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Oral Aspects in French as a Foreign Language Teaching

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Article Info	Abstract
	This study handles the specific aspects of oral communication at various linguistic dimensions within the context of teaching French as a foreign language. Oral language is prone to a particular organization at the prosodic, morphosyntactic, and discursive dimensions, which interact once speech is brought into play. In order to delve into orality in French, as the problematic of this study, and to draw its pedagogical implications, a linguistic review of some hypothetical utterances was first carried out. Then, an interview-based video retrieved from an open source was analyzed in terms of its specific oral aspects by excluding lexical and kinesic characteristics. The findings show the relevance of some oral features which bear a close relationship with each other. As far as the prosodic aspects are concerned, it is found that the filled pause, the false start, the contraction, the syllable lengthening, and most importantly the intonation, which plays a distinctive role when conveying meaning, are utilized in oral communication in French. The relevant morphosyntactic features of orality in the scope of French include the thematization, the omission of the first negative adverbial particle, the use of presentative structures, neutral demonstrative pronouns as well as that of bivalent indefinite/personal pronoun, and the recourse to direct speech or to various corrections/repetitions/reformulations. Concerning the specific discursive aspects of French, the findings reveal the use of phatic markers as pragmatic discourse organizers. Lastly, based on the findings, a communicative-linguistic activity in the form of a task was proposed for didactic purposes.

Introduction

In human communication, although the emergence of writing dates back to around 3 000s BC respectively in Sumerian and Egyptian societies, oral language goes further back in time, i.e. approximately to 100 000 years BC (Riegel et al., 2009). In line with the earlier appearance of speaking among human beings, oral language has always been more dynamic, i.e. evolving more over centuries, and it has played a dominant role in human communication with regard to writing (Desmons et al., 2005; Martinet, 1998). Despite its major place in human communication, speaking as a linguistic skill is relatively neglected in Turkey within foreign language classrooms, in comparison with the pedagogy about grammar, vocabulary, writing, and reading. Hence, this negligence leads to proficiency and/or performance gaps for students in the framework of various linguistic skills.

In the light of the above-mentioned perspective, the present research handles the specific

features of oral language, differing the latter from the written one. On the one hand, this study aims to enhance the understanding of the notion of *orality* among Turkish students of French as a foreign language (FFL), i.e. it aims to improve their listening skills. On the other hand, it proposes classroom activities in the form of a real *task* in accordance with the *task-based perspective* (called *perspective actionnelle* in French), as outlined in the *Common European framework of reference for languages* (CEFR, Council of Europe, 2005, 2020). It should be noted that in the task-based perspective, language users engage in some linguistic and communicative activities/actions (either inside or outside the classroom) departing from a linguistic/communicative problem to be resolved in foreign language, such as writing an article in a school journal, participating in a poetry contest, guiding foreign tourists in the city, giving a presentation on an actual topic, creating a website/blog around a topic of interest, posting a comment on social media, broadcasting/podcasting/vlogging on television/radio/social media, etc. (Bertocchini & Costanzo, 2008; Cuq & Gruca, 2017; Germain, 1993).

The researches on the subject matter especially concentrate on the role of speaking in FFL classroom and on the particular aspects of oral discourse/interactions, but they also propose simulated or real in-classroom and online activities (see among others Abbadie et al., 2002; Bertocchini & Costanzo, 2008; Cicurel, 2011; Desmons et al., 2005; Germain, 1993; Guichon & Tellier, 2017; Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1998; Pacthod & Roux, 2004; Tellier & Cadet, 2014; Wattier, 2017). The above-mentioned researches firstly draw attention to the use of prosodic elements such as intonation, stress over syllables, voice pitch, speech flow, etc., or visual clues such as hand gesture, facial expression, gaze, posture, etc., which differentiate speech from writing. Secondly, they also mention some linguistic markers shaping oral discourse, which distinguish the latter from the written communication and contribute to the speaker's subjectivity. Thirdly, some of the researches above propose classroom activities aimed to develop listening/speaking skills.

Yet, one may claim that these aforementioned specific oral elements are also required in writing. However, oral communication makes the use of such elements more delicate in terms of student performance, because speech is more spontaneous than writing, and it is more open to certain types of mistakes.

In sum, this study aims to find answers to the following research question: *What are the specific aspects of oral communication in French?* Taking this problematic as the starting point, it should also be stated that the specificities of oral communication might be treated in FFL classroom for developing students' listening and speaking skills. For doing so, the oral characteristics of French will be considered within the framework of task-based perspective, i.e. at the end of the *Findings* section, a task composed of classroom activities will be proposed.

