

# (INTER)FACES OF DIALOGUE

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# **Self-reference and reference to the other in the speech of two children and their parents**

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## **Abstract**

Our aim is to deal with the acquisition of self-reference by a bilingual child in French and Portuguese from Brazil and a monolingual child who speaks Portuguese. This research is based on a dialogic approach which considers that the child acquires and enters in the language through different genres. In Portuguese, the verbs can be used without the personal pronouns as the verbal endings make reference to the person. Our question is: Does the acquisition of self-reference and reference to the other happen similarly when the child is acquiring two languages at once? Moreover, the purpose is to spot how the interlocutors interact. The utterances were analyzed according to the presence of personal pronouns, proper nouns and null subject.

**Key-words:** language acquisition, bilingualism, dialogic approach

## **Introduction**

This work<sup>1</sup> will discuss the usage of personal pronouns referring to the first and second person in a Brazilian monolingual child (GUS.) and a French-Brazilian bilingual child (MAR.)

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<sup>1</sup> This study is part of a collaborative project between the groups NALíngua (Centre of Language Acquisition Studies, CNPq, Brazil) and DIAREF, which is coordinated by Professor Anne Salazar-Orvig (Sorbonne Nouvelle University).

We start from a dialogical approach for language acquisition, which considers that the child acquires language usage through their language practices and through their entrance into different genres. In the same way, we assume it is impossible to dissociate the dialogue's linguistic, cognitive (Bruner 1975), role of speech directed to the child (Bakhtin 1988), the process of language socialization (Ochs and Schieffelin, 1999) in the construction of a "grammar", which will gradually come closer to the adult's language (Tomasello 1992) and, at the same time, in the development of the child's discursive identity (Bakhtin 1984, 1991, 1992). We have therefore placed Bakhtin and the Circle (Del Ré et al. 2014a, 2014b) in a dialog with other authors who study the language acquisition process – since children's language was not a concern for Bakhtin – such as Bruner (2004a, 2004b), Anne Salazar-Orvig (2010a, 2010b, 1999) and François (1994, 2004, 2006).

This perspective makes us take into consideration, in the analysis, aspects in the data, which are intimately connected to language production, such as enunciation; social and historical formation of language; the sequence of utterances and the discursive movement; verbal and non-verbal elements; the situation of communication; the subject; the genres of discourse; alterity. In order to make it possible to reflect upon these issues, it is necessary to start from a non-static notion of language, as conceived here: live material, vehicle of ideological significations, socially and historically constituted.

In previous research (Del Ré 2010), it was observed that when A. (20-33 months) took part in interaction situations, which required a child's positioning in relation to others, there was an oscillation in the person marks. A. sometimes used the pronoun in the first person singular and sometimes in the third person singular; sometimes A. even produced sentences with a null subject.

This observation together with the studies of Morgenstern (2006) and Salazar- Orvig (2010) about the acquisition of pronouns in French made us question the way a bilingual child (MAR.), who speaks Portuguese from Brazil (PB) and French would use “eu/ você” and “je/ tu”<sup>2</sup> in her utterances. The acquisition of pronouns happens at around 3 years of age, when the child has already acquired a huge part of the grammar in her language. This could be explained by the underlying cognitive work, required for the child to use the pronouns. However, what is the relation between the appearance of these forms and the self-consciousness correlated to an explicit relation to others? “This usage of pronouns by the child also requires an ability of abstraction, representation, (self) designation. It is a complex system for a child as the pronouns change according to the condition of enunciation” (Morgenstern 2006, 10). Therefore, the question at stake is whether the acquisition of self-reference and reference to the other happens in the same way in the case of a bilingual child. Moreover, would it therefore be a relation between the child’s usage of pronouns (or not) and the constitution of her subjectivity?

Studies made about the acquisition of English as a First Language show that children omit the subject less than Italian, Portuguese and Brazilian children do. This could be explained, maybe, by the input from adults, providing a kind of model to these children. The input could explain part of what happens, but it is known that the acquisition process is much more complex than that, as there are many productions from children that are opposite to this explanation. For example, the fact that children in the process of acquisition of PB mark the plural in the noun instead of marking it in the definite article – form used by their parents and considered recurrent in the adults’ speech, in general (Hilário 2013).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> “I” and “you” in Portuguese and French respectively.

<sup>3</sup> In PB the mark of plural works differently from English because we mark it with “s” in both the article (definite or indefinite) and in the noun, for example “as bolas” (= the(s))

Some theories try to relate the fact that children produce non-grammatical utterances due to a limitation in *performance* and also to sensitivity to the characteristics of the *output*. Nevertheless, if all children are born with the same cognitive and memory ability, how can we explain the fact they do not treat some issues in the same way (the plural, for example)? Extending this thought to what particularly interests us in this work, to what extent is the explanation using the limitation of *performance* enough to explain what happens with the expression – oscillatory – of the subject? It seems that as in the case of the explanation about the input, it is one of the parameters that should be considered, among others. Thus, we intend to verify what the role of the input to the child represents in this process.

To answer these questions, we analyzed utterances from a bilingual child (MAR., 2;5.09 to 2;8.12) and from a monolingual child (GUS., 2;0.12 to 2;11.14) as well as the parents' and observers' utterances who interacted with these children. Personal pronouns, proper nouns and null subjects were observed.

### **First steps**

In order to understand this process we initially investigated some works about pronouns in French (Black 1982, Tamba 1994, Morgenstern 2006, Brigaudiot, Morgenstern 2003), in English (Chiat 1986, Cooley 1908), in Italian (Serratrice 2005, Grinstead 2000), in Spanish (Valian, Eisenberg 1996) and in Portuguese (De Lemos 2004, Duarte 1995, Guedes 2007,

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balls), form which is considered grammatically correct. However, it was observed that adults sometimes produce statements such as “as bola” (= the(s) ball), omitting the plural from the noun. On the other hand, it was equally observed that children have a tendency to mark the plural in the noun, omitting it from the article as in: “a bolas” (= the balls), probably because they consider that, the most important “plural” is in the noun.

Magalhães 2007, Roberts, Kato 1993, Kato 2003). Grinstead (2000) tries to explain what happens in the process involving pronominal usage claiming that usage of the subject function demands the control of verbal and case morphology. In this way, in the beginning of the acquisition process, a child does not understand that the grammatical function exists and that it is possible to find an explanation from Latin (the subject-argument can receive a nominative case). According to the author, it is only after the morphological acquisition of number and tense that the nominative position can be acquired. In addition, once more, it is not difficult to find counterexamples in the child's speech, which indicates that there is something in this process, which is not being taken into consideration.

