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Humour in children's discourse: A case study of a bilingual child (Brazilian Portuguese and German)

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Based on a dialogic-discursive approach according to the ideas of Bakhtin and the Circle, this article aims to analyze the humour data of a bilingual child, L., 9 years old, Brazilian Portuguese and German-speaker, who was born in Germany, but moved to Brazil at the age of 1 year and 6 months. Our corpus consists of footage of the child in everyday situations, in which she interacts separately with interlocutors in both languages she can speak. Our goal is to unravel whether L. produces and understands humour in both languages and which language mechanisms lead to such understanding and production. In addition, we intend to verify the different situations that raise humour in the daily life of this child, identifying some common types of humour in her speech. The results show that L. has greater "security" and fluency in the language in which she has more "input": Brazilian Portuguese (BP), and this may influence her relationship with languages and her production of humorous discourses.

Key-words: *Humour, Bilingual Child, Portuguese, Germany.*

1. Introduction

Humour has only recently become a recognized subject of the Linguistic studies, especially in Brazil (Del Ré 2011), although it has been debated since Plato and Aristotle in Classical Antiquity. With regard to the children's universe, studies on humour are even more recent, but provide us with important reflections that may help us understand this specific discursive field. Thus, this article intends, from a case study of a bilingual child, to contribute to the discussion about humour in the child's speech, reflecting on the way a bilingual child produces and understands

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humorous episodes, considering that she participates in two distinct culture backgrounds (German and Brazilian).

Given these considerations, the starting point for this paper is the case study of L., a 9-year-old bilingual girl, Brazilian Portuguese and German-speaking child, who was born in Germany and came to Brazil at the age of 1year and 6 months. The corpus of this research thus consists of filmings of L. in everyday situations, in which she interacts separately with interlocutors in both languages she can speak. In the German context of interactions, we always have the presence of L.'s mother (who is German and who tries to ensure that L. does not lose daily contact with the language, even if she is living in another country). In Portuguese, L. interacts with another Brazilian child of her age and who also speaks Brazilian Portuguese (BP) as a mother tongue. Our goal, based on these data, is to unravel whether L. produces and understands humour in both languages and which language mechanisms lead to such understanding and production.

By publishing the results of this study (Mroczinski 2015), which brings a still not very explored theme in Brazil, we intend to contribute to a new kind of discussion in the field of Humour and Language Acquisition, as well as to deepen more general debates related to Bilingualism (Del Ré *et al.* 2014). In addition to these studies, we start from discussions already held by Del Ré (2011), whose research deepened the notions of humour in children's discourse, establishing different types of humour as well as defining relevant analysis categories to look at when analysing humour in children's discourse.

For this work, we start from a dialogic-discursive approach to language (Bakhtin 1988, 1997, 1999), which takes into account discursive movements and the relationship between the interlocutors. The language, in a dialogic-discursive perspective, cannot be separated from its ideological content. Thus, we consider that humour, a language expression that can manifest itself under different discursive genres and different communicative spheres (Possenti 2018), in different communication situations, has its cultural specificities, which often hinders its comprehension.

> In fact, language is a constitutive activity of the child's world knowledge and it is where they constitute themselves as subjects and through which they segment and incorporate world knowledge and the other. In this way, language and world knowledge are closely related, and both go through the mediation of the other. (Del Ré 2006, 26)[4]

[4] English version by us – free translation. Original version: Na verdade, a linguagem é atividade constitutiva do conhecimento do mundo pela criança, é onde ela se constrói como sujeito e por meio da qual ela segmenta e incorpora o conhecimento do mundo e do outro. Desse modo,

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It is precisely at this point that we seek to evaluate how the bilingual child can capture/understand and produce humour, considering that they are inserted in a context in which they move between two languages and cultures so different from each other. Thus, the context, culture and the relationship that the subject establishes with the other are important topics that permeate the analysis of humorous statements brought to critical reflection in this article.

Regarding humour in the child's language, we can refer to the study that Freud (1905) made about the joke, in which he deals not only with this humorous form but also with nonsense, for example. For the author "the transgression of the language is made in the name of laughter" (Del Ré 2011, 38). In this study, Freud relates the production of humour to the prolongation of pleasure, which is the purpose of the humorous games he describes.

In addition to this work, we start from the researches of Bariaud (1983), Aimard and Ruffiot (1988) and, in particular, Del Ré (2011), Del Ré *et al.* (2010, 2014), outlining a dialogic-discursive approach to humour and to the issues that envolve the child's laughter, which will serve us as a basis for the analysis of our interactive episodes.

2. Bakhtin's and Circle's ideas in language acquisition studies

When looking at language from a Bakhtinian dialogic-discursive perspective, it is important to consider that our discourse, our words, are always aimed at someone, always dialogical, that is, they are in relation to the other statements that historically and ideologically permeate the discursive situations in which we participate. They are therefore related to the discourses of others, forming a link in the infinite chain of communication. Our discourse is chained not only to the statements that preceded it, but also to those that will come from it. Thus, the mechanisms and language skills are first acquired from the interaction with the mother (and the interactants of the immediate situations of communication), which plays the role of mediator between the child and the world.

