

**Children with Verbal Restrictions and the Concept of
Intercomprehension and Multimodality in Speech-Language Therapy:
A Case Study / *A criança com restrição verbal e o conceito de
intercompreensão e multimodalidade na clínica da linguagem: um estudo
de caso***

*Cristiane Alves Silva**
*Ana Paula Santana***

ABSTRACT

This article aims to analyze the process of mutual understanding from the perspective of Discursive Neurolinguistics. As a methodology, a case study was carried out on a child with a linguistic profile of verbal restriction, which concerns the dimension of utterances involving words and their morphology. Data interpretation was based on the Bakhtinian perspective, which addresses ‘understanding’ as an active-responsive process and meaning as emerging from the relationship between utterances. The results showed that the interlocutors’ common ground allowed the joint construction of meaning even in the face of verbal restrictions, and aspects such as nonverbal elements and the recognition of the child’s active-responsive role also favored mutual understanding. As a conclusion, the attention to different multimodal resources as legitimate modes of expression allows children with verbal restrictions to fulfill the role of “speakers” regardless of their modes of expression.

KEYWORDS: Discursive Neurolinguistics; Multimodality; Verbal restriction; Dialogism; Mutual understanding

RESUMO

Este artigo tem por objetivo analisar o processo de intercompreensão sob a ótica da Neurolinguística Discursiva. Como metodologia, foi realizado um estudo de caso de uma criança com perfil linguístico de restrição verbal, que diz respeito à dimensão dos enunciados que envolve as palavras e a sua morfologia. A interpretação dos dados ocorreu com base na perspectiva bakhtiniana, que aborda a “compreensão” como um processo ativo responsivo e a significação como emergente na relação entre enunciados. Os resultados evidenciaram que o conhecimento compartilhado entre as interlocutoras permitiu a construção conjunta da significação mesmo diante da restrição verbal, e aspectos como os elementos não verbais e o reconhecimento do papel ativo-responsivo da criança também favoreceram a intercompreensão. Conclui-se que a atenção aos diferentes recursos multimodais como modos de expressão legítimos possibilita às

* Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina – UFSC, Centro de Comunicação e Expressão, Faculdade de Letras, Departamento de Linguística, Campus Trindade, Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil; <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-8660-2783>; crissa.alves@gmail.com

** Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina – UFSC, Centro de Ciências da Saúde, Departamento de Fonoaudiologia, Pós-Graduação em Linguística e Pós-Graduação em Fonoaudiologia, Campus Trindade, Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil; CNPq Research Productivity Fellow, Proc. 311127/2019-3; <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9508-9866>; ana.santana@ufsc.br

crianças com restrição verbal ocupar a posição de “falantes”, independentemente de seus modos de expressão.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Neurolinguística discursiva; Multimodalidade; Restrição verbal; Dialogia; Intercompreensão

Introduction¹

The complaint of “not speaking” or the “nonverbal children” in speech-language therapy covers cases that are quite different from one another, involving adults and children with various diagnoses (aphasia, deafness, motor speech disorders, chronic non-progressive encephalopathy, autistic spectrum disorder, and various neurodevelopmental and neurological syndromes and disorders). Although different, these diagnoses have one thing in common: the restriction and/or absence of *oral language*, understood as the linguistic form of social interaction that involves words - as opposed to elements considered “nonverbal” in the situation, such as gestures, looks, facial expressions or even non-articulate vocalizations. It is important to emphasize that subjects with different diagnoses and abilities have often received the same social, educational, and therapeutic treatment because they are considered subjects who “do not speak,” and thus, the particularities of each case are underestimated under the same perspective: the “absence of speech.”

However, as Lucia Arantes (2003) states, there is heterogeneity in the group that is sheltered under the symptom of “not speaking,” which exposes different ways of relating to language and, therefore, unique subjective positions. For the author, the unique way of looking at the symptom “not speaking” implies a clinical approach to language that moves away from the orthopedic concept that largely prevails in the traditional speech-language therapy and opens up space for a clinical approach that considers subjects to have a place as speakers. In the author’s words: “From this perspective, speech therapists interpret the children’s gestures, whether they are vocal (or not) - in this case,

¹ This text was based on the results of the master’s research carried out by the first author of this article and the research project *Avaliação da Compreensão: Avanços e Desafios* [*Comprehension Assessment: Advancements and Challenges*], coordinated by the second author (PQ/CNPq Process 311127/2019-3).

the speech therapists lend their imagination and put into text what has not yet gained a place in speech” (Arantes, 2003, p. 62).²

Regarding this point, Ana Paula de Oliveira Santana (2015, p. 13) also emphasizes that speech therapists must offer the subjects the possibility of assuming their role as interlocutors, in other words, their role as speaking subjects. In this regard, “a clinician’s gaze is as much on what the subjects say as on what they don’t say, but want to say, and how they say it. Thus constructing the other person’s speech from their own, in order to constitute the processes of signification.”³ For the author, in these cases, practices with other language modalities - gesture and writing - are important aspects to be signified in the interaction. We must not leave out the other multimodal elements of language.

For studies that consider the multimodality of language, such as the study by Marianne Bezerra Carvalho Cavalcante (2019), concrete enunciations are realized through “speech” (vocal) in a way that is closely integrated with “gestures.” Studies on the gesture/speech relationship emphasize that children use the multimodal elements of language from a very early age. We can say that, under the umbrella of multimodality, gestures have come to be understood as part of the linguistic phenomenon and have therefore been conceived as a multimodal aspect co-acting in the matrix of language (Cavalcante, 2018). From this theoretical perspective, language is developed in oral-auditory and kinesthetic modalities together, without speech taking precedence over gesture or vice versa (Barros; Fonte; Souza, 2020), since “gesture” and “speech” are considered to form an inseparable sphere (McNeill, 1985).

From David McNeill’s perspective, however, both “speech” and “gesture” should be considered as inseparable dimensions of the “verbal” elaboration process (McNeill, 1985). The theory that the author proposes is that “gesture” and “speech” represent the global-synthetic and linear-segmental expression of verbal communication, respectively. However, in this study we work with a more restricted concept of “verbal,” as representing only the dimension of “speech” that McNeill proposes, that is, the use of words with their linear, articulated, and conventional characteristic. This verbal

² In Portuguese: “Nessa perspectiva, o fonoaudiólogo interpreta os gestos da criança, sejam eles vocais (ou não) – nesse caso, o fonoaudiólogo empresta seu imaginário e coloca em texto, o que ainda não ganhou lugar na fala.”

³ In Portuguese: “o olhar do clínico é tanto sobre o que o sujeito fala quanto sobre o que ele não fala, mas queria falar, e como ele fala. Construindo, assim, a fala do outro a partir da sua própria fala, para constituir os processos de significação.”

dimension complements the nonverbal dimension in concrete enunciation, which in this paper encompasses both the manual “gestures” to which McNeill refers and other forms that make up enunciations, such as facial expressions, looks, body orientation, among others.

In this respect, we follow the proposal of authors who use the term *gestures*, in the plural, considering that the term can be understood in the broadest sense, not restricted only to the investigation of manual gestures, but also other body movements such as facial expressions, looks, body orientation, among others (Cavalcante; Faria, 2015). *Figure 1* further illustrates this point.

