

The Experience of the Social Semantism Embedded to the Vocal Aspect of Enunciation on Language Acquisition

PhD. Marlete Sandra Diedrich¹

Abstract

This article aims to explicit how does the specificity of the vocal aspect of enunciation constitutes the relationship man, language, and culture in the act of language acquisition. Therefore, it focuses on the role of vocal arrangements on children's language. The analysis is based on the significant purposes about the significance discussed by Benveniste, which are executed in language experience through language interpretation regarding other systems. This experience reveals the social semantism embedded to vocal and evoked in each relation of language interpretation: the child, thus, by mobilizing *vocal arrangements* in its enunciation, seizes the general on language and, on the other hand, the culture it holds, in order to obtain singularity through it. The constitutive *vocal arrangements* of the emission and perception acts allow, thereby, that the child, as immersed in cultural schemes, establish itself on the formal vocal language set, in order to obtain singularity as subject of/on language.

Keywords: Vocal aspect of enunciation. Language Acquisition, Significant Purposes about the Significance.

1. Preliminary concept

This paper is a result of a particular study that we had done, according to Diedrich (2015), on the vocal aspect of enunciation, presented by Émile Benveniste (1970/1989) as one of the aspects from which enunciation might be studied. We relate it to the principles that define this aspect to language acquisition. Therefore, we find necessary, before entering on the theme specificities, to define some concepts that are fundamental to approach the topic.

Initially, we explicit the concept of "enunciation", through readings of Benveniste's work. According to the author (1970/1989), enunciation is the individual act of language appropriation. That definition, for us, implies thinking on the movement of the speaker that manages to get appropriation of the language in the speech, a movement, thus, that departures from the general of the language, the virtual, to the specificity of the speech, concrete achievement of a communication act.

Performing that movement, the speaker lives his experience of significance, since the language activates on the speech a particular meaning, established on the relation of a speaker and his interlocutor, *me* and *you*. In that significance experience, the speaker accomplishes "significant purposes about the significance". (BENVENISTE, 1969/1989, p. 66). It occurs because, as provided by the enunciative principles of Benveniste's work, the language has the privilege of simultaneously incorporate the meaning of the signs and the meaning of enunciation. According to the author, that condition provides power to the language in order to raise a second level of enunciation, in which it is possible to sustain significant purposes about the significance. (BENVENISTE, 1969/1989, p. 66).

¹University of Passo Fundo, ORCID <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9177-089X>, 449, Humberto de Campos St., Carazinho – Postal Code 99500-000, Rio Grande do Sul – Brazil. marlete@upf.br, +55 54 9975 1714 / +55 54 3316 8330

As stated by the author, the language is the interpretative system by excellence, capable of comprehending all other systems, which provides it a special role in the significance systems. Besides that, the significance of an interpretation always happens on the inside of a culture, through the act of revealing traces of language's values, that we may find throughout the observation of different ways of using the language and that reveals the "social semantism", which Benveniste refers to in his studies (1969/1989). We comprehend that as a result of the relations established among interpretative system, language, and interpreted system, culture and social schemes. The infant's experience in the language, thus, is always revealed through the significant purposes about the significance, which are achieved in the language interpretation in relation to other systems and to itself, fulfilled by human, language and culture triad, in which the vocal aspect of enunciation embraces a fundamental role. The kid, by mobilizing *vocal arrangements* when composing the speech, accomplishes significant purposes that attempt to deal with the significant reality that not only surrounds it, but of which it is part of, and, those, are held in other significant relations brought up in each enunciation, by the sign presentation in the speech.