Considering this theoretical context, language is embedded in ideology - the ideology present in the society that uses it. And therefore, there is no neutral speech. Not even in the process of language acquisition, according to the authors of the Circle (works by Bakhtin, Voloshinov and Medvedev 1988, 1997, 1999[5]), can

linguagem e conhecimento do mundo estão intimamente relacionados e os dois passam pela mediação do outro.

[5] These references and also the citations refer to the Portuguese versions of these works. The quotes we use here were freely translated by us.

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we find a "pure signal" that is, a signal for a signal only. And this is because the linguistic forms, although at this initial moment of production, are contextually oriented and, therefore, each one will have a different meaning, as well as a linguistic value, that is, the words are placed in a contrasting relation (unlike when we learn a foreign language).

> In the mother tongue, that is, precisely for the members of a given language community, the signal and the recognition are dialectically erased. In the process of assimilating a foreign language, one senses “signaling” and recognition, which have not yet been mastered: the language has not yet become a language. The ideal assimilation of a language occurs when the signal is completely absorbed by the sign and recognition by understanding. (Bakhtin / Volochinov 1988, 97-98).

That is, we only “see” the signals and try to recognize them when we are facing a foreign language that we have not yet mastered. In the mother tongue, recognition gives way to comprehension; the signal is absorbed by the sign, and the word cannot therefore be assimilated from its meaning found at the dictionary, but rather as a part of the concrete structure of the utterance. In this way, the line separating the language(s) that can be acquired - mother - and the ones that are assimilated - foreign - becomes clearer. And that is why, in the native language, the word “is perceived as the atmosphere in which one usually lives and breathes” (p.102), as its meaning is always determined by its context. Meanwhile, in the foreign language, which is learned more systematically in the classroom, one tends to look at the word from its isolated dictionary meaning, what can be a problem, since in the language in use it always comes from a context that determines it. Our tendency is to look for a correspondent in our mother tongue for every word in the foreign language, which often becomes unfeasible, due to lexical, cultural and/or ideological issues involving different languages. However, for the bilingual subject, this difficulty does not seem to be an issue, since, in theory, they have two mother tongues and can move from one to the other in a natural and contextualized way

Regarding the dynamics of language, according to Bakhtin and the members of the Circle (Bakhtin 1988, 1997, 1999), it would be a mistake to look at the living language, even if it is a foreign one, as if it were something idle, with a “complete” meaning. In fact, any “language lives and evolves historically in concrete verbal communication, not in the abstract linguistic system of the forms of language or in the abstract individual psyche” (Bakhtin 1988, 127). That means that each discursive act renews the meaning of the words, and therefore meanings are only effectively given and understood in the moment of enunciation, given their context.

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Thus, from this perspective we emphasize our concern to look at the statements found in the corpus of this work not as isolated facts, but as links that make up an enunciative chain, which is responsible for the interaction between the subject and the other. Although we have to cut these interactions in order to be able to analyze them in episodes, we cannot fail to consider the chain of utterances and the context in which they are, so that we can perform such an analysis in a meaninful way. Moreover, when it comes to humour, it is necessary to look at the whole scene, since humorous utterances occur in the discontinuity originated in the triggering of discourse, and therefore we have to look at the scene as a whole. The speeches of L., therefore, only interest us within the course that they establish with their interlocutor and in the face of the answers they raise. Words can never be understood outside a context of enunciation (erroneous situation repeated in foreign language courses, for example), because, as stated earlier, they are always ideological and carry historical and social content within them. In addition, they exist because they are an answer to another word.

In a dialogical context, we understand comprehension as an active part of the communicative process and constituent of a form of dialogue, because, in understanding the other's statement, I oppose the speaker's words to mine. Thus, for Bakhtin, there is no passive role in communication, but an alternation in the roles of speaker and receiver, because both act actively in their positions. Therefore, the role of comprehension is extremely important when dealing with the issue of humour, since we can only say that a humorous statement had the connivance of the interlocutors if the comprehension occurred effectively. For this to happen, i.e., for the humorous effect to be understandable, it is necessary that the participants of these statements share the same knowledge that may involve elements such as ideologies, culture and linguistic and non-linguistic issues. Thinking about the bilingual subject of this study, in order to produce and understand humour in the two languages through which she transits, it is necessary that she actively participates in these processes, using her knowledges of the world, of the discursive-linguistic and the cultural spheres of the situations. Otherwise, when this active understanding does not occur, the humorous effect is not complete.

