Homenagem

ACQUISITION AND CHANGE OF DISCOURSE
MARKERS IN FIRST AND SECOND LANGUAGE

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RESUMO: *O texto trata de pesquisa sobre aquisição de marcadores conversacionais no português adquirido como L2 pelos índios do Alto Xingu. Procedendo a uma comparação entre os resultados do processo aquisitivo dessas partículas entre falantes aprendizes do português e falantes nativos, evidencia-se que alguns marcadores emergem na mesma ordem e outros, em ordens diversas, em função de diferenças no processo maturacional lingüístico-cognitivo e da competência comunicativa dos falantes.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *marcadores; aquisição; L1 e L2.*

Introduction

We all know that pidgins have gaps of various mor-
phemes and grammatical structures. We could re-
gard them as lacking some language functions. However, is that
also true when we are dealing with discourse functions? Discourse
markers are mainly constituted of particles. Are they used in the
pidgins? If so, in what order are they acquired? Those were the
questions I first tried to answer based on Xingu Portuguese.

I then passed to a description of the use of markers among
children, with the following questions: What are the phases of
their acquisition? Which discourse-interactional functions are
developed first?

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The next step was the comparison between first and second language, and the questions were: Are there parallels in both processes of acquisition? Are the phases of acquisition parallel to the steps already described for language change? Which theorectical approaches can explain the similarities that were found?

My work was based on the language of contact spoken in an Indian reservation in the Amazon region in Brazil that has pidginized features and whose history I will briefly sketch. I will then describe the use of discourse markers in that language variety, compare them with what happens with children from Rio de Janeiro, and explain the similarities based on the proposals of the theories of grammaticalization.

2. History of the pidginized variety of Brazilian portuguese

The language of contact here referred as *Xingu Portuguese* is spoken in the main Indian reservation in Brazil – the Parque Nacional do Xingu. The reservation was created in 1961, when the first roads were about to be constructed in the Brazilian Amazon region, and some communities had to be relocated from their traditional lands. It is an area of 26.000 square kilometers along the Upper Xingu river (Xingu is a tributary of the Amazon river), in the state of Mato Grosso, on the southern fringes of the Amazon region. Indigenous people who speak nine languages, from four different families, had already been living in the area for centuries, and had been protected from outside contacts by natural geographical conditions. *Kamayura* and *Aweti*, from the **Tupi** family, the *Waurá*, *Mehinako*, and *Yawalapiti* from the **Arawak** family; *Kalapalo*, *Kuikuro*, and *Matipu* from the **Carib** family; and *Trumai*, an isolated family. With the road constructions, three other groups were relocated into the reservation after the sixties: the

Txikão, from the **Carib** family, the Txukarramãe and the Krenha-
karore, from the **Jê** family.

Xingu Portuguese is an example of how an entire commu-
nity has been going through a recent and rapid process of lan-
guage contact with restructuring. There were people from nine
languages learning a simplified version of Portuguese, there was
tertiary hybridization, for they used Portuguese for intertribal com-
munication and also to speak with each other. As a result, Xingu
Portuguese presents various traits of pidginization, such as lack
of articles and prepositions, lack of person, number and gender
agreement, different syntax of tense and aspect, lack of copula,
peculiar use of repetitions, to mention some of the most salient
ones. The contact of the Indians with the Portuguese spoken in
the Brazilian cities also occured: Some Indians visited Rio or São
Paulo, for medical treatment and one of our speakers has even
served as informant in a linguistic course at the University of
Brasilia. We cannot talk of Xingu Portuguese as creole, though,
because it is not a native language for anyone. They still learn
their first language in the villages, and olny after 6 years of age
start learning Portuguese as a second language. From then on,
depending on their contact with the national society, what hap-
pens is a rapid process of depidginization and acquisition of full
Portuguese.

At the time of the recordings, between 1976 and 1980, there
were 976 individuals in the the Upper Xingu. Members of each
village ranked the fluency as is described in Table 1 (Baruzzin &
Magid, 1970). Almost half of the population (48.12%) was either
monolingual in their ancestral languages (level 1), or could only
understand, but could not speak Portuguese (level 2). At the next
lowest levels of proficiency (levels 3 and 4), they spoke isolated
words or very short reduced structures, for the purpose of trad-
ing. Those were not included in the sample. At level 5, speakers
have grammatical structures of emerging morphosyntax complexi-

ty: practically no use of person agreement, few prepositions, more frequent transfer of substrate word order. At level 6, speakers exhibit a higher use of morphosyntactic complexity (higher use of person agreement, of prepositions, lower word order transfer from the substrate). From level 6 to level 7 there is a continuum: there is a higher use of the mentioned structures, and also more fluency in discourse. Their narratives and argumentations are more complex in the interviews. Those are the speakers who have had contact with the language of large Brazilian cities.

