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RESEARCH IN TRANSLATOR EDUCATION: ACTION RESEARCH IN SPECIFIC PEDAGOGICAL CONTEXTS

À PESQUISA NA FORMAÇÃO DE TRADUTORES: PESQUISA-AÇÃO EM CONTEXTOS PEDAGÓGICOS ESPECÍFICOS



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Abstract: Lack of research tradition in the process of translation learning and teaching has been recently pointed out by Echeverri (2018), who called attention to the closed doors of the translation classroom, to which he has referred as "the last frontier to be overcome". According to the author, this kind of investigation would allow researchers, interested in translation pedagogy and didactics, to move beyond reports of didactic experiences which, albeit relevant for information gathering related to pedagogical issues generated in the translation classroom, do not result from theory informed research and do not reflect the complexities of the theoretical and pedagogical aspects in translation education. Aiming to contribute to research advances in this area, this article presents the design and the results of three doctoral studies carried out in the translation classroom in three different pedagogical contexts. These investigations share some common grounds, namely: the researchers carried out investigation building on their teaching practice in translation classrooms; the teaching materials were designed in accordance with the theoretical framework (research action; competence-based education; translation didactics; active methodologies; translation task); data analysis was carried out in a similar fashion, with two of the studies being based on Content Analysis (CA) procedures. The results obtained, despite the specificities of the different pedagogical situations, point to common denominators, such as: (i) issues derived from classroom practice and examined in the light of well defined theoretical and methodological frameworks may offer a broader and a more accurate understanding of the process involved in translation learning and teaching; (ii) action research in the translation classroom may contribute to teacher empowerment, as a result of his/her engagement in curricular planning (syllabus design), as well as his/her professional development and growth, derived from reflective educational practice; (iii) action research in the translation classroom may not only improve the process of translation learning and teaching, but also, influenced by the cyclic nature of action research, contribute to the

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unfolding of further research in terms of new observation, new data gathering and interpretation, and new searches for theory-oriented evidence.

Keywords: translation didactics; classroom research; teaching/learning of translation; teaching materials.

Resumo: A ausência de tradição de pesquisa sobre a construção do processo de ensino-aprendizagem de tradução foi apontada recentemente por Echeverri (2018), que chamou a atenção para as portas fechadas da sala de aula, a que ele se referiu como "última fronteira a ser superada". Segundo o autor, esse tipo de investigação permitiria aos pesquisadores interessados em pedagogia e didática da tradução avançar a formação de tradutores, para além de relatos de experiência didática, que, embora relevantes para o levantamento de questões oriundas da sala de aula de tradução, não resultam de pesquisa informada teoricamente e não refletem a complexidade das questões teórico-pedagógicas do ensino-aprendizagem de tradução. Nesse cenário, e buscando contribuir para o avanço das pesquisas nessa área, este artigo apresenta a configuração e os resultados de três pesquisas de doutorado, realizadas na sala de aula de tradução, em três contextos pedagógicos específicos. Tais pesquisas compartilham aspectos em comum, a saber: os pesquisadores desenvolveram a pesquisa a partir de sua prática como professores em salas-de-aula de tradução; os materiais didáticos foram elaborados com base no mesmo quadro teórico composto (pesquisa-ação; formação por competências; didática de tradução; metodologias ativas; tarefas de tradução); a análise dos dados obtidos foi efetuada de modo similar, sendo duas delas apoiadas nos procedimentos da Análise de Conteúdo (Bardin, 2016). Os resultados, apesar da especificidade das situações pedagógicas, apontam para denominadores comuns, quais sejam: (i) as questões surgidas da prática de sala de aula e examinadas a partir de quadros teóricos e metodológicos bem definidos podem oferecer uma compreensão mais ampla do processo envolvido no ensino-aprendizagem de tradução; (ii) a pesquisa-ação em sala de aula de tradução pode contribuir para a formação do pesquisador-professor, como resultado de seu engajamento no planejamento curricular (elaboração de programas de ensino) e seu amadurecimento profissional decorrente de prática educacional reflexiva (Viana, 2007); (iii) a pesquisa em sala de aula de tradução pode não só gerar melhorias no processo de ensino-aprendizagem no contexto específico, como também, pelo caráter cíclico da pesquisa-ação, contribuir para o desdobramento de futuras pesquisas em termos de nova observação, nova coleta/interpretação de dados e novas buscas de evidências para a teorização. Palavras-chave: Didática de tradução. Ensino/aprendizagem de tradução. Pesquisa em sala de aula. Material didático.

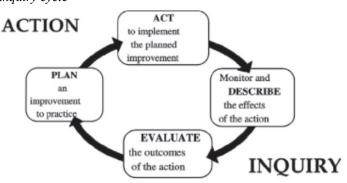
he research group entitled "Translation and Interpretation Pedagogy and Didactics" (PEDITRADI¹, in Portuguese) seeks to investigate aspects related to – as its name indicates – the pedagogy and didactics of translation and interpretation, with a view to producing and disseminating knowledge on the education of translators and interpreters. Projects carried out in this context fall within a constructivist-oriented learning approach, in line with a Competence-Based Teaching (CBT) pedagogy, having translation tasks and interpretation tasks as their main methodology. The following research topics are explored: translators and interpreters' professional profile; teaching proposals; teaching materials design; language teaching to translators and interpreters; learning assessment in a competence-based approach; educational action research.

Aiming to share a part of the research conducted within the scope of PEDITRADI, this paper presents the results of three doctoral studies, carried out by some participants of the group, in the context of action research. The impact of implementing teaching materials created in accordance with the adopted theoretical-methodological-pedagogical basis is explored. Thus, the point of intersection of the three studies corresponds to: (i) the concept of translation

(Hurtado Albir, 2011, p. 42), i.e., "translation as a textual operation, as a cognitive process, and as an act of communication²"; (ii) the concept of Translation Competence³ (Hurtado Albir, 2007, p. 169) as "an underlying system of declarative and, to a large extent, operative knowledge necessary to be able to translate"; (iii) the model put forward by Grup Procés d'Adquisició de la Competència Traductora i Avaluació (PACTE) for the acquisition of TC (Hurtado Albir, 2007, p. 172), as "a process of reconstructing and developing of TC subcompetences and psychophysiological components⁴"; (iv) Competence-Based Teaching (CBT) approach, which "proposes an integrated model of teaching, learning, and assessment that gives considerable importance to formative assessment" (Hurtado Albir, 2020, p. 377⁵); (v) the methodology used, that is, the translation task approach, which ensures "an active methodology in which students learn to translate by performing tasks that allow them to discover principles and strategies and to build the scaffolding for their TC⁶" (Hurtado Albir, 2015, back cover).

