

DEVELOPMENT OF ORAL NARRATIVE AND LEVEL OF MOTHER'S EDUCATION

Development of oral narrative and education level of mother

Ana Carolina Francisca da Silva ⁽¹⁾, Amandrade Andrade Ferreira ⁽²⁾,
Bianca Arruda Manchester de Queiroga⁽³⁾

ABSTRACT

Purpose: to assess the oral narrative in children depending on the level of maternal education. **Methods:** the study was conducted at the Municipal Public School Magalhães Bastos, in the Meadow neighborhood in Recife, with 20 children in 1st grade I, aged between 7 and 8 years. For the evaluation we used a text and an mp3 recording of children for telling the story. **Results:** we observed that most children were in category II of the narrative scheme, most problems were cohesive in their narrative coherence and in relation to all the children were at level IV of consistency. When data from narrative scheme, cohesion and coherence were crossed with the data on the level of maternal education was observed that there was no significant relationship between them. It was also seen that very few mothers have the habit of reading in the home environment and most of them did not even graduate from elementary school I. We also observed that the more education the mothers, the better the habit of reading them. **Conclusion:** the maternal education had no significant effect on the oral narratives of children; this is due to several factors that need to be investigated further. However, the variability of oral narrative development of children observed in this study, whereas age and education were constant, suggesting the influence of other linguistic and social variables in this acquisition.

KEYWORDS: Child Language; Language Development; Communication; Child; Family Relations

■ INTRODUCTION

Language is a system that can enable a large development of creativity, for through it the individual can also create and understand new grammatical sentences created by others¹. The way the child uses language depends directly on how this language is addressed to it, i.e. if the adult use a language with simple grammatical structures and a reduced vocabulary, the child will use the same processes to communicate². Child builds the language through dialogic and social relationships it establishes with other speakers of the language³.

Several studies have claimed that children of different cultures follow the same route of language development⁴. However, according to socio-interactionism, the interaction of the child with the mother and with the world around will be central to such development, since it is the mother who, in most cases, means and interprets the baby' speech, introducing the child in the communicative universe⁵. In this perspective, the child will build and develop the language from their social interactions⁶ and, through the language, later will be able to exchange their experiences and knowledge⁷. Overtime and from contact with the language, the child refines the knowledge and comes to make more convoluted segmentations, to build more complex structures and, subsequently, to rule on this knowledge in a metalinguistic way³.

Study suggests that the social status of the family group will influence the development of language in children, with a focus on the influence of maternal speech⁸. To do so, however, it is necessary to think

⁽¹⁾ Fundação de Amparo à Ciência e Tecnologia do Estado de Pernambuco – FACEPE/UFPE, Recife, PE, Brazil.

⁽²⁾ Universidade Federal de Pernambuco – UFPE, Recife, PE, Brazil.

⁽³⁾ Universidade Federal de Pernambuco – UFPE, Recife, PE, Brazil.

Conflict of interest: non-existent

about the quality of the relationships that develop among family members, i.e. the involvement that the mother and the other people who live in the house are with child, as well as the intellectual and cognitive level of each of these people will also be decisive for the development of the child's language⁹.

Among all the capabilities that the child develops in the process of acquiring oral language, one occupies a special place, the ability to narrate events¹⁰. The narrative has been defined as one of the main tools that the individual has to reveal his thinking, since it involves characters, circumstances, consequences, space and time¹¹. In this sense, the narrative allows exchanges of meanings from existing symbolic systems in their culture. These symbolic systems, in turn, are used by men so that they can build their representations of the world¹². The narrative is used to recall events that have already occurred, being important tool for life¹³⁻¹⁵. The species of the narrative genre are varied, there are folk tales, evolutionary analyzes, fables, myths, fairy tales, justifications of action, memorials, advice, excuses, among many other narrative types¹⁵. Narrating allows for the establishment of relationships not restricted to logical causality, including psychological causality or intentionality to explain the events and situations¹⁶. The narrative can reach the child in several ways, for instance through lullabies, stories, songs that marked the childhood and youth of the mother and father cradling in her lap, and also primarily through conversations between the adult and baby¹⁷.

The reading of fairy tales can be used as a promoter resource of development. And this feature contributes to the development of socio-cognitive skills, social information processing and understanding of mental states¹⁸.

Narrative abilities of children provide rich and varied information about their linguistic, cognitive and social skills^{19,20}, besides different types of textual, narrative and social knowledge². Studies correlate the conversational style of parents with narrative performance of children²¹. It is through the construction of narratives that children try to assign meaning and coherence to the world around them. This process of meaning from experience develops in interaction with others, usually parents²².