In view of this, Serratrice (2005) did some research with 6 children between 1,07 and 3,03 years of age about the role of the pragmatic component in the pronoun acquisition process. As from the analyses of 15.928 utterances taken from available data in the website CHILDES and divided in MLU stages, Serratrice (2005) starts from a conception of discourse that unites the verbal content (word order, morphemes, prosodic information) to extra linguistic factors (shared knowledge, culture, cognitive aspects, memory). Considering that the subject (personal pronoun) is not mandatory in Italian, the speaker's decision to use the pronoun depends on the knowledge that he attributes to the other (shared knowledge) and the access to information within the context (linguistic and extra linguistic). The results show, different from previous work (Bates 1976) that even in MLU level 1, children produce between 16 and 23% of utterances with personal pronouns (subject function). The higher the MLU, the greater the number of personal pronouns used and they are, mainly, personal pronouns of the third person. However, when there is a high MLU, these pronouns are less used. In general, the lack of pronoun (or null subject) is associated with a known situation, implicit to the context and its usage is linked to situations in which there are several possible antecedents, in which there is ambiguity. This



indicates that Italian children go in the opposite direction “null subject/expressed subject” in a pragmatically pertinent manner, in this way, becoming sensitive to pragmatic-discursive impositions.

Although the works mentioned, among others, have raised relevant questions to the understanding of the pronominal acquisition process, it seems that the pragmatic aspect did not receive sufficient attention, which makes us believe, in agreement with Serratrice (2005) that this is a fundamental element in this process.

In relation to Portuguese from Brazil (PB) and from Portugal (PE), as well as to Spanish and Italian – contrary to French or English, for example, but similar to Latin; these languages permit the omission of the subject mark in the production of utterances (null subject), considering that in these cases, the person is usually marked in the verb ending. In other words, the pronoun, in the case of these languages is optional because the verb ending would be sufficient to indicate the reference, different from French, for example, in which the pronoun or noun is necessary and can even be combined in utterances like “moi, je veux”, “mon papa, il veut” (“I, I want”, “my father, he wants”).

However, contrary to PE, PB has recently presented a significant change in oral productions used to refer to people, which implies in the activation of the third person singular (Duarte 1995, Guedes 2007, Magalhães 2007, Roberts and Kato 1993, Kato 2003, among others). It seems we are seeing a return in the usage of personal pronouns and a decrease in the null subjects. Taking the verb *eat* as an example:

<b>BEFORE</b>	<b>AFTER</b>	<b>ENGLISH<sup>4</sup></b>
Eu <u>com</u> o	Eu <u>com</u> o	I eat
Tu <u>com</u> es	Você <u>com</u> e	You eat

<sup>4</sup> In English, as the only difference is in the third person of the singular, with the addition of “s”, it is not possible to translate these differences we have in Portuguese from Brazil to English.

Ele <u>come</u>	Ele <u>come</u>	He eats
Nós <u>comemos</u>	A gente (Nós <u>comemos</u> *) <u>come</u>	We eat
Vós <u>comeis</u>	Vocês <u>comem</u>	You eat (plural)
Eles <u>comem</u>	Eles <u>comem</u>	They eat

This phenomenon – that does not exist in PE – is apparently due to the reduction of the second person in the singular – followed by the reduction of the second person in the plural and both would have led to a third in the paradigm of verbal flexion of PB: a reduction of the first person in the plural. Here there are some of the reductions:

- disappearance of “tu” (you/singular), “vós” (you/plural), “nós” (we), especially in the oral language (in the written language it is possible to find them);
- appearance of “você/vocês” (you for singular and plural) instead of “tu” (you for singular) and “vós” (you for plural) and “a gente” (we) in the place of “nós” (we);
- reduction from 6 verbal forms to 3 forms.

Therefore, it seems we are facing a new panorama in PB: a slight decrease in the production of null subjects. With the reduction of marks, which distinguished the people in the verbs, pronouns have had to reappear in the production (particularly in the oral production) and they seem to have become more stable. What we see in adults’ language is thus a production, which is somehow “chaotic” because of lots of individual differences and these changes are not found in older children whose grammar has already been “fixed” in childhood – period when the reduction in verbal paradigms was in process.

The most recent studies about pronoun acquisition and null subject in PB by children show that the production is equally “chaotic” (Magalhães 2007), but with an increase in the production of pronouns and a decrease in null subjects, which would make PB become detached from the PE, Spanish

and Italian. This could indicate that the “new generation” had a different input and this could be used as a clarification for the observed changes. However, would it be the case?

This “chaos” also seems to reflect in some of the uses: for example, in reference to the first person singular, we still see the null subject together with verbs in the past and some of them in the present; however, we believe that it is necessary to study this issue further.

### **Theoretical perspective**

Research interested in bilingual acquisition has been occupying a significant space. The concept of bilingualism, itself, is already controversial as there is a huge number of studies about this issue in different areas (such as Education, Applied Linguistics, Neurolinguistics, and Psycholinguistics, among others). For each of them it is possible to find a different definition for the term, as well as for what would be investigated when we talk about bilingualism.

There is an agreement that bilingual acquisition refers to the acquisition of two or more languages during childhood, but there is no consensus about the various situations in which it can happen or how we could categorize them. We are going to list some examples: McLaughin (1978) is usually a reference when we discuss the simultaneous or successive acquisition: the first is characterized by the input of two languages at the same time before the age of three and the second is characterized by the input of the second language after the age of three. Houwer (1995), realizing that the first category created by McLaughin was too broad, distinguished its delimitation claiming that when a child is exposed to two languages since birth, she would have two first languages. Whereas the situation in which regular exposure to a second language happened after the first month of being born, but before two

years of age, would be called second language bilingual acquisition. Nevertheless, it is really necessary to specify when the exposure to these two languages happened.

According to Houwer (1990), in the field of language acquisition studies, emphasis has been given, especially, to monolingual children's language development and, in the search for answers, there is a lot of research comparing children in this acquisition process in different languages – commonly called comparative research in order to find specific factors, which are different or similar in the acquisition of different languages (Slobin 1995, Berman 1986, and Mills 1986). However, in this kind of comparison, most psychological and social variables cannot be considered and, thus, it is not possible to be sure of the precise reasons for any differences or similarities found to be “patterns”. This is because they can be purely linguistic factors, but they can also be other factors, such as cognitive development, cultural or social environment, among others.

For these reasons, the bilingual child offers us a wide range of investigation possibilities. Still, it is essential to remember that we cannot extend our considerations about the bilingual child as adequate to the monolingual ones and vice-versa.

We understand that bilingualism in childhood usually happens, because the child has a necessity to communicate with people who have a very important role in their lives – parents, siblings, relatives, friends and teachers. While communication is effective and these people are important for the child, she will carry on being bilingual; when these factors become less important or are removed, the child will naturally become monolingual (Grosjean 1982).

There is much research, mainly in the psycholinguistic area that attempts to understand how the bilingual person's brain works: which side the languages are located and which areas are activated when one or another language is spoken and/or heard. Other research also attempts to answer the

question about a bilingual person's proficiency (how much is required in order to have productions, which define if a child is a “*real*” or “*ideal*” bilingual speaker).

