



Reading understanding on deaf professionals of a higher education institution

Compreensão de leitura em profissionais surdos de uma instituição de ensino superior

Comprensión de lectura en profesionales sordos de una institución de enseñanza superior

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Abstract

Introduction: Reading is an important practice to communicate and to understand the world around us. Some researches indicate that deaf subjects have significant difficulties in reading comprehension. **Objective:** To assess reading comprehension in deaf professionals from a higher education institution. **Method:** Case study: 14 adult subjects, deaf, literate, both male and female, aged between 20.6 and 42.7 years. Procedure: PHASE 1: Application of Cloze Test on a journalistic text with approximately 200 words, 30 blanks. PHASE 2: According to the results obtained by the subjects in Cloze test, they were asked to perform a new linguistic task: reading followed by the preparation of a written summary of the original text. Six subjects accepted to participate in this phase. Criteria for results interpretation: the answers provided in Cloze test were ranked as: correct, possible, incorrect and no answer. A descriptive data analysis was held. The summarized texts were qualitatively analyzed. **Results:** Most of the subjects obtained scores significantly below compared to the maximum total score of the Cloze test. Of the 6 phase 2 participants, only one did not include essential information in the summary of the text. **CONCLUSION:** the performance in reading comprehension, in deaf subjects enrolled, is hampered by the formal (morphological and syntactic) aspects of the linguistic code and favored by semantic and pragmatic aspects used to elaborate written summaries.

Keywords: Understanding; Reading; Language; Deafness; Cloze Test

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Authors' contributions:

AFV - responsible for research, data collection

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Resumo

Introdução: A leitura é uma prática importante para a comunicação e compreensão do mundo à nossa volta. Pesquisas apontam que sujeitos surdos apresentam dificuldades significativas na compreensão de leitura. **Objetivo:** avaliar a compreensão de leitura em profissionais surdos de uma instituição de ensino superior. **Método:** Casuística: 14 sujeitos adultos surdos, alfabetizados, de ambos os gêneros, na faixa etária entre 20,6 e 42,7 anos. Procedimento: FASE 1: Aplicação do Teste Cloze a partir de um texto jornalístico com aproximadamente 200 palavras, 30 lacunas. FASE 2: Diante dos resultados obtidos, eles foram contatados para desempenhar nova tarefa linguística: leitura seguida de elaboração de resumo escrito do texto original. Seis sujeitos aceitaram participar dessa fase. Critérios de interpretação dos resultados: as respostas do teste Cloze foram categorizadas em: correta, possível, incorreta e em branco. Foi realizada análise descritiva dos dados. Os resumos foram analisados qualitativamente. **Resultados:** A maioria dos sujeitos obteve pontuação significativamente abaixo do total máximo no teste Cloze. Dos 6 participantes da fase 2, apenas um não apresentou no resumo as informações essenciais do texto. **Conclusão:** O desempenho em compreensão de leitura, desses sujeitos, é dificultado pelos aspectos formais do código linguístico (morfológicos e sintáticos) e favorecido pelos aspectos semânticos e pragmáticos mobilizados para realização de resumos escritos.

Palavras-chave: Compreensão; Leitura; Linguagem; Surdez; Teste Cloze

Resumen

Introducción: La lectura es una práctica importante para la comunicación y comprensión del mundo a nuestro alrededor. Las investigaciones apuntan que sujetos sordos presentan dificultades significativas en la comprensión de la lectura. **OBJETIVO:** evaluar la comprensión de lectura en profesionales sordos de una institución de enseñanza superior. **Método:** Casuística: 14 sujetos adultos sordos, alfabetizados, de ambos géneros, en el grupo de edad entre 20,6 y 42,7 años. Procedimiento: **Fase 1:** Aplicación del Test Cloze a partir de un texto periodístico con aproximadamente 200 palabras. **Fase 2:** Ante los resultados obtenidos por los sujetos en el test Cloze, fueron contactados para desempeñar una nueva tarea lingüística: lectura seguida de elaboración de resumen escrito del texto original. Los sujetos aceptados participaron en esa fase. Criterios de interpretación de los resultados: las respuestas del test Cloze se clasificaron en: correcta, posible, incorrecta y en blanco. Se realizó un análisis descriptivo de los datos. Los resúmenes se analizaron cualitativamente. **Resultados:** La mayoría de los sujetos obtuvo una puntuación significativamente por debajo del total máximo (60 puntos) en el test Cloze. De los 6 participantes de la fase 2, sólo uno no presentó en el resumen la información esencial del texto. **Conclusión:** El desempeño en comprensión de lectura, en los sujetos sordos estudiados, es dificultado por los aspectos formales del código lingüístico (morfológicos y sintáticos) demandados por el test Cloze; y favorecido por los aspectos semánticos y pragmáticos mobilizados para la realización de resúmenes escritos.

