

Oral Microstructures in Multilingual and Monolingual Dyads of Children Aged 3-to-4 Years old in ECE



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2019 Biennial Meeting,
Baltimore,
March 23rd

1-Context

1- Developing verbal and non-verbal microstructures (i.e. propositions, gestures, etc.) may enhance skills that underlie communication in both multilingual and unilingual dyads and the role of the E is essential in it (Sabot *et al.*, 2018).

2- Microstructure helps measure children's linguistic growth in terms of both gestures and words **BUT** in previous study the focus was essentially put on the development of their macrostructure and has not underlined the role of the E (Weisleder *et al.*, 2013).

3- Language support offered by the educator to children is essential for both their verbal and non-verbal language growth (Cabell *et al.*, 2015).

4- Strategies used by educators to elicit and support children's microstructures appeared different in multilingual and monolingual dyads (Gest *et al.*, 2006).

5- As more and more multilingual children attend ECE, it is important to understand if and how the role of their educator can promote their language development, as would be the case for monolingual children.

2- Aims

Describe and **compare** the evolution of the development of oral microstructures (verbal and non-verbal) that compose spontaneous narratives of 24 children enrolled in an Early Childhood Center (ECE) between 36 and 47 months old and the practices used by their educator through this specific development.

3- Method

Participants:

- N= 12 dyads; 6 Multilingual (5b.; 7g.) and 6 Monolingual (6b.; 6g.) = 24 children
- N= 12 female educators;
- Teaching experience= 12.41 years (SD= 4.78)

Measures:

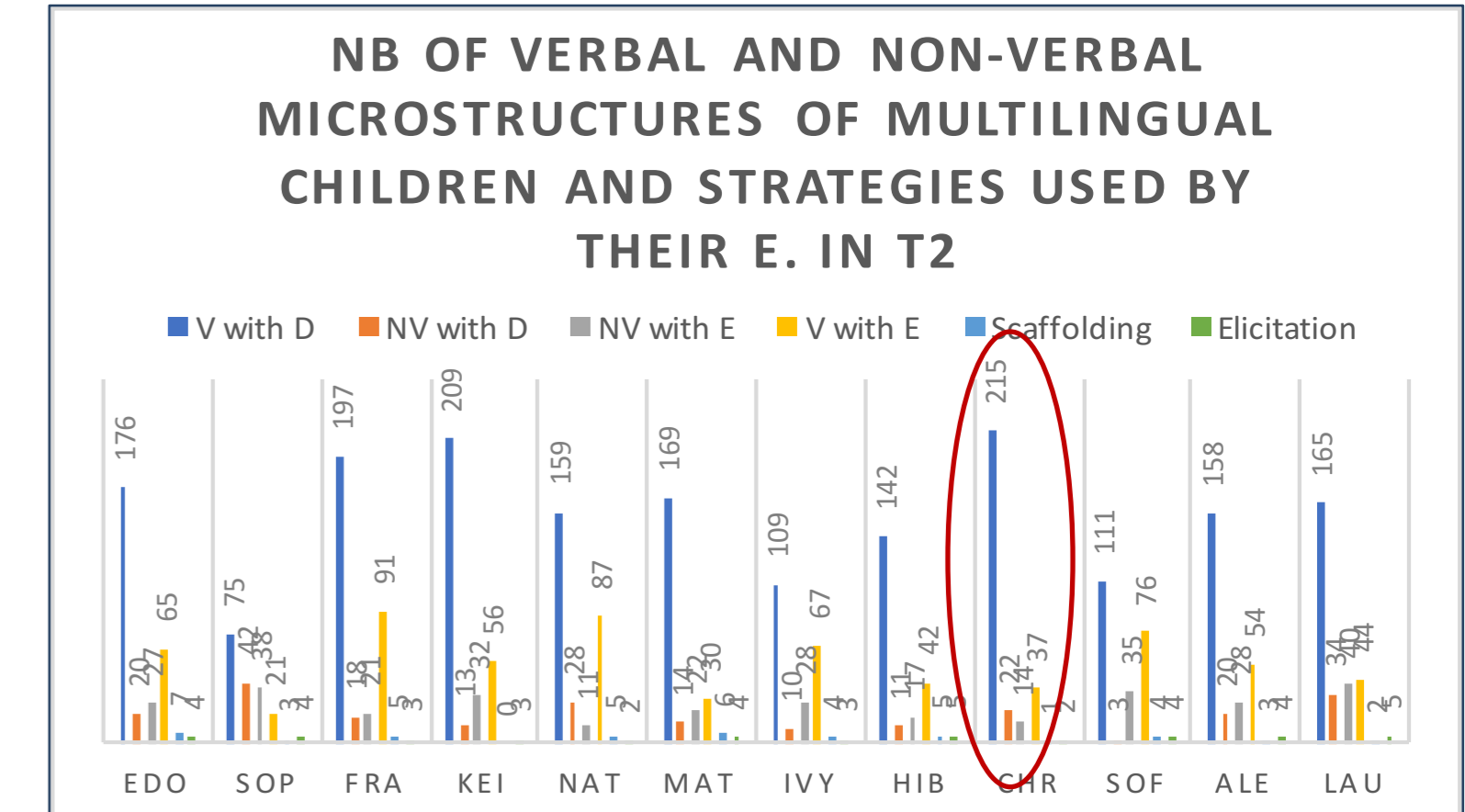
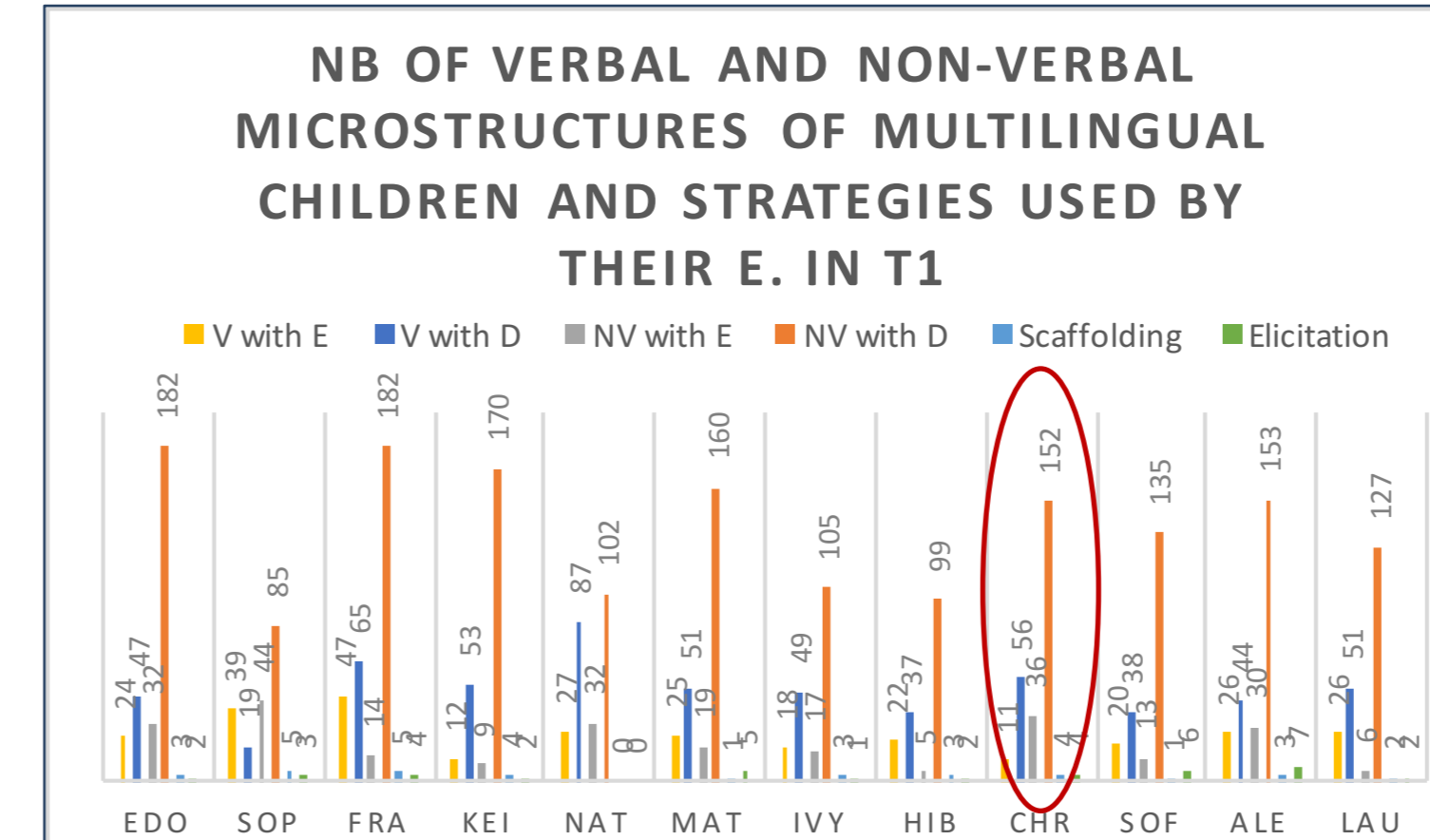