In our work, these points are irrelevant as our interest is to know how the bilingual child deals with the two languages she is exposed to and our questions would not be answered considering the aspects mentioned before. This is because we understand the language as being social, part of the subject and the culture, always in social interactions. Therefore, for us, what matters is to know in which socio-cultural conditions bilingual interactions happen – those which help to constitute the child's subjectivity, seen as an active subject in the language acquisition process – and what kind of interaction encourages bilingualism production.

We also take into consideration the assertions made by Grosjean (2001, 4) who believes that bilingual people have two ways of communicating, depending on their need. This means that they use the monolingual mode and the bilingual one, depending on the participants, the situation, the kind of language, etc. In fact, they adapt to the situation they are in. When they interact in monolingual situations (for example, when somebody does not speak both languages), the tendency is that they communicate in only one language; if they are among other bilingual people, they will probably mix their two languages. Reaffirming the position we have already called attention to previously, it is possible to explain these communication situations considering, in Bakhtinian studies, that the subject is constituted by the other and his utterance is responsive and thus, to assure the interaction, the child (considered the subject “I”, in this case) answers to the “other” with whom he speaks, as it is constituted by this “other” person. According to Grosjean (2010, 125):

Bilinguals use their languages for different purposes, in different domains of life, with different people. Different aspects of life often require different languages. Contexts and domains trigger different attitudes, impressions, and behaviors, and

what is seen as a personality change due to language shift may have nothing to do with the language itself.

At this point it is worth thinking that bilingualism in its communicative instances in which heterogeneous discourses are employed even if without any apparent combinatory rule. After all, language was not born ready. On the contrary, it continues its construction process since its appearance through the dynamics of discursive genres. Bakhtin (2000, 251 and 254) claims that:

[...] the language participates in life through concrete utterances that make it true, in the same way as the life participates in life through the utterances. [...] the utterances configure types of discursive genres and they work in relation to the others, as “chains of transmission” between the history of society and the history of language.

The narrow bond that Bakhtin verifies between discourse and utterance shows the need to think about the discourse in the utterance context of communication and not as units of linguistic structure. “*Utterance*” and “*discourse*” assume the dialogical dynamics in the exchange among discursive subjects in the process of communication. Hence, the importance of the communicative context to assimilate this repertoire.

Talking about culture inevitably means discussing the issue of genres and in their cronotopic relation because the interaction always occurs between subjects in a specific space and time. The acquisition of one language, from this point of view, means to enter in a sociocultural universe. In the case of bilingual subjects, they enter, at least, two universes (two languages, two different cultures, which cohabit in constant dialog – in the ample sense given by Bakhtin – constant).

Considering the fact that two cultures are mobilized by the bilingual subject, it interests us to observe, as mentioned, how a child deals with them

also in terms of the constitution of their subjectivity by the language, more specifically in the usage and/or absence of pronouns in their speech (Bakhtin 1993, 1997, Bakhtin/ Voloshinov 2006, Voloshinov 1973).

When referring to the modifications of the cited discourse, Voloshinov (1973) indicates that subject individuality can be expressed objectively or subjectively. The author names them *content-analyzing modification* and *texture-analyzing modification* and explains the differences:

For the first modification, the speaker's individuality is a factor only as it occupies some specific ideational position (epistemological, ethical, existential or behavioral), and beyond that position (which is transmitted in strictly referential terms) it has no existence for the reporter. There is no wherewithal here for the speaker's individuality to congeal into an image. The opposite is true of the second modification, in which the speaker's individuality is presented as subjective manner (individual or typological, as manner of thinking and speaking, involving the author's evaluation of that manner as well. Here the speaker's individuality congeals to the point of forming an image (Voloshinov 1973, 132-133).

In relation to the texture-analyzing modification, Voloshinov (1973, 128) emphasizes that subjectivity can be learned in the words and in the manner of speaking of the other, which, introduced specifically in the indirect construction, suffers an “estrangement”, being, oftentimes, placed within quotation marks. The indirect discourse modifications contemplate, the issue of the subject – one giving importance to “what” the other person says, the other revealing, yet, “how” someone says something.

Nevertheless, the two meanings of the word individuality have to be emphasized:

To avoid misunderstandings, a rigorous distinction must always be made between the concept of the individual as natural specimen without reference to the social world (i.e., the individual as object of the biologist's knowledge and study), and the concept of individuality, which has the status of an ideological-semiotic superstructure over the natural individual and which, therefore, is a social concept. These two meanings of the word “individual” (the natural specimen and the person)

are commonly confused, with the result that the arguments of most philosophers and psychologists constantly exhibit *quaternion terminorum*: now one concept is in force, now the other takes its place (Voloshinov 1973, 34).

Based on Bakhtin's ideas, we consider that the subjectivity is what differentiates one from the other, it means taking what pleases one in the other's discourse, which I have contact with, reformulating the necessary to make possible the world I take for me. It is from the awareness start through the entrance in the First Language and the subjectivity constitution in this language, which is possible to search other "doors" and meanings. One of the possibilities that we believe is opened with this subjectivity, is the development of different identities, according to the various relations established by the subject. The identity is intrinsically connected to the subjectivity as the first comes from the second; it is what identifies the subject with the other, it is what brings them closer to one another in a relation of the subject's search for something that captivates him and approximates him, in some way, from the other.

Let us say then that each "singular act" – each manifestation in the form of language, of dialogue, of discourse – is marked by the speaker's subjectivity, revealing a subject who enunciates himself/herself, who manifests himself/herself, who takes a stand with regard to other discourses. We believe the manifestation of subjectivity happens, thus, in the singularity of the act (Del Rè et al. 2012). Nevertheless, the traces left by the speaker in his/her discourse do not reveal all that constitutes him/her as a subject – they could not do it, due to the fact that the utterance is inserted in a determined space and time, as an answer to another utterance.

Thinking about bilingual children, due to the fact bilingualism is a controversial concept, and because of the subject from this research, we understand that a child is bilingual when she was exposed to two languages at the same time since her birth in the familiar environment (Houwer 1990).



Talking about culture inevitably means discussing the issue of genres and in their cronotopic relation because the interaction always occurs between subjects in a specific space and time. The acquisition of one language, from this point of view, means to enter in a sociocultural universe. In the case of bilingual subjects, they enter, at least, two universes.

Considering the fact that two cultures are mobilized by the bilingual subject, it interests us to observe, as mentioned, how a child deals with them also in terms of the constitution of their subjectivity by the language, more specifically in the usage and/or absence of pronouns in their speech.

### **Methodological issues**

In this work, we bring the data from GUS. (monolingual, Brazilian), from 2;0.12 to 2;11.14 years of age, who was recorded once a month during one hour in situations of natural interaction with his parents. This data will be used to discuss the data of MAR. (bilingual, French-Brazilian, from 2;5.09 to 2;8.12, who was equally recorded in daily life's interactions with the father (in French) and with the mother (in Portuguese). MAR. lives in France and speaks Portuguese at home with her mother, her sister and her babysitter; French is used with the father and at school.