The teaching material designed in each of the three studies was implemented in accordance with the premises of action research, considering the cycle proposed by Tripp (2005, p. 444), illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1
The phases of an action inquiry cycle



Source: (Tripp, 2005⁷, p. 444).

As Figure 1 shows, research begins with the identification of a problem, followed by planning a solution, implementation of the improvement planned, monitoring, and finally evaluation and restructuring of the initial proposal. This cycle is present in the three studies reported herein.

"One particularly valuable way to carry out educational research is to have teachers themselves study what goes on in their own classroom." This statement by Kiraly (2000, p.

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195), made over 20 years ago, has not yet been contemplated in a continuous and systematized manner in research on translation teaching in Brazil; in research on foreign/second language teaching, though, this practice is not only acknowledged as historical, to which there is even a "script" to follow (Moita Lopes, 1996, p. 187). In Brazil, researchers concerned with translator education created a forum for discussing and sharing studies, named Seminário de Pedagogia e Didática de Tradução - SEDITRAD (Translation Teaching Seminar in English), organized by Universidade de Brasília (UnB), in the context of its graduate program in translation studies. Its 2016 edition (published in 2018, volume 5 of Coleção Estudos da Tradução⁸) had the participation of the Canadian scholar Alvaro Echeverri, from Université de Montreal, who highlighted the importance of research in the translation classroom. Concerning the establishment of a research culture on this basis, he adds that the classroom is the "last frontier" to be overcome with a view to conducting investigation that truly promote changes in our teaching practices and have a positive impact on the construction of knowledge on the part of translation students.

In accordance with the theoretical-pedagogical-methodological framework of this study and with the principles of an action research, this paper is structured as follows: after this introduction, the next Section presents some considerations on the part of the action researchers divided in three subsections: Action research in a translation classroom in an Executive Secretariat Program; Action research in a Translation Studies course; Action research in a French class in translator education. Following those three reports, we present our final considerations.

Action Research in Specific Pedagogical Situations

The pedagogical situations in which our translation classroom research was conducted present some specificities, including: the Higher Education Institution, program, and course in which the research was carried out; the role of translation in these specific contexts; the status and objectives of the teacher/researcher; the issues to be investigated; the learning outcomes of the course; the teaching material designed in accordance with the context; and finally the conditions for its implementation and for research. Each specificity is discussed in the subsections below.

It is important to highlight that the three studies presented herein were conducted in a blended teaching environment; thus, there was a combination of face-to-face classes with tasks designed to be done remotely with the support of technologies. The students' reports at the end of the teaching-learning process, especially their responses in the learning portfolios, suggest that blended learning was advantageous because it promoted autonomy, encouraging learners to study beyond the classroom. Additionally, apart from specificities of each study, the pedagogical situations in a hybrid environment provide researchers with a better understanding of the teaching context, including its complexities when implementing an active methodology and theory-informed teaching proposals.

Action Research in a Translation Classroom in an Executive Secretariat Program

The Undergraduate Program in Executive Secretariat belongs to a field of studies named by Nonato Junior (2008) as 'Ciências da Assessoria' (Assistance Sciences, in English), in which translation is part of the competences required for Secretariat professionals to perform the so-called 'intellectual assistance' to the CEO for whom they work. Thus, training future Executive Secretaries (henceforth, ES) as translators is necessary, considering this professional profile and the requirements of this job market they aimed to be part of. In view of the complexity and variety of the competences involved in professional translator education (PACTE, 2003), it is important to highlight that the Program is not designed for professional translators, but to teach future ES professionals to translate.

In the case of this research, which resulted in Gysel's (2017) doctoral dissertation, the future English-Portuguese ES translators were students in the Curso de Secretariado Executivo (Executive Secretariat Undergraduate Program) of Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), Brazil in 2016. This program has two courses to develop students' TCs, one of which being introductory and the other being more specialized. The latter, used for this study, was conducted at a Computer Laboratory in a blended format (Coaten, 2003; Bersin, 2004; Galán-Mañas, 2011), that is, face-to-face classes complemented with tasks performed remotely with the support of technologies. Our students carried out translation and research tasks and obtained general course information through our Moodle platform (*Modular Object-Oriented Digital Learning Environment*).

This proposal focused on design, implementation, and validation of a syllabus, teaching materials, and assessment⁹ for the more specialized translation course, following a cognitive-constructivist theoretical framework (Kelly, 2005; Hurtado Albir, 2015), a translation task approach (Hurtado Albir, 1999; Gonzáles Davis, 2004; Wills,1976), and recent teaching-learning theories (Ausubel, 2000; Ronca, 1994; Li, 2013). To this end, the following research objectives were established: (i) to build a theoretical and methodological framework for

specialized translation teaching in a local context; (ii) to elaborate a pedagogical proposal of Teaching Units (henceforth, TUs) for a competence-based specialized translation teaching; (iii) to implement such pedagogical proposal in a translation course of an Executive Secretariat Undergraduate Program; and (iv) to reflect upon the proposal on the basis of data gathered in the course of its implementation, by means of triangulation: students' reports and their answers to a final questionnaire; results obtained from different assessment tools and tasks; and finally, field observations.

This study presents a specific pedagogical situation focusing on its participants, that is, students and the action teacher/researcher, and discusses data gathered from these participants. Initially, it is important to highlight the action researcher's trajectory, which occurred in three ways simultaneously: as a translator, as a researcher, and as an intern teacher in the course during the implementation of the proposal. As a translator, Gysel (2017) began her career without a formal education in this area, but (as many translators in the market) performed translations solely based on her knowledge of the English and German languages and on life experiences she had had in countries where such languages are spoken. Her translation skills during that time were built through 'trial and error', always working as a freelancer on translation of specialized and technical texts, but not on literary ones. As time passed, she pursued a more specific training that could provide her with further knowledge on translation strategies, on translation technologies, on diverse thematic areas, and on translation theories. Thus, she enrolled at UFSC Undergraduate Program in the English Language, in 2006, and since then she has felt that the formal knowledge acquired has not only boosted her performance as a translator, but also empowered her as a professional. As a researcher/author of this study, she combined the knowledge thus acquired with the expertise developed during her MA Program in Translation Studies in the same institution, where she conducted research on Systemic Functional Linguistics, more specifically on Context-based Text Typology (Gysel, 2013). Following this period, she developed activities as an intern teacher and as a PhD student, fulfilling a requirement made by the graduate program.

