

Diction in the Art of Singing in French Language

Radu Corneliu FĂGĂRĂȘAN¹

Abstract: *In French vocal music, diction refers to the clear and expressive pronunciation of the language while singing. It is an essential element of proper articulation in the French language, especially in genres such as mélodie and opera. Diction in the French language in the art of singing focuses on clarity, elegance, and natural fluidity. Unlike other languages, French relies heavily on nasal vowels, subtle consonants, and smooth connections between words. Singers must carefully shape the vowels, keeping them pure and very clearly pronounced and articulated, while at the same time avoiding overly harsh consonants that could disrupt the musical line. In the French language specific to the art of singing, great attention is given to nasal vowels such as an, on, and in, which must resonate without becoming heavy or muffled; then to silent consonants, many of which are not pronounced unless followed by a vowel. Phrasing in the art of singing requires legato, and this musical expression ensures a smooth flow of the text together with the melody of prosody; that is, the rhythm and natural accent of spoken French must align with the music.*

Keywords: *diction; vowels; consonants; art of singing; pronunciation; articulation;*

Introduction

Speech diction and diction in the art of singing differ from one another in the French language more than they do in other internationally spoken languages. The greater number of vowels, together with the nasal sounds and consonants such as the French [r], as well as many other French phonetic qualities, require adjustments when sung. A French artist sings the language differently from the way it is spoken. As in the Italian language, the vast number of regional dialects obliges the singer to adopt a standardized pronunciation. The French spoken by the educated Parisian would be the best standard for singing. This can be exemplified by the pronunciation of the consonant [r]. For vocal purposes, nasal sounds must also be adjusted. If the soft palate is lowered too much, as often happens in speech, the resonance shifts from the mouth to the nose, resulting in an uneven and exaggerated way of singing French words. Furthermore, open and closed vowels must fit the vocal line, especially in classical music. Nothing is worse than changing the vowel color from one tone to another, as spoken diction sometimes requires. In general, it can be said that diction in the art of singing in the French language conforms to the rules of Italian *bel canto*, with the inevitable exceptions that arise from the particularities of the French language. Correct pronunciation of French sounds is indispensable in order to avoid the misunderstanding of words.

1. Vowels in French Language

The large number of vowels in the French language requires a very keen ear and a pronunciation capable of reproducing the specific tone and dynamics of the language. The differences are

¹ Faculty of Arts, Ovidius University of Constanta, radu.fagarasan@365.univ-ovidius.ro.

subtle. Examples must therefore be carefully chosen by the voice teacher. Particular attention should be given to explaining to the singer the function of the three written accents: the acute accent [´], the grave accent [˘], and the circumflex accent [ˆ]. *It is important to have a clear understanding of this sings and in what ways they affect pronunciation.*² In addition to the three accents, in French language there is the cedilla accent [¸] and diaeresis accent [¨].

French linguists distinguish several types of [a], which in the art of singing are simplified into a front and a back vowel sound. This classification is extremely misleading, because every singer will associate the word “back” with backward vocal production, which is always vocally undesirable. Every vowel should be pronounced forward. The difference lies in the position of the lips, tongue, and jaw. *The spot where a French a should be produced in singing is exactly where the Italian a is situated and the mode of production is the same.*³ We distinguish between the long vowel [a] and the short vowel [a]. The vowel [a] is long in final syllables ending in -ar, -are, -arre, -age, -ave, -asion, -assion, and -ation. Example: *Mais n'apportant de p[a]ssion profonde, qu'à s'adorer* (“But bringing no deep passion, only self-adoration”) from the song *Au Bord de l'eau*, from the cycle *Trois Mélodies*, Op. 8 No. 1, by Gabriel Fauré.

It is also long and less open in final syllables ending in -ase, -aze, -able, -abre, -acle, and -asse, and in words such as *mac[a]bre* (“macabre”) and *sabre* (“sword”), when the final [r] is preceded by a voiced consonant. In words such as *place* (“place”), *masse* (“mass”), and *chasse* (“hunt”), the letter [a] is short. This is an exception to the rule above.

[Â] with a circumflex accent is also long and relatively closed, as in *mâtin* (“morning”), *pâle* (“pale”), and *grâce* (“grace”). In the endings -âmes, -âtes, and -ât, the [a] is short.

[A] is long but open in nouns and adjectives derived from or compounded with the syllable -as, such as *las* (“weary/tired”), *lasser* (“to tire”), *pas* (“not”), and *passer* (“to pass”). Example: *Tes beaux yeux sont las, pauvre amante* (“Your beautiful eyes are weary, poor lover”) from the song *Le Jet d'eau*, from the cycle *Cinq Poèmes de Baudelaire*, No. 3, by Claude Debussy.