Both corpus were totally transcribed in the CLAN/CHAT, a program freely provided by the database CHILDES. It is necessary to claim that our aim is to do qualitative research, based on the data of two children and a quantitative part will be included to understand the results better.

Therefore, for each recorded section, we searched for elements which we would like to observe about the child's language to address the other: the reference to the person, the pronouns, the verbs, the positioning in relation to the other.

Utterances in which the first and second person pronouns expected, a potential function of the subject, were analyzed – i.e., when these pronouns could appear in this function but did not, considering:

- the speaker
- the referent
- the expected pronoun / possible: I (je/eu)/ you (tu/você)
- the produced form: a pronoun (PRO), another form, such as their own name, (OUT) or the omission of the expected/ possible element in the function of the subject (ZERO)
- the produced pronoun

### **Data<sup>5</sup> and discussion**

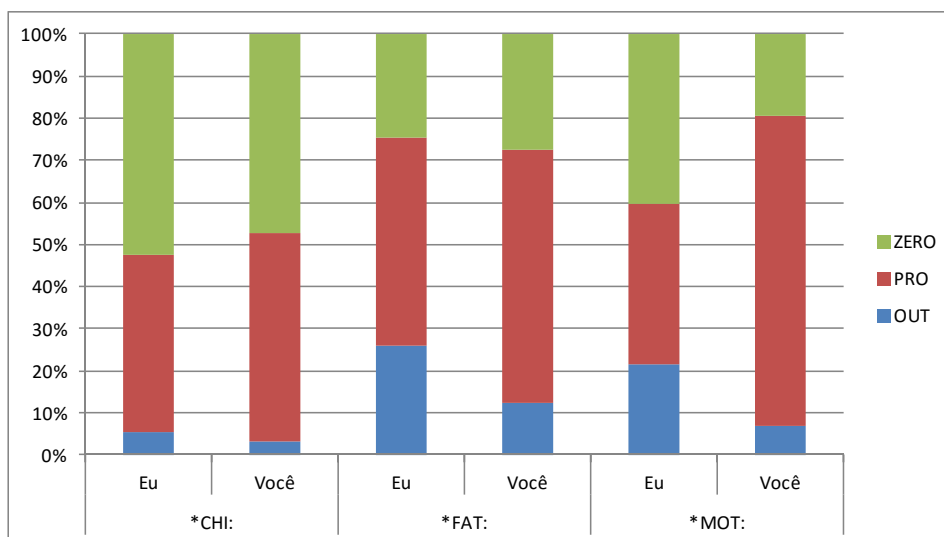
We analyzed all GUS.'s utterances as well as those of his parents, in a total of 3.329 utterances from the child (CHI), 3080 from the father (FAT) and 1217 from the mother (MOT). Out of this total, 1215 utterances were analyzed using the categories mentioned above: 357 from CHI, 567 from FAT and 291 from MOT. A total of 9856 utterances were analyzed from MAR. and her parents: 2995 from CHI, 2413 from FAT and 2802 from MOT. Using the categories, we analyzed 370 from CHI, 598 from FAT and 594 from MOT.

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<sup>5</sup> We would like to thank a lot Rosângela Nogarini Hilário for her help with GUS's analysis and the production of the graphs to a better view of the results.

Our first results can be seen below:

I. (Figure 1) – GUS.’s data



As can be seen, GUS. uses the mark of person in the verb in 50% of his utterances and, the use of other forms, such as his own name or “daddy” and “mommy” are used very little. It is also possible to verify that the parents use the pronoun “you” to refer to the child most of the time.

Now, let us look at the table with the productions that called our attention the most, which are in red and blue:

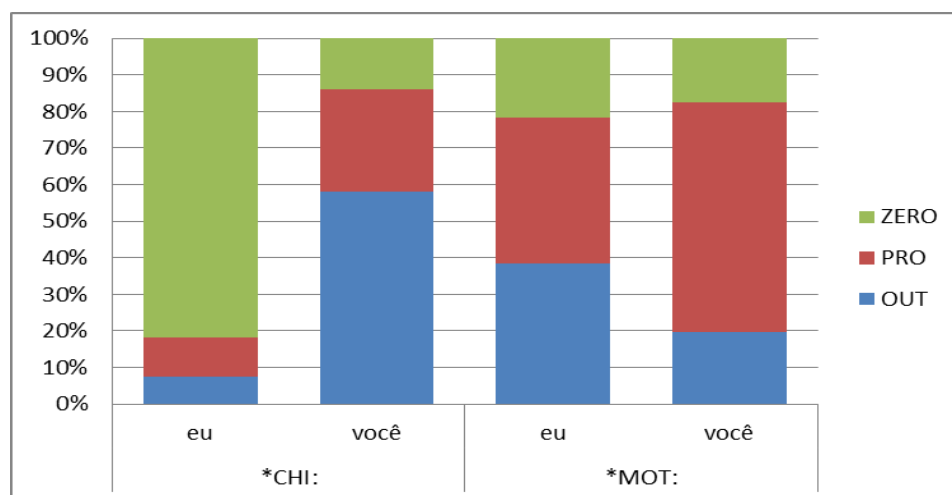
Table 1

Possible pronoun	Produced form		
	OUT	PRO	ZERO
*CHI:	15	157	185
Eu/Je (I)	13	<b>128</b>	<b>157</b>
Você/Tu (YOU)	2	<b>29</b>	<b>28</b>
*FAT:	100	317	150
Eu/Je (I)	56	<b>107</b>	53
Você/Tu (YOU)	44	<b>210</b>	97
*MOT:	36	176	79
Eu/Je (I)	23	<b>41</b>	<b>43</b>
Você/Tu (YOU)	13	<b>135</b>	36

We can notice that the parents use the personal pronoun almost exclusively to refer to the child, with the second person, while the child varies almost in the same way, using utterances with the pronoun and without it. In relation to the first person, the child uses the verb ending to mark the person more, i.e. without the pronoun, although there is a significant number of utterances using the pronoun of the first person. It can mean that he is already the author of his speech; he is able to mark the differences between him and the object of discourse, as well as him and his interlocutor.

