


DOM CASMURRO AS A GRAPHIC NOVEL: A SOCIO-COGNITIVE ENHANCED TRANSLATION FOR TEACHING BRAZILIAN LITERATURE

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Resumo: As novelas gráficas têm uma forma diferente de transferir informações de uma literatura culturalmente enraizada para um estudante estrangeiro do que um livro tradicional de texto. A novela gráfica, um recurso educacional multimodal, permite a partilha de aspectos culturais que o leitor pode aprender quando são apresentados. Este artigo demonstrará a ligação inseparável entre a língua e o seu contexto cultural através de novelas gráficas, mostrando como estas modificam a percepção dos alunos. Utilizando métodos de tradução e teorias de aquisição de segunda língua, como a instrução de processamento de Van Patten (1996), é possível revelar as vantagens do uso de novelas gráficas. Além disso, esta pesquisa utiliza os métodos de Krashen (1985) para exemplificar como uma novela gráfica é uma versão modificada do texto original, que supera as diferenças de significado para o estudante estrangeiro. Também ilustra as vantagens de uma abordagem multimodal. Por fim, este artigo analisa exemplos de "Dom Casmurro" adaptado para uma novela gráfica e demonstra como as novelas gráficas aumentam o acesso dos alunos, ilustrando fatores de linguagem, temas literários e cultura.

Palavras-chave: Novelas Gráficas; Tradução; Aquisição de Segunda Língua; Recursos Educacionais Multimodais; Input Sociocognitivo; Dom Casmurro Em HQ.

Abstract: Graphic novels have a different way of transferring information from culturally entrenched literature to a foreign student than a traditional book of text. The graphic novel, a multimodal educational resource, enables the sharing of aspects of culture that the reader can learn when they are shown. This paper will demonstrate the inseparable connection between language and its cultural context through graphic novels while showing how graphic novels modify students' input. Using the methods of translation and second language acquisition theories such as and Van Patten's (1996) processing instruction one can reveal advantages of using graphic novels. Moreover, this research uses Krashen (1985) methods to exemplify how a graphic novel is a modified version of the original text which bridges the gap of different meanings for the foreign student. It also

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illustrates the advantages of a multimodal approach. Finally, this paper analyzes examples of Dom Casmurro adapted into a graphic novel and demonstrates how graphic novels increase access for students by illustrating factors of language, literary themes, and culture.

Keywords: Graphic Novels; Translation; Second Language Acquisition; Multimodal Educational Resources; Socio-Cognitive Input; Dom Casmurro in GN.

1. Introduction

As a teacher of Portuguese as a foreign language, one may find the gap between learning advanced grammar and interpreting literature meant for natives a big jump. Nevertheless, foreign language teachers understand the use of literature as an excellent way to push their students outside of their comfort zone and into situations which require critical thinking in their new language. Students of a foreign language sometimes lack the cultural experiences which enable them to see the finer details of literary devices in the works they read. The intertwining of culture and language is one reason that the jump from grammar books to literary works is so difficult for the student of a foreign language. Translators from one language to another often also cite cultural references as one of the more challenging parts of their duties of bringing meaning from one language to another. Assuming language is learned as suggested in VanPatten's input processing theory, one may recommend that we must include culture and the language as a single input (VanPatten 1996). Like Krashen, this paper argues that graphic novels, that is, sequential artistic narratives, provide a stepping-stone for advanced learners of foreign languages on their path to being able to successfully read literature authored for natives through techniques such as elaboration, simplification, and enhancement (Krashen 1985). Furthermore, it strives to make socio-cognitive connections to why illustrative enhancement is particularly advantageous for the teaching of literature in foreign language courses.

2. Literature Review

Syma and Weiner's book, "Graphic Novels and Comics in the Classroom: Essays on the Educational Power of Sequential Art," explores the benefits and challenges of incorporating graphic novels and comics into the classroom setting (Syma and Weiner 2013). The book is a collection of essays by various authors, each focusing on different aspects of using comics in education. The strongest argument made in the book is that graphic novels and comics serve as powerful tools for engaging reluctant readers (Syma and Weiner 2013). As the essay by Miller notes, "students who are disengaged or struggling with traditional texts may find graphic novels and comics a more appealing alternative" (Miller 2013, p. 38). This is because the combination of images and text can help make the material more accessible and easier to understand.

Another point discussed in the book is the idea that graphic novels and comics can be used to teach a wide variety of subjects beyond just English Language Arts. For example, as the essay by Duncan-Andrade and Morrell notes, "the use of comics in the classroom can serve as a tool to teach history, science, and social studies, and can also promote critical thinking and visual literacy" (Duncan-Andrade and Morrell 2013, p. 85). The study of literature in foreign language requires critical thinking. Comics that can promote critical thinking in the target language, Portuguese in this case, are tools that should not be wasted in the classroom. This paper will address how one may use a type of comics, graphic novels, as a tool for second language acquisition and taking the first steps of studying literature in that foreign language as a more advanced Portuguese Foreign Language (PFL) student.