The research question at hand becomes relevant, as phenomena related to orality especially concern the *phonological, morphosyntactic* and *discursive* competences of students defined in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2005, 2020). Hence, the oral characteristics of French will be described below according to these competences. However, in this study, lexical/semantic specificities of the oral communication like words/expressions associated with different

linguistic registers (formal/informal language, slang, jargon, etc.) will be excluded (e.g. the use of the French word *bagnole* [*jalopy*] in daily life instead of *voiture*/*automobile* [*car*]), because the oral lexicon which presents a considerable amount of sociolinguistic and cultural variability requires a study of its own.

All in all, when considering the specific aspects of oral communication observed frequently among French native speakers, the *prosodic* (as one of the most important components of phonological competence alongside with pronunciation), *morphosyntactic* and *discursive* ones become relevant according to the theory about orality (see below the corresponding literature for each of them). Thus, as part of the theoretical framework of this study, we compiled in the following lines the specificities of each aspect, and we gave hypothetical examples drawn from the related literature (or adapted from it); the examples for each aspect illustrate the specificities of oral communication in French.

Prosodic Aspects

Orality can be described first by its phonetic/phonological but also prosodic components (Martinet, 1998). Apart from the phenomena related to pronunciation/articulation, oral language has some vocal characteristics also called *paralinguistic* or suprasegmental features such as *tone*, *duration,* and *intensity*, but also *pause* (empty of filled), each of these characteristics gives way to diverse *prosodic* phenomena (Martin, 2009; Rossi, 1999).

In summary, *prosodic* variations which are intrinsically absent from the written code include the following phenomena (Desmons et al., 2005; Éluerd, 2012; Martin, 2009; Rossi, 1999):

- The pitch (or the frequency) of the phoneme represents its tone (measured in Hertz, Hz); when the tone of a phoneme, of a word or of a group of word (or of segment of discourse) varies in an utterance, this variation witnessed in the melodic curve of the utterance is called *intonation*. For example, in French, assertive utterances' intonation goes typically downward, or interrogative ones' rise up at their ends.

- The duration of a segment of discourse unit is measured in second, and it determines the *speech flow*, i.e. the time taken for speaking. It can be relatively slow or speedy. Moreover, the speech flow also covers the phenomenon called *prolongation* (*allongement* in French) of a syllable in a word. This lengthening of a given syllable may stem from the process of thinking (as the speaker may take time when uttering words or may hesitate) but also from a deliberate communicative intention, i.e. it may fulfill a pragmatic value as a speech act (e.g. drawing attention to a point or asserting something in a weak/strong way) by indicating the speaker's attitude towards what (s)he is saying at that moment.

- The intensity (loudness) of the voice (measured in Decibel, DB) may also be modified for stressing a segment of discourse; this phenomenon is called *accentuation*, and it undertakes different pragmatic functions, especially when the speaker wants to draw attention to the most important segment of discourse in the utterance. The accentuation proves to be closely linked to syntactic procedures such as thematization and focalization as part of the emphasis (to be explored in the following lines).

- Although it is essentially a phonetic issue, the *liaison* is not shown in the written code, contrarily to the phenomena like *elision* (contraction of two vowels between some words such as *le + ami=l'ami* [*the friend*]) or *hiatus* (encounter of two vowels that French tries to avoid as much as possible to secure euphony with certain sounds or letters like *-s* or *-t,* for example in the case of *va + il=va-t-il* [*is he going?*]). That is why we mention the notion of liaison here. The liaison designates the fact of pronouncing the final consonant of a word in order to tie it to the initial vowel of the following word. For example, in French, the liaison is typically observed between the final consonants *-d* and *-s* and the following vowel, such as *les_enfants* (*the children*) or *un grand_homme* (*a great man*).

- The *empty pauses* as well as the filled ones referred to as the *hesitation pauses* (where in French the interjection *euh,* i.e.*er* in English, is normally used to fill gaps between words) may occur between words, group of words or utterances; sometimes, they are not simply silent moments or moments of error, hesitation, or lack of concentration. Although they may formally correspond to period, question mark, comma, colon, semicolon, suspension points or empty spaces in the written code between words and sentences, their pragmatic function may be sometimes more delicate. They do not solely organize discourse segments rhythmically according to the meaning to be conveyed, but they may also have a subjective and an interactive value, i.e. they show the speaker's subjective engagement into her/his utterance as a speech act within a communicative interest to pursue.

