

## **The verbal-visual discourse in Brazilian Sign Language – Libras / O discurso verbo-visual na língua brasileira de sinais – Libras**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This article aims to broaden the discussion on verbal-visual utterances, reflecting upon theoretical assumptions of the Bakhtin Circle that can reinforce the argument that the utterances of a language that employs a visual-gestural modality convey plastic-pictorial and spatial values of signs also through non-manual markers (NMMs). This research highlights the difference between affective expressions, which are paralinguistic communications that may complement an utterance, and verbal-visual grammatical markers, which are linguistic because they are part of the architecture of phonological, morphological, syntactic-semantic and discursive levels in a particular language. These markers will be described, taking the Brazilian Sign Language–Libras as a starting point, thereby including this language in discussions of verbal-visual discourse when investigating the need to do research on this discourse also in the linguistic analyses of oral-auditory modality languages, including Translinguistics as an area of knowledge that analyzes discourse, focusing upon the verbal-visual markers used by the subjects in their utterance acts.

**KEYWORDS:** Dialogism; Verbal-Visual Utterance; Brazilian Sign Language-Libras; Non-Manual Markers; Translinguistics

### **RESUMO**

*Este artigo tem como objetivo ampliar as discussões sobre enunciados verbo-visuais, refletindo pressupostos teóricos do Círculo de Bakhtin que podem reforçar a argumentação de que, em enunciados de línguas de modalidade gestual visual, transparecem valores plástico-picturais e espaciais dos signos através também das Marcas não Manuais (MNMs). Está sendo ressaltada a diferença entre as expressões afetivas, comunicações paralinguísticas complementares em um enunciado, e as marcas verbo-visuais gramaticais, que são linguísticas por fazerem parte da arquitetura dos níveis fonológico, morfológico, sintático-semântico e discursivo em uma determinada língua. Essas marcas serão descritas a partir da Língua Brasileira de Sinais - Libras, incluindo a Translinguística como área de conhecimento que analisaria o discurso com relação a essas marcas verbo-visuais utilizadas pelos sujeitos na enunciação.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Dialogismo; Enunciado Verbo-visual; Língua Brasileira de Sinais - Libras; Marcas não manuais; Translinguística*

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## Introduction

This research about non-manual markers – NMMs – in Brazilian Sign Language – Libras, the language used by the deaf communities in Brazil, was carried out to provide subsidies for the Prodeaf Translator Project, whose goal is to develop a software to translate, by means of an avatar, Portuguese texts in the oral or written form into Libras.

Libras' linguistic architecture is being analyzed, also including the NMMs that will be used by the avatar in the translation process into Libras by a human aided automatic translation system.<sup>1</sup>

As in similar research in other countries for the creation of automatic translation software, these Libras utterances are being analyzed for the:

- a) Preparation of a bilingual dictionary specific for the translation process;
- b) Preparation of parsing from existing models for natural languages of the oral and auditory-visual-gestural modalities;
- c) Use of statistical models that work with *corpora* available on the internet or in other media that also employ videos;
- d) Survey and description of the NMMs present in utterances.

These studies have expanded the scope of linguistic discussions about languages.

From theoretical assumptions about language and dialogism stemming from the Bakhtin Circle, the utterance is being thought of as a social-historical event in which the plastic–pictorial and spatial values of the sign reflect and refract the world. Thus, from a

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<sup>1</sup> This research is a sequel to the research developed by the Research Group of the National Federation for the Education and Integration of the Deaf-FENEIS, who is responsible for the Project Libras x Portuguese Translator, funded by MEC/SEESP-FNDE in 2004. Three teams participated in this project: the FENEIS team, coordinated by this article's author, responsible for data gathering and linguistic description of Libras, the NILC-USP–SC team, who was responsible for translating and creating a model for the translator, and a team in the area of computer graphics, who was responsible for preparing the avatar to translate into Libras from the model created. This project was ended in the first phase. See project and references in: Tradutor Libras: Projeto TLIBRAS - Tradutor Português x LIBRAS (Língua Brasileira de Sinais) [Libras Translator: TLIBRAS Project - Portuguese x LIBRAS (Brazilian Sign Language Translator) - <http://www.acesobrasil.org.br/index.php?itemid=39> / <http://www.acesobrasil.org.br/index.php?itemid=163> Martins, R., Pelizzoni, J. Hasegawa, A. PUL - a system for semi-automatic translation Portuguese - Libras <http://www.lbd.dcc.ufmg.br/colecoes/til/2005/0014.pdf> Pelizzoni, J. M., Nunes, Mary Grace V. Flexibility, configurability and Optimality, in: UNL Deconversion via multiparadigm Programming: <http://www.cicling.org/2005/UNL-book/Papers/175.pdf> Martins, R., Pelizzoni, J. Hasegawa, A. PUL - a system for semi-automatic translation Portuguese - Libras <http://www.lbd.dcc.ufmg.br/colecoes/til/2005/0014.pdf> Pelizzoni, J. M., Nunes, Mary Grace V. Flexibility, configurability and Optimality, in: UNL Deconversion via multiparadigm Programming: <http://www.cicling.org/2005/UNL-book/Papers/175.pdf>

description of Libras' MNMs, these marks will be presented as verbal-visual units of utterances in an utterance act.

