

PHONETIC CORRECTION IN CLASS WITH VERBO-TONAL METHOD

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I Issues in phonetic correction in class

1.1 A difficult situation

As teachers of foreign language in Japan, we often have to deal with the bad pronunciation of our students. It takes a long time for them to make up a sentence, and the result is often beyond comprehension. This (with the lack of motivation and passivity) is the main obstacle to effective teaching. The students lack ability to communicate efficiently in a foreign language. This has become a widely recognised problem in education.

What are the reasons of this lack of aptitude in speaking? Based on our own experience, let us describe the main obstacles to a good participation of the students in the oral class. Before even thinking of phonetic correction, first there is the issue of liberating the speech. The following are the main problems for effective participation in class :

- In the traditional language class, the emphasis is made mostly on **writing**. There are few occasions to make a free conversation in the class.
- The classes in traditional school teaching are **too big**, furthermore limiting the free speech. In High School, English oral classes of over 40 students are common, limiting expression.
- As a consequence, the main way of learning is through **group repetition**,

which is not a context of communication.

- The way of teaching is mostly on a **master / student relationship**. The master teaches, the students learn (or try to). The type of relationship it creates is a vertical one: master above, speaking; mute students absorbing the knowledge. This is also due to the traditional role of the *sensei* in Japan, untouchable and deserving utmost respect. This barrier is even symbolised by a spatial one: teacher standing behind his/her desk, on the stage, *versus* a block of dizains of students, sitting and absolutely still. The result of which is a passive way of learning, when it has been established that it is easier to learn through an active way¹⁾.
- **The natural shyness and lack of initiative** (which is a Japanese cultural trait) of the students prevents them to speak. There is a phenomenon of group effect that reinforces passivity.
- **The hypercorrection** is also a problem. By hypercorrection I mean the tendency not to accept one's mistake. Unstead of making an error, the students prefer not to speak.
- **The general competence of the Japanese English teacher** is sometimes insufficient. An experiment has been made, by introducing foreign English-speaking teachers in kindergarden to teach children²⁾. The experiment was comparatively a failure, since after acquiring a good accent and pronunciation, the children moved to Junior High school only to be taught by a teacher speaking katakana english. The progress is from then definitely

1) As described in various studies: see STAHL, Robert J.: *The Essential Elements of Cooperative Learning in the Classroom*, ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education Bloomington IN, 1994. Also: Platform for active learning, University of Hull. (<http://www.hull.ac.uk/pal/>)

2) Monbukagakushou 文部科学省 report on English education in Japan: <http://www.mext.go.jp/english/news/2002/07/020901.htm>

lost: the children lose their ability in order to line up with the taught pronunciation. That is why the JET programme, which was a program of the Japanese Education Minister whose aim was to invite thousands of Native English-speaking teachers to Japan to teach, was somewhat a failure³⁾.

Besides these cultural and institutional difficulties, there are, more specifically, a certain number of issues in terms of phonetic correction in the class.

- In the traditional language class, there is absolutely **no phonetic correction in class**. There is almost no teaching of prosody, rhythm and intonation. The student speaks, as taught, word by word. There are no *flow*, no melody, just words put one after each other. The attention is focused only in the detail, not in the global structure.
- And here comes the well-known arch-enemy of the language teacher: **katakana**. Katakana is a translation of the foreign language sound system into the Japanese one. Instead of adaptating to the language, the learners adapt the foreign language to their own familiar phonetic system. Students never hear, they never work on their perceptions and intuition. As soon as they hear a new word, they transcribe it into katakana. If they don't, they feel unsecure and feel they didn't memorize the word. But by doing so, they often learn a mistaken pronunciation. And the word is considered as a single unit, not as a part of a sentence.

