

The enigma of the subjective constitution in autism: A psychoanalytical analysis of Temple Grandin's autobiography

O enigma da constituição subjetiva no autismo: uma leitura psicanalítica da autobiografia de Temple Grandin

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RESUMO | Esta pesquisa tem como objetivo analisar a autobiografia de Temple Grandin, com base na teoria da alienação e separação elaborada no primeiro ensino de Lacan durante o Seminário 11. O estudo contou com o método qualitativo, a partir da análise documental do livro "Uma menina estranha: Autobiografia de uma autista". Os resultados da análise apontam que apesar de cada autor ter uma particular leitura do autismo, que ainda gera debates, eles convergem em alguns aspectos, como o diagnóstico diferencial do autismo e psicose e que na estruturação subjetiva da criança autista, o cerne da questão está no processo da alienação, sendo possível observar sinais do autismo desde a primeira infância. Concluindo que apesar de não haver uma melhor teoria a respeito do autismo, devendo se levar em consideração o caso a caso do paciente em questão, a análise da autobiografia de Temple Grandin aponta para a hipótese apresentada por Maleval da alienação parcial.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Autismo. Psicanálise. Alienação. Separação.

ABSTRACT | This research aims to analyze the autobiography of Temple Grandin, based on the theory of alienation and separation elaborated in the first teaching of Lacan during Seminar 11. The study relied on the qualitative method, from the documentary analysis of the book "A girl Strange: Autobiography of an Autistic ". The results of the analysis point out that although each author has a particular reading of autism, which still generates debates, they converge in some aspects, such as the differential diagnosis of autism and psychosis and that in the subjective structuring of the autistic child, the heart of the matter is of alienation, being possible to observe signs of autism from the early childhood. In conclusion, although there is no better theory about autism, considering case by case of the patient in question, the analysis of Temple Grandin's autobiography points to Maleval's hypothesis of partial alienation.

KEYWORDS: Autism. Psychoanalysis. Alienation. Separation.

Autism from psychiatry to psychoanalysis: introducing the question

More and more people talk about autism without knowing very well what it is; the like for solitude, its fixity and stereotyped behaviors appear in the foreground characterizing a singular subjective functioning (Tendlarz, 2017). However the term autism is not new, it was coined in 1906 by Plouller, while studying the thought process of patients diagnosed with dementia, however, the name was only disseminated in 1911 by the Swiss psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler, who pointed it as one of the symptoms of schizophrenia. Bleuler borrowed from the Freudian theory the term autoerotism and subtracted Eros, indicating autism as the effect of dissociation and attempted adaptation to the pathological process; a rupture of relations with the outside world (Dias, 2015).

Leo Kanner, in 1943, is the first to describe autism in children in the syndrome that became famous entitled “Early Childhood Autism”. He observed in these children unusual responses to the environment, which included stereotyped motor mannerisms, resistance to change or insistence on monotony, as well as unusual aspects of the child’s communication skills, such as the reversal of pronouns and the tendency to echo in language (echolalia). He says the children acted as if no one was there, as if they were hypnotized, self-sufficient, and happy when left alone (Kanner, 1943).

A few years later, Asperger created the “Asperger Syndrome” to name children also subtracted from the social bond, but with greater discursive ability (Tendlarz, 2017).

During the 1950s and 1960s there was a great deal of debate about the nature of autism and its etiology, with the belief that autism was caused by parents not emotionally responsive to their children (the “refrigerator mother” hypothesis). However, in most parts of the world such notions have been abandoned. In the early 1960s, a line of research on autism emerges that seeks to understand issues such as a brain disorder present since childhood and found in all countries and socioeconomic and ethno-racial groups investigated (Klin, 2006).

In 1978 the psychologist Michael Rutter proposes a definition of autism based on four criteria: 1) backwardness and social deviation not only as a function of mental retardation; 2) communication problems, again, not only because of associated mental retardation; 3) unusual behaviors, such as stereotyped movements and mannerisms; and 4) beginning before the age of 30 months. The definition of Rutter and the growing body of work on autism influenced the definition of this condition in the third version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-III) in 1980, when autism was first recognized and placed in a new class of disorders, namely Invasive Developmental Disorders (TIDs). Until then, autism was classified in DSM-I and DSM-II under the heading “schizophrenic reaction or schizophrenia in children’s form” (Klin, 2006).

In DSM-IV, autism continued in the Invasive Developmental Disorders section, which was characterized by severe and invasive impairment in several areas of development; this same section covered Autistic Disorder, Rett Disorder, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, Asperger’s Disorder and Invasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

So in today’s DSM-V everything clusters in Autism Spectrum Disorder. Considered a neurodevelopmental disorder defined by a set of conditions ranging from very specific limitations in the learning or control of executive functions to global impairments in social skills or intelligence beginning in the developmental period. Thus, autism is characterized by persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction in multiple contexts, and the presence of restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior, interests or activities (American Psychiatric Association 2014).

