

## *Learning the Genre "Summary" by Undergraduate French Language Students: A Didactic Device at the Service of Academic Literacy*

Eliane Gouvêa **LOUSADA\***  
Jaci Brasil **TONELLI\*\***

\* Master's and PhD in Applied Linguistics and Language Studies at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC-SP). Leader of the ALTER-CNPq and ALTER-AGE-CNPq research groups, as well as coordinator of the Textual/Discursive Genres WG at Anpoll (2017-2020) and the Academic Literacy Laboratory at FFLCH-USP for the French language. Professor at the Department of Modern Letters at the Faculty of Philosophy, Letters and Human Sciences at USP, in the area of Linguistic, Literary and Translation Studies in French and at PPG-LETRA; she has been an undergraduate and masters professor of French Studies at the University of Guelph, Canada, where she still serves as a Visiting Professor and advisor. She has experience and publications in the areas of academic literacy, textual genres, teaching material, teacher training and development through the teaching work bias. Contact: elianelousada@uol.com.br.

\*\* Master's in Linguistic, Literary and Translation Studies at the University of São Paulo (2016); currently a PhD candidate in the LETRA program at the same institution and part of the Academic Literacy Laboratory team. Interested in French language teaching, academic literacy in French and Portuguese, and reading and production of texts in a university context. Contact: jaci.tonelli@gmail.com.

### **Abstract:**

In this article, we aim to present the work with the written production in French during a semester of the undergraduate course in French as Foreign Language, seeking to develop the language capacities of students, in LE. More specifically, we will present the work done with students on language operations related to the process of summarizing the ideas of a text (MACHADO, 2010) and the avoidance of repetition, but through a socio-discursive and interactionist perspective, showing the device that we created, the students' productions and discussing the role of the Academic Literacy Laboratory (LLAC) in developing students' language capacities. Our study takes as a theoretical and methodological basis Socio-discursive Interactionism (BRONCKART, 1999) and its consequences for the Didactics of Languages, through the concepts of: didactic model (DE PIETRO; SCHNEUWLY, 2003), didactic sequence (DOLZ; NOVERRAZ; SCHNEUWLY, 2004), language capacities (DOLZ; PASQUIER; BRONCKART, 1993). The results pointed out that the students developed the discursive and linguistic-discursive capacities, especially those related to the act of summarize, using nouns and pronouns to avoid repetition. It also shows that the device is relevant to the learning of the genre summary and also of the content of the text that was summarized, what illustrates the perspective of "writing to learn" (GERE, 2019) and the epistemic function of writing.

### **Keywords:**

Writing Production. Movie Review. Summary. Summarization.

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## INTRODUCTION

In this article, we aim to present the work with the written production in French during a semester of undergraduate course in French as Foreign Language, aiming to develop the language capacities of the students to produce the textual genre “summary”. To do that, we adopted the theoretical framework of Socio-Discursive Interactionism (SDI) (BRONCKART, 1999, 2006), which proposes a model of textual analysis that can be used to elaborate didactic activities to teach how to write textual genres. Also, within the theoretical framework of SDI, we use the guidelines of didactic engineering (DOLZ, 2016), to develop a sequence of activities to teach this genre, starting from the understanding of the genre, its context of production, its textual organization and studying, in French, the linguistic aspects that characterize it. In the Socio-Discursive Interactionism Approach (BRONCKART, 1999), the work with textual genres aims at the development of language capacities (of action, discursive and linguistic-discursive), however, in this article, we will highlight the work with discursive and linguistic-discursive capacities, focusing on a proposal for teaching language operations that allow the act of summarizing. To put this perspective into practice, we use studies on the process of summarizing the ideas of a text (MACHADO, 2002/2010) and on the avoidance of repetitions. All the activities were prepared from an interactionist point of view: considering the context of production of the texts. In this perspective, we will expose the device designed and the students’ productions, discussing the role of the Academic Literacy Laboratory (LLAC)<sup>1</sup> in the development of their language capacities.

The teaching of written production in a foreign language in the context of university studies is a topic that has been researched more frequently lately, as a consequence of the interest in Academic Literacy (LEA; STREET, 2014; CRISTOVÃO; VIEIRA, 2016; PEREIRA, 2018), in Portuguese, the first language of these undergraduate students (PEREIRA, 2014, 2018), but also in a foreign language, driven by the internationalization of Brazilian universities (SILVA; LOUSADA, 2014; FERREIRA; LOUSADA, 2016; MAGALHÃES; CRISTOVÃO, 2018). Among these studies, many are based on the perspective of researchers in Didactics of Languages at the University of Geneva, who propose to learn the production of textual genres (SCHNEUWLY; DOLZ, 2004) for the development of students’ language capacities (DOLZ; PASQUIER; BRONCKART, 1993). In Brazil, many works have been carried out in this perspective, both in the teaching of written production in first language (PEREIRA, 2014; ABREU-TARDELLI; APÓSTOLO; SILVEIRA, 2019), and in foreign languages (MAGALHÃES; CRISTOVÃO, 2018; LOUSADA; TONELLI, 2019).

As numerous English-speakers authors (BAZERMAN, 2015) and Brazilians authors (PEREIRA, 2014) have pointed out, students have writing difficulties when inserted in the university context, which often affects their performance in different disciplines. This happens because, frequently, these students

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<sup>1</sup> Laboratório de Letramento Acadêmico da FFLCH-USP (<http://letramentoacademico.fflch.usp.br/>).

were not previously prepared to produce textual genres of the university context. In a recent research<sup>2</sup>, we compared the genres produced by Canadian-French and Brazilian students in high school and university and found that the difficulty in producing specific genres from the university context does not occur only in linguistic and literature courses, which have a direct relationship with writing, but in all disciplines (LOUSADA; BUENO; DEZUTTER, 2019).

In the university context, writing has a predominant role, mainly due to two aspects: i) the evaluative function of written texts, since undergraduate students are evaluated in most courses, especially in a Language major, through written productions; the written form of the language being highly valued (BROSSARD, 2004) in this context; ii) the epistemic character of writing. Blaser (2007, p. 59) emphasizes the importance of this function of writing, based on the definition given to this notion by Chartrand, Blaser and Gagnon (2006). For these researchers, as well as for other authors (BOTA, 2018) who are also based on Vygotski (1997), the epistemic function of writing is defined as the role that writing plays in the appropriation and co-construction of knowledge and disciplinary skills.