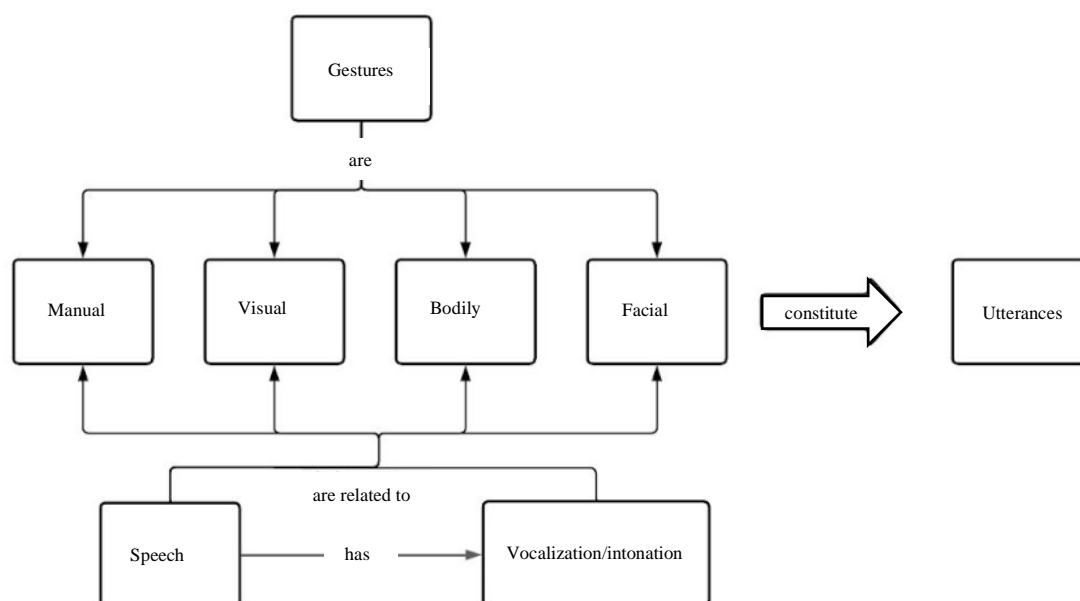


Figure 1 - Sign language. *Source:* The authors.

Studying how multimodality is exploited in social interactions, however, requires considering the socio-historical and cultural contexts in which these interactions take place, a point of view introduced by Vološinov’s language studies (1973).⁴ From this perspective, the use of multimodality must be impacted by situational and social factors in which the interaction takes place, including who the interaction partners are, where they are interacting, when they are speaking, what sphere of social activity is taking place, among other factors. Thus, in order to understand language development from this

⁴ VOLOŠINOV, Valentin Nikolaievch. *Marxism and the Philosophy of language*. Trad. Ladislav Matejka and R. Titunik. Translator’s Preface. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973.

perspective, it is necessary to observe spontaneous speech data and analyze the interactional scene as a whole, aiming to assess how meaning emerges in the dialogical process and how different factors in the situational and social context can influence these interactions.

Vološinov (1973)⁵ emphasized that meaning involves all verbal manifestations and other manifestations of a semiotic nature, such as mimicry, sign language, conditional gestures, and the volitional-emotional tone linked to the words. In this respect, for meaning to occur, it is necessary to consider the multimodality involved in the interaction.

Thus, meaning belongs to a word as a link between the interlocutors and is only realized in the process of active and responsive understanding. According to João Wanderley Geraldi (1991, p. 19), “in the process of active-responsive understanding, it is the presence of the other’s speech that triggers a kind of inevitable search for meaning; this search, in turn, triggers the person who comprehends to orient themselves towards the other’s utterance.”⁶

Thus, we can say that comprehension is semiotic in nature. In this context, Vološinov (1973, p. 70)⁷ understands that what “we never say or hear *words*, we say and hear what is true or false, good or bad, important or unimportant, pleasant or unpleasant, and so on.” The word, for the theorist, is always charged with an ideological or experiential meaning. This is how we understand words and react to those that resonate with us ideologically or in terms of life. To understand is, in his terms, to oppose the speaker’s word to a *counter word*.

Based on these assumptions, the term we adopted in this study, which reflects this perspective, is *intercomprehension*. This term was initially used by Geraldi (1991) to rule out any interpretation that could make the subject the source of meaning. For the author, there are two levels that intersect in this process:

(...) that of the historical and social production of reference systems in relation to which expressive resources become significant and those of the discursive operations which, by referring to reference systems, allow intercomprehension in interlocution processes despite the

⁵ For reference, see footnote 4.

⁶ In Portuguese: “no processo de compreensão ativo-responsiva é a presença da fala do outro que deflagra uma espécie de inevitabilidade de busca de sentido; essa busca, por seu turno, deflagra que quem compreende se oriente para a enunciação do outro.”

⁷ For reference, see footnote 4.

vagueness of the expressive resources used. In these operations, it is possible to say that there are actions that subjects perform *with* language and actions that they perform *upon* language; in the utilization of expressive resources and in the production of systems of references, we can say that there is an action of language (Geraldi, 1991, p. 16).⁸

The term “intercomprehension” was also used by Fugiwara (2013, p. 131) to refer both to the notion of “joint comprehension” and to the notion of “a work in which both partners in verbal communication operate on each other’s utterances to construct meaning” (Fugiwara, 2013, p. 155).⁹ In the field of discursive studies, intercomprehension¹⁰ marks comprehension as an active process in which meaning only occurs dialogically, involving the multimodality of language.

It is in this regard that we say that comprehension always contains the elements of response, since we respond to any utterance from our interlocutor, if not with words, at least with a gesture: a head movement, a smile, a little head shake, among other resources (Bakhtin, 1986).¹¹

In our study, we take Discursive Neurolinguistics (DN)¹² as our starting point. Based on the studies of Maria Irma Hadler Coudry (1996), DN presents a discursive view of language that has been questioning the limits of structuralist theories in the face of idealized models that synthesize the complex relationship between production and

⁸ In Portuguese: “[...] aquele da produção histórica e social de sistemas de referências em relação aos quais os recursos expressivos se tornam significativos e aqueles das operações discursivas que, remetendo aos sistemas de referências, permitem a intercompreensão nos processos interlocutivos apesar da vagueza dos recursos expressivos utilizados. Nestas operações pode-se dizer que há ações que os sujeitos fazem com a linguagem e ações que fazem sobre a linguagem; no agenciamento de recursos expressivos e na produção de sistemas de referências pode-se dizer que há uma ação da linguagem.”

⁹ In Portuguese: “um trabalho em que ambos os parceiros da comunicação verbal operam sobre os enunciados um do outro para construir a significação.”

¹⁰ According to Escudé and Calvo del Olmo, the word “intercomprehension” was coined in 1913 by the French linguist Jules Ronjat, although it is not as widely used today. For the author, “it is simple to explain what this term means: two interlocutors meet, each speaking - or writing - their own language and striving to understand the language of the other” (2019, p. 11). The term as it is being used here is different from the one that has been used in multilingual studies to emphasize the interaction between two or more languages using different semiotic resources (García, 2018).

¹¹ BAKHTIN, Mikhail. The Problem of the Text in Linguistics, Philology and the Human Sciences: An Experiment in Philosophical Analysis. In: BAKHTIN, Mikhail. *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays*. Translated by Vern W. McGee and Edited by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986, pp. 103-131.

