Studying Argumentative Text Processing through Collaborative Writing

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this chapter is to point out the significance of using collaborative writing as a methodology for the study of the processing of argumentative discourse. Our theoretical framework is based on a strong link between the social context of production (communicative purpose, relations between the writers and the addressee, etc.) and the psycholinguistic operations implemented by writers. Experimental collaborative writing provides online data as traces of the writing processes that can be compared with the final texts. We show that the study of the data collected (mainly 'metacomments' of the writers and lists of proposed formulations to be written) is a promising method for increasing our knowledge of some aspects of the argumentative procedures activated by learners (of a foreign language). In elaborating the content, we look at how the writers look for and select the arguments according to their representations constructed about the addressee. In planning the production, we examine how the text schemas influence the choices, and which kind of argumentative strategies are verbalized. In textualization, we explore how the question of the enunciative strategies is especially relevant for argumentative text processing. Due to the nature of our preliminary results, we focus our attention on the polyphonic aspect of argumentation, concluding that enunciative strategies are inextricably linked to argumentative strategies: managing voices in the text, adjusting the enunciative involvement, supporting arguments, all those operations being problematical for learners, are abundantly verbalized. Thus we propose a microgenetic study of argumentative writing activity, using collaborative work as a method of allowing the exteriorization of some internal operations.

1   INTRODUCTION TO COLLABORATIVE WRITING

The aim of this chapter is to point out the significance of using collaborative writing as a methodology for the study of the processing of argumentative text. Indeed, it seems to be a promising method for increasing our knowledge in this area, considering the specific nature of the data collected, which may inform us about the online procedures involved in argumentative text production. Thus we propose a microgenetic study of the argumentative writing activity, looking for traces of the operations processed during the production.

1.1 A learning activity

In our frame of study, collaborative writing is first of all a specific learning task: two (or three) learners have to construct and write a text together, participating equally in the production, and being equally responsible for achieving the task (e.g., Damon & Phelps, 1989).The goal is to create one text, by means of interaction.The partners have to exchange ideas, plans, suggestions for formulations, and together they have to solve the problems that arise.Thus collaborative writing is used as a teaching tool: the interactions between peers are considered as a source of the potential regulation of the activity of writing. In the case of argumentative production, working with other learners offers many advantages. It seems to be helpful, for instance, when searching for arguments arising from different points of view, or for specifying the addressee.The interaction between partners writing a text together have generated some studies with different perspectives (see, for instance, Nystrand, 1986; DiPardo & Freedman, 1988; Garcia-Debanc, 1990; Zammuner, 1995), but more generally, they agree on its positive effects on the acquisition of writing.

The main advantage of collaborative writing is to offer a workspace where the learner receives immediate feedback about his[1] writing actions: he has access to how his text (or part of text) is received by someone else. Furthermore, the discussions generated by the activity make him verbalize and negotiate many things: his representations, purpose, plans, and doubts. He has to test his hypotheses, justify his propositions, and make his goals explicit. It allows him a progressively more conscious control and increases the awareness of the processes.According to the literature (for instance, Gere & Stevens, 1989; Piolat, 1990; Roussey & Gombert, 1992), the dialogues created by the activity lead to more revision processes, more critical control, and more consideration for the addressee of the text being produced.

1.2 A searching methodology

Apart from this pedagogical point of view, collaborative writing is also studied by witnessing the activity of writing in itself: the verbalizations of the writers are of great interest, in the sense that they provide a lot of information about their writing procedures. In the context of argumentation, it is highly relevant to know about the ways in which writers cope with representations of the communicative purpose, the profile of the addressee, the text genre they have to use, how they manage to deal with the polyphonic aspect of argumentation.We will show further on how researchers have access, analyzing the dialogues, to some of the argumentative strategies of writers.

David and Fayol, in their overview on the methodological aspects of studying writing production (1996), confirm that collaborative writing only recently has been exploited as a method to collect online data on the writing process. By putting two writers in an interaction situation for a collective writing task, and observing these interactions, the researcher has at his disposal two types of data: dialogues (registered and transcribed) as traces of the writing process, and texts produced as a result of the achieved task. In the dialogues, the 'text to be written' appears under various forms (Schneuwly, 1992): direct dictation (without any comments); 'variations' of a formulation (the successive states of an utterance);

'metalinguistic comments' of all kinds (*e.g.*, metagraphic, metalinguistic, metadiscursive, and metacommunicative),'epilinguistic' evaluations, *etc.*Two categories of tools are especially relevant for our purpose: the construction of the formulations (Variations) and the metalinguistic activities (Metacomments).

The data can be analyzed according to the questions of research chosen (including native or non-native writers).In a developmental perspective,for instance, interactions between children, of different ages, or between adults, novice or expert, have been studied in a comparative way (for instance, Dolz, Pasquier & Bronckart, 1993; Dolz & Schneuwly, 1996; Garcia-Debanc, 1996), in order to discover how the capacities are progressively constructed. It can also be very useful for observing the effects of a pedagogical sequence on the writing procedure (Camps, 1995).The cooperation between participants,in an ethnomethodological perspective, has been studied through collaborative writing, with interesting results concerning the different means of solving problems which arise: asking for help, using the partner as a resource of knowledge, and so on (see for instance, Dausendschon-Gay, Gülich & Kraft, 1991; de Gaulmyn, 1992).

In the field of argumentation, the methodology has also given some promising results, concerning the influence of the text genre on the processes. Schneuwly (1992),for instance,showed that children are more concerned with choosing the right words,and modalizing their text adequately,when writing an argumentative letter, than when writing an instructive text -where the preoccupation for the addressee is more visible.It confirmed that the nature and the order of the procedures vary according to the type of text concerned. Giroud (1997),following this idea,tries to observe the traces of modalizing operations,instrumental in processing an argumentative text,in adults' collaborative writing. In an intercultural perspective, Giroud (1995) analyses the influence, on the processing, of the argumentative models of different cultures, and shows how inadequate representations of argumentative prototypes provoke 'pragmatical errors'.

When studying argumentative text production in terms of processing activities, there are many advantages in using this methodology: putting into perspective the two kinds of data (produced texts and dialogues) allows us: (a) to look for traces of the underlying operations; (b) through those traces, to make hypothesis about the processing of those operations, their quantitative importance, and their temporal distribution, their eventual combination (Bouchard, 1992, 1994; Schneuwly, 1996); (c) to study how the writing process is affected by different kinds of factors; (d) to work on and with the dynamic of the production.

In concrete terms, by using this methodology, one is able to observe what writers effectively do, even if the verbalizations only partially translate the activated processes. We have been studying adult learners of French as a Foreign Language (advanced level), engaged in a collaborative task of writing an argumentative text in the target language. In order to give the reader a concrete example of the results that can be obtained with this method, we are going to present some research about an important question for argumentative texts, namely the question of the 'polyphonic aspects' (the presence of several voices in the text). This deals with how writers create a 'network of voices' in the text, processing enunciative operations, which seems to be a particularly relevant question in setting the argumentation. From a pedagogical perspective, it might help us gaining a better understanding of how learners deal with this difficulty.

2   ARGUMENTATIVE DISCOURSE AND POLYPHONY

All authors working on argumentative discourse agree to consider the critical importance of managing the different voices for the setting of argumentation. It is well known that in any writing act, the writer has to establish a 'voice setting'. He must assign responsibility of what is being said, choosing, for instance, between 'I think this practice is unacceptable', 'A lot of people think this practice is unacceptable', 'The moralists claim that this practice is unacceptable', and thus establishing a varying distance with the content. He must also choose the kind of relationship with the intended audience, from all the existing possibilities (for instance, 'You must vote for prohibition', 'We must vote for prohibition', or 'Can you accept this terrible idea?', *etc.*)

Such enunciative procedures are part of the 'communicative structuration' (see the Geneva Psychological Model of Discourse Production, Bronckart, Bain, Schneuwly, Davaud & Pasquier, 1985; Schneuwly, 1988; Bronckart, 1996). The management of the different voices constitutes language operations, which depend on the parameters of the production context, especially the communicative purpose. Concerning the production of argumentative texts, the 'voices' strategy is essential for the discursive (rhetorical) strategy.[2] It is about convincing the audience, and activating arguments and counterarguments that must be assigned to enunciators. Therefore, the writer must elaborate enunciative strategies: choosing different plans in order to achieve his specific goal.

The decision making about the voices is critical; it is the base of the argumentative strategy, according to two perspectives: the lesser or greater distance of the writer with the utterances of his text, and the setting of other voices. Consequently, the polyphonic aspects in argumentative texts cannot be ignored: as there is always, at the origin of argumentative discourse, a controversial question on which the author takes a position, there are always (although sometimes only implicitly) two theses involved, and therefore, at least two voices.