In second-person singular endings in -as, [a] is short, as in the expression *tu ne viendras pas* (“you will not come”). Example: *Tombe la neige, tu ne viendras pas ce soir* (“The snow is falling, you will not come tonight”) from the song *Tombe la neige* by Salvatore Adamo.

[A] is long and rather closed in certain words ending in -as, such as *parias* (“outcasts”), *bras* (“arm”), and *chas* (“eye of a needle”). Example: *Au bras de leurs galants* (“At the arm of their gallant suitors”) from the song *Tristesse*, Op. 6 No. 2, by Gabriel Fauré; *à voler dans tes bras!* (“to fly into your arms!”) from Dalila’s aria *Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix*, from the opera *Samson et Dalila*, Op. 47, by Camille Saint-Saëns.

[A] is a long vowel in words such as *casser* (“to break”), *tasse* (“cup”), as well as in the words *damner* (“to damn”) and *condamner* (“to condemn”). Example: *Que le sort te condamne* (“May fate condemn you”) from the opera *Faust* by Charles Gounod. [A] is also long in endings such as -ail and -aille, as in the words *taille* (“size”) and *bataille* (“battle”). Example: *Aux vautours, il faut la bataille, pour frapper d'estoc et de taille* (“Vultures need battle, with thrusts and cutting blows”) from Stéphano’s aria in the opera *Roméo et Juliette* by Charles Gounod.

² David Adams. 2008. *A Handbook of Diction for Singers. Italian, German, French*. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 117.

³ Kurt Adler. 1965. *Phonetics and Diction in Singing Italian French Spanish German*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, p. 49.

The short open pronunciation of the vowel [a] is found in words where [a] carries a grave accent, such as *voilà* (“there is / here is”), *là* (“there”), and *déjà* (“already”). Example: the song *Voilà* by Barbara Pravi, Igit and Lili Poe.

Likewise, [a] is short when words end in *-at*, *-atte*, *-ap*, *-ape*, *-appe*, *-af*, *-afe*, *-aphe*, and *-ache*, as well as in the word *arracher* (“to tear away”). In monosyllabic words such as *car* (“because/for”), *bal* (“ball”), and *mal* (“evil/pain”), the pronunciation of [a] is short. Example: *Et Satan conduit le bal!* (“And Satan leads the ball!”), from Méphistophélès’ rondo *Le veau d’or est toujours debout!* (“The Golden Calf is still standing!”) from the opera *Faust* by Charles Gounod.

With regard to the vowel [e], we must distinguish between five different [e] vowels, without taking into account diphthongs and combinations of nasal sounds. These are the wide open [e], the intermediate [e], the closed [e], the weak [e], and the mute [e]. In French singing diction, the vowel [e] is not always pronounced in the same way.

The wide open [e] sound occurs in words written with a circumflex accent. It is pronounced in an exaggerated manner, similar to the vowel in the English word *bad*. Words pronounced in this way include *tête* (“head”), *bête* (“beast”), and *rêve* (“dream”). An example can be found directly in the title of the song *Après un rêve* (“After a Dream”), from the cycle *Trois Mélodies*, Op. 7, No. 1, composed by Gabriel Fauré. The vowel [e] is also open in the monosyllables *mes* (“my”), *tes* (“your”), *ses* (“his/her”), *les* (“the”), and *es* (“are”); as well as in endings such as *-et*, *-ets*, and *-ect*. In the conjunction *et* (“and”), however, the [e] is closed.

In general, it may be said that the French [e] is always open in words with syllables ending in a consonant, whether that consonant is pronounced or merely indicated in spelling, with the exception of syllables ending in *-ez* or *-er* (which contain a closed [e]). Wide open and open [e] vowels are pronounced as in the words *colère* (“anger”) and *neige* (“snow”). Example: the song *Paris en colère*, lyrics by Maurice Vidalin and music by Maurice Jarre - *Il faut voir les pavés sauter, quand Paris se met en colère* (“You should see the paving stones fly when Paris becomes angry”).