As we know, many university professors request written texts to verify that students have learned the contents taught, whether in language classes, as is the case with the experience described here, whether in the case of literature classes or in other courses such as Pedagogy or other ones (LOUSADA; BUENO; DEZUTTER, 2019). In the second case, we are faced with the perspective of “writing to learn” and not “learning to write” (GERE, 2019), since, according to this author, when writing at the university to carry out the various assignments requested by teachers, students learn the disciplinary contents. In our case, as we will see below, despite the fact that it is a French language class, students had to summarize two chapters of the book *Les stratégies d'apprentissage*, by Paul Cyr. As they are Language students, this book is important in their education, so that they learn about strategies for learning languages, which can help them during graduation, as students, and, in the future, as teachers. To do so, students wrote a summary to learn about this topic, as suggested by Gere (2019).

Thus, the elaboration of written productions is seen as a means of deepening reflections initiated in the classroom and contributes to reinforce learning, since writing has both an epistemic character, which allows the appropriation of knowledge and the construction of knowledge, as well as a heuristic character, which favors discovery and creation. Blaser, Lampron and Simard-Dupuis (2015, p. 51) emphasize the importance of these functions in the school context, at all levels of education, presenting as the responsibility of teachers the task of proposing writing activities aiming at the epistemic potential, in situations of writing that favors learning and formalization of knowledge. Thus, at the end of the university course, since they have sufficiently experienced the epistemic and heuristic potential of writing, students will want to continue to use it in their lives. It is in this sense that the production of summaries in the French II course can be understood as a training activity that favors learning and the formalization of knowledge.

To show this path, we will first present the theoretical assumptions that guided our study and describe the context of the university course; then, we will expose the written production activities proposed to students of the French II course<sup>3</sup> and the analysis of some of their productions, illustrating how the teaching and learning of the genre summary and the act of summarizing in an LE occurred in this context.

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<sup>2</sup> The international project “The development of academic literacy skills, a key to university success” (CAPES-DFAITD) showed the mismatch between textual genres produced in high school and during graduation (LOUSADA; BUENO; DEZUTTER, 2019).

<sup>3</sup> Equivalent to level A1.2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – CEFR (Conseil de l'Europe, 2001).

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Within the SDI approach, in the context of French language teaching, especially L1, researchers from the Didactic Unit at the University of Geneva proposed the work with textual genres (DOLZ; NOVERRAZ; SCHNEUWLY, 2001; DOLZ; GAGNON; VUILLET, 2016) for the development of students' language capacities. This proposal was adopted in Brazil for the teaching of first language, as can be seen in several studies (MACHADO, 2010; BUENO, 2011; PEREIRA, 2014), and also for foreign languages (CRISTOVÃO, 2010; LOUSADA, 2010). In our study, we use this approach to work with academic textual genres and, therefore, we will present some concepts, such as: didactic model of the genre, language capacities, in addition to new experiences that are being developed by Geneva researchers, for example, itineraries for writing.

The didactic model (MD), proposed by De Pietro et al. (1996) and reviewed by De Pietro and Schneuwly (2003), is a concept linked to didactic engineering. It aims at describing a textual genre, detailing its potential objects for teaching; in this way, it provides the basis for the elaboration of didactic sequences.

Four sets of data are used for the elaboration of a didactic model (DE PIETRO; SCHNEUWLY, 2003): the social practices of reference: based on linguistic and discursive analysis, the elements that appear regularly or occasionally in empirical texts are identified as being constitutive of the genre; existing literature of the genre; the students' language practices, which mainly describe those aspects of textual genre that can be difficult to be learned by a certain group of students; and finally, school practices: the ways to teach this textual genre. Based on this information, the didactic model will be composed of: 1. definition of genre; 2. parameters of the communicative context; 3. specific contents; 4. global textual structure; 5. language operations and their linguistic aspects (DE PIETRO; SCHNEUWLY, 2003). These characteristics can also be presented in the form of: i) orientation base, which describes the objectives of the genre, the parameters of the communication situation and the thematic content used; ii) planning, divided into macro-planning and micro-planning; iii) textualization, composed of the description of verbal cohesion, lexical/grammatical cohesion, connection mechanisms, lexicon, the most frequent enunciative positioning markers and the most frequent modalizations in this textual genre (DOLZ; GAGNON; VUILLET, 2016).

To identify the characteristics of the textual genre "summary", we use the textual architecture model (BRONCKART, [1999] 2012), as it allows us to make the contextual, discursive and linguistic-discursive analyzes of the texts, allowing items 4, 5 and / or ii) and iii) mentioned in the paragraph above. This model of textual analysis was proposed by Bronckart ([1999] 2012, 2006, 2019) and is based on raising hypotheses about the physical and socio-subjective context of the production of texts. Then, enunciative-discursive analysis is conducted at three levels: general text infrastructure, textualization mechanisms, enunciative mechanisms.

The characteristics of the textual genres that we detail above and that compose the MD are integrally linked to the concept of language capacities (DOLZ; PASQUIER; BRONCKART, 1993). These are divided, for didactic purposes only, into three: action capacities, related to the ability of the text producer to represent the production situation for himself, in other words, understanding who writes, for whom, when and for what purpose; discursive capacities, which show the ability to use thematic content, its organization and the discursive types and sequences used; linguistic-discursive capacities, related to textualization, in other words, the use of lexical/grammatical and verbal cohesion, connection, modalities and voice management when producing an oral or written text. In the conception of Socio-discursive Interactionism, it is understood that these phenomena and aspects occur together in the textual production and always in a dialogical way.

The work with textual genres aiming to the development of language capacities can be carried out through the application of didactic sequences (DOLZ; NOVERRAZ; SCHNEUWLY, 2001), which have been used in many works in Switzerland and Brazil. More recently, some researchers (COLOGNESI; DOLZ, 2017) have been interested in other ways of proposing work with textual genres, for example, through the application of writing itineraries (COLOGNESI, 2015). This teaching device was developed in a perspective of progression of textual production and is centered on teaching written textual genres. It unites the characteristics of “chantiers d’écriture” and writing workshops: the first brings improvements to the knowledge chosen through actions proposed by the teacher to deal focusing on specific aspects of the textual genre to be studied; the second, on the other hand, promotes a global improvement of the text, due to the debates and comments that peers make about the productions of other students (COLOGNESI; DOLZ, 2017, p.181).