Discussing a bioethical, social subject, the texts integrate many arguments supported by various voices (the voices of social groups or individuals). In the produced texts of the data collected, several features signal the presence of the 'Voices of the Others'[3] (lexical, graphical, syntactical marks, *etc.*), and several procedures, relevant to polyphony, are used (concession, negation, irony, *etc.*). We will come back to those manifestations which are traces of the operations of setting the enunciative strategy.

3   QUESTIONS OF RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

For learners, language operations present many difficulties. The question of how to signal distance and how to integrate the Voices of the Others, generates delicate technical problems: choosing the introducing verb, choosing the lexicon for the characterization of the Enunciators, adjusting the distance by procedures of modalizations, choosing the personal pronouns, and so on. Thus, the questions which arise concern mainly those difficulties: how do the learners cope with such operations? What kind of linguistic means have they at their disposal to spread the polyphony in their texts? What problems arise and how are the solutions found? How do learners react when faced with having to make decisions? What criteria are used to make those choices? How do they take into account the

various constraints (contextual, communicative, linguistic, or textual)? Our present study aims to explore these questions.

We set up an experiment using a collaborative writing task. We recorded the dialogues and collected the texts of twenty pairs of learners. They were students of French as a Foreign Language at a University, who wrote, with a partner, a 'Letter to The Editor' (for a French-speaking newspaper), about a controversial debate of bioethics: 'Should in vitro fecundation be forbidden to women who have passed natural child-bearing age?' (within the dyads, partners had the same opinion on the subject). Then we put into perspective our two kinds of data, texts-produced and texts-processed.

From the enunciative configurations (*e.g.* the 'network of voices') of the final products, it is possible to characterize the enunciative strategies. Then, from the dialogues generated during the production, we can try to find the traces of the processing of those strategies. We are studying the Variations and Metacomments about the enunciative choices, such as adjusting the distance between the author and the utterance, or assigning arguments to the Voices of the others. This leads us to the possibility of forming hypotheses about the ways in which writers cope with those problems. With that purpose, observing the conflicts linked to this problematical aspect of the production seems useful.

We use the theoretical tools of Ducrot (1984), which allow us to describe how the utterances point out the existence of different voices. Ducrot (1984: 204) has conceptualized diverse enunciative levels of the text. First, he makes a distinction between the 'Speaking Subject' which is the empiric producer (the human being producing the utterance), and the different enunciative levels (which remain theoretical beings): the 'Speaker' and the 'Enunciators'. The Speaker is responsible for the enunciation (*cf.*, grammatical first person marks, such as 'I'), the Enunciators design the different sources (the voices spread all over the text) that can be marked out in the utterances.

Observing the imprint of the process of enunciation in the utterance, may provide us with clues about the enunciative operations. Such descriptors seem adequate to argumentative text analysis: the enunciative strategies can be described in terms of making decisions about the voices carrying the arguments, the choices many times verbalized by the partners (Which mark of the locutor is to be used? Are they supposed to say 'I'? Can they introduce the voice of the doctors, the brother...? *etc.*)

4 THE MANAGEMENT OF THE VOICES IN LEARNERS' ARGUMENTATIVE TEXT PRODUCTION[4]

By observing the procedures, we find interaction between different levels of operations: the voices' decision making occurs frequently, most often being determined by the choices of the argumentative/rhetorical strategies – even if sometimes we found that the voices' choice was governing the argumentative construction. The overlapping of high and low level processes is obvious. Coping with the voices is necessary at all levels of the argumentative text production processes; in 'generating content' (arguments and counterarguments); in 'planning'; in 'anchoring'[5] the text by choosing the communicative structure (selecting the discursive mode, managing the voices); and in 'textualization' (assigning contents to specific voices, lexical choices, *etc.*).

We also found, surprisingly, that a majority of the learners-writers seem to be fairly conscious of the enunciative stakes: for instance, sixteen dialogues out of twenty present a conscious and verbalized choice of the Speaker's mark. This activity sometimes generates conflicts, which reflects a high conceptualization of the enunciative management.

We will give some examples of the implementation of the processes involved in the argumentative text production by L2 learners. We limite ourselves to three aspects: at the level of generating the content, exemplifying how the activity of looking for arguments and counter-arguments, right from the beginning, has a polyphonic orientation; at the level of 'anchoring' operations, showing how the choices are linked to the argumentative strategies; at the level of the assignment of voices to arguments and counter-arguments, describing the difficulties and the way they are dealt with.

4.1 Content elaboration

The research for arguments and counter-arguments involves a polyphonic preoccupation. This implies the necessity to refer to the 'intertext' (circulating texts in the world of the learner: a press article used previously as a base of discussion, a collective debate on the subject that led to the working out of a list of arguments for and against[6], a dictionary, *etc.*) In many dialogues, generating the contents leads to a verbalization of the argumentative strategy imagined by the writers.

I shall provide an example, which illustrate how the argumentative strategy is associated with the enunciative strategy. In D1[7], two learners are looking for arguments to support their position (against the interdiction). They find A7, then A4, and then one of the partners suggests taking into account the opposite arguments:

Ex. 1:
59.F   maybe it will also be necessary to see the arguments in the article, or the arguments of those who are for prohibition, to tell them that eh... for instance, I think they said that for the child, it's not good because the mother will be eh... they don't really have a mother but a grand mother, and then we could say against that, that the mother will love the child, maybe even more than a woman who is young and has not wanted a child so much[8].

So, the learner finds a counterargument in the discourse of the opponent (*I think they said that for the child it's not good*), then she justifies her suggestion introducing the concept of point of view:

Ex. 2:
61.F   because here, we've got the point of view of the woman, and those who are for prohibition very often have the point of view of the child, and maybe we...

She is referring thus to her enunciative strategy, which consists of opposing points of views.

In D17, the partners verbalize a similar argumentative strategy (opposing the two points of view by presenting opposing arguments), but their comments suggest a hesitation about whether this is appropriate. They verbalize their doubts in terms of polyphonic concerns: should another point of view be introduced? Is it the appropriate argumentative strategy? We reproduce the whole discussion about this argumentative strategy, which integrates formal (E140; U153) and strategic comments (E140; E146; U155; E156), and references to the audience (E148; E150; E152).

Ex. 3:

140.E eh wait...if we begin the second paragraph with that, if we begin by admitting, of course there are some risks, but... can we begin the second paragraph with that? with of course?

141.U no

142.E no?

143.U because it is not

144.E because in fact like that

145.U logical

146.E we don't say that there are other arguments, we can just... I don't know whether we have to defend ourselves, because in fact, if we introduce the other arguments, if we say the other arguments

147.U I think we

148.E it will put in the reader's mind

149.U yes

150.E more other arguments like that

151.U yes

152.E they think of both sides, but if we just say that's how it is

153.U I think that for the purpose eh... we've only got one page and... we can't discuss everything

154.E yes we can write

155.U yes... I think it's better if we discuss only the arguments against prohibition

156.E you think we have to defend that? (...)

The suggestion of formulation of E140 is to use a concession form (*of course*) in order to present a counter-argument in an implicit way: the concession mark indicates the Speaker's attitude toward his discourse. It signals that the utterance (*of course there are some risks but*) is not assumed/supported by the authors. The proposal of introducing other points of view supported by other voices, is considered at different levels of objection. There is a formal planning consideration (E140: *can we begin the 2ⁿᵈ paragraph with that?*). But there are also strategic considerations about the danger of introducing opposing arguments. These refer to the predictable effect on the reader (E146: *I don't know whether we have to defend ourselves, because in fact if we introduce the other arguments, it will put in the readers' mind other arguments like that*).

The representations emerging from these comments may be regarded as quite inadequate: as if the use of counter-arguments were logically going against the current communicative purpose (to convince the audience to adopt the writer's position). The theory of argumentation suggests that it is necessary to leave a space for the opposite point of view, a space for negotiation, which will possibly

lead to a movement (a change of position) of the audience. But our writers fear introducing other points of view, which have to be reported with the appropriate polyphonic means of the target language, in order to serve the author's cause.

Thus we can observe how a polyphonic choice is processed, generating a formulation which is then evaluated. This evaluation activates other levels of operations: the writers have to integrate different constraints – in that case, formal and rhetorical constraints – and calling for different kinds of representations. By studying the content elaboration, we can confirm that the argumentative processing and the polyphonic processing are almost always integrated into a generating activity. In many examples, we observed that while looking for content, the partners were simultaneously generating an argument and its opposite (correspondent counter-argument). The activity of looking for opposite pairs was helping them in their search for content.

4.2 Anchoring

We will limit ourselves to a single aspect of 'anchoring', which is a crucial one: it concerns the alternative to the Speaker's mark; writers may decide to use an explicit mark of the Speaker, or may decide to avoid any of those marks. Two kinds of negotiation are generated: discussing the option of leaving the Speaker implicit, as opposed to the option of making it explicit; or discussing the selection of a specific Speaker's mark (*e.g.*, '*I*' or '*We*').

