things to clarify.”* (P2).

As reported, in the view of the people interviewed, the lack of receiving the support material in advance can hinder the professional performance of the translator and interpreter, affecting the result of the work delivered. Another variable is related to the diversity of areas of activity since, considering that, currently, higher education courses are generic, when a student reaches the job market and is faced with the real diversity in the contexts of performance, it may happen that professional does not have sufficient preparation to deal with such a situation.

From the questions presented, it can be noticed that the adversities are most distinct, and the professional, when faced with these situations, must be prepared to face or circumvent them in the best possible way, as the knowledge of the language needs be added to other types of knowledge for a good translation and/or interpretation to be achieved. Considering that the demand for these professionals has increased significantly, TILSP must always seek to improve their professional performance (Debona et al., 2016).

Final Considerations

This study aims to analyze the view of TILSP professionals working at the Federal University of Goiás (UFG) about their education and training in the area.

The view of these professionals is that, taken alone, neither the practical training acquired through experience, nor academic training, are enough to prepare graduates to face

the job market, where professionals are faced with all kinds of adversity, such as, among others, emerging and diverse contexts, not receiving material in advance to study, the contractor's lack of knowledge about the nuances of the profession, and so on. That said, from the point of view of the people interviewed, it is inferred that only the alignment and union of the two educations – the practical experiences can happen during graduation through the internship disciplines – can bring surprising results, in which theory and practice complement each other, preparing TILSP for the adversities they will encounter in their professional practice and for decision-making.

According to the research results, it is observed that the practice of both language – namely, Portuguese and Libras – is paramount for the education and training of the professional, without excluding the theoretical knowledge. The closest thing to ideal would be an academic education balanced between theory and practice, leading to praxis.

It is essential that a theoretical training be constructed in combination with practice. As for the professionals interviewed, most of them have no specific training at the undergraduate level in translation and interpretation of Libras, however, all of them have some complementary training in the area, which demonstrates the concern and the growing search for qualification. Complementary training can actively collaborate for the evolution of the professional, because through it, one can find qualification in several spheres or even become specialized in some specific context in which the professional wishes to develop.

Continued education is a way for TILSP to keep studying and updating himself throughout the profession, as there is always something to be learned and evolved. In the areas that involve the study of languages, it is essential for the professional to avoid being intellectually stagnant.

The importance of higher education training is emphasized but, as pointed out by Rodrigues (2018), it must be highlighted that, although the training is generalist, it is necessary to rethink the existing higher education courses so that they do not become solely theoretical study courses in translation and interpretation. It is necessary to think about the didactics of translation and interpretation of Libras-Portuguese so that the TILSP in training can experience the contexts of performance in a structured and practical way, because, when entering the job market, theoretical knowledge is not enough. Translating and interpreting are tasks that require numerous choices, and it is believed that, when a TILSP in training can experience the contexts in a structured way, that is, in undergraduate courses, it is possible that possible for common

mistakes in the career to be mitigated.

We hope that this paper can contribute to the education and training courses for sign language translators and interpreters, collaborating with research in the area and guiding the future educators of these professionals. We emphasize that one of the limitations of this research is its focus on the professionals working at the UFG, which represent the view of a single higher learning institution in Brazil. In order to have a better idea of the view of the professionals in the area, we suggest the expansion of this study to other professionals of the area.

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¹ Artigo traduzido para o inglês por Paulo Manes / Faculdade de Letras / Universidade Federal de Goiás.

² ON THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF THE TRANSLATOR AND INTERPRETER OF LIBRAS-PORTUGUESE: Art. 17. The education and training of the translator and interpreter of Libras-Portuguese must be made effective through a higher education course in Translation and Interpretation, with a qualification in Libras – Portuguese Language. (BRASIL, 2005)

³ In 2020, the World Health Organization declared a World Pandemic State due to the spread of the coronavirus. This fact influenced the routine of the entire world population, who needed to stay at home, working remotely. During this period, there was a great advance in the inclusion of deaf people who needed information, and Libras translators and interpreters started to use new technologies to work, in addition to working in new contexts, such as online musical presentations, news programs, interviews on social networks on various topics. and to participate remotely in activities, such as teaching and examination boards, among others.

⁴ “If we think about the profession as a hand-painted picture, which oscillates between perfection and mistakes, as if it lacks ‘firmness’ in their education, we will understand that empiricism is not only framing this process, but also weaving this entire work, once the background, the canvas of the oeuvre, is already ‘handmade’”.

⁵ Lei 12.319, which regulates the profession of Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) Translator and Interpreter is from 2010 (BRASIL, 2010).

⁶ *Children of Deaf Adults*.

⁷ “Thus, the syllabus, the didactic, and the teaching should conduct the TILS apprentice to prepare himself to face the game of enunciations, both from Portuguese to Libras and from Libras to Portuguese. In such fashion, practice and theory are indissociable. From practice, it is understood what has already been constructed as theory in the field, and theory can only be sustained when based in a practice of translation or interpretation”.

⁸ “In order to teach its use in the processes of translation and interpretation, language must be lived, experienced in its process of transformation from one language into another, of its articulation with other languages, which proves that one cannot learn only through theory, but also through experience, because in the social practice of using language, one learns to interpret by interpreting”.