From the analysis of a corpus for the translator, this paper aims to contribute to discussions on the dialogism of language, presenting utterances in gestural-visual languages as a verbal-visual discourse in which non manual markers of face to face dialogue are essential to the totality of the signaled utterance in relation to the *otherness* of the interlocutor.

These non manual markers, being face-body expressions, are also used in oral-auditory languages, but as they seldom have been the subject, a new linguistic research, the aim of this paper is to discuss this suprasegmental component also in those languages which need to be considered from studies in areas of Linguistics and Metalinguistics (Cf. BAKHTIN, 1984).

## **1 Theoretical assumptions**

The Bakhtin Circle introduced theoretical–philosophical concepts which, translated into several languages, have been used by many researchers in various approaches and disciplines, applying them in specific analyses. The concepts of dialogism and polyphony have generated numerous interpretations, which proves the dialogic function of language.

In Brazil and other countries, these concepts and many others of the Circle, have created new translations and productions that have revolutionized literary, linguistic and philosophical studies among other areas of knowledge, as in film art<sup>2</sup>.

From this contribution of the Bakhtin Circle, a new perspective arose on the dialogism of language, and the human being, as the speaker of a language, came to be analyzed as a subject. This subject, actor-agent, has to be analyzed from his incompleteness because the completeness of the utterance of this speaker only materializes through the dynamic relationship of the responsive understanding of the interlocutor.

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<sup>2</sup> To name a few authors: Stam (1992); Clark E Holquist (1998); Brait (2004, 2008, 2012); Hanks (2008); Faraco (2010); Geraldi (2010).

Thus, the formulation and the understanding of an utterance have been analyzed as an interactive and contextualized activity that requires complex knowledge and skills in which the meaning of the utterance is related to an utterance act which, being social and historical, is ideological.

This view of the utterance allows one to abstract language as a language that implies context and interaction, and can be seen, from the perspective of scholars of cognitive and social sciences, as a social phenomenon materialized through a continuum between cognition and culture, once “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, p.78).

In this Bakhtinian perspective, the concrete utterance as a unit of speech communication is analyzed from two perspectives: the utterance as event and the utterance as historicity. As an event, the utterance is finished and has an end that is marked by the alternation of the subjects and a conclusibility that is in the responsive possibility of the interlocutor. This conclusibility, from this point of view of the event in a given utterance act, causes the utterance to be unique, unrepeatable and capable of being answered, not only presenting itself as a verbal unit, but through actual interactions between the subjects of the discourse in a social-historical situation.

Therefore, the meaning of an utterance is no longer a pre-given, since it is something that is reconstructed based on linguistic elements in a context, in the accumulated knowledge and in the socio-historical relations. So there is no isolated utterance because it always has a precedent and another that succeeds, becoming just one link in the chain.

As the formal linguistic analyzes the abstract forms of the linguistic system, isolating these forms of social historical context that is concrete and mutable, it does not analyze the utterance. This attitude would be opposed to the attitude of the speaker in a communication process in which the evaluative accent change of word is context-dependent because the utterance is social in nature and involves a "mental activity of the self and one's mental activity we" that "*words are always filled with content and meaning drawn from behavior or ideology*" (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.70).

Therefore, Volosinov (1973) presented several arguments to delimit the scope of linguistics in relation to the philosophy of language from the concepts of language,

speech and enunciation. For him, as linguistics would focus its studies in a phrase as a model, not exceeding it, there would be need for another type of analysis in which these units were not separated from the context historical partner of utterances as "half extraverbal and verbal (made up of other utterances)." (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.96).

According to this new approach, Bakhtin (1984) proposes the creation of a discipline, denominated by metalinguistic, which analyzed the discourse. This discipline has been identified as translinguistic in the lingual translation of some of his scholars who preferred to use this term: Clark and Holquist (1998) used the term translinguistic to refer to this philosophy of language because they consider that the term metalinguistic had become too commonplace in the West. Stam (2011), stressed that the translinguistic, as a discipline, analyze the language in its entirety and concrete living, embodied in discourse, as set out comprehensive determined from the inside and the outside, since the boundary between the "inside" and "out" is artificial, because, in fact, that there is a large overlap between them (STAM, 2011, p.68).