According to Colognesi and Dolz (2017, p. 182), the device “writing itineraries” has three stages, which are considered as its levers: the actions of the teacher that address specific aspects of the genre to be learned, the evaluation by peers and the metacognition. The teacher’s actions can be composed of activities centered on obstacles inherent to the textual genres to be produced, addressing at least one language issue necessary for the desired written production, in the presentation of model texts of the studied genre so that its general organization is listed and described. The peer review is done through collaborative rereading that points out positive aspects of the text and changes to be made. These two types of activities alternate during classes. Finally, cognitive mediations are conducted throughout the process so that text producers (scripteurs, in the article) question themselves and explain their actions, strategies, their progress, etc. These other ways of working with the production of different textual genres seem interesting to us, as they are part of a didactic engineering (DOLZ, 2016) that is adapted to the varied teaching-learning contexts.

In our case, we developed a device for teaching written production in a university environment, which has similarities with the didactic sequence and with the “itineraries”, since we proposed a series of actions and activities for learning the genre summary but working with more than one textual genre and proposing several writing and reflection activities, as we will report below. In this sense, our device sought to put into practice a “Didactic Engineering” (DOLZ, 2016), considering the context in which it was implemented.

Since we considered the context of teaching written production at the university, we highlighted the process of summarizing or reducing semantic information, which Machado (2010) pointed out as important in the reading process. Starting from proposals by other authors, Machado (2010) suggests rethinking these approaches based on textual linguistics (SPRENGER-CHAROLLES, 1980), but within a socio-discursive interactionist framework. For this purpose, Machado (2010) proposes to use the possible processes of summarizing a text, differently from what was proposed by textual linguistics, as it considers the concept of text genre, which assumes that the context of production of the texts is taken into account, in other words: who produces the text? For whom? For what purpose? When? Where? Taking these issues into account, we see that, from the same basic text, different summaries can be proposed, if we consider the conditions of production of the texts (MACHADO; LOUSADA; ABREU-TARDELLI, 2004<sup>4</sup>). For example, if we think of a children’s book summary made by the same enunciator for a website for children and a website for adults, we will see that the summary of the same book will be different. In the first, the objective is to create children’s interest in the story / theme of the book, whereas for adults, the objective is to create an interest in the theme of the book in relation to its potential to children education, inciting, or not, the purchase. The summary could also be different, considering enunciators, different social locations, different

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<sup>4</sup> In this book, the work with the summary is interesting because it shows how, depending on different contexts of production (other enunciators, addressee and objectives), different summaries are produced.

moments, etc. In this perspective, Machado (2010) understands the contributions of textual linguistics as possible strategies to be developed by students to assist in the production of texts, however, without forgetting that the interaction situation, in other words, the context of production, is essential to determine the characteristics of the summary to be produced. According to her (MACHADO, 2010), these studies are relevant to contribute to the processes of comprehension and textual production based on genres, which are important, in our view, in the university context. It points to the existence of two types of strategies that are important for the summarization process: generalization, whereby several terms are replaced by one that names a common class representing them; and construction, which ensures the replacement of a sequence of propositions by a single proposition that can be inferred from them (MACHADO, 2010, p. 152-153), always linked to the characteristics of the textual production context, which can give characteristics completely different to the texts.

Regarding the teaching of written production in the university context, with the objective of supporting and guaranteeing the good performance of university students, we work in a perspective that understands the need to offer writing aids (FERREIRA; LOUSADA, 2016; LOUSADA, GUIMARÃES-SANTOS, 2018), inspired by what is proposed in the Writing Centers<sup>5</sup> in English-speaking universities and which were taken up in the Academic Literacy Laboratory (Laboratório de Letramento Acadêmico) of FFLCH-USP.

## STUDY CONTEXT

The undergraduate degree in Languages and Literatures at the University of São Paulo begins with the Basic Cycle, consisting of 8 courses on linguistics, studies in Portuguese, literature and classical studies, offered during the first year. Its purpose is to provide the basis for subsequent studies.

After this first year, the undergraduate student can choose a major, in a foreign language or in linguistics, according to their grades in the Basic Cycle, since each major has a limited number of places. For example, the French language major has 100 vacancies, divided into morning and evening periods. However, the 850 students who enter the College of Language and Literatures each year can take the major in Portuguese.

French language studies therefore begin in the third semester of the undergraduate course and no prior knowledge of the language is required from students. In French I, students learn to introduce themselves, describe their daily lives, conduct dialogues linked to daily activities, with the aim of reaching the level A1.1 of the CEFR<sup>6</sup>. In French II, the focus is on learning how to count past events, but contents such as: talking about your plans for the future and avoiding repetitions, making lexical/grammatical cohesion etc., are also learned. This latter linguistic-discursive content is essential in university studies, as it permeates the production of most of the written academic texts. For this reason, we have chosen to bring a reflection on its teaching to this article. The textual genres expected to be worked on at this level are film synopsis, informal email, unusual news<sup>7</sup> and travel stories, in addition to other genres that may vary each semester. In addition, it is requested to produce a summary of a text on learning strategies, to contribute to the development of students and future teachers to theories arising from didactics. Among the genres we worked with, it should be noted that there are similar language operations between the film synopsis and the book summary, because, in both, the mastery of the summary process is expected.

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<sup>5</sup> Like, for example, the Sweetland Center for Writing at the University of Michigan: <https://lsa.umich.edu/sweetland>

<sup>6</sup> Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – CEFR, Conseil de l'Europe, 2001.

<sup>7</sup> The genre “fait divers” which is quite common in the francophone context.

To develop written production in French, several written production activities with different objectives are proposed, which demonstrates the intention to design devices appropriate to the teaching context. To do so, we put into practice the use of *Moodle*, an online learning platform, used as a virtual learning environment and support for face-to-face classes. It includes information and complementary exercises and the activities of written production to be done in autonomy.

In the next section, we detail how the work with the summarization process and the ways to avoid repetition in a text were done, focusing on the textual genres film synopsis and book summary.