Palabras claves: Comprensión; Lectura; Sordera; Prueba Cloze

Introduction

The deaf subjects are trying to get more space in society, which involves the inclusion in the labor market. It should be noted that for decades deafness was associated with intellectual disorders, which was a myth that was overcome by scientific knowledge. Thus, the barriers regarding the professionalization of these subjects have been gradually eased¹.

In general terms, it is possible to state that insertion in the labor market is an essential condition for individuals, not only in terms of financial sustainability, but also to provide subjective aspects involved in self-esteem and exercising of citizenship².

From this perspective, the “Employment Quota for Disabled Persons Law” (no. 8,213, of July 25, 1991)³ and, more recently, the “Brazilian Law of Inclusion of People with Disabilities” (no. 13,146, of July 6, 2015)⁴, also known as “Person with Disabilities Statute”, which covers all types of disabilities (physical, visual, hearing and intellectual) were welcomed. Both laws regulate that public and private companies must meet a quota of employees with disabilities in their functional frameworks, in addition to investing in knowledge and strategies in order to deal with these employees.

However, it should be understood that the difficulties regarding oral and graphic communication, which are inherent in deafness, generate barriers (to different degrees) in the professional performance of these subjects.

With respect to graphic communication learning, some authors report that teachers are not properly prepared to meet the demands of deaf students who enter the Brazilian educational system. That is, in the desirable perspective of inclusion there is a lack of elaboration/implementation of educational proposals that would facilitate the effective learning of this communication modality for these subjects⁵.

Thus, difficulties persist in the schooling process, despite the (relatively hegemonic) discourse of teachers that the inclusion of deaf students is fully enabled. However, in practice, it is possible to notice a trend towards exclusion⁵.

On the other hand, deaf adults who are users of the Brazilian Sign Language (BSL) have a

hard time in pursuing their formal studies towards professionalization, since educational institutions have few professional interpreters and teachers with knowledge of BSL. In terms of acquiring academic content and social interaction, there is significant damage to deaf students in these circumstances⁶.

Specifically regarding reading and writing acquisition processes, it should be noticed that reading involves several cognitive and metacognitive, auditory and visual perceptual and memory skills in terms of decoding and comprehension of texts (in order to understand intentions and senses)⁷.

In this sense, it is necessary to understand the construction process of reading and writing acquisition processes. According to Ferreiro (2011), writing consists of a series of different graphic elements in order to identify and interpret different letters. This process also involves understanding the figurative aspects (motor coordination, symbolic representation, use of writing instrument, letter tracing, space, etc.)⁸.

On the other hand, knowing the alphabet and decoding letters is not enough to read, you should understand what is read. This also depends on the knowledge of the world that the subject has and on the ability to relate it to the subjects addressed in a text, which must also be articulated with other texts, what constitutes intertextuality. In addition, learning to read/write implies acquiring the competence to incorporate these practices in daily life⁹.

Therefore, reading and writing are indisputable bridges to the social inclusion of individuals. In this sense, this research specifically studies the reading comprehension ability of deaf subjects, in order to assess reading comprehension of deaf professionals of a higher education institution.

Method

This is a descriptive study. The project was approved by the Ethics Committee of PUC/SP according to Resolution No. 196/96 of the National Research Ethics Committee/CONEP (opinion no. 1,789,791), based on the guidelines and regulatory standards for research involving human subjects of the National Health Council (resolution no. 466).

Case study

14 deaf subjects of both genders, all aged between 20;6 and 42;7 years, who were employees of a higher education institution, among which 12

completed high school, 02 attended higher education, and 07 are oralized. All subjects interested in participating in the study signed the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).