As the term metalinguistic comes from the structuralism, related to one of the functions of language, according to Jakobson (1977, p.127), my choice is also the term translinguistic, to specify this new discipline which encompasses the notion of utterance, the speaker and dual orientation of the word at the same time, marks its specificity in relation to Linguistics, which although legitimate for certain purposes, would be insufficient for what Bakhtin was proposing in *Dostoevsky's Poetics Problems*.

Translinguistic, whose object of analysis would be the discourse, would focus on the psychology of the social body, fully externalized in speech, gesture and act, because, according to Bakhtin / Volochínov,

There is nothing left inexpressed in it, nothing "inner" about it – it is wholly on the outside, wholly brought out in exchanges, wholly taken up in material, above all in the material of the word (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.19).

[...]

... things left completely unstudied to the present day. All these speech performances are, of course, joined with other types of semiotic manifestation and interchange - with miming, the gesturing, acting out and the like (VOLOŠINOV, 1973, p.20).

As the language is realized in a discursive space and is not only composed of vocal language units, all dialogical relations are constituted as a unit of social interaction and for a detailed study of verbal-visual communication, it is proposed in this research that psychology of the social body could be revealed through the analysis of human communication which has the following basic dimensions: 1. articulated language (verbal vocal) 2. paralanguage (vocal and non-verbal) 3. kinesic (non-vocal, non-verbal) 4. proxemics (non-vocal, non-verbal), according to Rector and Thirty (1986, p50).

For these authors paralanguage would be all nonverbal communicative activities that complement vacal communication but this research about Libras, which can be extended to oral-auditory languages, these activities are treated as visual-verbal communication that can composing also the architecture of an utterance.

So it is possible to describe the visual affective Expressions that are paralinguistic and grammatical-verb-discursive visual expressions because this supra-segmental component needs to be analyzed for a better understanding of the utterance as social communication.

Thus, Translinguistics, analyzing these linguistic facts and paralinguistic, starts from a transdisciplinarity, seeking theoretical support in kinesics, studying the gestures and body movements in their mean and standard value, the proxemics and cronemics, respectively studying the use of space and time in communication.

According to Hall (1963, p.50), as there is the visual space, auditory, olfactory and tactile, proxemics would focus on posture, the angle formed by the shoulder of the interlocutors, in the distance, types of ringtones, direction of eye contact, emotion, odors and height of the voice of the interlocutors. So this transdisciplinarity to the study of the psychology of the social body can reveals the language of silence that co-articulates, while verbal-visual communication, with the verb-verbal communication of interlocutors.

## **2 The language of silence in utterances**

For a long time, research on oral-auditory languages described that linguistic object only from the point of view of their phonological properties, since all other

described levels always took the phoneme/grapheme as the last indecomposable unit liable to linguistic analysis, although already analyze prosody (intonation and stress) as a linguistic supra-segmental component.

Under the theoretical assumptions of Textual Linguistics and of different approaches to Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis, many researchers have reflected upon texts and discursive resources that are used and are detectable from context, from shared world knowledge, from inferences between other features that allow one to capture the ‘said and unsaid’(DUCROT, 1977; ORLANDI, 1995) in the illocutionary act, considering the illocutionary acts of the speaker and his/her expectations regarding the perlocutionary acts of his/her interlocutor (AUSTIN, 1955; SEARLE, 1994)<sup>3</sup>.

In addition to these theoretical assumptions, the finding of verbal-visual communication in the utterance is expanding the horizons of linguistic research with the articulation of the verbal and the semiotic under a discursive focus and from the perspective of the Bakhtin Circle, such as the research of Geraldi (1991), Brait (2004, 2005 and others), Grillo (2009, 2013), Berti-Santos (2011, 2013), among others.

However, these discursive resources in the utterance act have been analyzed only through non-linguistic pictorial visual signs co-articulated with the utterance itself as a linguistic form that makes a phonetic-morphosyntactic-semantic-pragmatic-discursive analysis possible, although in every language, regardless of their modality, a speaker uses facial-bodily expressions to express the illocutionary force of their utterances in an utterance.