Several authors agree that the story is a kind of narrative with specific components that appear in an organized manner through conventions and typical linguistic constructions²³. One of these authors describes the structure of a story including the scene introduction where the individual will describe the time and place where the event occurs and this scene introduction will usually start with conventional linguistic markers such as "Once upon

a time ", "One day"; and after that , it will be time to describe the characters with their goals, then after such descriptions it is time to talk about the problem-situation and then resolve it and finally, the closing occurs that usually ends with conventional end" and they lived happily ever"²³.

It is expected that at 6 years to acquire the structure of narrative text is complete and thereafter children spend narrate stories with coherently in detail and without interlocutor support²⁴.

Study suggests the existence of different categories of development in the acquisition of a narrative scheme of stories, from a category where there is only the scene, the characters and conventional linguistic markers of beginning and the full story, with a beginning, middle and end. The same study also highlights the importance of micro-textual (cohesion) and macro-textual (consistency) elements in order to ensure the linking of ideas and meaning unity of discourse, proposing a sequence of acquisition during the process of language development, pointing out eight-year-old children should be able to produce complete, cohesive and coherent stories. However, age alone cannot be taken as a parameter for considering the development of storytelling, since this ability also depends on the child's experiences with this genre, as well as other socio-cultural variables^{23,25}.

Study on youths and adults found that the coherence covers, besides language elements, world knowledge, shared knowledge, situatedness, informativity, intertextuality, intentionality and acceptability²⁶.

Among the studies that explore socio-cultural aspects^{8,9}, one aspect stands out as having important influence on child development: the level of maternal education. Maternal education is associated with the mental development of the child, i.e. the higher level of maternal education, the better child's cognitive development²⁷. Based on this hypothesis, the present study aimed at investigating the development of oral narrative in children depending on the level of maternal education.

■ METHODS

This is an observational, descriptive and transversal study.

Twenty children in the 1st grade of elementary of a public school participated in this research, with 13 females and seven males, randomly selected, ranging between seven and eight years of age. The number of participants was estimated by criteria of delineation among the group, which allows the analysis of the behavior of variables within a single

group of participants, with no claim to achieve a representative sample of a population.

Children who had neurologic, psychiatric and/or hearing disorders, as well as those with any type of confirmed language disorder were excluded from the study.

Materials and Procedures

Initially, an interview with the mothers was performed in order to know their level of education and other sociocultural aspects (Figure 1).

<p>Date of interview: Name of interviewee:</p> <p>Name of child: Date of birth: Place of Birth: Address: School: Education: Age that began studying: Years of education:</p> <p>1) How many people live in the house?</p> <p>2) How many family members work?</p> <p>3) Family income in minimum wages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Up to 01 wageb. 01-02 of wagesc. 02-04 of wagesd. 04-06 of wagese. Above 06 wages <p>4) Mother's education level and Profession.</p> <p>5) Who cares for the child at home? What is the caregiver's education level?</p> <p>6) What is the mother's reading habits?</p> <p>7) Does someone read storybooks for children? If yes, who? What level of education?</p> <p>8) The child likes to tell stories?</p>

Figure 1 – Script of the interview with the mothers

Subsequently, the oral narrative activity was then applied, by using the method of tales and retelling (Figure 2). This activity was recorded and transcribed for analysis. The activity was carried out with each child separately in a room, and outside of class time.

Data collection was conducted from November to December 2009. The narrative was analyzed in three aspects: the **narrative scheme** according to Rego²⁸, **cohesion** and **coherence** according to Spinillo and Martins²⁶.

It was approved by the Ethics Committee in research at the Health Sciences Center of the Federal University of Pernambuco under the registration 234/09 without restrictions. The responsible party was informed about the study's objectives and was asked to sign the Instrument of Consent allowing the child's participation in the study.

Data was tabulated in a spreadsheet of the SPSS statistical analysis software version 13.0, which enabled the analysis of descriptive and correlation statistics. Descriptive statistics and Pearson's R correlation test at 95% confidence interval ($p < 0.05$) were used.

REDHEAD HEN

Once upon a time there was a redhead chicken that lived with her chickens on a farm. One day she realized that the corn was ripe, ready to harvest and turns a good food. The redhead chicken had the idea to make a delicious corn cake. Everyone would like it! It was hard work: she needed enough corn for the cake.

Who could help harvest the corn cob?

Who could help shuck all that corn?

Who could help grind corn to make corn flour for cake?

Thinking about it the redhead hen found her friends:

– Who can help me harvest the corn to make a delicious cake?

– I can't, said the cat. I am very sleepy.