## THE WORK WITH THE WRITTEN PRODUCTION IN THE FRENCH II COURSE

We designed a didactic device, in the French II course, which aims to develop written production through work with at least five different written text genres, articulating activities in the classroom and others on the *Moodle* platform. In this article, we will highlight the activities to work with the genres: film synopsis<sup>8</sup> and book summary, which enable learning the act of summarizing, through the following activities:

- Study of these textual genres and their most important aspects in the classroom, starting with activities on the context of production of these genres, essential to reflect, next, on macro and micro-planning, in other words, on textual organization and, finally, to select the relevant language aspects for textualization. At that moment, we observe, for example, the ways to summarize the information in a larger text, as well as the mechanisms to avoid repetition.
- Elaboration, in the classroom and in groups, of film synopses, in French, and activities that resemble “itineraries”, in which students socialize their texts, reflecting and discussing texts produced by other groups, through metacognitive activities.
- Writing, at home, a synopsis of a film, each student writes individually and submit via the Moodle platform. These texts are corrected and returned to students. They are worth 0.1 in the final average regardless of the number of mistakes or successes, as this form of assessment aims at valuing the practice of writing, encouraging students to write more, even if they make mistakes.
- Elaboration, at home, of a summary of two chapters of a theoretical book<sup>9</sup> on learning strategies. This theme is also discussed on in the course with the students. Although the chapters are read in French, the summary can be written in French or Portuguese; one of the objectives of requesting the summaries is for students to learn content about learning strategies, which can be useful throughout their French language learning path, from the perspective of “writing to learn” (GERE, 2019). To produce this text, students had a class on how to write the summary in French. It was a class in which the students observed summaries in French, discussed the genre and made small productions, in other words, it was a praxiological approach (BULEA BRONCKART; BRONCKART, 2010) of working with the genre. In addition, the professor established a partnership with the Academic Literacy Laboratory (LLAC) to conduct individual appointments.
- Appointment at LLAC, equivalent to 1 point in the grade, which means that the student who did not attend received a maximum of 9. In the appointment, the students could bring a draft from the text or questions, and he would benefit of the help of the consultants to better understand the genre, the context of production, etc.

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<sup>8</sup> The synopsis can be considered as a brief summary, which allows us to compare it with the genre summary.

<sup>9</sup> *Les stratégies d'apprentissage* by Paul Cyr, published in 1998.

- Writing of a synopsis and a summary, but in the context of evaluation, that is, with a grade. One of the texts requested in this final moment, was the summary of two chapters of Paul Cyr's book on learning strategies.

Through these varied activities of textual production, we aimed at developing students' language capacities in French: action, discursive and linguistic-discursive capacities. In terms of discursive capacities, we work on the act of summarizing, in other words, the summarization process and, also, the ways to avoid repetition, which are important language operations to produce the summary genre. The device as a whole was designed for the production of the genre summary within two specific production contexts: first, for a synopsis to be produced for a website that presents film summaries and, for the summary of the book chapters, for a site that presents books for university students. Therefore, the initial work with these production contexts was important for the final textual production, which depended on this understanding.

In addition, in the classroom, oral and written textual genres were used in comprehension, such as movie trailers, articles, etc., to put students in contact with the language in use, in contexts where the discursive and linguistic aspects to produce summaries are required. In some of these comprehension activities, students were asked to summarize the contents, thus working on the summary process, but always considering the context of production. Speaking activities were also proposed, which requested linguistic, discursive aspects and adaptation to the communication situation, to prepare students to produce the film synopsis and the book summary. For work with language operations linked to synthesizing and summarizing, some aspects such as lexical/grammatical cohesion were worked on, especially ways to avoid repetition, linguistic-discursive aspects considered important for the elaboration of genres such as the synopsis and the summary, both required in the course. To support activities to produce summaries, students performed exercises proposed by *Grammaire des Premiers Temps*, a book adopted for French I and II, and, on the Moodle platform, online exercises on the contents studied in the classroom were available. These actions were intended to lead students to study and reinforce morphological, syntactic, lexical aspects, among others, even more because this course is about learning a foreign language, which is not mastered by students. Finally, we highlight that, at various moments of learning, both in the classroom, with the socialization of the written productions of the film synopsis and subsequent evaluation by colleagues, or in the appointments at LLAC, metacognitive activities were proposed, so that students could learn better the genre and better understand its functioning, consciously.

All these activities constitute the path for learning the genre summary in French II, mainly focused on the development of language operations to avoid repetition and to resume elements, in addition to the account of past facts, which we do not describe in this article<sup>10</sup>. Considering the work with the genre, we understand that this proposal is closer to the "itineraries" for writing than to the didactic sequence, because: - it did not start from an initial production, although several intermediate productions of summaries in different contexts have been requested; - it proposes work with various genres and diverse activities, including metacognitive ones, for textual production.

In the table below, we show the work done with the text genres requested throughout the semester and which require the use of the act of summarizing: the synopsis and the summary. We show the activities carried out to teach how to produce these genres, as well as the characteristics of the work to accompany the development of the students' language capacities, knowing that the synopsis was the first genre to be worked on, and the summary, although it was the object of activities in the middle of the semester, was requested as textual production for evaluation only at the end of the semester.

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<sup>10</sup>The work with language operations related to reporting past facts was presented in XXXX and Amorim, 2014.



To conduct the activities described above, we used an inventory of the characteristics of the genres, as in the MD. We described the language capacities requested for the production of the students and that should be developed throughout the activities. In the table below, we detail the characteristics of these textual genres, related to the language capacities necessary to produce them.