Table 1 – Indigenous population of the Upper Xingu Region

Fluency	Men	Women	Total
7	14	0	14 (1.64%)
6	39	3	42 (4.94%)
5	68	19	87 (10.24%)
4	77	37	114 (13.42%)
3	107	77	184 (21.64%)
2	30	82	112 (13.18%)
1	142	155	297 (34.94%)
Subtotal			850
Not classified	56	70	126
		Total	976

Levels of fluency

Level 4

Meu pai..Kamayurá.

(Sobre a mãe dele):..nome dele é Tatá. Minha mãe nome dele Tatá.

(Sobre a filha dele): Então nós botamo nome dele Tatá, esse minha filha.

(Falando sobre um general que o levou a São Paulo): Eu num

conheço. Nome dele. Só tem. General, mulher, Terezinha. Tere-
zinha. Conheço, né. Ah, tem nome dele. Filho da general tem três
mulhé, ne. Tem..neto da general. Amigo também.

Level 5

Depois ele fala pro chefe, pai daquela chefe: "Vamo lá. Vamo". Ih
pessoal vai muito lá. Lá onde tava motô, né. Aí tudu mundu vai.
Aí vô atras, né. Vô atrás. Barco tem muito grande. Tem motô qua-
tru, tem motô quatru. Tem cachorro dele. Eu num cunhece ca-
chorro né. É. Aí fica com medo.

Level 6

(Sobre sua dificuldade em aprender Português):

K: Ah, difice sim.

E: É?

K: Ah, a gente num sabia logo né. Agora, por exemplo, o Olando
falava assim, né: Vai buscá esse...Ele falava então: "Ropa de cama,
travessero". Aí num sabe. Aí eu falei: "O que é travessero?" Eu
num sei, né. Aí voi lá po Orlando, voltei. "Orlando eu num sei
não". "Cê num sabe? É travessero pa colocá na minha cabeça".
Aí eu voi lá perguntei po rapaiz tamém: "O que que é travessero?"
Aí ela me mostrô. Até eu sabe isso, aprende isso. (K3).

Level 7

E: E por que que você acha bom aprender a ler e escrever?

T: Por quê? Porque daqui uns...amanhã ou depois, isso aqui num
pode, num vai podê acabar, ou não. Os civilizado tá chegando
perto, né ? Os fazendeiro e pra nós sê escravo dos fazendeiro, os
menino tem que aprender lê, escrevê pra...pra não passá pra traz
os fazendeiro não roubá eles. Então por isso a gente pediu a escola
pros menino aprendê. (K5)

We have the good fortune of having access to the earlier
stages in the process, thanks to the work of Charlotte Emmerich.

She taped a large sample of people from 1976 to 1980, financed by CNPq (the National Council of Research in Brazil), and by CEPG (the Center for Graduate Research of the Federal Unversity of Rio de Janeiro), and she has recently donated it to a sociolinguistics research group of the Department of Linguistics at UFRJ, where various structures are being studied.

I now proceed to the subject of my analysis – the use of discourse markers.

3. Use of discourse markers in Xingu portuguese

3.1 General Issues

While functional words such as prepositions and conjunctions are well known to be scarce in pidgins, the use of discourse markers needs to be checked. Discourse markers as such are not a subject matter in pidgin and creole studies (usually oriented towards phonology, morphology and syntax, rather than towards discourse organization).

I define as *discourse markers* the particles, lexical items, or expressions, usually conjunctions, adverbs of verbal expressions that I first treated as having a homonym in grammar, but which, in discourse, have been phonologically shortenned and been emptied of their grammatical function. In previous studies on the Rio de Janeiro variety of Portuguese, we suggested four main functions for those markers: checking the interaction, organizing the parts of discourse (those which could be called the conjunctions of discourse), reformulating (a function related to discourse processing), and maintaining harmony between the interlocutors (functions of mitigation, related to politeness). For further definitions of discourse markers, see Schiffrin, 1986; Vincent, 1983;

1993; Marcuschi, 1991; Silva & Macedo, 1992; 1996; Macedo, 1994; Risso, Silva & Urbano, 1995, and Martelotta et al. 1996.

I chose to examine the most common discourse markers in Xingu Portuguese, that ended up by representing those functions:

Né ('isn't ist?'), as well as *Sabe*? ('you know'), *Viu*? ('you see'), and *Entendeu*? ('understand?'), which are used to check the attention of the interlocutor.

Aí ('then'), which is originally a deictic ('there'), and is used as a sequencing conjunction

Ah, *Ih* e *Oh*, interjections- mainly used in turn takings, to show agreement, or a sudden recall.