It is perceived in such a way that the diagnosis of DSM is essentially phenomenological, since they are based on the symptoms presented by the individual, what differentiates from psychoanalysis, which will propose a structural diagnosis, that is, operating through the transference; it does not work as a reader of phenomena, but rather as the denominator of a mode of incidence of the subject in language. Following this strand, one thinks of the diagnosis less as an objective description and more as a descriptive operation of the analyst, in which

the naming of the structure of the patient focuses on the conduct of the treatment at several levels. Thus, it is believed that two subjects with distinct subjective structures may present similar symptoms depending on the circumstances (Figueiredo & Machado, 2000).

When looking at the psychoanalytic movement, autism has its history stripped of the connotation initially given by Freud with autoerotism. Bleuler places at the beginning of the twentieth century the autistic introversion as a modality of schizophrenia, to describe the retraction of the subject in relation to its surroundings.

Meanwhile, post-Freudians and Kleinians began to take an interest in this picture. Melanie Klein locates the Dick boy case within an atypical schizophrenia. In the 1950s and 1960s, Margaret Mahler, put the need to cross the autistic shell. Francis Tustin postulates the “autistic carapace” as a protective barrier to the outside world, generated by self-sensual body that includes the use of autistic objects and autistic forms of sensations. During the same time, Bruno Bettelheim, introduces the “empty fortress”. In the 1970s, Meltzer examines the topology and the use of its own two-dimensional space, the result of adhesive identification. And on the side of the Lacanian orientation, Rosine and Robert Lefort think of it as a fourth structure (Tendlarz, 2017).

Tendlarz (2017) in her article “Lacan and autism in our time” portrays an overview of the relevance of Lacan’s teaching in the perspective of autism. The author suggests that Lacan himself spoke little about autism, since the diagnosis as such had not yet reached the classificatory and mediatic height of the 21st century. However, his teaching offers the contours needed to understand autism and propose a direction of treatment. Thus Lacan retakes autism understood in the broad sense in several opportunities; as in “Freud’s Technical Writings” (1954), Melanie Klein’s Dick Case and Rosine Lefort’s Robert Case. In 1967, about ten years later, he comments on the case of Martín der Sami Ali in his “Address on the psychosis of the child” and, finally, speaks again about autism at his 1975 “Geneva Conference”. Dick’s case as in Robert, points out how the children are immersed in the real. As for the Martin case, Lacan indicates that if the boy covers his ears, it is because he protects himself from the verb and is already post-verbal.

Thus, if there is an increasing interest in psychoanalysis in relation to autism, however, some glances and hypotheses still diverge among themselves at the present time. Some theorists will consider it a fourth structure (Jerusalinsky, 2012); others perceive autism as a refusal of the Other’s response (Freire, 2002), the Other being taken as “the place where the chain of the signifier is situated that commands everything that will be able to present itself to the subject” (Lacan, 1964/2008, p.200). Laznik (2013) and Catão (2015) defend the hypothesis that in the autistic there is a failure in the alienation time of the constitution of the subject, by the impossibility or refusal of the end of the third time of the drive. Other authors propose that the autistic are subjects, but not enunciators, appearing the pure meaning of the Other (Soler, 2007). Stefan (1991), in turn, places autism at a time prior to the mirror stage, stating that in autism there would be no Other and not even the other, the like. He argues that the autistic are outside the discourse and outside the language and being by and in the language that the subject is constituted; in the case of the autistic there would be an absence of subjectivation. In contrast, Maleval (2015) proposes that the autistic is not on the edge of alienation; he is in alienation, but refusal. Thus one of the main difficulties when dealing with autistic children is the diversity of the explanations that are given for autism. Most neurologists and even a large proportion of psychiatrists have an understanding that differs from that of psychologists, and especially psychoanalysts. And even within psychoanalysis itself, as already mentioned, it differs from the understanding of what autism is, and thus, according to each form of apprehension, clinical practices are guided.

Lacanian psychoanalysis, which will be approached in this study, makes an important contribution, situating the understanding of autism from the comprehension of the constitution of the subject. This theory does not deny biological issues, which may or may not exist, but it throws a new look at the subject beyond the biological, placing the relation of the infans with its Other at the core of the subjective constitution (Mexko & Galhardi, 2014).

Considering that for psychoanalysis the constituent process of the subject don’t reside neither in the satisfaction nor in the frustration of its needs, nor in

a genetic automatism that guarantees per se such process, but that the operation that situates it is defined on another level: that of the signifier; it is important to consider the two operations that are articulated in the relation of the subject to the Other, termed by Lacan as alienation and separation (Jerusalinsky, 2012).

Alienation and separation

The Lacanian theory of alienation and separation proposes to explain the constitution of the subject from the signifier, which are the founding words, which involve the subject, everything that marks him, his parents, his neighbors, the whole structure of the community that constitutes him not only as a symbol, but in his being (Jerusalinsky, 2012). Thus, from the alienation with the Other (the treasure of signifiers) emerges the subject that as such can only be known in the place or locus of the Other (Laurent, 1997). Lacan's theory of alienation (1964/2008) is presented by Bruder & Brauer (2007, p. 515):

Alienation belongs to the subject; it is born by the action of language. The place of Other, which the caregiver occupies at this moment, offers signifiers, through speech; the subject submits to one of the various signifiers that are offered to him. Your being can not be totally covered by the sense given by the Other: there is always a loss. There is a kind of life-and-death struggle between being and meaning: if the subject chooses to be, loses meaning, and if he chooses meaning, he loses his being, and there is the aphanisis, the disappearance of the subject.