– I can't, said the dog. I'm too busy.

– I can't, said the pig. I just had lunch.

– I can't say the cow. It's time to play outside.

Everyone said no.

Then, the redhead chicken was preparing all alone: harvested the cobs, threshed corn, milled flour, prepared the cake and put in the oven.

When the cake was ready...

That good cake smelling was making the friends arrive. Everyone was salivating.

Then the redhead chicken said:

– Who was it that helped me harvest the corn; prepare the corn to make the cake?

Everyone was very quietly. (No one had helped.)

– So who will eat the delicious corn cake will be me and my chicks only. You can continue to rest looking.

And so it was: the chicken and her chicks seized the party, and none of the lazy was invited.

Author: André Koogan Breitman

Available at: <<http://www.feijo.com/~flavia/index.html>> Accessed on: May 20, 2009

Figure 2 – Text used for oral narrative

■ RESULTS

As can be seen in Table 1, the results revealed that out of the 20 children, 16 are cared for by their mothers. It was also noted that the number of residents in each household varied greatly among participants. It was seen that in 14 families only one person in the house was working and in four families

no one in the house works. It may be noted that out of the 20 families, 17 live only on minimum wage and three families depend exclusively on the Bolsa Familia program. And most mothers do not have the habit of reading for children. However, when questioned whether children liked to tell stories, all said yes.

Table 1 – Distribution of participants by caregiver, number of people working, family income, mothers who read to children, categories of stories' narrative scheme, cohesion, mothers' reading habits and level of maternal education. Recife 2009

Caregiver	N	%
Mother	16	80
Grandmother	3	15
Grandfather	1	5
Number of people working	N	%
0	4	20
1	14	70
2	2	10
Family income	N	%
Bolsa família	3	15
Up to one minimum wage	17	85
Mothers who read to children	N	%
Yes	9	45
No	11	55
Narrative scheme	N	%
Category II	8	40
Category III	7	35
Category IV	5	25
Cohesion	N	%
With problems	11	55
No problems	9	45
Mother's reading habits	N	%
No reads	2	10
Rarely reads	8	40
Reads a bit	5	25
Reads a lot	5	25
Mothers' education level	N	%
Illiterate	2	10
Incomplete elementary school	8	40
Complete Elementary School I	4	20
Incomplete High School	1	5
High School	5	25
Total	20	100

After collecting and transcribing data, analyses were performed to identify the narrative scheme, cohesion and coherence of oral narrative produced by children. To analyze the narrative scheme certain criteria were established to identify the categories of narratives comparing them with those proposed by Rego²⁸. In Rego's criteria, the story is classified as Class I when there is only the scene, the characters and the conventional linguistic markers of beginning; while in the criteria used in the present study the history was classified as Class I when only the characters are described. In Rego's criteria, the history is classified as Category II when already have more Category I plus an outline of the problem-situation, while in the present study the story was classified as Category II when it was not clear that the animals wanted to eat the cake after it was finished (problem-situation). In Rego's

criteria, the history is classified as Category III when already has Category II plus a sudden resolution of the problem-situation, while in the criteria used in this study the story was classified under Category III when it was clear that the animals wanted to eat the cake after it was finished (sudden resolution of the problem-situation). In Rego's criteria, the story is classified in Category IV when the story appears complete, while in the criteria used the story was classified under Category IV when it was clear that the animals were attracted by the smell of finished cake, which came to ask the cake and the chicken does not allowed it (full story).

After analyses it was observed that most children was in class II regarding the narrative scheme, this analysis is shown in Table 1. The transcription of texts produced by children can be seen in full in Figure 3.

Subject 1

It is ... the redhead chicken is ... (who?) helps make a cake, of friends (?), but there she was calling her friends, then her friends were busy, the dog was with sleep, and the cat was, was, was, was busy, and the pig was, was, was eating, was eating and the bull was, playing, and she, the chicken made the cake by itself, and, and ate the chicken and chicks.

Category III

With cohesive problems.

Subject 2

The redhead chicken, she saw the corn, so she thought that such a pretty tasty cake, so to do all that alone, she could not achieve it, she met her colleagues and nobody wanted to help, so she was alone and put on fire and when it was, I was quite ready, and it came that yummy smell and everyone was there and she said no one will eat cake, no one will eat cake just me and my chicks that nobody helped me, so those lazy were there, and she and her chick, and she and her chick made the party.

Category IV

No cohesive problems.

Subject 3

The redhead chicken was baking a cake, there called the cat, the cat (said), I'm tired, the dog said, I want to play, the pig (said) I'm so tired, the cow (said), I do not want it, then, then she made the cake, the, then, then came the cat, dog pig and cow, then she, she, she and chick, then (chicken) said no one helped me, I'll eat the whole cake with my chicks.

