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Introduction

- 1 Children language has always been a fascinating subject, instigating different research interests, either for the naivety of children enunciations or for the sophisticated strategies displayed in their speech. Another fascinating motive of study is that children speech allows researchers to tackle many issues which persist in adult speech, thus leading to enhance comprehension of language in general. This is why children speech motivated this work.
- 2 The purpose of this article is to observe the linguistic productions of a Brazilian boy (G. 24-37 months) and a French girl (M. 23-36 months), who were recorded interacting with their parents, in routine settings (such as meal and play time, etc.), with the goal of understanding how argumentation and explanation occur in their speech¹. We aim to examine how these two textual functions mix or differ according to their practical use in children speech. The initial hypothesis is that both explanation and argumentation have their own characteristics regarding linguistic mechanisms, and that both contribute, in unique ways, to linguistic development.

- 3 From a dialogical-discursive perspective (Bakhtin, 1976; 1986), on one end of the communication process, the speaker's mark is left into his/her utterance and into the dynamics of meaning conveyed by textual concatenation; on the other end of the process, this individual imprint can be "reclaimed" by the utterance receiver/listener (François, 1994; Del Ré, 2006). The Bakhtinian perspective offers a significant theoretical basis to observe the data in children's productions. Together with this perspective, a variety of theoretical approaches in children's speech analysis should not be underestimated, especially the many questionings that arise from a (socio)interactionist approach (Vygotsky, 2008; Castro, 1996), opening the path to a dialogical-discursive approach (François, 1994, 1988, 1989, 2006; Salazar-Orvig, 2010a, 2010b; Salazar-Orvig et al. 2003, 2008; Del Ré et al., 2014a, 2014b). Such are the basis for this study.
- 4 The notion of argumentation used in this article refers to Leitão's theoretical conception (2007a, 2007b, 2001, 2008) and to other authors who contributed to her ideas. Leitão claims that the emergence of argumentation presupposes the existence of a divergent argument (either actual or potential), as contraposition of ideas in the discourse. With regard to the notion of explanation, Veneziano (1999) and Salazar-Orvig (2008) contribute with key concepts and definitions.

1. Bakhtinian theoretical foundation and Language Acquisition

- 5 Bakhtin, Voloshinov and Medvedev did not study specifically the concepts involved in language acquisition. However, their assumptions touch questions that are essential to understanding how children deal with language. As mentioned before, the inspiration for this "Bakhtinian perspective" on children's language came with the studies of François (1994, 2006) and Salazar-Orvig (1999, 2008).
- 6 Bakhtin, Voloshinov and Medvedev paved the way for a new point of view on previously developed theories, and a different approach of language facts. According to these authors, when someone wants to say something, he/she doesn't make a word by word selection in order to create meaning. Instead, he/she starts by setting his/her discursive aim as a whole, and planning everything he/she intends to say. Then, as a second step, follows the actual choice of words which provide the actual meaning. Moreover, speech is molded according to the conditions of enunciation, the context and the social sphere from which a person is a part of, as well as according to these relatively stable utterances that Bakhtin names as speech genres. Bakhtin claims that speech genres are relatively stable types of utterances, although their compositional content, as well as their theme and style keep changing according to the verbal situation. Speech genres results from specific contexts of interaction, which give each utterance its "completeness."
- 7 We are given these speech genres in almost the same way that we are given our native language, which we master fluently long before we begin to study grammar. We know our native language - its lexical composition and grammatical structure - not from dictionaries and grammars but from concrete utterances that we hear and that we ourselves reproduce in live speech communication with people around us. We assimilate forms of language only in forms of utterances and in conjunction with these

forms. The forms of language and the typical forms of utterances, that is, speech genres, enter our experience and our consciousness together, and in close connection with one another. To learn to speak means to learn to construct utterances (because we speak in utterances and not in individual sentences, and, of course, not in individual words) (Bakhtin, 1986: 79)

- 8 For Bakhtin, an utterance can only be understood within the frame of a whole developed interaction. This means that when people speak, they relate their utterances to everything that has been said about the “object” before, considering who their partner-interlocutor is, and which possible answers are presupposed or predicted. When something is communicated, there is no completely virgin or unnamed discourse, as if it were spoken by the biblical Adam (Bakhtin, 1986). On the contrary, discourse is always a reconstruction of things heard throughout the speaker's existence. According to Bakhtin, the utterance obviously results from linguistic choices within a specific context, and these choices account for the speaker being creative and innovative. In order to ensure comprehension, the individuals involved in a determined communicative situation must share, at least partly, the same knowledge.
- 9 The data analyzed in this article make it possible to ascertain the presence of other voices in children's speech (heteroglossia), voices that permeate through children's speech, while producing contextual meaning. These are usually family voices, e.g. parents' voices, among others. As social being, the child's points of view and ideas result from other people's speech: it is by making use of other people's words, that the speaking child builds and expresses his/her own opinion.
- 10 This point confirms the importance of social relations and interaction, and leads to the view that words are not static elements, but parts of the real and live communication (Bakhtin, 1986). Words cannot be considered to have fixed and definitive meanings; on the contrary, they are always related to spoken situations, drawing from them their whole meaning.