A strategic option: what about 'taking the responsibility' for the utterance /text?
In D2, we can observe a recurring conflict about taking responsibility for the text: recurring Variations and Metacomments, and hesitations on the enunciative strategy to be used. The final text eventually presents an explicit Speaker.

The writing of the first three sentences provokes the same type of Variations: utterances supported by a neutral ('empty') enunciation (no Speaker), and utterances explicitly supported by marks of a First Speaker. The conflict remains for a long time – throughout the Variations of formulations to be written – between J, who systematically introduces the mark [nous] (*we, the authors*), and R who systematically refuses or avoids this marking out, choosing to neutralize the enunciation. This strong conflict, materialized by the collaborative nature of the activity, is to continue through numerous negotiations: from J36, the beginning of the redaction of sentence 1, to R423, thus 400 turn takings. We will now provide more details about analyzing the different sequences where enunciative strategies are verbalized.

Let us consider the conflicts opposing the enunciative options.

Sentence 1
In the first part of the sentence, we find the opposition: J36/R37: *we refer / in reference to the article* R45/47 is rejecting the marked utterance invoking stylistic reasons. J finally agrees (with no comment) writing down the unmarked formulation. For the second part of the sentence, J69 makes the same enunciative proposal: *we want to express our.* R74 finally agrees again, opting for the same mark: *we had.*

Sentence 2

The same opposition arises several times:

A/ First attempt: R100: *it is true that it's an act against nature*; J101: *we want to give.* The J101's proposition generates a first negotiation (Metacomment):

> Ex. 4:
> 103.J do we want to say we?
> 104.R no

B/ Second attempt: J105: *we do know that it is a very ambiguous subject*; R108: *indeed, this is a subject.* J 109 again initiates a Metacomment in order to make the conflict explicit:

> Ex. 5:
> 109.J but do you want to remain neutral or do you want...
> 110.R no no
> 111.J do you want to take... because it's necessary to... eh...

Thus she is verbalizing the alternative of their enunciative strategy, staying neutral (avoiding marks of the Speaker) or taking position (by introducing those marks). Once again, she is taking the initiative of the negotiation, but R remains unconvinced.

C/ Third attempt: in front of R's mutism, J113 reiterates a marked proposition, *we, we would like*, trying to justify it (because you always want to give your opinion):

> Ex. 6:
> 113.J we us, we would like... because you always want to give your advice
> 114.R yes absolutely
> 115.J as we, we are giving... because
> 116.R but we are going to make a little introduction, saying that it is true that... eh... people eh...
> 117.J indeed
> 118.R it is true that... indeed... indeed
> 119.J the the...
> 120.R this subject... creates much controversy, many controversial opinions, no? is it possible to say that in French?
> 121.J eh... no, indeed...
> 122.R this subject eh... creates... some critics... creates
> 123.J creates <writing> many (...)

R118 marks her opposition to this new attempt, by proposing the formulation *it is true that*, associated with a timid justification (*we are going to make a little introduction*), which seems to convince J to renounce once again to the marked option.

Sentence 3

A/ The same conflict reappears, at the beginning of writing the third sentence. Considering the Variations:

J145: after a long reflection, we / after a lot of reflection on that
R148: it is true that / it is true that an old woman who is not anymore able to
give birth
J149: it is true that the power of nature
R150: it is true that an old woman can't give birth to a child in a natural way.

The J145 proposition is rejected by R148 counter-proposition, generating Variations that do not affect the enunciative configuration. R is in a strong position here, she doesn't feel the need to justify herself: R146, as a reply to the marked proposition of J145, asks her partner to read again the text already written. When the reading is finished, she imposes a new formulation, suppressing again the explicit mark of the Speaker we, replaced by a modalizing marker (epistemic mode: *it is true that*).

Ex. 7:
145.J   <writing> mh... ok>... we would like to give our opinion on the subject
of in vitro fecundation... indeed, this subject creates a lot of criticism for
the prohibition... and against...after thinking a lot, we... ok it gives an
introduction eh... after thinking a lot about that, we...
146.R   eh read me the text... referring
147.J   wait... <reading> referring to your eh... no... referring to the article
printed in the paper Liberation on twenty eighth of December ninety
three, we would like to give our opinion on the subject of in vitro fe-
cundation... indeed this subject creates many criticism for the prohibi-
tion and against>
148.R   and against... full stop... eh... then next line, we write it is true that...
eh... it is true that... an old woman who is not anymore able to give birth
149.J   it is true that the nature power (...)

Once again, J149 is giving up. However, those proposed utterances have not yet been written down. The two partners keep digressing from the writing to the referent. Then, they change their organization and decide to write a draft, take notes, digressing again for a long time.

B/ When they finally come back to finish the writing of the third sentence, J404 makes a new proposition. The Variation integrates a mark of the Speaker (*we realize that it is clearly against nature*), that now supports the whole R100 proposition concerning CA5, as they were writing the second sentence (*it is true that it is an act that goes against nature*): using R's proposal with only a modification of the enunciative configuration in order to explicit the involvement of the Speaker explicit. R does not reject clearly this proposition, but initiates a new digression, which again delays the writing.

The recurrence of the conflict throughout the interaction is quite spectacular: both strategies (involve the Speaker/erase the Speaker) are in conflict throughout the dialogue. It causes the writers to verbalize references to enunciative strategies (*staying neutral* or *taking position*, introducing enunciative marks of the Speaker, *telling their opinions, etc.*), references which would probably have remained implicit (unconscious?) without the necessity of justifying the proposed formulations. Thus the partners prove their capacity to conceptualize (in order to justify), afterwards, the operations processed.

A strategic choice:What mark must be chosen?
Choosing the appropriate mark is often verbalized, in various ways, within a brief comment or a long discussion. When justifying their propositions, a majority of the writers refer to:

1.The text genre concerned, as in D15:

> Ex. 8:
> 12.T how do we want to begin? because we are both of us eh... we are going to use feminine first person
> 13.I yes
> 14.T I am
> 15.I yes, like that, like a letter
> 16.T yes, ok, so (...)

2.The argumentative strategy to be adopted, as in D20:
Initiating the redaction of the first sentence, G43 verbalizes the option of taking a specific point of view.The partners have already been through a phase of elaborating the arguments, where the construction of a specific, common representation of a character emerged: the aged woman concerned by this IVF problem. G41 begins by proposing an interrogative modality:

> Ex. 9:
> 40.E how do we begin?
> 41.G maybe with a question
> 42.E which one?
> 43.G eh... are the women eh... maybe let's put ourselves in the women's position... of that age...don't we, we women more than fifty, have the right to eh... to want to be mother or to want to have a child?
> 44.E can we begin like that? don't we...

The first Variation (*are the women / don't we, women*) presents an important enunciative modification, with the addition of a first person mark, explicitly involving the Speaker.What is more, the redundancy *we* and *women more than fifty* enhances the movement, and gives more specific information about the 'profile' of the Speaker. G43's Metacomment (making the enunciative strategy explicit) appears right on the boundary of the two Variations: it describes the enunciative change: *let's put ourselves in women's position*; there is a choice of positioning, of anchoring, to be made, and this choice is highly conscious. In fact, the whole formulation proposed is filled with marks of the Speaker's involvement: *e.g.*, interronegative modality (highly rhetorical), deontic modality (*we don't have the right*). This enunciative configuration results in calling out to the audience, and denying the opposite thesis.The following Meta-comments confirm the level of the activity.We are in an 'anchoring' problematic and the partners are referring to the question of the addressee (the audience of the text), linked to the question of the official Speaker (the signature):

> Ex. 10:
> 45.G mh... but who are we addressing? the population? or the politicians? or...

46.E the public opinion
47.G yes, yes
48.E we can first write the letter, then put
49.G wait... eh two signatures... we could put eh... we are two fifty three and
      fifty four year old women... and we want to ask the public opinion haven't
      we got the right to be mother?

In order to evaluate her own proposition, G45 (*but who are we addressing?*)
calls for their representation of the situational context, by questioning the ad-
dressee's status. After E48's answer, defining the addressee as *public opinion*, the
partners will keep on proposing Variations, which reinforce the degree of involve-
ment of the Speaker:

G53: we are two fifty three and fifty four year old women and we want to ask
       the public don't we have the right to be mothers
E54: we / we women of / sixty year old
E56: we / we confirm / that it is possible to bring up a child
G57: that it is
E61: who can stop me / who can
G62: who can say
E63: forbid me
E65: who is going to decide
G66: who can
E67: if I / if I able or unable to grown the child
G68: who can decide on my freedom
E69: who can decide on my destiny and my children's destiny

The change from the plural mark (*we*) to the singular mark (*I*) is very clear in E61
and it will not be modified afterwards. E54/56 rejects the interro-negative propo-
sition suggesting a new Variation (whose Speaker's marks still remain strong). E58
justifies her opposition by a Metacomment:

Ex. 11:
58.E because it's a bit ridiculous, isn't it? haven't we got the right to be?
59.G yes, because those are completely different questions... how did you
      say?
60.E maybe we can write who can... who can
61.G who can tell
62.E forbid me
63.G yes, that will be good... that would be good as...
64.E who who is going who is going to decide (...)