Category III

With cohesive problems.

Subject 4

Once upon a time, a redhead chicken, she wanted to make a corn cake, then she would not do it herself, then she asked for help for the kitten, puppy, kitty, piglet and the kitten said it was sleep, the dog said he was busy, the piglet said he was going to lunch and the little cow said she was playing, then she did all alone, then when there was that smell of cake there got came, the kitten, the dog, the pig and cow, then she said no, since nobody wanted to help, I'll eat it with my chicks.

Category IV

No cohesive problems.

Subject 5

The redhead chicken, redhead chicken asked for help to her friends to make corn cake, the kitten said it was sleep, doggie said it was busy, the little pig said it was having lunch, and the cow said it would play, then, then she took the corn things, then made the cake herself, then took, then saw that no one wanted to help, she said, since nobody wanted to help me, then I will , oh it will just eat me and my chicks.

Category II

No cohesive problems.

Subject 6

Chick (chicken) wanted to make a cake, there was asking the cat, the dog, a pig and kitty (if they wanted to help), she was hungry, the cat (said he was hungry), the dog, the cow and the pig (?) then she (chicken) was making the cake herself, when it was finished (?) , then took, took long to make the cake. Then the cat, the dog pig and kitty wanted to eat cake then the chicken (said that her and her chocks would eat) and the chick would eat it.

Category II

With cohesive problems.

Subject 7

Once upon a time, a chicken that wanted to make a corn cake, but she did not want to make a cake of maize alone, she was asking for help the cat, dog, pig and kitty, but the cat said he would play, and the dog said it would, would play, the pig said he'd eat and the kitty said she would play ball, but she only said ah, I will not give cake to anyone, she was there, she said she was going to eat her and her chicks.

Category II

No cohesive problems.

Subject 8

Once upon a time, a chicken who wanted to make a corn cake, after she sought help from kitten, to the dog, the cat and the pig, the kitten was hungry, the dog said play, the cow said would eat, and cow said she would play, after she made the cake herself, then she made the cake and her little friend, the dog, the cat and the cow wanted to eat, the chicken then she said no, she would eat only with her chicks

Category III

No cohesive problems.

Subject 9

Once upon a time, a redhead chicken, she was (saw) that corn, I was beautiful and mature, she thought, then she was asking friends (to) prepare everything for cake, then no one wanted to help her, she was, then she, she did herself and friends saw the cake and came fast, then she, she said, that her and her chicks would eat it.

Category II

with cohesive problems.

Subject 10

Once upon a time a chicken, she, she saw that the corn was mature, then she asked for help for homi (?), the animals go help her, she was picked up corn to make the cake, then she did cake, but the others (?) wanted to eat with her, then she said she did not allowed it because they did not help her.

Category II

With cohesive problems.

Subject 11

The chicken wanted to make a corn cake, she was asking for help the kitten, the dog, no, wait, the cat, the cat she asked if he could help her, then the kitten was sleep, she was asking the dog if he could help her, the dog said he was busy (o), then she was asking the pig, the pig said, he didn't want it , then the chicken asked the cow, the cow said he would play, the chicken when cake was finished, there was that smell then everyone wanted (?), she said no, just who is going to eat me and my chicks **Category IV**

With cohesive problems.

Subject 12

The chicken made the cake then she asked for help the pig, the dog, the cat, then she made the cake, can you help me? then he (?) said I cannot, I'm busy, I cannot, I'm busy then she was, I'll make the cake of maize alone, after I was asked (?) then she did not give it because she said you did not help me make the cake.

Category III

With cohesive problems.

Subject 13

Once upon a time a chicken wanted to make corn cake, wanted to make corn cake, then she was asking for help the kitten, puppy, and the pig, and the kitten, then she could make the cake alone, when cake finished, then, then the kitten, puppy, and piglet and, and the cow (wanted the cake) then she said since you did not help me I'll, I'll eat cake with my chick.

Category III

With cohesive problems.

Subject 14

Once upon a time a redhead chicken, she wanted to make a cake, but she asked for help to cat, pig, cow and dog, no one help her, then when she was making the cake, made the cake alone, when she made the cake, the cat felt a smell and came, then she said, oh no, just me and the chicks. Only.

Category IV

With cohesive problems.