Therefore, one can say that any word exists for the speaker in three aspects: as a neutral word of a language, belonging to nobody; as an other's word, which belongs to another person and is filled with echoes of the other's utterance; and, finally, as my word, for, since I am dealing with it in a particular situation, with a particular speech plan, it is already imbued with my expression. (Bakhtin, 1986: 88)
- 11 For Bakhtin, dialogism is a key concept to understand language. It is not conceived as a mere conversation between two people; it is far more complex. Every discourse is seen as an answer to others, as a response to the verbal situation and to other people's utterances. The people involved in a specific communication are unavoidably interrelated and, therefore, the whole process of actual communication is connected to the concept of dialogism.
- 12 It follows that dialogical relations – mediated by speech genres – introduce children to their mother language and to the ideology of their social world and culture. Therefore, it is only in the context of specific communicative situations that researchers can apprehend the complete meaning of a child's utterance, through the interaction between this child and his/her interlocutor, in a given space and time. When words are considered in abstraction from their social and cultural background, they are not endowed with all the necessary resources for their understanding and, thus, they cannot acquire meaning.

- 13 In children's speech, all the nuances involved in the constitution of language aspects are built throughout their development as they interact with others, and acquire gradually, the subtleties involved in the communication process. Children do not learn isolated words. On the opposite, they receive contextualized utterances in relation to the others and only after that, they are able to apply these words in completely different communicative situations. Children enter in the language through the speech genres, which compose distinct communicative spheres. They slowly acquire the ability to make use of these genres and also, the other's utterances which such genres concretize.
- 14 It means that children don't only acquire linguistic elements during their development. Above all, they also gradually understand how they should relate these elements to their own language reality, improving and modifying them according to their enunciative needs. To understand the children's language, contextualization is necessary and this does not only concern the context or the immediate situation, but also all the discursive elements that are involved, such as intonation, discursive memory, the notion of the other, etc.
- 15 Even before they begin to speak, children are already exposed to the language of their community, to the intonation, to the nuances of their language, which does not exist *a priori*, but is built through human relations. It is from this contact that they understand and then, use the specific linguistic and extralinguistic elements.
- Everything that pertains to me enters my consciousness, beginning with my name, from the external world through the mouths of others (my mother, and so forth), with their intonation, in their emotional and value-assigning tonality. I realize myself initially through others: from them I receive words, forms, and tonalities for the formation of my initial idea of myself. [...] (Bakhtin, 1986: 188).
- 16 In this way, we can again emphasize that the word apprehended by the child is neither decorated nor imposed, it does not have a single meaning or even stored in his brain, as if it were a kind of filled recipient; but it gains meaning again and again – in its emotional and evaluative tone – through the effective process of communication. Then, the child is not a passive partner, a *tabula-rasa*, who only memorizes a kind of dictionary, merely receiving other people's word, but a living entity who learns to make use of the other's genres and words, providing them new meanings, in each utterance.
- 17 All these concepts contribute to a better understanding of how human language works, and especially how children make use of language in different social situations in which he/she is involved. It is also from these same concepts that the concepts of argumentation and explanation will be analyzed in children's speech.

2. Argumentation and explanation: differences and intersections

- 18 Discussing the notion of explanation is not an easy task, since there is no consensus among the authors about its definition. The starting point of this work is that the explanation is a discursive phenomenon that surpasses the grammatical plan insofar as it involves and is related to other discourses. In order to understand it, it is necessary to review the context and the discursive situation in which it arises. Thus, from the

proposed definitions, we list some that, considering our theoretical conceptions, help us to have a better comprehension of this phenomenon.

- 19 A first proposal is that of François (1988) for whom the meaning of the word “explain” may vary according to: (a) the type of question (why, etc.); (b) the type of object (one may answer the question: “what does that word mean?” with an example, a synonym, etc.; (c) the type of interlocutor (it is different to explain something to a teacher or to someone who does not know the theme); (d) the place of explanation in the discourse (explaining can be the main object, or appear only during the narration of a fact, for example); (e) the person who explains (he/she can choose how to explain according to the situation, his/her preferences, etc.).
- 20 Veneziano (1999) is an author who dedicated part of her research to study children’s explanative discourse. She states that to find an explanation, it is necessary to define what the explanative act is, and, to take into consideration the functional and the interactional points of view:

[...] l’acte d’explication est à considérer comme un acte communicatif complexe comportant un *explanandum* – la composante (verbale ou non verbale, explicite ou implicite) qui pose ou qui est censée poser problème à son interlocuteur – et un *explanans* – la composante qui fournit la cause, la raison, ou motivation qui est temporellement ou logiquement en amont de l’*explanandum* (Veneziano, 1999 : 02)².
- 21 Veneziano (1999) states that the interactional representation of the explanative act places the notion of *explanandum* as a central point of the explanation, even if implicit. Once it is verbalized, only the *explanans* is considered. Assuming that not a lot of research focuses on the emergence of the “explanative conducts” in young children, she highlights the importance of analyzing the explanative acts at the beginning of speech development. In this period, it is possible to identify which linguistic and cognitive mechanisms are being used by children to explain something. As a result of her study, Veneziano attests of the importance of explanation in children’s speech, and highlights how the child develops the ability to explain, for example, from speech related to or disconnected from the mother’s speech, when he/she starts to explain or to ask about certain situations or objects.
- 22 Following Veneziano’s notions (Berthoud-Papandropoulou *et al.*, 2003), three characteristics are fundamental to any act of explaining. The first one refers to a need to distinguish “[...] *explanans* (what explains) and *explanandum* (what should be explained)” (2003: 40). It means that we are able to provide an explanation that is not attached to the other’s speech, when we understand that is necessary to explain (*explanandum*) to the other to be understood, or to continue the dialog (*explanans*). The second characteristic would be “the negative component (in a broad sense) of the explanative act” (2003: 40), that is, when a problem arises in the discourse, and it is necessary to give an explanation, or when there is an incapacity of the speaker, than can serve as justification, which is very common in young children’s speech. The third characteristic is intertwined to the “pragmatic dimension of the explanative acts, i.e., the way the speaker considers the other when he explains” (2003: 41). This idea is very important since alterity is a determining factor in the emergence of an explanation. All these ideas related to explanation³ help us to think about what would be an explanation and, above all, to establish a framework that helps to understand some nuances and differences between the concepts of argumentation and explanation.