The utterance, defined as a link in the verbal communication chain, whose boundaries are determined by the alternation of speakers, is always full of echoes and memories of other utterances (Bakhtin 1997). This alternation of speakers is also reiterated as a way of finishing a speech that allows the possibility of response and responsive understanding of the interlocutor. The listener receives and understands the meaning and takes an active responsive posture (which is in operation all the time). Now, in order for humour to be effective in a discourse,

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these “Bakhtinian” premises are necessary, since it only has its full meaning when there is active understanding of the subjects involved, as well as connivance. Otherwise the meaning and humorous effect are lost in context.

To understand humor, it is necessary to return to the point of the “project of saying” - the meaning or the discursive purpose - described by Voloshnov (1927). If, for the author and the Circle, the subject is always active, they must create strategies when developing their discourse, and it is through those strategies that they trace their project of saying. There must therefore be recognized that dialogue is a joint action and it requires such a project to take into account the existence of the other. It is the dialogical character of language that allows it to be a means of production and reproduction of meanings. For their project of saying, the subject must take into account not only the existence of this other - their interlocutor - but also the context in which they find themselves, the set of knowledge that is shared among them, so that they can make choices that enable them (re)build the meanings they want in their speech.

Thus the Bakhtinian theory of language - for which language is social and ideological, and according to which social practices interfere with people's sense of things - seems to meet the needs of the corpus we discuss in this article, since it is intended to take into account the contexts that involve interactions, as well as the subjects and the verbal and nonverbal relationships that are produced and established in the different situations we face through the analysed episodes. In this sense, we base our discussions in a sociocultural perspective allied with the Bakhtinian thoughts in order to discuss how the subject L. interacts and reacts when dealing with humor.

2.1. The subject L. and the bilingualism

The case of L. is described in the literature as simultaneous bilingualism (Kroll and Groot 2009, Liddicoat 1991, Meisel 2001), considering that the child had access to both languages quite frequently since a very early age - German since birth, BP from the age of 1 and a half years old. However, we know that there is no consensus on a definition of this term and it will not be our goal to deeply discuss such nomenclatures.

Our interest is that the bilingual subject is someone who has the opportunity of entering two cultures and, therefore, two ideologies as they speak and experience these two languages that surround them. Thus, they stand as individuals who will be richly constituted in these two contexts, since such constitution, based on Bakhtin's concepts, occurs in a dialogic way, built from the

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language - a social organism. In this context, the bilingual subject will internalize, through the social interactions in which they participate, the culture, the rules, the customs and social behaviors of both languages within which they live and interact.

It is worth adding that bilingual children can recognize at a very early age when and in which situations they should use each language and also in which extent they can mix them and still be comprehended, even in the face of unknown interlocutors (Lanza 1997). According to Lanza (1997), bilingual children use their languages in the same socialization process as monolingual children.

Thus, we note that, for the purposes of this research, we consider bilingual a subject who acquires two languages simultaneously - as described by McLaughlin (1978), being one who receives input[6] from two languages at the same time - before the age of three (Houwer, 1999) - and, as pointed out by Bullio (2012), we are not interested in their degree of competence in such languages, since there are numerous variables in the context, such as culture, individual and interpersonal context, etc., as presented by Grosjean (2010).

In the case of L., her daily contact at school and in the social context in which she lives is most marked by the presence of Portuguese, since she is, most of the time, inserted in the Brazilian society. Her mother, however, keeps German present in L.'s family daily life. In addition to that, her contact with German occurs most intensely once a year, during the July school vacations, when L. and her mother spend a month in Germany with her family on the mother's side. This period allows L. to have an immersion in the language, as well as in the German culture and daily life. On these trips, L.'s mother always takes the opportunity to buy books and children's magazines in German, so that she can also encourage L. to read in German as well.

In addition to this more intense contact during her vacations, L. also talks weekly with her German uncles and grandparents via Skype, which, together with her mother's daily conversation stimulus in German, gives her a recurring use of this language, even if she is immersed in a Brazilian daily life. We note that L. was literate in Portuguese and always studied in Brazilian schools and, therefore, German was restricted to a less formal contact, since the child, although also reading and writing in this language, did not go through any traditional teaching of it.

It is important to acknowledge that this kind of information about the subject is important for our study, since we believe that language is constituted by the speaker's culture and ideology and, in this sense, the subject's social context is essential for the analysis of their speech data.

[6] It is noteworthy here that our use of this term is not at all linked to Chomsky's conception of input.

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3. Adult and child humor[7]

Regarding adult humor, Possenti (2011) proposes that, for a humorous utterance to fully work, there must be some knowledge about the event among the participants, which is what the author calls the "language game". Thus, it is necessary to understand the "trigger" that the humour triggers, because if it is not deciphered, its function is not completed. Therefore, the humorous effect would be the union of a non-humorous context with an unforeseen one, that is, a discontinuity in this discourse. In addition, knowledge of the production circumstances and the context is also essential in this process of understanding humor.