The intermediate vowel [e], phonetically written [ɛ], is somewhat less open than the [e] in the word *père* (“father”). Its English equivalent may be found in the word *set*. In French, it is pronounced when an [e] appears before two or three consonants, as in the words *descendre* (“to descend”), *laisser* (“to leave”), *terminer* (“to finish”), *parfait* (“perfect”), *merci* (“thank you”), and *espoir* (“hope”). Example: *Ne m’abandonne pas, espoir de la vengeance!* (“Do not abandon me, hope of vengeance!”), Arnold’s aria from the opera *Guillaume Tell* by Gioachino Rossini.

The intermediate [e] vowel is also found in the word *Noël*. Example: *Cantique de Noël (Minuit, Chrétiens)* (“Christmas Carol - O Holy Night”) by Adolphe Adam. The intermediate [e] is always short. Furthermore, the [e] in the middle of a word followed by a double *mm*, or by *nm* or double *nn*, is sometimes transformed into a short [a], as in the word *femme* (“woman”). An example of the vowel [e], which in French pronunciation changes into the vowel [a], appears in the verse: *Mais viendra le jour des adieux car il faut que les femmes pleurent* (“But the day of farewell will come, for women must weep”) from the song *Les Berceaux*, from the cycle *Trois Mélodies*, Op. 23, No. 1, by Gabriel Fauré.

The closed vowel [e] should not be understood in the sense that the throat must close in order to produce it. The tongue should remain low, and the corners of the lips should not be stretched outward. This closed [e] vowel also has an equivalent in English, as heard in words such as *chaotic* and *chaos*. German-speaking singers have no difficulty pronouncing a word containing a closed [e], such as *leben* (“life”). Italians use it in words such as *eh!* and *deh!*.

The closed [e] in French is usually represented by an acute-accented [é], as in *désir* (“desire”) and *été* (“summer”). Example: *Tous les désirs, tous les plaisirs, je les connais tant, je suis un amant excellent* (“All desires, all pleasures, I know them so well, I am an excellent lover”), sung by Tybalt in the musical *Roméo et Juliette* by Gérard Presgurvic; *Histoire d’amour et de désir* (“A story of love and desire”) from Gringoire’s song *Le Temps des Cathédrales* in the musical *Notre-Dame de Paris* by Riccardo Cocciante.

The weakly pronounced vowel [e] is similar to the sound in the English word *herb*. This weak [e] is produced with the lips slightly protruded and rounded, while the sides of the tongue curve upward. The [e] is weak in syllables ending in *e*, such as *je* (“I”), *te* (“you”), *ce* (“this”), *de* (“of/from/about”), *retour* (“return”), *venir* (“to come”), *cela* (“that”), and *dehors* (“outside”). Example: *Et la jeunesse ouvrant son aile a disparu sans retour* (“And youth, spreading its wings, disappeared without return”) from Manon’s aria *Profitions bien de la jeunesse* (“Let us make the most of youth”) in the opera *Manon* by Jules Massenet; *Je t’aimerai* (“I would love you”) from the romance *Plaisir d’amour* by Jean-Paul-Égide Martini.

*German-speaking singers have no difficulty at all with the closed e. It is exactly the same as in the word leben.*⁴

In spoken French there are many rules specifying when the vowel [e] should or should not be pronounced - in other words, when it becomes a mute [e]. In sung diction, these rules become more or less simplified according to the way composers use the libretto or text. This vowel becomes mute when it appears in endings such as *mère* (“mother”), *elle* (“she”), and *porte* (“door”). None of the final [e] vowels in these examples are pronounced in everyday speech. However, they must be pronounced in singing if they are placed under a long note or under a note that differs from the previous one. Example: *N’ouvre ta porte, ma belle* (“Do not open the door, my beautiful one”) from Méphistophélès’ serenade *Vous qui faites l’endormie* (“You who pretend to sleep”) in the opera *Faust* by Charles Gounod.



Fig. 1.

Méphistophélès’ Serenade: Vous qui faites l’endormie
from Opera *Faust* by Charles Gounod

The vowel [e] followed by [u] produces the sound [œ]. Phonetically, these are not diphthongs but vowels, since their place in the phonetic chart lies midway between [e] and [o]. They should be practiced by vocalizing an [o] and then gradually rounding and protruding the lips until it transforms into an [ø]. The same exercise should then continue beginning with [a],

⁴ Kurt Adler. 1965. *Phonetics and Diction in Singing Italian French Spanish German*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, p. 53.