Subject 15

The chicken she wanted to make a cake, then she talked to her friends, the puppy, the kitten, do you want to help me? he said no, I 'll, I'll, I'll sleep, oh puppy can you help me? then he said no, I will play, piggy, will you help me? I'll have lunch, Kitty can you help me? I want to play, I'll play outside, then he made the cake, it was finished and smelling, then he, he, then other friends said they wanted to eat, then she said no, I will not eat alone with my chicks.

Category IV

No cohesive problems.

Subject 16

She (?) was making the cake and asked to help friends, then she made the cake by herself and they (?) were asking for, and she said no, I will not give it.

Category II

With cohesive problems.

Subject 17

The chicken made the cake, the chicken made the cake alone because her friends too lazy (?). Only.

Category II

With cohesive problems.

Subject 18

Once upon a time, redhead chicken, then she saw the corn, as corn was mature, then she was making the cake, then she asked for help kitty, doggie, cow and pig, the cat said, I'm too busy, then the dog, the dog, I go to sleep, the dog, I'm too busy, and, and kitty, I'll eat, cow said, I'm hungry, the piggy, I'm going to sleep, then she took the cake, did everything myself as, no one helped, there was smell of cake, nobody, like nobody helped, the cat came, the dog came, the cow came, and, and piggy came, and everyone freaked, she did so, no but, as no one helped me, I'll eat everything alone. End.

Category III

No cohesive problems.

Subject 19

The redhead chicken decided to make a cake, then she asked her friends, her friends arrived, she asked the cat, the kitten did not want, asked the dog, the dog did not want then she asked the pig, the pig did not want it, then asked the cow, the cow was good (?), she picked the corn, picked corn, made the cake, there was smell of cake, then her friends the cake smell (?), then she said, and I will only eat with my puppies.

Category III

With cohesive problems.

Subject 20

The, the redhead chicken, her, she was watching the ripe corn, then she thought of collecting and making the cake to her chicks, she was asking animals, but none wanted, wanted to help her, then she decided to do alone, she prepared, collected everything and then made the cake, it was, was delicious and then she called them her puppy to go eat with her and none lazy did it because they did not help her.

Category II

No cohesive problems.

Figure 3 – Category of narrative scheme and analysis of cohesive matrix

To analyze the cohesion certain criteria were established to identify the narratives with no cohesion problems. Narratives with cohesion problems were those with no cohesive links, damaging the connection between the text elements, while narratives without cohesion problems had sufficient cohesive links to liaise between all elements of the text.

After analysis it was observed that most children had cohesive problems in their oral narratives (Table 1).

As regards consistency, all the children were at level IV of consistency. This means a well-defined

main event in the oral narratives of children, which is held as well as the topic of the story; the outcome is present and has a close relationship with the main event. For this reason all the stories were considered consistent.

Regarding the reading habits, only five mothers reported having the habit of reading in the home environment. Table 1 shows that half of mothers (ten) did not actually complete elementary education I.

Table 2 shows that no increasing distribution among the narrative categories depending on the increase in maternal education.

Table 2 – The relationship between maternal education and children’s Narrative Scheme. Recife 2009

Narrative scheme	MATERNAL EDUCATION					Total
	illiterate	Incomplete elementary school I	Complete Elementary School I	Incomplete elementary school II	High school	
2	1	5	1	-	1	8
3	-	3	2	-	2	7
4	1	-	1	1	2	5
Total	2	8	4	1	5	20

Table 3 shows that 11 children produced oral narratives with cohesion problems and, nine children produced cohesive oral narratives. Among the children who had cohesion problems, it is observed that maternal education also varied greatly.

As noted in the narrative scheme and cohesion, the habit of reading varied widely among levels of maternal education. However, it is noteworthy that

the five mothers with secondary education usually read more often than the others, according to data shown in Table 4.

These data were subjected to a correlation analysis (Pearson’s R coefficient) and there was significant correlation only in crossing the variables of maternal education and reading habits, as shown in Table 5.

Table 3 – The relationship between the level of maternal education and cohesion. Recife 2009

Cohesion	MATERNAL EDUCATION					Total
	illiterate	Incomplete elementary school I	Complete Elementary School I	Incomplete elementary school II	High school	
With problems	-	7	2	-	2	11
cohesive	2	1	2	1	3	9
Total	2	8	4	1	5	20

Table 4 – The relationship between educational level and maternal reading habits. Recife 2009

Reading	MATERNAL EDUCATION					Total
	illiterate	Incomplete elementary school I	Complete Elementary School I	Incomplete elementary school II	High school	
no reads	2	-	-	-	-	2
rarely reads	-	4	3	1	-	8
reads a bit	-	1	1	-	3	5
reads a lot	-	3	-	-	2	5
Total	2	8	4	1	5	20

Table 5 – Correlation matrix between maternal variables and linguistic variables of children

	Maternal Education	Reading Habit	Oral narrative	Cohesion
Maternal Education	-	.445 ($p < .05$)	.365 ($p = .144$)	.181 ($p = .445$)
Reading Habit	-	-	.120 ($p = .591$)	.297 ($p = .203$)
Oral narrative	-	-	-	.298 ($p = .202$)
Cohesion	-	-	-	-

Note: The consistency variable not entered in the analysis because all children were classified as category IV of development. Pearson's R Correlation test.