**Table 1** - Requested genres, activities conducted and their characteristics

<b>Genre</b>	<b>Proposed activities</b>	<b>Characteristics of the work with each activity</b>
Synopsis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation of the genre and the production situation in the classroom. Activities on genre in the classroom.</li> <li>- Written production in the classroom, with feedback from other groups.</li> <li>- Written production via Moodle, with indications that encourage reflection on language and genre, worth 0.1 in the final grade.</li> <li>- Test/evaluation 1, with the possibility of discussing errors in LLAC appointments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussions with the whole class and in groups, seeking to make students aware of the context of production of the genre, its characteristics, etc. Students produce synopses in groups and read texts from other groups.</li> <li>- The written productions inserted in Moodle are corrected by the class consultants (more advanced students), to promote a reflection on the genre.</li> <li>- The errors of the written productions (in the tests/ evaluations) regarding the genre are discussed with the professor or in LLAC appointments</li> </ul>
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation of the genre and the production situation in the classroom.</li> <li>- Activities about the genre in the classroom.</li> <li>- Individual appointment at LLAC, with the possibility of discussing genre and errors.</li> <li>- Written production (summary on a page of two chapters in a book) submitted for evaluation with a score from 0 to 10.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussions with the whole class and in groups, seeking to make students aware of the context of genre production, its characteristics, etc.</li> <li>- The discussion with the LLAC consultant takes place before the submission of the final version and the student receives 1 point for the first appointment, but he can return more than once.</li> <li>- Genre correction and feedback are given by the professor.</li> </ul>

Source: Elaborated by the authors

**Table 2** - Requested text genres and language capacities

<b>Genre</b>	<b>Action capacities (CA)</b>	<b>Discursive capacities (CD)</b>	<b>Linguistic-discursive capacities (CLD)</b>
Synopsis	Journalist, distributor or film producer writes a summary of the film so that people decide whether they want to see it. The text is published on a website or a specialized magazine.	Short text, organized to report the main events of the film, summarizing them, synthesizing them and following the order of the facts, but without revealing the end.	Use of verbs in the present and anaphoric elements to ensure lexical/ grammatical cohesion without repeating the names of the characters.
Summary	Journalist, editor who writes a summary of the book so people can decide whether they want to read it or not. The text is published on a website or a specialized magazine.	Short text, organized to summarize the main contents of the book, summarizing them. Not revealing the ending applies depending on the type of book.	Use of verbs in the present and anaphoric elements to ensure lexical/ grammatical cohesion without repeating the authors' names or other frequent terms in the original text. Insertion of voices of the author of the main text, explicitly or implicitly.

Source: Elaborated by the authors

In the table above, we see that there are several similarities between the film synopsis and the book summary, concerning the language capacities necessary to produce them. It is mainly linked to the act of summarizing and synthesizing, as a language operation, that these two genres have more points in common. As both genres share the fact that they require students to master the summarization process and be able to avoid repetition, they were chosen as some of the main genres to work with in class. Despite sharing the act of summarizing, these genres have different production contexts, which determine several of their characteristics. This was widely discussed with students, so that they could adapt it to other situations of producing summaries at the university.

Next, we will see a comparative analysis of the film synopsis, written at the beginning of the semester, and the summary, produced at the end of the semester. Our analysis seeks to verify the development of discursive and linguistic-discursive capacities linked to the act of summarizing between the production of both genres, at the beginning and at the end of the semester. We selected the synopses and summaries to be analyzed as follows: firstly, we identified the students who produced the summaries in French, since this genre could be written in Portuguese or in French, according to the students' linguistic level; we looked for their synopses that had been written in French, like those of all the other students. Therefore, we will show, in the next section, the analysis of synopses and summaries of five students.

## **APPOINTMENTS AT LLAC**

Writing assistance is a tutoring or consultation service that consists of a meeting between the consultant of the Academic Literacy Laboratory (LLAC) and one or two students, in which it is possible to clarify doubts about the textual genre to be produced and / or to have their text read and commented on by the consultant. The LLAC consultants are trained to be able to exercise this activity and some of them even conduct master's and / or doctorate research in the field of academic literacy studies.

In this context, there is a partnership with the French II course, in which students are invited to use the services of LLAC and, if they do so, they guarantee a point of the grade referring to the textual production brought to the appointment. During the appointment, one of the main doubts of students about the genre to produce was the choice of thematic content to be used in the summaries. They questioned the consultants about how they could choose the most relevant topics for the summaries, which shows us that, in fact, the selection between essential and less important contents is essential for the writing of the summary. In addition, students hesitated and asked for confirmation about the need to insert an appreciation of the summarized work. To assist them in this matter, the consultants discussed the genres summary and book review and their production contexts, pointing out their differences.

To clarify doubts about what were the most relevant contents, during the appointments, the consultant suggested the realization of an oral summary of the text read with the following production situation: as an undergraduate student, they had to summarize the content of the text for another students of Language and Literatures College of another major, aiming to explain to him what are strategies and learning in a maximum time of 5 minutes. When they put themselves in this situation, the students understood which ideas of the main text were the most essential to compose a summary, because they knew for whom they were writing, for what purpose, in which social place, etc.

We also emphasize that some students enrolled in French II, who did not write their summaries in French and therefore did not have their productions analyzed in this article, when carrying out their appointments, in addition to clarifying doubts about the textual genre to be produced, also used the LLAC service to ask questions about the text to be summarized because they had doubts about the vocabulary or

sentence structure when reading a theoretical text in French. In this situation, we see how important the act of summarizing and the summarization process are for reading with understanding and, therefore, we adhere again to the perspective “writing to learn” (GERE, 2019). This aspect reinforces the importance of spaces in which students can feel safe to clarify doubts about the most varied aspects of textual production in a university context, since in order to write summaries the understanding of the original text is crucial.

## ANALYSIS OF TEXTS PRODUCED BY STUDENTS

For our analysis, we tried to identify whether students developed language capacities (action, discursive and linguistic-discursive) within the device we implemented. Although we have observed the development of the three language capacities, in this article, due to lack of space, we will highlight the development of discursive and linguistic-discursive capacities, through the strategies to summarize. As we said, we believe that it is important to reflect on the contributions of some textual linguistic studies on the processes of summarization and their articulation to the perspective of Socio-discursive Interactionism, which considers that textual production is completely dependent on the context in which it takes place, in other words, taking into account the enunciator of the text, the addressee, the objective, the social place and the moment.

As Machado (2010) points out, in the reading process with understanding, the reader would do a summary process, retaining the basic information and removing the accessories. As mentioned earlier, this process is subject to understanding the context of textual production, in other words, understanding who writes, for whom, for what purpose in which social location and when, since the summary may vary, in terms of the thematic content used and the linguistic-discursive choices (MACHADO; LOUSADA; ABREU-TARDELLI, 2004). We consider this process essential in the act of summarizing and we try to work on it in our study. Machado (2010) also emphasizes that, to retain essential information and remove secondary information, it is necessary to use erasure and substitution strategies. Much of these strategies are focused on generalization, in other words, on the substitution of several terms by another that encompasses them. These strategies occur at the level of lexical/grammatical cohesion.