1.2 What can be done ?

Concerning these different issues, the language teacher might find handy to observe the following suggestions :

- In order to solve the problem of shyness and hypercorrection, the teacher

3) See the Monbukagakushou 文部科学省 report on JET Programme : <http://www.cao.go.jp/sasshin/data/shiwake/result/B-36.pdf>

should dedicate himself/herself in creating a **friendly and warmth atmosphere**. If one want to correct the pronunciation of the students, one needs to have them relaxed (but ready), and have them motivated.

- The teacher should **restrict the use of katakana**, even trying to forbid it. The differences between katakana-less and katakana classes are quite stunning, in terms of pronunciation and communication.
- Unstead of having enormous classes, it is important to have **smaller classes**, with a more egalitarian relationship between the teacher and the students, as in many unformal schools (such as *juku* (cram schools) and language schools). The teacher should withdraw when needed (during communication practices for instance), so as not to put always a judging eye and let the students practice freely (but still overlooking the activity).
- **The writing should be started later**, if possible. It has established that the writing directly influences the pronunciation⁴⁾. For instance, Japanese French learners pronounce correctly « j'habite » [jabit] when taught orally, and then would change their prononciation to [jøhabit] when they see the writing for the first time (the aspirated « h » does not exist in French).
- **The roleplaying game and class activity** should be strongly encouraged, as it gives motivation and gets closer to a mere game.
- Lots of method are purely grammatical. On the contrary, **the use of innovative methods**, such as the *Immediate method*, is very rewardful. The Immediate Method⁵⁾ is a method developped by Jean-Luc Azra and Bruno Vannieu, from Kobe university. The main principles are simple : no

4) RENARD, Raymond (1971) *Introduction à la méthode verbo-tonale de correction phonétique*, Didier, Paris, citing linguist P. Delattre : «*After years in America, it is still impossible for me, without considerable efforts, to pronounce a enough open sound for the [o] of English words like hot because my mind resists saying [a] when reading an [o]*», p. 58.

5) Official website : <http://www.almalang.com/contact.html>

grammatical explanations (the grammar is intuitively understood), few writing, very few cultural contents, but *pure communication*. The lesson is based on the learning and practice of a structure, with infinite variations. From lesson 1, a very simple conversation can be made. Another strong point of this method is that the word is integrated in a structure, is not an isolated item but a part of the whole. This is a very communicative method, and versions exist in French, English, German, and even Japanese. The comprehension is intuitive, as a Native learner would learn. Thus this method is recommended for the *liberation* of the speech in language class.

- Likewise, the teacher should insist on **prosodic patterns** (accentuation, intonation, rhythm). The student must make a sentence, with the right intonation and rhythm, not lining the words like pearls on a necklace.
- Also, it is important to put the stress on **audition**. Hearing the words over and over is a good way to gain proficiency in a language.

But all these suggestions might not be enough to obtain a good pronunciation from the students. A tool able to directly influence the pronunciation is therefore needed. In that regard, the Verbo-tonal method provides a clear and complete phonetic correction system, that can be used discreetly as well as intuitively.

II Verbo-tonal method

2.1 Origin and principles

The verbo-tonal method has been developed by famous linguist Petar Guberina at Zagreb Univ, in 1954. It was used at that time as a phonetic correction tool for hearing-impaired children (through the use of sound machines called *logatomes*⁽⁶⁾). It later evolved into a comprehensive method in the teaching of foreign languages.

The very strong point is that the Verbo-tonal method can be used with any language, with any kind of learners.

What are its basic principles ?

- **Integration of the phonetic correction in the teaching**
- **Importance of the body and affectivity**
- **Importance given to intonation and rhythm**
- **Intuition** : there is no direct analysis of the pronunciation, no use of the analytic consciousness of the learner
- **Priority to oral rather than writing**

The Verbo-tonal method is based on the most accurate linguistic theories, especially concerning the acquisition of language. We cannot spare some explanations about the way we acquire the language capacity, since it is at the very root of this method.

2.2 The basics of language acquisition

There are **four stages of language acquisition**⁷⁾. This is true for *any* language in the world.