Possenti (2011) turns to Freud to discuss other issues about humour in language. Thus, according to Freudian thinking, humour would be the contribution made to the comic by the superego and, therefore, the character of discontinuity in humorous discourse is evident. From this discontinuity, the discovery of the meaning by the listener is then fundamental to the production of pleasure, because if there is no shared knowledge between speaker and listener, the humorous effect will fail. But when it is complete, laughter would be one of the possible manifestations of humor. It is worth pointing out a difference in relation to the child's production: indicators like a smile or laugh seem to be necessary for them - and not only possible.

In the case of our corpus, although L. is a bilingual child, her context of less daily contact with German seems to cause her difficulties and distances between the German language and its culture, resulting - perhaps - in a greater difficulty in understanding and appreciating humorous utterances in that language.

Aimard (1988), one of the childhood humour scholars, believes in the precocity of humour and proposes that a 3-month-old child would already be in the humorous universe, because since their birth, children can recognize not only the voice, but also the physiognomy of the people with whom they live, and such resources are responsible for the emergence of what the author calls "pre-humor". This primary resource - from which they will learn to imitate, to progress, to engage in activities – works as a guide to the child towards humour later on. Although still not especially numerous, we emphasize the importance of works such as Aimard's, which study the humour in the child without defining humour from what is found in an adult context.

[7] For the purposes of this paper, we will not enter into the discussion about possible distinctions that could separate humour from what is related to it such as the comic, the irony, etc. For this reason, they will appear here as belonging to a field, the humorous, which manifests itself through the verbal utterance, through a laugh or a smile.

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Other studies, this time considering Brazilian and French children between their 0 and 4 years, conducted collectively (Del Ré and Morgenstern 2010, Del Ré *et al.* 2015, Dodane *et al.* 2012, Dodane *et al.* 2014) determined criteria that would verify the presence and the components of humor. These results were possible by studying the development of humour in French children from data from the CoLaJe database and other data from Brazilian children from the NALíngua base. These studies have shown that adults actively act in sequences containing humor. Thus, progressively, children also take the initiative to produce humorous statements. Given these data, five parameters were defined in order to identify the construction of humour by adults and children: intentionality (of the speaker in producing humor), fun marks (gestural or verbal), connivance and rupture (incongruity or discrepancy). From these categories and data one can identify a very common type of reaction to humour - laughter. To this type, there was further assignment of parameters related to its intensity, appearance and duration. Thus, it was observed that in children's laughter the relative intensity parameter increases with age (result obtained through longitudinal data with 3-year-old children) and that there is an acoustic difference between shared and non-shared laughter (according to longitudinal data with 1-year-old children).

Still in the context of the study of child humor, the authors Mireault and Reddy (2015) state in their research that when children made something fun and their parents or babysitters laughed, they actually demonstrated some complex cognitive skills, such as the ability to put themselves in the other's place and understand / predict what would be fun or not to produce. Regarding the creation of humour by children, Reddy (2001) brings interesting results from a longitudinal research with children from 7 to 11 months of age. The author reports that most of the children studied made their interlocutors laugh through the deliberate repetition of actions in order to obtain laughter already obtained previously. Such actions can then be compared to those of the “adult clowns,” which shows many similarities and suggests that the origins of humour may occur much earlier in childhood than previously thought. Moreover, such humorous production can be seen more as an interpersonal rather than an individual phenomenon, and this would also initially be a process linked to the infant's emotional rather than to intellectual issues at this stage. Thus, Reddy (2001) postulates that this production of humour / jokes for both children and adults is responsible for the "game" with the reactions observed in the other - interlocutor. This emotional key is crucial to the other's perception of certain values, taboos, and norms, and it gives humorous power in different ways and at different ages and times, developing from simple actions to the most complex and satirical ones when we become adults.

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Neuß (2006) states that children's humour can then emerge for a variety of reasons, from wordplay to satirical jokes, which makes it clear that children's humour is more complex than many adults might think.

> Moreover, via humour they express their playful and creative way of interpreting the world combined with their spontaneous experimental approach. (Neuß 2006, 5)[8]

Also in this sense, the authors Sroufe and Wunsch (2013) conducted a study observing 150 children in their first year of age, in order to show that age changes the amount of laughter and the nature of the stimulus of laughter. They show that laughter is an important mechanism and it can have a positive effect on the development of children interaction. In this study, the authors realized that laughter means an important occurrence of transaction between the child and their development. Laughter, for them, would play a functional role that would release tension because of some incongruity in a stimulus situation. Thus, these patterns of behavior in the face of incongruity would be functional and a part of human adaptation. This is why we will start from laugh/smile to identify humorous production and understanding.

Del Ré (2014) points out that the onset of humour occurs early and depends on the shared understanding between the interlocutors to achieve its humorous effect, according to a study based on data from a Brazilian child collected in a naturalistic environment, from 24 to 42 months old. These data have proved that, at 36 months of age, the elements that will make up the child's humorous speech, including irony, will appear. According to the work and data analysis, in this developmental path taken by the child, the elements of humorous discourse are established in a dialogic way. First, the adult takes the initiative while there is little shared knowledge of the world. However, the child progressively develops from the dialogue with the other and the situations experienced until reaching the categories responsible for the appearance of humour (such as initiative, connivance, and so on).