The transformation from *we* to *I* corresponds to a metalinguistic pause in the
following Variations: as if the partners were taking a distance from the activity at
this point of the construction. Many metaelements are clear (*e.g.*, G59: *those are
completely different questions /how did you say?*; E60: *maybe we can write*, and
even G63, commenting afterwards: *yes it will be good / it would be good*, evaluat-
ing the formulations).

The interrogative modality (explicitly suggested by G41) is conserved, associ-
ated with a first person singular. Consequntly, the first enunciative option chosen

by the writers, which was the use of a 'enunciation modality'[9], seems independent from the utterance content; the interrogative form remains a permanent frame for the writing (the textualization). Within this frame, they create Variations about marking the Enunciator, and choosing a voice for the utterance. A second level of enunciative 'problem solving' appears.

However, the strategic choice of the mark *I* has not yet been justified. The explanation comes *a posteriori*, through a verbalization of the argumentative strategy. G74 initiates a metasequence about choosing a point of view, which leads her to make her argumentative strategy explicit, previously mentioned in G43 (*maybe let's put us in the women position*), by means of the following Metacomments[10]:

Ex. 12:

74.G (...) so... maybe we could eh... tell about as if she had a similar experience (...) and so for instance tell that this woman... this woman had she has lived a similar situation... she had a child or she made an in vitro insemination and then she had a child she could well bring up her child, and then... she she has a normal life with her family and her child and all that... and so, like that, this woman is trying to convince the other women or those who are against, that they can have a normal life

75.E yes but I don't think it's good to do that to convince the other women to do the same

76.G yes but we're not going to do it... it's not convincing the others but saying that it's not fair to forbid... something that was a good thing for her... that maybe it gave her a lot of satisfaction, that she is happy because of that, that she lived a normal life like all the other women, that her family is a normal family like all the other families and that her son or daughter eh... are like all the other kids... (...) or maybe... that this woman is a woman who wants to do it, and so she tries to convince.

The strategy consists in introducing a narrative sequence, where the Speaker (*this woman*) tells her experience. Concerning the referential content of the narration, two options are generated: the woman has experienced IVF already, or she wants to. By telling her story, *she is trying to convince*. The narrative tool is therefore considered as an appropriate means for argumentative efficiency, since they agree on it. After this long verbalization about the argumentative strategy, the actual writing can begin again.

To sum up: first, within a single intervention (G43), we went from a neutral enunciation (*are the women*) to a marked enunciation (*are we, women*), through an anticipated Metacomment on the enunciative strategy being developed (changing of point of view/Speaker's voice). In this case, the conceptualization of the enunciative change occurred before the formulation of this change.

Secondly, we went from the mark *we* to the mark *I*, with no direct justification. The change occurs in E61 and remains stable. Subsequently, G74, when initiating the generating of the second sentence, will be based on that enunciative option, already used in the first sentence (*who can decide about my freedom of choosing my destiny?*) to verbalize her argumentative strategy. In that case, it seems that the conceptualization of the change occurs *a posteriori*. Disclosing her strategy, suggesting the narrative content, G refers to *this woman, she*, and not any more to *the two women* mentioned at the beginning. It is as if the enunciative choice (*I*) had generated the argumentative strategy, not the other way round.

This is a good example of the inextricability of the operations processed during the text production. Once again, it appears to be difficult to separate the levels of the operations and their relationships.

Finally, what have we learnt from studying verbalizations of the choice of the Speaker's mark? Processing this operation, the partners are calling for three types of representations: they are using references to the text genre concerned and its conventions; they are verbalizing enunciative strategies which seem to them to correspond to the proposed formulations; and they are verbalizing their argumentative strategies. Several times we were surprised, when studying the Metacomments, by the high level of conceptualization of the activity. The necessity to explain and justify, during the conflicts, implies an effort to make the operations conscious: de facto, the Comments themselves seem to play an important role in constructing the writing.

In addition, we noticed once more the interaction between the operations: the 'anchoring' choice is a complex global processing whose functioning is hard to describe. The Speaker's mark choice is also strongly linked with the choice of mentioning or not the addressee, with the problem of referring more, or less to the situational context (all operations being part of the anchoring process). So aspects other than those presented here should be integrated in the discussion.

However, our partial study of the anchoring processing leads us to some reflections. First of all, let us keep in mind that anchoring operations are very often verbalized: either in choosing the enunciative modality (a Speaker?), an allocutary mark (a reference to the addressee?), or when presenting more, or less explicitly the referent (the level of implicit content?). The problems are very often discussed in two ways: a conflicting way (two conflicting propositions are in competition), and a collaborative way (adjusting the representations linked to the parameters of the situation, in order to agree about a common image of the addressee, the social context, the communicative purpose).

In fact, only three or four dialogues do not present any verbalizations of anchoring choices. The partners, in these cases, begin the writing without wondering about the subject: the proposed formulations are not questioned on the enunciative level, as if it were obvious. T18, for instance, is surprising: we were expecting that the choice of a very specific enunciative option (a direct call for the reader, by using recurring injunctive modalities) would result from a negotiation. The absence of any Metacomment on the subject suggests the hypothesis that the enunciative configuration used was so obvious to the partners that it did not need to be discussed.

Secondly, we want to keep in mind that the choices, as we can observe them in studying the verbalizations, are more often achieved by agreeing on common features of the parameters of the situation: the Metacomments help partners to precise and adjust representations which are to determine choices. In addition to this problem of agreeing on appropriate representations, the problem of agreeing on appropriate tools (enunciation tools) has to be solved.

So it seems that in dealing with argumentation, the learners are regularly faced with anchoring choices.

4.3 Managing the 'Voices of the Others'

Another aspect of the enunciative operations is keeping the writers busy: they are faced (in an argumentative text more than in others) with the problem of assigning specific voices to arguments or counterarguments. They can choose between

two general options: introducing the 'doxa' voice (the common opinions of society, *people*, *we*, designating nobody in particular), or a specific Secondary Enunciator (a specific social group: the doctors, the woman, the opponents, the media, or an individual character).

Let us point out first that this type of operation is more often visible through the Variations than through the Metacomments. This is understandable, perhaps, considering the more 'technical' nature of the difficulties to work out: *e.g.*, name the Enunciator 2, find the adequate verb for introducing the reported discourse,[11] choose the appropriate modality, *etc*. The partners approach the problem by testing with the Variations the (limited) possibilities of supporting arguments. The extent and the frequency of the lists of Variations give us indications of the degrees of difficulty experienced by the writers.

A longitudinal study of some dialogues provides interesting results. We found comments confirming that the assignment of utterances to Secondary Enunciators is not a random activity; on the contrary, it is an activity controlled by the argumentative strategy. We will go through two eventualities: the assignment of an argument (in favor of the writer's thesis) and of a counterargu-ment (against the writer's thesis).

The polyphonic management of the arguments
In D14, the will to use the doctor's voice is verbalized right from the beginning of the content elaboration (E51: *we must also listen to the doctor's advice*). This comment concerns both the writers (for the research of arguments) and the readers (who will listen/be informed of the opinions of the doctors). This voice, then, will be reported in the text,[12] functioning as an authority argument: Sentences 11 and 12 result from this choice.

The study of the writing of these two sentences informs us about the chronological aspect of the operations. Designating the Enunciator (the voice of the doctors) is the first choice, next is the choice of the Introducing Verb, then the choice for the content of the argument supported (thus matching the syntax order).

In Sentence 11, the polyphonic implementation does not seem to generate major problems, other than the negation of the verb.

Ex. 13:
295.E eh... from the medical point of view, we can see
296.D yes now I go already to second...
297.E yes <writing> medical>
298.D the doctors
299.E it is not
300.D we can already put the doctors the doctors
301.E is it not sure?
302.D yes... the doctors advise advise... advise?
303.E mhmh... don't advise, rather
304.D yes don't advise...
305.E <writing>... have... children...
306.D a pregnancy or have children
307.E mhmh... at this age...>
308.D for the dangers they pose for the mother as much as for the mother as for the child...
309.E <writing>... mhmh... the mother... as for the child...>

This passage illustrates the beginning of the writing of Sentence 11. The comments of the partners performing this activity proviede us with interesting clues about the way the language operations are processed. For instance, we can observe that the Enunciator is proposed in a previous formulation, when the writers do not yet know what is going to be enunciated: (D298/D300: *the doctors / we can already put the doctors*).

It is also worth noting that the option chosen concerning this enunciative modality is not questioned afterwards. The Introducing Verb proposed determines the choice of Related Reported Discourse. The Variations produced here concern only the assertive/negative modality (D302: *advise* / E303: *don't advise*). The process of writing appears as a meticulous construction with visible chronology: choosing the Enunciator, then choosing the kind of reported discourse, after which begins the textualization of the argument itself. The choice of the Enunciator results in a strategic decision, which is higher in the hierarchy of operations.