Assim ('like'), a reformulator, used to specify an X's 'complement', X being a Noun, an Adjective, an Adverb, or a Verb). In 'caraíba' Portuguese, it is less frequent in final position, although in Xingu, that seems to be the preferred position.

Agora ('now'), indicates adversatives in large chunks of discourse. In Xingu Portuguese, among the less fluent, it has a peculiar use.

Quer dizer (I mean), that reformulates clauses or sentences, and

Bom ('well') and *Olha* ('look'), frequently used as turn takers, with mitigating function.

Examples:

(1)   Eu vinha pra ficá um ano, eu fiquei um ano **né**,
       aí meu pai veio me buscá, eu voltei pra aldeia, fiquei uns seis meses lá. **Aí** queria vim pra cá de novo, **aí** vim. **Aí** fiquei até agora.

'*Then* came here to stay for one year, I stayed for one year, you see? *Then* my father came to fetch me, I went back to the village, stayed more or less six months there. *Then* I wanted to come back here again, *then* I came,...*then* I stayed (here) until now.'

(2) I: Sei. Mas é muito difícil quando começa assim aprender?

I: I know. But is it very difficult when one starts like learning?'

K: **Ah**, difice sim.

'*Ah*, difficult, yes.'

I: É?

'Really?'

K: **Ah**, a gente num sabia logo **né**. **Agora**, por exemplo, o Olando falava **assim**,

né: 'Vai busca esse... ele falava então," ropa decama, travessero".

'*Ah*, we didn't know at once, *you see? Now*, for example, Orlando said *like* that, *you see*: "Go bring that..." he then said: "linen, pillow".

(3) Fazia fut.., feze futebol lá, **agora**, idade do meu pai.

'They made (played) foot- they played football there, *now*, age of my father...'

(4) Kamayurá tem muito **agora** muito tempo Olando chegô lá só Kamayurá.

'Kamayurá there are many *now* long time Olando arrived there only Kamayurá there'

(5) Você sabe tapooca né. Tocano ele (.) cantano **assim**, home vai **assim** cantano. Depois vai em cima da costa, pegano **assim**, **assim**, né.

(6) Lá não tem ninguém, só FAB mesmo. Lá não tem **assim** civil nenhum lá.

'There is no one there, only FAB in fact. There is *like* no civilian there.'

(7) Mora ali, cinco dia foi lá visitá Olando. 'tão tá visitanto **assim** só ele **assim**.

'(–) live there, five days (–) went there to visit Orlando. (–) (Are) is visiting *like* only him *like*.'

(I live over there, but I came here to visit Orlando. I'm only like visiting Orlando)

(8)   Essa é uma história **assim**... **qué dizê**, pessoal já morava lá, pra lá da estrada **né**.

Estrada quando cortô, pessoal, Txucarramãe, morava lá pra baixo.

'This is a story *like*... *I mean*, people already lived there, beyond the road, *you see*. When road crossed (the Park), people (the) Txukarramae used to live down there.'

(9)   **Qué dizê** o parque era até lá na cachoeira **né**. E, e..naquele. tempo Olando queria mudá, todo mundo pra, mais perto do Diawarum **né**.

'*I mean* the park went as far as the waterfall, *you see*. And, and at that time Orlando wanted to move everybody to... closer to Diawarum, *you see*.'

(10) I: A mulhé também?

'The woman also?'

A: **Bom**, a mulhé tamém pode ficá junto, mas a mulhé pode saí. Como ela quisé.

'*Well*, (the) woman may also stay, but (the) woman may leave. As she wishes'.

(11) I: E a estrada?

'What about the road?'

A: **Olha**, esse é muito problema memo. Essa aí que é muito importante pra nozi. Estrada que tá passando no Txukarramãe, que dizê, já passô, né? isso aí atrapalhô bastante memo. Isso atrapalho muito memo.

'*Look*, this is much of a problem. That's what is very important for us. (–) Street is passing through the Txukarramae (village), I mean, it has already passed, you see? It disturbed us a lot. That really disturbed us a lot.'

3.2 Methodology

I examined interviews with 17 speakers from the Emmerich sample, who were examined as to the types of discourse markers, discourse genre, and as to the social parameters:

Language: Kamayurá, Aweti (Tupi), Yawalapiti (Arawak), Trumai (isolated), and Txukarramae (Jê) (classified as to place of residency and seniority).

Level of fluency: Levels 4, 5, 6 and 7, according to previous definition.

Place of residency: Their traditionsl villages (Kamayurá, Yawalapiti) or the government outpost at the reservation.

Age: Young (those who had recently left seclusion/ married without children), or Seniors grandparents, village chiefs, chiefs of the house).