In addition, as we said, it was the linguistic-discursive objective of the semester to work on strategies to avoid repetition, through either lexical or grammatical cohesion. Therefore, we chose the category of lexical/grammatical cohesion to carry out our analyzes in this article, showing how students learn to replace nouns (lexical cohesion) or pronouns (grammatical cohesion) and, in some cases, how this contributed to the summarization process.

Before going on to the analysis, we remember that the synopsis was the first genre to be produced and it had to be written in French. The summary was written at the end of the semester and, because it is a complex genre for students in their second semester of French studies, it could be written in Portuguese or French. Therefore, for our analysis, we selected the synopses and summaries of the five students, named E1, E2, E3, E4, and E5, who wrote the summary in French.

E1, in his synopsis about the film *La môme*, uses pronominal anaphora (*elle, son, sa*) to avoid repeating the name of the character in the film. His synopsis had 199 words and the word *elle* was used 7 times to speak of the main character and a nominal anaphora *grande femme française* was also used. We realized then that there is not much variety of anaphoric forms used, although the use of the anaphora *grande femme française* reveals a certain degree of complexity in the generalization process, as it uses two attributes to characterize the character.

L'histoire de vie d'Édith Piaf, connue en France pour "La Môme", est une grande aventure dramatique et musicale. Le film commence à partir d'enfance à Belleville, où **elle** vit avec une famille pas fonctionnelle: **sa mère, qui** chante dans la rue et a des problèmes avec alcool, et **son père, qui** est un artiste toujours absent. Donc **elle** habite avec **sa grand-mère** au bordel. Quand **elle** est jeune, **elle** commence à chanter dans les rues de Paris et, rapidement, puisqu'**elle** a une voix forte et pas commun, **elle** devient la plus populaire chanteuse en France au XXe siècle. Pendant **elle** réussit dans la musique, **sa vie** est remarquée par les tragédies: un accident de voiture, que (sic) **lui** cause les douleurs horribles pendant toute la vie; la passion pour un boxer américain, que (sic) se finit subitement; la dépendance d'alcool et de la morphine. De "La Vie en Rose" à "Non, je ne regrette rien", en passant par "L'hymne à l'amour", nous pouvons connaître et sentir la vie d'**une grande femme française qui** a enchanté le monde avec sa musique. Pour son rôle comme Piaf, Marion Cotillard a gagné le Oscar, le Bafta et le César de meilleure actrice en 2008.  
 [Excerpt from the E1 synopsis (emphasis added by the authors)]

In the summary of the book made by E1, the word strategies is repeated four times in the first paragraph, but in the following paragraphs, E1 uses different words to talk about studies on teaching and learning in order to avoid repetition (recherches, études, courant). We can see that there is a development in the use of linguistic-discursive capacities, although there is still a lot of repetition of referents. In part, the repetition of the term strategies is expected, as it is the title of the book and the main subject of it. Even so, at times, this repetition seems to be avoidable.

Depuis les années 1970, on observe l'accroissement de l'intérêt pour trouver les meilleures manières de permettre aux apprenants l'acquisition d'une L2. Par conséquent, **plusieurs recherches** sont arrivées et **elles** ont centralisé sur l'apprenant leurs discussions. **Les premières recherches** remarquaient que l'efficacité de la méthode dépendait du travail des enseignants. Alors, **plusieurs courants** ont commencé à réfléchir sur la didactique d'apprentissage en L2. Ensuite, **des recherches** ont considéré l'autonomie des apprenants, en s'intéressant sur leurs caractéristiques comme l'âge, la motivation et la personnalité.

En 1975, les **études** de Stern et Rubin ont analysé le comportement et les traits sur les caractéristiques du bon apprenant de L2 afin de découvrir si leurs outils pouvaient aider les élèves qui avaient les difficultés d'apprentissage.

[Excerpt from the E1 summary (emphasis added by the authors)]

On the other hand, in E2 productions, we see that in the synopsis, he uses lexical (nouns) and grammar (pronouns) anaphora (in bold):

**Philippe** est un riche propriétaire d'hôtel **qui** est quadruplégié donc **il** besoin (sic) d'aide d'**un soignant**. C'est quand il embauche **Driss, un homme qui** n'a pas d'intérêt ni d'expérience avec ce type de travail, mais que (sic) **le** regarde (sic) comme une personne normale, même avec **son** handicap. Malgré le dur début **ils** arrivent à une amitié spéciale.

[ E2 synopsis (emphasis added by the authors)]

Student 2 uses several types of pronoun anaphora in his synopsis: *il, le, que*; however, the use of the relative pronoun *qui* still has unstable usage, since it is used once correctly and once incorrectly.

In his summary, E2, uses a pronoun anaphora (*elle*) and also elaborates a lexical (noun) anaphora to avoid the repetition of "strategies", calling them "concept": "L'auteur fait mention aux travaux d'autres chercheurs pour exposer **le concept** et les types de techniques au cours des dernières décennies" (Excerpt from the E3 summary, emphasis added). We see, therefore, that this student can use anaphors in both productions, and in the summary, he finds ways to rename the subject of the book to avoid repetition.

Student 3 uses several anaphors in his synopsis, avoiding repetitions and producing a synopsis with several cohesive elements through nouns and pronouns, as can be seen below:

Mon inconnu

Raphael connaît l'amour de sa vie, Olivia, quand **ils** étaient deux adolescents encore au collège. **Ils** se marient et **ils** vivent une grande histoire d'amour. **Raphael** devient un célèbre écrivain de romans de science-fiction, alors qu'**Olivia** laisse tomber **sa** potentielle carrière musicale pour **le** suivre et pour être à côté de **lui**. Un jour, soudain, **il** se réveille et toute **sa** vie a changé. **Il** est maintenant un professeur médiocre, tandis que **sa femme** est devenue une pianiste de renommée et reconnue dans le monde entier. En plus, **elle** ne **le** reconnaît même plus... Raphael doit, alors, reconquérir Olivia.