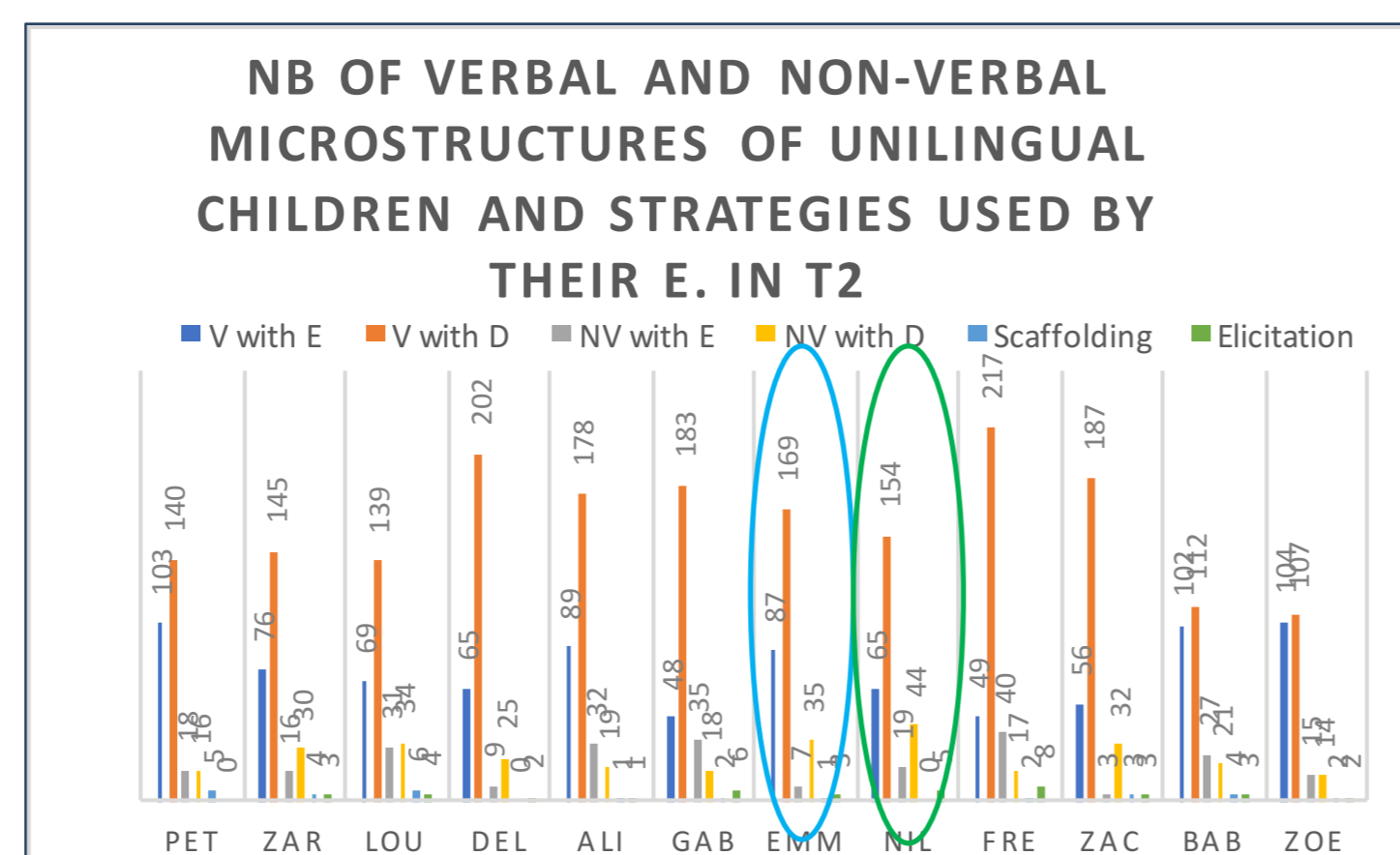
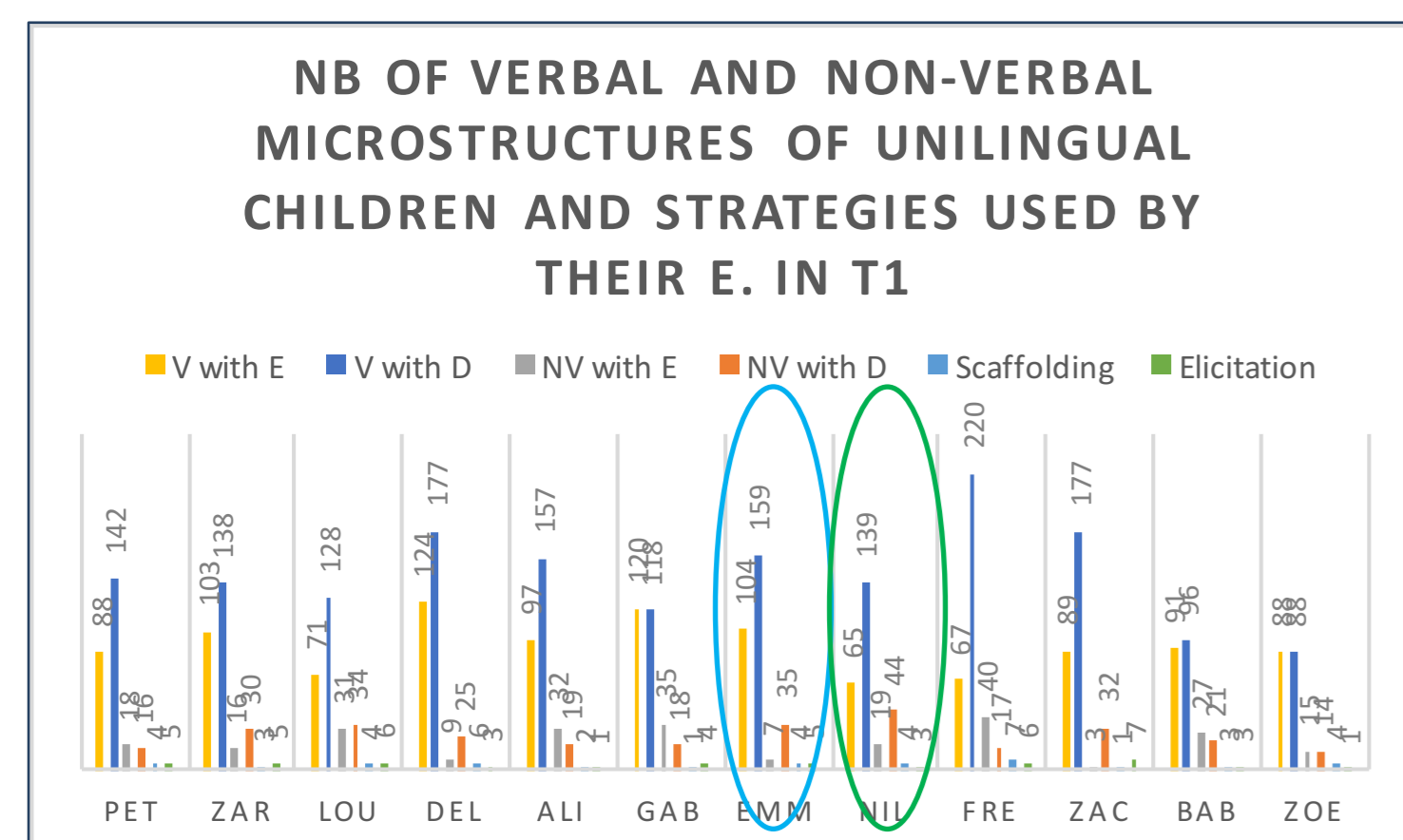
- Two Non-participatory observations:
T1= children's aged 36-40 months
T2= children aged 42-47 months old