- 23 Regarding argumentation, this article is based on the notions developed by Leitão (2000, 2001, 2007a, 2007b). Her research affirms the importance of argumentation for the intellectual development, since it would allow a reflection on our points of view, providing possibilities to “[...] revise our own knowledge, contributing to knowledge development (transformation) [...]” (Leitão, 2007a: 75). For this author (Leitão, 2001, 2007b, 2008), argumentation can be treated as:

uma atividade discursiva que se caracteriza pela defesa de pontos de vista e consideração de perspectivas contrárias. A necessidade comunicativa de defender um ponto de vista e responder à oposição cria, no discurso, um processo de *negociação* no qual concepções sobre o mundo (conhecimento) são formuladas, revistas, transformadas [...] (Leitão, 2007a: 75).⁴

- 24 According to her, argumentation is composed of at least three elements (the argument, the counter-argument and the answer) that together constitute an unit of effective analysis of argumentation, considered from three perspectives: discursive (linked to the three constituent elements of argumentation previously described), psychological (referring to cognitive operations that the argumentation triggers) and epistemic (referring to the gains in reflection and revision of points of view that an argumentation makes possible). Furthermore, the author argues that the argumentation itself contains both dialectal and dialogical dynamics:

While the dialogical dimension points out the role of the audience, “the other” to whom the argumentation is addressed and whose characteristics constrain both the process and structure of argumentation, the dialectical dimension emphasizes the role of systematic opposition and critical questioning in argumentation that comes from the other (Leitão, 2001: 16).

- 25 The confrontation between points of view – not between individuals – is what provide a dialogic/dialectical dimension (Ferreira, 2005) to argumentation. Therefore, argumentation involves two or more perspectives and it is necessary to have an opposition of ideas (counter-argumentation) and a defense of the arguments (formulation of points of view and reasons to support the arguments). Besides these elements, there is always an answer raised by the debate, which corresponds to the reaction of the arguer to the impact of the contrary positions (counter-argument). From the given answer, it may result a partial or total incorporation of the initial counter-argument, or a partial or total refutation of that argument.
- 26 Considering the concepts discussed so far, it is not an easy task to drawn a line dividing argumentation and explanation. The perspective adopted here is that explanation and argumentation differ due to the oppositions of ideas, from the conflict that the argumentation emergency’s context provokes. While the meaning of the word “explain” could be understood as an answer to a demand of understanding, without major differences in the points of view of the interactants, the meaning of “argue” would be closer to the idea of a discursive answer to a situation in which there is a counter-position of ideas and defense of divergent points of view.

Grosso modo, a explicação pode ser compreendida como um elemento que surge no discurso quando há algo a ser clarificado, um problema a ser resolvido – sem que isso venha a provocar, no entanto, uma oposição, uma polêmica. [...] a explicação estaria relacionada a situações-problema que surgem no discurso quando o motivo ou a razão de algo precisam ser explicitados para que não ocorra a incompreensão do enunciado ou o mal entendido [...] Já com relação à argumentação, o contexto de seu surgimento estaria mais próximo ao da contraposição de ideias e defesa de

pontos de vista, ao oferecimento de justificativas para uma tomada de posição e/ou apoio a uma dada afirmação (Leitão & Vieira, 2014: 91).⁵

- 27 In analysing the data presented below, we can see why explanation and argumentation are often seen as synonyms. We believe that this is due to the common linguistic elements that are mobilized in both cases. Among these elements, the most important one is *because*, which may belong, depending on its use, to explanation or argumentation. Furthermore, there are words such as *since*, *as*, *once*, etc., which may appear in both discursive processes. For Grize (1990), an important aspect of explanation is the distinction between “explain” and “justify.” Thus, by discussing these notions, the author is concerned with “*because*” (“*parce que*”, in French) distinguishing its relations, the first as a causal link and the other, as a logical link between reason and consequence. He defines the former as “explanation” and the second as “justification” (Grize, 1990: 105). It is noteworthy that, according to this author, it is possible that both terms (explanation and justification) work together.
- 28 Fisher (2004) draws attention to the intrinsic ambiguity of the particle *because* and the complexity that it aggregates to identifying and analyzing arguments produced in natural language (so-called “everyday argumentation”). This ambiguity arises essentially from the different uses of *because*, in different communicative contexts. Three different uses are distinguished by the author. In the first case, the use of *because* marks the presence of a reason, supporting a conclusion or a point of view, in which it is possible to claim that *because* assumes an argumentative value. The second case occurs when *because* establishes a causal relation between two elements. Still, the third case, when *because* appears in an utterance to offer an explanation. Three examples were created and presented by the author to illustrate these usages (2004: 18):
- [1] John broke the window because he tripped.
 [2] John broke the window because he had forgotten his key.
 [3] John must have broken the window because he was the only person in the house.
- 29 It is important to emphasize that these examples, even if not linked to real and immediate communicative contexts (they were artificially created by the author to exemplify the different usages of *because*), can only be understood within context. The comprehension of what is said in each example inevitably demands that communicative context are assumed in which each of these statements would be appropriate.
- 30 In this sense, it is possible to affirm that only in the third example, is an argument effectively presented: the information that John “was the only person inside the house” (when the window was broken, fact that is inferred), supports the conclusion (allows the inference) that he must be the person who broke the window. Different uses can be observed in the other two examples: while in the first, the presence of *because* establishes a causal relation between “tripping” and “break the window” (the tripping caused the breaking of the window), the second offers an explanation – in this case, a reason/motivation that leads John to break the window.
- 31 Particularizing the explanative and the argumentative *because* (of especial interest in this work), some distinctive characteristics can be pointed out in the contexts in which one and the other are typically used. In the case of argumentation, the communicative need to support an affirmative statement (introduced by *because*) happens due to the

perception that, without this support, something stated before would remain doubtful, questionable. Explanation, on the other hand, arises from something that needs to be better understood (rather than “proven”) in order to provide comprehension of the whole utterance, or because the information is incomplete, or there is a lack of shared knowledge between interlocutors.