The same movement is visible in Sentence 12, although in that case, the writing generates more difficulties, resulting in many lexical Variations of the Enunciator and the Introducing Verb. It begins with a proposition of E309, whose Metacomment seems to confirm what has just been said: *and also we can take as an argument the fact that the other doctors refused*. This comment looks very explicit: it is verbalizing a strategy, which consists in introducing a Voice of the Others. The specific (and difficult, for learners) processing of this operation creates numerous lexical Variations concerning the Enunciator:

> D310: one has testified / there has been a testimony
> E311: there is in England / the English doctors
> D312: Professor Craft, an eminent expert at London Fertility
> D314: the professor's staff
> E315: the whole staff
> D316: the doctor / the first / the English doctor that she
> D318: he
> D320: the first doctor who saw her
> D324: the doctors who had
> E325: the English doctor
> D326: who had seen her before

This long list is proof of the difficulty writers meet in trying to establish the right voice. We are interpreting the first three Variations as metalinguistic marks of the argumentative strategy: the aim is to make an authority voice speak with a strong social image, whose opinions have to be trusted. The plan is to present a testimony whose content is less important than the fact that there is a testimony. Through these Variations, the partners try to individualize the Enunciator, specifying more and more: from a defined group (E311: profession and nationality) to an individual subject (D312 gives his name, his title, adding an esteemed socio-professional qualification which enhances the efficiency of the authority argument: *an eminent expert*). D314 then comes back to a collective determination (*the professor's staff*). It seems that the partners are testing the effect of the different options on each other. The writing is going on through the negotiation.

A second type of Variation emerge, which concerns the choice of the Introducing Verb: *testify/forbid/refuse* are both metalinguistic verbs, both potentially performative, both indicators for the Related Reported Discourse. Therefore, the

Variation does not concern the kind of Reported Discourse to be used, which was decided long before (in E51) with regard to the argumentative strategy: using an authority argument. The partners did not suggest neutral verbs –such as 'to explain', for instance – which would have focused on the content of the Reported Discourse. They are only concerned with the 'Saying' [Le Dire], the act of enunciating produced by prestigious characters.

Example D14 illustrates a kind of mechanism which is originated by the choice of a strategy that we can try to reformulate: we will resort to an authority argument, we will call on the doctor's help. From this choice, a whole series of operations are intitiated where new choices are necessary (determining the Enunciator, selecting the Introducing Verbs, choosing the verb modality (negation/assertion/interrogation), choosing the temporal mode, *etc.*). The negotiations generated by the activity give us partial access to the functioning of this mechanism: we note that all of the decisions to be made at the level of the textualization are determined by the underlying choice of the strategy (argumentative *and* polyphonic).

The polyphonic management of the counterarguments
Studying the introduction of counterarguments in the texts leads to the same reflections. In different dialogues, we found the traces, upstream, of making decisions about an argumentative strategy. Take for instance D11: *introduce an argument from those who are in favor of IVF*, which indeed implies a polyphonic enunciative strategy, being formulated in such a way. The partners are faced with the problem of how to do, to which they react by suggesting enunciative solutions: begin with a question / quote a sentence / mention the addressee you are opposing. Nevertheless, the polyphonic option has been decided already.

This leads us to an important aspect of the dynamic of the processing: high level strategic choices create new constraints for writers, at each level of the operations (content elaboration, planning, communicative structuration, textualization, and revision).

We will develop a single example of the enunciative managing of counterarguments, with D1, where the operation is causing many difficulties. As in many other dialogues, the partners for T1 have stated in the content elaboration phase their wish to introduce counter-arguments (F59). The idea is recalled in initiating the writing of Sentence 3, by C387's proposition: *everybody speaks about the child <long pause> but isn't it probable that such a woman loves....*This formulation will function as a frame, an argumentative and enunciative frame, for the writing of Sentences 3 and 4 (Sentence 3 presenting the counter-argument, Sentence 4 refuting it).

In Sentence 3, the problem becomes how to assign a voice to the counterargument (CA2). A long list of Variations show that the two partners have great difficulty in making the choices. In order to pass from *everybody speaks about the child*, the first formulation proposed, to *those who claim for the prohibition are worrying about the fact the children might suffer from a mother who is too old*, the last formulation written, the authors must process a series of operations that illustrate very well what textualization is. The primitive utterance *everybody speaks about the child* contains the three areas of difficulty the writers have to face, materialized by four lots of Variations:
1. To formulate the Enunciator 2: *everybody / those who are for the prohibition / those who represent this interdiction / those who claim for this interdic-*

tion / those who claim for the interdiction / those who speak / those who plan.

2. To formulate the verb for introducing reported discourse: they temporarily keep the verb *to speak*, then they add a second verb, *to worry*, ending with the suppression of the first one.

3. To formulate the reported content: (1) with the verb *to speak: about the child / always about the child who will be disadvantaged with a mother who is too old / about children disadvantaged by / about children suffering from a life with a mother who is too old / only about children*; (2) with the verb *to worry: that their children / her child / of their children / only of their children / that their children suffer from a mother who is too old / only / on / to / to their children / that the children suffer from a mother who is too old / to the children and their happiness / that the little kids.*

4. To adopt the adequate syntax, according to the different considered formulations. On one hand, the construction of the verb *to worry* generates some hesitations about the appropriate syntactical connection (*worry about / to / of / on / towards*). On the other hand, the two verbs in French (for Introducing Reported Discourse: *to speak* and *to worry*) are competitive: they generate repetitions of the word children.

We will not go further on in the description, which implies more details based on the French language. We simple want to stress that the attempt for textualizing the sentence can be considered to have failed: the last formulation, syntactically inappropriate, does not satisfy the writers, who seem aware of not having been successful in solving the problem:

Ex. 14:

440.F a bit cold... that the children suffer from a woman who is too old... maybe it is... find another word

441.C well we can eh maybe we can go on and look for it, the exact structures, afterwards

The C441 comment (*look for the exact structures afterwards*) is a way of getting out of the dead end. In fact, no more allusion will be made in the dialogue to modify the writing of Sentence 3. But in the produced text, the Variation *only speak about the children* has been crossed out. These different movements clearly reveal a number of difficulties the writers have to face: they have to pay attention to all kinds of constraints (syntactical, textual, pragmatical, enunciative) and they cannot do it simultaneously. That is why the construction of a sentence may take a long time, untill the revision phase.

In the end, we realize that, in order to go from *everybody speak about the children* to the utterance finally written, the two partners processed multiple operations of textualization, more, or less interdependent from each other. We observe a big difference in expressing subjectivity between the two ends of the chain: in the final sentence, the characterization of Enunciator 2 is more specific, and it presupposes the existence of the opposite camp. The voice of 'doxa': *everybody*, previously selected, is transformed into the voice of a limited group, *those who claim for the interdiction*. By restricting and weakening the Enunciator, the writers make it clearer that the Speaker is not supporting the counterargument.

The same movement (increasing subjectivity) is clear for the Introducing Verb: from the most neutral verb (*to speak*) to a verb expressing feelings (*to worry*).

This latter verb, being used as an Introducing Verb, causes problems of syntactical construction, even for native writers. Finally, the modification realized on the formulation of the counterargument seems to be linked to the writers' worry of being more specific (verbalized by F436: *because like that, (...) it is clear why they are suffering*). They can refute CA2 with A2 only if they stress it.

As in the previous examples, the argumentative and enunciative structure is set upstream (*everybody speaks about the children; but isn't it probable that...?*) and determines the other operations. It is a polyphonic strategy: the counter-argument is to be supported by a 'Voice of the Others', in order to be refuted by the voice (highly modalized) of the Enunciator 1 (*e.g.*, the Speaker) and it was already present in F59.

We could go on mentioning examples illustrating the processing of assigning voices to the utterances. They are numerous and more often than not show the choices processed under the control of an argumentative strategy, sometimes verbalized during the task, which is determined by the representations of the writers. We saw how these representations first concerned some parameters of the situation of production (references to the addressee, to the newspaper, and to the text genre and its conventions, are verbalized). Secondly, they concerned the referential content (the position of the partners, for or against, radical or moderate, consensual or divergent, the degree of personal implication, being more or less concerned by the question of IVF, the knowledge of the writer, and so on).

5   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we think that this study increases our knowledge about the processing of argumentative texts by learners. Collaborative writing methodology offers much information about the operations in process. However, its great interest lies in materializing the dynamic of the processing. It shows that the different levels of operations, as defined by models of production (Hayes & Flower, 1980; Bronckart *et al.*, 1985; Bronckart, 1996) remain theoretical. In fact, they often function simultaneously, and their articulation is very complex. Considering again the questions we were proposing, we are able to provide partial answers. As two partners are working out the writing task, the activity leads to two possibilities: either to conflict, or to collaborative interaction, both being observable in the dialogues.