All in all, prosodic phenomena contribute to the significance at the semantic level and to the use of language at the pragmatic one by working in parallel with the syntax.

Morphosyntactic Aspects

Orality also presents some *morphosyntactic modifications*, i.e., those including the sequencing of discourse segments and the use of some words (Chiss et al., 2001; Delatour et al., 2004; Desmons et al., 2005; Éluerd, 2012; Riegel et al., 2009; Schott-Bourget, 1994):

- The *thematization* is a prosodic but also a syntactic variation frequently encountered in oral discourse. It refers to detaching/dislocating at the beginning of an utterance a discourse unit to which the speaker draws attention. The same element is generally accentuated at the prosodic level. In French, the subject and the object may be placed thematically at the beginning of an utterance, e.g. in *PAUL, il est malade* (*PAUL, he is sick*). Here, *Paul* constitutes the *topic* of the utterance (i.e. what the speaker talks about), whereas *il est malade* forms the *commentary* (i.e. what the speaker says about the topic). A highly frequent use of thematization for French speakers is the one concerning *MOI, je...* (*ME, I...*); the thematization attracts the addressee's attention to a topic, but it also marks the speaker's subjectivity. Nevertheless, in the example *PAUL, je l'ai vu dans la rue* (*PAUL, I have seen him on the street*), the topic *Paul* is reprised as the object of the utterance as *l'*.

- The *focalization* resembles thematization in terms of emphasis, and it is observed in cleaved constructions such as *C'est... qui/que* (*It is ... who/which*). For example, in *C'est*

PAUL qui décide (*It is PAUL who decides*), there is a strong prosodic accent on *Paul* which corresponds to the commentary (together with *c'est*), i.e. the information given about the theme (*qui décide*); it is Paul and not for example Mary who decides.

- The negative adverb *ne* used together with *pas* in standard, formal and written French is phonetically weak; therefore, it is omitted in oral communication. For example, instead of *Je n'arrive pas à trouver mon passeport* (*I cannot find my passport*), French speakers usually say *J'arrive pas à trouver mon passeport* (*I can't find my passport*). In consequence, all the negative charge is orally bestowed upon the accentuated adverbial particle *pas* in French (although the negation depended uniquely on *ne* in old French, where *pas* was absent).

- The phenomenon called *contraction* is also brought into play for ensuring linguistic economy. When the last syllable of a word (or an entire word) is truncated, this phenomenon occurs. As for the lexical truncation (for example, the use of the word *resto* instead of *restaurant* [*restaurant*] in French), the contraction has evidently phonetic implications, but this shortening of words may also affect the syntax of an utterance. In fact, all is about the linguistic economy; the phonetically weaker phonemes tend to disappear in oral, also giving way to syntactic variations. Here are some examples:

   i. *J'sais pas* (*I don't know* [*I dunno*]) instead of the formal *Je ne sais pas* (*I do not know*),

   ii. *Y a un homme dans la rue* (*There's a man on the street*) instead of the formal *Il y a un homme dans la rue* (*There is a man on the street*),

   iii. *T'as compris (You've understood)* instead of the formal *Tu as compris* (*You have understood*), etc.

- The use of the *impersonal introducers* such as *il y a* (*there is/are*), *c'est* (*this/that/it is*) and *voici* (*here is*) called *presentative* (*présentatif* in French) is also frequent in oral with regard to written communication.

- The use of the *neutral demonstrative pronoun ça* (*that*) is another feature of orality.

- When speakers talk, they sometimes make linguistic mistakes; thus, they recourse to *repetitions*, *reformulations* or *corrections*. Usually, these operations performed at the phonetic and/or the syntactic dimensions are neither accepted nor tolerated in writing.

- The formal register builds *interrogation* upon the inversion of the verb with the subject separated by a dash in writing, e.g. *Allez-vous au ciné?* (*Are you going to the cinema?*); however, in daily, common and informal registers, French speakers have a tendency to ask questions either with the aid of rising intonation (e.g. *Vous allez au cinéma?* [*You are going to the cinema?*]) or with the intermediary of the interrogative adverb *est-ce que* added at the beginning of the question (e.g. *Est-ce que vous allez au cinéma?*, which does not have a direct translation to English but having exactly the same function and meaning as the previous ones). Linguistically speaking, the question obtained by rising intonation seems simpler and more natural, for the question has exactly the same words with the same order compared to its assertive equivalent, but a simple modification of

tone at the end suffices to alter meaning.