- 32 Turning to Fisher's examples, the statement that “John must have broken the window” (example 3) could be dubious in a given context. However, the information that he was alone at home gives strength to the hypothesis that he would have broken it. In contrast, in the example 2, the statement that “John broke the window” is not equivocal, remaining only to understand/explain the reason why he would have done it.
- 33 Nuances of differentiation between cases like the ones above, become even more complex when dealing with very young children's speech, who are in the process of language acquisition. What can be found here are examples of connectors such as *because* (implicit, in many situations), which become comprehensible or interpretable by the other (parents, researchers, discursive partners) from the situations in which they emerge. From this perspective, the parents' interpretation of children's speech, in the context in which this speech is produced, becomes fundamental for the analysis of the children's discourse, just as essential, of course, as the enunciative chain and the context of production of the statements.

3. Data and discussion

- 34 In order to contribute to the discussions proposed so far, we will analyze some excerpts from G. (Del Ré *et al.*, 2016) and M. (Morgenstern & Parisse, 2012). The data of two children (G., 24-37 months and M., 23-36 months)⁶, who were recorded in daily situations interactions (bath, lunchtime, family dinner, play time, etc.) between the children and their familiar interlocutors (father, mother, babysitter, observer, grandmother, etc.). The recordings happened once a month, and are about an hour long.
- 35 In the first excerpt, the interaction between the parents and their child occurs in the living room of their apartment, in a situation of free play with a set of pieces to assemble, called “*O pequeno constructor*” (the little builder). The child had just gained this game from the researcher/observer, who is responsible for filming. In the living room, there are also several car toys and some boxes. The mother is sitting on the sofa, while the father and the child are sitting down on the floor. With the pieces, father and child are building an “automobile showroom.” In the transcription presented below (figure 1), we present data in the original language – Portuguese or French – and in English), with the notation FAT indicating the father, CHI, the child, MOT, the mother and OBS, the researcher/observer⁷.

Figure 1- Episode [1] (G. 2;11) - *The automobile showroom*.

PORTUGUESE	ENGLISH
17 *FAT: vamo(s) [o pai está propondo a brincadeira a G.] ?	17 *FAT: let's go? [the father proposes the game to G]
18 *CHI: vamo(s) [...] o Match [Match é um dos personagens do desenho Carros] [o pai e a criança continuam a montar o salão do automóvel com as peças].	18 *CHI: let's go [...] Match! [Match is a cartoon character from the animation "Cars"] [the father and the child carry on assembling the pieces of the automobile saloon]
19 *CHI: não # põe aqui do lado do Match [a criança aponta para o outro lado de onde estão os brinquedos que o pai está montando como salão do automóvel].	19 *CHI: no # put it here next to Match. [the child points to the other side].
20 *FAT: eu vo(u) po(r) do lado de lá o(olha) # aqui o(lha). [o pai coloca o carrinho em cima de peça de montar, do lado contrário ao sugerido por G.]	20 *FAT: I will put it over there # here look! [the father puts the car on the top of the game, on the opposite side suggested by the child]
21 *FAT: aí o(lha)	21 *FAT: hey look!
22 *CHI: assim não (es)tá certo # é po(r) muito o [/] o não pode cabe(r) # assim (es)tá menos. [aponta para o brinquedo que o pai montou, que está menor que os outros já montados]	22 *CHI: like this, it is not right # it is to put a lot [/] it cannot fit # like this it is less. [the child points to the toy the father assembled, which is smaller than the others]
24 *FAT: (es)tá menos n(ão) é?	24 *FAT: it is less, isn't it?
25 *FAT: só que não tem mais peça	25 *FAT: but there aren't any pieces left
26 *MOT: tem ali o(lha) # um quadradin(ho) daquele que faz a montanha # aí. [a mãe aponta para uma peça de brinquedo que está próxima a outras]	26 *MOT: there is one look # one little square that makes the mountain # there. [the mother points to a piece of the toy that is near the others]
28 *FAT: esse?	28 *FAT: this?
29 *MOT: é.	29 *MOT: yes.
30 *FAT: (es)tá bom vai. [o pai coloca os carrinho sobre ele]	30 *FAT: it is okay, let's go. [the father puts the little car on it]