¹² Discursive Neurolinguistics inaugurated its studies with the language assessment of aphasic subjects, in longitudinal follow-ups, anchored in the historicity of the subjects and the time in which they live, in the centrality of interlocution in the production of data, being mediated by a conception of language and the brain as historically determined human constructs (Coudry; Freire, 2017).

comprehension and that exclude communication partners, starting from the point of view of speakers, as if they were alone in the interaction (Fugiwara; Novaes-Pinto, 2013).

DN is based on socio-historical studies, based on Alexander Romanovich Luria (1976)¹³ Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (1978)¹⁴ and the Bakhtin Circle¹⁵(Vološinov, 1973).¹⁶ In these studies, the main points considered are the social sphere, the immediate context and the broader context of the interactions, the heterogeneity of the subjects, the historically constructed social places and positions, as well as the historical (subjective) and social (ideological) aspects of both the subject and their interlocutor (Santana; Santos, 2017). These aspects, considered to be constitutive of language in the flow of discursive communication, occur regardless of the form of expression used. This means that, even when faced with situations of interaction with subjects who are verbally restricted, or even when faced with unintelligible or unconventional utterances, the way the interlocutor responds to these utterances will constitute different *completions* (Bakhtin, 1986)¹⁷ regarding the *intended meaning*¹⁸ of the individual. This reveals the more (or less) active role of each interlocutor in relation to the discourse of the other, exposing their understanding of the semiotic constructions built dialogically (Canónico; Del Ré, 2022). For this reason, *dialogy* transcends dialog in its strict sense (face to face) and reflects a principle of the *real functioning of language*, whether internal (monologue) or external (Vološinov, 1973). As Fiorin (2018, p. 22) explains:

According to Bakhtin, language, in its concrete, living entirety, and its real use, has the property of being dialogical. These dialogic relationships do not fall within the narrow framework of face-to-face dialog, which is only one compositional form in which they occur. On the contrary, all utterances in the communication process, regardless of their dimension, are dialogic. In them, there is an internal dialogization of the word, which is always permeated by the word of the other, and is also always inevitably the word of the other. This means that in order

¹³ LURIA, Alexander Romanovich. *The Working Brain. An Introduction do Neuropsychology*. Translated by Basil Haigh. New York: Basic Book Inc., Publishers, 1976.

¹⁴ VYGOTSKY, Lev Semenovich. *Mind in Society. The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge (USA) and London (UK): Harvard University Press, 1978.

¹⁵ The Bakhtin Circle is the name given to the group of Russian scholars who used to meet between 1919 and 1974, including Bakhtin, Volóchinov, and Medvedev.

¹⁶ For reference, see footnote 4.

¹⁷ For reference, see footnote 11.

¹⁸Intended meaning or discursive intent is a Bakhtinian concept closely related to the concept of utterance.

to constitute a discourse, enunciators take into account the discourse of others, which is present in their own.¹⁹

In this regard, since language is essentially dialogic, this means that it can only be understood in the flow of verbal/discursive communication. This is what we present in this paper. We analyzed in depth situations of interaction of children with verbal restrictions who often don't have the verbal resources to say something in words, but have *alternative processes of signification* (Coudry, 1996), such as vocalizations, gestures, drawings, images, among others. In contexts of verbal restriction, how do interlocutors construct meaning? What resources do they use to make themselves understood? Also, how do interlocutors act *in, with* and *on* the language of a verbally restricted interlocutor to build intercomprehension?

Based on these considerations, the aim of this article is to analyze the process of intercomprehension from a socio-historical perspective of Bakhtinian thought. We present this discussion based on a case study of a child with verbal restriction.

1 Methodological Aspects

In terms of methodology, this research has the following characteristics: in terms of means, it is a qualitative study, and a case study; and in terms of time and context, it is cross-sectional naturalistic.

For Maria Cecília de Souza Minayo (2014), qualitative research is characterized by involving social phenomena that can be understood as a research dynamics that integrates the analysis of objective and subjective aspects. Thus, *understanding* is considered as the main axis of analysis, since all understanding is partial and unfinished, both for the interviewee and the researcher, since we are all limited in what we understand and interpret.

¹⁹ In Portuguese: “Segundo Bakhtin, a língua, em sua totalidade concreta, viva, em seu uso real, tem a propriedade de ser dialógica. Essas relações dialógicas não se inscrevem ao quadro estreito do diálogo face a face, que é apenas uma forma composicional, em que elas ocorrem. Ao contrário, todos os enunciados no processo de comunicação, independentes de sua dimensão, são dialógicos. Neles, existe uma dialogização interna da palavra, que é perpassada sempre pela palavra do outro, é sempre inevitavelmente também a palavra do outro. Isso quer dizer que o enunciador, para constituir um discurso, leva em conta o discurso de outrem, que está presente no seu.”

In addition to these assumptions, the study is based on a Bakhtinian perspective and, particularly, DN, according to which human interaction can be more adequately assessed based on data contextualized with the daily lives of the research subjects. Thus, the research data emerged from dialogic situations between the subjects participating in the study in various language practices, carried out in their everyday social context. We chose video recordings to generate data, as they can capture the multimodal resources in the interaction.

For this study, we extracted data from the first author's master's research. The case studied is a child that we will call Gabriela. In addition to Gabriela, three subjects were invited to take part in this research and signed the *Termo de Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido (TCLE)* [Informed Consent Form (ICF)]²⁰ authorizing the recording and analysis of video data: her mother and two professionals who assist the child in the early stimulation program. The participants are: Ana, who is Gabriela's mother and 42 years old, Maria, 43 years old, and Joana, 34 years old.

The research data was generated over 53 days, at the institution where the child attends the early stimulation program. After recording the interactions in the first 20 minutes and selecting the data, we processed the audiovisual recordings using the Eudico Linguistic Annotator (ELAN) tool, created by the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen - Holland. This software works as a data transcription tool that makes it possible to describe different multimodal language resources, such as gestures and vocal production, for example, at the exact time of their occurrence.

1.1 Who Is Gabriela?

Gabriela is a child who is 3 years and 10 months old and lives with her parents and 16-year-old brother. Her mother, Ana, reports that when pregnant, she was under high-risk prenatal care because she had hypertension. For this reason, she was born prematurely, at 35 weeks. After she was born, she spent three hours in the neonatal ICU.

²⁰ This research was authorized by the *Comitê de Ética e Pesquisa do Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa com Seres Humanos* [Research Ethics Committee from the Human Research Ethics Committee] (CEPSH/UFSC), with CAAE number: 55848022.5.0000.0121 and opinion number: 5.286.272.

Around the age of nine months, Gabriela began a journey of diagnostic investigation. The diagnosis of chronic nonprogressive encephalopathy²¹ (CNE - ICD G 80.2) was in March 2019, when, at the age of ten months, Gabriela had her first brain MRI scan with the following conclusion: “Malacia in left superficial sylvian segment - infarction; Leukopathy; Left polar arachnoid cyst.”²² During the investigation of the CNE, the clinical findings showed an abnormality suggestive of Turner syndrome²³ (TS). The diagnosis of TS was confirmed by a genetic test that showed complete monosomy of the X chromosome.