- The indirect speech constructed on the subordinating conjunction *que* (*that*) is relatively absent in oral and tends to be replaced with *direct speech*. This is possibly due to modifications for transforming a direct speech to an indirect one, which poses a challenge for speakers. To elucidate our point with an example, in a written direct speech sentence like *Paul a dit: "J'ai visité ma mère."* (*Paul said, "I have visited my mother."*), the sentence is endowed with punctuation. In its oral version, both the principle and the subordinate clauses stay the same, and the punctuation is replaced with prosodic elements (intonation, pause, etc.). However, if the direct sentence is transformed into an indirect one, some modifications should be executed: *Paul m'a dit qu'il avait visité sa mère* (*Paul said that he had visited his mother*). First of all, as the reporting verb is conjugated in past simple, the subordinate clause is prone to some transformations: Present perfect of the direct speech becomes past simple. Secondly, the addition of the subordinating conjunction and the modification of the possessive adjective are required irrespective of the tense of the reporting verb.

- The indefinite personal pronoun *on* in French represents respectively two referents in English: *people* and *we*. In the formal written communication, this pronoun refers to *people* and indicates a habit/routine/generality: *On s'amuse avec ses camarades* (*People have fun with their friends*). However, French speakers use it also for referring to *we* (*nous* in French) in oral; this usage brings about its own syntactic as well as semantic changes: *On s'amuse avec nos camarades* (*We are having fun with our friends*). As it turns out, the morphosyntactic aspects cited previously do not fully cover the specificities of orality. Yet, they are taken into account more or less according to their relevance in FFL teaching.

Discursive Aspects

By taking into account the vast span of research discourse analysis invests in, the *theory of enunciation* and the *textual linguistics* become more relevant in terms of exploring the specific aspects of orality. In Benveniste's (1966, 1974) *enunciative theory*, discourse means enunciation, where language is subjectively taken over by the speaker; in other words, enunciation automatically requires the subjective implication or the personal engagement of the speaker towards her/his utterance as a concrete linguistic ground through which it is possible to spot the linguistic marks of this engagement. These linguistic marks are coined as *shifters* by Jakobson (1963/2003). For example, the personal pronouns *I/we* and *you* (the third person pronouns are purely textual, as they require a previous textual referent, i.e. they are not shifters), the demonstrative words (also called deictics, e.g. *this*) or the temporal adverbs (e.g. *today*) only acquire a meaning within the immediate communicative context (Benveniste, 1966, 1974). Enunciative marks also include *utterance modalities* such as subjective adjectives, adverbs, verbs, etc. (Sarfati, 2005). For example, when someone uses the modal adverb *frankly*, that person shows herself/himself as the guarantor of what (s)he is saying. All in all, modal words demonstrate in the utterance the speaker's subjective engagement in the discourse/enunciation.

In *textual linguistics*, *connectors* may build up various semantic relationships between the clauses of an utterance or between utterances themselves, such as cause, consequence, opposition, condition, purpose, etc. This is particularly the case of conjunctions (e.g. *parce que* [*because*]) or connecting adverbs (e.g. *par conséquent* [*therefore/in consequence*]). Yet, these argumentative connectors do not present a particularity in oral, as they also occur frequently in writing. The connectors or markers of interest from an oral point of view are those structuring pragmatically the discourse; they are designated as *conversation organizing markers* (*marqueurs de structuration de la conversation*) (Adam, 2020; Riegel et al., 2009). Indeed, these markers are discourse organizers which aim to pragmatically orientate the addressee, i.e. they show the positive or negative reaction of the speaker to what happens previously in the communicative context. As their semantic/argumentative value is weak, these markers are *pragmatic discourse organizers* rather than argumentative connectors which semantically unite two clauses. These markers are divided into two categories (Charaudeau & Maingueneau, 2002; Riegel et al., 2009):

- In the first category, we find the essential pragmatic discourse organizers such as the coordinating conjunction *mais* (*but*), the adverbs *alors* (*then*) and *ben* (*well*), and the interjection *bon* (*ok/well*). The markers in question may express approbation, but they often show the reaction of the speaker towards a previous utterance/act/situation/circumstance that (s)he opposes, disapproves of, about which (s)he wants to give an emotional response, such as surprise, complaint, anger, contempt, etc. For example in *Bon! C'est fini? Ben/mais/alors, qu'est-ce que tu fais là?* (*Ok! Is it finished? Well/But/Then, what are you doing there?*), the use of markers is not argumentative but rather pragmatic, for they indicate the opposition and the reaction of the speaker to what is actually happening in the immediate communicative situation.