Table 1. Sample characterization

Identification info				Audiological Evaluation	
Initials	Gender M/F	Age	Educational Level	Type	Grade
1	F	33	High school	Sensorineural	Severe Bilateral
2	F	29	High school	Sensorineural	Deep Bilateral
3	F	30	High school	Sensorineural	Deep Bilateral
4	F	47	High school	Sensorineural	Deep Bilateral
5	M	30	High school	Sensorineural	Deep Bilateral
6	M	26	High school	Sensorineural	Deep Bilateral
7	F	25	High school	Sensorineural	Deep RE Severe LE
8	F	24	Graduating	Sensorineural	Deep Bilateral
9	F	25	Graduating	Sensorineural	Deep Bilateral
10	F	38	High school	Sensorineural	Deep Bilateral
11	F	40	High school	Sensorineural	Deep Bilateral
12	M	35	High school	Sensorineural	Deep Bilateral
13	M	31	High school	Sensorineural	Deep Bilateral
14	M	30	High school	Sensorineural	Deep Bilateral

Note: The subjects who participated in the two phases of the procedure: S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12.

Procedure

Data collection was performed at the workplace and during the working hours of the participants in February 2017. A BSL interpreter monitored the procedure to ensure the subjects' full understanding of the procedure.

PHASE 1

Application of the Cloze Test based on the text "Metro loses R\$6 million due to the lack of change and asks for help to churches", which was published in *Folha de S. Paulo* newspaper on November 03, 2016.

Appendix 1 - Original text

Metro loses R\$6 million due to the lack of change and asks for help from churches"

By Thiago Amâncio, published by *Folha de S. Paulo* in November 03, 2016.

In the midst of a crisis, with a voluntary resignation plan in progress and a series of barriers to its expansion, the São Paulo Metro reported a R\$ 6 million loss in revenue this year due to discounts due to lack of coins for change at the box office.

This amount represents a loss of R\$20k per day for the company linked to the government of Geraldo Alckmin (PSDB) in the first ten months of this year.

The amount also represents 0.4% of the revenue from ticket sales. However, it could be used for individual works and replacement of equipment. Last year, for example, the company received a contribution of R\$ 260 million from the state government to pay off the bills.

According to José Carlos Nascimento, Metro's Chief Financial Officer, the company must have R\$1.2 million in cash for cash at the box office every month.

The Central Bank, its main source, provided only R\$250k in coins during the last month, R\$1 million less than needed.

The ticket costs R\$3.80, but almost every day the passengers are surprised by lightning deals at some box offices.

According to the missing coins, the price drops to R\$3.75, R\$3.50 or even R\$3.00 - with a limit of a single ticket per person..

According to the rules of application of the Cloze test, the gaps were established as follows: from the fourth line of the text, four words were counted, and then the fifth was deleted from the original text. And so, successively, until the end of

the text, generating a total of 30 gaps. Each subject was instructed to fill in the blanks (30) with the appropriate words to the content of the text. The gaps were represented by traces of the same size.

Appendix 2 - Text for Cloze Test application

The following is the text "Metro loses R\$6 million due to the lack of change and asks for help from churches", by Thiago Amâncio, which was published in Folha de S. Paulo newspaper on November 03, 2016. Please note that some words were removed from the text. You must fill in the gaps with the appropriate words.

In the midst of a crisis, with a voluntary resignation plan in progress and a series of barriers to its expansion, the São Paulo Metro reported a R\$ 6 million loss in revenue this year due to discounts due to lack of coins for change at the box office.

This amount represents a loss _____ R\$20k per _____ for the company linked _____ the government of Geraldo Alckmin (PSDB) _____ first ten months of this _____.

The amount also represents 0.4% _____ the revenue from _____ sales. However, it could _____ used for individual works _____ replacement of equipment. Last _____, for example, the _____ received a contribution of R\$ 260 million _____ state government to _____ the bills.

According _____ José Carlos Nascimento, _____'s Chief Financial Officer, the _____ must have R\$1.2 million _____ cash for cash at the _____ every month.

The Central Bank, its main _____, provided only R\$250k _____ coins during the _____ month, R\$1 million less _____ needed.

The ticket _____ R\$3.80, but almost every day _____ passengers are surprised _____ lightning deals at some _____.

According to the missing _____, the price drops _____ R\$3.75, R\$3.50 or even R\$3.00 - _____ a limit of _____ single ticket per person.

Chart 1 details the grammatical categorization of words relevant to the gaps.

PHASE 2

Considering the results obtained by the subjects in the Cloze test and considering non-restricted aspects to the formalism of the language code involved in the reading comprehension process, a complementary procedure was chosen (and performed in July 2017). The subjects were contacted to perform a new linguistic task to assess reading comprehension, namely: reading followed by writing a summary of the original text. 06 subjects participated in this phase (subjects no. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12).