Frequency of contact with Portuguese: High (those who had spent from 3 to 6 months in large cities, mainly Brasília, Rio or São Paulo. Low (those who never left the villages or the outpost).

My hypothesis was that the speakers would not use discourse markers, because I already knew, from other works, that they did not use conjunctions, prepositions, verbal morphemes of time and person agreement, number agreement, among other things.

Table 2 – Sample of the speakers of Xingu Portuguese

Inf.	Local/ Lg.	Freq. Contact	Level of fluency	Age
P1Ar.	Posto Trumai	+	7	young
P3Meg	Outpost Txukarr.	+	7	young
P4Kok	Outpost Aweti	+	7	young
P2Ary	Outpost Trumai	+	7	young
K1Suk	Outpost Kamay.	–	5	young
K3Kot	Village Kamay.	–	6	young
K5Tat	Village Kamay.	+	7	young
Y1Kan	Village Yawal.	–	5	young
Y2Sap	Vilalge Yawal.	+	7	young
Y3Ari	Village Yawal.	+	7	young
Y4Pir	Vilalge Yawal.	+	6	young
Y5Kuy	Vilalge Yawal.	–	6	young
B1Kat	Vilalge Kamay.	–	4	young
B2Taw	Vilalge Kamay.	–	4	young
B3Map	Vilalge Yawal.	–	4	senior
B5Awa	Village Kamay.	–	4	senior
B6Tar	Village Kamay.	–	4	senior

For the analysis of how the above factors were correlated to the use of discourse markers, I used the VARBRUL Program (Sankoff, 1988; Pintzuk, 1988). I first used frequencies, and then separated five markers for the analysis of their relative weight.

3.3 Results of Xingu portuguese use of discourse markers

Let us begin by the results of frequency of contact (Table 3): (neuter value=.25):

Table 3 – Markers by contact

marker	+ contact	rel. weight	-contact	rel. w.
Né	957/1751=55%	.25	813/1854=44%	.23
Aí	602/1751=34%	.19	760/1854=41%	.30
Ah	50/1751=3%	.17	209/1854=11%	.33
Assim	142/1751=8%	.39	72/1854=4%	.14
Agora	40/1925=2%	–	7/1869=0	–
Bom/Olha	61/1925=3%	–	5/1869=0	–
Quer dizer	73/1925=3%	–	3/1869=0	–

You may notice that the use of the marker **Né** showed little difference in both groups. Both **Ah** (and its variants **Ih, Oh)**, and **Aí** showed higher indices among the speakers with less contact.

The other items were more used by the speakers with high contact with the outsiders.

On Table 4, you may see the results for levels of fluency of the speaker (neuter. 25):

Table 4 – Markers by level of fluency of the speakers

marker	level 4	rel.w.	level 5	rel.w.	level 6/7	rel.w.
Né	220/487=45%	.25	261/783=33%	.15	1289/2335=55%	.32
Aí	214/487=44%	.41	365/783=47%	.10	783/2335=34%	.30
Ah	40/487=8%	.13	123/783=16%	.45	96/2335=4%	.20
Assim	13/487=3%	.22	34/783=4%	.31	167/2335=7%	.17
Agora	5/492=1%	–	0	–	42/2518=2%	
Bom/Olha	0	–	1/784=0	–	65/2518=3%	
Quer dizer	0	–	0	–	76/2518=3%	

Level 5 was against our expectation that there would be also a gradual increasing of the same items of Table 3, according

to the increase of fluency of the speaker. The indices for levels 6 and 7 were similar and those two were merged on the Table.

However, if we consider a gradation from level 4 to level 7 (passing over level 5), the indices behave according to our expectation, with the exception of the marker **Aí**, which decreases in level 6/7. Once more, we see that **Agora** ('now'), the mitigators **Bom** ('well') and **Olha** ('look') and the sentence reformulator **Quer dizer** ('I mean') are only used by the most fluent group.

Let us not turn to the results for age, as in Table 5 (neuter. 25):

Table 5 – Markers by age

Marker	Young	rel. w.	Senior	rel.w.
Né	1205/2020=60%	.22	565/1585=36%	.26
Aí	550/2020=27%	.16	812/1585=51%	.36
Ah	113/2020=6%	.31	146/1585=9%	.19
Assim	152/2020=8%	.31	62/1585=4%	.19
Agora	38/2198=2%	–	9/1596=1%	–
Bom/Olha	65/2198=3%	–	1/1596=0	–
Quer dizer	75/2198=3%	–	1/1596=0	–

Both groups employ **Né** – the marker of interaction in aproximately similar rates. **Aí** (the sequencing marker) was more frequent amont the older ones. **Assim** ('like') was more frequent among the young speakers. The different result here was that interjetions were more frequent among the young group. At the bottom of the table you may see again that **Agora** ('now'), **Bom/Olha** ('well, look'), and **Quer dizer** ('I mean').