Regarding the students who participated in this study, they were enrolled in the Foreign Language and Literature Department LLE 5166 course at UFSC Curso de Secretariado Executivo (Executive Secretariat Undergraduate Program), attending the 7th semester of the Program (which has eight semesters). As officially required by the Research Ethics Committee, the students signed an Informed Consent, according to Brazilian regulations¹⁰. The course had 18 students, among whom 12 agreed to participate by signing the Informed Consent. Data

gathered through a diagnostic questionnaire showed that most of the students were already ESs and were pursuing a specific formal education for translators to improve their professional profile. This might be one of the reasons underlying students' high degree of motivation.

Concerning the proposal designed, it consisted primarily of a syllabus containing general and specific objectives: the former made explicit the general the results that the specific teaching process should achieve; the latter considered what a student should be able to accomplish at the end of the course in terms of competence acquisition and learning outcomes. The teaching materials consisted of TUs inspired by Hurtado Albir (1999) and Anabel Galán-Mañas (2009) in terms of structure and by Hurtado Albir (2007) in terms of sequencing. This means that each TU begins with learning activities based on the students' previous knowledge. Therefore, such activities explore a more familiar field and progress to integration tasks, which aim to activate and develop various components of a competence. Each TU ends with a reflection and integrating task which, besides activating and developing the components of a competence, relates it to other transversal competences and mobilizes declarative and procedural knowledge.

Data gathered with the participants (students and the action teacher/researcher as an insider) consisted of students' responses to questionnaires and the action teacher/researcher's observations and reflections.

For this paper, TU3 was selected, which introduces the Text Typology model proposed by Matthiessen et al. (2007) and, in this specific context, aims primarily to develop future ES translators' bilingual competence. This typology brings a 'panoramic' view, that is, a view based on contextual parameters, focusing on Social Semiotics and not on text format. The choice for this specific typology lies in the fact that it is able to provide researchers with text collections that are more concrete and operative from the point of view of translation. Such a typology considers not only the function and some structural parameters of the text, but also the context of use and categories such as Field, Tenor, Mode along with conventional linguistic forms (Hurtado Albir, 2011, p. 488). This TU seeks to raise students' awareness as to the importance of the Context of Situation to which different texts belong. This objective was accomplished considering that students provided positive evidence of this new concept of text typology in their translation tasks, in their arguments and justifications when solving translation problems: students stated that the meaning of the source text is closely related to the context in which it was produced and, without this context, the translator lacks information and resources to perform a quality translation. In other words, a translation without a context is done under

generalized assumptions, being fundamentally literal, and may not correspond to the reality represented in the source text; in cases like these, translation may become vague and meaningless.

With regards to students' responses about the materials and their implementation, that is, the teaching and learning method, all of them considered the choice of texts adequate, authentic, up-to-date, and representing the corporate world. Several students stated that many of the texts were quite challenging, which contributed to developing translation strategies and procedures that had not necessarily been used before. This confirms what Schunk (2012) says about cognitive development: the author argues that constructivism has a great impact and useful implications on teaching and learning, as it encourages teachers to bring varied thoughts and challenges to their students. The proposal rests on Lasnier's (2000, p. 211) definition of TU as "a coherent compilation of integrating tasks and learning activities aiming at the integration of a set of competences and at the learning of course content that has similar characteristics" In this sense and concerning the teaching materials designed, it was quite successful as students found the TUs to be innovative, practical, clear, and objective, providing a productive and dynamic learning environment.

The students' reports and answers in the final questionnaire as well as the results of assessment tasks showed that: (i) the learning outcomes of each TU were achieved, as the students effectively acquired the competences proposed; (ii) the translation task approach provided an active methodology, through which students learned to translate by performing tasks that enabled the discovery of principles and strategies, additionally, the approach ensured the constructive alignment of learning outcomes with the competences to be developed, and the assessment tasks (Biggs & Tang, 2007); and (iii) the text typology model used contributed to the translation process as regards understanding and preparation of the texts to be translated according to text function in specific contexts – i.e., according to Social Semiotic Processes – and helped the student-translator to learn varied criteria when translating different text types.

Finally, students' own voices are presented below, to attest to the positive impacts of the proposal.¹²

Concerning the course in general:

This term was long and had many texts, which is positive, because we need to learn how to write. This course, specifically, made me enjoy translation and understand it better so that I can feel self-confident and have tools for future translations both in the job, and academic environments¹³.

Regarding the course content:

During the classes, I learned, in practice, the translation of different text types and relevant theoretical concepts, and the use of tools and ICTs. I liked the fact that, through the TUs, we could put all the concepts into practice¹⁴.

We got to expand our knowledge about strategies and translation tools, besides learning how to use them in each specific context. The role of a professional translator will surely be more appreciated and respected from now on 15.

In relation to the method used: "In general, the methodology was particularly good and made me pay attention and always participate in class, for being something interesting 16".

To these voices, the teacher/researcher's testimony is added:

Based on the need for curricular innovations pointed out by professors and researchers regarding translator education (Hurtado Albir, 2011; Li, 2013), more specifically on the education of ESs who translate (Melo, 2013; Cantarotti & Lourenço, 2012), we adopted a cognitive constructivist approach for this proposal, which focuses on the student's learning process, not only on the teacher. The translation task-based teaching is in accordance with this premise, promoting the development of students' TC, as well as their research and critical thinking abilities, aiming to self-regulate their learning; it also enables the teacher to prepare the students for a more confident and autonomous performance at work. However, innovation brings moments of adaptation. In this research specifically, our proposal demanded a detailed design of materials, as well as a good qualification and hard work on the part of the teacher/researcher. In the classroom, students were constantly challenged to participate actively in their own learning processes, which did not always please them, but, in the end, resulted in the positive acknowledgment of how much they had learned¹⁷.

The quote above shows the dynamic interactive process that took place between the teacher and students and the learning environment in which the teacher served as a guide and consultant, helping students evolve into professional secretaries able to translate as the needs arise in their working environment.