Since the eighties, I have reflected on these facial-bodily expressions that I have called language of silence, since they co-articulated with the vocal utterance,

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<sup>3</sup> It was Austin (1962) who, for the first time, conceptualizes these speech acts. Later, his former student, Searle (1994), challenged some issues considered ambiguous with respect to the distinction between illocutionary and perlocutionary acts of his teacher. However although both had worked such acts as actions that are in communication as speech (parole), their positions are related to conventionality in language (langue), since for them, when a speaker utters a sentence - locutionary act, it is related to a certain sense and reference. Here, in this article, these speech acts are being thought from a Bakhtinian perspective and not from a Saussureian perspective, so that these acts would not be related only to verbal-auditory linguistic form used in a sentence with its meaning already established. The locutionary act expressed through an utterance, coexists with the speaker's illocutionary act in utterances involving ideological socio-historical situations. This speaker interacts with the interlocutor, which performs a perlocutionary act. These speech acts can be perceived in the utterances, being not only in the specific wording of a utterance while locutionary act and it is this social-communicative dynamics that establishes dialogism and polyphony in enunciation.

establishing the meaning of the verbal utterance. When I started my Libras research, I aimed to clarify this language of silence, most visible in a visual gestural language modality. The analysis of this face body prosody revealed two types of visual expressions: a) Visual affective Expressions b) Grammatical-discursive visual expressions.

The visual affective expressions are complementary paralinguistic communications that express the feelings of the speaker and the interlocutor, through gestures and body posture, facial expressions and gaze. So, it is possible to realize states and sensations such as: joy, sadness, anxiety, insecurity, doubt, irony, surprise, confrontation, rejection, among others, which are behavioral attitudes. Often, as they express feelings and emotions, these expressions are involuntary and may not happen concurrently with an utterance, but whether they are performed separately or simultaneously with the production of an utterance, they are always identified as they are cognitively apprehended by the interlocutors in a dialogical relationship.

On the other hand, grammatical-discursive visual signs are verb-visual grammatical-discursive markers – MNMs. They are part of the architecture of phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and discourse levels in a certain language, as a social communication.

Taking as a starting point the theoretical assumption that, in a linguistic description, speech as a language in which dialogism implies ideological social relations, a particular utterance will also be analyzed through the verbal-visual elements perceived by an interlocutor because the inter-completeness of the speaker in and for the other involves acting according to this discursive complexity.

This shared ‘language of silence’ expressed through face-body expressions allows the completion of the speech from otherness<sup>4</sup> to see with one’s ears and to hear with one’s eyes, interacting with “the centripetal and centrifugal forces of the universal symposium” (FARACO, 2009, p.69).

Thus, research on sign languages has given relevant contribution to this kind of study and technological resources have made it increasingly possible to assess this verbal-visual discourse, to assess NMMs in detail, simultaneously with lexical or

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<sup>4</sup> To deepen this concept, in a Bakhtinian perspective, see Brait (2006, p.9-31), and Geraldi (2010, p.83-101). From an anthropological perspective, see <http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alteridade>.



phrasal expressions that enable and delimit the meaning of an utterance, which is social and historical.

Studies on these face-body expressions also for oral-auditory languages may broaden the scope of the grammatical-discursive analysis in the area of Translinguistics as a science that analyzes language in discourse and, from these surveys in sign languages, these face-body expressions can be compared and rethought for the architecture of oral-auditory languages.

### **3 Visual and affective grammatic- discursive expressions in Libras**

Research on facial expressions and other non-manual markers began with Lidell (1978), who has since been researching NMMs in (Yes/No) questions, topicalization, negative sentences, relative sentences. His studies have been complemented by other authors such as Baker (1988); Johnson and Liddell (1989); Reilly, McIntire and Bellugi (1990); Bahan (1996); Ekman, Matsumoto and Friesen (1997); Wilbur and Patschle (1998); Emmorey (1999); Knapp and Hall (1999); Reilly (2006), among many others who have been researching NMMs in the American Sign Language - ASL. All these studies have been the subject of comparative study in the work of Felipe (1989, 1992, 1993, 1998, 2006); Arrotéia (2005); Correa (2007); Quadros, Pizzio e Resende (2007); Anater (2009), who have been researching NMMs in Libras from several specific theoretical approaches.

These studies reinforce the assumption that NMMs, which are present in dialogical relations as an area of tension between utterances, can be defined as a visual prosody expressed by different face-body expressions. This visual prosody can also be analyzed from the perspective of the type of movement involved a sign that, causing a change in its root Movement (root-M), may add a modal case, a verbal aspect, a degree, among other grammatical-discursive traits to the lexical item (FELIPE, 1989).

Regarding facial expressions, Ekman, Matsumoto and Friesen (1997) developed a Facial Action Coding System to describe and analyze these expressions by encoding eye and head movements and also that of approximately forty facial muscles, recording them according to the following variables: gaze direction, movement/nod, body position, y/n (yes-no), wh (interrogative - wh) , among others.