Regarding to language development, in Gabriela’s first few months of life, her expressions were predominantly vocal sounds and pointing. During the acquisition process, according to her mother, it was remarkable that the first word, “papai” [daddy], which she uttered at around 24 months, was produced in a very articulate way: “she spoke very clearly. But then, suddenly, she stopped” (acc. mother’s account).²⁴ Another characteristic was the generalized use of parts of a word, such as the syllable /ma/ (meaning: “mãe” [mother]), to call mother, father and any other adult. Gabriela uses pointing to get what she wants (popcorn, clothes, etc.) and “home gestures” to ask for cartoons she likes to watch on television or to ask for the story she wants her mother to tell her at bedtime.

2 Data Analysis

The analysis aims to understand the process of intercomprehension between Gabriela, a child with verbal restrictions, and her interlocutors in a naturalistic context, based on the theoretical assumption that language cannot be understood/evaluated independently of the contexts of interaction, nor outside the flow of verbal communication. To this end, we analyzed 4 interactive scenes transcribed from audiovisual recordings. In the analysis of interactive scene 1, the aim is to discuss the continuous work of building intercomprehension between the mother and the child and

²¹ Chronic nonprogressive encephalopathy (CNE) is a pathology that results from a static lesion in immature developing brains, impairing the subject’s tone, posture and motor skills.

²² In Portuguese: “Malácia em território silviano superficial esquerdo - infarto; leucopatia; cisto aracnoideo polar esquerdo.”

²³ Turner’s Syndrome is a rare condition caused by the total or partial deletion of the X chromosome.

²⁴ In Portuguese: “ela falava certinho. Só que aí de repente, depois, parou.”

the role of the dyad’s multimodal utterances in this work. In scene 2, we emphasized the alternative system of meaning established between the child and the mother. In scene 3, we discussed the discursive relationships involved in interpreting the production of unrecognized or atypical vocal utterances. Finally, in scene 4, we looked at the role of Gabriela’s gestures in the interpretation of her utterances by the interlocutor.




Interactive scene 1 - “A-Lála”

Child’s age: 3 years and 10 months.

Location: cafeteria.

Participants: child, mother and researcher.

Context: In this first episode, the child, the mother and the researcher enter the cafeteria. After the sequence organized by the mother (sitting and positioning the child at the table, heating the food and offering it to the child), Gabriela turns to her mother and begins the conversation.

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Interlocutor</i>	<i>Multimodal utterance</i>	<i>Pictures</i>
1	Gabriela	“Êee” (Points upwards and looks at her mother)	
2	Ana	“What do you want?” (Looks at the child)	
3	Gabriela	(Grabs her mother’s forearm)	
4	Ana	(Withdraws her arm and looks at the child)	
5	Gabriela	(Points and looks in the direction of the backpack)	
6	Ana	“Do you want some water?” (Looks at the backpack, then at the child)	
7	Gabriela	(Produces the “no” sign and looks in the direction of the backpack)	
8	Gabriela	“Êee” (grabs her mother’s forearm and looks in the direction of the backpack)	
9	Ana	“Water?” (Leans torso and head forward, facing the child)	
10	Gabriela	“Eeaii” (Points and looks in the direction of the cell phone)	
11	Ana	(Looks at the pointing gesture and then looks at the cell phone)	




<i>Turn</i>	<i>Interlocutor</i>	<i>Multimodal utterance</i>	<i>Pictures</i>
12	Ana	“This one?” (Points to the cell phone and looks at the child)	
13	Gabriela	“Edee” (Produces the “yes” sign)	
14	Ana	(Picks up the cell phone and puts it in front of the child)	
15	Gabriela	“A-lála!” (Smiles, pointing and looking at the cell phone screen)	

Chart 1 - Interactive scene 1 “A-Lála?”. Source: Alves-Silva (2022, p. 71)

This is a regular scene between the child and the mother: feeding time. In the transcribed scene, we first notice that the child simultaneously produces the vocal expression “Eee” and the pointing gesture (turn 1), provoking a reaction in her mother, who looks at the child and interprets her multimodal production as a *request* and responds with an *open-ended question*: “What do you want?” (turn 2). After the child grabs her mother’s forearm (turn 3), she points in the direction of the backpack (turn 5). The mother rephrases her question, but this time with a *close-ended “yes/no” question*: “Do you want water?” (turn 6); to which the child replies “no,” using a sign (turn 7). The shared knowledge puts the mother in a position of active understanding when she relates the backpack to the items that could be in it, such as water, considering that it is feeding time. However, the child rephrases and says “Eee” and grabs her mother’s forearm (turn 8).

This time, the mother leans her torso and head forward, coming closer to the child, facing her and rephrasing the question for the third time: “Water?” (turn 9). The sequence begins to be resolved when the child looks again at the side of the backpack, starts pointing at the cell phone next to it and says “Eeaii” (turn 10). The gesture of pointing reduces the ambiguity and the mother rephrases her statement while pointing at the cell phone: “This one?” (turn 12). The child then smiles and makes the “yes” sign with both hands, along with the vocalization “Edeee” (turn 13). The mother then picks up the cell

phone and puts it in front of the child (turn 14), who continues to smile and, pointing at the screen, says “A-lála” (turn 15).

We want to draw attention to two aspects: (i) the continuous work of building intercomprehension between the mother and the child; and (ii) the role of the dyad’s multimodal utterances. Throughout the interaction, it is noticeable how the mother directs the child’s possibilities of meaning through an interaction process that is sensitive to multimodality (Alves-Silva, 2022). Based on the child’s pointing gestures and vocalizations, the mother asks three successive questions: “What do you want?,” “Do you want water?” and “Water?”. These linguistic actions on the part of the mother, in the form of a dialog, make it possible for roles to be reversed and give the child the chance to answer the question using the mother’s words: “Yes” (I want water) or “No” (I don’t want water).

According to Fugiwara and Novaes-Pinto (2013), these are the linguistic actions, as acts of reflection practiced in interactions, that Geraldi (1991) considers essential to the process of learning language, since learning language is already an act of reflection. As the authors point out, “understanding the other’s speech and making oneself understood by the other takes the form of a dialog: when we understand the other, we match their speech with a series of words of our own” (Fugiwara; Novaes-Pinto, 2013, p. 912).²⁵

Looking at the multimodal elements, we can see that the gesture of pointing is often used by the child (turns 1, 5, 10, 14), as well as by the mother, when she seeks confirmation of the child’s object of interest through a deictic gesture (turn 12). According to Cavalcante (2012), the gesture of pointing has a prominent position in relation to the signs produced by the child.

Other gestures that Gabriela produced were the “negation” and “positive” signs (turns 7 and 13). The use of this type of gesture reveals that the child has, as part of her communicative repertoire, conventional and symbolic signs, which have a similar status to *words* in oral languages (McNeill, 1985). This observation suggests that Gabriela is able to communicate in a conventional and symbolic way using hand gestures, which raises the question of her potential to learn a manual language system - such as the sign

²⁵ In Portuguese: “compreender a fala do outro e se fazer compreender pelo outro tem a forma de diálogo: quando compreendemos o outro, fazemos corresponder à sua fala uma série de palavras nossas.”

languages used by deaf people - in order to structure and expand her communicative repertoire.

Looking at the child's vocalizations (*Chart 2*), we can identify some productions that also stood out. The first two productions used to express the request were the same: "Êee" (turns 1 and 8). Combined with pointing gestures, these productions may be associated with a conventional way for Gabriela to make a "request."