Finally, the book highlights the importance of selecting appropriate graphic novels and comics for classroom use. As the essay by Carter notes, "teachers need to carefully consider the content and appropriateness of the graphic novels and comics they choose to use in the classroom" (Carter 2013, p. 116). This means selecting materials that are both age-appropriate and relevant to the curriculum. In the context of this work, it implies choosing the materials appropriate to introduce themes of a given genre of literature such as romance or selecting a specific type of vocabulary, such as military focused vocabulary for students in the Department of Defense (DoD).

Frey and Fisher's book, "Teaching Visual Literacy: Using Comic Books, Graphic Novels, Anime, Cartoons, and More to Develop Comprehension and Thinking Skills," explores the benefits and challenges of incorporating visual media, including comics and graphic novels, into the classroom setting. The book provides practical guidance for educators on how to effectively use visual media to develop students' comprehension and thinking skills. One of the strongest points made in the book is that visual media can be utilized to help students develop critical thinking skills (Frey and Fisher 2008). As the authors note, "comics and graphic novels offer unique opportunities for students to think critically about issues, such as point of view, symbolism, and metaphor" (Frey and Fisher 2008, p. 24). By analyzing the images and text in visual media, students can learn to recognize and interpret these literary elements. This paper will try to show that by interpreting literary elements in the target language in this manner, PFL students can begin to take their first steps towards comprehension of more challenging traditional literary texts from the Portuguese language.

Another argument in the book is that visual media can be used to engage students who may struggle with traditional text-based materials. As the authors note, "visual media can serve as an important bridge to literacy for struggling students, including those with learning disabilities, English language learners, and reluctant readers" (Frey and Fisher 2008, p. 7). By providing students with alternative ways to engage with the material, educators can help them to develop their literacy skills.

Equally as important, the book highlights the importance of providing students with guidance and support as they learn to interpret visual media. As the authors note, "just as with traditional texts, students need guidance in learning how to read and interpret visual media" (Frey and Fisher 2008, p. 78). This means providing students with strategies for analyzing and interpreting images, as well as providing them with opportunities to practice these skills. This is particularly true for their use in a foreign language.

3. The Advantages of Rewriting: Translation Through Adaptation into Graphic Novels

Translation studies often approach intralingual translations such as the adaptations of literature into graphic novels and other mediums. Therefore, research on graphic novel adaptation can take advantage of translation studies and what they offer. Translators work as agents and experts on the connection between two languages. As Anthony Burgess wrote, "translation is not a matter of words only: it is a matter of making intelligible a whole culture," which demonstrates the need to bring the culture with any material when it is passing cultural borders (Burgess 1965, p. 43). Contending that graphic novels adapted from literature is a translation, I argue that they can be more suitable to introducing the foreign reader. Translators often encounter untranslatable terms that belong on the margins of a given language, in which they often need an additional apparatus such as a footnote to provide detailed cultural context. This serves as strong evidence that culture cannot be differentiated from language when thinking of language as a single input for students to process. For example, cultural references, similes, and metaphors are deeply infused in language. In Brazilian Portuguese, the reference of a *fusca* may cause confusion for a foreign reader if it is understood solely as a car. Just like translators, the makers of graphic novels adapted from

canons of Brazilian literature modify the input that is given to their audience with additional apparatus. The makers of such works most notably accomplish this through illustration and footnotes.

In translation theory, the phenomenon of bringing the text closer to the target audience (TA) is domestication. Graphic novel versions of the traditional text counterparts are often domesticated for their native audiences. As a result, the complexities which may exist in the traditional text are either simplified into shorter dialogue like interactions or modified to be represented via illustration. For example, when analyzing *Dom Casmurro em Histórias em Quadrinhos (HQ)* recreated by Ivan Jaf and Rodrigo Rosa from a canon from Brazilian literature's Machado de Assis, it is difficult to miss that remediation is a recreation of a book of 77 pages that was originally 162 pages. Therefore, one can define the important text as that text that stays in the recreation versus that text that is eliminated. However, the introduction of the new sign of illustrations, or design with illustrations, shares a significant amount of information that comes from the original text which may have been eliminated. For example, the graphic novel has 132 words for the first chapter, and the first chapter of the traditional book has 334 words in the same chapter. Much of the content stays in the remediation of the comic, but the meat of the text is taken away while the script writer only leaves the bones of the original text. For example, the phrase,

Sucedeu, porém, que, como eu estava cansado, fechei os olhos três ou quatro vezes; tanto bastou para que ele interrompesse a leitura e metesse os versos no bolso (Machado de Assis 1899, p. 13), becomes, “*Eu estava cansado.*” (Jaf and Rosa 2012, p. 5).

Although the version remediated for comics takes advantage of the presence of images and the sequence of the story, it still loses quite a bit of information from the original text. However, what is written are the main events and themes of the story. Defining what are and are not the main events and themes of the story is troublesome because the remediation puts a lot of subjectivity in the recreation. In this way, the script writer and the artist decide what is important and what is not which introduces a limitation of such graphic novels in the teaching of Brazilian literature. For example, during a machine reading analysis of keywords by a corpus-based tool on sketchengine.eu, six of the top ten keywords were similar in a comparison of the parallel works of *Dom Casmurro*. However, students' excitement for graphic novels and perception of a simpler text of these texts will motivate foreign languages students to continue whereas the traditional text offers the opposite effects. The benefits of the modified text outweigh the limitations clearly due to the enjoyment the students gain when reading and comprehending.