[ E3 synopsis (emphasis added by the authors)]

In his summary, student 3 uses noun anaphors, for example, *recherches*, *travaux*, *approche* to avoid repetition and assure text progress. In the excerpt below, we see the use of the demonstrative pronoun *celle*, which attests to a greater proficiency in the substitution of referents, through less usual pronouns. In addition, the student demonstrates another type of summarization process: the construction, in which he replaces the entire history of strategies told in the book, with the phrase: *Les classifications des stratégies sont devenues plus raffinées et précises au fil du temps*, which attests his mastery of the act of summarizing.

**Les classifications des stratégies** sont devenues plus raffinées et précises au fil du temps. **Les typologies** plus complètes comprennent : **celle** d'Oxford (1985, 1990), la plus longue et connue dans le domaine de l'enseignement des langues ; ensuite, **celle** de Rubin (1989), plus analytique et descriptive ; enfin, **celle** de O'Malley et Chamot (1987, 1990), la plus synthétique.

[Excerpt from the E3 summary (emphasis added by the authors)]

E4, in his synopsis, uses several pronoun anaphors to make his text progress and avoid repetition. When proposing a generalization, the student proposes a generic term (la chose), showing that he has not yet mastered more complex forms of nominal resumes.

Intouchables

**Philippe**, un monsieur **qui** a des très bonnes conditions, mais **qui** est tétraplégique, a besoin de quelqu'un pour l'assister le jour-à-jour. C'est quand **Driss**, un jeune homme marginalisé par **ses origines, sa façon de vivre et son lieu d'habitation** (la banlieu (sic) de Paris), **qui** n'a aucune formation pour être assistant, **le** devient, car **il** voit **Philippe** comme une personne comme toutes les autres, pas comme un handicapé **qui** doit être traité de façon différente. Au début, **ils** sentent la différence sociale qui existe entre **eux**, mais au long des mois et des moments passés ensemble, plein d'aventures et de moments drôles et d'autres pas tellement se passent et **ils** deviennent amis. Une amitié improbable, faite par hasard, devient **la chose** qui change leurs vies.

[ E4 synopsis (emphasis added by the authors)]

On the other hand, in the summary, student 4 repeats the word *stratégie*: there is no use of noun or pronoun anaphors to replace this term, but he uses pronoun anaphors to avoid the repetition of the names of the researchers mentioned. As we said, the fact that he does not replace the term *stratégies d'apprentissage* does not represent a problem to the text, because it is a keyword and the subject of the book studied. Even so, when some students demonstrate that they have constructed complex forms to replace it, we consider that there is a greater proficiency in this language capacity. On the other hand, this student uses the term "ouvrage" to refer to the book read, which shows that he has proficiency in

generalizations as a way of synthesizing information.

Aux États-Unis, la psychologie cognitive a beaucoup influencé, ce qui a originé (sic) une classification des stratégies en trois types : métacognitives, cognitives et socioaffectives, faite par **O'Malley et Chamot** (1990). Dans **cet ouvrage**, **ils** renforcent la distinction entre « acquisition » et « apprentissage », mais réfutent que l'apprentissage formel ne contribue pas à l'acquisition. **Ils** disent aussi qu'il existe une différence entre les stratégies d'apprentissage et les stratégies de communication.

[Excerpt from the E4 summary (emphasis added by the authors)]

In the synopsis of E5, we can see the use of cohesive elements such as possessive pronouns and nouns anaphors to write the summary of the film. We highlight the student's ability to synthesize in the first sentence, which contains the description of the main elements of the film.

Le prénom

*Une discussion chaleureuse à propos du choix de prénom pour **le fils de Vincent** parmi un **groupe des amis** va démarrer plusieurs révélations qui vont rendre **les invités** du rire au plaisir très rapidement. Tous les genres de blagues sont mises en place, dès les politiques, culturelles et surtout sur la petite bourgeoisie parisienne. **Les amis de Vincent** sont en colère à cause de **son choix** et vont essayer d'utiliser tous les arguments raisonnables pour **le** faire changer d'avis, **il** semble ne pas avoir du bon jugement pour choisir le prénom de **son fils**. Les opinions vont se partager et déclencher des déclarations épouvantables. C'est une comédie assez marrante qui rassemble beaucoup d'humeur et intelligence.*

[ E5 synopsis (emphasis added by the authors)]

In his summary, E5 finds cohesive elements to avoid the repetition of the word strategy, assigning it the value of a term, in addition to replacing it with pronouns. The word *terme* is generalizing, in the sense that it attributes a category to *stratégies*, contributing to the summarization process. Although there is a repetition of *stratégies* three times in the excerpt below, as we said, this is not a problem to the text, because *strategy* is a keyword.

Dans ce livre l'auteur précise ce qui est compris comme **stratégie** actuellement. **Le terme** est devenu d'usage commun dans les études universitaires et dans les recherches sur l'apprentissage des langues secondes (L2) et **il** fait référence non seulement à **des stratégies**, mais des techniques qui ont comme objectif atteindre (sic) une cible de façon efficace. En ce qui concerne des langues (sic), **les stratégies** consistent en un processus de traitement de l'information **qui** va rendre les apprenants capables d'acquérir, intégrer et réutiliser la langue.

[Excerpt from the E5 summary (emphasis added by the authors)]

If we compare the students' productions, we see that E2, E3 and E5 have a good mastery of lexical/grammatical cohesion, avoiding repetitions with more complex anaphors, which denote generalization or a more elaborate system of pronouns. E1 and E4, on the other hand, have greater difficulty in avoiding repetitions, although they also do it, but in a less varied way and with more simplified constructions. In general, the comparison between the synopses and the summaries of the students shows that there was a development of the textual organization, since the act of summarizing, synthesizing, takes place in a more pertinent way for the genre in the summary.