Now, if sharing is essential for its effect, humour is therefore always linked to the other and is dependent on social relations for the traces of fun to appear (laughter, smile, etc.). Therefore, our view on humour in children is based on a dialogic-discursive perspective, proposed by Bakhtin and the Circle, which has the language as the thread that leads the subject, and this relationship will be the active participation of the interlocutors in a dialogue. Linguistic humour has its

[8] In addition, it is via humour that children express their playful and creative way of interpreting the world, combined with their spontaneous experimental approach.

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ideological appeal in language, which in turn is linked to history and society, and is therefore alive, and can only be analyzed from a dialogical perspective. Meanings will always be socially constructed and cannot be considered neutral. Thus, the sharing of humour is intrinsic to this dialogical view of language, always occurring in response to another utterance.

4. Humour in Germany and in Brazil

Humor, therefore, needs several cultural characteristics of its own for its understanding and it reveals different views, often even stereotypes, about how it appears in different cultures. Germans are seen by most other people as serious and with almost no sense of humor. Brazilians, on the other hand, are widely considered humorous (Filho 2012). The reasons for this German seriousness would be due to historical issues dating from the early nineteenth century, when the Germans did not consider jokes and grace as welcome in their territory and did not consider them as constituent features of their cultural identity. According to Gelfert (1998), in his master's dissertation, German humour was considered an instrument to criticize the Government. Thus, we can note that humour depends not only on culture, but also on the historical period of a society. Two centuries since then, we find today, on German TV, for example, weekly humour programs, since at the moment the period of political tension is a lot different.

In Brazil, good mood is considered indispensable and an intrinsic characteristic of Brazilian citizens. For the Germans, the mood (good mood / bad mood) does not appear as indispensable in social relations, because it is related to a passing reaction and that is up to the individual. They can make a clear distinction between this kind of humour and the broader one, relative to a specific culture or region, which is in this sense collective. Brazilians, in turn, do not set fixed limits for these two conceptions of the term humour and, according to Filho (2012), they end up having both as typical references of their nation.

According to Saliba (2002), it appears that, in transitory moments of laughter, the Brazilian built a comic representation of their nation, and it would be responsible for giving them a sense of belonging that did not exist in the political sphere of their country. This is because humour occurred in an attempt to compensate for an emotional “deficit” regarding Brazilian history. In the end, it would have blended so much with the daily life of the people that it seemed difficult to draw boundaries between the collective and the individual. In this context, Saliba (2002) understands that humour production can be considered as a mirror in which societies can look at themselves.

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5. Methodology

For the corpus composition, longitudinal data of L. were collected in informal, everyday situations, which were experienced in a family environment. These data belong to the NALingua-CNPq group database (Del Ré *et al.* 2016). We are interested in evaluating, in the light of the collected data, the production and understanding of the humour data found in the relationship that this subject establishes with her mother (who speaks German as a mother language and Portuguese as an apprentice) and with another child, a friend of L. (Portuguese speaker as mother language), subjects with whom she interacts during the filmings. It is noteworthy that L. did not agree to be filmed by the researcher, claiming not to feel comfortable with it. For this reason, it was the mother herself who made the recordings and the researcher did not participate in them at any time.

The recordings - which include audio and video - aimed to capture spontaneous interactions from a naturalistic, uncontrollable reality, in which we select and analyze the statements that trigger humorous situations - in our case, we prefer those in which one or both participants laugh or smile. The duration of the recordings has an average of 50 minutes and they were taken within a period of a year and four months, ie, from L.'s eight to her nineth year of age, thus giving a longitudinal character to the data of this qualitative research. Our interest in longitudinal data stems from the fact that such records allow the researcher to observe at least part of the child's development, making it possible to analyze this subject on several occasions and at different moments of interaction with her interlocutors[9]. This method, therefore, does not limit the analysis to a single moment of this subject. On the contrary, it broadens the context of analysis of such subject and the variability in her linguistic productions.

The collected data were transcribed using the program CLAN, the CHAT format, hosted on the CHILDES[10] platform. Our study has a qualitative character and it is important to emphasize that the choice to do such a work is justified to the extent that we are interested in analyzing what is singular, not repeatable, in order to approximate the data of descriptive and inductive discovery, without focusing at first on their generalization (Del Ré and Hilário 2014). This type of analysis, involving both verbal and nonverbal issues, allows us to better evaluate aspects that involve the uniqueness of the child that makes up the corpus of this research,

[9] Although they are not the focus of this paper, longitudinal data may provide important clues to the development of humour in the child's language. We intend to discuss these features in future works.