For those who may argue that the text is still often complicated, one need not look further than the comparison of the two versions of *Dom Casmurro em HQ* versus the traditional *Dom Casmurro* by Machado de Assis. In the graphic novel version, the average sentence contains 7.23 words while the traditional text averages around 16.78 words. Le confirms that one of the most evident features of pre-modified text occurs by “removal of subordinate clauses to reduce sentence length and complexity” (Le 2011, p. 27). This data illustrates how the language is more direct and informing in the graphic novel in comparison to the traditional novel. Krashen demonstrates advantages and the natural appearance of such controlled input that this project aims to develop when he discusses how people naturally simplify speech to their children when teaching them how to speak or what he considers “teacher talk” or “foreigner talk” (Krashen 1985, 8). He also supports the idea of controlling input when he discusses how “all exposure does not necessarily entail comprehensible input” (Krashen 1985, p. 85). Beyond further justification, SLA studies will also offer practical approaches towards modifying the input as to promote student's intake.

Echauri discusses this phenomenon as omission and it is not limited to only text. For example, Echauri demonstrates how text elements are removed from the illustrations as well as

times in graphic novels, “Elisión: este procedimiento es contrario a la amplificación e implica la omisión de elementos presentes en el texto original” (Echauri 2020). Therefore, readers indeed encounter not only a different text from the original text, but also encounter truly different stories. The illustrations are not capable of capturing the entire story but are still capable of capturing the most important elements and even literary and cultural themes. For example, in *Dom Casmurro em HQ*, the apparatus at the end of the graphic novel illustrates how several literary themes are present in the work such as “a escravidão no context urbano, o estereótipo feminino de uma época, a modernidade dos valores burgueses, e o contraste com as antigas estruturas coloniais” (Jaf and Rosa 2012, p. 80). These themes in *Dom Casmurro em HQ* compel the teacher to believe that complex themes can be presented in graphic novels.

Le claims there are three basic ways to modify input which are pre-modified input along with interactionally modified input (Le 2011, p. 27). Graphic novels leverage pre-modified input techniques such as simplification, elaboration, and enhancement. (2011). Le defines simplification as “changes to the input so that there is less syntactical and lexical complexity while elaboration refers to changes in which unfamiliar linguistic items are paraphrased with redundancy and explicitness” (Le 2011, p. 27). Despite utilizing some of the SLA principles established in Le, the research also brings significant challenges to its application to graphic novels such as the expansion of sentence length that typically results from elaboration processes, presenting a challenge due to special limitations on page sizes (Le 2011). However, elaboration via graphic novels can transform once difficult to interpret text into complex illustrations that show the reader the concepts that they may not yet be able to comprehend such as indifference or sarcasm in the voice of a particular character. These often difficult to interpret subtleties can be rendered more directly to the reader through illustrations of the characters’ body language and posture.

Although graphic novels’ illustrations may be viewed as elaboration via illustration, they may also be interpreted as a different form of simplification. Le has coined the term enhancement for such modifications (Le 2011). Le demonstrates how illustrations and images can even be used to help a reader understand a simile where one describes a tornado as a funnel-like appearance with the image of a funnel beside the text to help them understand (Le 2011). In the context of graphic novels, for example, instead of the reader having to comprehend the term *camisa branca*, an illustration showing that could be used in its place to describe a character. This substitution via illustration is often even more comprehensible than a synonym that would be used in a graded reader. Therefore, one could argue that simplification occurs alongside elaboration enforcement of the text present in graphic novels via enhancement. In the analysis of two experiments conducted by Yano, Long and Ross, they demonstrated that the simplified versions of passages would lead to more comprehension in a follow up multiple-choice test. Additionally, the same study displayed findings that lead to the advantage of elaboration of semantic details for foreign language learners (Yano, Long, Ross 1994, p. 215). In graphic novels, enhancement most notably appears as illustrated reinforcement of the dialogue that is present on the same page. For example, an exchange between two characters and their speech bubbles or sequential framing may reinforce the grammar and the formality used between the characters illustrated in each scene by revealing social cues such as body posture, or even societal status. In *Dom Casmurro em HQ*, priests are often show in a condescending posture when talking with Bento as shown in Attachment A below.



Attachment A: *Dom Casmurro em HQ* (Jaf, Rosa, and Machado, 2012)

The use of simplification and elaboration side-by-side is also common among graded readers and they are often difficult to differentiate. For example, Le contends that simplification may be “repetitions of words and phrases” and “restriction of lexis to familiar items” while he also declares elaboration is “learning through paraphrases, synonyms and restatements” (Le 2011, p. 27). The research mentioned above demonstrates how both simplification, elaboration and enhancement are helpful techniques when attempting to find pre-modified input for foreign readers and how they are both present in the intralingual translation of a canon into a graphic novel.