■ DISCUSSION

The studied population was composed mostly of female children. Most of the children belong to families that have a very low income and few of them survive only on the value of the Bolsa Familia program. This data is very important, since it is known that social class interferes with the quality of the narrative²⁸. Families from different social classes in different ways influence the process of language development in children⁹.

The children in the study mostly live under the care of mothers, who lies unemployed or not working out of home. Despite this intense experience of mothers, they are children little encouraged to read because, according to the interviews, few mothers read or tell stories to their children.

The interaction with parents allow the child to participate in the narrative practices of day-to-day in which the child learns to tell and organize their stories, what kinds of events are reportable and what kind of relationships can be established between them based on an interpretative framework of their culture. Thus, parents encourage children to construct their narratives and develop specific parts of their stories by providing ideas, using questions and developing children's responses²².

The interaction of children with mothers through stories read or told by them is of paramount importance to the oral narrative development, as when listening to stories told by their mothers, children tend to develop their ability to retell and create their own stories¹⁷.

The lack of this interaction may impair the child's language development as it is in the early childhood education and with the help of parents that children should develop their first narrative skills¹¹.

Family interactions play an important role in the development of the child's narrative construction,

since family is the first context of socialization. It is through questioning and emotional reactions raised by parents in response to the child's story that parents actively drive the content and structure of narratives of their children^{22,29}.

In the present study, the narratives of children were analyzed and classified according to the narrative scheme, cohesion and coherence. It was observed that children are well distributed in the narratives categories II, III and IV, eight children are in class II, seven in category III and five in category IV.

This distribution would be natural if children had different age and education, but as the age and education were constant, the result seems to confirm that the development of the narrative scheme relies on other language experiences of children, particularly those that occurring outside the school environment, particularly in the family context.

In a review of studies that investigated the acquisition of narrative scheme of story in several languages, authors state that in favorable conditions of environmental stimulus and opportunities for learning, children aged four to five years produce stories classified in category I and II, children aged between six and seven years produce quite varied stories between categories II and IV, and children aged eight years produce complete stories in class IV²³. In the present study however, differently from that reported by the aforementioned review, eight out of the twenty surveyed children, aged between seven and eight years and should be producing stories in categories III and IV, produced far less elaborate stories classified as II. Therefore, it can be stated that this population lacks incentives that encourage the development of oral narratives.

This may even impair the whole learning process of the child, because it is expected that school-children understand explanations of their teachers,

tell and retell stories and interpret them. And this ability to produce and understand oral narratives is important to academic success as well as for social-emotional well-being²⁴. One study showed that for a good language development, the school needs to organize reflective activities based on dialogue, understanding of the other's role and the dynamics, i.e. collaboration among all involved in this context. Thus, it will be possible the formation of subjects whose actions will transform the environment they live³⁰.

In the present study, most children produced oral narratives with cohesion problems. The use of cohesive elements does not only depend on the age of the narrator, but other aspects, such as situations of production and the type of text being produced²³. It is possible that the text used has brought difficulties for the children of this study. For this reason, it is recommended that the school routine proposed a work with different text genres.

Studies suggest the existence of four distinct levels of development as the ability to produce coherent stories, namely levels I, II, III and IV. And the factors already mentioned in the literature as capable of influencing the textual coherence are education, age and social factors²³. All children in this study produced narratives considered as level IV of consistency.

Regarding the main objective of the present study by investigating the development of oral narrative in children depending on the level of maternal education, there was no statistical significance in the analysis of correlation between data relating to maternal education and narrative levels, refuting *a priori* the raised hypothesis.

According to this study, maternal education alone is not enough to influence this acquisition. However, when considering the variation in the categories of narrative in the study population, which is composed of children of the same age and same school, one cannot deny that other social variables that pervade the family environment are intervening in children's language development.

It is also important to note that although maternal education has not correlated separately with the development of oral narratives, there was a significant correlation between maternal education and

reading habit, which undoubtedly interferes with literacy practices occurring in the family environment.