Criteria for analyzing results

Cloze Test:

The score obtained by each subject in the Cloze Test resulted from the simple sum of the points assigned to the completion of each of the

thirty (30) responses, namely: Correct=2 points; Possible=1 point; Incorrect=0 and No Response=0. In this way, the index can range from 0 to 60 points, whereas the higher number represents the better performance.

Statistical analysis:

A descriptive data analysis was held through absolute (n) and relative (%) frequencies, in addition to central tendency (mean and median) and dispersion (standard deviation, minimum and maximum) measures.

As for the quantitative variables, the Komolgorov-Smirnov test was first applied to identify the distribution. Since the variables did not follow the normal curve, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney test was used for the difference between the two groups and the Spearman test was used for the correlation analysis.

A 5% descriptive level ($p < 0.05$) was assumed for statistical significance. The data were entered in Excel and analyzed in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0 for Windows.

Chart 1. List of classes and grammatical concept of words deleted from the text

WORD	GRAMMAR CLASS	CONCEPT
R1_ DE (OF)	Preposition	It indicates the circumstance of place, origin, starting point of a movement or extension (in time and space), the person or thing from which another comes or depends, in the proper sense or figuratively.
R2_ DIA (DAY)	Noun	Period of time from sunrise to sunset.
R3_ AO (TO)	Preposition + definite article	Combination and contraction with another word, that is, preposition by binding to another word. Preposition a combined with definite article o = ao.
R4_ NOS (IN THE)	Preposition + definite article	Preposition em with definite article os, thanks to the resonance of the nasal: em + os = nos.
R5_ ANO (YEAR)	Noun	Time the Earth takes to complete a complete orbit around the Sun.
R6_ DA (OF)	Preposition + definite article	Preposition de combined with definite article a = da.
R7_ BILHETES (TICKET)	Noun Plural	Resource required to travel in collective vehicle (train ticket)
R8_ SER (BE)	Verb	Irregular verb, infinitive
R9_ E (AND)	Conjunction	Connective or coordinating conjunction. Additive conjunction
R10_ ANO (YEAR)	Noun	Time the Earth takes to complete a complete orbit around the Sun.
R11_ EMPRESA (COMPANY)	Noun	Business, commercial society; any establishment that sells, buys or offers any type of service.
R12_ DO (FROM THE)	Preposition + definite article	Preposition de combined with definite article o = do.
R13_ QUITAR (PAY OFF)	Verb	Regular verb To pay, to cease a debt, paying what is due.
R14_ COM (TO)	Preposition	It is used in the circumstances of accompany, gathering, simultaneity, mode, manner, means, instrument, cause, grant.
R15_ METRÔ (METRO)	Noun	ABBREVIATION FOR METROPOLITAN, URBAN RAILWAY, UNDERGROUND IN WHOLE OR IN PART.
R16_ COMPANHIA (COMPANY)	Noun	Organization composed of partners or shareholders; association, firm: transportation company.
R17_ EM (IN)	Preposition	This denotes place (where), situation, in the proper or figurative sense, time, duration, term, mode, means, price, evaluation.
R18_ BILHETERIAS (BOX OFFICE)	Noun Plural	Place where tickets are sold to shows, admission cards, etc.
R19_ FONTE (SOURCE)	Noun	[Figuratively] Principle, origin, cause.
R20_ EM (IN)	Preposition	This denotes place (where), situation, in the proper or figurative sense, time, duration, term, mode, means, price, evaluation.
R21_ ÚLTIMO (LAST)	Adverb	Circumstance expressing time, adverb of time.
R22_ QUE (THAN)	integral or adjective subordinative conjunction; relative pronoun	It articulates the main clause to a substantive or adjective subordinate clause; it articulates a term to the term that retakes it (relative pronoun).
R23_ CUSTA (COSTS)	Verb	Regular verb, present tense.
R24_ OS (THE)	Definite article in the plural	A definite article that prefaces the noun with reduced demonstrative semantic value, and main function as adjunct of these nouns.
R25_ COM (BY)	Preposition	It is used in the circumstances of accompany, gathering, simultaneity, mode, manner, means, instrument, cause, grant.
R26_ BILHETERIAS (BOX OFFICES)	Noun Plural	Place where tickets are sold to shows, admission cards, etc.
R27_ MOEDAS (COINS)	Noun Plural	Metal piece coined by the governmental authorities, which is a representative of the value of the objects that are exchanged for it. Another word for cash
R28_ PARA (TO)	Subordinate conjunction or Preposition	Denotes the person or thing in favor or prejudice to whom an action is performed
R29_ COM (WITH)	Preposition	It is used in the circumstances of accompany, gathering, simultaneity, mode, manner, means, instrument, cause, grant.
R30_ UM (A)	Indefinite article	Indefinite article which resembles the definite article, it also has an assistant function of statements, but differs by origin, tone, and semantic value.