Finally, the more difficult items seem to be *bom, olha*, and *quer dizer*, which are rarely used by the less fluent. The different use of native speakers and second language learners in respect

to markers is responsible for an impression that something is lacking, even when the lexical items are correct. Lack of mitigators may result in an impression of rudeness.

Notice that for Xingu Portuguese, the senior speakers should be seen as the ones with less proficiency, for they are the more conservative ones, with less contact with outsiders. The young speakers, on the other hand, are the ones who suffer the influence of the surrounding dominant society.

Substrate language and place of residency were examined, but were not selected by the program.

Interesting information can be drawn from the comparison of Indians and non Indians (a sample of 9 speakers of Rio de Janeiro was used for comparison). The results showed that, although the Non Indians have a larger inventory of discourse markers at their disposal, some of the items, such as **Né** 'you see' and **Assim** are even more frequent among the Indians than among the speakers of Rio de Janeiro (Table 6) (neuter. 20):

Table 6 – Markers among Indian and Non Indian adult speakers

marker	Indians	rel.w.	Adult Non-Indians	rel. w.
Né	1289/2377=54%	.26	1058/1956=54%	.14
Aí	783/2377=33%	.24	527/1956=27%	.15
Ah	96/2377=4%	.17	142/1956=7%	.22
Assim	167/2377=5%	.18	96/1956=5%	.18
Agora	42/2377=2%	.12	133/1956=7%	.31
Bom,Olha	66/2439=3%	–	119/2054=6%	–
Quer dizer	76/2439=3%	–	87/2054=4%	–

That reinforces the interpretation that the discourse func-
tions are present in their language from quite early, as soon as
they leave the phase of very short sentences and start using longer
discourse, with narratives, descriptions, and argumentations.

3.4 Interpretation of results for Xingu portuguese

I can therefore attest that discourse-interative functions are
indeed present in this pidginized variedy since very early stages,
as soon as the speakers develop from the very first phases of
isolated words and start using longer discourse.

We take the direction from less fluent to more fluent, from
low contact to high contact, from old to yound, from village to the
outpost to reflect the process of acquisition of a second language.
It would be reasonable to expect that the more they became pro-
ficient, the more they would employ each of the items. After all,
they all have some discoursive function, and the speakers are in
the process of acquiring discourse proficiency as they learn Por-
tuguese.

However, it was interesting to verify that there was a sys-
tematic decrease in the use of **Aí**, and sometimes of the interjec-
tions, as speakers become more fluent. It seems that each func-
tion is gradually represented by more sophisticated strategies:
Interjections have expressive function, as well as interactive-po-
lite function, to indicate agreement in turn taking. They are the
first to be acquired, because they tend to be similar among lan-
guages, and as such, are more easily disposable to speakers.

The other function that is present since the first stages is
the indication of sequencing, one of the easiest steps in the orga-
nization of discourse. The marker **Aí** is the most frequent one
since those early stages, and it decreases as the speakers be-

come more proficient, when he or she will use other cohesive strategies.

Everybody uses the interactional marker **Né**, whose function is to make sure that the interloutor is following what is being said. That explains its very frequent use (see the column of frequencies).

The other markers, acquired later, represent the sophistication of usage of an ample inventory of items for the similar functions: **Agora** and **Quer dizer** articulate higher unities, **Bom/Olha** are mitigators of a more complex type than the interjections. Notice that the items **Assim** and **Agora** that occur in level 4 speakers are qualitatively different than the same items used by more fluent speakers.

Notice also the high frequency of the reformulator/specifier **Assim** (surprising for me, at first). That use is understandable, though, if we think that for less fluent speakers it may be necessary to be constantly modifying and reformulating what is being said. Previous studies of **Assim** had shown that this item is also used to process more complex information (Silva & Assafin, 1994).

The speakers first specialize in the use of one item for a certain function, and only later they gradually increase their inventory of forms for similar function:

Assim is acquired before **Quer dizer** because the first specifies shorter phrases, while the latter refers to larger portions of the text. In this process of acquisition, **Assim** goes from an adverbial or deictic function, much more concrete, to a more abstract function of reformulator/specifier.

Interjections would be the first polite items to be acquired, later diversified with the usage of Bom/Olha.

Notice that **Aí** and **Agora** are originally locative and temporal deictics, which undergo a metaphorical extension of their functions.