- **The first one** is the baby screaming (at a very early age) : it consists in a mechanic and unconscious muscle movement transmitting the reaction of the organism.
- **The second stage** is the babbling (from 6 to 12 months) : the babies start

6) See P. Veit ; G. Bizaguet ; A. Ubersfeld : *Contrôle De L'Adaptation De La Prothèse Auditive Du Jeune Enfant Sourd, Avant L'Acquisition Du Langage*, International Journal of Audiology, Volume 7, Issue 11968, pages 142-147

7) As established in Claude HAGEGE, *L'enfant aux deux langues*, 1996 [2005], Ed. Odile Jacob (Paris), p. 17-37.

controlling muscle activity, and begin chanting in a lot of different tones. Babbling is an stage of the development where the baby uses all the sounds in the languages of the world. There is no limitation on the experimentation of his or her own voice.

- **The third stage** is the constitution of the *phonetic filter*⁸⁾. The parents keep addressing to their child in their own native language. As a consequence, after a while there is a selection of only the distinct and meaningful phonemes, so to say the strictly useful phonemes. It leads to an

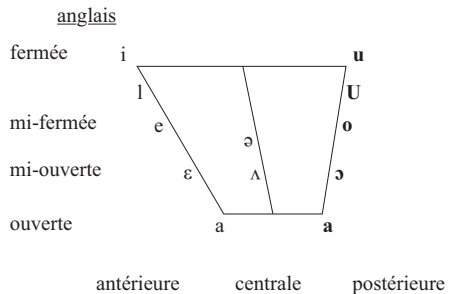
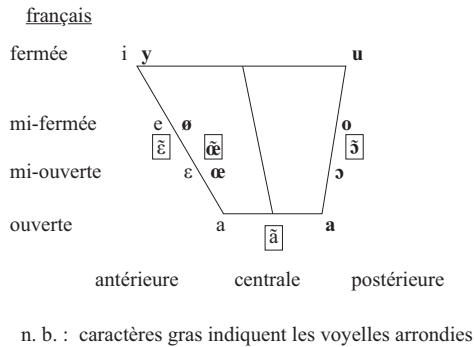


Fig. 1 : An exemple of how the phonetic filter differ in French and English regarding vowels

8) RENARD, Raymond, *Ibid.* : « The adult (i. e. the person mastering the phonologic system of its own motherlanguage, in opposition to the child at the stage of language learning), listening to a foreign language, wouldn't perceive the sound as a child but through a phonologic filter conditionned by its own phonologic system », p. 22.

impoverishment of the phonetic possibilities of the baby, and the constitution of a strict phonetic system.

At the end of these three first stages, we can say that the phonetic system of the mother language is almost constituted. Its main principle is that every phonologic system is the result of the organisation of data under a relatively reduced number of phonetic units (called phonemes) necessary to the communication. Each individual gives blind obedience to the phonologic system. Therefore, to hear a sound means not only detection, but also identification, selection and decoding, an unconscious and automatised process.

But the task of decoding the phonemes is not just what makes the system of the language. While learning how to master the mother language, the baby also learns :

- the combination system (i. e. the possible combination between phonemes, for instance *shi* or *tsu* in Japanese),
- the prosodic system (the global intonation and rhythm system)

Eventually, the mastering of the phonologic, combination and prosodic system leads to the gradual automatisation of the linguistic system.

- **The fourth and last stage** of the development of the language is the Phonologic surdity. This is the last stage after 1) screaming, 2) babbling and 3) constitution of the phonologic filter, and it takes place around 11-12 years old. Phonologic surdity means that you lose your ability of mastering another language as your language, since the constituted system of your mother system is fully automatised, therefore come to a completion. In other words, you become deaf to other languages. Now it is over, you will suffer to learn foreign languages.