The variable ‘body position’ was included because the posture and movement of the body can change the meaning of the signaled utterance and may establish temporality, illocutionary force to bring interlocutors closer or set them apart, social hierarchy, among other grammatical-discursive intentions already understood for Libras.

Thus, from these and other similar studies in other sign languages and oral-auditory languages, it becomes possible to observe and compare the face-body prosodies in discourses, assessing whether affective visual expressions are universal or cultural and whether visual grammatical expressions are also cultural discourse markers that differ from language to language.

The research on sign languages that provided descriptions of the component that has been analyzed as ‘tone’ in these languages (SANDLER AND LILLO-MARTIN, 2006) has made it possible to verify this fact. However, like other sign language researchers, in this research we assume that NMMs, as verbal-visual components, also present in the architecture of oral-auditory languages, cannot be considered as intonation in sign languages because they co-articulate with the intonation of an utterance in oral-auditory languages. Therefore, these NMMs are being analyzed as a verbal-visual, grammatical-discursive component in both oral-auditory and sign languages.

Grammatical-discursive visual expressions in sign languages are thus expressed through NMMs that, enacted concurrently with the sign or phrase, integrate these languages’ phonological, morphosyntactic and semantic-discursive sphere. Therefore, should they not be expressed, the sign or utterance can become ungrammatical or may not be decodable, causing ambiguity.

Prillwitz et al. (1989) developed the Hamburg Notation System for Sign Languages that has been used for transcribing sign language data in projects for the creation of automatic or semi-automatic translation systems (ADAM, 2011)<sup>5</sup>. These systems allow describing affective and grammatical-discursive visual expressions,

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<sup>5</sup> For transcription of sign language data it is also being used other systems, for example: a) LAN - Manual for AMS II, version 1.3. Language archiving technology. AMS II. Access Management System archive resources for language. Available at: <<http://www.lat-mpi.eu/tools/elan/download?>> Accessed on 17 March 2007; b) SIGNSTREAM: American Sign Language Linguistic Research Project. Available at: <<http://www.bu.edu/asllrp/>>. Accessed on 17 March 2007; c) AGA-Sign: gestures animator applied to sign language. Available in: <<http://www.dcc.ufla.br/infocomp/artigos/v4.1/art06.pdf>>. Accessed on 11 October 2006.

working with three articulators - head, face, and torso. These three articulators, in isolation or simultaneously, have specific features in Libras and, according to Anater's (2009) research, also based on the authors cited above, it is possible to identify those NMMs that, being grammatical-discursive, may have the phonological, morphological, syntactic-semantic and discursive functions that are described below:

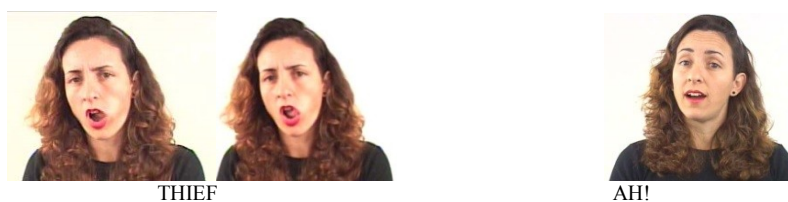
### 3.1 Phonological Markers

NMMs can be a phonological component of a sign or represent the non-manual sign itself:

a) Example of phonological component through facial expression:



b) Examples of non-manual signs, or sign that do not use hand(s) on its signaling configuration:



<sup>6</sup> The @ symbol is used to indicate the neutral gender in Libras: MAGR@ (thin) transcription system created by Felipe, 1989

<sup>7</sup> There are several culturally transmitted facial and face-body expressions that represent sensations, feelings and attitudes. These expressions, acquired by speakers can be co-articulated as a phonological component of signs, such as SAD and HAPPY, presented above, because the absence of a specific affective expression in a given lexical item can cause a mistake in the sign interpretation in Libras, or provide misleading inferences. See videos of exemplified signs in Felipe (2005). Dictionary of Libras. <http://www.librasemcontexto.org>. and <http://www.acessobrasil.org.br/libras/> Free distribution CD ROM – INES- Rio de Janeiro.



COITUS



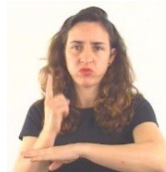
AHA!

In this phonological level, the configuration of the mouth, as a non-manual articulator, can be characterized as

a) Mouth Gestures, which are conducted concurrently with a signal but are not related to the spoken word corresponding the spoken language; they may be iconic features of the concept represented by the sign. Examples:



bruuu  
HELICOPTER



fuuuu  
ROCKET



pupupu<sup>8</sup>  
FIREWORKS<sup>9</sup>

b) The visual image of the word (Mouthings: mouth pictures or word pictures), which is an articulation of the mouth based on the pronunciation of the word in an oral-auditory language, but that is articulated in a peculiar manner, does not in fact represent the pronunciation of an oral-auditory language word. Examples:



cm  
COMO [HOW]



pq  
PRA QUE [WHAT FOR]



qu  
QUAL [WHAT]



UFA [PHEW!]