(a) "Êee" (turn 1)
(b) "Êee" (turn 8)
(c) "Eeaai" (turn 10)
(d) "Edee" (turn 13)
(e) "Alála" (turn 15)

Chart 2 - Extracts from the child's vocal productions. *Source*: Alves-Silva (2022, p. 74)

The other three vocal productions also stand out for their possible similarity to typical Portuguese constructions. In the first one (c), the child says "Eeaai" (turn 10), pointing to the cell phone, to which the mother replies: "This one?" We might ponder to what extent the mother would intuitively use sound clues present in the child's vocalization to reflexively reformulate her production, since the sequence of vowels in Gabriela's production ('e-a-i') is similar to the mother's response: 'e(ss)e a(qu)i' [this one]. A similar process may have occurred next, when we can hypothesize that Gabriela's answer (d), "Edee," was a vocal approximation of her mother's previous utterance, "Esse" [this].

Although it's not conclusive, Gabriela's last utterance could strengthen this hypothesis. When we look at her last production (e), transcribed here as "Alála" (turn 15), a perspective restricted only to this interaction could suggest that it was just a random vocalization. However, if we cross-reference this data with another regarding Gabriela's verbal and nonverbal repertoire, which we asked her mother to do (*Chart 3* below), we observe that "A-Lála" is a *holophrase* that Gabriela uses with her mother on a daily basis to refer to the expression "A Dora," from the cartoon "Dora the Explorer." In this regard, based on this episode, it is possible to assume that Gabriela's vocalizations are not random and that looking for sound clues of similar words could play a role in the process of constructing meaning by her interlocutors.

During the interview with the mother, she was asked to name words used in her daily interaction with Gabriela. The mother mentioned the words that are part of the child’s repertoire, some of which are exemplified in *Chart 3*.

<i>Gabriela’s conventional vocalization</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
Mama	<i>mamãe</i> [mommy]
Baaa	<i>bala</i> [candy]
boo	<i>bolo</i> [Cake]
Lela	Cinderella
<i>Lala</i>	<i>Dora</i>

Chart 3 - Partial list of Gabriela’s conventional vocalizations recorded by her mother. *Source:* Alves-Silva (2022, p. 75)

In short, in this first scene, as Lucia Aparecida Scisci states (2004), the mutual knowledge that the subjects share is an important factor in understanding what is being said. In this case, we observe that the child’s utterances are closely connected to her *intended* meaning. According to Bakhtin (1992), an *utterance* is marked by individual circumstances, individualized partners and their previous interventions. Thus, communication partners who are familiar with the situation and previous utterances perceive the discursive intent, the intended meaning of the interlocutor, from the very first words they hear. Based on this, we can consider that living with people who have a language disorder makes it easier for the interlocutor to understand the gestures, pauses and other resources used by these people to make themselves understood (Scisci, 2004).

Interactive scene 2: “She’s showing her foot.”

Child’s age: 3 years and 10 months.

Location: cafeteria. Participants: child, mother and researcher.

Context: in this segment, which happens a few moments after interactive scene 1, the researcher, unaware of the cartoon the child was watching on her cell phone and not recognizing her production “Alála,” asks her mother what Gabriela liked to watch.

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Interlocutor</i>	<i>Multimodal utterance</i>	<i>Pictures</i>
1	Ana	“No, tell her, what other cartoon you like to watch? Which of... you like to see, the princess one? Tell her which one it is.”	



<i>Turn</i>	<i>Interlocutor</i>	<i>Multimodal utterance</i>	<i>Pictures</i>
2	Gabriela	(Takes her finger off her cell phone and, looking down, puts her hands under the table)	
3	Ana	“She’s telling you. She is showing her foot. It’s Cinderella.” (Looks at the researcher.)	
4	Researcher	“Oh, let me see what it is? Let me see?”	
5	Gabriela	(Touches her foot repeatedly with her hands, looks at the researcher and smiles.)	

Chart 4 - Interactive scene 2 “She’s showing her foot.” Source: Alves-Silva (2022, p. 77)

Interactive scene 2, involving the “child-mother-researcher” triad, shows the discursive role that the mother assumes in the interactive scene, by assuming the position of interlocutor and constituting the child as a potential speaker, asking her once again to enunciate it. First, the researcher asks the child what other cartoons she likes. Faced with the child’s silence, the mother intervenes in the interaction, but continues to attribute an active-responsive status to Gabriela’s actions, even though these actions are not verbal in nature. Watching her daughter slide her finger from bottom to top on her cell phone, Ana rephrases her open-ended question in the form of a statement, “Other cartoon...” and, noticing that Gabriela is still looking for her answer on her cell phone, she rephrases it once again: “No... tell her what other cartoon... (turn 1)”

The mother’s turn 1 has some elements that we emphasize. Firstly, the expression “No,” with which the turn begins, shows that the mother continues to recognize Gabriela’s action of sliding her finger on the cell phone as the search for an answer. At the same time, the mother’s statement requires the child to find another resource to answer the question. Next, the expression “tell her” explicitly questions Gabriela as an active-responsive subject of the discourse. This enunciation presents Gabriela not only as someone who is able to “speak,” but also to “report” experiences that go beyond the immediate here-and-now context.

Then, her mother acted as a translator to mediate the interaction between Gabriela and the researcher, who, until then, had been unaware that the gesture of touching the foot

was a conventional symbol in her family environment to refer to the Cinderella cartoon. “She’s telling you. She’s showing her foot. It’s *Cinderella*” (turn 3). If it were not for the mother’s mediation, supported by the *mutual knowledge* (Coudry, 1996) that she shares with her daughter, this gesture of touching her foot could possibly be considered a random action or even have a vague meaning for other interlocutors who do not share this common knowledge.

In this interactive scene, therefore, we highlight the importance of multimodal resources in Gabriela’s communication. In the case of the reference to Cinderella, the fact that subjects restricted by their verbal condition make use of different types of multimodal resources to convey meaning is evident. In Gabriela’s case, the restriction in the use of the oral modality highlights “the creative force of language” (Coudry, 1996)²⁶ through the emergence of nonverbal signs made possible *in* and *by* the interlocution with her mother.

When this data is cross-referenced with the interview conducted with her mother, it becomes clear that hand gestures are already explored daily as part of Gabriela’s repertoire and are an important communicative resource. Chart 5 below shows some of the gestures that make up their family repertoire.

<i>Gabriela’s home signs</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
Touches her foot (or shoe) with her hand	Cinderella (children’s cartoon)
Index finger pointing to her hair	Rapunzel (children’s literature character)
Arms extended at shoulder height and one leg bent (imitating the character’s body)	Dora the Explorer (children’s cartoon character)
With her hand closed, she makes circular movements, as if she were stirring something in a pan	Strawberry Shortcake (children’s cartoon character)
With her hands open and arms intertwined in front of her torso, with movements like rocking a baby	Baby Jesus
With her hands open, in front of her face, with vocalizations	Dinosaur
With her hands open, swaying at shoulder height, as if she were swimming	Little Mermaid (children’s cartoon character)
Kneeling down	Princess Jasmine (character from the children’s cartoon “Princesses”)
Hands joined on the side of her face.	Aurora, the sleeping beauty (children’s cartoon)

Chart 5 - Partial repertoire of home signs used by Gabriela with her mother. *Source*: Alves-Silva (2022, p. 90).

²⁶ In Portuguese: “a força criadora da linguagem.”