2.3 The system of errors

2.3.1 Three systems when learning a language

As Renard (one of the pioneers of the Verbo-Tonal method) said : « the fact is that we are mistakenly pronouncing a sentence in a foreign language because we perceive it mistakenly : this wrong perception is the result of the selection habits of the mother language » (p. 24). The « foreign accent » is not related to the fact that one cannot pronounce one sound, but that his/her perception of the sound is wrong. When learning a foreign language, there are three linguistic systems : your own system, the system of the other language, and the error system, third system born between the two : the *interlanguage*, or *the system of errors*. The learner has a tendency to be stuck in this system. This is what happens to a lot of Japanese students : they are stuck in interlanguage, so to say katakana English.

2.3.2 The difficulty of speaking

Others disturbing factors are messing with the problem of pronunciation : for instance difference in prosody (intonation, rhythm), gesture, facial expression, surroundings, context, hopes, culture, etc. There exists a feeling of danger when speaking another language, since speaking is part of yourself (psychically and biologically). The result of which is a feeling of danger and uneasiness when learning a language⁹⁾ : it affects your very intimate sphere. As a consequence, the most simple and wrong solution : hearing and pronouncing the sound of the foreign language as if it were your own language¹⁰⁾ (in Japan's case, katakana). **Therefore there is this absolute necessity for the student : *learning to perceive, not translate.***

9) RENARD, Raymond, *Ibid.*, p. 25.

10) RENARD, Raymond, *Ibid.*, p. 26.

Ⅲ Phonetic correction with Verbo-tonal methodology¹¹⁾

When using VTM (verbo-tonal method), there are 3 ways to correct the pronunciation :

- **Prosodic correction** : correction of rhythm and intonation
- **Nuanced pronunciation** : correction of phonemes
- **Facilitating surroundings** : correction of vowels

3.1 Prosodic correction

3.1.1 Definition of prosody

What we called prosody is a suprasystem (a system above other systems) ruling over 1) the syllabic system ; 2) the structure of intonation ; and 3) the structure of pauses and tempo. Basically, prosody is the first thing we notice when listening to a language (even without knowing it) : the global rhythm and expressivity of the language. The prosody is defined in terms of height (up and down), time (length of syllables) and intensity (stressed and non-stressed elements)¹²⁾.

3.1.2 Correction of Accentuation

3.1.2.1 Accentuation of the word

In English, the accentuation is made on certain syllables only : it depends which word you want to pronounce. On the contrary, in French and Japanese, the basic accentuation of the word is on the last syllable (or particle in the case of Japanese)¹³⁾. Students having a tendency to pronounce with more strength the first

11) The following notions are based on RAYMOND Renard, op. cit., and BILLIERES, Michel : *Phonetic correction in class*, course in pedagogy at University Toulouse Le Mirail, 2004-2005.

12) BILLIERES, Michel : *op. cit.*

13) ASHBY, William J. : The Rhythmic Group, liaison, nouns and verbs in French, *Studia Linguistica*, Volume 29 Issue 1-2, pages 110-116.

syllable when confronted to a foreign language, must be corrected : an isolated french word must be accentuated on the last syllable. For instance, the teacher must insist that the correct pronunciation of « scooter » in French is scooter, and not scooter.

3.1.2.2 Basic rhythmic group

The basic rhythmic group in French language is composed of 3 or 4 syllables, with the accentuation on the last syllable, as in Japanese. It is important to note that there is also an affective accent : *Oh ! C'est bon ! (Oh ! It's good !)* will naturally have a high-pitched accent on the last syllable, as well as the *Oh !*

3.1.2.3 Importance of gestures

The gestures accompanying the voice of the teacher are : 1) a media transmitting the rhythm, the intonation, and the tension of the sound ; 2) a visual and affective intermediary : *the eye hears*. But it is important to emphasize that the teacher must control the amplitude of his/her own gestures : don't go over the shoulder and stay in the chest zone, so that the learner can see the face of the teacher at the same time.

3.1.2.3.1 Melodic movement

For instance the teacher can raise his/her hand in case of a question, or lower his hand in case of an assertion.

Tu as mangé ? ↗ Tu as mangé. ↘ (Have you eaten ? You have eaten.)