- 36 One of the first points that draws attention is the presence of an implicit because in G.'s utterance on line 22, introducing a justification for his disagreement with the father's action (episode [1], 20). Although it was not verbalized, it can be analytically inferred as it was interpreted by the father, who continues the child's speech (24), justifying that he cannot do what G. suggested. The analysis of this fragment allows identifying a classic example of argumentation in children's speech, as it is possible to find explicitly all the subcategories needed to characterize an argumentation (Leitão, 2007a, b). On line 19, an initial point of view is clearly presented ("Put here next to Match"); the father counter-argues by formulating another point of view ("I will put it over there"). The child is not satisfied with the father's opposition and answers by reaffirming his initial point of view, and also by offering a justification ("It is to put a lot [/] it cannot fit"). Considering them together (answer to the father's opposition, reaffirmation of the point of view and justification), they acquire a counter-argumentative value about the father's point of view. Finally, on line 30, there is the father's answer to the child's counter-argument, accepting and fully incorporating the child's point of view ("Ok then").
- 37 The scene presented evidences what can be seen as an argument on part of the child, in an attempt to convince his father to put the piece in a specific place. Naturally, this is not the type of argumentation that would be produced by an educated adult or even an older child. Still, the excerpt offers a model of how the subcategories of an argument, counter-argument and reply work to generate an argumentative conduct. The three subcategories appear explicitly in the child's discourse, only the marker *porque* ("because") remaining implicit.
- 38 It is important to emphasize how the theoretical elements mentioned earlier are fundamental for understanding the statements of the child. It is only from the whole

enunciative, that is, from the analysis of the whole scene (speech, objects, actions on them) and from the chain of utterances, that we can understand the discursive situation. Besides the speeches, the gestures, the presumptions and the connivance among the participants make all the difference allowing the father to understand his child's opposition, which makes possible the continuation of the dialogue.

- 39 The following episode takes place when the child and the observer are in the laundry room of the child's apartment. Observing how the washing machine runs was the child's favorite free time activity at the moment of this recording. For this reason, when the school asked to the parents to send the child's favorite toy to be placed in a "Magic Box" (name given by the school for the activity), G.'s parents made a small washing machine, replica of the original one. In this episode, the observer and the child are looking at the real washing machine, talking about its functioning, while G. holds the toy washing machine.
- 40 In this episode [2], we have two questions from the adult that elicit the child's explanation. First (344), there is a question that the child tries to answer with his knowledge. In this case, the observer's question is answered with a negative statement, as the child does not answer "what goes inside the magic box" but what "does not go" inside the real washing machine. If the discourses between children and adult are observed, it is possible to realize that "why questions" are usually made when the interlocutor does not really want to know something, but to continue on the subject or to test the children's knowledge. It happens in this scene (358) when the observer instigates the child to answer why the real washing machine does not fit in the school "magic box." The explanation given by the child is simple and logical. He makes the reason explicit: the washing machine does not fit in the magic box and this *porque* ("because") is related to the explanation, justifying the reason for something (fit versus not fit).

Figure 2 - Episode [2] (G. 2;10) - *The washing machine*.

PORTUGUESE	ENGLISH
344 *OBS: aí, e o que que vai dentro dessa caixa mágica? [OBS pergunta sobre a máquina de lavar de brinquedo]	344 *OBS: hey, and what goes inside this magic box? [OBS asks about the toy washing machine]
345 *G.: aí não sei, essa não vai na caixa mágica. [G. aponta para a máquina de lavar roupas de verdade]	345 *G.: I don't know, this does not go in the magic box [G. point to the real washing machine]
347 *OBS: ela não entra essa daí? [OBS refere-se à máquina de lavar roupas real]	347 *OBS: that one does not fit here? [OBS makes reference to the real washing machine]
348 *G.: não, é porque é só a máquina. [G. está virado para a máquina de lavar de verdade, de costas para a observadora, e aponta para a máquina em funcionamento]	348 *G.: no, it is because it is only the machine [G. is back to the camera, looking at the washing machine and pointing to it]
349 *OBS: a::	349 *OBS: a::
350 *G.: só aquela máquina aí fora. [olha para a observadora]	350 *G.: it is only that machine outside there [he looks at the observer]
351 *OBS: mas se você quiser levar essa máquina aí num cabe lá naquela caixa mágica? [refere-se à máquina de lavar roupa verdadeira]	351 *OBS: but if you want to take this machine, it does not fit in that magic box? [making reference to the real washing machine]
353 *G.: não.	353 *G.: no
354 *OBS: não?	354 *OBS: no?
355 *G.: a máquina cabe. [olha para a observadora]	355 *G.: the machine fits [looking at the observer]
356 *OBS: essa daí? [aponta para a máquina de lavar de verdade]	356 *OBS: that one? [she points to the real washing machine]
357 *G.: mas essa, essa não. [olhando para a máquina de lavar de verdade]	357 *G.: but this one, not this one [looking at the real washing machine]
358 *OBS: essa não cabe, por quê?	358 *OBS: that one does not fit, why?
359 *G.: po(r)que é, esse é muito g(r)ande.	359 *G.: because this is, this is too big.
360 *OBS: a::, por isso que a mamãe fez uma pequenininha, né?	360 *OBS: a:::, that is why mommy made a small one, isn't it?

- 41 In episode [3], M. and her mother are checking the rules to play a game in which the players must insert or clear the colorful caterpillars away from a bamboo cone. The mother is reading the rules to M. when the child expresses a disagreement.