The polyphonic work is controlled by the argumentative strategy, often verbalized previous to the writing. The problem solving can be seen as going through several steps: (a) becoming aware of the problem (conceptualizing the choices); (b) taking in account the different constraints of the production situation; (c) using criteria directly determined by their representations of the production situation; (d) mastering the polyphonic instruments, considering that the learners have a limited range of tools, hesitate, and keep on testing them in the Variations they produce.

The dynamic aspect of the data highlights an important feature of the processing. The three areas we developed (generating the content, anchoring, and assigning the voices) are fully integrated. The polyphonic work we set out to describe is made of interacting procedures at different levels, which we detailed: choosing the speaker's mark, choosing the enunciative modalities, and choosing the Voices of the Others, being narrowly linked to the textualization choices (syntax, connections, lexicalization), and the argumentative strategy choices.

We discovered specific procedures for the elaboration of the content, based either on searching for opposite pairs of arguments and counter-arguments, or on searching for counterarguments first in order to be able to refute them. During the writing, numerous enunciative choices are verbalized, evaluated, and negotiated, with the argumentative purpose in mind: it seems that, for a majority of the learners studied, the activity of argumentation is basically a polyphonic activity, whatever the culture of origin.

The advantages of collaborative writing methodology are numerous for our purpose. However, we are conscious of its limitations. We have underlined how the verbal interaction of the writers modified the dynamic of the processing, and we know that our observations depend on the verbalizations of the partners. What is verbalized is a very small part of what is going on. Nevertheless, this partial piece of information allows us gain a better understanding of the processing of the argumentative text, providing clues about how two writers cope with it. The research should be extended to more aspects of the writing procedures, from a qualitative and quantitative perspective.

ANNEX 1

Texts produced quoted in the chapter, with their approximate translation (keeping as faithfully as possible the original style, including errors).

T1

Non à l'interdiction
(1) Heureusement nous vivons dans une société où la liberté individuelle a une grande valeur. (2) Depuis des dixaines d'années les femmes ont lutté pour le droit d'avortement mais actuellement on est de nouveau en train d'augmenter les restrictions de leur liberté en interdisant la technique de fécondation in vitro pour les femmes ménopausées. (3) Ceux qui proclament cette interdiction s'inquiètent que les enfants souffrent d'une mère trop agée. (4) Mais est-ce que ce n'est pas probable qu'une femme qui prend les risques d'un accouchement à l'âge de 50 ans soit la meilleure mère par rapport aux mères qui ont leurs enfants à cause d'un 'accident'. (5) D'ailleurs nous trouvons beaucoup de petits éduqués par leur grands-parents ce qui ne choque pas les défendeurs de l'interdiction.
(6) Devrons-nous pas interdire aux hommes de devenir père à l'âge de 50 ans?

No to prohibition
Happily we live in a society where individual liberty is highly valued. For several decades, women have struggled for the right of abortion but at present we are once again in the process of increasing the restrictions of their freedom by prohibiting the technique of in vitro fecundation for menopausal women. Those who call for this prohibition are worried that the children will suffer from having a mother who is too old. But isn't it probable that a woman who takes the risk of giving birth at the age of 50 would be a better mother compared to those mothers who have their children as a result of an 'accident'. We find a lot of kids brought up by their grand parents which does not shock those in favor of prohibition. Shouldn't we prohibit men over 50 from becoming fathers?

T2

Non à l'interdiction!
(1) En référence à l'article paru dans le journal 'Libération' le 28 décembre 1993, nous aimerions donner notre avis sur le sujet de la fécondation 'in vitro'. (2) En effet, ce sujet suscite beaucoup de critiques pour l'interdiction et contre.
(3) Nous sommes de l'avis que cette découverte est très importante parce qu'elle peut permettre aux hommes et plus particulièrement aux femmes de mieux organiser leur vie. (4) Prenons une femme qui, à trente ans, n'a pas eu la chance de trouver un partenaire juste et qui se trouve dans un état où elle est presque obligée de fonder une famille et d'avoir des enfants. (5) Pourquoi est-elle obligée? (6) C'est bien la nature qui la soumet à un délai restreint pour pouvoir accoucher. (7) Alors, pourquoi devons-nous être contre la fécondation 'in vitro'? (8) Regardons les avantages que cette méthode peut nous apporter! (9) D'abord, cela donne à un couple un délai plus large pour fonder une famille. (10) Puis les deux partenaires peuvent profiter de leurs loisirs et de leur temps libre. (11) Et enfin, c'est ce qui leur permet de mieux s'engager dans leurs domaines professionnels. (12) Plus tard, cela peut aussi attribuer à une bonne éducation de l'enfant.
(13) Tout de même, il ne faut pas abuser de cette possibilité. Des lois restrictives devraient être crées.

No to prohibition!
Referring to the article which appeared in the paper 'Libération' on 28th decembre 1993, we would like to give our opinion on the subject of 'in vitro' fecundation. Indeed this subject creates a lot of criticism for the prohibition and against it.
We are of the opinion that this discovery is very important because it can allow men and more particularly women to organize their lives better. Let's take a woman who at thirty years old, did not have the good luck to find the right partner and who finds herself in a situation where she is almost obliged to start a family and have children. Why is she obliged? It really is nature which submits her to a fertility time limit. So why must we be against in vitro fecundation? Let's look at the advantages which this method can bring us! First of all, it gives a couple more time to start a family. Then both partners can profit from their leisure and their free time. And finally, it is what allows them to be more involved in their professional fields. Later, this can also attribute to a good education of the child.
All the same, one must not abuse this possibility. Restrictive laws should be created.

T14

(1) Suite à la publication dans le journal 'Libération' d'un reportage consacré au cas exeptionnel d'une femme britannique de 59 ans qui a accouché de jumeaux, l'opinion publique commence à se poser des questions.
(2) Nous personnellement, nous sommes restés choqués par ce cas. (3) Premièrement, nous n'approuvons pas l'action de la mère. (4) On a l'impression qu'elle avait voulu les enfants uniquement pour elle-même. (5) Après avoir décidé de consacrer sa vie à sa carrière, à la fin elle a compris qu'il lui manquait qchose. (6) Ces réaction égoïstes doivent être mises en cause.

(7) A quel point une femme de 60 ans, peut-elle se charger de l'enfant? (8) A-t-elle
assez d'énergie pour l'élever? (9) Par rapport à l'enfant, on ne sait pas comment il
sera vu par son entourage? (10) Ca ne va pas être facile, car il y a la différence de
l'âge très grande avec sa mère et comment supporter les réactions de ses camarades.
(11) Du point de vue médical, les médecins ne conseillent pas d'avoir les enfants
à cet âge à cause du danger que cela présente autant pour la mère que pour
l'enfants. (12) En plus, le médecin anglais qui l'avait vu avant, le lui avait refusé.
(13) Bien sûr, le cas peut être considéré comme une réussite de la médecine. (14)
Mais si on permettait ça, on devrait aussi accepter les demandes des femmes plus
âgées.
(15) Le cas cité va contre les règles morales qui font partie de nos habitudes. (16)
Il faudrait pas laisser trop aller les décisions brusques car cela pourait amener
l'anarchie.
(17) Quand on est dans la situation de choisir si on va avoir un enfant, on doit pas
prendre des décisions à la légère. (18) Il faut pas seulement prendre en compte
les satisfactions personnelles, mais penser aussi à l'avenir de l'enfant. (19) La société
devrait porter la responsabilité d'imposer les limites à ces actions.

Following the publication in the paper 'Libération' of a report about an excep-
tional case of a 59 year old british woman who gave birth to twins, public opinion
is beginning to ask questions.

We personally were shocked by this case. First of all, we don't approve the
action of the mother. One has the impression that she wanted these children only
for herself. After having decided to dedicate her life to her career, finally she un-
derstood that she was missing something. This egotistical reaction must be
questionned.

To what extent can a 60-year-old woman look after a child? Does she have
enough energy to bring them up? As for the child, one doesn't know how he/she
will be seen by his/her peers? That is not going to be easy, seeing the age differ-
ence between the mothers; will the child be able to bear the reactions of his
friends?

From the medical point of view, doctors do not advise childbirth at this age
because of the danger which this presents as much for the mother as for the child.
In addition, the English doctor consulted in the first place had refused her the
procedure.

Of course, the case can be considered as a success for medicine. But if one
allows it in the first place, one should also accept the demands of older women.

The case cited goes against moral rules which are part of our customs. One
shouldn't embark upon sudden decisions because this could bring anarchy.

The decision to have a child should not be taken lightly. One must not only
take into account personal satisfactions, but also think of the future of the child.
Society should take the responsibility of imposing limits on these actions.

T15

Non à l'interdiction!
Je suis contre la loi qui interdit la technique de fécondation in vitro pour les
femmes âgées.