with the lips less protruded, moving toward an intermediate [e] with relaxed lips. The closed vowel [eu], heard as [ø], must always be articulated with length. This sound may be found in three positions. First, at the end of words such as *dieu* (“God”), *feu* (“fire”), *jeu* (“game”), *peu* (“little”), or with final mute consonants, as in words ending in *-eux*: *œufs* (“eggs”), *bœufs* (“oxen”), *neufs* (“new” or the number nine), *monsieur* (“sir”), and *messieurs* (“gentlemen”). Second, it appears in endings followed by pronounced consonants, as in the word *jeune* (“young”), and in endings such as *-euse*, *-eute*, and *-eutre*. Third, [eu] in the middle of a word is closed and long in words such as *deuxième* (“second”), *jeudi* (“Thursday”), and *meunier* (“miller”). As for the open *eu* vowel [œ], this sound is in fact an intensified [ə] sound. This vowel is found and pronounced briefly in words such as *neuf* (“nine”), *seul* (“alone”), and *peuple* (“people”). Example: *Et seuls, tous deux devant tout ce qui lasse* (“And alone, the two of them before all that wearies”) from the song *Au bord de l’eau, Trois Mélodies*, Op. 8 No. 1, by Gabriel Fauré.

The vowels [i] and [y]: the French letter [i], in some cases written as [y], is a closed vowel. [I] is produced in the same manner as the Italian [i]. The French [i] and [y] correspond exactly to the vowel sounds in the English words *sea* and *key*. There are two types of [i] in French: long and short. Final [i] vowels are moderately short, as in *ami* (“friend”), *lys* (“lily”), and *ici* (“here”). Example: *Ô Fleur-de-Lys, Je ne suis pas un homme de foi, J’irai cueillir la fleur d’amour d’Esmeralda* (“O Fleur-de-Lys, I am not a man of faith, I shall go and gather the flower of Esmeralda’s love”), Quasimodo’s song *Belle* from the musical *Notre-Dame de Paris* by Riccardo Cocciante.

Another example is the song *Ici-bas!*, Op. 8 No. 3, by Gabriel Fauré: *Ici-bas tous les lilas meurent, Tous les chants des oiseaux sont courts, Je rêve aux étés qui demeurent, Toujours...* (“Here below, all lilacs die, All birdsongs are brief, I dream of summers that remain forever...”).

The letter [i] is somewhat longer in words such as *puis* (“then”) and *minuit* (“midnight”). The vowel [i] is short before consonants, except before [r], [z], [ʒ], [n], and [v], as in the words *pipe* (“pipe”), *riche* (“rich”), *captif* (“captive”), *profiter* (“to enjoy/profit”), and *fil* (“son”). Example: *Bon jour, et puis, quelles nouvelles?* (“Good day, and then, what news?”) from the song *Aux damoyelles paresseuses d’écrire à leurs amys* (“To the young ladies too lazy to write to their friends”), from the cycle *Sept Chansons de Clément Marot*, Op. 15 No. 3, by George Enescu.

The vowel [i] remains pure and may be slightly lengthened in endings such as *-ie*; an example is the word *patrie* (“homeland”). When followed by the consonants [n] or [m] within the same syllable, it becomes a nasal vowel. The vowel [o] exists in two principal forms: closed and open, and it may be either long or short. The closed [o] is generally long, especially in final position, with accents or spellings such as *au* and *eau*. Some examples are *eau* (“water”), *faux* (“false”), and *chaud* (“hot”). Example: *Entendre au pied du saule où l’eau murmure* (“To hear at the foot of the willow where the water murmurs”) from the song *Au Bord de l’eau*, from the cycle *Trois Mélodies*, Op. 8 No. 1, by Gabriel Fauré. The open [o] is often shorter and appears in many internal syllables. In singing, the vowel [o] must never be produced gutturally. The vowel [ou] - [u], as in the word *doux* (“sweet,” “gentle,” “soft,” “pleasant,” “lovely,” “delicate,” “tender,” or “calm”) - must be pronounced as a pure, non-diphthongized sound (as in Italian), never muffled. Example: *Tout doux, monsieur, tout doux* (“Easy now, sir, easy now”) from *Carmen*, Act II, of the opera *Carmen* by Georges Bizet. Its length varies according to position and surrounding consonants, but it is often long in final or accented positions.

The vowel *u* [y] is a distinctive French sound (not found in English), produced with rounded lips and a forward tongue position situated between [i] and [ou]. It may be long or short depending on the context and becomes nasal before the consonants [n] or [m], as in the word *lune* (“moon”). Example: *Lune, qui là-haut s’allume* (“Moon, lighting up high above”) from Gringoire’s song *Lune* in the musical *Notre-Dame de Paris* by Riccardo Cocciante; *La lune langoureuse* (“The languorous moon”) from the song *Tristesse*, in the cycle *Trois Mélodies*, Op. 6 No. 2, by Gabriel Fauré.