2. Definition of the vocal aspect of enunciation

Benveniste (1970/1982, p.82) refers to the "vocal achievement of the language" as one of the aspects from which the great process of enunciation might be studied. We emphasize the use, by the linguist, of the determinant syntactic element "of the language", not "of the enunciation", whenever referring to "vocal achievement". Aside from that, we had not found, in the linguist's writings, the explicit usage of the term "vocal aspect of enunciation". In order to define what actually represents, for us, that aspect in the proposal that we are presenting, we are led to reflect on this Benveniste's terminological issue. Therefore, we recapitulate the article *O aparelho formal da enunciação* (*The formal apparatus of enunciation*), in which the author affirms that, in relation to the vocal achievement in language, we find the core of the sounds emission in individual acts' topic: The sounds emitted and perceived always proceed from individual acts (BENVENISTE, 1970/1989, p. 82) Through this statement, we authorize ourselves to reflect on the vocal achievement of the language as an expression of the speaker's singularity in the act of the language acquisition, once this act is particular and individual: "to the same subject, the same sounds are never exactly reproduced, and the identity notion is merely approximate, even when the experience is repeated in details" (BENVENISTE, 1970/1989, p. 83). This condition reveals specificities upon the relation of the speaker with the language in the enunciatively situation, which brings up to the analysis the relation speaker-language, speaker-listener, and speaker-enunciation, demonstrated in the vocalizations of the speaker who enunciates himself.

It is solely in that way, that the "vocal achievement of the language" referred by Benveniste (1970/1989, p.82) assumes its aspects in relation to the general enunciation phenomenon. We were motivated by the same methodology used by the linguist in his article *O aparelho formal da enunciação* (*The formal apparatus of enunciation*), when he considers, according to Flores (2008, p. 22), that the language, as a system, contains an apparatus of significances, which usages depend on the enunciation. Flores (2013, p. 168) affirms: "Ora, o locutor se apropria da língua, do aparelho formal da língua, para construir com ela um aparelho de enunciação" (The speaker appropriates the language, in the formal apparatus of the language, in order to build an enunciation apparatus using it.) As stated by the author (2013, p. 168), "o dito aparelho formal de enunciação não é algo que esteja pronto aprioristicamente" (that formal apparatus of the enunciation is not ready *a priori*) on the contrary, it is built in each enunciation, through the language apparatus of significances. This indicates a comprehension that what is achieved in the phonic enunciation is the language, but it completely depends on the *here and now*, mobilized by the relation *you and me* as proposes Benveniste in this statement:

Com o signo tem-se a realidade intrínseca da língua; com a frase liga-se às coisas fora da língua; e enquanto o signo tem por parte integrante o significado, que lhe é inerente, o sentido da frase implica referência à situação de discurso e à atitude do locutor. (BENVENISTE, 1966/1989, p. 230). (Along with the sign, there is the intrinsic reality of the language; it is with the sentence that those exterior things connect to the language; and while the significance is part of the sign, inherently, the sense of the sentence implies on references to the situation of the speech and to the speaker's attitude.) Therefore, we use the term "vocal aspect of enunciation", because we comprehend that it is one of the aspects proposed by Benveniste to the studies of enunciation, which highlights the vocal achievement of the language in the speech, marked by the speaker's subjectivity that appropriates the language units and enunciates them on the enunciatively structure, on an inter subjective relation towards the other of the enunciation.

The denunciative structure, in which is given the vocal achievement of the language, is responsible for the singularities that mark the *emission* and *perception* of the vocal arrangements in enunciation. The “vocal arrangements” are defined, according to Diedrich (2015), as integrative arrangements of the speech, implied on the emission and on the perception of the vocal elements of the language in individual acts, which reveals specificities that are brought up due to the diversity of situations in which the enunciation is produced. In our studies, we have been working on the analysis of vocal arrangements in language acquisition, by following up the enunciation of young children, of two years old, as an example. These specificities are discussed as follows.

3. The vocal aspect of enunciation on the child’s experience in the language

We noticed that, through the analysis of language facts that we followed (DIEDRICH, 2014), by mobilizing vocal arrangements in its enunciation, the child appropriates the language and the culture rudiments that it contains. It happens based on the dependence of the emission and the perception of the other’s arrangements, in a relation of double otherness: the other brings cultural traces on the language of which the child, in a singular way, also appropriates, appropriating, through the language, the world that surrounds it. This experience in the language, lived by the child that appropriates the language, points out to established realities on the society and on the culture, achieving the relation of language interpretation towards other systems and, also, towards itself, since it is a cultural system, likewise. Regarding this experience, Benveniste affirms: A aquisição da língua é uma experiência que vai a par, na criança, com a formação do símbolo e a construção do objeto. Ela aprende as coisas pelo seu nome. Descobre que tudo tem um nome e que aprender os nomes lhe dá a disposição das coisas. Mas descobre também que ela mesma tem um nome e que por meio dele se comunica com os que a cercam. (BENVENISTE, 1963/2005, p. 31)