Another limitation that graphic novels naturally face, as do many language learning resources, is what Ellis depicts as the inability to reciprocate discourse. Therefore, the graphic novel adapted from literature is still very much like that of a normal novel because of its delivery in the context of non-reciprocal discourse (Ellis 1994, p. 26). However, most language developing resources, outside that of an instructor or social interaction, will possess this limitation. Therefore, language instructors should not allow this to become a limiting force for the use of the resource. Additionally, language instruction and discussion should be used alongside resources such as graphic novels in the context of this paper. One may argue that despite the differences from the traditional novel, comics and graphic novels designed for native readers still share the limitation of often needing the presence of an instructor to fully understand. Therefore, comics and graphic novels should be used just as frequently as traditional novels. This leads to a critical factor in the use of graphic novels while teaching foreign language students’ literature which is the presence of a teacher while interpreting. Again, this is often parallel during the teaching of literature in traditional text as well, and consequently should not have any disadvantageous connotation.

As the teacher guides the interpretations of literature, one may return to the importance of the presence of bias in any translation. Schleiermacher demonstrates that a domesticated translation is one that involves “an ethnocentric translating in a transparent, fluent, ‘invisible’ style to minimize the foreignness of the traditional text” (Schleiermacher 1813/2012). Graphic novels can serve as a form of domesticated intralingual translation for foreign language learners and should be leveraged as a tool of instruction due to their ability to deliver meaning in a multimodal way. Since graphic novels may already be considered as a language themselves, one may argue that they are an effective intermediate language to connect the foreign language student to its new language’s literatures. This is similar to those who “baby talk” to their children while teaching them their first language, in that it is a natural phenomenon to bridge the gap between those with experience and those without.

Translation theories on form may also provide insight to the elaboration techniques that occur during the adaptation of a novel into a graphic novel and why these techniques may be helpful to the foreign reader. For example, the structure of *Dom Casmurro em HQ* offers details about underlying literary themes and an analysis on the novel itself at the end of the story. This structure presents the art in a way to aid in the teaching of Brazilian literature, thereby assisting the reader by directly emphasizing often difficult to recognize themes. Throughout the novel, there are often footnotes that also elucidate difficult to understand words and concepts from a different era. One limitation of this style of delivering the text is a lack of what translators consider dynamic equivalence, which Nida defines as “the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message (Nida 1964, p. 159). This challenge is unreachable in this paper’s context due to the foreign reader simply not being a native speaker. The only way that one may achieve dynamic equivalence would be to force the foreign reader to read the authentic novel which they often cannot understand. Therefore, the readability of the graphic novel lends itself to the foreign reader due to its multimodal delivery of meaning and simplified scripts.

4. Multimodality: Multiple Opportunities for Comprehension

Although translation studies prove that remediated or rewritten canons can be more helpful for foreign language students, it does not demonstrate why graphic novels are better than traditional graded readers. The language of graphic novels can communicate significantly better than someone who may not be intimately in contact with the culture of the language they read due to the illustration’s ability to show the reader detailed meaning. When discussing graphic novels, Kress may agree with the implication that graphic novels are a distinct language in the context of second language acquisition (SLA) due to the ability to show the reader that which they may not be able to interpret via traditional text (Kress 2010). Kress discusses this phenomenon in his research on native speakers such as secondary students explaining to their teacher a biological cell via illustration rather than traditional text on an exam (Kress 2010). Hence, Kress demonstrates that, even among speakers of the same language, some concepts are better explained through means of illustration than text (Kress 2010). Combined with some individuals favoring their visual learning capacity, this presents an advantage for the teaching of literature of a foreign language via graphic novels. In the example of *Dom Casmurro em HQ*, one such occurrence is a sequence of events shown in the division of frames within the same page. Due to this, the chronological storyboard of the narrative is simplified in a more concrete way. Like quotation marks for English texts, speech bubbles in the graphic novel version also help the reader distinguish between what is said in the narrative versus what may be otherwise present. In the traditional Brazilian Portuguese version of *Dom Casmurro*, as many texts in Brazilian Portuguese, the quotation marks are not always present. This can confuse readers not accustomed to this standard. Therefore, one may



Attachment C: *Dom Casmurro em HQ* (Jaf, Rosa, and Machado, 2012)

Other abstract concepts can also be rendered via illustration such as reflection and foreshadowing. For example, in *Dom Casmurro em HQ*, the protagonist, Bento, is often portrayed twice in the room. Once in full color to show the moment he is remembering as a young man, and the other as a ghost-like figure that demonstrates he is now a man remembering these occurrences. One such example occurs on page 28 of the work when Bento interacts with his mother. This play with the illustrations to show meaning in terms of time allows the reader another avenue of understanding time throughout the graphic novel and its direct relationship with the literature.