2. Nasal Vowels in French Language

There are four nasal vowel sounds: [ā], [ō], [œ], and [ē]. These sounds do not exist in English, Italian, or German. They are produced by slightly lowering the soft palate so that the airflow passes partly through the nasal passages and partly through the mouth. This lowering must not be exaggerated, since the result would be an overly nasal sound that would damage both diction and vocal tone. The position of the mouth, lips, and jaw remain unchanged for nasal vowels. A singer should use as little nasalization as possible. The positions correspond to those of the original vowels [a], [o], [œ], and [ε], which must never lose their identity. Here, the consonants [n] and [m] are blended into the nasal vowel and are not pronounced separately. The voice teacher must make it clear to singers that these nasal vowels are not like nasal consonants in other languages. Consonants following a nasal sound should be pronounced as late as possible. Nasal vowels are either long or moderately long, but never truly short. Initial nasal vowels must be attacked gently, without any glottal stroke. The sound [ū] is initially produced in the same manner as the vowel [a]. The mouth should be opened widely, while the soft palate is slightly lowered.

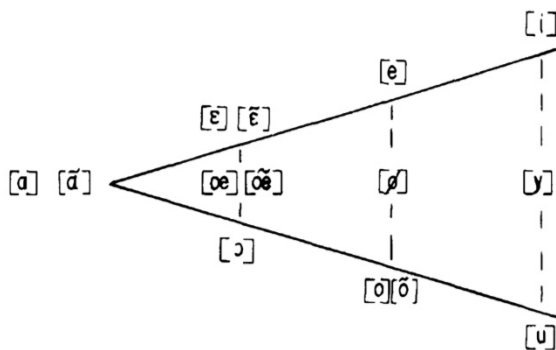


Fig. 2.

Diagram with the four nasal vowels in French language, according to Kurt Adler

Several examples of nasal vowel sounds can be found in words such as: *blanche* (“white”), *temps* (“time”), *infâme* (“infamous”), *inconnu* (“unknown”), *vainqueur* (“winner”), *cinq* (“five”), *main* (“hand”), *point* (“point”), *chien* (“dog”), *longue* (“long”), *blonde* (“blond”), *chacun* (“each”). Example: *Le veau d’or est vainqueur des dieux* (“The golden calf is victorious over the gods”) from Méphistophélès’ rondo *Le veau d’or est toujours debout!* (“The golden calf is still standing!”) from the opera *Faust* by Charles Gounod; *Que la main des femmes balance* (“Let the hand of women sway”) from the song *Les Berceaux*, from the cycle *Trois Mélodies*, Op. 23 No. 1, by Gabriel Fauré; *Pas même mon vieux chien* (“Not even my old dog”), from the song *Tristesse*, from the cycle *Trois Mélodies*, Op. 6 No. 2, by Gabriel Fauré.

The intensity with which French consonants must be pronounced in the art of singing lies somewhere between the explosive character of German and the subtlety of English. In general, it conforms to the clarity and gentleness of Italian consonants. However, there is an important difference: double consonants in French do not receive any additional stress; they are pronounced and sung just like single consonants.

pli - e, — Et ton cœur l'en croit! Ah! ah! ah! ah! ah! ah! ah! ah! ah!
 sure thee — There is naught a - miss! Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

riten. *p* *f* *a tempo* *pp*

A mild aspirated [h] can be found in words such as *haine* (“hatred”), *harpe* (“harp”), *hasard* (“chance”), and *haut* (“high”). Example of a gentle [h]: *La Haine* (“Hatred”) from the musical *Notre-Dame de Paris*, by Riccardo Cocciante.

The consonant [m] must never be nasalized on its own. Word-final [m] is always nasalized, with a few exceptions of foreign origin, such as *harem* and *album*. A vowel preceding [m] and followed by [b] or [p] merges with [m] into a nasal sound, as in *jambe* (“leg”), *simple* (“simple”), *nymph* (“nymph”), and *compte* (“account”). In the consonant combination [mn], the [m] is assimilated to [n], as in words such as *damner* (“to damn”) and *automne* (“autumn”).

Example: *Automne au ciel brumeux* ("Autumn in the misty sky"), from the song *Automne*, from the cycle *Trois Mélodies*, Op. 18 No. 3, by Gabriel Fauré.