Let us now turn to Table 5, with the correlation for age groups. Comparisons in aparent time are so dear to the variationists.In this case, the difference between senior speakers and young speakers do not indicate language change, but, instead, it shows the process of depidginazation in the direction of standard Portuguese.

The senior speakers, in spite of having being exposed to Portuguese for a long time, fossilized their language on the stage where they learned it, from a simplified model. The younger speakers are in the process of depidginizaton, gradually increase their use of the more complex features, in a perfect continuum that correlates with their frequency of contact with Portuguese outside the reservation.

4. Use of discourse markers by children

The next step was to examine the acquisition of discourse markers in L1, to compare it with the phenomena we have seen for L2.

This time, the questions were: What are their stages of development and what functions are acquired earlier?

Examples of discourse markers in non Indian Brazilian children are ilustrated below:

(11) Por que você mexeu naquele negócio ali, **né**?

(12) **Ah**! Daí veste a roupa de bruxa...

(13) E: Por quê? **Ah**, porque ele fica chorando.

(14) O Pedrinho fi..fica fazendo **assim** personagem de estórias. E a Narizinho também.

(15) Ficamos brincando **assim**, **aí** a gente falamos, no outro dia o Seu Mário foi,

a gente falamos que ia fazer uma pesquisa.

(16)   Ela tem dinheiro até muito mais para comprar uma fábrica de borracha.
        Agora Dona Manoelina, ela disse que – para fazer uma vaquinha.

4.1 Methodology for the study of children

I examined interview with 12 children, from 4 to 10 years of age, whom I took as still being in a phase of acquisition of discourse in their native language. I also examined 8 children from the Macedo sample (from 4 to 6), and 4 from the "Censo" sample (from 5 to 10).

I also examined, as a complement to my analysis, data of the longitudinal development of 2 children in their very beginning phases of acquisition (one from 2y 3m to 2y 8m; other from 1y to 2y 6m.).

4.2 Results of children

Table 8 below ilustrates the results for children (neuter. 20):

Table 8 – Use of markers by children

marker	4-6 y.old	rel.w.	8-10 y. old	rel.w.
Aí	49/88=56%	.24	575/823=70%	.16
Né	8/88=9%	.19	114/823=14%	.21
Ah	27/88=31%	.25	58/823=7%	.16
Assim	3/88=3%	.17	60/823=7%	.23
Agora	1/88=1%	.16	16/823=2%	.24
Bom/Olha	0	–	7/830=1%	–
Quer dizer	0	–	0	

Previous studies of markers in Portuguese had shown that **Aí** was more frequent among children than among adults. I had also attested that children use less turn takers than adults (Silva & Macedo, 1992; 1996; Macedo, 1994).

Accordingly, the present results show that young children (from 4 to 6) employ little discourse markers in general (the frequencies are low in Table 8). However, gradation remains the same as what we have seen for second language. The youngest group has a higher indices for **Aí** than for the other items. All the other items seem to grow with age.

The interpretation of those results follow what has already been commented for second language: Interjections and the sequencing marker represent the less complex representatives for a less complex function that is, therefore, acquired earlier. The discourse markers later acquired, the adversatve use of **Agora**, the mitigators **Bom/Olha**, were not used at all among the 4-6 y.of age group. The other reformulator **Quer dizer**, did not occur at all in any of the subjects of our sample, but we know it will be incorporated in the adolescent inventory of discourse markers.

We all know that the ideal for acquisition studies is to be based on longitudinal observations. I will now refer to my complementary sample to argue about how those items emerge.

I collected all the instances of **Ah**, **Ô**, **Ó**, **Aí**, **Né**? e **Viu**? in two toddlers.

Both used interjections **Ah** e **Ô**, the latter being used for calling (*Ô mãe, ô Bebel*). The item **Ó** arises first with a deictic function of showing, accompanied by pointing gestures, and is by far the most used of our particles.

I observed cases of **Viu** ('y'see') since 2 y 3 m., even before the child's using of **Né**, only after 2 y. 5 m.. By then, **Né** surpasses **Viu**, although it always occur in a fixed expression, to confirm the mother's support **Né, mãe**? (isn't it mum'?).

The form **Aí** is only used as a deictic of place. (There were also two instances of **Sabia**?, which, however, seemed to be isolated cases)

It is important to bring those complementary data to discussion, to evidence, first, that the interactional function of asking for agreement arises very early. Second, to show that the items such as **Ó** e **Aí** emerge first to indicate place, and only later will fluctuate as adverbs and discourse markers.

4.3 Comparison between L1 and L2

By comparing L1 with L2, our question was: Are there parallels between the two processes? If so, what would explain those similarities? Would the steps of acquisition be parallel to the predicted steps for change?