(The language acquisition is an experience that happens simultaneously, in the child, with the construction of the sign and the object. The infant apprehends things by their names. The child finds out that, everything has a name and that learning the names will make things available. However, the kid also discovers that has a name and is through it that he or she communicates with those that are around him or her.) As stated by the author, the quotation above explains the way the child manages to get awareness of the social environment in which he or she lives and “will adapt little by little his or her spirit throughout the language”. The vocal arrangements that mark the experience of the infant in the language translates the language symbolisms, contributing to the movements of the child in the culture, through the language, as we have seen in Benveniste (1963/2005, p. 31, emphasis of the author): “A medida que se torna capaz de operações intelectuais mais complexas, integra-se na cultura que a rodeia”. (As it becomes capable of more complex intellectual processes, integrates itself in the *culture* that surrounds it). That integration is built in the human, language, and culture triad, which allows the child to live the experience of language acquisition, modifying its relation with the language and with the other.

Thus, we achieve the great synthesis movement that characterizes the language experience lived by the child through the specificity of the vocal aspect of enunciation as an experience of language acquisition. In the experience of language acquisition, the child, being immersed in cultural structures, establishes itself, through constitutive vocal arrangements on emission and perception acts, in the formal vocal apparatus of the language, in order to singularize itself as a subject of/in language. This experience reveals the social semantism embedded to the vocal and evoked in each relation of language interpretation towards other systems: the child, therefore, by mobilizing vocal arrangements in its enunciation, manages to apprehend the general of the language with the culture that surrounds it, in order to get singularity in the language. The language acquisition reveals the movement of emission and perception of vocal arrangements mobilized on the enunciation and that, integrated with the culture, allows the entrance of the child in the human world. Such integration is possible due to the articulated symbolism that unites human, language and culture triad and that, through vocal arrangements, allows the child to establish relations of interpretation among language and the cultural systems that are part of its life.

These relations are stable, institutionalized in and by the society; however, it is by the appropriation of them that the child singularizes and particularizes itself, once it establishes its own way of mobilizing them in his or her speech, revealing it through vocal arrangements, which accomplishes, in the child’s experience, significant purposes about the significance, that are responsible for revealing the birth of a man in a culture and its transition from the nature to the human world, as it is stated by Benveniste (1966/1974).

By achieving those purposes, the child gets access to cultural values that are revealed in the symbolical of the language. Those are mobilized accordingly to the here and now that the infant lives in its enunciations, which allows that he or she, in his or her historicity, relate in different ways with the language and the other, from the cultural values mobilized by them. These values, on the speech particularization, are updated and always reveal a subject in constitution by its own speech. That is the great experience of the child in the language: the experience of signification. The denunciative singularity derives from the relations *me* and *you*, in the *here* and *now* in which the enunciation is given. The vocal arrangements are perceived in the child's enunciation, as well as vocalic stretching, exclamatory intonation, interrogative intonation, ascending tones, descending tones, syllabication and others, constitute specific functions on language forms that are only explained when the particularity of the speech is focused. We do not intend to explain these functions in this article. About them, we suggest to the lector the search for our doctoral thesis (DIEDRICH, 2015). Our interest in this article is to explicit how the specificity of the vocal aspect of enunciation constitutes the relation human, language and culture in the act of language acquisition, what was done on the next part of the paper, through the definition of denunciative principles.

4. The enunciatively principles mobilized in the vocal aspect of enunciation on the experience of the child in the language

Following the interest mentioned previously in this article, we achieve certain principles that are associated with the vocal aspect of enunciation in the experience of language acquisition lived by the child. In order to get to this point, we assume an acquisitioned enunciatively perspective, according to Silva (2009), based on Emilee Benveniste's writings, which we have access through articles published in *Problemas de Linguística Geral I* (Problems of General Linguistics I) and *Problemas de Linguística Geral II* (Problems of General Linguistics II). We do not present, in this article, any concrete fact of child's language, since we comprehend that is not the focus of our discussion. Our paper brings on a theoretical purpose, which justifies the restriction on discussing only the principles proposed.