The often-shortened modified texts from graphic novels discussed earlier in this paper, combine with the illustrations in ways that also clarify grammatical rules for foreign readers. In her work, Felix explains how deixis, or expressions with meanings that depend greatly on the context of situations (for example the word: here, you...) is leveraged in graphic novels because the writers create scripts that depend on the context of the situation which is often provided by the illustrations (Felix 2012). Kress demonstrates how “in communication several modes are always used together,” and how emissors and receptors of a language encounter languages in the real world normally to communicate, the graphic novels obligate the readers to understand the situation and its context in a more realistic mode than a traditional book without images (Kress 2010, 28). For example, on page 12 of *Dom Casmurro em HQ*, the term *ai* is used in a way that reinforces the natural usage of the term, often confused by native English speakers, in its natural context when Bento asks Capitu about what she wrote on the wall. Instead of using the term for wall, the term *ai* is used which reveals how readers of graphic novels receive input confirmed with deictic weight such

as situations they encounter. This comprehension reinforcement ultimately leads to a more detailed understanding of the work which will lead to increased capacity to understand literary themes.

Additionally, Felix describes how deixis display the “imperfections of language” that require a greater understanding at the cultural level and the situational context where signs are being interpreted (Felix 2010). In a world that is full of meaning that easily allows the cultural influences in the signs to exist, the deixis in graphic novels can be taken advantage of to teach how the language interacts with its cultural context. Such imperfections can be shown from the script of *Dom Casmurro em HQ*, with the use of discourse markers such as those in the following example from page 68: “*Ab! Pois nem os defuntos escapam aos seus ciúmes!*” (Jaf and Rosa 2012, p. 68). This sentence illustrates how short and concise messages that fit in speech balloon can still carry the natural imperfections of language that carry great meaning such as the term *Ab* and *Pois*.

Speech balloons, among other specific graphic novel apparatus such as footnotes, also give graphic novels a strong sense of a text enhanced or elaborated. Graphic novels are multimodal educational resources. Jewitt describes how both images and changes to typography can affect the meaning that is delivered to a student in an English class (Jewitt 2005). Graphic novels, through the emphasis of their own languages such as speech bubbles, or thought bubbles, and sequential framing, can communicate meaning in a different codified way that may be more effective than the foreign language in a traditional text style for a non-native reader. For example, onomatopoeia is a literary device that is often enhanced by the illustration and typography in graphic novels. Furthermore, Jewitt discusses recent work in technological advances in literary adaptation when he reviews what Chaplin and Elkins call the permeable presence of images and text (Chaplin 1994 and Elkins 1999). The permeable nature delivers, Jewitt claims, “designed meaning” and not “decoration” (Jewitt 2005, p. 321). Jewitt’s multimodal research displays how graphic novels may reveal a permeable mode which mimics a more realistic modern world. The three-dimensional possibilities of meaning in both image and textual form gives students a chance to critically think in both realistic contextual settings and abstract symbolic settings.

Likewise, the same concept can reinforce grammatical understandings in the foreign language. The text from the script of *Dom Casmurro em HQ* also illustrates the complexity of Portuguese grammar with just a few words from the dialogue and confirms grammar such as subject verb agreement through the illustrations of characters. From the differences between *ser* and *estar* already present in the third balloon when Bento says, “*Não. Eu não sou seu pai!*”, the use of the past perfect with the irregular verb “*disse*”, the use of indirect object pronouns like “*lhe*”, and even, the use of the present conjunctive like “*vá*” (Jaf and Rosa 2012, p. 68). This provides enhanced material for the foreign language teacher to instruct their students on the structures in Portuguese. There are various levels of instruction that the students learn from on the same page, and for those who are already at the level to read such a book, it is good use of the saturation of information about Portuguese grammar that allows the reader to have an experience closer to immersion where they must decipher language with context.

Even difficult to understand metaphors can be elaborated via illustration in graphic novels. According to Pierce, metaphors “represent the representative character of a representamen by representing a parallelism in something else” (Pierce 1931/1558: 2777). Johansen and Larsen share that metaphors work by using two types of signals, the first has a representative character that is expressed by the second (Johansen and Larsen 2002). The interesting part about the study of metaphors or images in semiotic context is that metaphors demonstrate how complex and interconnected signs naturally exist. The interaction with human beings and signs rarely is isolated, as human beings normally are confronting various signs at the same time. Graphic novels, just like a film, make the reader encounter various signs like the script, images, among others at the same time. Therefore, graphic novels create an almost virtual perspective, like cinematography, that results in something more “semiotically” real than a traditional text. Although literature does not

function in this way, this difference in graphic novel semiotic fundamentals should be seen as an advantage. Further, graphic novels can be better than films for the foreign student because it freezes the language and allows the student to truly study the text and its interaction with its cultural context in a slower and more consumable fashion. One example of an illustration of metaphor such as in *Dom Casmurro em HQ* when Bento is shown swimming in a sea of waves, struggling, which represented him drowning in passion for Capitu as shown in Attachment D below.