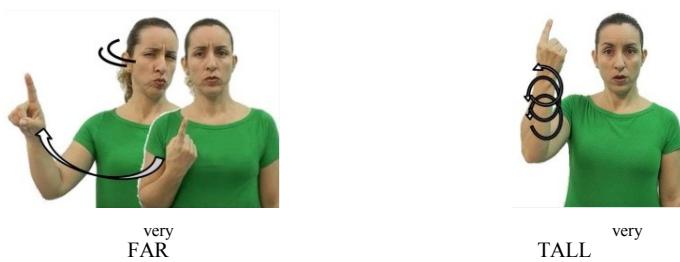
<sup>8</sup> Non-manual markers co-articulated with a sign, are represented above the translation signal. See the Transcription System in Felipe (2008). *Libras em Contexto* and in Felipe (2008) <http://www.librasemcontexto.org/> and [http://www.librasemcontexto.org/producao/lingua\\_brasileira\\_sinais\\_mec.pdf](http://www.librasemcontexto.org/producao/lingua_brasileira_sinais_mec.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> Database GP Libras - Feneis - Photos and graphic design: Paul André and Elaine Lima Bulhões, Deaf Libras teachers.

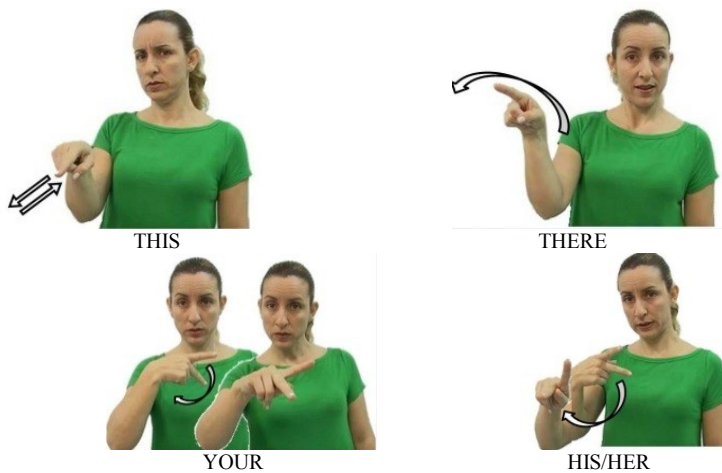
### 3.2 Morphological Markers

A NMM can be a complex morpheme, performed by means of articulators, for adjectival, adverbial, pronominal, interjective, tense and aspectual and adjectival degree markers:

a) Adjectival morpheme: A type of head movement and gaze direction, simultaneously with the hand signal, marks a feature for the noun or an intensifier for an adverb or adjective. Examples:

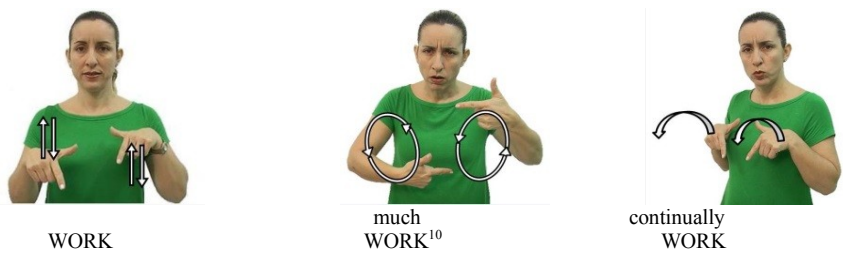


b) Deictic morphemes: The gaze and head direction, simultaneously with a pronominal or locative signal, marks a reference to particular spatial referents indicated by pointing. Examples:

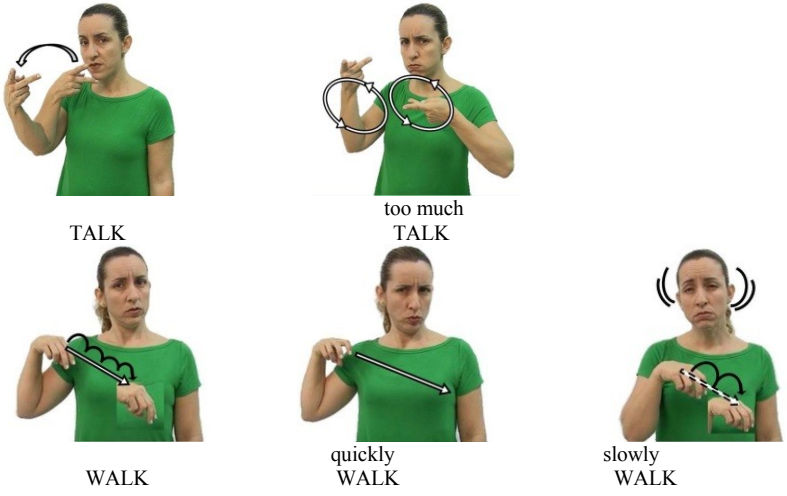


c) Adverbial morpheme:

i. Intensifier: a specific facial expression, by raising the eyebrows or frowning, sometimes also with inflated cheeks and eye-widening, simultaneous with an adjective, noun or verb marks an intensifier:



ii. Modal case: a specific facial expression, signaled by the mouth simultaneously with the signal of a verb marks a modal case. Examples:



iii. Denial, reproach: the NMM can be a specific expression, signaled by the head repeatedly moving sideways and frowning while simultaneously signaling; the head slightly tilted; lowered eyebrows; lips extended laterally or rounded; the eyes with sideways movements (squinting eyes). Examples:



d) Morpheme for adjectival degree: the intensity in widening the eyes or squinting, simultaneously with raising or furrowing the brow and inflating or

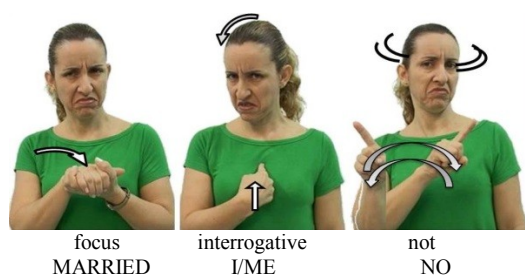
<sup>10</sup> The change in the quality/frequency/stretching movement also marks an intensifier or verbal aspect, as in these examples for the verb WORK.

contracting the cheeks, mark the augmentative or diminutive and the superlative degrees.

### 3.3 Syntactic Markers

A NMM may be a complex morpheme, performed by articulators, to mark a particular type of sentence, topicalization, focus, nominal and verbal agreement, an utterance with conditional and relative clauses or interphrasal connectors:

a) Types of sentences: In Libras, the prosody for the types of phrases resides in the differentiation of NMMs for each type: interrogative, exclamatory and negative, with their possible combinations (Felipe, 1989, 2008). The affirmative form is neutral when there is no affirmative NMM for emphasis. The negative mark by a NMM is required for negative sentences; however, shaking the head is optional and its use may indicate an emphasis. Example:



b) Interrogative - WH: There are two specific hand signals for this type of interrogative and one NMM or NMM combination: raising one eyebrow concomitantly with a slight upward movement of the head; shaking the head from side to side and raising the eyebrows with a concomitant slight upward movement of the head up, prior to the hand signal, lasting until the end of the utterance.

c) Topicalization: The topicalized argument is marked by a raised eyebrow or also, in parallel, by a tilting of the speaker's head, followed by a pause.

d) Focus: When in an initial position in the utterance, the focus is marked by a movement of the speaker's head.

e) Agreement: Depending on the type of agreement and context, there are several NMM possibilities, through the three articulators. Thus, the agreement may be marked by a slightly upward movement of the head to a particular side, forward or backward; raised or lowered eyebrows; the eyes with different expressions and directed



movements; wrinkled nose; inflated or contracted cheeks; lips with specific shapes and the torso in various positions, for example:

i. Person-number agreement: In verbs that have this type of agreement, it is marked by the direction of the verb's root-M regarding the location of persons of speech (first, second and third person singular; first, second and third person plural) that can also be marked either concurrently by tilting the head (head tilt) and by gaze direction (eye gaze). These markers also used for other types of verb agreement.

ii. Agreement with the subject - NMM, concomitant with manual markers:

1. Directional movement of the head and gaze regarding the subject positioned in the utterance;

2. Speaker in unmarked position (facing the interlocutor), assumed to be the subject of an utterance in the first person of speech.

iii. Agreement with the object:

1. Directional movement of the eyes (eye gaze), concomitantly with the hand signal for the object of the sentence. This marker is also used for other syntactic and discursive facts;