Concerning to this influence, the literature points to studies that argue that the mother has a key role in the child's linguistic development⁵, including a highlight for the association of this variable with the child's mental development²⁷. On the other hand, another study that aimed at investigating the influence of maternal education on the language development of children aged 2 to 24 months also found no statistical significance regarding this possible influence³¹.

Thus, the fact that maternal education has not significantly influenced the oral narrative of children in the present study can be explained by several factors. It is possible that maternal education variable alone is not able to exert such influence, but, as it has been verified, it is related to other socio-cultural habits, such as reading frequency; then these and other aspects of family routine need to be further investigated.

Another limiting aspect of the present study was the sample size, because they were only 20 children, the sample may have been insufficient to establish the intended relationship. It is necessary that further studies being conducted with other populations and a larger sample.

■ CONCLUSION

As it has been reported, no significant effect of maternal education on the development of children's oral narrative was found. However, the variability of categories observed in the children's narrative under the same age range and studying at the same school, suggests the influence of other social or family variables on such development.

In addition, children in this study had lower than expected performance for their age and education when comparing the results with other investigations. The effect of social variables on the development of oral narrative needs to be further investigated in other studies on other populations with amplified samples.

RESUMO

Objetivo: verificar a narrativa oral em crianças em função do nível de escolaridade materna. **Métodos:** o estudo foi realizado na Escola Pública Municipal Magalhães Bastos, no bairro da Várzea no Recife, com 20 crianças da 1ª série do ensino fundamental I, com faixa etária entre sete e oito anos. Para a avaliação foi utilizado um texto e um Mp3 para a gravação das crianças narrando a história. **Resultados:** observou-se que a maioria das crianças encontrava-se na categoria II do esquema narrativo, grande parte apresentou problemas coesivos em suas narrativas e em relação à coerência todas as crianças encontravam-se no nível IV de coerência. Quando os dados de esquema narrativo, coesão e coerência foram cruzados com os dados do nível de escolaridade das mães foi observado que não houve relação significativa entre eles. Foi visto também que pouquíssimas mães têm o hábito de leitura no ambiente doméstico e a maioria delas nem chegou a concluir o ensino fundamental I. Também foi observado que quanto maior a escolaridade das mães, melhor o hábito de leitura delas. **Conclusões:** a escolaridade materna não influenciou significativamente na narrativa oral de crianças, isto se deve a diversos fatores que necessitam ser investigados com mais profundidade. Entretanto a variabilidade do desenvolvimento da narrativa oral das crianças observada no presente estudo, considerando que a idade e a escolaridade foram constantes, sugere a influência de outras variáveis linguísticas e sociais nesta aquisição.

DESCRIPTORIOS: Linguagem Infantil; Desenvolvimento da Linguagem; Comunicação; Criança; Relações Familiares

■ REFERENCES

1. França MP, Wolff CL, Moojen S, Rotta NT. Aquisição da linguagem oral: relação e risco para a linguagem escrita. *Arq. Neuro-Psiquiatr.* 2004;62(2b):469-72.
2. Borges SMM. A Estrutura da Narrativa Escrita, em Crianças com Diferentes Línguas Maternas e a Mesma Língua de Escolarização. Lisboa. Tese [Mestrado em Ciências da Educação] – Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa-Escola Superior de Educação de Lisboa; 2011.
3. Lorandi A, Cruz CR, Scherer APR. Aquisição da linguagem. *Verba Volant*, v. 2, nº 1. Pelotas: Editora e Gráfica Universitária da UFPel, 2011.
4. Schirmer CR, Fontoura DR, Nunes ML. Distúrbios da aquisição da linguagem e da aprendizagem. *J. Pediatr.* 2004;80(2):95-103.
5. Ré AD. A pesquisa em Aquisição da Linguagem: teoria e prática. *Aquisição da Linguagem: uma abordagem psicolinguística.* São Paulo. Contexto; 2006.
6. Borges LC, Salomão NMR. Aquisição da linguagem: considerações da perspectiva da interação social. *Psic: Reflexão e Crítica.* 2003;16(2):327-36.
7. Palangana IC, Desenvolvimento e Aprendizagem em Piaget e Vygotsky: a relevância social. A concepção de Lev Semynovitch Vygotsky. 2ª ed. Ed. Plexus; 1998.
8. Hoff E. The specificity of environment influence: socioeconomic status affects early vocabulary development via maternal speech. *Child Development.* 2003;74(5):1368-78.
9. Cachapuz RF, Halpern R. A influência das variáveis ambientais no desenvolvimento da linguagem em uma amostra de crianças. *Rev Amrigs.* 2006;50 (4):292-301.
10. Miilher LP, Ávila CRB. Variáveis Lingüísticas e de Narrativas no Distúrbio de Linguagem Oral e Escrita. *Pró-Fono Rev. Atual. Cient.* 2006;18(2):177-88.
11. Smith VH, Sperb TM. A construção do sujeito narrador: pensamento discursivo na etapa personalista. *Psicol. estud.* 2007;12(3):553-62.
12. Vieira AG, Sperb TM. O brincar simbólico e a organização narrativa da experiência de vida na criança. *Psic: Reflexão e Crítica.* 2007;20(1):9-19.
13. Bruner J. Life as narrative. *Social research.* 1987;54(1):11-32.
14. Vieira AG, Sperb TM. O brinquedo simbólico como uma narrativa. *Psic: Reflexão e Crítica.* 1998;11(2):233-52.
15. Brockmeier J, Harré R. Narrativa: Problemas e Promessas de um Paradigma Alternativo. *Psic: Reflexão e Crítica.* 2003;16(3):525-35.
16. Bruner J. The narrative construction of reality. *Critical Inquiry.* 1991;18(1):1-21.
17. Girardello G. Voz, presença e imaginação: a narração de histórias e as crianças pequenas. In: Fritzen C, Cabral GS. *Infância: Imaginação*