Similarly, the teacher can indicate the full intonation of a sentence with his/her hand, thus showing the melodic pattern :

C'est vrai monsieur ? (Is that true, sir?)

=
=
=

3.1.2.3.2 Syllabic scansion

Since the rhythm of French is regular, you can beat the rhythm with your hand, as well as showing the length of the final syllable of the rhythmic group, and showing if the intonation goes up or down.

Bonjour / comment allez-vous / ce matin ?

= ↗ = = = ↘ = = ↗

3.1.2.3.3 Syllable count

You can use this technique when syllables are missing (sometimes students «eat» the words, forgetting to pronounce every single syllable). Count the syllables by groups of 2 or 3 (1, 2, 3) with the hand at the height of the chest.

(bonjour) (comment) (allez-vous) (ce matin ?)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The student concentrating on the teacher's gestures and as a matter of fact on prosodic factors unconsciously unlocks his/her perception. There is less focus on the difficult sound. Thus, the songs and nursery rhyme are of great help for the teaching of foreign language.

3.2 Nuanced pronunciation (correction of phonemes)

3.2.1 Two axis in pronunciation¹⁴⁾

An error of production on a vowel or consonant always occur on one of these two axis :

- **Axis of tension(T)** : the Tension is the energy needed to make a speech sound.
- **Clear axis(C)/the dark axis(S)**. A clear sound implies a high-pitched frequency, a dark (or low) sound implies a low-pitched frequency.

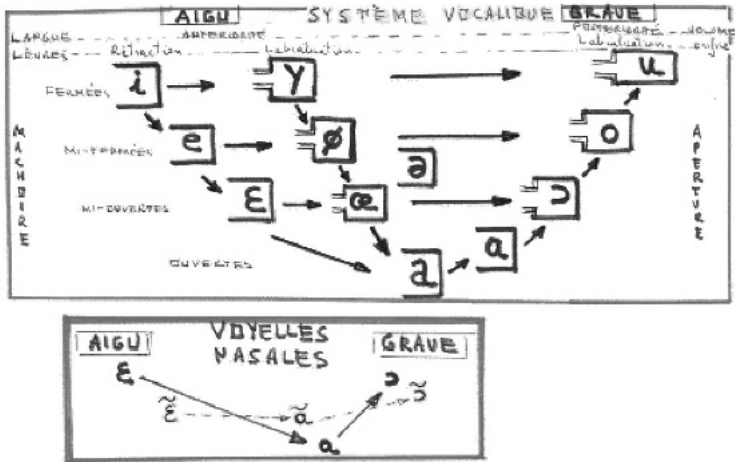


Fig. 2: Vowels classification. From left to right : clear → dark pronunciation.
From up to down : tense → relaxed pronunciation¹⁵⁾.

14) BILLIERES, Michel : *op. cit.*

15) University of Leon : <http://www3.unileon.es/~dp/dfm/fenet/phon/phoncours3.html> #methodeverbotonale

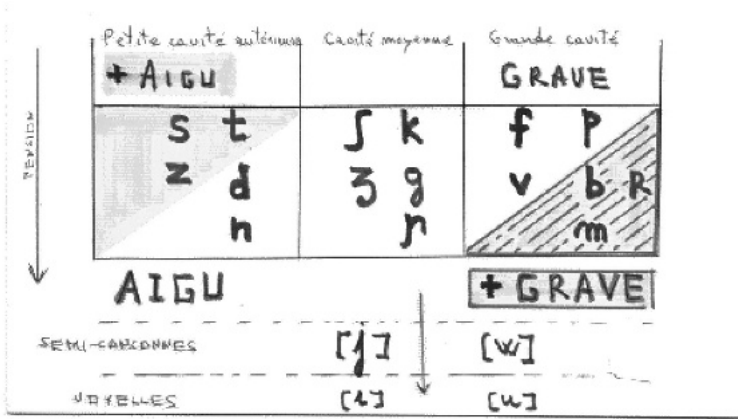


Fig. 3 : Consonants classification. From left to right: clear → dark pronunciation. From up to down : tense → relaxed pronunciation¹⁶⁾.