At this moment, we can see the same figure about MAR.'s data:

II. Figure 2 – MAR.'s data with her mother



We can notice how different MAR.'s linguistic behavior is in comparison with GUS.'s, especially by the usage of only 10% of the utterances using the pronoun "I" and because she uses other forms (different from "you") in more than 50% of the utterances to refer to her mother, such as "mommy" for example. However, we can observe a possible influence from the input, as her mother uses other forms to make reference to herself in 40% of the utterances; contrary to GUS.'s parents, she used the pronoun more only to

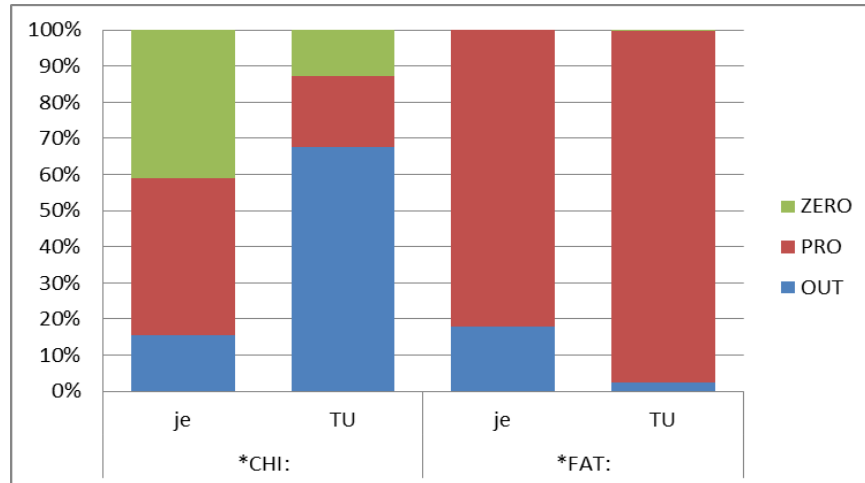
refer to the second person when she refers to MAR. We can see it in the table:

Table 2

Possible pronoun	Produced form		
	OUT	PRO	ZERO
*CHI:	38	31	149
Eu ( <i>I</i> )	13	19	<b>143</b>
Você ( <i>YOU</i> )	<b>25</b>	12	6
*MOT:	109	230	79
Eu ( <i>I</i> )	55	<b>57</b>	31
Você ( <i>YOU</i> )	54	<b>173</b>	48

At this instant, we will see MAR.'s data with her father:

III. Figure 3 – MAR.'s data with her father:



There is a clear change when MAR. is with her father. As expected, he does not use the null subject, as it is a demand from the language, although he uses the form “papa, je” (daddy, I) in more than 10% of the utterances, which is common in French. MAR. makes use of the verb ending to mark the person in more than 40% of her statements, a fact that is decisive in

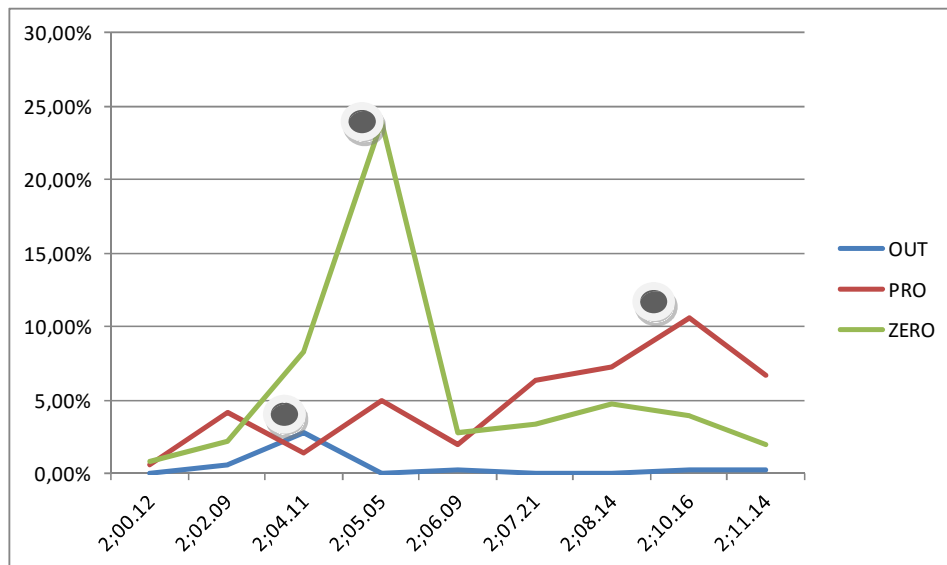
terms of input for the children’s production. It also shows a child’s independence about the linguistic choice and usage made at that moment. It is interesting to notice that MAR.’s behavior in both languages changes but these variations can only be clear when we make a qualitative analyzes. This is why the graph shows a similarity, although her parents’s usage is different.

Table 3

Possible pronoun	Produced form		
	OUT	PRO	ZERO
*CHI:	35	45	41
Je ( <i>I</i> )	14	<b>39</b>	37
TU ( <i>YOU</i> )	<b>21</b>	6	4
*FAT:	36	445	1
Je ( <i>I</i> )	28	<b>128</b>	
TU ( <i>YOU</i> )	8	<b>317</b>	1

Now, coming back to Gus. In figure 4 and then again to Marina in figure 5 and 6, we have in all the cases spikes of the use or the non use of pronouns and other forms chose by the child in each section. Because MAR was recorded either with her mother or her father, we decided to put the data in two different figures to make it clear her linguistic changes/choices when she was speaking with her parents. We chose one example from GUS and two examples from MAR to illustrate it in different interactional situations)

IV - Figure 4 (GUS.'s data.):



In this case, we can detect that GUS.'s productions vary according to the discursive situation in which he is in, with more or less use of pronouns at different times. We highlight the section in which GUS. is 2;05 when there is greater incidence of marking the person in the verb. In this section the interactions between father and son about a film he likes very much and which he is watching, while his father is insisting that he drink some juice. It seems to us that, in this case, when there is a negotiation, a regulation in the activity through the interlocutors, there is a smaller production of pronouns.

To start with, we are going to see an example in which GUS. is 2;04:11 when there are more instances of other forms referring to the first person:

Table 4

*FAT:	da onde é isso aqui # o(lha) ?	*FAT:	Where is it from # look ?
*CHI:	é do <b>Gu(s)tavinho</b> .	*CHI:	<b>It is Gu(s)tavinho's</b> .
*FAT:	tira o pé daí .	*FAT:	Take your foot off from there.
*OBS:	do Gu(s)tavinho ?	*OBS:	Is it Gu(s)tavinho's ?
*FAT:	vamo(s) ve(r) # o(lha) .	*FAT:	Let's see # look
%act:	a criança quer pegar o álbum de foto.	%act:	The child wants to get the photo album.
*CHI:	não # <b>o Gu(s)tavo</b> .	*CHI:	No # <b>Gustavo</b> .
*FAT:	de(i)xa <b>o papai</b> mostra.	*FAT:	Let <b>daddy</b> show.
%com:	a criança quer pegar o álbum e ver sozinho.	%com:	The child wants to get the album and see it alone.
*CHI:	<não::> [>] .	*CHI:	<no::> [>] .
*FAT:	<se não> [<] .	*FAT:	<if not> [<] .
*FAT:	o(lha) <b>o papai</b> mostra filhinho .	*FAT:	Look <b>daddy</b> shows little son .
*FAT:	(vo)cê que(r) ve(r) ou não ?	*FAT:	Do you want to see it or not .
*CHI:	que(ro)	*CHI:	(I) want .
*FAT:	então pronto .	*FAT:	So, that is it .
*FAT:	o papai vai virando .	*FAT:	The father goes on turning .
*FAT:	yy <b>o Gustavo</b> vê .	*FAT:	yy <b>Gustavo</b> sees it .
*CHI:	não .	*CHI:	No .
*CHI:	<b>o Gu(s)tavo</b> fai@c [: faz] .	*CHI:	<b>Gustavo</b> does it .
*FAT:	o(lha) Gustavo # ou <b>o papai</b> mostra ou eu vou guarda(r) .	*FAT:	Look Gustavo # either <b>daddy</b> shows or I'll put it away .
*FAT:	que que (vo)cê que(r) ?	*FAT:	What do you want ?
*FAT:	hum@i ?	*FAT:	hum@i ?
*CHI:	<b>Gu(s)tavo</b> .	*CHI:	<b>Gustavo</b> .
*FAT:	<b>o Gustavo</b> vai ve(r) só que <b>o papai</b> que vai mostra(r) .	*FAT:	<b>Gustavo</b> is going to see what <b>the father</b> is going to show .