It is worth noting the similarities between the processes described by the mother about Gabriela’s use of gestures and what other researchers who study deaf children born into hearing families call “home signs” or “family signs,”²⁷ because they are only used in the family context (Santana, 2007). Although home signs are not considered a complete linguistic system, such systems present an embryo of the essential properties of human languages (Mylander; Goldin-Meadow, 1991). When encouraged, these productions have the potential to develop typical characteristics of linguistic signs, such as those of the sign languages spoken by deaf people, thus exploiting the “creative force of language” (Coudry, 1996).²⁸

In short, as interactive scene 2 shows and the interview reinforces, the alternative system of meaning established between the child and the mother seems to broaden the possibilities of establishing dialogues with a greater diversity of themes and contexts. Thus, it also has a positive influence on the child’s affective, cognitive, linguistic-discursive and social development.


Interactive scene 3 “É-tchãa”

Child’s age: 3 years and 11 months

Location: therapy room.






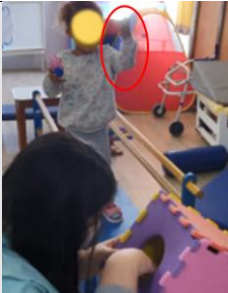
Participants: Gabriela, Maria and the researcher.

Context: in the interactive scene, the interlocutor leads the interaction by asking Gabriela to take an object from inside a box. The toy Gabriela picks up is a cartoon character known as “George,” Peppa Pig’s little brother. Then, the interlocutor asks Gabriela to take “George” to a table a few meters away from the box. The following interactive scene begins with an image showing what appears to be Gabriela’s unease, as she drops the box, turns her body towards the table, looks at “George,” and is then interpreted by the interlocutor in turn 1.

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Interlocutor</i>	<i>Multimodal utterance</i>	<i>Pictures</i>
1	Maria	“Do you want George?”; “Come here” (follows the child’s movements)	

²⁷ In Portuguese: “gestos caseiros;” “gestos domésticos.”

²⁸ In Portuguese: “força criadora da linguagem.”

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Interlocutor</i>	<i>Multimodal utterance</i>	<i>Pictures</i>
2	Gabriela	“É-tchu” (raises her left arm and hand, moving to the rhythm of the vocalization)	
3	Maria	“What do you want? George is a little pig. Do you want to play with him?” (looks at the child)	
4	Gabriela	“É-tchiu” (continues to make the gesture up and down, following the rhythm of the vocalization)	
5	Maria	“Did you see him on TV?”	
6	Gabriela	(Looks inside the box)	
7	Maria	“Uh, I don't know what you're trying to tell me. What do you want to tell me?”	
8	Gabriela	“Pé-pa” (maintains the gesture pattern)	
9	Maria	(Remains in silence, looking at the child)	
10	Gabriela	“É-tchaa” (maintains the gesture pattern)	
11	Maria	“Huh? What is it? Take George to the table so we can get another animal.” (Looks inside the box)	
12	Gabriela	“É-tchua” (takes two steps towards the table, but stops, turns around and vocalizes again with the same gesture pattern)	



<i>Turn</i>	<i>Interlocutor</i>	<i>Multimodal utterance</i>	<i>Pictures</i>
13	Maria	“Ha! Look here! There’s a whale!” (takes a toy from the box)	
14	Gabriela	“É-tchaa” (maintains the gesture pattern)	
15	Maria	“Look” (making movements with the whale)	
16	Gabriela	“É-tee” (maintains gesture pattern)	
17	Maria	“What now, Cris, help me...” [looks at the researcher]. “What do you want?” (looks at the child)	
18	Researcher	“Is it Peppa you want?”	
19	Gabriela	(“Positive” gesture with her left hand, looking at the researcher)	

Chart 6 - Interactive scene 3 “É-tcháã”. Source: Alves-Silva (2022, p. 94)

In this fragment, we see more clearly the discursive relationships involved in interpreting the production of unrecognized or atypical vocal utterances. Firstly, Gabriela changes her engagement in the interaction with the interlocutor Maria, who continued to lead the child’s attention, by turning her body and directing her gaze to the “George” toy instead of the box. Faced with this change, Maria interprets Gabriela’s body signs and tries again to get her to focus on the activity, “Do you want George? Come here” (turn 1).

From then on, Gabriela began to express her object of interest persistently in various turns. When she takes “George” in her hands, we see the first of many vocal-gesture productions that Gabriela has enunciated to her interlocutor. As a first observation, we can see that the child’s productions in turns 2, 4, 8, 10, 12, 14 and 16 were similar, which means we can observe a pattern involving the same rhythm, the same number of syllables and the same intonation contour. Regarding the number of syllables, it is possible to observe that the child’s productions were disyllabic, with a stress on the first syllable, “É.” With regard to phonetic/phonological articulation, although the sound

articulated in the first syllable is close to the Portuguese phoneme /e/, there is greater variability in production in the second syllable.²⁹

The gestures produced by the child are classified as gesticulations which, according to Paulo Vinícius Ávila-Nóbrega and Cavalcante (2015), are defined as idiosyncratic, unconventional movements without linguistic (verbal) properties, performed concomitantly with speech. However, it is clear that this gesticulation has the characteristics of gestures known as “beats,” which mark the rhythm of speech and are coordinated with prosody (McNeill, 1992). Thus, on the stressed syllable, “É,” the gesture is higher and on the second, weaker syllable, the gesture is lower.

A second aspect to be addressed is that, in this scene between Gabriela and Maria, we notice that the child’s vocal-gesture production raises some possibilities of interpretation on the part of the interlocutor: “What do you want? George is a little pig. Do you want to play with him?” and “Did you see him on TV?” (turns 3 and 5). On the other hand, realizing that Gabriela shows that she is not being understood, Maria tries to change the topic, asking the child to take another animal from the box and then taking a whale herself and inviting the child to play with it (turns 11, 13 and 15).

Throughout this excerpt, Gabriela’s discursive intent is noticeable, even in the face of her interlocutor’s attempts to change the topic of conversation. The child takes a persistent position in the interaction, clearly sustaining a certain *intended meaning* (Bakhtin, 1986).³⁰ It should be added that the interactive scene also shows the interaction clues that make it possible to understand what Gabriela was expressing - which is evidenced by the “positive” sign she produced in response to the researcher’s utterance, “Is it Peppa you want?” (turns 18 and 19, respectively).

At that moment, two aspects allowed the researcher in the interactive scene to interpret her productions. Firstly, in the immediate context of the scene, we can see that Gabriela, after holding and repeatedly looking at “George,” turns to look inside the box, apparently looking for “something.” The second aspect was the form of the vocalizations, which maintained the prosodic characteristics and sounded similar to the word “Peppa” – the name of the sister of the character “George” in the cartoon.

²⁹ It should be noted that the second syllable of Gabriela’s productions was transcribed based on the researcher’s approximate observation, as they are not clearly identifiable.

³⁰ For reference, see footnote 11.

Interactive scene 4: “What’s wrong? Are you hungry?”

Child’s age: 3 years and 11 months.

Location: therapy session.

Active participants in the scene: Gabriela, Joana and the researcher.

Context: in this episode, Joana and Gabriela are interacting in a game with a “miniature kitchen.” In the scene, Joana plays “cooking soup” with Gabriela. At a certain point, Joana turns the toy towards the child and asks a question, starting the episode.