Figure 3 - Episode [3] (M. 2;11) - *The caterpillars' game*.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
2261 *MOT: toi tu choisiras trois couleurs et moi je prendrai les trois autres. [M. est penchée sur le tube]	2261 *MOT: you will choose three colours and I will take the other three. [M. is leaning towards the cone]
2262 *CHI: et non parce+que les miennes e(lles), elles sont ici. [M. regarde le tube de très proche]	2262 *CHI: and no because mine, they are here. [M. looks at the cone very close]
2263 *MOT: tu peux toutes les mettre.	2263 *MOT: you can put all of them.
2264 *CHI: oui faut toutes les mettre. [M. prend une autre chenille]	2264 *CHI: yes, it is necessary to put them all. [M. takes another caterpillar]
2265 *MOT: mais i(l) faut le dé.	2265 *MOT: but we need the dice.
2266 *CHI: j' ai pris le dé. [M. prend le dé dans la main dans laquelle elle prend une chenille et laisse le dé par terre à côté de la boîte pour se rapprocher du tube]	2266 *CHI: I took the dice. [M. catches the dice with the same hand in which she took a caterpillar and leaves the dice on the floor next to the box to get closer to the cone]

- 42 The first element of interest for the analysis appears when the mother explains to M. what she must do to play the game and M. opposes (2262): “and no because mine, they are here.” M.’s opposition acquires, in this situation, the value of a counter-argument in relation to the mother’s point of view, given in the form of an instruction (2261), as she makes it clear the opposition between ‘to do’ (or ‘not’) the action indicated by the

mother. Further even, with the utterance at line 2262, M. formulates a justification, a supporting element to the argument of “not doing” what the mother demands.

- 43 What makes these utterances oppositions (or counter-arguments) in this case, are the discursive markers, combined with the situation/context, which symbolizes and directs the conversation. In this episode, *non* (“no”) provides us a beginning of this opposition although this opposition is aided by *parce que* (“because”) that gives the interlocutor an argument with another point of view. These two linguistic elements, combined with the situation characterize an argumentation in M.’s speech. In this way, this *non* (“no”) and this *parce que* (“because”) confer on M.’s speech an opposition to the other’s speech, with a justification, revealing the way in which argumentation appears in M.’s speech.
- 44 In episode [4], M. is with her mother, the observer and her little brother (C.) in the living room. She has seen a show at school, telling the story of the Puss in Boots; her mother questions her about the story, and M. tells her what happened to the miller’s son (the future Marquis of Carabasse) and why.

Figure 4 - Episode [4] (M. 2;08) - *The story of Puss in Boots*.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
175 *MOT: et+pis après le roi lui [/] lui fait donner des habits ?	175 *MOT: and then the king him [/] makes him give clothes?
176 *MOT: c'est ça ?	176 *MOT: It is that?
177 *MOT: il met des beaux habits ?	177 *MOT: does he put beautiful clothes?
178 *CHI: oui pour qu' i(l) se noie pas.	178 *CHI: Yes, so that he does not drown.
181 *MOT: ah oui qu' i(l) soit beau!	181 *MOT: Yes, so that he does look good!
182 *MOT: hop+la [>] !	182 *MOT: upa [>]!
183 %act: MOT porte C.	183 %act: MOT takes C. in her arms.
184 *CHI: pour [<] qu' i(l) soit beau.	184 *CHI: for him to look handsome.
186 *CHI: parce+que euh là quand i(l) tombe dans la grosse rivière +...	186 *CHI: because euh when he falls into the big river +...
189 %sit: CHI fait le geste de tomber avec ses mains	189 %sit: CHI makes the gesture of falling with her hands.
190 *MOT: oui ?	190 *MOT: yes?
191 *CHI: i(l) [/] i(l) [/] i(l) [/] i(l) se met plein [/] plein [/] plein d'eau.	191 *CHI: he [/] he [/] he [/] he gets full [/] full [/] full of water.

- 45 On line 175, M. is asked about the beautiful clothes the king gives to the miller’s son and she answers (178): “Yes, so that he does not drown”. Then the mother, agreeing with the child and completing the story, affirms that it would be for him to look handsome. M. agrees, echoing her mother: “for him too look handsome” (184) and then, she explains how he got wet: “because when he falls into the great river” (186), “he gets full of water” (191). Two explanations are therefore given in M.’s speech: one about the miller’s son near drowning, using the connectives *pour que* (“for”, 178) and *parce que* (“because”, 186), and the other one about his appearance, using the connective *pour que* (“for”, 184). Thus, these two connectives help the child to justify (1) the reason why the miller’s son wears beautiful clothes and also (2) the reason why he nearly drowned. In the mother's questions (175-177), there is no 'point of view' the child might agree with or not. Her questions only lead the child to produce an explanation.