Source: Bechara, Evanildo. Moderna gramática portuguesa. 37ª and the *Pequeno Dicionário Houaiss da Língua Portuguesa*

Summaries written:

The summarized texts were qualitatively analyzed with the following criteria: time spent with the understanding of the essential content, understanding of complementary content, and inclusion of personal opinions.

Results

The application time of the Cloze Test ranged from 25.6 to 28 minutes.

The scores obtained on the Cloze Test ranged from 0 to 34 points, whereas the higher number represents the better performance. It can be noticed that subject 12 had the highest score (56%) among the subjects analyzed.

Chart 2. Scores obtained on the Cloze test for each subject, percentage in relation to total expected (60 points)

Subjects	Score obtained in the Cloze Test	Percentage
1	1	1.7
2	2	3.3
3	0	--
4	2	3.3
5	0	--
6	4	6.7
7	0	--
8	9	15.0
9	16	26.7
10	4	6.7
11	5	8.3
12	34	56.6
13	0	--
14	0	--
	60	100

Table 3 shows the type of response in relation to grammatical categories of words relevant to gaps. It shows the sum of the number of words in each grammatical category multiplied by the total number of subjects. It is possible to notice that the

highest percentage of 'wrong' and 'no response' are in the adverb grammatical category, followed by conjunction and article. And the highest percentage of 'correct' and 'possible' refers to verbs and nouns.

Table 2. Description of the results of missing words according to grammatical classification

Grammatical classification	correct		possible		wrong		no response		total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
adverb (R_21)	0	0.0	0	0.0	10	71.4	4	28.6	14	100.0
article (R_24, R_30)	2	7.1	0	0.0	21	75.0	5	17.9	28	100.0
conjunction (R_9, R_22, R_28)	2	4.7	0	0.0	27	64.4	13	30.9	42	100.0
preposition (R_1, R_3, R_4, R_6, R_12, R_14, R_17, R_20, R_25, R_29)	9	6.5	14	10.0	87	62.1	30	21.4	140	100.0
noun (R_2, R_5, R_7, R_10, R_11, R_15, R_16, R_18, R_19, R_26, R_27)	12	7.8	5	3.1	100	65.0	37	24.1	154	100.0
verb (R_8, R_13, R_23)	4	9.5	2	4.8	29	69.0	7	16.7	42	100.0
total	29	6.8	21	5.1	274	64.8	96	23.3	420	100.0

Table 3 shows that there was no statistically significant difference in the Cloze test scores comparing subjects using only BSL with those who are also oralized.

Written summaries:

Only 06 (40%) of the 14 subjects who composed the initial sample accepted to participate in this phase (S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12).

Chart 3 shows the results of the summaries analysis.

The average time to prepare the summaries was 11 minutes, and it was computed from the time when the participant started reading until the conclusion of the summary.

Table 3. Analysis of the Cloze index, according to BSL and BSL + Orality

Variable	N	Score in the Cloze test			p*
		Mean (SD)	Median	Min.-Max.	
BSL	7	3.4 (5.8)	1.0	0.0 – 16.0	0.432
BSL + Orality	7	7.6 (12.0)	4.0	0.0 – 34.0	

* Mann-Whitney

Chart 3. Characteristics of written summaries prepared by subjects

Subjects	Summary preparation (in minutes)	Understanding of the essential content of the text (yes, no)	Understanding of the additional content of the text (yes, no)	Inclusion of personal opinions on the text (yes, no)
7	10	NO	NO	YES
8	5	YES	YES	YES
9	14	YES	YES	NO
10	13	YES	YES	YES
11	19	YES	YES	YES
12	5	YES	YES	NO

Discussion

In general, results show that the subjects studied had low scores in the Cloze Test, suggesting that such difficulties arise not only from reading comprehension skills, but also from their association with the level of complexity of the linguistic structure of the text¹⁰.