As we have seen, the results pointed amazing similarities in both groups. The differences might be commented were the low number of discourse markers in children, and a lower use of interactive **Né** in children than in the Indians.

The existence of parallels between first and second language gained interest in the seventies, and the work of Dulay & Burt, 1978 was seminal in the area. At the time, this kind of result was seen as evidence of universals of acquisition. Today, it is known that Dulay & Burt exaggerated in their expectations of universal down to such details. Even though, one cannot deny that there are imilarities in both processes (see Bailey, N., Madden & Krashen, 1978).

My expectation was that there would be more differences than similarities. After all, my sample had adult Indigenous speakers learning Portuguese, versus children. As we know, discourse markers have discoursive functions, which are acquired later by

children. I expected the adults to be more obviously prepared than children in various aspects, such as in the questions of politeness, which require the speaker's perception of the effect one might have upon the interlocutor, and, by such, trying not to embarass him or her. All that requires social maturity (Brown & Levinson, 1978; 1987), a task that also requires reversibility.

Nevertheless, there were much more similarities than diferences in the gradation of acquisition of discourse markers in both groups.

The similarities in the first phases in L1 and L2 could be explained, as has already been mentioned, by the continuum from easier (interjections, representation of sequencing relations by a spatial deictic *Aí*) to more difficult functions and ways of expressing them (use of more sofisticated forms for atenuation and reformulation).

The differences could be explained by the different phases of maturity of the two groups.

Both Indians and children use *Assim* (to reformulate/specify phrase parts) and the adversative conection *Agora* in a more fluent or mature stage. However, adult Indian speakers seem to be mature enough to restructure discourse. That would be a reason why they use more *Assim* than the young children.

Summarizing, my results are interesting because they verify empirically that there is a gradual increacing of the use of discourse strategies of cohesion and interaction, attached or explained by age, on the one side, and by proficiency in the language on the other.

At this point, I should return to the question of parallels between acquisition and change.

The recent approach of grammaticalization seems to be able to explain and generalize some of the facts that we have seen for discourse markers. This is what I will try to explain from now on.

5. Grammaticalization and the process of acquisition of discourse markers

5.1 Some basic notions of grammaticalization

The term "grammaticalization" has been used to explain how grammatical forms emerge, how they are used and how they may shape language. Grammaticalization was at first viewed as part of diachronic linguistics, but is a very relevant notion also to explain synchronic grammar, especially in the cases of fluctuating patterns of forms. Its concept is intimately tied to the concept of metaphor – metaphor would be one of the main means by which one form fluctuates from one function into another. Old means may be explored for new functions due to metaphorical expansion.

As part of the explanations based on metaphor, it is predicted that the forms change from more concret to more abstract, from lexicon to grammar. Therefore, to go from an adverb to a reformulator would be to go from more concrete to more abstract, and maybe from lexicon to 'grammar' if we take its new function inside the sentence. Likewise, to change from paratactic or less integrated type of conection to a hypotactic or more integrated one would be explained by the same principle. The complete cycle would end up in phonologically reduced forms, that may reach zero (Heine, Claudi & Hünnemeyer, 1991; Hopper & Traugott, 1993; Bybee, Perkins e Pagliuca, 1994). Another prediction of the theory of grammaticalization is that, for a considerable period, the new and the old form will co-exist, for we are dealing with gradual processes, that has its roots in prototypes – the cognitive theory proposed by Rosch, 1973 and others. Intuitively, we feel that when the same item fluctuates in various functions, that would be a sign of this kind of process; it would be a candidate case for grammaticalization.

Many authors defend unidirectionality as a requirement for grammaticalization- only those phenomena which would go from discourse to grammar should be admitted under the proposed definition. Others, however, admit both directions, as long as the other parts of the definition apply (Traugott, 1995). In any case, I think that all the authors that refer either to degrammaticalization, or to discursivization, are facing the same kind of theoretical explanation, of cognitive-functional base, and this is the kind of process I insert my discourse markers in (Traugott, 1995; Vincent, Votre & Laforest, 1993).

5.2 Treatment of discourse markers as cases of grammaticalization

I return, now to what I had underlined in the beginning. The results we have observed on the similar steps of acquisition of discourse markers in L1 and L2 allow me to highlight two aspects connected to some view of grammaticalization. One in the sense of predicting that the forms change from pragmatics to grammar, from discourse to syntax. When we consider clause combining in larger chunks of the text, there are indications that the forms go from discours to grammar (those forms that end up by functioning as conjunctions, for instance).

1) In spite of the fact that pidgins lack a whole series of grammatical rules, such as person agreement, number agreement, gender agreement, lack of tense and aspect morphemes, lack of prepositions, different word order) the discourse/pragmatic functions were always present since the earliest phases of the least fluent speakers. In special, the interactional function with **Né**, looking for agreement or for feedback.