[10] CHILDES is the Programming and Code System developed by *Child* Language Data Exchange System (or *CHILDES*). In this platform we can find data from different languages, transcribed using the CLAN program, in CHILDES format (MacWhinney 2000). Access: https://childes.talkbank.org/

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and this uniqueness meets the theoretical approach adopted here. This is also aligned with the idea that two children do not enter language in the same way (Del Ré 2006), which reinforces our interest in L.'s uniqueness.

5.1. Analysis parameters

In order to analyze our data, it is important to consider the following topics in the humorous scenes (which also permeate the analysis categories):

- if there is presence (or absence) of amusement marks (such as laughter or smile);
- *connivance* – considered from the point of view of Salazar-Orvig (2003);
- *discontinuity* – Considered from Freud's point of view (1969);
- *project of saying* - according to the concept thought by Bakhtin (1997; 1988).

It should be noted here that the idea of connivance theorized by Salazar-Orvig (2003) is related to the complicity among the speakers of a dialogue. Such a concept refers to an intimacy, to a shared knowledge between them that would allow them to continue the dialogue or not. It is exactly the connivance that is capable of allowing the participants of a dialogic interaction to share the same tuning in communication (Del Ré *et al.* 2014). If there is no tuning or if it is not shared, the connivance will not exist. This idea is fundamental for humor, since in order for it to have its objective achieved (to make one laugh and have fun) there must be connivance between the participants. Otherwise, the humorous feature will not reach its target.

The discontinuity is related to the element of surprise that releases the marks of fun (Freud 1905). Thus, the laughter would be the result of the distraction of our consciousness, facing something that would be new to the interlocutor. Such strangeness would, therefore, be responsible for the release of humour in speech and it is an important category in humour analysis.

As for the project of saying, according to Voloshinov (1927), it is interesting to note that such a concept concerns the planning made by the interlocutor in their speech. It is the project of saying that allows them to determine what they want to say and where they would like to "guide" their dialogue to. However, it is not always possible to maintain such a strategy and it therefore often needs to be reformulated. In the case of humor, the humorous effect can appear when there is an unexpected break in this project of saying, when there is no initial goal of making one laugh.

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6. The episodes

For the purposes of this paper, we have selected 3 episodes to illustrate how the theory selected here contributes to the interpretation of part of the collected data (Mroczinski 2015).

Episode 1: The toothpaste (9 years and 13 months of age)

In the episode below, L. is with her mother at a table where they set the scene of a house with toys that mimic the objects of different rooms of a house. During the scene, L. alternates moments when she sits, with others when she gets up to have a better place at the table. The mother remains seated. Then, when assembling the rooms of the house with the pieces, they initiate this dialogue that culminates in the laughter of the mother, but not of L., due to the unexpected confusion resulting from a change in vocabulary made by the child:

(1) *CHI: wo ist denn das ?	*CHI: Where is it again ?
(2) *MOT: was suchst du ?	*MOT: what are your looking for?
(3) *CHI: Ist +... é uma parte do banheiro # ich weiss nicht mehr wo die ist # ach das da das da # hier duscht man # so hier kann man so duschen und hier gibt es das da tchi::: nein # und wo ist das blaue Ding ?	*CHI: it's +... a piece of the bathroom # I don't know where it is anymore # Ah that one that one # we take showers here # here we can take showers and here we have that: tchi::: no # and where is the blue thing ?
(4) *MOT: fehlt noch ein Teil ?	*MOT: is there still a missing piece ?
(5) *CHI: Ja dies +... hum:: blauer Teil # erinnerst du dich nicht ? ein blauer Teil # das:: die nicht das ist die Lampe # das kleine Lampe # die bleibt immer hier so und hier gibt es den noch # wo ist eine Vase? gibst du mir diesen transparenten da ? wenn du Pasten findest +/ .	*CHI: yes # that hum: blue piece # don't you remember ? A blue piece this: not this this is the lamp # the small lamp # it Always stays here like this and here there is also that # where is a vase? Can you give me that transparent there ? if you find paste +/ .
(6) *MOT: was suchst du ?	*MOT: what are you looking for ?
(7) *CHI: Pasten # pasti:nhas .	*CHI: pastes # little pastes .
(8) *MOT: Pasten ?	*MOT: pastes ?
(9) *CHI: Pasten ja # weisst du ?	*CHI: pastes yes # you know ?