Premièrement on a déjà assez de lois et je pense que chaque loi empêche l'homme en général de prendre ses propres responsabilités. Comme ça on se réfère toujours à la loi.

Pour moi se pose jamais la question d'une fécondation in vitros, parce que je voudrai jamais prendre les risques qui existent sans doute pour moi-même; je pense aussi aux enfants pour qui une mère agée est peut-être un problème. Mais je veux que les femmes peuvent garder la liberté de décider pour elles-mêmes.

Deuxièmemon n'a pas des preuves que les femmes 'agees' sont moins saines. En plus elle vivent plus les probabilités de vie sont plus élevées que autrefois, les conditions de la vie sont devenues mieux.

Troisièmement qui peut prouver que les mères jeunes aiment plus leurs enfants.

No to prohibition!
I am against the law which forbids the in vitro fecundation technique for older women.

First of all, we already have enough laws and I think that each law stops one in genereral taking his own responsibilities. Thus, we'll always refer to the law.

For me, the question of in vitro fecundation will never have to be asked, because I would never take the risks which exist. I must also think about the children for whom an old mother is maybe a problem. Though I would want women to be able to have the freedom to decide for themselves.

Secondly we don't have any proof that these older women are less able. In addition, women live longer, life expectation is higher, the standard of living is also improved.

Thirdly, who can prove that young mothers would love their children more.

T 17

Non à l'interdiction
(1) Il ne faut pas interdire la technique de fécondation in vitro pour les femmes ménopausées. (2) La base d'argument c'est que cela doit être seulement le choix de la femme. (3) Nous ne pouvons pas commencer à mettre les réstrictions sur les systèmes réproductifs des femmes. (4) Même si nous sommes contre l'idée, nous devons réspecter le droit de la femme de choisir.
(5) Il y a tellement des arguments pour l'interdiction, comme les femmes ménopausées sont trop agées, trop faibles, et il y a plus de risques. (6) Mais, honnêtement, il y a toujours des risques pour les femmes à n'importe quel âge et les risques devraient être discuter entre la femme et son médecin et après c'est toujours la femme qui doit décider. (7) De toute façon, si une femme a un coeur très faible ou si elle a d'autres maladies, nous ne pouvons pas l'empecher d'avoir des enfants, c'est toujours son choix si elle va prendre des risques ou pas. (8) Quelques-uns disent que la femme va mourir avant que l'enfant puisse s'occuper de lui-même, mais la possibilité de mourir se pose à chaque jour pour tout le monde. (9) Où pouvons-nous mettre la ligne d'âge?
(10) Il est necessaire que nous laissions les femmes le pouvoir de gouverner leurs propres corps. (11) Ce n'est à nous ni de décider ni d'imposer les destins des femmes. (12) Elles doivent conserver à n'importe quel âge le droit de choisir pour elle-même.

No to prohibition

One must not prohibit the in vitro fecundation technique for menopausal women. The basis of argument is that this must be only the choice of the woman. We cannot begin to put restrictions on the women reproductive rights. Even if we are against the idea, we must respect the right of the woman to choose.

There are so many arguments for prohibition: menopausal women are too old, too weak, and there are more risks. But, honestly, there are always risks for women at whatever age and the risks should be discussed between the woman and her doctor and then it should be the woman who decides. Even if a woman has a very weak heart or if she has other illnesses, we cannot stop her from having children, it is always her choice. Some say that the woman will die before the child can look after himself, but the possibility of dying is present everyday for everybody. Where can we draw the line of mortality?

It is necessary to leave to women the power to govern their own bodies. It is not for us to decide or to impose the fate of women. They must keep at whatever age the right to choose.

T20

Qui peut décider sur la liberté de choisir mon destin?

Je suis profféseure au colège depuis 30 ans.

J'ai consacré tout ce temps à éléver les enfants d'autres, et je n'ai pas eu l'oportinité d'avoir une famille et mes propres enfants.

Aujourd'hui à 54 ans j'ai rencontré l'homme de ma vie et il m'a demandé de l'épouser, bien qu'il est beaucoup plus jeune que moi.

On a décidé de former une veritable famille et on voudrait avoir un enfant.

J'ai consulté plusieurs medecins car j'ai reçu la menopause il y a déjà quelques années et la seule posibilité d'avoir un enfant ça serait par le moyen de l'insemination in vitro.

Mon mari et moi, on croyait que cette décition c'était toute à fait normale, et on a été surpris par la reaction des autres, qui pensaient que je n'avais pas l'âge pour le faire.

Qu'une mère soit bonne ou pas ça ne dépend pas de son âge si non de sa capacité.

Je crois que les jeunes mères ont très peu de temps pour se consacrer à ses enfant. Elles sont beaucoup d'activités. et elles veulent encore faire beaucoup des choses pour elles-mêmes; tandis que les mères de notre âge, apart d'avoir une éxpérience de vie plus grande, on a l'envie de rester déjà chez nous et dediquer tout notre temps à notres enfants. D'autre part je ne vois pas quel peut être la difference entre ma famille et les autres et quels conséquences peuvent produir sur mon enfent.

J'ai évidement beaucoup réflechis avant de faire ce pas, j'ai mis sur la balance toutes les conséquences et j'arrivé à la concluson que je pouvait être une mère comme toutes les autres.

Alors, pourquoi on veut décider sur ma vie?

Fin

Who can decide on my freedom to choose my destiny?
I have dedicated all this time to educating the children of others, and I did not have the opportunity to start a family.

Today at the age of 54 I met the man of my life and he asked me to marry him, though he is much younger than me.

We decided to form a real family and we would like to have a child.

I have consulted several doctors because I have entered the menopause some years ago and the only possibility to have a child would be by means of in vitro insemination.

My husband and I thought that this decision was completely normal, and we were surprised by the reactions of others, who think I don't have the right age to do that.

A mother being good or not doesn't depend on her age, but on her capacity.

I think that young mothers have little time to dedicate to their children. They have a lot of activities, and they still want to do a lot of things for themselves; whereas mothers of our age, apart from having a greater life experience, already have the desire to stay at home and dedicate all our time to our children. On the other hand I don't see what can be the difference between my family and the others and what the possible consequences could be for my child.

Obviously I thought a lot before making this step, I weighed up the pros and cons and I reached to the conclusion that I could be a mother like all the others.

So, why do they want to decide about my life?

The End

ANNEX 2

Extracts of the dialogues quoted in the chapter

Conventions for the transcription of the dialogs
- overlaps: underlined utterances
- pauses: – (1 to 2 seconds), – (2 to 5 seconds), – (more than 5 seconds)
- partial words: ...dation
- interrogative intonation:?
- comments from the transcriber: <relit>.....>; <A écrit>..........>; <rire>
- not understandable utterance: ***

Ex. 1
59.F peut-être il faudra aussi eh – voir les arguments dans l'article ou bien – les arguments – de ceux qui sont pour l'interdiction – pour un peu – eh – comment dire – pour un peu leur dire qu'ils ont <inaudible> qu'ils eh – eh – par exemple – je crois que – qu'ils ont dit pour l'enfant c'est pas bien parce que la mère elle sera – eh ils n'ont pas vraiment une mère mais une grand-mère et puis – on pourrait dire eh contre ça que même la mère elle va aimer son enfant – plus peut-être qu'une femme qui a – qui est jeune – et qui a pas – tellement voulu un enfant –
60.C oui c'est – oui –

Ex. 2

61.F parce que là – on a le – le point de vue de de la femme si tu veux et ceux
      si si – ceux qui sont pour l'interdiction ont très souvent le point de vue
      de l'enfant - et peut-être on
62.C oui c'est vrai
63.F on devrait aussi –
64.C faut comparer –
65.F mhmh - alors (...)