Pidgins are studied with the main interest of discovering how a language is born. The fact that the particles we have exam-

ined were present from the very begining is an indication of the precedence of those discourse pragmatic functions, at least before many other syntactic functions appear.

2) As to the use of discourse markers by children, the parallels between L1 and L2 allowed us to say the same the above. Besides, the additional longitudinal data of children before 3 years of age showed the precocious use of request for feedback, before a whole series of grammatical rules.

Those two facts would be evidence of language acquisition (of L1 and L2) in favor of the functionalist approach of the how cycle might work.

Let us now argue why discourse markers can be treated as grammaticalizations also in the stricto sensu approach.

The discourse markers are, as we have seen, items or expressions that fluctuate. They fulfill practically all the requirements for grammaticalization to occur, except the question of unidirectionality. An item like **Né**, for instance, derived from "não é", would be a case of "degrammaticalization" or "discursivization" for the change would be from grammar to discourse. Anyhow, the forms **Né**, **Ó**, **Sabe?**, **Quer dizer**, **Bom**, and **Olha** were already grammaticalized or discursivizes when they were acquired by our Indians or our children. The most crucial thing for our argument was to see the acquisition trajectory of the items **Aí**, **Agora** e **Assim**, which mirror what has been said, from the historical point of view, about how the forms grammaticalize. (cf., Vincent, Votre & Laforest, 1993; Martelotta, 1994; Martelotta, Nascimento & Costa, 1996; Martelotta, Votre & Cezario, 1996).

Let us examine first the case of **Assim** and **Agora**:

The acquisition of the marker **Assim** as reformulator/specifier inside the sentence occurs gradually, in L1 as well as in L2, going from full lexicon to a more abstract use of reformulator. In the first phases, the what occurs is practically only the adverb "assim", in the stage I'm calling as "lexical".

Children	adv Assim	mark.Assim	Xingu	Assim adv.	Assim mark
4-6	12	3	young	116	105
8-10	274	60	senior	131	62
	286	63		247	167

The same happens with **Agora**, used first as a time deictic, and gradually as a marker of contrast, in a process of metaphorical extension as predited by the mentioned authors.

Children	Agora adv	Agora mark
4-6	7	1
8-10	29	16
total	36	17

Xingu	Agora adv.	Agora marc.
young	151	26
senior	133	9
total	284	35

As for the item **Aí**, the longitudinal data showed how evidently this form aises first as deixis. However, very rapidly, the child will be using it as a conjuntion, much more often than as deixis. That extension itself evidences the predictions of grammaticalization, reinforced in this case by the different frequencies of the adverbial and the deictic use, as in the tables below:

Children	Aí place	Aí seq.
4-6	0	48
8-10	18	576
total	18	624

Xingu	Aí place	Aí seq.
young	111	507
senior	85	812
total	194	1319

The frequency in the use of **Aí** decreases with matureness of the speaker. We know why this happens: as other strategies are acquired to express phrase connection, other connectors will be used. The recent results of Paiv, 1997, and Braga, 1997 on clause combining in Xingu Portuguese evidence very clearly the whole process: the less fluent speakers use more juxtaposition,

without any marking. The next step is they indicate cause and sequence relations with the deictic item **Aí**. As they grow in proficiency, they start acquiring new connectors and the cohesive relation becomes more and more hypotactic (or integrated) (cf. Paiva, 1996; 1997; Braga, 1997).

Final remarks

We saw that discourse markers may very well be treated in the perspective of acquisition- how those forms arise and by what processes they grammaticalize. It was possible to point out similarities between first and second language acquisition, as well as between language acquisition and language change, both processes explainable by the same metaphorical cognitive processes predicted by the interesting proposals of grammaticalization theory.

Notice that all my arguments were based on observations of social factors: age, type of contact, child maturation – and I was able to get to interesting linguistic conclusions, such as how the acquisition processes of L1 and L2 are similar and mirror change processes.

The results on L2 may also be seen as processes of depidginization and may offer a contribution to the studies on pidgins and creoles.

By examining discourse markers, I was able to corroborate recent results on the steps of acquisition of clause combining strategies, made by my collegues in our Research Project in Rio de Janeiro.

ABSTRACT: *This study analyzes the acquisition of discourse ma-*
rkers in the Portuguese spoken as L2 by the Indians from Alto Xingu.
The comparison between the acquisition process of these particles
in that language variety and the language of children who learn
Portuguese as L1 shows a difference in the acquisition pace of some
markers due to differences in the linguistic-cognitive maturational
process and communicative competence.

KEYWORDS: *markers; acquisition; L1 and L1.*

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