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(10) *MOT: ja # ich weiss # für das Badezimmer oder ?	*MOT: yes # I know # for the bathroom, right?
(11) *CHI: nein pastas pastas .	*CHI: no pastes pastes.
(12) *MOT: Ach so, so was .	*MOT: Ah:: yes # this here .
(13) *CHI: Ja,so was .	*CHI: yes this here .
(14) *MOT: [=! ri] Ordner heisst es auf Deutsch # ich dachte pasta de dente .	*MOT: [=! ri] Ordner is the name of it in German # I thought toothpaste.
(15) *CHI: Nein, es gibt keine pasta de dente	*CHI: there is no toothpaste

We call the analysis of the episode 1 "lexicon / ideas - analysis". Here "toothpaste" in German, suggests that there may be an alternation in L.'s perceptions of humour in one or the other language. We notice L.'s "confusion" with the word "Pasten". This is because in BP, the word 'pasta' can be used both for the thing we use to brush the teeth and also within the office universe (folder, file). However, such lexical similarity does not apply in German, since the toothpaste would be 'Zahnpasta', while archives would be 'Ordner'. We believe, therefore, that it is possible that the BP synonym may have influenced the 'Pasten' neologism said by L.. In a bilingual context, such interferences occur only in cases like this, since this lexical approximation thought by L. could only take place because she is bilingual and is daily immersed in the two languages she dominates. When the mother, speaking German and BP, does not understand what L. means by 'Pasten', she asks, by association, if it would be 'the paste we use in the bathroom'; We understand the reasoning made by L., which is however not correct, due to the different words in German and in Portuguese. It is also noteworthy that when L. realizes that her mother does not understand what she means by 'Pasten' and uses 'paste, little pastes' in BP, she ends up using a typically bilingual feature: the *codeswitching*.

Such a lexical confusion causes a *discontinuity* in speech, as L.'s mother needs to ask her for more information in order to understand her message. And it is precisely because of this *discontinuity* caused by the child, who did not initially have humour in her *project of saying*, that the mother laughs at the situation. However, since L. did not master such vocabulary, for her, the situation does not have a humorous character, unlike for her mother.

We realize that humour is not complete in Example 1 in German, since L. does not share her mother's laughter; Despite understanding the progress of the situation, L. does not find it funny, probably because she is uncomfortable about being the reason her mother is laughing. Considering the elements we intended to observe, although there was connivance between the interlocutors and there was a rupture in

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the dialogue caused by L.'s "error", there is no shared laughter, since there seemed to be no such intention in the child's project of saying. As L., in the face of her lexical confusion and her mother's laughter, perceives her 'error', she does not try to argue in her own favor, since it was irrefutable that the word she said was causing her mother some trouble in understanding the meaning of her statement.

Episode 2: The toilet bowl (8 years and 8 months of age)

L. plays setting up scenarios with the other child. Both talk about the objects that make up the house they are setting up on the table, when the utterance that generates a humorous effect arises.

(1) *CHI: a toalha também .	(1) *CHI: the towel too .
(2) *CHI2: olha # xx duas camas .	(2) *CHI2: look # xx two beds .
(3) *CHI: xx .	(3) *CHI: xx .
(4) *CHI2: o que que você fez com a privada ?	(4) *CHI2: what have you done with the toilet bowl ?
(5) *CHI: nada # não é a privada # a privada (es)tá ali .	(5) *CHI: nothing # it's not a toilet bowl # the toilet bowl is there.
@sit: CHI sorri ao falar o enunciado acima .	@sit: CHI smiles as she enunciates the statement above .
(6) *CHI2: ah: a privada (es)tá ali .	(6) *CHI2: ah: the toilet bowl is there .
(7) *CHI: não é uma privada .	(7) *CHI: it's not a toilet bowl.
@sit: CHI sorri ao falar o enunciado acima.	@sit: CHI smiles as she enunciates the statement above .
(8) *CHI2: 0 [=! ri]	(8) *CHI2: 0 [=! ri]

Looking at the second type of episodes we have, which we call "the situational comic", we find example 2 (The toilet bowl) in Portuguese, in which L. and the other child are playing when the *discontinuity* appears, because the other child was mistaken as for the nature of the object she was looking for - it was not a toilet as the child thought it was - this *discontinuity* causes L. to laugh and her friend ends up in that same spirit, laughing at her mistake. We can see, then, the *connivance* between them - shared knowledge, a relaxed atmosphere, etc., as both had the same understanding of the context surrounding the situation - the *marks of fun*, since both laugh at the situation - and the joint attention facing the same object. All these elements, added to the discontinuity / rupture, the breaking of what was expected in

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the triggering of speech, were able to produce humour in the described situation. However, as this type of episode is related to the comic that arises from an unexpected situation, we cannot say that there was a project of saying that sought to provoke humor, since the funny situation arises for the interlocutors spontaneously.

Episode 3: About marriage (8 years and 5 months of age)

In this episode, L. and the other child play dolls on the living room table. During the game, they begin to describe what their dolls' lives would be like as they set the scenario on the table.

1* CHI2: e essa daqui?	1* CHI2: what about this one?
2* CHI: finge que ela não tinha marido e:: aí era solteira # mas ela morreu antes de achar um .	2* CHI: let's pretend she didn't have a husband a::nd then she was single # but she died before she could find a husband.
3* CHI2: nossa !	3* CHI2: wow !
4* CHI1: que destino cruel, né? ### me ajuda a colocar isso?	4* CHI1: what a cruel fate, right? ### can you help me with this?