e Educação em debate. Santa Catarina. 1ª ed. Papirus; 2007, p.39-57.

18. Verzolla BLP, Isotani SM, Perissinoto J. Análise da narrativa oral de pré-escolares antes e após estimulação de linguagem. *J Soc Bras Fonoaudiol*. 2012;24(1):62-8.

19. Béfi-Lopes DM, Bento ACP, Perissinoto J. Narração de histórias por crianças com distúrbio específico de linguagem. *Pró-Fono Rev Atualiz Cient*. 2008;20(2):93-8.

20. Geraldi JW. Palavras escritas, indícios de palavras ditas. *Ling. (Dis)curso*. In: III Conferência de Pesquisa Sócio-cultural. Santa Catarina. 2003, p. 9-25.

21. Dadalto EV, Goldfeld M. Características comuns à narrativa oral de crianças na pré-alfabetização. *Rev. CEFAC*. 2009;11(1):42-9.

22. Carvalho JRD. Qualidade das narrativas produzidas em contexto diádico por crianças na idade pré-escolar: Impacto do scaffolding verbal materno. Braga. Tese [Mestrado Integrado em Psicologia] – Universidade do Minho; 2011.

23. Leitão S, Spinillo A, Correa J. Desenvolvimento da Linguagem: Escrita e Textualidade. A produção de histórias por crianças a textualidade em foco. Rio de Janeiro. Farpej; 2001.

24. Cavalcante PA, Mandrá PP. Narrativas orais de crianças com desenvolvimento típico de linguagem. *Pró-Fono Revista de Atualização Científica*. 2010;22(4):391-6.

25. Gonçalves F, Dias MGBB. Coerência Textual: Um Estudo com Jovens e Adultos. *Psic: Reflexão e Crítica*. 2003;16(1):29-40.

26. Spinillo AG, Martins RA. Uma análise da produção de histórias coerentes por crianças. *Psic: Reflexão e Crítica*. 1997;10(2):219-48.

27. Andrade AS, Santos DN, Bastos AC, Pedromônico MRM, Almeida– Filho NE, Barreto ML. Ambiente familiar e desenvolvimento cognitivo infantil: uma abordagem epidemiológica. *Rev Saúde Públ*. 2005;39(4):606-11.

28. Rego LLB. A escrita de histórias por crianças: as implicações pedagógicas do uso de um registro lingüístico. *Rev doc de est em ling teórica e aplicada*. 1986; 2:165-80.

29. Melzi G, Schick A, Kennedy J. Narrative elaboration and participation: Two dimensions of maternal elicitation style. *Child Development*. 2011;82(4):1282-96.

30. Magalhaes MCC. Narrative and argument in teacher and researcher interactions on classroom discourse: different ways of organizing salient and problematic action. In: Hedegaard M. (ed). *Learning in Classrooms: A cultural-Historical Approach*. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press. 2000;352-69.

31. Escarce AG, Camargos TV, Souza VC, Mourão MP, Lemos SMA. Escolaridade Materna e Desenvolvimento da Linguagem em Crianças de 2 Meses à 2 anos *Rev. CEFAC*. 2011. Ahead of Print.

Received on: March 26, 2012

Accepted on: August 23, 2012

Mailing address:

Ana Carolina Francisca da Silva
Rua Monsenhor Silva, 399 – Madalena
Recife – PE
E-mail: anacarolinafono@hotmail.com