1st Principle: In the inter subjective relation, the vocal aspect of enunciation evokes cultural values carried on the other's speech, which enable the singular experience of the child in the language. By living that experience, the infant, as soon as it is born, explores the possibilities in its babbling. The split of sound and word, however, could not define the history of the human that begins with the language, by the words. We had never found, therefore, the man separated from the language. In this way, the role of the other's perception on the vocal emissions of the child, through symbolical relations in the language, is necessary for such experience, once the relation between emission and perception of the vocal arrangements comes from the possibility of the child to historicize itself in the language-speech, creating its history in the language, since in its enunciations, the infant appropriates the vocal elements of the language-speech in its own way, providing a particular character to each one of them.

In regard of that, we have found support in Silva's statements (2009, p. 247): "a criança, pela língua-discurso, constrói uma semântica particular, produzindo estruturas no uso, que se convertem em formas da língua na relação enunciativa constituída por *eu* e *tu*". (the child, through language-speech, builds a particular semantics, producing structures in the usage, which are converted in language forms on the enunciatively relation constituted by *me* and *you*). We defend the idea, therefore, that the arrangements of the vocal aspect of enunciation are part of the particular semantics characteristic of the child's language, which allows the relation between the semiotic and the semantic in each enunciation. The child, thus, in the enunciatively relations derived of the emission and perception of language vocal elements, registers itself in language-speech, applying a particular character to the language, which reveals, in the vocal arrangements of the sentence, a direct relation among the child and the language, the other, the enunciatively structure.

2nd Principle: This experience is developed under the dependence of emission and perception of vocal elements of the language, in relation to the enunciation, which enable the child to historicize itself in the language-speech, in order to substantiate its subjectivity in the language, by getting appropriation of the forms and functions structure. Through this work of symbolical construction, we recall Flores (2013b). By approaching the theme of the subject of enunciation through the concept to fenunciation syntax, the author says: "Afinilar o sentido, ouseja, enunciar é, vale repetir, em última instância, uma apropriação imaginária marcada no simbólico por oper açõessingulares que integram a *syntaxed' énonciation*."

(To direct the sense, in other words, to enunciate is an imaginary appropriation marked on the symbolical through singular processes that integrate the *syntaxed' enonciation*). Although the author does not emphasize, in that paper, the vocal aspect of enunciation, we notice in the reference "singular processes that integrate the *syntaxed' enonciation* the possibility of relating to the direction of the sense that represents all the enunciation by the arrangements that integrate the vocal aspect of enunciation.

By the singular relation between form and sense, the vocal arrangements that characterize languages in general are particularized in the speech by an act of the speaker that gets appropriation of them and becomes subject of his sayings. That subject is the one who mobilizes the language and implies a rhythm by saying what singularizes itself. The enunciative singularity, so, restricted by the limits of our research, is recognized by the vocal aspect, though specific vocal arrangements mobilized by the speaker. That is because each child that is born and lives in the world of adults reproduces its own experience in each enunciative act. We focus on the importance of using the prefix "re" in "reproduce", once that it points out to the fact that, even though the linguistic forms are the same, they are renewed by different characteristics, in each enunciation, of each particular enunciative act, as stated by Dessons (2006). Therefore, the child gets inside of the language world not through the signs' system, but through speech, what happens through vocal achievement, constituting, therefore, its history.

3rd Principle: In this experience, the child lives the enunciative singularity through the vocal aspect, through specific vocal arrangements emitted and perceived, which constitute reference in the speech. Those arrangements, in relation to the emission and perception, are the elements that integrate forms to communicate and evoke senses in enunciations that constitute the child's experience in the language. Flores and Surreaux (2012, p. 86) observe that in those determined relations to which they call "ligação gramático-vocal-enunciativa" (vocal-enunciative-grammatic connection), since they comprehend them as derived of the concatenation among the separable elements of the sentence, which brings up to evidence the enunciative transversality of which supports the sense in the speech. The vocal achievement covers all language forms as a wrapper capable of affecting the sense. Such relation is so alive that is capable of pointing out senses which are independent of the linguistic forms mobilized, but, at the same time, capable of assuming their existence.

Based on those principles, we affirm, finally, that there is a movement that marks the child's historicity in the language, which consists in the establishment, through constitutive vocal arrangements on the acts of emission and perception, in the vocal formal apparatus of the language, movement taken in order to singularize itself as a subject of/in the language and that marks the experience of language acquisition.

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