Let's look at a second example in which GUS is 2;05.05 years old when there is more verb ending marks for the first person:



Table 5

*OBS:	você (es)tá bebendo suco ?	*OBS:	Are you drinking juice?
*CHI:	não .	*CHI:	No.
*OBS:	não é suco esse ?	*OBS:	Isn't it juice?
*OBS:	que que é isso que você (es)tá bebendo ?	*OBS:	What is this that you are drinking?
*CHI:	é do Mickey .	*CHI:	It is from Mickey.
*OBS:	a@i # é do Mickey .	*OBS:	a@i # it is from Mickey.
*CHI:	não é do Carros .	*CHI:	It is not from Cars.
*CHI:	não é do Carros .	*CHI:	It is not from Cars.
*OBS:	que que aconteceu com o copo do Carros ?	*OBS:	What happened to the glass from Cars?
*OBS:	onde que (es)tá o copo do Carros ?	*OBS:	Where is the glass from Cars?
*CHI:	ele (es)tá aí na casa da vovó .	*CHI:	It is in Grandma's house.
*OBS:	ah # ele (es)tá na casa da vovó .	*OBS:	Ah# it is in Grandma's house.
*CHI:	o copo .	*CHI:	The glass.
*FAT:	tem que ir buscar na casa da vovó n(ão) é#Gustavo ?	*FAT:	We have to get it in Grandma's, don't we # Gustavo?
*FAT:	você tomou todo o suco ?	*FAT:	Did you drink all the juice?
%act:	CHI sai correndo em direção aos quartos	%act:	CHI starts running in the direction of the bedrooms.
*CHI:	papai # <b>que(r)</b> Macqueen .	*CHI:	Father # (I) <b>want</b> Macqueen.
*FAT:	que(r) Macqueen ?	*FAT:	(Do you) want Macqueen?
*CHI:	<b>que(r)</b> Macqueen .	*CHI:	(I) <b>want</b> Macqueen.
*FAT:	você tomou todo o suco ?	*FAT:	Did you drink all the juice?
*OBS:	ainda não#n(ão) é ?	*OBS:	Not yet # right?
*CHI:	<b>que(r)</b> Macqueen .	*CHI:	(I) <b>want</b> Macqueen.

Now we have the last example in which GUS is 2;10.16 (two years, ten months and sixteen days of age) and there is more usage of pronouns with reference to the first person. He's in front of the washing machine watching the clothes being washed, he just loves it.

Table 6

<p>*OBS: i::@i # a máquina paro(u) agora .          *CHI:a:@i .          *OBS: a:: # começo(u) .          %act: CHI volta para frente da máquina de lavar roupas e começa a pular.          *OBS: 0 [=! risos] .          *CHI:&lt;esse não <b>quero</b>&gt; [?] # xx # é rápido.          %act: CHI fala e pula em frente à máquina.          *OBS: agora é rápido ?          *CHI:é rápido .          *CHI:<b>eu não quero # não que(r)o Nanci</b> .          *OBS: e ali &lt;o(lha)&gt; [&gt;] # eu vi uma cuequinha do Mickey ali # de quem que é aquilo?          *HOU: &lt;oi&gt; [&lt;] .          *CHI:é meu .          *OBS: a:::@i ## achei que fosse do papai.          *CHI:é .          *OBS: não é do papai ?          *CHI:não # é meu .          *OBS: a:::@i .          %act: CHI continua pulando na frente da máquina.          *CHI:deixa <b>eu segu(r)a(r)</b> a máquina # deixa <b>eu segu(r)a(r)</b> a máquina mamãe # deixa <b>eu segu(r)a(r)</b> a máquina .          %sit: CHI volta para a sala pedindo a máquina de brinquedo.          *MOT: o(lha) # desenhei você dentro da máquina # (o) que que (vo)cê acha?          *OBS: 0 [=! risos] .          *CHI:<b>eu quero</b> a máquina # onde &lt;a máquina (es)tá&gt; [&gt;] ?</p>	<p>*OBS: i::@i # the machine stopped now .          *CHI:a:@i .          *OBS: a:: # (it) started .          %act: CHI goes back to the front of the washing machine and starts to jump .          *OBS: 0 [=! laugh] .          *CHI:&lt;this <b>(I) don't want</b>&gt; [?] # xx # it is fast .          %act: CHI speaks and jumps in front of the washing machine.          *OBS: is it fast now ?          *CHI:it is fast .          *CHI:<b>I don't want # (I) don't want Nanci</b> .          *OBS: and look # I saw a piece of underwear from Mickey there # whose is that?          *HOU: &lt;yes&gt; [&lt;] .          *CHI:it is mine .          *OBS: a:::@i ## I thought it was daddy's.          *CHI:yes .          *OBS: isn't it daddy's ?          *CHI:no # it is mine .          *OBS: a:::@i .          %act: CHI carries on jumping in front of the washing machine.          *CHI:let <b>me</b> hold the washing machine # let <b>me</b> hold the washing machine mommy # let <b>me</b> hold the washing machine .          %sit: CHI goes back to the living room asking for the toy.          *MOT: look # I drew you inside the washing machine # what do you think?          *OBS: 0 [=! laugh] .          *CHI:<b>I want the washing machine</b> # where is the machine ?</p>
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As you can see in the transcription, there are lot of “eus” / “I” and it is an evidence that GUS has already been through the three phases, according to Morgenstern (2006) going from an objective phase where the first name is more used up to the usage of “I”, which constitutes a subjective phase. GUS marks himself as the subject of his own speech.