Ex. 3

140.E (...) eh – attends peut-être – si on commence le deuxième paragraphe
       avec ça – si on on commence – par admettre bien bien sûr il y a des
       risques – mais – est-ce qu'on peut commencer le deuxième paragraphe
       avec ça? – avec bien sûr – parce que comme ça on
141.U non
142.E non?
143.U parce que il n'y a pas de –
144.E parce qu'en fait comme ça –
145.U logique
146.E on ne dit pas qu'il y a des autres arguments – si on peut juste – je sais
       pas si il faut si il faut nous défendre et – si – parce qu'en fait – si on
       introduit – les autres arguments si on dit les autres arguments –
147.U je crois qu'on
148.E ça mettra dans la tête des des lecteurs –
149.U ouais
150.E les autres arguments comme ça –
151.U ouais
152.E ils pensent –
153.U je crois parce que
154.E ils pensent à les deux mais si on juste dit – les choses comme voilà ça
       c'est ça c'est comme –
155.U je crois que pour le but – eh nous avons – nous n'avons – qu'une page
       – et bon – on ne peut discute – tout
156.E ouais ouais on écrit eh – chaque quatres lignes –
157.U <rire>
158.E on peut écrire
159.U ouais –
160.E eh –
161.U je crois que c'est mieux – si on discute – si on ne discute que – disons –
       les arguments – contre l'interdiction
162.E tu crois qu'il faut défendre ça – il faut il faut – non non je – je te demande
       c'est tout hein moi je – je sais pas – eh –

Ex. 4

103.J est-ce qu'on veut dire nous?
104.R non

Ex. 5

109.J mais tu veux rester neutre ou tu veux
110.R non – non

111.J tu veux prendre – parce qu'il faut – eh

Ex. 6
113.J nous nous aimerions
114.R tu vois il il
115.J parce que tu veux toujours dire ton avis
116.R oui tout à fait
117.J puisque que nous nous donnons – parce que
118.R mais on va – on va faire une petite introduction – qui va dire que il est
       vrai que – eh les gens – eh
119.J en effet
120.R il est vrai que ce – en effet – en effet eh
121.J les les –
122.R ce sujet – suscite beaucoup de controverse de de d'avis controverse
       non? c'est possible de dire ça en français?
123.J eh – non en effet –
124.R ce sujet – eh – suscite – de – la critique – suscite
125.J suscite <écrit> beaucoup de

Ex. 7
145.J <écrit> mh – ok – mh nous aimerions donner notre avis sur le sujet la
       fécondation in vitro – en effet ce sujet suscite beaucoup de critiques
       pour l'interdiction – et contre – après avoir bien réfléchi – nous – voilà
       ça donne une *** une introduction – eh – après avoir beaucoup réfléchi
       là-dessus – nous –
146.R eh – lis-moi un peu le texte – en référence
147.J attends – en référence à votre ar...eh – ah non – en référence – à l'article
       paru dans le journal Libération – le vingt-huit décembre mill neuf cent
       nonante trois – nous aimerions donner notre avis sur le sujet de la
       fécondation in vitro – en effet ce sujet suscite beaucoup de critiques
       pour – l'interdiction et contre –
148.R et contre – point – eh – puis – alors eh à la ligne – on écrit il est vrai que
       – eh – eh – il est vrai que – eh une femme âgée – qui n'est plus en
       pouvoir – de – de – de mettre au monde
149.J il est vrai que que la nature pouvoir

Ex. 8
12.T comment – on veut commencer – parce que nous sommes tous les
      deux eh – on va parler à la première personne du féminin
13.I oui mh
14.T je – suis
15.I oui – comme ça – comme une lettre quoi
16.T oui – d'accord – alors

Ex. 9
40.E comment nous commençons –
41.G peut-être avec une question –
42.E quelle - laquelle? –
43.G eh – est-ce que les femmes eh: – peut-être mettons-nous: peut-être dans
      la position des femmes – de cet âge – est-ce que nous les femmes de:

plus de cinquante ans on a pas le droit de: eh -- de vouloir être mère ou
de vouloir - avoir un enfant
44.E   *** commencer comme ça - est-ce que nous?

Ex. 10
45.G   mh mhmh - eh mais on se dirige à qui? -
46.E   mh?
47.G   on se dirige à qui? - à la population - ou: les politiciens - ou: -
48.E   à l'opinion publique -
49.G   ouais - ouais c'est ça -
50.E   on peut écrire la lettre et puis -
51.G   ouais
52.E   après mettre -
53.G   attends - eh: deux signatures - on pourrait mettre eh: nous sommes
       deux femmes de: - eh cinquante trois et: cinquante quatre ans - et on:
       veut demander à l'opinion publique est-ce que nous n'avons pas le droit
       d'être mère? -

Ex. 11
58.E   parce que si: - c'est un peu ridicule - non est-ce que nous n'avons pas
       le droit d'être non? -
59.G   oui c'est que ça - sont des questions complètement différentes - un de
       de bon <bas> c'est plutôt la même chose> - mh: - comment tu avais
       dit?
60.E   peut-être on peut écrire - qui - peut m'em... qui - peut -
61.G   qui - peut dire
62.E   interdire à moi -
63.G   qui oui: ça sera bien - ça serait bien comme:
64.E   qui qui va dé... qui va décider -

Ex. 12
74.G   sur - la liberté - alors sur la liberté - de - choisir - mon destin > - destin
       - alors - peut-être on pourrait - eh: - non ça va pas - non moi je disais
       de raconter comme si: elle avait eu une expérience eh similaire -
75.E   mhmh - ***
76.G   et alors - par exemple raconter que cette femme - mh: - cette femme
       elle a eu elle a vécu: une: une situation similaire - elle a: eu - un enfant
       - ou ou elle a fait une une insémination in in vitro - et: puis
       elle a eu un enfant elle a pu bien élever son enfant - et: et puis: - elle elle
       mène une vie normale avec sa famille et son enfant -
77.E   mhmh
78.G   et tout ça - et alors que - de - cette façon cette femme elle essaie de
       convaincre les autres femmes - ou ou: ceux qui sont contre - de voir
       que: - ils peuvent avoir une vie - normale
79.E   oui tu tu sais je pense que: que c'est possible mais moi je ne pense pas
       que c'est c'est c'est bien - faire ça pour convaincre les les autres femmes
       pour eh - faire la même chose
80.G   oui mais c'est que on va - on va pas le faire - c'est pas convaincre les
       autres sinon - dire que - c'est pas juste - d'interdire - une chose que
       peut-être que pour elle - c'était une bonne chose - que c'était une

chose que peut-être l'a: l'a donné beaucoup de satisfactions: qu'elle est heureuse à cause de ça qu'elle a mené une vie normale comme tous les autres femmes – que sa famille c'est une famille normale comme tous les autres familles et que son fils ou fille eh: sont comme tous les autres enfants – ou l'aborder d'autres points de vue *** –

81.E que peut décider qui peut décider – la liberté de choisir mon destin
82.G ou peut-être – que cette femme c'est une femme qui veut le faire –
83.E mhmh
84.G et alors elle essaie de convaincre
85.E oui je pense que c'est mieux parce que nous nous avons moi je je eh: je ne suis pas très sûre que c'est bien – <rires>
86.G <rires> bon - alors <relit> qui peut décider sur la liberté de choisir – mon destin >– mh: – on doit – décrire un peu – cette phrase
87.E la situation
88.G ouais – eh: j'ai: cinquante six ans –

Ex. 13
295.E mhmh – eh du point de vue médical on peut voir –
296.D ouais maintenant je passe déjà à deuxième
297.E oui <écrit> – > médical –
298.D les médecins –
299.E ce n'est pas
300.D on peut déjà mettre les médecins les médecins
301.E ce n'est pas sûr? –
302.D ouais – les médecins a conseillent – conseillent – conseillent?
303.E mhmh – ne conseillent pas – plutôt –
304.D ouais ne conseillent pas – <E écrit>
305.E avoir – d'énfants
306.D une grossesse> ou avoir des enfants –
307.E mhmh – <écrit> à cet âge – >
308.D pour les dangers qu'il présente pour – la mère – tant pour la mère como pour l'enfant –
309.E mhmh – <écrit> mhmh – la mère – que pour l'enfant – > (...)

Ex. 14
440.F un peu froid – que les enfants souffrent d'une mère trop âgée – (x s.) c'est peut-être – trouver un autre mot
441.C bon – on peut – eh peut-être qu'on – nous pouvons – continuer –
442.F mh
443.C et – le – chercher – les strcutures exactes après –
444.F ouais

NOTES

1 In order to facilitate reading, we will use only the masculine marks to refer to the learners of both sexes.
2 A strategy being defined as a set of means carried out to achieve a goal, those means being materialized in linguistic forms/features in the texts: writers have to choose (construct a strategy), between different plans, those which are the most adequate in order to achieve their argumentative goal.

3   [la Voix des Autres]
4   See Annex 1, for the texts produced, quoted in the chapter (English and French versions).
5   See the Geneva Model of Discourse Production (Bronckart *et al*, 1985): the anchoring is the way in which the writer links his discourse to the enunciative situation in which it is produced (presence or absence of marks of the material situation of production, selection of temporal aspects, references to the addressee, etc.).
6   Listed from A1 to A10, and from CA1 to CA10; A is used in the text for 'argument', CA for 'counterargument'.
7   Dialogue from Group 1 (D1) corresponding to the Text 1 (T1).
8   All the extracts of the dialogues are translated from the French interlanguage of the learners. In order to facilitate the reading, specific marks of oral characteristics have been suppressed. For original dialogues, see Annex 2.
9   [modalité d'énonciation]: an utterance always has an 'enunciation modality': assertion, interrogation, injunction, etc.
10   For French text, see Annex 2.
11   Verbs Introducing Reported Discourse: those metalinguistic verbs which are used to report the discourse of someone else, which we will designate as Introducing Verb'.
12   By means of 'Related Reported Discourse' [Discours Rapporté Narrativisé]: the doctors advise to / refuse to....