In our study, we observed that there was a development of students' language capacities: action, as well as discursive and linguistic-discursive. However, keeping the focus of this article, we will discuss the development of linguistic-discursive and discursive capacities. First, we observed a development of

discursive capacities, since the summaries had a textual organization more relevant to the genre than the synopses, showing a better proficiency in the act of summarizing. This occurred because there was a development of linguistic-discursive capacities, especially in the use of forms to avoid repetition, since the use of subject pronouns (*il, elle, ils, elles*) are more frequent in the synopsis and less in the summary, produced later. These words were replaced by a more complex system of pronouns, and also by generalizations and constructions that, in addition to avoid repetitions, contribute to the process of summarizing the text read. Although this greater complexity of the ways to avoid repetition is partly due to the constraints required by the genre in question (the synopsis is a more informal written genre, when compared to the summary produced in the university sphere), we believe that this greater refinement of the system of pronouns and of the ways to avoid repetition and to summarize, synthesize, was due to the work with these language operations in the didactic device during the semester. The activities of reflection on genre, on language operations and on French language - with the help of colleagues and the professor, of the corrections of texts submitted by Moodle and, also, of the appointments of the Academic Literacy Laboratory, with the help of tutors - were helpful for the development of students' language capacities.

Among the students whose texts we analyzed all attended the service of the LLAC, however, only one of them, student 5, brought a preliminary version of his summary. The other four students clarified doubts about the genre to be produced. When participating in LLAC appointments, students fill out a form that aims to investigate the role of tutoring in the production of the text brought by them for discussion. We analyzed the responses to this form, to understand their perception of the role of LLAC in their textual productions. The form consists of 14 questions, however, in this article, we will only provide answers to three of these questions.

One question seeks to investigate whether students believe that consulting LLAC helped them in writing the text. The five students replied that they agreed or totally agreed with this statement. Another question seeks to investigate what was worked on in the service [*Cochez les phrases qui vous semblent vraies. "Dans cette consultation, nous avons travaillé les aspects suivants ...*], proposing a series of options that can be chosen at the same time. Four students affirm that, during the service, they worked on: recognition of the characteristics of the genre to be produced, choice of contents, discursive and linguistic aspects thinking about the addressee. Three students claim to have worked on the organization of the text, on the choice of content relevant to the textual genre.

Another question seeks to understand whether students, after the appointment, feel able to perform the same operations as the question above [*Cochez les phrases qui vous semblent vraies. "Après avoir fait cette consultation, je me sens capable de..."*]. Four students say they feel able to choose content relevant to that textual genre and organize their text. Three students said they feel able to make choices and think about the addressee and reviewing their text alone.

Although we have not made an analysis of all the students' answers, which is not the focus of this paper, we can infer, from the brief indications that we present, that LLAC seems to have played an important role in the textual production, having contributed, in most cases, to students learning.

In addition, it is worth highlighting the role of continuous evaluation, represented by the ways of correcting written productions (0.1 point in the final average for each text inserted in Moodle, without connection with mistakes or successes) and by stimulus offered to students who attended LLAC, who obtained 1 point of their final average.

## CONCLUSIONS

In this article, we focused on presenting the work with writing in French during a semester of the undergraduate course in French Languages and Literatures, aiming to develop the language capacities of students, in FL, to produce the textual genre “summary”. In order to do this, we exposed the work on language operations related to the process of summarizing the ideas of a text (MACHADO, 2010) and the avoidance of repetitions, but adopting these strategies from a socio-discursive interactionist point of view. Thus, we described the device used in a French II course, through activities in the classroom and on the *Moodle* platform, which keeps similarities with the proposal of didactic sequence (DOLZ; NOVERRAZ; SCHNEUWLY, 2001) and of itineraries of writing (COLOGNESI; DOLZ, 2017). Despite these similarities, our device is designed for a specific teaching context, as proposed by Didactic Engineering (DOLZ, 2016). In addition to showing the device designed and analyzing the students’ productions, we were also able to discuss the role of the Academic Literacy Laboratory (LLAC) in the development of students’ language capacities.

Thus, the variety of activities we proposed and the spaces in which they took place (in the classroom, on the *Moodle* and in LLAC) fits our device in a Didactic Engineering (DOLZ, 2016) of teaching of written production and it is similar to the Itineraries proposed by Colognesi and Dolz (2017), in the sense that it combines activities and strategies for students to reflect on the texts produced and develop their language capacities, through a varied range of learning spaces and interlocutors (professor, course consultants and LLAC tutors). This device enabled the development of students’ language capacities, as we have seen, with a focus on discursive and, mainly, linguistic-discursive capacities, represented by the summarization process and the ways to avoid repetition.

However, in addition to learning the summary process and ways to avoid repetition, we can say that there was learning of the very content of the book to be summarized. In other words, when reading the students’ summaries, we see that they often used the generalization and construction processes to condense two chapters on one page. As we pointed out, students synthesized the history of the classifications of learning strategies in one sentence (*Les classifications des stratégies sont devenues plus raffinées et précises au fil du temps.*), they summarized the scope of this field also in one sentence (*Le terme est devenu d’usage commun dans les études universitaires et dans les recherches sur l’apprentissage des langues secondes (L2)*), in addition to other procedures that they successfully use to remove superfluous information, keeping the essential, but always keeping in mind the addressee and the purpose of the text. To do this, we know that a mastery of discursive and linguistic-discursive capacities is not enough: first, it’s important to read with understanding, as Machado (2010) points out, without which the reformulated ideas would not be the same as the original book. In this sense, we can say that we are in the perspective of “writing to learn”, as advocated by Gere (2019) and we approach the authors who point out the epistemic function that writing can have.

Therefore, we can conclude that the experience with this didactic device provides:

- the association of two genres: the teaching-learning of the synopsis genre, at the beginning of the semester, as a way of raising awareness of the summarization process and avoiding repetition, followed by the genre summary, a more formal written genre, but which demands the mastery of similar language operations at the end of the semester;
- a series of reflection activities on genre and language, between the two moments, developed in different spaces: first in class, with exchanges with other students; then on the *Moodle* platform and, finally, on the Academic Literacy Laboratory;



- the help of different interlocutors: other students, in the classroom; the professor, in the correction of texts inserted in Moodle or the tutors of LLAC;
- incentives for written production, through the attribution of points for the effort of writing (0.1 for the texts inserted in Moodle), or 1 point for the presence in the Academic Literacy Laboratory;
- the insertion in the perspective of “writing to learn” other contents and in the epistemic function of writing.

Therefore, it seems to be an interesting alternative for the development of the language capacities necessary to produce the summary genre and the very act of summarizing, both of extreme importance for university students.

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