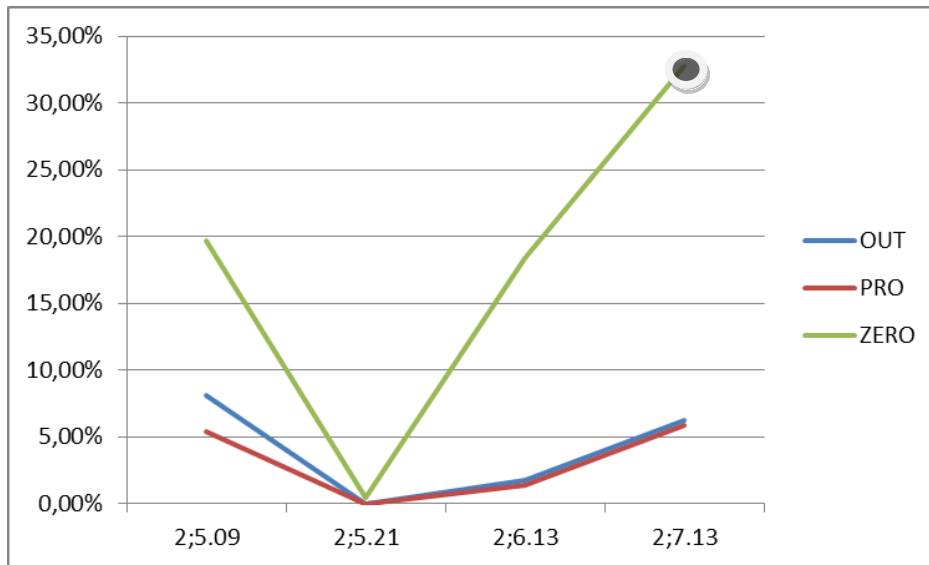
With MAR. and her father, whenever there is a negotiation, it seems to us that there is more usage of pronouns, confirming that she is assuming a subject’s position. Let’s see one example:

Table 7

*FAT:	<b>papa</b> va <b>te</b> préparer à manger#ok ?	*FAT:	<b>Daddy</b> will prepare <b>you</b> to eat #ok?
*FAT:	hein@i ?	*FAT:	hein@i?
*CHI:	oui.	*CHI:	Yes .
*FAT:	ouais.	*FAT:	Yes .
*FAT:	qu'est-ce que <b>tu</b> veux manger ?	*FAT:	What do <b>you</b> want to eat ?
*CHI:	des pâtes#queijo#ketchup#<tout ça>[/]<tout ça>.	*CHI:	Pasta # cheese # ketchup # <everything>[/]<everything >.
*FAT:	<tout ça>[/]<tout ça>.	*FAT:	<everything>[/]<everything >.
*OBS:	[=! risos]	*OBS:	[=! Laugh]
*FAT:	des pâtes#du queijo#du ketchup#des pâtes#du fromage ?	*FAT:	Pasta # cheese # ketchup # pasta # fromage ?
*FAT:	<b>tu</b> veux mettre du fromage sur les pâtes ?	*FAT:	Do <b>you</b> want to put cheese on the pasta?
*FAT:	non# <b>papa</b> va faire de la purée avec des saucisses.	*FAT:	Não # <b>daddy</b> will make purée with sausages.
*CHI:	xxx	*CHI:	Xxx
*FAT:	hein@i ?	*FAT:	Hein@i ?
*CHI:	xxx	*CHI:	Xxx
*FAT:	d'accord ?	*FAT:	Is it ok ?
*FAT:	<b>je</b> vais faire de la purée.	*FAT:	<b>I</b> am going to make purée.
*FAT:	<b>tu</b> veux +/.	*FAT:	Do <b>you</b> want +/ .
*CHI:	Xxx	*CHI:	Xxx
*FAT:	hein@i ?	*FAT:	hein@i ?
*CHI:	Xxx	*CHI:	Xxx
*FAT:	du fromage aussi ?	*FAT:	Cheese as well?
*CHI:	hum@i.	*CHI:	hum@i ?
*FAT:	et pas#euh@i.	*FAT:	And no # euh@i .
*FAT:	non# <b>on</b> va pas manger ici .	*FAT:	No # <b>we</b> are not going to eat here .
*FAT:	<b>on</b> va manger dans la cuisine#hein@i?	*FAT:	<b>We</b> are going to eat in the kitchen #hein@i ?
*FAT:	d'accord ?	*FAT:	Is it ok ?
*CHI:	<b>eu</b> como aqui.	*CHI:	<b>I'll</b> eat here.
*FAT:	non # dans la +/.	*FAT:	No # in the +/.

At this moment, we are going to see the same kind of data with MAR.

V. Figure 5 (MAR.'s data with her mother)



We can verify that in MAR's sessions with her mother, there is also a spike in the non-use of pronouns at the age of 2;7. In this section, mother and daughter play with plasticine making animal figures. The whole time, there are questions from the mother about the child's day, which animal to make and instructions of how to make it. Thus, it is possible to observe, in this case that the symbolic game (and not the negotiation as in the case of GUS.) influences the smaller production of pronouns.

Here is an example of this spike (with non pronouns):