The consonants [n] and double [nn], in articulation, are associated with the syllables *an*, *in*, *en* and are nasalized. Final syllables with these sounds, followed by the letters [e], [d], [t], or [s], are also nasalized, such as *bane* (“plague/misfortune”), *quand* (“when”), *point* (“point”), and *gens* (“people”). The sound [gn] in certain words is classified as “mouillé” (palatal/“liquid”), as in *agneau* (“lamb”), *compagnie* (“company”), *magnifique* (“magnificent”), and *montagne* (“mountain”). Example: the song *C’est magnifique* from the musical *Can-Can* by Cole Porter.

The consonant [l] and double [ll]: there are two types of [l] in French, a normal [l] and a liquid (palatalized) [l]. The normal [l] occurs as an initial sound, inside words, or at the end of words. It is found in endings such as *-al*, *-el*, *-eul*, as in *ciel* (“sky”) and *seul* (“alone”), as well as in combinations like *-oul* and *-ul*, as in *foule* (“crowd”). Example: *La Foule* (“The Crowd”) – “*Et la foule vient me jeter entre ses bras*” (“And the crowd comes to throw me into its arms”), lyrics by Michel Rivgache, music by Ángel Cabral.

It is silent in words such as *gentil* (“kind/nice/good/gentle”) and *fusil* (“rifle”), but liquid in similar forms such as *gentilhomme* (“gentleman/man of court”) and *gentille* (“kind/nice/friendly”). Combinations with *-il* in the middle of a word are always regular when followed by another vowel, as in *filial* (“filial”) and *fusilier* (“rifleman/infantryman”).

Some words with *-ill* have a normal [l], such as *ville* (“city”), *mille* (“a thousand”), and *tranquille* (“calm/quiet/peaceful”). The consonant [v] in pronunciation is regular and appears in words such as *voilà* (“here is/there is”), *revoir* (“to see again/meeting again”), and *rêve* (“dream”). The consonant [z]: in French pronunciation, the sound [z] can be written either with *s* or *z*. Inside a word, an *s* between two vowels (where the first vowel is not nasal) is pronounced [z], as in *visage* (“face”), *raison* (“reason”), and *rose* (“rose”). Example: the song *Les roses d’Ispahan* (“The Roses of Isfahan”), Op. 39 No. 4, by Gabriel Fauré.

Combination	Pronunciation	Example	Translation
ch	ʃ	ch ocolat	chocolate
ill	ll	fi lle	daughter
ge	j	g ens	people
ci	s	merci	thanks
ç	s	Fra n çais	French
gn	ni	monta gn e	mountain
ti	si	pa ti ence	patience
in	en	in tel li gent	intelligent
ph	f	ph armacie	pharmacy
en	an	en trer	enter
qu	c	ma g ique	magic
u	iu	cul te	cult
is	z	rai son	motif
se	z	ro se	rose

Tabel 1.
Consonant Pronunciation

4. Conclusions

Correct diction in vocal performance in the French language is essential to avoid misunderstandings and to faithfully convey the text. Diction should conform to the rules of Italian *bel canto*, while also taking into account the specific characteristics of the French language. Nasal, open, and closed vowel sounds in French must be adjusted in order to maintain vocal balance and avoid unwanted changes in vocal color. *The spelling of a word is supposed to do this, and in German and Italian it is tolerably successful in so doing, although in English and French it fails woefully.*⁵ Vowels have multiple variants and pronunciation rules: long, short, open, closed, nasal, mute, or clear. These distinctions must be understood and carefully reproduced in order to preserve the authenticity of the French language in singing. Nasal vowels are unique to French and must be used with moderation to avoid compromising tonal clarity. The singer must apply them appropriately, without exaggeration, and must understand their position and mode of production in order to reproduce and articulate them correctly.

The pronunciation of consonants in French varies, being more delicate than in German and clearer than in English. Silent, aspirated, or stressed consonants must be clearly understood and properly applied in performance in order to faithfully render the language and support musical expressiveness. To achieve authentic and precise diction, the singer must practice correct pronunciation of sounds and pay attention to the particularities of each one. Exercises involving lip rounding and the adjustment of tongue and jaw position are essential for the accurate production of French sounds.

Diction in French vocal art must be a combination of strict phonetic rules and interpretative sensitivity. A deep understanding of phonetic particularities and their precise application are indispensable for the correct and expressive interpretation of French music, respecting both the rules of the language and the artistic nature of vocal performance.

5. References

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⁵ Alexander J. Ellis. 1900. *Pronunciation for the Singers with Especial Reference to the English, German, Italian and French Languages.* London: J. Curwen & Sons, p. 14.