Action Research in a Translation Studies Course

In this section, a teaching proposal is discussed, which was presented and developed in Neckel's (2019) dissertation entitled 'Metalinguagem e autorregulação na formação de tradutores: uma proposta de disciplina e material didático sob a ótica da perspectiva cognitivo-construtivista de aprendizagem' (Metalanguage and self-regulation in translator training: a course and teaching material proposal from a cognitive constructivist perspective on learning). Due to the fact that the investigation was carried out within the paradigm of educational action research, some specific actions were taken to conduct this study.

According to the principles of action research, planning the material to be implemented is necessary, which includes specifying the pedagogical situation for which the proposal was planned. Thus, teaching materials were specifically designed for the course Translation Studies I, at the curso de Letras – Língua e Literatura estrangeiras (Foreign Language and Literature Undergraduate Program) at UFSC.

This course was part of the curriculum grid in effect until 2018. This curriculum entailed three mandatory courses related to Translation Studies. We chose Translation Studies I to implement the material proposed due to its higher course load (four classes per week) and because it is taught in the third semester, when the students supposedly have a more developed bilingual competence. In addition, its syllabus provided opportunities for more critical discussions on translation theories, when compared with the other courses of the grid, which focused on translation history, and on translation practice, respectively.

This was the second translation course attended by the students, which helped in the construction of knowledge in translation studies (particularly historical aspects of translation practices), fundamental for the design of this teaching material. Their previous knowledge was a starting point to expand a reflection on translation, developing students' critical thinking, particularly using Translation Studies metalanguage.

Due to the nature of the Program, some courses are part of a core curriculum offered to students of all languages taught at UFSC, which is the case of Translation Studies I. Thus, at the beginning of the semester, students' language pairs were identified by means of a questionnaire, revealing that German, Spanish, French, and English were the languages at stake. This information was essential for the design of tasks and the selection of the texts that would be translated by the students.

The teaching-learning environment in which the proposal was implemented is part of the specific pedagogical situation. Materials were designed having a blended learning context in view: synchronous activities (i.e., face-to-face) were more relevant than asynchronous ones, characterized by supporting tasks. In a manner similar to Gysel (2017), Neckel (2019) also used Moodle as a virtual teaching-learning environment. The material was designed and implemented throughout the first semester of 2017, being revisited both in 2018 and 2019. Improvement suggestions by students of the previous editions were incorporated and modifications demanded by new pedagogical situations were made.

According to Delisle (1993, p. 15), it would be "difficult, perhaps impossible, to have an articulated discourse about translation phenomena or even to effectively assess translations without an adequate terminology." In other words, when students understand the metalanguage used in Translation Studies, they develop the ability to reflect on and justify, in an articulated way, their translation choices, associating theoretical concepts with their translation practice. Moreover, the use of metalanguage directs the learner's mental operations, control their course, and channel them toward the solution of problems faced by such learners (Vygotski, 2018, p. 169).

Along this line, Neckel's (2019) study aimed to investigate the relation between a systematized teaching of metalanguage used in Translation Studies and the development of related metacognitive processes, especially the promotion of self-regulation (Wertsch, 1979, 1985), which means the translation learner's capacity to independently perform tasks aiming at their autonomy. To this end, a pedagogical proposal in Translation Studies I was designed and implemented.

Firstly, a process of awareness raising was needed to make students conscious of the adequate use of metalanguage, highlighting the need to justify their translation choices, as to better understand their own translation process; through the supporting material presented in the TUs, students were provided with the necessary metalanguage. Subsequently, students' critical thinking was developed to enable them to metacognitively reflect on, defend, and justify their translation choices.

Action research allows for "dynamically studying problems, decisions, actions, negotiations, conflicts, and awareness that occur amongst the agents during the situation transformation process²⁰" (Thiollent, 2011, p. 25). Both teacher/researcher and students are considered research agents or participants.

The teacher/researcher of this study holds a B.A. in Letras (Foreign Languages), with emphasis on translation, and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Translation Studies, at UFSC. In tune with action research premises, this study aims to reflect on the role of translation metalanguage in translation classes and to discuss how this knowledge could promote students' self-regulation.

Eighteen students participated in this research²¹. A diagnostic questionnaire to determine the students' profile was applied before the materials were designed. We initially thought that their considerable age differences (between 18 and 62) would cause some discrepancy among students, as blended learning would require basic knowledge in ICTs. Nevertheless, at the beginning, all students were found to have, at least to some extent, a certain degree of difficulty in adapting to this class format, a problem that was eventually overcome.

Experience in translation was also a relevant factor revealed by the questionnaire, which showed that all students similarly had no, or little experience. This information led us to elaborate a material aiming at this specific audience, i.e., translation beginners.

Two other factors considered in the materials design were students' working language pairs and their view of what was necessary to translate, that is, which competencies are required from a translator. Students' spontaneous concepts (Vygotski, 2018) about TC gave us inputs to reflect on the best ways to develop scientific concepts (Vygotski, 2018) related to translation and TC.

To promote students' self-regulation, learning outcomes were established for the course, in alignment with the competences the students were to develop at the end of their teaching-learning process. Table 1 shows such learning outcomes and specific competences.

 Table 1

 Learning outcomes and competences

Learning outcomes and competences	
LEARNING OUTCOMES	COMPETENCES
1. To understand 'Translation Studies' as a field of study and	'Knowledge about translation' subcompetence
to know some mapping proposals	
2. To understand translation as a textual, cognitive, and	'Bilingual' subcompetence; 'Extralinguistic'
communicative activity (integrating concept of translation)	subcompetence; 'Knowledge about translation'
	subcompetence; 'Strategic' subcompetence
	'Bilingual' subcompetence; 'Extralinguistic'
	subcompetence; 'Knowledge about translation'
	subcompetence; 'Strategic' subcompetence
3. To understand the concept of Translation Competence	'Bilingual' subcompetence; 'Knowledge about translation'
(TC) and its acquisition	subcompetence; 'Strategic' subcompetence
	Subcompetência 'conhecimento sobre tradução'
4. To mobilize knowledge about metalanguage acquired in	'Bilingual' subcompetence; 'Extralinguistic'
general translation practice, as a basis for critical thinking	subcompetence; 'Extralinguistic' subcompetence; 'Strategic'
and justification of translation choices	subcompetence

5. To mobilize knowledge about metalanguage acquired to improve translation self-regulatory behavior 'Knowledge about translation' subcompetence; 'Strategic' subcompetence

Source: adapted from Neckel, 2019, p. 101.