Procedures:

- An average of 3h26 filmed observation for each dyad repeated at T1 and at T2
- Full transcript of children's spontaneous narratives divided in **two** categories: verbal and non-verbal microstructures;
- Full transcript of the strategies used by their educator divided in two main categories:
 - Elicitation (Encourage the child to explain his knowledge) and scaffolding (Adult assistance to the child to help him develop a thought he could not develop without the support);
 - *Computerized Language Analysis* (CLAN, MacWhinney *et al.*, 2001).

Legend: E= Educator; D=Dyad; V= Verbal; NV= Non-Verbal; T1-T2= Time 1, 2

4- Results



At this stage, only 3 children stood out in regard of their use of verbal and non-verbal use of microstructures when compare to the number of strategies used by their E.

- 6/12 children use more NV microstructures with their D than with their E in T1. 5/12 use them more in T2. = **Little change for NV**
- As a general rule, unilingual children use considerably more V microstructures between them than with their E for both T.
- E used 2 less elicitation and 3 less scaffolding with **EMM** between T1 and T2.
- E used 2 less elicitation and 4 less scaffolding with **NIL** between T1 and T2.

- 5/12 children use more NV microstructures with their D than with their E in T1. 3/12 use them more in T2.
- As a general rule, multilingual children use more than one MIC between them with E for both T.
- E used 2 less elicitation and 3 less scaffolding with **CHR** between T1 and T2.

5- Discussion

- Preliminary results show that for **EMM** and **CHR**, when their Es decrease their used of strategies, these children used fewer verbal microstructures.
- For **NIL**, even though E has decreased the number of strategies used, his verbal microstructures are equivalent between the two T.
- **Overall, only a few strategies are used by the educators in variety and in numbers.**
- In general, between T1 and T2, the less strategies Es used, the less unilingual children (8/12) used verbal microstructures with them.
- Even if Es used fewer strategies in T2, only 3/12 multilingual children decreased their use of verbal microstructures with them.
- Although more drastic (i.e. **some Es did not/no longer used strategies between T1 and T2**), our results are similar to those of Gest *et al.* (2006). However, the contexts in which these strategies are present should be looked at, in order to understand how it is possible to support/spread their use.
- Describing more specifically the content of the verbal and non-verbal microstructures would allow to have a portrait of their quality (in terms of MLU) which could then be related to the quality of the practices used by the Es.

6- Selected References

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7- Acknowledgements and contact

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada

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