Attachment D: *Dom Casmurro em HQ* (Jaf, Rosa, and Machado, 2012)

In the explanation of the text-illustration dynamic, Echauri discusses the meaning that can come from both text and illustration presentations, “Cuando esto ocurre a un nivel más significativo y uno de los dos elementos aporta información verdaderamente relevante y diferente al otro, nos encontramos ante un caso de *complementariedad*” (Echauri 2020). This complementary impact also accolades the text in a more natural way in terms of understanding the language in real contexts. For example, instead of using the subject directing via text, the reader is often given an illustration of a third person with a speech bubble which removes one layer of signs to consume for the reader. The direct illustration of the context often complements the reader by removing additional layers of comprehension. For example, the reader does not have to decipher through the additional text in the foreign language that they may not understand. Instead, the reader is provided an illustration it will understand in a more direct nature. Understanding the limitation of opportunity to learn is also considerable, but that is why this paper does not suggest that graphic novels are the only tool to teach literature. In this way, it aims to show that it is a useful tool in the path of leading students in the understanding more challenging literature.

Although Echaury elaborates about how illustrations and texts do not always complement one another, this text argues that illustrations that are contradictory are much rarer than those that are complementary in graphic novels (Echaury 2020). One may also argue that in the context of graphic novels adapted from literature, they may only occur as often as they occur in the text. These are usually present in situations of sarcasm. Although sometimes confusing, the reader is afforded an opportunity to understand and interpret a more complex situation that is also quite natural. Due to the context of this research comparing adapted graphic novels from canons to the traditional canons themselves, there is no doubt that the graphic novels may provide more confusion than their traditional counterpart. The socially loaded input of graphic novels leads to more real experiences that render meaning for their foreign readers.

5. The Theoretical Why Behind the Use of Dom Casmurro in the PFL Classroom

Recognizing the opportunities multimodalities offer for understanding still doesn't close the gap of why graphic novels are better to introduce foreign readers to than the canons. One may look to socio-cognitive linguistic studies for further closure. As Voloshinov claimed, language and ideology are inseparable, and hence one may argue that language and culture are inseparable. This is largely due to how Voloshinov defines the psychic experience (Voloshinov 1973). Voloshinov declares, "Psychic experience is the semiotic expression of the contact between the organism and the outside environment. That is why the inner psyche is not analyzable as a thing but can only be understood and interpreted as a sign" (Voloshinov 1973, p. 26). Thus, studies of SLA input, taking the stance of VanPatten that SLA should not be divorced from pedagogical issues, must consider the fact that the subjective psyche resides somewhere between the person and the outside world (VanPatten 1996). With the outside world of a given language being largely dominated by the culture from the people who speak that language, one must consider culture and social influence as a critical piece of input when processing it to produce the output of meaning. In graphic novels, it is arguable that the so-called outside world is put in a more directly understandable language via illustration for the foreign reader, thus acting like a pre-modified input like what one would find in a graded reader. Graded readers, as put by Albay, "are particularly designed to enable learners practice reading skills and provide an opportunity to reinforce known vocabulary" (Albay 2017, p. 177). Therefore, one must consider the Input Hypothesis theory which has supported cognitive studies for quite some time. Krashen stated that students can only acquire language in one way, via "comprehensible input" (Krashen 1985, p. 2). The illustrations present in graphic novels are often more comprehensible than those in the traditional text due to the context of this study dealing with only advanced learners of the target language.

Dilthey had a different approach to the same issue when separating language from culture (Dilthey 1973). In his article, Dilthey confirmed that "what makes a word a word is its meaning" alongside the parallel of "what makes an experience an experience is also its meaning" (Dilthey 1973, p. 26). Graphic novels substitute words as input in their usage of teaching literature in a foreign language with a more useful socio-cognitive input. Socio-cognitive input should be defined as traditional words and text presented with non-textual social context. Therefore, socio-cognitive input is modified to represent something closer to an experience than traditional text due to the consumable and direct social influence in its presentation. Graphic novels adapted from literature bring meaning to their readers in a more effective way due to the foreign readers' lack of the linguistic knowledge or cultural experience often needed to recreate the situation or idea in their minds as would a native. Instead, the graphic novel transforms meaning originating from words into an experience. Graphic novels close the gap of meaning for foreign readers by injecting the input that teachers use with social and cultural themes present in the literature. These modified

signs are more consumable intake because of the increased opportunity for understanding due to the multiplied entry for comprehension.

Johansen and Larsen declare that iconic signs use logical relationships to take advantage of creativity and human experimentation (Johansen and Larsen 2002). They confirm it is possible to present generalization and abstraction for a fictional object. For example, iconic signals have fewer concrete characteristics than others. Images, and consequently illustrations, are enriched with more meaning than the word itself and require more interpretation from the reader. This helps the foreign reader move towards critically thinking in the context of their foreign language. Johansen and Larsen declare that signs are made from smaller elements (Johansen and Larsen 2002). If one considers the smaller elements contained in an illustration in comparison to verbal text, one may better understand the foundational argument that the illustrations may incite more critical thinking than the traditional novels, based on the semiotic understanding that all signs are made up of smaller elements. Likewise, VanPatten demonstrates that all input is not processed (VanPatten 1996, p. 8). Therefore, a processed illustration is more powerful than traditional text that is not completely processed. This paper argues that the illustrations in graphic novels such as *Dom Casmurro em HQ* contains many more comprehensible smaller elements than its traditional counterpart which only uses verbal text in a linear structure.