When the student mistake a consonant with another, it is always a problem of tension. When the student replace a vowel with another, it is always a problem on the C/S axis.

3.2.2 Making good use of tension

When a student is having a pronunciation too relaxed or too tense, you can play with the tension to get him/her to pronounce correctly.

If the pronunciation is too relaxed and you need to strengthen it, these are the measures to adopt :

- Speak more quickly
- Put the sound error at the end of a question or exclamation¹⁷⁾

16) University of Leon : <http://www3.unileon.es/dp/dfm/fenet/phon/phoncours3.html#methodeverbotonale>

17) RENARD, Raymond, *op. cit.* : « The vowel at the top -i. e. the end of an ascending intonation, or at the beginning of a descending intonation -is perceived as clearer and more tense », p. 63.

Elle est ici ? *Il est sorti ?*
 T+ T+

- Put the sound error at the beginning of a sentence (the first syllable of a word is always stronger).

Qui est venu ? *Que vois-tu ?*
 T+ T+

If the pronunciation is too stressed and you need to put the tension down : at the end of a sentence, or in the middle/end of a word¹⁸⁾.

To make things clearer, some generic examples are needed :

*If the student pronounce [dʒuR] instead of «jour», it means that the pronunciation is too tense. To help relax the sound, [ʒ] should be put on final position : *rouge, bouge, orage, plage...*

*In case of diphthongs : you should shorten the sound (with a gesture, and speaking more quickly). For instance, English have a tendency to say [bɔw] instead of [bo].

*The English are also pronouncing [p], [t], [k] too strongly. A good way to correct this (and relaxing the pronunciation) is to put the consonant in the middle of a sentence, so that it will be more relaxed : *Est-ce Paul ? , est-ce tard ? , est-ce comique ?*

*There is a deep connection between the body and the tension : if the body is tense, the pronunciation will be tense, if the body is relaxed, the pronunciation is relaxed. For instance, you can rise the tension by moving up your head and clenching your fists. Or you can decrease the tension by moving your body towards the ground, lowering your head and arms.

18) RENARD, Raymond, *op. cit.* : « The vowel at the end of a descending intonation or at the beginning of an ascending intonation, is perceived as darker and more relaxed », p. 63.

3.2.3 Making good use of the dark/clear axis

The canonic example is the following¹⁹⁾: a native spanish speaker will have a tendency to pronounce «J'ai bou un café», instead of «j'ai bu un café». In phonetic alphabet, the error is pronouncing [u] instead if [y]. Obviously, the sound [u] is perceived too dark. Provided that the correct sound [y] is between [i] and [u] in the board of vowels, you should make a sound between [y] and [i] so that the learner will tend to the sound [y], a clearer pronunciation. The main idea is: to make the student perceive an error he/she cannot perceive because the difference is too subtle, the teacher should exagérate in the other direction.

3.3 Facilitating surroundings

I don't use a lot the technique of facilitating surroundings in french class, but in brief there are the basic principles. The facilitating surroundings technique aims at the correction of vowel, perceived too tensed or too relaxed. In the syllable, the phonemes have a mutual influence: $C_1 \leftrightarrow V_1 \leftrightarrow C_2$ (C_1 and C_2 being consonants, and V_1 being a vowel). Vowels and consonants are more or less dark or clear. By putting clearer or darker consonants next to a vowel, you can influence the pronunciation of the vowel.

Let's take again the example of «j'ai bou un café», with [u] being too dark. You can nuance the pronunciation as said above, but you can also replace the [b] in «j'ai bou un café» by clearer consonants:

”J'ai [ty] un café

”J'ai [sy] un café

And gradually come back to the [b]. In the french class, I use this technique only to correct the sound [y], which is perceived too low by students.