So the constitution of the subject emerges through alienation to the other holder of meaning. This process of alienation is correlated with the fact that the encounter of the individual with the language, that precedes it, which there was before it existed. A language whose rules and codes are already defined, the subject having no role in its constitution. These laws are external to him, and one must conform to them if one wants to gain recognition of the other

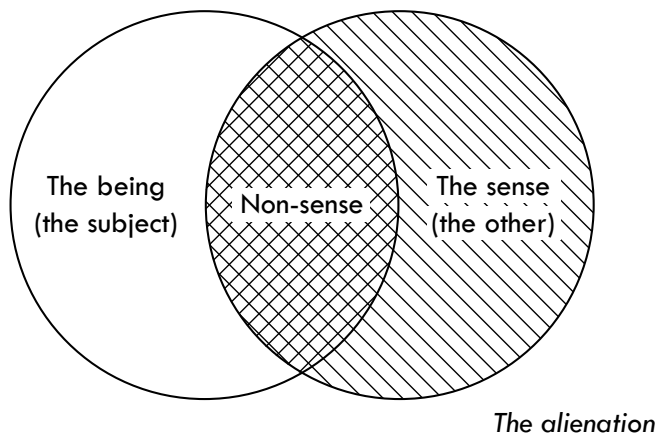
speaker. In fact, it will be this Other who will teach you to use language; Other that will provide all the necessary signifiers to such use (Nascimento, 2010).

You can say that the encounter of the individual with the Other is made from the experience of original satisfaction. The Other is that puts an end to the tension of necessity. The child will record from this fundamental experience both the mnemonic traits of the object and the words uttered at the time. This Other's intervention will involve the insertion of the child in the symbolic order, order of exchange of signifiers. The child's first participation in this symbolic exchange is through his cry, which becomes significant from the moment the Other welcomes child's message. This act, this Other's response are responsible for the "significant mutation" and the appearance of S1. As stated by Nascimento (2010, p.2):

The minimum pair of the signifying chain are: S1-S2. S1 as the substitute for the cry, the first signifier of the subject; S2 as the signifier of the Other's response, the signifier that makes the cry even a signifier. Now to say that S2 transforms the cry into a signifier afterwards, is to say that S2 is wich inaugurates the function proper of meaning of language. In other words, it is only after the Other's response has taken place that we can truly affirm that there was something like a message, an appeal. S2 is the semantic vector, because it is wich that gives, retroactively sense to S1. The dimension of the direction is in the articulation of S1-S2. In this way, it is not only the fact of taking S1 as a representative, but, above all, the fact of articulating it to S2, which produces meaning and, consequently, alienation.

On this, the alienation is defined by a choice, Freedom or Life? To alienate the Other, code holder, and be a slave to language, or not alienate? If the choice is freedom, it both are lost immediately, because there is no life without language, if the choice is life, the life is amputated of freedom, because language has an inherent lack, since speech can not account to speak of all things. Whatever choice made is, there is the disappearance of one of the parties (Lacan, 1964/2008).

Figure 1. The alienation



Source: Adapted from Lacan, 1985.

In Figure 1 are presented two sets, the one of the being and the field of the Other (language/sense). The element that belongs to both is non-meaning, S1 (Lacan, 1964/2008). Pisetta & Besset (2011) propose to apprehend non-meaning as inherent in meaning, because no signifier recovers the total meaning, unable to say who the subject is, something always is missing, some meaning that can not be represented by words.

To take the whole of the subject as empty before the encounter with the Other means to say that the subject is constituted through this encounter, that the subject is founded on the basis of this naming of the emptiness, of this “materialization” of absence. Therefore, the signifier is the first differentiated instance, the element that removes the being from the real, by delimiting it (Nascimento, 2010). If in some place he identifies with a signifier (a meaning about his existence), on the other hand he is situated in an aphanis (disappearance of the subject). Thus the definition of his being always is partial, inconsistent and in motion (Pisetta & Besset, 2011).

Choosing only the way of alienation, meaning’s way, it would not be possible for the subject to appear (\$), because it would be overtaken by the Other’s desire. However, without first crossing this path, it ends up falling into the non-meaning or the silence. From this the inversion of the cogito “I think where I am not, therefore I am where I do not think” (Lacan, 1966/1998). This condition is of an essentially divided, barred subject: the fact that the subject as such manifests itself only in the interval S1-S2,

before the sense is constituted, but after a signifier has been captured. The subject manifests itself in the unconscious (where I do not think), because in consciousness, (where I think) the subject goes out (Nascimento, 2010).