Only after establishing the learning outcomes was it possible to design the six TUs, as well as activities and assessment tools aligned to them²². Each TU had its own learning outcomes achieved through Translation Tasks, aiming to develop specific competences and promote self-regulation.

All TUs introduced a supporting material section to: (i) present new content; (ii) discuss theoretically the topics approached by the TU, and (iii) instruct the students on how to conduct the activities. In addition, the TUs were structured into different translation tasks, comprising learning²³ and integrating activities, which "activate one or more discipline-related competences" (Hurtado Albir, 2007, p. 180).

Data gathered while the materials were being implemented helped us to discuss the effectiveness of research action, as well as of the teaching proposal. Data concerning students' voices were gathered from the following sources: (i) initial/diagnostic questionnaire; (ii) final questionnaire; (iii) students' responses to the Final Tasks of each TU, to the self-assessment, and to the learning portfolio. Feedbacks provided by the teacher/researcher in each TU yielded data regarding the researcher's points of view.

Data were then analyzed from the perspective of Content Analysis (CA). CA suggests some steps for the analysis: (i) conducting a pre-analysis to select the documents; (ii) establishing analysis units to search for influences of the theoretical framework on the material analyzed; (iii) proposing categories of analysis to identify the participants' voices in the documents; (iv) making inferences to relate the participants' points of view with the theories on which this study is based (Bardin, 2016).

By means of a list of categories built in the first stage of the procedures of CA, a qualitative analysis of the information provided by the participants (students and the teacher/researcher) was carried out, with a view to making inferences regarding the classroom reality observed. CA also aided in the organization of the data gathered, given that there was a great amount of raw data to discuss.

The inferences made possible by CA can be summarized as follows: (i) those students who appropriately used translation metalanguage were also more autonomous when performing the tasks, which was observed in their TU final tasks and learning portfolios; (ii) by becoming familiar with scientific concepts, most learners, at the end of their teaching-

learning process, seemed to be more aware of their choices and to reflect more autonomously on their decision-making process. This relation was inferred based on the understanding that metalanguage is one of the instruments that help promote self-regulation, as it leads to students' awareness, allowing them to apply those concepts; in other words, scientific concepts are gates through which awareness enters the realm of concepts (Vygotski, 2018, p. 295). This could be observed in students' justifications for their translation choices and in their comments required in the final learning portfolio.

Considering the cycle of action research, an improvement of the pedagogical practice in this specific context was planned by investigating the relation between teaching Translation Studies metalanguage and promoting self-regulation. In implementing the teaching material proposed, the specific pedagogical situation (context and research participants) was carefully analyzed, the effects of the pedagogical action were monitored and described, inferences were made, which allowed for the assessment of the whole cycle.

The following statements, echoing the students' voices, allowed for the understanding of not only their perspective regarding the way the course was conducted, but also of the improvements that were necessary for further editions of the course.

Concerning the classroom dynamics:

This comment goes for congratulating both the professor and the doctoral student; I very much enjoyed the learning method, which aimed at interaction, presence and classroom participation. Assessment procedures were also very interesting; in fact, they represented the sum of daily efforts with assistance. The method contributed to turning the course into an interesting learning experience, making it possible to me to understand and to put theory into practice²⁴.

Both the professor and the doctoral student did their best to implement different and dynamic classroom methodologies, which was able to stimulate attention and interest on the part of the students²⁵.

Regarding the improvements suggested by the students, the main aspect referred to the availability of theoretical materials:

I believe a more theoretical base would improve the knowledge constructed, for example, the availability of texts by Hurtado Albir and PACTE. I do not believe this

theoretical base should be mandatory, but it could be interesting for students willing to broaden their knowledge²⁶.

The students' voices provided an opportunity to reflect on our teaching practice, continuing with or abandoning the methodological strategies explored when new versions of teaching materials were implemented in different pedagogical situations, with new students and in different years. This is one of the most relevant factors in classroom research, since it allows for questioning our pedagogical action, thus making both teachers and students more conscious of their roles in the teaching/learning process.

Action Research in a French Class in Translator Education

Gomes' (2019) research is conducted in the context of French teaching/learning in translator education, focusing particularly on the linguistic education of translation students. This study contributes to filling the "pedagogical gap" pointed out by Berenguer (1996), by proposing learning outcomes specific to the French language in response to the need for professional translators to use the language appropriately. This need is aligned with the general objective of translator education, the acquisition of TC, of which the bilingual subcompetence is a component. Such an alignment was based on a theoretical framework of Translation Studies, on Competence Based Training (CBT), and on Task Based Teaching methodology, which originated in foreign language teaching and was adapted to translation teaching, thus creating a point of intersection between Translation Studies (TS) and Foreign Language Teaching (FLT).

Based on a literature review on foreign language (FL) learning outcomes in translator education (Berenguer, 1999; Brehm Cripps & Hurtado Albir, 1999; Andreu et al., 2002), a proposal was made focusing on reading comprehension, since it is considered the most important ability to be developed in the literature in the area.

In this context, the following learning outcomes were put forward: (i) to understand written texts of varied typologies about general topics in French (textual competence developed in TU4); (ii) to raise language awareness by contrasting French and Portuguese (linguistic and contrastive competences developed in TUs 2 and 3); (iii) to improve and mobilize encyclopedic and thematic knowledge related to French speakers (extralinguistic competence developed in TU4); and (iv) to learn how to use documentary sources adequate to reading comprehension in French (instrumental competence developed in TUs 3 and 4).

In addition to the theoretical-methodological orientation, the research aimed to include a pedagogical orientation by proposing and implementing teaching materials²⁷. Regarding its design, the material comprised five TUs aligned with the learning outcomes aforementioned, and with a specific competence in translator education (Hurtado Albir, 2008). Regarding assessment, each TU had a self-assessment activity at the end, and TU5 was entirely dedicated to a final self-assessment. Most tasks in the teaching material were connected to translation. The initial tasks were simple and familiar to the students, and gradually turned into more complex tasks until the final integration task presented at the end of each TU. Regarding its implementation, the material was used in an extra-curricular course proposed to the students at Curso de Bacharelado em Tradução (Translation Undergraduate Program), at Universidade Federal da Paraíba (UFPB). The course, entitled "Workshop of Level B1 French Applied to Translation," had a course load of 60 hours and was developed according to a public notice - Edital FLUEX - published by Pró Reitoria de Extensão e Assuntos Comunitários (PRAC).