Figure 5 - Episode [5] (M. 2;08) - *The uniform*.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
1713 *FAT: vem cá # Gu # vamo(s) bota(r) esse aqui # o(lha).	1713 *FAT: come here # Gu # we'll put this one here # look.
1714 %act: FAT mostra a calça do uniforme da escola para CHI.	1714 %act: FAT shows the pants from the school uniform to CHI.
1715 *FAT: já (es)tá sequinho # o(lha).	1715 *FAT: it's already dry # look.
1716 *CHI: num [: não] que(r)o pô(r)!	1716 *CHI: no [: no] I don't want to put it on!
1717 *OBS: 0 [=! ri].	1717 *OBS: 0 [=! ri].
1718 *FAT: vamo(s) bota(r) esse aqui?	1718 *FAT: let's put on this one?
1719 *CHI: eu quero monta(r) isso!	1719 *CHI: I want to assemble it!
1720 *FAT: monta(r) o quê?	1720 *FAT: assemble what?
1721 *CHI: é o: carrinho!	1721 *CHI: it is the little car!
1722 *CHI: esse carrinho .	1722 *CHI: this little car.
1723 %act: CHI olha e aponta para o carro novo que ganhou.	1723 %act: CHI looks and points at the new car that he has won as a gift.
1724 *FAT: eu vo(u) monta(r) pa(ra) você.	1724 *FAT: I'll assemble for you.
1725 *FAT: mais uma vez # e depois a gente vai pô(r) a calça # (es)tá bom # que +...	1725 *FAT: one more time # and then we'll put on the pants # okay # because it's +...
1726 *FAT: já (es)tá na hora # o(lha) .	1726 *FAT: it is already the time # look.
1727 *CHI: só mais uma vez?	1727 *CHI: just one more time?
1728 *FAT: é!	1728 *FAT: yeah!
1729 *FAT: vem cá!	1729 *FAT: come here .
1730 *CHI: mas eu não quero!	1730 *CHI: but I do not want to!
1731 *FAT: num [: não] que(r) o quê?	1731 *FAT: what don't you want?
1732 *CHI: <mas eu> [/] eu num [: não] que(r)o pôr essa b(l)usa!	1732 *CHI: <but I> [/] I don't want to put this t-shirt!
1733 %act: CHI puxa a blusa que está vestindo	1733 %act: CHI pulls the t-shirt he is wearing.
1734 *FAT: num [: não] é blusa # é calça!	1734 *FAT: it's not a t-shirt # they're pants!
1735 *CHI: num [: não] quero pôr essa blusa do Sol da Vida!	1735 *I don't want to put this "Sun of Life" t-shirt.
1736 *FAT: por quê?	1736 *FAT: why?
1737 %act: CHI puxa a blusa para tirá-la.	1737 %act: CHI pulls the t-shirt to take it off.
1738 *CHI: é po(r)que eu quero fica(r) só assim.	1738 *CHI: it's because I want to be only like that.
1739 %act: CHI ergue a blusa e passa a mão na barriga.	1739 %act: CHI lifts his t-shirt and passes his hand over his belly.
1740 *CHI: que é mais # fre(s)quinho!	1740 *CHI: because it is more # fresher!
1741 *FAT: mais fresquinho?	1741 *FAT: fresher?
1742 *OBS: 0 [=! ri].	1742 *OBS: 0 [=! ri].
1743 *CHI: é.	1743 *CHI: yes.
1744 *FAT: fica(r) peladão?	1744 *FAT: Do you want to be naked?
1745 *CHI: é!	1745 *CHI: Yeah!
1746 *FAT: mas num [: não] pode fica(r) peladão # vai na rua o(lha) lá # dá uma!	1746 *FAT: but you can't be naked # go to the street and look there # look!
1747 *OBS: olha lá fora # (es)tá chovendo # meu@i!	1747 *OBS: Look outside # It's raining # meu@i!
1748 *OBS: (es)tá chovendo!	1748 *OBS: It's raining!
1749 *OBS: (es)tá friozinho lá na rua!	1749 *OBS: It's cold in the street!
1750 *FAT: é # ã:i@i!	1750 *FAT: yes # ã:i@i!

- 46 In this scene, we can observe that there is an important negotiation process, in which the child argues that he does not want to wear the "Sun of Life" t-shirt (the school uniform), arguing that he wants to go without a t-shirt, justifying his point of view "it is fresher" (I want to be like this – take off this clothes) with “because” (1738). We can see that there is a relation between putting on the uniform and going to school, and perhaps it is the reason why there is the emergence of arguments by the child about not wearing the uniform.
- 47 In this episode emerge two antagonistic “points of view” – in this case, two contrary actions that the father and the child want to prevail: put the clothes on or not. The defense of the point of view / the action of 'not putting on the pants' is, therefore, the pragmatic context that requires the child's production of justifications.

Final considerations

- 48 In our analyses of children speech, we could notice a quite early use of explanative and argumentative connectors, such as *parce que* (“because”), *mais* (“but”), *pour que* (“so that”) in M.'s utterances, and *porque* (“because”) in G.'s productions (both explanative and argumentative). From a methodological point of view, it is evident that the presence of *parce que* (or *porque*), as an important marker in both explanatory and argumentative statements, is by itself, insufficient to distinguish between explanation and argumentation. A special attention must be given to occurrences in which a causal link is explicitly marked or implicitly inferred: this appears to be a decisive analytical requirement to establish the argumentative/explanative value of the utterance.
- 49 From the given examples, it is possible to observe that the explanations are mainly related to situations that provoke a misunderstanding on the part of the interlocutor

and demand a reaction from the speaker. However, there is a common ground for situations leading to an explanation: it is that they do not involve conflict. When an explanation is asked for, there is no need to respond by supporting or strengthening what is said, as would be the case in a context of argumentative conflict. What emerge instead are statements about causal relations, reasons/origins of actions, information about process and procedures (detailing of “how” in any process), etc.

- 50 Diverse reactions can be noticed, however, when the child is confronted with an opposition, which refers to the search for some element that help him to justify/strengthen his/her opinion over the others, even in a rudimentary form. These situations impel children not only to expose their initial arguments but also to reformulate them in the face of confrontation with different point of views. Similarly to what has been said about explanation, situations that trigger argumentation are almost always instigated by an adult, and make the child face a problem he/she has to solve. In this case, however, the discursive problem is essentially characterized by an actual or potential conflict which demands “negotiation”, not due to a possible lack of understanding.
- 51 Based on these observations, it is possible to claim that such conducts have different functions in the discourse. The argumentation is a process of re-evaluation, reflection about what the arguer can or will probably be opposed, while the explanation is a process that centers in the comprehension and the importance of coherence in the discourse. This is a central nuance in the communication process: the child begins to learn it, when he is led to clarify his statements in such a way that his/her interlocutor could understand him.
- 52 The data also show that both explanation and argumentation imply an interlocutor, although it is necessary to emphasize again that this interlocutor is not always explicit. In this way, the other can be represented even when there is only one speaker in the enunciative scene. It can happen in children's speech when “already-said” discourses, related to their discursive memory, are present in each of their utterances, as we can see from the postulates of Bakhtin and the Circle's theory.
- 53 It is interesting to specify that, from the available data of these two children, observed in similar situations and at the same age, emerged no noteworthy regularity, which could be connected to linguistic differences between, French and Brazilian Portuguese. The observed variations are mainly related to the singularity of the children. Since this lack of linguistic differences might be explained by the young age of the two children, it would be very interesting to analyse their production at an older age.
- 54 Finally, it is worth mentioning that this work allowed us to analyze how explanation and argumentation appear in the child's speech, highlighting some differences and intersections between these notions. However, many other questions still need elucidation: how do children develop explanation and argumentation skills during the process of language acquisition? what is the role of multimodal elements such as intonation and gestures in the acquisition of explanative/argumentative skills? and how are these multimodal elements related to the question of humor, for instance? These questions suggest further research, which is expected to be completed in future studies.