The separation, however, is represented by the intersection between the elements that belong to the both sets, the place where the subject and the Other, the being and the meaning would be together. Such intersection arises from the overlapping of two faults (Lacan, 1964/2008). A fault is, by the subject, found in the Other, in the intervals of the Other’s discourse. It is the lack of the signifier where language and the meaning’s way fail to encompass the whole being. The other fault is brought by the subject who responds to this capture with the previous lack of his own aphanis, by to submit to the meaning given by the Other (Bruder & Brauer, 2007). One fault covers the other, it is a dialectic of objects of desire, in which it makes the union of the subject’s desire with the Other’s desire. It is the dialectic of the processes of alienation and separation, there is an intersection of the Other’s desire that makes the subject’s desire appear (Lacan, 1964/2008).

In that your desire is unknown; the subject returns to the starting point, which is of your lack. This indicates that alienation and separation are not static “phases”, and shows the permanent oscillation that occurs in the analyst between alienation and separation, as an alternation always renewed.
(Bruder & Brauer, 2007, p.519).

So there is no possibility of separation if there is no alienation to the Other. In the case of the autistic, the authors discuss that there is an impasse in the process of alienation, not reaching the separation operation. It is important to emphasize that in studying these operations appears the question of the differentiation between “self” and “subject”, Lacan’s contribution that distinguishes the self (an imaginary construction that is established in the mirror stage) of the unconscious’s subject (desire’s subject that emerges among the signifiers of discourse).

Thus the purpose of this study is to understand the subjective constitution in autism based on the analysis of Temple Grandin’s autobiography in the light of the Lacanian theory of alienation and separation,

taking into account one of the puzzles that runs through this clinical picture: Is there subject in autism? On the face of it, this work becomes relevant to approach present questions in the psychoanalytic field and of fundamental importance to think about the therapeutic management of the autism clinic.

Methodology

This work constitutes a qualitative research, in which it was made a documentary analysis of the book "A strange girl: Autobiography of an autistic" that brings the autobiographical report of Temple Grandin, an autistic that influenced the vision of the autism and its treatments. The analysis of the document was made on the basis of the theory of alienation and separation, set forth in the first teaching of Lacan proposed in Seminar 11. In this seminar, approaching what Lacan names as the four fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis (unconscious, drive, repetition and transference), he elaborates the concepts of alienation and separation as intrinsic to the process of constitution of the subject.

The theory is presented in the works of some authors (Catão, 2015; Jerusalinsky, 2012 and 2015; Laznik, 2013 and 2015; Maleval, 2012, 2015 and 2017; Soler, 1999 and 2007; Stefan, 1991) which in the present research, they were used as a basis for discussion of the elements present in the analyzed work.

Analysis of Temple Grandin's autobiography

Faced with the question raised, here is the analysis of the book "A Strange Girl: Autobiography of an Autistic" which portrays the autobiography of Temple Grandin, an engineer and biologist, who was diagnosed early with autism. Until the age of three and a half, Temple only reacted to her surroundings by means of cries, whistles and murmurs of closed mouth. Her mother realized that at six months she did not nestle in her lap: she was rigid, rejected the body that wanted to hold her. At school, he beat the other children's heads. Instead of clay or synthetic

clay, she used her own feces to model and spread her creations across the room.

Temple Grandin was stimulated precociously and intensively by the mother and later led to the school where she was helped by a sensitive teacher until the conclusion of the high school, when she moved to the aunt's farm. In this context, she begins to interest in cattle by observing and understanding in a peculiar way the behaviors of these animals, especially how they are calm when they are immobilized to receive vaccines. From this experience, she idealizes and constructs a similar device that presses and immobilizes her, generating a sense of tranquility that appeases the anxiety's crises arising from her social relationship inability, what she calls the "hug machine".

Her family perceived her remarkable abilities, because of that she was pressed to follow the studies in the university, beginning a trajectory marked by intense difficulties in the academic environment. Her distinctive way of seeing and understanding the world compels her to develop strategies to overcome obstacles until she completes her PhD in agricultural engineering, when she revolutionized her cattle management methods and became a respected expert on the subject.

It is important to emphasize that Temple brings in her autobiography a vision of autism based on neuroscience and behavioral therapy. Thus, the limitations of this analysis are anticipated to the reader, whose objective is not to exhaust the reflections and hypotheses regarding the relation of autism and the processes of alienation and separation, but to raise psychoanalytic perspectives on this clinical picture.

Starting with the book's analysis, on the cover is notorious the name of two authors, besides Temple Grandin, obviously because it is her autobiography, there is the name of Margaret Scariano American author. This fact raises Maleval's (2015) observation that it is not uncommon for autistic writings to be written "with two voices", the author relies on a person that to be able to write. Which already raises the difficulty of the autistic with the language codes.

Early in the autobiography Temple Grandin defines autism as a developmental disorder; a deficiency in the systems that process the sensory information received, which causes the child to react to some stimuli in an excessive way, while others react weakly. It brings up the discussion of the possible neuropsychological causes of autism, and puts this as a mystery.