19) Taken from BILLIERES, Michel: *op. cit.*

IV Phonetic correction in French class for Japanese

How would you use this three techniques of phonetic correction in the french class? What is an efficient way of teaching the pronunciation? Based on our experience, here are a few examples of how the Verbo-tonal technique can be useful :

*g and j (letters of the alphabet) are often pronounced [tʒe] and [tʒi]. There is too much tension in the pronunciation, so you should make the sound longer, adopt an attitude to release the tension (lowering your head, moving your hand horizontally, and pronouncing the [ʒe] and [ʒi] with very little strength, so that the students, influenced by that, would pronounce the sound more clearly. Likely, the pronunciation of je is often too tense : instead of [ʒe swi ʒapone] (je suis japonais), we can find [tʒe swi tʒapone]. Therefore, the sound should be corrected as said above : releasing the tension, head lowering, slow horizontal gesture of the hand to show that the sound is relaxed.

*[y] is often pronounced as [Ø] (which is a schwa), which is too relaxed. The teacher, before having the students repeat, should pronounce the [y] with a lot of tension, clenching the fist, looking up, well rounding the lips, and exaggerating the high-pitched tone. Then pronounce the [Ø] extremely relaxed, mouth wide open, head nodding down. The same could be said with the letter q, pronounced in French [ky] : add more tension, look up, exaggerate the high-pitched tone.

*There is often a confusion in [v] and [b]. Let the student repeat the following pattern : *je bois / je vois* (I drink / I see), *j'ai bu / j'ai vu* (I drank / I saw). The teacher should put his/her hand in the forehead, above the eyes, as if

looking at something, while extending the sound [v]. For the sound [b], the teacher should mime someone drinking from a cup while saying *je bois*, putting strong emphasis on the sound [b]. Therefore, the meaning goes with the pronunciation.

*As there are a lot of nasal vowels in french ([ã], [e], [o], [u]), the teacher should touch his nose with his/her finger, so as to show where the sound is emitted.

*Another distinction is between *é*, which is clearer, and *è*, which is darker. The distinction can be done while rising the head up, and pronounce in a high-pitched tone, in the case of *é*, and lower the head and pronounce in a low-pitched voice in the case of *è*. The direction of the accent can be used also to indicate how to pronounce the sound : *é*=↗, *è*=↘.

*The difference between masculine and feminine can be shown by a movement of the hand. For instance, the difference between *étudiant* (masculine for student) and *étudiante* (feminine) can be shown with an horizontal gesture and the prolongation of the nasal sound [a] for *étudiant*, a gesture indicating the closing sound for *étudiante*.

*The segmentation of words is useful too, in a phonetic correction perspective : in order to prevent students to pronounce the katakana way, making a scansion of syllables can indicate how to pronounce the word. The word *table*, for instance, will be mistakenly pronounced by the students テーブル or something approaching. The teacher should indicate the number of syllables to be pronounced (in this case, only one), by showing distinctly the fist: tabl[e]. The importance is to counterattack the influence of katakana which has a tendency to over-cut the words.

Making the students try to repeat within one syllable the word *table* is of hand. The same can be said with words like *livre* (pronounced in one syllable), and *septembre* (pronounced in two syllables, not like the English pronunciation). Segmenting the words in order to give the right number of syllables is important. Another example is *appartement* (1-2-3-4). Since a lot of students have a tendency to swallow the syllables, it is better to show them with gestures of the hand the right number of syllables.

*In this sense, gestures (hands going up) indicating if the sentence pronounced is a question or a affirmation might be of use. Too often, the students tend to ask a question as if it were an affirmation. For instance, - *Vous avez une voiture.* - *Oui* (*You have a car - yes*) doesn't make a proper conversation. The intonation is important, and should be taken special take of.

*In terms of gesture, one simple use is that of past / present / future tense. The past tense should be expressed by a gesture of the hand over the shoulder (past), the present tense indicated by a finger pointing down (present), the future tense by a gesture of the hand indicating towards (future).