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NOTES

1. The data of G. belongs to the group NALingua (CNPq - Brazil, coordinated by Alessandra Del Ré) and the one of M. belongs to the group CoLaJe (France - coordinated by Aliyah Morgenstern).

2. The explanative act must be considered as a complex communicative act which has an *explanandum* – the component (verbal and non-verbal, explicit or implicit) that provides or supposedly provides a problem to the interlocutor – and an *explanans* – the

component that provides the cause, the reason or the motivation which is temporally or logically above the *explanandum* (free translation).

3. They are many other discussions related to several research made by different authors (see, for example, Grize, 2008). Due to the limitations of size of this article, it was chosen to bring only some ideas and few authors that meet the analyses in this article.

4. A discursive activity characterized by the defense of points of view and by the consideration of opposite perspectives. The communicative need to defend a point of view and answer to this opposition creates, in the discourse, a negotiation process in which the concepts about the world (knowledge) are formulated, revised, transformed. (free translation)

5. Roughly speaking, explanation can be understood as an element that arises in the discourse when something must be clarified, a problem to be solved – however, it will not provoke an opposition, a polemic. [...] the explanation would be related to a problematic situation that is brought to the discourse when the reason of something must be explicit to avoid misunderstandings or incomprehension [...]. In relation to argumentation, the context of its arisen would be closer to the contraposition of ideas and defense of points of view, offering justifications to take a position and/or to support an affirmation. (Free Translation).

6. For further information about the data and the corpora, access <http://gruponalingua.com.br/apresentacao.html> and <http://colaje.scicog.fr/index.php/corpus>.

7. In the transcription of the data, the conventions from Clan in CHAT format (Childes, MacWhinney, 2000) were used. However, in order to facilitate the reading, only the most important signs in the transcription were used. Therefore, the meaning of these symbols are: # pause; [] comment about the situation; () ellipsis of a word; [/] repetition; [/]/ two repetitions, %sit description of the situation; [>] or [<] two or more people talk at the same time; @ interjections; + juxtaposed words.

ABSTRACTS

Starting from a dialogical-discursive perspective, the present work intends to investigate the relations between explanations and argumentations produced by two children in the process of language acquisition. Particular attention is given to distinguish these notions in children's discourse, in an attempt to reveal their contributions to the child's linguistic development. In that order, we analyzed data of two children, a Portuguese speaker (G., 24-37 months) and a French speaker (M., 23-36 months). All the data recorded contain daily interactions between the child and his/her parents, grandparents, or other significant adults. Explanation is what means any spoken utterance made in order to promote understanding or clarification of causes and reasons about a statement or a circumstance, without assuming any existing gap between speaker's and addressee's initial point of views. Argumentation, on the other hand, comprises the opposition of ideas and production of reasons to reconcile initially divergent points of view. This

theoretical distinction is used for data analysis in the present study. In the same vein, we analyzed the term *because* in explanatory and argumentative forms as a marker of different dialogic relations between statements, created in specific contexts. Despite some similarities, these two types of verbal messages are differentiated by the fact that an argumentation has, at its core, an argumentation implies an opposition of ideas and diverging viewpoints, whereas, in an explanation, we observe more effort to clarify the causes and reasons about things and events 'being as they are'.

En partant d'une perspective dialogico-discursive, nous proposons d'analyser les relations entre les productions explicatives et argumentatives qui apparaissent dans le discours de deux enfants en train d'acquérir leur langue maternelle. Une attention particulière est accordée à la distinction entre ces notions dans le discours des enfants afin de révéler leurs contributions respectives à leur développement linguistique. Pour cela, nous avons analysé les données de deux enfants, un enfant brésilien (G., 24-37 mois) et une enfant française (M., 23-36 mois). Toutes les données ont été enregistrées dans des situations quotidiennes d'interaction entre l'enfant et ses parents, ses grands-parents et d'autres adultes significatifs de son entourage. En général, l'explication peut être décrite comme ce qui est dit pour favoriser la compréhension ou clarifier les causes et les raisons d'une affirmation, ou d'un état de choses, sans supposer qu'il y ait une différence de points de vue entre les personnes en interaction. En revanche, l'argumentation correspondrait à l'opposition d'opinions différentes et à la tentative de réconcilier cette divergence de points de vue. Cette distinction théorique est utilisée pour l'analyse des données de la présente étude. Ainsi, nous analysons *parce que* explicatif et argumentatif comme marqueur de différentes relations dialogiques entre les déclarations, qui sont générées dans des contextes spécifiques. Malgré certaines similitudes, les deux phénomènes se différencient par le fait qu'une argumentation a pour noyau l'opposition des idées et la défense des points de vue, alors que dans une explication, on observe davantage un effort de clarification des causes et des événements « tels qu'ils sont ».

INDEX

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