Often, the child is “absent” from the surrounding environment and from the people around them in order to block external stimuli that seem overwhelming. (Grandin, 2012, p.18). [...] These symptoms seem to appear in the first months of life. The baby does not respond in the same way as the others. It is not deaf, because it reacts to sounds. But his reactions to other sensory stimuli are unconscious. [...] Other symptoms of autism are avoidance of the touch of others, lack of meaningful speech, repetitive behaviors [...] and lack of emotional contact with other people. (Grandin, 2012, p.19).

Grandin (2012) reports that she was an adult the first time she could see someone in the eye: “As a child, I remember my mother saying, ‘Temple, do you hear me? Look at me’. Sometimes I tried, but I could not ... And there were other telltale signs. I cared little for other children, preferring my inner world” (p.28).

Laznik's theory (2013) points out these behaviors in autism as resulting from a failure of alienation in the constitution of the subject; and this, by the impossibility or refusal of the closing of the third time of the drive, which is called passive, where the baby becomes himself the object of an Other. The first and second times are respectively the active, when the baby goes in search of an external object and the reflective time when the baby takes as object one part of his own body. Thus without the closure of the drive circuit there is the failure of the establishment of baby alienation in the relationship of the Other, which would explain the impossibility of the return Temple Grandin's voice and look to her mother, since it is not possible to articulate to an real Other.

At a later time, Laznik (2015) reaffirms this theory, pointing out that the failure in autism occurs in the process of alienation, different from the psychotic that failure is in the process of separation, where such

a distinction is possible from Seminar 11 of Lacan. Corroborating this theory, Catão (2015) points out the existence of a particular psychic functioning in the autistic child, where his subjective position is a radical and precocious refusal of what comes from the field of the Other. And this refusal can be observed in the pulsional records; oral, sphincter control, look and voice.

Catão (2015) still raises the hypothesis that in autism there is a compromise of the primary identification, by the bias of the voice refusal. So, the mark left by the encounter with the signifier is not ordered in chains and the subject does not enter the discourse. The author goes on to point out that the autistic is placed on the fringe of the language field. This would explain the absence or low presence of vocalizations and babblings, addressed to the Other, and the refusal of the Other's voice exemplified in the cut of Temple Grandin's self-report.

Jerusalinsky (2012) is in agreement with the authors mentioned when they raising that in autism there are not constituted subject. It presents an absence of subject, since it lacks the demand of recognition of the Other and the desire of the other's desire so that it is possible to consider a structure subject. The autistic would be out of language, considering that the subject's unconscious is structured as language. And the prevalence of automatisms creates a mechanism for excluding the child from language. That is why the autistic look away from the like and make themselves deaf not to any sound, but specifically to the other speaker. So the author defends the therapeutic movement of assuming a subject precisely where there is no such.

On another occasion, Jerusalinsky (2015) discusses that in autism there is an early failure point common to all, a fault characterized as the break or discontinuity in reciprocal recognition between the son and his mother (or caregiver). This mismatch according to the author is the key to the installation of the child in an autistic position, which is constituted by not having representation of the other and therefore rejects his relation with him. And when by chance there is a relationship, it is episodic, fleeting, decontextualized, minimal and of no or little imaginary extension and no symbolic extension.

Other authors agree that the absence of contact by the look and the lack or rarity of the social smile in autism is a refusal of the autistic to give away to the Other the instinctual objects (Maleval, 2015). Freire (2002) points out that in autism the child does not respond to Other constituent and Soler (1999) states that autistic children seek the annulment of the Other because they feel invaded by the presence of this. There is refusal and avoidance of the look and the voice. The child does not seem to be listening or looking. Therefore, the child exhibits a rejection of the word of the Other, as, for example, in the act of covering the ears.

Grandin (2012) reports that until she began to speak, communication to her was a one-way street. She said she understood what they were saying, but she was unable to respond. Thus, shouting and clapping her arms were her only form of communication. Even when she began to speak, sometimes she was in the speech, sometimes not. "The people around me could not explain why sometimes I could talk and sometimes not" (Grandin, 2012, p. 24).

Her first word was "ice", when she was three, in a car accident, the window glass shattered and fell on her, which caused her to associate the shards of glass with ice. This fact raises Maleval's (2015) hypothesis that the autistic is not exiled from language, that the retention of the voice is revealed in the strangeness of the enunciation of the autistic, where there are four very different ways of dealing with speech.

The most radical is to refuse it, which expresses the obstinate mutism of a large number of autistic. Another way is the autistic who explicitly love "the sound of their own voice". There is still verbiage that almost does not allow the communication, they resort to a factual language, without cession of the voice, that confers the surprising monochord tone of the autistics of high level. Finally, there is a rarer way of communicating, the impressive spontaneous phrases that escape these dumb subjects in moments of anguish, an example presented by Grandin (2012). When this occurs, the retention of the voice stops for a moment. It is often the case that mute autistic children sometimes emerge from their silence, uttering a perfectly constructed sentence, before returning to their silence (Maleval, 2015).

It is characteristic that this occurs almost always in critical situations that go beyond the protective strategies of the subject, making him abandon for a moment the refusal to summon the Other and the refusal to inscribe the voice in speech (Maleval, 2017).