*In terms of syllable count, it would be useful to start from the end of the word so as to give an idea of how the word should be pronounced globally. *Au revoir* as *conversation* are big problems to the students in terms of length of the word. So the teacher should start at the end of word, slowing decomposing the different sounds. For instance, *au revoir* should be decomposed gradually as [aR], [waR], [voaR], [ØvoaR], [RØvoaR], [oRØvoaR].

*Dislocating the sound may prevent some pronunciation habits. For instance,

in words such as *monsieur* or *piscine*, the sequence [si] will have a tendency to be pronounced [ʃi], in regards to the phonetic distribution of Japanese, where the combination [si] does not exist.

The teacher can dislocate the word into [mØs-iØ] or [pis-in] (the teacher should do the *peace* sign in order to make the student understand visually). It works almost instantly.

*There are many other ways of correcting the sound according to the methods exposed above. Moreover, you can combine them to get maximum result. For instance combining the pronunciation of [y] with a high-pitched tone and looking up, combined with the use of facilitating surroundings « J'ai [ty] un café », « J'ai [sy] un café »...

The main point is not to leave the error in sound without correction. By doing so, you help fossilizing the error which tends to remain forever. On the contrary, operating a very technical correction in front of others, is stressful for the student. At least, with the Verbo-Tonal methodology, you can correct in a discreet way, making it seem like a game.

V Phonetic correction in English class for Japanese

And in English? How is it possible to use the Verbo-Tonal methodology? Too often, the sentence is broken in little pieces, pronounced with utmost difficulties. The first point is to restore the flow of the English language: have the student repeat in a flow, give the rhythm with gestures. One should also make the accentuation of the words and sentences clear with gestures. By gestures (opening the hand) indicating how much tonicity should be given to the consonants ([p^H], [t^H], [d^H]

etc., instead of [p], [t], [d], for instance). Great attention should be done to the diphthongs: the vowels should be made longer with a sign. The teacher should also comparatively study the phonological system of English and the native language of the students, so as to know how to correct the sound, by nuanced pronunciation or facilitating surroundings.

As a conclusion

We hope that we were able to bring interest on the Verbo-Tonal methodology, which is a comprehensive and effective Phonetic correction method in class. One strong point is that it works, not only with French / English and Japanese students, but with any language and any type of learners. You can also use it as you will: you can do intensive training with phonetic correction workshops, or just use it at some occasion in class. Another good point is that is very intuitive, and easy to use, and it adds a lot more spice class to the class. In our experience, the student's response were really positive, and the results can be seen quickly: the errors are corrected little by little, and it gives best chances to communicate whenever the students would go abroad in a French-speaking country.

Verbo-tonal methodology Ressources :

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- * BILLIERES, Etienne : *Phonetic correction in class*, course in pedagogy at University Toulouse Le Mirail, 2004-2005.
- * HAGEGE, Claude 1996 [2005], *L'enfant aux deux langues*, Ed. Odile Jacob (Paris)
- * VEIT al. : *Contrôle De L'Adaptation De La Prothèse Auditive Du Jeune Enfant Sourd, Avant L'Acquisition Du Langage*, International Journal of Audiology, Volume 7, Issue 11968, pages 142-147

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<http://www3.unileon.es/dp/dfm/fenet/phon/phoncours3.html#methodeverbotonale>

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<http://www.d2.dion.ne.jp/~vtj-yaqi/vts15.htm>

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(this article is dealing with the use of Verbo-Tonal methodology to teach chinese to Japanese)

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* STAHL, Robert J. : *The Essential Elements of Cooperative Learning in the Classroom*, ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education Bloomington IN, 1994.

* *Platform for active learning*, University of Hull. (<http://www.hull.ac.uk/pal>)

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About English pedagogy in Japan

<http://www.cao.go.jp/sasshin/data/shiwake/result/B-36.pdf>

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<http://www.almalang.com/contact.html>

Méthode Immédiate's official website