Based on Universal Grammar (UG), one may contend that all languages have components within them that can be determined to be subjects, verbs and objects (Chomsky 1965). Likewise, the language of illustration also contains subjects, verbs, and objects. Therefore, one may consider the stimuli in graphic novels a language that can provide additional meaning alongside that of the traditional text it contains. Another interesting insight to language and our psychological processes can be revealed by those who have studied UG. For example, Towell and Hawkins highlight that UG cannot account for the order of the elements of language such as pronouns (Towell and Hawkins 1994). This would lead one to believe that the order of the language elements, such as the order of subjects, verbs and objects, or adjectives and nouns, is not universal. Illustrations from graphic novels are more abstract than traditional text and often have no linear order at all between the elements of language. Therefore, one may argue that illustrations can connect with our psyche in a more direct way without remediation and ordering required by most languages. The very essence of having no order in the meaning makes the signs in the graphic novels natural for the foreign reader and closer to a true UG without order influence. Both illustrations and traditional text are limited digital representations of analogue situations and concepts. However, the use of both allows more pathways for comprehension. This reinforces the notion that socio-cognitive input incorporates another avenue for introducing foreign readers to their new language's literature because it transforms meaning into a UG while also eliminating issues of order.

UG demonstrates what humans may find natural or unnecessary for instruction. However, another important concept of the human mind when it comes to comprehension is that the input it receives is analogical. Humans naturally use analogies and generalizations for comprehension. Illustrations aid this natural process by connecting the reader to a raw concept that it can then quickly correspond to something else the reader already partially comprehends. Therefore, illustrations offer more analogical representations of the traditional text. Consequently, the illustrations of graphic novels enhance their stories alongside the modified traditional text in an analogical way which makes it easier for the brain to consume. Wu et al. discusses generalization concepts in their work on Visually grounded Language Acquisition (VLA) (Wu et al. 2020). The research demonstrates how observing a set of compositions can aid language learners generalize and recognize new compositions in new contexts. This confirms that the generalizations that students make with graphic novels may be used to recognize similar patterns discovered in traditional literature represented by only traditional linear text.

6. Further considerations and limitations

Translation theories again encourage the power of images. Lefevere claimed that rewriting is like translation in its most obvious form and claimed, "...it is potentially the most influential because it is able to project the image of an author and/or those works beyond the boundaries of their culture of origin" (Lefevere 1992, p. 9). The very essence of the idea that translators recreate images in their target language demonstrates to us how reproduced images via illustration may help guide foreign readers to success in comprehension. In this same light, translation theories do still maintain an ideological, economic and status component as any form of rewriting may, which can influence the result of what the reader may read. Ideologically, one may argue that the literary themes presented in the graphic novel are a watered-down version of those that may exist in the novel. The so-called mainstream ideas and interpretations of literary themes are present, but maybe not some of those that may be outliers. However, the revealing of even these basic or *en masse* interpretations of the literary themes present in the novel help one that might not have been able to retrieve it otherwise. Furthermore, graphic novels are not the complete answer or substitute for studying literature in a foreign language, but instead they should be used as a compliment in the initial stages of instruction.

The economic component also limits the novels that a foreign language instructor can use in the SLA context. Due to economic reasons, many of the canons of Brazilian literature for example, have not been adapted or translated into graphic novels. On the contrary, one may argue that the canons of Brazilian literature largely are present due to the attention they naturally pull. Publishers such as Cambridge Readers, Oxford Bookworms, Macmillan Guided Readers, and Penguin Readers have long lauded the use of rewriting the canons because of their timeless nature. Claridge shows that in the transformation of remediated texts into graded readers, canons are often chosen because of their tried-and-true nature (Claridge 2012, p. 111). From a foreign language teaching standpoint, the canons are useful due to their cultural relevance. Therefore, the students can gain access to the same novels that most secondary school students encounter in the native culture. For example, foreign language students can gain access to *Dom Casmurro*, which is a common text throughout Brazilian education.

Due to the academic status of graphic novels, the proposal for foreign language teachers to use them in their classrooms may face some conflicts. However, the excitement and other motivational factors on behalf of the student such as their interest in the illustrations and their perception of a simpler text outweighs the common misperception that graphic novels are for children. As a graduate of the Air Force Academy, I thoroughly remember the lessons in my world literature class that focused on another graphic novel, *Persepolis*. If graphic novels are used at universities such as the US Military Academy and the Air Force Academy in English classes for native students in their third year of university, why should we not use them in our foreign language classrooms as we make the jump from elementary instruction to literature?