When we get to the kind of episodes we call "dark humor", the fourth episode (About Marriage) in BP seems to fall into this category and it is produced here by L.. As she was describing what the life of the doll would be like in the context, L. puts in the idea that the character would die young and, above all, single. Such a conception in Brazilian culture - which demonstrates that the understanding and production of humour are closely linked to the cultural issue of a social group - could be considered tragic, as "dying before finding a husband" may mean the sadness of not living a marriage, a highly valued sacrament in countries where the Catholic religion is predominant, as well as fitting in as a predestination and consequence of life in society. L., in creating such a scenario for the doll, does it so naturally, without even altering her intonation, continuing in that typical tone we use when telling a narrative, which would denote no strangeness to her in the face of such a construction of dark humor. On the other hand, the other child remains trapped in astonishment - represented by the interjection 'wow!' – as she hears the idea of L..

According to Bergson (1940), we need to momentarily detach ourselves from the feeling of pity in order to laugh in a dark humour situation. This mechanism seems to have been used by L. as she smiles at the situation, but then she changes the topic of conversation because it proves to be disconcerting. There is, therefore,

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a *project of saying* by L. that has its expectation broken when the other child does not show *connivance* in the presented situation. Thus, the topic of conversation then ends up being lost, opening up a new topic. There is, moreover, an incongruity (rupture), caused by L.'s statement (generating the interjection of her friend), which generates a humorous situation.

7. Final considerations

Given the ideas and postulates discussed here, we were seeking to verify the production and understanding of humour by L. and how this phenomenon appears in the different language interactions in which the child participates, since we observed the way she puts herself in each one of them, demonstrating greater "security" and fluency in the language in which she has the most frequent "input": Brazilian Portuguese (BP). We believe that this closer connection with BP can influence L.'s relationships with languages, as well as with humor. In addition, we verified some types of humorous situations that emerged along L.'s discursive interactions, seeking to resume the categories of analysis proposed in this article.

Since we are dealing with a discursive issue - humor, which can more explicitly bring about the simultaneous use of verbal and nonverbal marks that appear in these interactions, and also contextualize the linguistic and contextual triggering that culminated in the humorous effect - it is necessary to have a closer look on the part of the researcher at the moment of the analysis, in the subtlety of some situations, which can make the analysis difficult. Humour can then be placed as a way of expressing the subject's project of saying, but it is not the only possibility for it. Nor does it mean that a project of saying that has no humorous intent cannot acquire such a feature during an interaction.

As for our hypotheses of a possible German gap in camparison with BP, we note that the comprehension factor, whether of context, words or humor, is entirely internalized by L. in both languages - although she did not laugh in some situations where her mother laughs - and it seems clear that there is always a positioning of the child, and not a lack of understanding. The production of humour appears in both contexts researched, spontaneously or planned by L., and in all productions we can find fun marks, except on episode 3 (About Marriage), which leads to the dark humor, as discussed earlier. As for L.'s performance in both languages, it seems clear that it is very similar in BP and in German, since the comprehension and production of statements by L. occurs effectively in any of the languages she interacts in.

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From the data analysis, we reflect on the bilingual child's mood, showing how the culture, context and dialogical relationship are essential not only for children's linguistic development, but also lead them to the path of humor. The child must first learn to understand and deal with the disruptions in their and the other's speech so that they can then produce humor. Clearly, because L. was 9 years old, she would no longer be in the language acquisition phase, and therefore we would not be able to observe and/or trace such a path. However, this path - along with culture, discursive context, and dialogical interaction - is essential for the onset and development of humour in children.

It is noteworthy that the context of this work - the clipping made from humorous statements that were analyzed – might seem initially reduced due to the impositions of time and limitations of the corpus itself, but it opened our horizons about the child we analyzed, who produced so many rich statements. These allowed us, even within the uniqueness of a single child, to establish types of humour that were analyzed, which made us realize that the initial "limitation" actually brought us a number of issues that raised our discussion. Thus, it seems to be clear that case studies, unlike one might think, can really open up to a range of discussions and analysis, especially in a context as rich as the linguistic - children - humour one.

At this moment, from the analysis of the selected data, we leave as following questions for a possible continuity to this research: what is the relation of humour and intonation (thinking about the specificity of a bilingual child)? How do multimodal aspects (gestures, facial expressions) influence or more clearly demonstrate humor? In addition, we intend to verify the different situations that raise humour in L.'s daily life, identifying some types of humour that can be considered frequent in this child's speech and to analyze part of child's development.

We consider that these, as well as other questions that may still arise, can be answered, discussed and analyzed in future research.

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Clan symbols
*CHI: child L.
*MOT: Mother
*CHI2: Friend of L.
@sit: Explains the situation in which the lingustic production occurs.
( ) Elision: suppression of segments not performed in oral production.
# short pause
[=! ri] Laughter: extralinguistic event.
: Syllable extension
:: Longer syllable extension
+/. Speech interruption by the speaker
*TRAD Translation from German to Portuguese

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