Weekly three-hour classes took place from September to December of 2018, at a computer laboratory belonging to the Curso de Bacharelado em Tradução. A total of five students (two females and three males), from 18 to 23, participated in this study; they had English as their first foreign language and French as their second foreign language. Their French language level was A2, except for one student, whose level was A1. The action teacher/researcher is a French teacher at the Departamento de Letras Estrangeiras Modernas (department of modern languages) - (UFPB). She holds an M.A. degree in Pedagogy of Languages and Cultures from Université Paris III, France, and has conducted research in language teaching methods, teaching materials for French teaching, and task-based methods.

This action research followed Narcy-Combes' (2005) proposal, including: (i) institutional support; (ii) preparation, organization, follow-up (field notes); (iii) possibility of implementation and validation; (iv) availability of short-term course; (v) ethics; (vi) publication of results. Before the beginning of the course, students signed the document of informed consent (TCLE) and answered a diagnostic questionnaire aiming at gathering information on their profile, French language level, skills in other languages, forms of contact with French (such as radio, website, movies, music, literature etc.). Subsequently, the teacher/researcher applied an on-line language test, Dialang, to confirm the French level that the students had informed in the questionnaires.

Data concerning the students' voices were gathered by means of the following tools: (i) a journal ('cahier de commentaire'), in which students, at the end of each TU, made general

comments on the TU and on the tasks proposed; (ii) diagnostic assessment; (iii) student self-assessment at the end of each TU; and (iv) course assessment at the end of the workshop, in TU5. Data concerning the teacher/researcher's voice were gathered through six reflective journals and field notes.

Content Analysis (Bardin, 2016) was used to analyze these data. The method suggests four stages of inferences and interpretations: a pre-analysis, a category analysis (exploring the data), an inferential analysis, and interpretation of the results. CA in this case, focused on learners' feedback regarding the teaching material and the proposal of learning outcomes specific to the teaching context. We firstly carried out a pre-analysis, which comprised revisiting the raw data gathered and selecting the documents for the analysis per se. Subsequently, we defined the following goals for the corpus analysis: (i) making inferences about students' conscious perceptions concerning differences/similarities between the language pairs at stake; (ii) making inferences about students' reading comprehension skills; (iii) making inferences about students' perceptions on the teaching material and on its implementation; and (iv) making inferences about students' perceptions on the specificity of the teaching proposal. Following the CA procedures, after analysis and organization of the data into "categories", the raw data acquire significance as though "speaking to you", triggering inferences. We analyzed 127 statements in the "contrast," "reading comprehension," and "teaching material" categories. Therefore, establishing a dialogue between the student's statements and the research objectives, inferential analysis resulted in four issues to be discussed.

The first discussion refers to the relevance of a contrastive approach in a foreign language teaching material for translators. Students' responses in the category "contrast" bring to the foreground an aspect already highlighted by some authors (Berenguer, 1999; Brehm Cripps & Hurtado Albir, 1999) about the importance of developing linguistic and contrastive competences in the languages at stake. Tasks that contrasted the language pair were positively perceived by the students, as these tasks, in their view, were more useful and directly connected with translation. Some students mentioned the impression of "saving time" when this contrastive look is developed from the early stages of their foreign language studies.

Words such as "impact", "essential" or "relevant" permeated student's testimonies related to TU3, which proposed tasks concerning contrastiveness. the following statements illustrate this point:

I learned a lot of polysemic words, acronyms and idiomatic expressions which I did not know, which are essential to translating²⁸.

- (...) this one [TU3] had a stronger impact, particularly in cases such as "false friends", expressions, acronyms, abbreviations and even words bearing more than one meaning, the so called polysemic words²⁹.
- (...) in addition, of course, the false friends, which to beginners may be "a tricky business". The introduction of the acronyms and the expressions are also <u>considered</u> relevant, since they are issues that always come up in discussions in translation³⁰.

The results of data analysis results in the category "contrast" suggest the importance of emphasizing contrastiveness in FL classes for translator education. In fact, a contrastive approach between the language pair in contact would favor a 'conscious' perception of differences and similarities between the languages – in this case, French and Portuguese – from early stages; this would, therefore, promote what Berenguer (1996, p. 10) calls "reading with a translator's eyes"³¹.

The second discussion refers to the development of a translation-oriented reading comprehension practice. Students' responses in the "reading comprehension" category confirm what other authors had pointed out (Berenguer, 1996; Brehm Cripps & Hurtado Albir, 1999) about the importance of an FL teaching that focuses on the development of reading comprehension, the skill that translators use the most in a direct translation. Seventeen out of 47 statements mentioned the issue of translation-oriented strategies, of which reading strategies were highlighted as central to their awareness raising process, influencing their "translation choices" (Part.1 As6-ADUD5).³²

(...) I find it important to know how to extract information which are implicit in the text, such as who wrote it, when, and to whom, crucial aspects when translating, and which, surely will have an impact on the translation choices made³³.

We began to identify the different textual genres and we also learned about grammar (...). Grammatical aspects were taught, through various examples and activities, which helps in reading comprehension (...). All of this is important in translation because it influences the way we would carry out the translation³⁴.

Students' assertions indicated a major ability to identify significant aspects for text interpretation that would ease the translation process.

The third discussion refers to the specificity of the teaching material. Students' responses regarding the "teaching material" category showed their view on the benefits of an FL material, in this case French, specific to translation students, with a contrastive approach. An emphasis on reading comprehension skills and a proposal of translation-based tasks would also contribute to promote the so-called "reading with translator's eyes" mentioned above, since the early stages of FL studies (Berenguer, 1996, p. 10).

The fourth discussion refers to the proposal of FL learning outcomes specific to translator education. Data interpretation and inferences showed the importance of an alignment between the outcomes of FL learning and the outcomes of the Curso de Bacharelado em Tradução (Translation Undergraduate Program) at the UFPB, as proposed in the teaching material. This evidence echoes in the students voices below:

I think [learning outcomes] are essential, as the focus of teaching and learning [of foreign languages] in translation courses are different from other language courses. The competencies and abilities translators should develop are specific and are not always addressed in regular French courses³⁵.