These strategies appear in Grandin's autobiography (2012) when pondering that even after verbalizing she presented a difficulty in speaking of her feelings, without presenting intonation and inflection in the voice, a mechanical way of speaking. This corroborates with Maleval (2012, 2015) that say that in the impossibility of being completely alienated in language, one of the strategies created by the autistic to circumvent it, would be the preservation of a centrifugal voice, situation in which he would prefer to hear his own noises in detriment to those of the Other. The author further emphasizes that the rare circumstances in which the autistic person engages his enunciative voice confirm by his non-assumption, that he resists the alienation of his being in language by retaining the object of vocal enjoyment. These phenomena strongly suggest that the autism is not a cognitive deficit but is an imponderable choice of being in order to protect oneself from anguish

So also the hypothesis of Freire (2002) includes that stereotypies and ecolalias would be resources of maneuver in the face of the unbearable initiative of the Other. These are attempts, perhaps, in the real, to inscribe a difference, however small, between the self and that which comes from the other. Differently from significance, where in the effect of retroaction a meaning of inverted form, coming from the other, causes the subject to be represented between two signifiers. The "stereotyped" gestures and echolalia of the autistic meanwhile, do not seem to present an inverted message that can identify them in appeal.

Thus autism presents itself as an enigma since it poses the following impasse: How in front of the otherness of the language structure, a subject "responds" not, recognizing language as such, but showing itself alien to the otherness proper to the field of the Other? How can a subject present himself by rejecting or trying to nullify the dimension of the other from the moment he is introduced from the object (object as that which designates the non-unity between the

self and the other) annulment that implies in the own annulment of the subject as alterity to that object? (Freire, 2002).

Given these theories that point to an active movement of refusal to the Other in autism, can one think of the presence of a subject, even if there is not necessarily the discourse?

This questioning is also presented by Soler (2007) who states that infants is already immersed in language before being able to speak. Therefore, she believes that the autistic are in the language, even if they do not speak, being subjects, to the extent that they are spoken; in the Other, there are signifiers who represent them. So the autistic would be in the short of the alienation, being subjects, but not enunciators, appearing like pure meaning of the Other:

Thus, we can make the notation of the autistic subject according to the first form: s - subject - represented, assumed, placed under the signifiers that represent it in the Other: S/s. This is, in fact, the first emergency of any subject, whoever he may be. The question posed by Lacan in Seminar 11 and in "Position of the unconscious" is how this subject, defined as pure effect, spoken by the Other, can become an agent, become a speaker who wishes, or, in other words, someone moved by the libido. The S/s formula writes, initially, the subject assumed by the signifiers of the Other, and who has not yet "made its entry into the real." At that moment, it is at most the libido of the Other that binds to it, to the point that we could evoke its inclusion in the place of the Other (Soler, 2007, p. 67).

According to Temple's teachers, she spoke strangely and asked very strange questions, repeating the same question several times, being named with the nickname of a phonograph. "My voice was expressionless, with little inflection and no rhythm" (Grandin, 2012, p. 28).

This raises the hypothesis of Stefan (1991) who argues that the autistic child can speak, but this is not an act that produces social bond, and therefore does not produce speech. These children speak, but they speak to no one, and their speeches do not entail anyone. Which would explain the inflection in the voice.

This is because in counterpart Soler's theory (2007); Stefan (1991) addresses autism at a time prior to the mirror stage, stating that in autism there would be no Other or even the other, the like. This author affirms the absence of bond of the autistic children from the realization that they are not constituted in and by the language: they are outside the discourse and outside the language. If the subject is a production, an effect of the fact that we are beings of language, then the autistic is outside the language in that strict sense of the term. In infants, the non-constitution of the bond is attested by the absence of look, of vocalizations. If it is by and in the language that constitutes the subject, it would be necessary to speak, in the case of the autistic, of an absence of subjectivation. In agreement, Laznik (2013, p.65) states:

It seems to me now possible to hypothesize that in the autistic there is a failure of the time of the alienation of the subject's constitution and this, among others, because of the impossibility or refusal of the completion of the third time of the drive - when the Ich becomes the object of a new subject. This hypothesis could certainly account for the fact that there is sometimes a language in them that does not incarnate, and that seems to depend on a taking on a symbolic Other-pure code, without being able to articulate itself to a real Other that could incarnate it, without there being in the same movement access to the mirror stage and to the constitution of a self and to the imaginary alienation that this instance entails.

In agreement with Laznik (2013) when she mentions the mirror stage, Jerusalinsky (2012) points out that autism consists in the absence of the imaginary and symbolic, resulting from the mirror that the maternal intermediary offers the child to permanently return to the sphere of the Real, either because of a psychic impossibility of sustaining a place of symbolic circulation to that child, or because the child is organically prevented from coming to constitute himself as subject or by the combination of the two factors.