<i>Turn</i>	<i>Interlocutor</i>	<i>Multimodal utterance</i>	<i>Pictures</i>
1	Joana	“See if there’s anything here.” (directs the toy towards the child). “Is there anything in there?”	
2	Gabriela	(Opens the oven door, looks inside and extends her left arm into the oven)	
3	Joana	“Is there anything there?”	
4	Gabriela	(Touches the bottom and top compartments, extends her arm inside the fridge, moves it sideways and looks at the interlocutor)	
5	Joana	“Is there anything in there?”	
6	Gabriela	(Looks at the fridge and closes the door)	
7	Joana	“Look at me” (touches the child’s arm). “Is there anything in there?”	
8	Gabriela	(Makes the “positive” sign)	
9	Joana	“There is?... What?... Take it!”	
10	Gabriela	(Closes the fridge door, stands up and rubs her stomach with her left hand)	
11	Joana	“What’s wrong? Are you hungry?” (rubs the child’s stomach)	
12	Joana	“There’s nothing in here” (turns her body towards the toy). “What about in the microwave?”	

Chart 7 - Interactive scene 4 - “Hand on stomach.” Source: Alves-Silva (2022, p. 99).

In this episode, Gabriela is once again engaged in interaction with her interlocutor, as described in the excerpts analyzed above. However, an initial observation that distinguishes this data from the previous ones is that, here, Gabriela is only using gestures, without vocalizations. *Chart 8* below shows Gabriela’s gestures in this interactive scene.

1. Opening gesture (in turn 2, the child opens the fridge door)
2. Touching gesture (in turn 4, the child touches the fridge compartments)
3. “Sweeping” gesture (in turn 4, the child swipes her arm across the fridge in sideways movements)
4. Closing gesture (in turns 6 and 10, the child closes the fridge door; and in turn 17, she closes the microwave door)
5. “Positive” gesture (turn 8)
6. Hand on stomach gesture (turns 10, 13 and 15)

Chart 8 - Gabriela’s gestures in interactive scene 4. Source: Alves-Silva (2022, p. 100)

Unlike the other described interactive scenes, in this episode, the interlocutor attributes meaning to the child’s body actions only when she produces gestures that resemble culturally conventionalized *signs* (Cavalvante, 2018). With regard to the other gestures, pantomimes that illustrate modes of action produced by the child, we observe that their meaning was not addressed by the interlocutor throughout the interaction. In other words, the interlocutor does not recognize the semiotic potential of pantomimes and does not engage in the symbolic/dialogic game proposed by the child.³¹

Thus, in turns 2, 4 and 6, Gabriela’s gestures do not seem to be recognized as responses, considering that her interlocutor rephrases the same question multiple times: in turn 1 (“See if there’s anything here”). Is there anything in there?”); in turn 3 (“Is there anything there?”); in turn 5 (“Is there anything in there?”); and in turn 7 (“Look at me. Is there anything in there?”).

We see that Gabriela’s production is recognized as an answer to the questions in turns 8 and 10. In turn 8, the child makes a “positive” sign, which the interlocutor interprets and follows up in turn 9 (“There is?... What?... Take it.”). Then, in turn 10, the child makes a gesture of rubbing her stomach, also a familiar sign in our culture to designate “hunger,” which is again signified by the interlocutor in turn 11 (“What’s

³¹ Marianne Carvalho Bezerra Cavalcante, 2022, personal communication.

wrong? Are you hungry?"). However, although Joana attributes meaning to Gabriela's gesture, this is not further explored during the interaction. Thus, in turns 12, 14 and 16, she returns to the topic she had been developing previously, asking the child what was inside the toy, instead of elaborating on the new topic introduced by the child: was the "hunger" in the make-believe because the fridge had nothing in it? Or because Gabriela was hungry? Or because it was time to have lunch with her mother? These and other possibilities for developing the new topic introduced by the child would strengthen her active responsive role throughout the interactional process.

Final Considerations

In this study, we start with some questions about the possibilities of constructing meaning in contexts of verbal restriction. We show the importance of the interlocutor directing the child's possibilities of meaning through an interactional process that is sensitive to the multimodality of language, mutual knowledge between the interlocutors and attention to details of the immediate situational context.

This study shows that children can assume the position of subjects (more active or less active) of language depending on the modes of interaction that their interlocutors establish with them, particularly if these interlocutors are attentive (or not) to the child's intended meaning, by providing *completions* for their utterances regardless of their modes of expression.

In short, from the DN theoretical perspective adopted in this study, the "other," the interactional partner, plays a central role in the process of constituting not only language, but also social subjects. The constitution of the subject is a dialogical process, since it is founded and based on social practices that take place with language. Therefore, there is no passive position in an interaction, but an alternation in the positions of speaker and listener, both working actively in the construction of intercomprehension.

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Statement of Author's Contribution

The authors of the article “The child with verbal restrictions and the concept of intercomprehension and multimodality in the language clinic: a case study” declare below their contributions to the production of this article:

Cristiane Alves-Silva: Conception and design of the theme of this work. Analysis and interpretation of data. Article writing. Relevant critical review of intellectual content. Final approval of the version to be published.

Ana Paula Santana: Conception and design of the theme of this work. Analysis and interpretation of data. Article Writing. Responsibility for all aspects of the work in ensuring the accuracy and integrity of any part of the work.

Research Data and Other Materials Availability

The contents underlying the research text are included in the manuscript.

Reviews

Due to the commitment assumed by *Bakhtiniana*. Revista de Estudos do Discurso [*Bakhtiniana*. Journal of Discourse Studies] to Open Science, this journal only publishes reviews that have been authorized by all involved.

Review I

Bakhtiniana, São Paulo, 19 (2): e62685e, April/June 2024

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It is a very well-written text, clear, the language is entirely compatible with a scientific article, all parts well-organized and articulated. The author proposes the discussion of a current, original and highly relevant topic, not only for language studies, but also with a great impact on society in general, deconstructing, among other things, an outdated view that many professionals still have, especially in the health area, that subjects who do not speak, do not signal or who have restrictions in this regard are not within the realm of language. The title clearly reflects this proposal. In this regard, the text in question contributes not only to studies in Speech-Language Therapy but also to those concerning Language Acquisition processes in both typical and atypical children, from a theoretical discursive/dialogical perspective.

In order to analyze the process of intercomprehension involving situations with the child, the mother, and the researcher, and another with the child, the mother, and the speech therapist, the author poses 3 questions that she aims to address throughout the text, adopting a Bakhtinian perspective: 1) “In contexts of verbal restriction, how do interlocutors construct meaning?” “What resources do they use to make themselves understood?” Also, “how do interlocutors act *in, with* and *on* the language of a verbally restricted interlocutor to build intercomprehension?” The three questions are answered throughout the text and discussed at the end, based on the results of the analysis of 4 interactive scenes.

To this end, the article in question proposes analyzing the data from a Bakhtinian perspective, which considers, among other aspects, the notion of language involving its multimodal aspects, intercomprehension and completion. And precisely for these last two aspects, the author proposes a dialog with Discursive Neurolinguistics, with a view to dealing with the complex relationship between production and comprehension, thus including all communication partners in this process.