Practitioners from the field of SLA often debate perspectives when attempting to comprehend language. Some argue for the cognitive perspective while others argue for the social perspective. These two perspectives are brought together in graphic novels and present yet another advantage of using them in the foreign language classroom. For example, Norton and Block have shown via applied linguistics that linguistic forms and modifications are often highlighted in the foreign language classroom (Norton 2000 and Block 2003). These factors lend themselves to the cognitive perspective. Meanwhile, social processes, relationships and the like have often been marginalized in the foreign language classroom. Many foreign language instructors agree that understanding both types of perspectives on language is necessary for complete comprehension. Graphic novels help bring the social perspective to light via illustrations via socio-cognitive input.

These often subtle and difficult to extract cues in traditional texts are emphasized in their graphic novel adaptations.

For example, in *Dom Casmurro em HQ*, Bento's body language and gestures often demonstrate his relationship with the other character in the dialogue. This body language, which is critical to completely understanding the various scenes from the novel, is maximized, and elaborated on in a much more obvious way for the reader. Confusion, indifference, and defensive body language are just some cues the reader can comprehend from the illustrations in the graphic novel. These cues are easily understood by means of illustration than in the tone of a traditional verbal text. Similarly, these factors are often the differentiating factors questioned in formalized fluency reading tests such as the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT), the test used by the United States Department of Defense to determine whether an individual can read in a given language at an intermediate level or an advanced level.

Although socio-cultural examples of meaning such as a cross, clothing and setting, among others can be highlighted in many graphic novels, one should not overlook what cultural factors such as body language can provide to wrestle the comprehension of meaning prowess to be considered fluent in a foreign language. Graphic novels present the target language to foreign language students in a more direct way. Harris explains the phenomenon that “human beings do *not* [italics in original] live in a communicational world that is neatly and permanently compartmentalized into language and non-language” (Harris 2003). Graphic novels pause such realities with the use of their illustrations and take more real scenes and make them consumable for the reader via socio-cognitive input.

Along with the common perception that graphic novels are meant for children and not academia, one may also perceive the capacity of the simplification and elaboration techniques to only help readers in the low proficiency levels. However, studies of pre-modified texts, such as Oh have revealed that reading comprehension was improved by input elaboration for both high and low levels of proficiency (Oh 2001 and Le 2011, p. 28). This would also suggest that elaboration could extend into the realm of literary studies since the understanding of literary themes and devices is just another level of comprehension of language itself. Pound has confirmed the correlation between language and literature when claiming “Great literature is simply language charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree” (Pound 1934, p. 28). Consequently, modifications such as pre-modified elaborations can and should be used in the first stages of learning literature just as it is used in SLA.

Perhaps the most influential meaning deliverance from illustrations in graphic novels is revealed through the power of redundancy. Redundancy as Le establishes, is a powerful way to deliver pre-modified elaboration. Illustrations can enhance grammar and lexical phenomena with the context they provide (Le 2011). However, thematical representations can also be demonstrated via illustration according to Le (Le 2011). The example of thematical representations via illustration confirm that critical thinking through literature can be viewed from graphic novels. The presentation of themes in literature help confirm that critical thinking is accelerated in the study of graphic novels via illustrations. According to Le, “Redundancies served to separate the theme from the rest of the sentence (presentative) and include left-dislocation, anaphoric demonstrative noun phrases, and generic noun phrase” (Le 2011, p. 280). Therefore, redundancy via illustration of those subjects normally existing in noun phrases is a useful technique to teach literary themes.

7. Conclusion

Intralingual translations, like interlingual translations, help readers understand a text and culture that was previously inaccessible through the transfer of meaning into other forms of media

which gives students other windows from comprehension. Multimodal educational resources increase opportunity for comprehension just as simply as two is greater than one. Therefore, foreign language readers need multimodal educational resources, like comics or graphic novels, when they begin reading literature for the first time in their new language. Foreign language instructors should conclude that graphic novels are an effective way to introduce literature in a foreign language because of their ability to incite critical thinking by elaboration or domestication of the traditional text via socio-cognitive input by presenting the text in a more complex and real social context. In Voloshinov and Bakhtin's article, they contend that they favor "the methodological precedence of psychology over ideology" (Voloshinov and Bakhtin 1986, p. 27). Furthermore, they go on to discuss on "experience exists even for the person undergoing it only in the material of signs." (Voloshinov and Bakhtin 1986, p. 28). This demonstrates that even illustrations are no more pure than verbal text. However, the variation of the stimuli and signs and the perceived lack of adequate understanding in the reading and comprehension of the verbal text for some foreign readers may suggest that the illustration provides multiple alternate avenues for comprehension. Thus, the chances of the reader to both comprehend and critique the text are higher than that of a traditional verbal text.

Furthermore, the use of graphic novels insists on the student's understanding of language at a critical level in a complex world of blurred lines of language and non-language. Pre-modified canons not only help students understand literature in a new language, they also inject cultural catalysts in foreign language students that are usually reserved for people who have a native speaker's educational experience. As our students encounter literature in the Portuguese language for the first time often in an overwhelming manner, graphic novels provide an interesting way for teachers to introduce a consumable part of that literature that enhances their ability to see literary themes and meaning through reading before they are able to receive them in a mastery or native-like way.

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