The mirror stage is so called because each similar (the others) start to function as a mirror to the child, who then contemplates the effects that his voice, gesture and expressions cause in the other. Thus this stage has the "function of recognition" which has a fundamental value in being the gateway to the field

of language. In autism, there is an insurmountable obstacle between the child and his Primordial Other, which culminates in the failure of this primordial function of recognition (Jerusalinsky, 2012).

Mexko and Galhardi (2014) corroborate the hypothesis of Laznik (2013) that in autism, the third time of the drive circuit does not close. Without the complete drive circuit, the body is not taken by the drive, it does not build erogenous and the body orifices do not border. Since there is no such bond between the baby and his primordial Other, it can not come as the subject of the drive.

In contrast Maleval (2015) points out that autistic did not remain outside or on the edge of alienation; he is in alienation, but refusal. Significant alienation is not assumed by the autistics, it would occur what Maleval (2012) names partial alienation. There is no aphanisis of the subject; the language does, in contrast, echo in his body. The one who communicates without engaging the voice. And this is the difficulty with which high-level autistics are confronted, and they solve it by means of factual language. Which is what Grandin (2012) referred to in describing the strange, expressionless speech, with little inflection and no rhythm. According to Maleval (2015) it is a speech as if it were an accumulation of facts, events, names and dates.

The words are more emitted than spoken, since these speeches come from a memorized mental repertoire. And when there is a fixation on a subject, the enthusiasm inspires them with a verbal rhetoric, arriving at a ceaseless verbiage (Maleval, 2017). "Like many autistic children, everything to me was literal" (Grandin, 2012, p. 83). "My parents did not understand my logic, and I being a person who thought for images, did not understand theirs" (Grandin, 2012, p.85). "The subtleties of language escaped me" (Grandin, 2012, p.34). "I thought visually, and needed concrete symbols for abstract concepts" (Grandin, 2012, p.84). These self-reports raise the theory of Soler (1999) that in autism the signifier will have sign value, which will correspond to only one meaning.

The theory of Soler (1999) is presented by the authors Kupfer, Faria & Keiko (2007, p.159) when they affirming that:

There is first a S1 that represents the child in the field of the Other. The problem is that from this first signifier, engendered in the field of the Other, others will not follow. And an isolated signifier can not be considered as such, insofar as its meaning will not be generated by sliding and the possibilities of combining and substituting with other signifiers, which is proper to the functioning of language. Thus the signifier will have only sign value. If the Other is fixed to one meaning, it will always remain in the same place: in the Absolute Other. There is then no question of the Other's desire, there is no dialectic, no doubt (what does the Other want of me?). Because of this, the Other becomes absolute, not clipped, not symbolized. So the presence of the Other will be sign. This means that the child does not operate with polysemy, variability, uncertainty. The Other will have fixed signified. The variations will be seen as a problem, and to them, the autistics will react by avoiding them. [...] For this reason, children behave as if they were persecuted by the intrusive signs of presence of the Other. They react to everything that is unpredictable as a sign of the presence of the Other, seeking to nullify it.

Maleval (2015) corroborates Soler's theory (1999) when the author points out that the use of the signifier is erased in favor of the sign. He says that the ideal for the autistic "would be a code that would be able to connect words in a constant and rigid way to clearly defined objects or situations" (p.22). The problem is not in the complexity of the language, instead that, the greater its complexity, the less the risk of a word being polysemic. "The more rules and structures, the less the autistic must rely on their intuition and context. The ideal would be a meaning for a word, a language that would be reduced to a code, totally constructed with signs" (Maleval 2015, p. 22).

For the autistic, language does not make disappear what we are talking about; the word is not totally the death of the thing. The detachment of the signifier and the object is difficult in the autistic, which is what allows the child to pretend that a shoe is a car, for example. However, Maleval (2015) affirms to be abusive to say that autistics do not have access to abstraction. Although their symbolization capabilities essentially pass through the index, and even by the icon, they put into action a process of substitution that allows them to take the thing to the language.

The autistic children also tend to like routine, as Temple was dedicated to formulating a set of practicable rules that would account for their behavior and the conduct of others, “the world which they desperately try to impose some order” (Grandin, 2012, p. 21). “New places made me upset” (Grandin, 2012, p. 34).

Maleval (2015) points that autism adaptation occurs through the intellect, by the rational explanation of things. “The autistics would like the world of things to be governed by fixed regularities; they suffer from the fact that reality fluctuates in function of subjective interpretations. Significant ambiguity disorients them; so they seek to encode the world with the help of signs” (p.26).

Jerusalinsky (2012) also speaks of this aspect by mentioning that the presence of the Other is intrusive to the autistic child, where their defense mechanism is the exclusion. However, for this author, the exclusion leaves the autistics out of the language and the process of alienation, diverging from Maleval (2015) who, as already mentioned, believes that the autistics are within language, in a partial alienation.

Thus it is by means of objects that the autistic can open themselves to the world, this object was named by Tustin in 1972, as an autistic object. The autistic object is at the beginning of the autistic defenses which essentially consist of maintaining control and putting itself out of reach (Maleval, 2015). The autistic object interposes itself between the subject and the desire of the Other, enabling the autistic to put a barrier in front of the world. However, if the autistic can maintain control of his autistic object, he may establish a relationship with the world through it.