I find [the definition of learning outcomes] very important, and I could see a clear and direct application to translation; [such a definition is] missing in our programs, in which the language courses are taught in a very general fashion, without considering certain peculiarities and contrasts between the two languages (...). I have already studied French in regular courses³⁶, and I can see methodological differences between the teaching of French in such courses, where learning outcomes are different³⁷.

The results obtained in Gomes (2019) and illustrated in the quotes above show a pedagogical gap to be filled in the Curso de Bacharelado em Tradução (Translation Undergraduate Program) at UFPB, concerning the teaching of FL: the learning outcomes in this context should, after all, be aligned with the general objective of the program, that is, the acquisition of the Translation Competence.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the experience with action research in this study proved to be adequate for the investigation at stake. More importantly, it promoted the development of a dual empowerment: the first concerns knowledge production as regards the

French language teaching-learning process in this specific context, that is, translator education; the second concerns knowledge production as regards the classroom environment *per se*, as it contributes to knowledge production concerning the teacher/researcher own teaching practice and the improvements made possible in the real environment where it took place, "the last frontier to be overcome" in research into pedagogy and didactics of translation.

The three instances of action research reported in this paper aimed to share translation teaching-learning proposals put forward in the context of the constructivist approach to learning, in the competence-based teaching (CBT) perspective. To this end, the article presented the design, implementation and results of three doctoral studies carried out in the translation classroom in three different pedagogical contexts. These studies have some characteristics in common, namely: (i) the researchers carried out investigation building on their own teaching practice in translation classrooms; (ii) teaching materials were designed in accordance with the same theoretical framework (educational research action; competence-based training (CBT); translation didactics; active methodologies; translation task); (iii) the pedagogical approach was tailored to the three specific teaching situations in a similar fashion; (iv) a hybrid environment (a combination of face-to-face classes with tasks conducted remotely with the support of technologies) was explored, which provided the teacher/researcher with a more comprehensive knowledge of their classroom situations; (v) data analysis was carried out by means of similar procedures.

From the perspective of the teacher/researcher, three reflections merit attention: (i) the experience with action research promoted a sense of empowerment on the part of the teacher/researcher, who, as an insider, was able to identify room for improvement and conduct investigation in his/her own teaching practice; (ii) the results obtained showed a positive impact of the cognitive-constructivist approach to competence-based translator education, and of a translation task-based teaching and learning; (iii) the results also suggested that the students were able to develop internal resources and competences to translate and critical awareness as to their own learning as a consequence of the teaching-learning environment provided.

The authors worked together in dialogue as members of a teaching/learning community, which believes that educational research is to be carried out by teachers themselves who identify room for improvement in their own pedagogical practices. As Kiraly (2000, p. 195) points out,

Classroom research is *not* something teachers *do alone*, with students serving as their guinea pigs. Instead, it is *collaborative action* carried out by teachers and students working together. By having *students join us in research* to *investigate learning and teaching processes*, we can instil in them the understanding that they have a stake in designing their own learning environment; thus, we can *encourage* them to develop a *sense of responsibility for their own learning* and actions that will surely stand them in good stead as they *develop expertise and autonomy* as language mediation professionals. (italics added).

The segments italicized in quotation above represent what we understand by the role of teachers as researchers and articulate our ideas about educational action research: it is not something teachers do alone, but it is a collaborative action in which students join us in the investigation of learning and teaching processes. We also believe, in line with Kiraly, that by carrying out classroom research together with teachers, students surely become protagonists of their learning and are on the right path to autonomy as professional translators.

As a last word, in addition to sharing our studies, we aim to contribute to the establishment and consolidation of action research in Translation Studies, as is already common in other fields, such as foreign language teaching. Kiraly's (2000, p. 195) statement helps to conclude our reflections:

We need to start observing and effectuating change in our own classes (...). We need to identify room for improvement in our own teaching practices and to devise our own viable remedies for change that we can continuously observe and modify, as necessary.

This paper represents an invitation for colleagues to work together to promote a culture of educational research that goes beyond the 'last frontier' of investigation in translation teaching.

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¹ The acronym PEDITRAD stands for the research group Pedagogia e Didática de Tradução e Interpretação. Link: dgp.cnpq.br/dgp/espelhogrupo/4182369881392972. Researchers: Maria Lucia Vasconcellos (UFSC); Edelweiss Vitol Gysel (UFVJM); Filipe Mendes Neckel (Postdoctoral researcher, PGET/UFSC); Lavínia Teixeira Gomes (UFPb). Students UFSC: Crystoffer emilio Zanchet (BA); Emily Arcego (PhD); Fábio Júlio Pereira Bricks (PhD); Ringo Bez de Jesus (PhD); Tiago Coimbra Nogueira (PhD). Natália Roth da Silva Taxweiler (MA); Samuel de Oliveira Morais (MA).

² Our translation from: "tradução como operação textual, como processo cognitivo e como ato de comunicação."

³ Henceforth TC

- ⁴ Our translation from: "um processo de reconstrução e desenvolvimento das subcompetências da Competência Tradutória e dos componentes psico-fisiológicos."
- ⁵ Hurtado Albir's paper, firstly published in French in 2009, was translated in 2020 by Gomes e Dantas and published in *Cadernos de Tradução*, Florianópolis, v. 40, n. 1. We are citing a segment of this translation, found on page 377.
- ⁶ Our translation from: "una metodología activa en la que el estudiante aprende a traducir haciendo tareas que le permiten descubrir princípios y estratégias, y construir asi los andamiajes de su competencia traductora."