2. Directional movement of the eyes (eye gaze) and the torso in relation to the object.

f) Verbal tense and aspect: Present, past and future tenses, in addition to being expressed syntactically by means of specific signals for time adverbs may also be marked by a NMM in relation to the signers' body by means of a timeline in which the present would be the neutral position, the future would be marked by a forward movement of the body and the past by a backward movement of the body. Punctual, continuative, durative, iterative and distributional verbal aspects are marked by changing the root Movement of a signal or this Movement's frequency. This verbal conjugation for aspect through the change in frequency, repetition, stretching, tension or speed change of the root movement can be co-articulated with a change of the point of articulation of the verb and a particular NMM, such as lowering and raising the eyebrows, eye movement, and the position of the mouth.

g) Utterance that expresses a condition: This kind of utterance expresses hypothetical situations; therefore, NMMs are expressed by raising the eyebrows, usually co-articulating with a chin lift, slightly pointing forward. The speaker may co-articulate



the hand signal (S-I) concomitantly with the NMMs although this manual signal is optional, since it is grammatically accurate to use only the NMMs that distinguish a declarative utterance from a conditional one.

h) Utterance with a relative clause or with inter-phrasal connectors: This type of utterance is also marked by the elevation of the eyebrows during the clause or connector; it may be concomitant with a backward movement of the head and a specific movement of the upper part of the mouth and a pause in the signaling for the embedding of the information within the utterance.

### **3.4 Discursive Markers**

Affective and grammatical expressions are present in utterances as visual prosody. However, these affective expressions represent states and sensations that are not explicit in the lexical-syntactic form of utterances; these prosodic traits can be manipulated by the interlocutors who can deny them or pretend they are unintelligible. These consensual attitudes may be related to a situation/utterance act in which politeness and discretion must be maintained by the interlocutors or when an authoritarian/subservient attitude, or an imposition/ involuntary acceptance are tacitly demanded or interlocutors are mocking, belittling, among other discursive attitudes expressed through this visual prosody. Thus, affective and grammatical face-body expressions delimit the meaning of the utterance as it is being uttered.

In a conversation or in argumentative discourse, NMMs can represent an exchange of discursive roles (role shift), disagreement or agreement in points of view and phatic function, marked by the direction of gaze, pause, nod, bodily gestures and also from affective expressions.

In narrative utterances, the discourses of the narrator and of the characters are marked by NMMs in which affective and grammatical face-body expression may portray the characters, distinguishing them from the narrator. By the movement of the speaker's torso in space and the gaze direction, it is possible to establish the characters' types of speech (direct, indirect, free indirect) (FELIPE, 1992), discursively organizing the narrator's and characters' sequence of actions and speech lines.

NMMs involving the speaker's gaze direction and the use of space can also be locative references for the characters' actions and, when the narrator incorporates a character, he/she assumes the physical-emotional and discursive characteristics already assigned to each character, as a dramatization in which the actor takes on the role of a character.

Although many of the NMMs presented here can also be found in utterances in the Portuguese language in its oral modality, the linguistic descriptions have only highlighted the phonetic-phonological prosody in the oral mode or the graphic and pictorial resources for the written modality, disregarding this visual prosody.

### **Final Considerations**

From the standpoint of the event in a given utterance act, conclusibility makes the utterance to be unique, unrepeatable, and capable of being answered. It does not present itself as a verbal unit only, but through actual interactions among the subjects of the discourse, who also express themselves verbal-visually, adding, to what is said, ideological and historical information that complements and/or adds new information to the data that needs to be captured for the completeness of an utterance; therefore, it is always said beyond sounds, and it is precisely what is not sonorously said that may present the speaker's illocutionarity as perceived by the interlocutor that provides the completeness of the utterance: the said in the unsaid, the verbal-visual language of silence.

From the description of these affective and grammatical-discursive NMMs, it becomes possible to draw an analytical proposal that is capable of describing all sign facts of face to face discourse because

To live means to participate in dialogue: to ask questions, to heed, to respond, to agree, and so forth. In this dialogue a person participates wholly and throughout his whole life: with his eyes, lips, hands, soul, spirit, with his whole body and deeds. He invests his entire self in discourse, and this discourse enters into the dialogic fabric of human life, into the world symposium (BAKHTIN, 1961, p.293 *apud* FARACO, 2010, p.76).

From the above it is clear that in every utterance there is a face-body prosody which is actualized through facial expressions, gestures and body, used by speakers who use either spoken languages or sign languages; it is a cognitive-discursive strategy that needs to be considered in a linguistic description and in a translinguistic description of discourse.

Therefore, from these two modalities of language, in their processes of linguistic and discursive meaning, which are sequential and simultaneous, through comparative studies, it will be possible to verify whether face-body prosody is specific to each language, regardless of its modality, or whether it is the same as a cognitive-discursive trait of human languages in face-to-face discourse.

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*Received March 19, 2013*

*Accepted October 27, 2013*