A caveat, which requires revision, is regarding the coherence of this dialog among theories. The author states (p. 2):

“For studies that consider the multimodality of language, the presence of another type of modality, such as gesture, is conceived within the speech matrix (CAVALCANTE, 2019). Studies on the gesture/speech relationship emphasize that children are able to use the multimodal elements of language from a very early age. Thus, the nature of the multimodality of language proves to be crucial for understanding interactions involving verbal and nonverbal semiotics (ANDRADE; ALVES, 2019; CRUZ; COTS; LUIZ, 2017). We can say that, under the umbrella of multimodality, gestures have been acquiring a linguistic status and, therefore, are conceived as a co-acting multimodal aspect in the matrix of language (CAVALCANTE, 2018). From this theoretical perspective, language is developed in oral-auditory and kinesthetic modalities together, without speech taking precedence over gesture or vice versa (BARROS; FONTE; SOUZA, 2020), since gesture and speech are considered to form an inseparable sphere (MCNEILL, 1985).

If “gesture and speech are considered to form an inseparable sphere,” why use the terms “verbal” and “nonverbal” throughout the text? Wouldn’t everything be “verbal,” since both are part of language, without one being more important than the other? In this respect, a distinction involving what is vocal seems more coherent to me, and the author also uses this term in certain parts of the text. Therefore, there is a fluctuation in the use of these terms that needs to be reviewed throughout the text. ACCEPTED WITH RESERVATIONS [Revised]

Reviewed on September 04, 2023.

Review II

The article aims to “analyze the process of intercomprehension from a socio-historical perspective of Bakhtinian thought.” Methodologically, there is an emphasis on the fact that “the study is based on a Bakhtinian perspective; and, particularly, Discursive Neurolinguistics (DN)” (section 1. Methodological Aspects, p. 06).

As for the title, considering the stated objective, it is deemed appropriate. However, concerning coherence with the methodological approach, a suggestion is the addition of a subtitle for better clarification.

The developed work aligns with the proposed theme. However, considering the objectivity and the developed methodology, aiming for greater alignment with the proposed theme and enhanced transparency and coherence regarding the employed methodological procedures, I suggest, especially in the Abstract, including a reference to Discursive Neurolinguistics, as expressed in footnote 4 and in the Final Considerations: “analysis of the intercomprehension process, based on neurolinguistic and discursive studies” (p. 22).

The study is up-to-date in terms of the references used, particularly concerning the reference to Discursive Neurolinguistics – (Coudry, 1996). Regarding the Bakhtinian reference, there is a need for further development throughout the text of the concepts expressed both in the Abstract and in the Final Considerations, especially concerning the concept of dialogism, given that this concept is only explicitly mentioned in the Abstract, Keywords, and Final Considerations. In line with the above, the following adjustments are suggested:

- a more explicit presentation of the concept of dialogism in Bakhtin, avoiding a *narrow* conceptualization of the term and emphasizing that “Dialogic relations are thus much broader than dialogic speech in the narrow sense of the word ” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 125).³²
- further development of what is understood by the “socio-historical perspective of Bakhtinian thought” and/or addition of the cultural aspect also emphasized by the author, as explained on page 3 of the article: “historical-cultural perspective and dialogical discourse studies.”
- when highlighting that, also regarding the methodology, “the study is based on a Bakhtinian perspective,” specify which text by Bakhtin methodologically underpins the research by providing the publication year(s) of the work(s). If they are the same as already explicitly stated in the body of the text and in the References, there is no need for new inclusions, just an indication of the year(s);
- regarding the reference Bakhtin (2006), a revision of the work to attribute the authorship of the book *Marxismo e filosofia da linguagem* [Marxism and the Philosophy

³² For reference, see footnote 11.

of Language] to Valentin Volóchinov and not Mikhail Bakhtin, as per the latest translation from the original Russian by Sheila Grillo and Ekaterina Vólkova Américo. Thus, the reference should be changed as follows:

From: - BAKHTIN, M. MARXISMO E FILOSOFIA DA LINGUAGEM. 12. ed. [s.l.] HUCITEC, 2006.

To: -VOLÓCHINOV, Valentin (Círculo de Bakhtin). Marxismo e filosofia da linguagem. Problemas fundamentais do método sociológico na ciência da linguagem. Tradução, notas e glossário de Sheila Grillo e Ekaterina Vólkova Américo. Ensaio introdutório de Sheila Grillo. São Paulo: Editora 34, 2017, 373p.n - as a result, the reference (author, year and citations) must be changed throughout the text.³³

Regarding clarity, correctness, and language appropriateness for a scientific work, the text has few points that require revision concerning linguistic-textual aspects, which are highlighted in the attached file and detailed in the revision tables in Word, specifically addressing issues of verb agreement in the synthetic passive voice and standardization.

Regarding the application of *ABNT – Associação Brasileira de Normas Técnicas* [Brazilian National Standards Organization] rules, it is advisable to make adjustments according to the new regulations (ABNT NBR 10520/2023) and pay attention to changes in the journal's rules, especially concerning the following points:

- “Indication of individual authorship, within parentheses, must be in upper and lower-case letters;”³⁴

- The first time an author is cited, their full name should be used without abbreviations.

In addition to the suggested revisions, the study presents an original and significant theme, revealing a contribution not only to the field of Speech-Language Therapy but also to studies that involve work (care) with individuals with a profile of verbal language restriction and to linguistic-discursive studies in general.

Given these considerations, the article can be published, noting the need for adjustments regarding the highlighted points. ACCEPTED WITH RESTRICTIONS [Revised]

Regina Godinho de Alcântara – Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo – UFES, Vitória, Espírito Santo, Brazil; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5748-3918>; regina.alcantara@ufes.br

Reviewed on October 26, 2023.

Review III

The new version of the text incorporates the previously required modifications, thus, from this perspective, my opinion is positive. However, these changes require a revision (both grammatically and in terms of how authors are cited), which I took the liberty of performing in a document attached. Therefore, these corrections are mandatory for the article to be published. ACCEPTED

³³ For equivalence in English, see footnote 4.

³⁴ In Portuguese: “Quando for pessoa física, a indicação deve ser feita pelo sobrenome do autor, em letras maiúsculas e minúsculas.”

Alessandra Del Ré – Universidade Estadual Paulista “Júlio de Mesquita Filho” – UNESP – Araraquara, São Paulo, Brazil; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6740-9631>; del.re@unesp.br

Reviewed on December 18, 2023.

Review IV

After a new reading and analysis of the article, and considering that most of the suggestions/remarks were accepted, namely:

- mention in the Abstract regarding the reference to Discursive Neurolinguistics;
- explanation of the concept of dialogism in Bakhtin (p. 06-07);
- adjustment concerning the cultural aspect related to Bakhtinian studies (p. 04);
- adjustment regarding the authorship of the book *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*: (Volóchinov, 2017);
- and other adjustments in the body of the text,

we are in favor of approving the article for publication.

We note that, regarding the new ABNT and Journal rules, the authors made the adjustment for the first time an author is cited (using their full name without abbreviations). However, there was no adjustment in indicating the authorship of an individual within parentheses: it should be in uppercase and lowercase letters, as explained in the Review and in a review table included in the attached file.

Therefore, it is necessary for this adjustment to be made throughout the entire text (*Indication of individual authorship within parentheses should be in uppercase and lowercase letters*) for the article to be published. E.g. p. 03 from (CAVALCANTE, 2018) to (Cavalcante, 2018), and all other references within parentheses throughout the text (ABNT NBR 10520-2023). ACCEPTED

Regina Godinho de Alcântara – Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo – UFES, Vitória, Espírito Santo, Brazil; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5748-3918>; regina.alcantara@ufes.br

Reviewed on November 27, 2023.