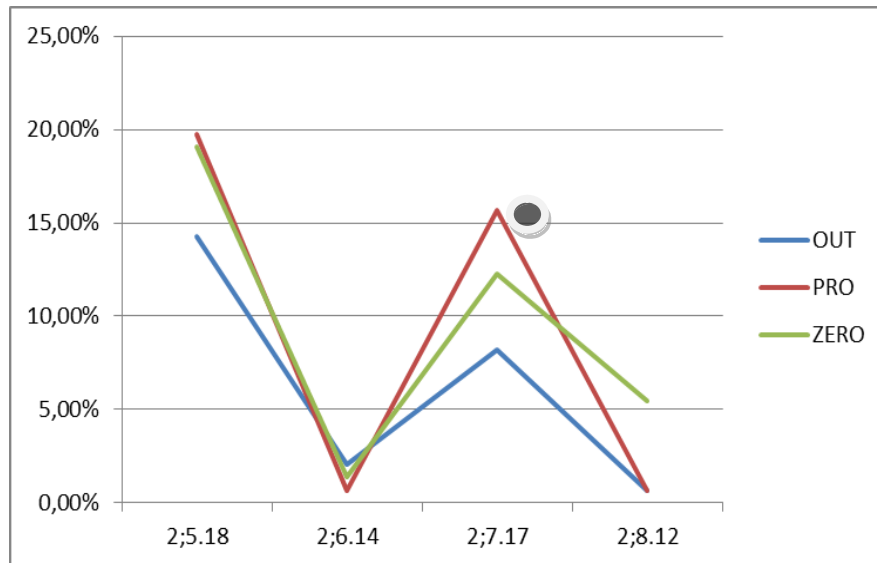
Table 8

*MOT:	a Marina vai dize(r) o que p(a)r(a) o lobisomem ?	*MOT:	What will Marina tell the werewolf?
*CHI:	xxx .	*CHI:	xxx .
*CHI:	malvado ele .	*CHI:	He is bad.
*MOT:	malvado ?	*MOT:	Bad?
*MOT:	porque que ele é malvado ?	*MOT:	Why is he bad?
*CHI:	<b>vo(u) bate(r)</b> (n)ele .	*CHI:	<b>(I) will hit</b> him.
*CHI:	vai cai(r) lá o fundo e a b(r)uxa <vup@o> [?] .	*CHI:	(he) will fall down there and the witch <vup@o> .
*CHI:	<b>pega(r)</b> lobisomem	*CHI:	<b>(I will) catch</b> the werewolf.
*MOT:	a bruxa vai pega(r) o lobisomem ? %act:CHI faz que sim com a cabeça	*MOT:	Will the witch catch the werewolf? %act: CHI nods.
*MOT:	e vai faze(r) o quê ?	*MOT:	and what will happen?
*CHI:	<b>vai cai(r)</b> lá (n)o fundo .	*CHI:	<b>(?) will fall</b> down there.
*MOT:	vai cai(r) lá no fundo ?	*MOT:	(?) will fall down there.
*MOT:	e morre(r) afogada ?	*MOT:	And will she drown?
*CHI:	é .	*CHI:	Yes.
*MOT:	do poço ?	*MOT:	In the well?
*CHI:	é .	*CHI:	Yes.
*MOT:	é uma boa idéia .	*MOT:	It is a good idea.
*CHI:	<b>Marina</b> é medo a b(r)uxa .	*CHI:	<b>Marina</b> is afraid of the witch.
*MOT:	Marina tem medo da bruxa ?	*MOT:	Is Marina afraid of the witch?
*CHI:	é .	*CHI:	Yes.
*MOT:	não#mas tem bruxa que é gentil .	*MOT:	No # but there witches who are kind.
*CHI:	a b(r)uxa <lá>[/]<lá> cima a(l)to .	*CHI:	The witch up there.
*CHI:	<b>Marina</b> que(r) vê cima e n(a) a(l)to .	*CHI:	<b>Marina</b> wants to see up there.

As you can see she refers to herself the whole time as “Marina” and considering the three phases we mentioned before, she would be in the first, using her own name, not marking herself as the subject of discourse.

Now, we are going to observe the same graph with the father:

VI. Figure 6 (MAR.'s data with the father)



It is clear that there are more variations in the uses when MAR. is with her father and there are two moments when the child makes more usage of all forms analyzed with small distinctions. In the section in which the child is 2;5 there is a situation during the meal; the child is having dinner with her sister and her father. There is a negotiation about what they will do after dinner; differently from what happened with GUS., the negotiation provides a larger use of pronouns and other forms. In section 2;7, there is nearly a sequence of negotiations, which would confirm the fact that, with the father, the activity regulation makes the usage of pronouns higher.

Let us look at the example below:

Table 9

*SIS:	c'est très dur#hein@i#papa ?	*SIS:	Is it hard #hein@i # daddy?
*FAT:	c'est pas facile hein@i ?	*FAT:	It is not easy hein@i?
*CHI:	c'est pas facile.	*CHI:	It is not easy.
*FAT:	ben oui c'est pas facile.	*FAT:	Well, it is not easy.
*FAT:	et toi tu y arrives Marina ?	*FAT:	And you Marina # do you come?
*SIS:	moi#j'arrive.	*SIS:	I # I come.
*CHI:	<b>eu non.</b>	*CHI:	<b>I don't.</b>
*FAT:	non ?	*FAT:	No?

And, in another moment of the same section:

Table 10

*FAT:	bon alors Marina.	*FAT:	Well # Marina.
*SIS:	<ouah@i>[/]<ouah@i> !	*SIS:	Yes # yes.
*FAT:	qu'est-ce qu'on fait maintenant ?	*FAT:	What are we going to do now?
*CHI:	<b>j'veux jouer.</b>	*CHI:	<b>I want to play.</b>
*FAT:	tu as été dans des jeux aussi à Disney.	*FAT:	You have already played games at Disney.
*CHI:	oui.	*CHI:	Yes.
*FAT:	t'as fait quoi comme jeux ?	*FAT:	What did you do as a game?

It is possible to notice, not only in this section but also in all of the interactions with the father, that MAR. uses, for the first time, the personal pronoun together with the code-switching, marking her identity and showing us clues of the constitution of her subjectivity.

### Final considerations

Our initial hypothesis was that the speech directed to the child would have a crucial function in this process. However, we managed to notice some important differences: the bilingual child uses verb endings (without pronouns) in 85% of her utterances to refer to herself, while her mother uses the personal pronoun “I” in 40% of the utterances to refer to herself. Her father uses the pronoun “je” (I) in French 80% of the time. GUS.’s data (monolingual) shows that 55% of the utterances are produced without pronouns, but his parents use pronouns more (50% and 40% respectively).

Looking at the interlocutor, the bilingual child uses both in Portuguese (60%) and in French (70%) forms such as “mommy” and “daddy” to refer to her parents, while her father uses the pronoun “you” 95% of the time and her mother uses it 60% of the time. Therefore, there is an apparent contradiction that still needs to be explored in a more detailed qualitative analysis.

The most important consideration that we are able to make so far is that the bilingual child is truly different in her linguistic behavior and, actually, it is not suitable to make any kind of comparison between bilingual and monolingual children. We can verify how differently MAR. uses the subjectivity manifestations, her singularity through the uses of pronouns and that, for her, language is not only a way of communication, but also a tool of power, as Bakhtin claims. She has diverse behavior in relation to the father’s language (French) and to the mother’s language (Portuguese). Moreover, it was possible, reading the literature about the issue, to observe that PB has distinct particularities and that we must analyze this language taking these peculiarities into consideration.

It is also conceivable to detect that the usage of certain linguistic elements occurs in some discursive situations. MAR. uses code-switching with her father in statements, in the here/now discourse and this “resource” seems to be more used as “coping” or “arguing” with the father, together with the person mark in the pronoun not in the verb, as she does most of the time.

Therefore, we have a qualitative analysis initially trying to find heterogeneity in the data and making an analytic generalization that is built when new cases are studied and revised. It means looking for some quantitative data in the qualitative data, as in this case, we make usage of linguistic elements that allow for this search.

This kind of data makes us think that biological prerequisites can explain many aspects in language acquisition by children and, thus, they should be taken into consideration. However, children’s data shows that to



actually comprehend this process, it is necessary to consider, above all, a set of capabilities that are put into practice in the dialogical interaction i.e., the cognitive, sociopragmatic, and linguistic interaction.

To conclude, studying this acquisition process does not mean observing the grammatical categories produced by the child, as this reflection is not enough to explain, for example, what she wants to say when she enunciates a term - if it is about a verb, a noun, etc. In this case, a solution for this impasse, which we believe in, would be to consider the context in which the “word” was produced, who participates in this dialog and sometimes, it is also necessary to verify the intonation, pauses, gestures, at last, the multimodality (it is part of future research). Thereby, analyzing language acquisition by the child requires that the researcher pay attention to the relation between extralinguistic, suprasegmental, gestures, linguistic and cognitive aspects. The debate nature versus culture is, therefore, far from over.

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