In this sense, it can be emphasized that the Cloze technique relies on the reader's previous linguistic knowledge on syntactic and semantic relations, and also on the topic addressed in the text^{10,11}.

It may be possible to notice a significant predominance of wrong answers based on the correctness criteria used in this study (correct, possible, wrong and no response), which suggests semantic

difficulties corroborated by the category of no responses (the second one, statistically). Correct and possible answers combined were relatively inexpressive in percentage, which also shows the same difficulties.

In this scenario, since the flaws reveal significant lexical difficulties the syntactic aspect analysis is undermined. Despite the predominance of faults in conjunctions (in terms of statistical frequency), the other grammatical categories present did not reveal significance in inferential terms.

There was an assumption that the prior knowledge of the topic addressed in the text would favor performance in the sample studied. Although a conclusive statement is not possible, the results suggest the non-confirmation of this hypothesis. Although it is not possible to reach a conclusive

statement, the results suggest the non-confirmation of this assumption.

However, given the unfavorable results related to the performance of subjects in the Cloze test, errors are ways of thinking as well as successes¹². Thus, the role performed by linguistic factors (decoding ability, vocabulary, syntactic knowledge), as well as the memorization of information accumulated throughout the reader's life through informal learning are relevant factors for the reading comprehension assessment. And such ability also varies according to the nature of the content of the text (in literal and implied terms) and to the context in which it was read. In a general way and with regard to this last aspect, it is worth noticing that the subjects showed some tension/lack of confidence facing the proposed task.

It was also observed that there was no statistically significant difference between the performances of deaf individuals who only use BSL when compared to those who are also oralized.

This result confirms that, although the sign language is considered by several authors as the first language that works as a support of thought and communication for the deaf subject, the reading and writing acquisition process does not occur through this means of communication¹³. That is: in the literacy process, the deaf subject needs to analyze differences and similarities between the sign language and the Portuguese language. For example: there are no articles, prepositions, conjunctions in sign language and verbs are all conjugated in the infinitive¹⁴, as well as verbal and nominal inflections (gender and number).

In this sense, the low performance of the subjects in the Cloze test can be justified from the following formulations¹⁵: reading comprehension refers to a text in its entirety, and not to words taken as isolated units of meaning. Thus, the emphasis on the word (as a lexical item), when associated to the difficulties in the knowledge of Portuguese, affects the performance of deaf individuals. According to Suehiro (2013), the knowledge of the word is required for the understanding of the text, but which also is not enough, since the most important is to access (or even infer) the meaning of a word from the context.

Also regarding the significant difficulties presented by the subjects studied in the Cloze test, it is worth mentioning a limitation of the study: the text was not presented as news from a newspaper,

but typed in a text file format. Thus, there was a relative change in the discourse genre¹⁶, which may have negatively affected the performance of the subjects, since the original textual support was not maintained. But despite this limitation, it was possible to observe that the studied subjects recognized the news genre in the source text. That is, from the point of view of literacy, the participants seem to have contact with this genre, despite language difficulties.

As for the results obtained by the subjects (06) with respect to reading comprehension when asked to create a written summary of the original text, it was observed that the results were significantly more favorable when compared to the performance in the Cloze test.

The task of summarizing a text reveals a discursive competence to produce two modalities: the indicative summary (which synthesizes the source text) and the informative summary (which adds information from the source text). The first type prevailed in the study population¹⁷.

It can be observed that reading comprehension was assessed through writing, in such linguistic task, in which changes were observed. The influence of sign language can be noticed in the summaries, such as the lack of connectives between words and phrases, difficulties in the use of articles, lack of verb and adjective inflections¹⁸.

Nonetheless, the semantic aspect has been preserved in all cases, as the understanding of the essential content of the text. However, in quantitative terms, it is important to remember that only 06 (of the 14 subjects who performed the Cloze test) accepted to prepare the written summaries.

Comparatively, the mean time spent on the Cloze test ranged from 25.6 to 28 minutes. On average, the written summaries were completed in 11 minutes. Such a time difference, when coupled with the better performance of the subjects in the summaries, suggests that this language task was more easily performed by the deaf subjects studied.

Conclusion

Results of this study suggest that the performance in reading comprehension, in deaf subjects enrolled, is hampered by the formal (morphological and syntactic) aspects of the linguistic code demanded by the Cloze test; and favored by semantic

and pragmatic aspects used to elaborate written summaries.

These findings confirm the relevance of this population assessment based on the literacy perspective.

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