⁷https://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci arttext&pid=S1517-

- 97022005000300009&lng=en&nrm=iso&tlng=en
- ⁸ Translation Studies Collection.
- ⁹ Further information on the syllabus, teaching materials, and assessment of this research is available at: http://tede.ufsc.br/teses/PGET0360-T.pdf (in Portuguese).
- ¹⁰ Resolution n. 510, from April 7, 2016, by the Brazilian Research Ethics Committee, in Portuguese, Termo de Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido (TCLE).
- ¹¹ "Une compétence est un savoir-agir qui fait suite à l'intégration, à la mobilisation d'un ensemble de ressources (capacités, habilités et connaissances utilisées efficacement, dans des situations similaires."
- ¹² All statements were made in Portuguese and were translated into English for the purpose of this paper.
- ¹³ Este semestre foi longo e com muitos textos, o que é positivo, pois precisamos aprender a escrever. Esta disciplina em especial me fez gostar da tradução e entendê-la mais para que eu possa ter segurança e ferramentas para futuras traduções no âmbito de trabalho, ou até mesmo, no âmbito acadêmico.
- ¹⁴ Durante as aulas aprendi na prática a tradução de diferentes tipos textuais e conceitos teóricos relevantes e a utilização das ferramentas e TIC's. Gostei que, por meio das UDs, pudemos colocar em prática todos os conceitos que aprendemos.
- Nós pudemos ampliar nosso conhecimento sobre estratégias e ferramentas tradutórias, além de saber como utilizá-las em cada contexto específico. Com certeza o papel do profissional de Tradução será visto com muito mais apreço e respeito daqui em diante.
- ¹⁶ No geral, a didática e metodologia foram muito boas, e fizeram com que eu ficasse sempre prestando atenção e sempre participasse da aula, e por ser algo muito interessante.
- ¹⁷ Partindo da necessidade de inovações curriculares apontadas por professores e pesquisadores no que se refere à formação de tradutores (Hurtado Albir, 2011; LI, 2013), mais especificamente, na formação de SEs que traduzem (Melo, 2013; Cantarotti & Lourenço, 2012), foi adotada para essa proposta uma abordagem cognitivo-construtivista, a qual se concentra no processo de aprendizagem do aluno tirando o enfoque somente no professor. De maneira prática, o ensino por tarefas de tradução responde a essa premissa, possibilitando o desenvolvimento da CT dos alunos e de suas capacidades de pesquisa e reflexão para fins de autorregulação da aprendizagem por parte dos próprios alunos e, por parte da professora, prepará-los para uma atuação mais segura e autônoma no mercado de trabalho. Entretanto, toda inovação traz consigo momentos de adaptação. No caso específico dessa pesquisa, a proposta demandou uma elaboração minuciosa dos materiais, assim como um bom preparo como professora. Em sala de aula, os alunos foram constantemente desafiados a participarem ativamente de seu processo de aprendizado, fato que nem sempre lhes agradou, mas que, ao final da disciplina, resultou no reconhecimento positivo do quanto haviam aprendido durante o semestre.
- ¹⁸ Our translation of: "Difficile, voire impossible, de tenir un discours articulé sur les prénomènes de la traduction ou encore d'évaluer pertinemment des traductions sans disposer d'une terminologie adéquate."
- 19 http://s-f-walker.org.uk/pubsebooks/pdfs/Vygotsky Thought and Language.pdf
- ²⁰ "Estudar dinamicamente os problemas, decisões, ações, negociações, conflitos e tomadas de consciência que ocorrem entre os agentes durante o processo de transformação da situação"
- ²¹ There were 35 students enrolled in the course; however, only those who signed the Informed Consent were eligible to participate.
- Further information on the syllabus, materials and assessment is available at http://www.bu.ufsc.br/teses/PGET0437-T.pdf.
- ²³ Learning activities aim at "the development of an ability, skill or discipline-related content" (Hurtado Albir, 2007, p. 180).
- ²⁴ Esse comentário é só para parabenizar a professora e ao doutorando, gostei muito da didática de aprendizado que visou a interação, a presença e a participação em aula. A avaliação também foi muito interessante, na verdade foi a soma de trabalhos diários com acompanhamento. Tornou a matéria muito interessante, consegui entender e colocar em prática a teoria.
- ²⁵ Ambos se dedicaram muito e trouxeram um método diferente para a sala de aula, dinâmico, que conseguiu despertar a atenção e o interesse dos alunos.

²⁷ Further information on the syllabus, teaching materials and assessment is available at: http://www.bu.ufsc.br/teses/PGET0453-T.pdf.

²⁸ Aprendi muitas palavras polissêmicas, siglas e expressões idiomáticas que eu não conhecia, e estas são essenciais para a atividade de tradução. (Part.4 As7-AAUD3)

²⁹ [...] essa aqui [UD 3] impactou ainda mais, sendo específica em casos como os falsos amigos, expressões, siglas, abreviações e até palavras detentoras de mais de um sentido, as chamadas polissêmicas. (Part.2 As2-CAUD3)

³⁰ (...) acrescentando, claro, o fato dos falsos amigos, que para aprendizes iniciantes no idioma podem ser uma "casca de banana". As apresentações das siglas e das expressões também consideram relevantes, uma vez que são pontos sempre levantados nas discussões em tradução. 9 (Part.1 As3-CAUD3) ³¹ In the original "leer con ojos de traductor".

32 This code represents the location of the information in the corpus. It stands for Participant number (Part 1), Assertion number (As6), and the teaching unit (in Portuguese, UD) in which the assertion appears (ADUD5).

³³ [...] considero importante, saber extrair as informações implícitas do texto, como quem escreveu, quando e para quem, pontos estes indispensáveis na hora de traduzir e que, com certeza, influenciarão nas escolhas tradutórias tomadas. (Part.1 As6-ADUD5)

³⁴ Começamos a identificar os tipos de gêneros textuais, também tivemos conteúdo gramatical [...]. Os aspectos gramaticais foram ensinados com vários exemplos e atividades, o que ajuda na compreensão [...] tudo isso é importante na tradução, porque influencia o modo como nós realizaríamos a tradução. (Part.5 As3ADUD5)

³⁵ Acho que são essenciais [os objetivos], pois o foco de ensino e de aprendizagem nos cursos de tradução são outros dos demais cursos. As competências e habilidades que os tradutores devem desenvolver são pontuais e nem sempre estas necessidades seriam atendidas em um curso não específico de Língua Francesa. (Part.5 As14ADUD5)

³⁶ Letras and LEA

³⁷ Considero os pontos acima [objetivos] muito importantes, e percebi, de fato, uma aplicação direta com a questão da tradução, o que falta no nosso curso, em que as disciplinas de língua são dadas de forma muito geral, sem se atentar a certas peculiaridades e contrastes entre os dois idiomas (...). Eu também já havia estudado francês no curso de Letras e LEA, e percebo as diferenças metodológicas no ensino de francês nesses cursos, cujos objetivos na formação são diferentes. (Part.1 As14ADUD5)

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