This analysis reminds the Temple Grandin’s hugging machine, which since its construction facilitated the connection of the same with the world. This machine under Temple’s control enabled her to have something in touch with her body, a kind of body restraint that calmed her down. Regarding the hugging machine, we have the following statements from Grandin (2012):

But what was most important to an autistic person was I who exercised control, instead that the situation in which I was swallowed by my aunt’s over-affection. (p.93). When I stepped in, I felt closer to people like

my mother, Mr. Peters, Mr. Brooks, Mr. Carlock, and Auntie Ann. Although it was only a mechanical device, the cattle crush brought down my tactile defensiveness, and I could feel the affection and concern of the people, being able to express my feelings for myself and for the others. It was as if a pantographic door had been opened, revealing my emotions. (p.97).

Maleval (2015) also highlights in the autism clinic an aptitude for these subjects to develop what is termed “specific interests”. The skills they acquire in this field are sometimes generalized, allowing them a professional insertion. What is observed in Temple Grandin’s autobiography, his intense interest in bovine behaviors and his professional insertion in this field.

The attraction for a specific interest may incite the autistics to a spontaneous acquisition of social competences, which lead them to develop, from themselves, their synthesis Other. Autistic objects and specific interests can be a protection against the desire of the Other, a refusal of alienation, avoid a confrontation with anguish and sometimes allows advance social life (Maleval, 2015).

As it is presented in the autobiography of Temple Grandin that over the years has been expanding her social skills, her communication and the expression in the voice; as the Temple’s teacher reports: “The tone of his voice improved. It is no longer so unimpressive” (Grandin, 2012, p.90). What culminates the analysis that the “hugging machine” and her specific interest for cattle, did not distance Temple Grandin from the world, but instead that, allowed her an insertion in the world and a relation with the other in a less invasive way for her.

Final considerations

In front of the analyze the Temple Grandin’s autobiography based on psychoanalytic theories on autism and taking as a guiding compass the theory of the alienation and separation of Lacan; it was possible to realize that although each author aims to look at different aspects of autism, they converge in some aspects. First, that all approach autism differing from other psychic structures; neurosis, psychosis, and

perversion. And they converge in the conception that in the subjective structuring of the autistic child, the heart of the question occurs in the process of the alienation, being possible to observe signs of autism from the early childhood, in the interface of the relation of the child with the Other.

At the same time there are differences in theories. Where Laznik, Jerusalinsky, Catão and Stefan point out that there is a failure in alienation and as a result of this failure there is no constitution of the mirror stage and the subject does not come because the autistic is outside of language. On the other hand Soler, Freire and Maleval corroborate that the autistic is not out of language, considering that humans are in language before they are born, since they are spoken by the Other.

However, it stands out that Soler speaks of a short of alienation, while Maleval positions autism not being short of alienation, but in alienation, in an active position of refusal to the Other. And so, with the autistic being inserted into language and the social bond being possible through the autistic objects and specific interests, one could think of what he called partial alienation.

In this analysis we can see that there is no theory that explains the all complexity of autism, but which is more interesting to think about the case of Temple Grandin is the Maleval's perspective (2012, 2015 and 2017) that brings the partial alienation, where the autistic child sometimes is in the speech, sometimes not. What is perceived throughout the autobiography of Temple Grandin, her difficulty of being inserted in speech by the language, voice, expressions, intonation and difficulty to articulate with others

It was perceived with this research that the theory of alienation and separation has limitations, since in speaking of autism it is necessary to think also the concepts of *jouissance*, drive, and also to advance in the second teaching of Lacan, where the signifier emerges: *lalanguage*. Thus, it is extremely important to advance Lacanian teachings in order to think of this clinic from a wider perspective, respecting its complexity.

It was also possible to observe that there is no answer to the enigma of the subjective constitution in autism. For if, when speaking of subject, we are referring to the barred subject (\$), of the neurotic, this does not come about in autism, nor does it constitute psychosis. But even so, psychoanalysis considers the psychotic as subject. So, why not think that in autism there is a subject in constitution, a subject to be, with a particular functioning, distinct from other structures (neurosis, psychosis and perversion)?

They are questions that disturb and move the researchers that permeate the autism clinic, which relaunches the enigma of the subject constitution and causes the analyst to work and with that the psychoanalysis advances. Thus, this work did not aim to exhaust discussions and analyzes about autism, but to discuss some hypotheses and readings of this clinical picture, which has been increasingly addressed in research and clinics, but still raises many questions to health professionals.

Contributions of the authors

Borges, M. Y. P. participated in the survey of texts, literature review, systematization of data and preparation of analyzes and writing of the manuscript. Castro, M. L. S. guided the conduct of the work, besides contributing with the writing and revision of the final manuscript.

Conflicts of interest

No financial, legal, or political conflict involving third parties (government, business and private foundations, etc.) was declared for any aspect of the work submitted (including but not limited to grants and funding, participation in advisory council, study design, preparation manuscript, statistical analysis, etc.).

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