- The second category encompasses the use of some interjections, adverbial constructions, and colloquial filler words or sentences like *hein/n'est-ce pas* (*right/isn't it*), *tu vois* (*you see/you understand*), *tu sais* (*you know*), *quoi* (*I mean/in brief/that's all*), etc. They firstly ensure communicative contact with the addressee, i.e. they verify if the communicative channel is open; furthermore, either they may indicate lack of knowledge about something, or they are formulated by the speaker to seek for an agreement/approbation/adherence from the addressee's side to a previous utterance or to what had previously happened in the immediate communicative context of the interlocutors. These markers are called *phatics* (*phatèmes* in French) (Riegel et al., 2009). In utterances like *Je te l'avais déjà dit, tu sais, ce mec est fou, hein!* (*I had already told you, you know, this guy is crazy, right!*) or *On ne peut rien faire, quoi!* (*We cannot do anything, I mean!*), it is possible to observe this kind of pragmatic fillers which target the addressee's adherence to the content of the utterance.

The specific and relevant features of the oral communication in French were theoretically examined and illustrated with examples drawn from the corresponding literature in the previous lines. This study is important, and it contributes to the field from our point of view for three reasons: First of all, it aims to sensitize French learners to oral features neglected

most of the time in the classroom and in course books. Secondly, it aims to analyze the French orality in its naturalistic setting through real interviews, contrarily, for example, to most of the French course books conveying listening and speaking skills through simulated dialogues where the majority of the oral features examined above are absent. Lastly, it links the oral aspects of French-to-French teaching in the classroom, as it proposes a task-based activity on orality to the pre-service French teachers.

Method

This study is *qualitative* (Bryman, 2012), for it aims to analyze the linguistic content of oral communication in French through utterances produced by native speakers. To delve into the problematic *specific aspects of oral communication in French* and to draw the didactic/pedagogical implications from orality in French, the research was designed within a two-step procedure: First of all, the oral elements were analyzed and categorized through the data consisting of street interviews obtained in a natural setting with 4 French native speakers on the effects of the coronavirus pandemic; the interviews in question were derived from *YouTube as an open source* (Agence France-Presse [AFP] News, 2020). Secondly, after the analysis, an activity setting up a real communicative situation was provided in accordance with the task-based approach, as recommended by the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2005, 2020).

Data Collection and Participants

Our problematic consists in determining the *specific aspects of orality*. For doing so, we analyzed a *2-minute video-recorded audiovisual document* of oral interviews obtained from an open source (YouTube) and conducted beforehand with *4 adult French natives* who were passing by on the street and gave spontaneous statements about the coronavirus pandemic (AFP News, 2020). During the interviews, the interviewees as participants give answers to the following question: *What do people in the streets of Paris think about the coronavirus?* The choice of videotaped interviews for didactic/pedagogical purposes may be justified with the following arguments: The topic is more or less actual, and as the interviews are given orally and spontaneously, they include various features of orality. They are consequently prone to didactic/pedagogical treatment in FFL classroom.

Thus, the essential data is based on the interviewees' (as participants) opinions. The interviews as audio-visual documents provide us with a natural oral setting and also a possibility of drawing didactic/pedagogical implications of orality in terms of listening and speaking skills in classroom. This natural setting lays out a lot of phenomena related to orality, as shows our analysis of the interviews. With this in mind, the *validity* of the research (Babbie, 2014) is ensured, as the data derived from the interviews with 4 French passers-by reflects a variety of spontaneous oral features, which constitute the object of analysis and the starting point for the elaboration of task-based activities geared towards French classroom.

Data Analysis

As oral French constitutes the main focal point, we carried out a *conversation analysis* having its roots in *ethnomethodology* within the framework of *qualitative* research methods; i.e. the linguistic examination of utterances falls within the limits of *qualitative conversational*

analysis of an audiovisual document, where prosodic, morphosyntactic and discursive phenomena (or categories) more or less specific to oral communication were taken into consideration altogether (Bryman, 2012; Paillé & Mucchielli, 2013; Sarfati 2005). More specifically, in order to reveal specific aspects of orality within the utterances of the interviewees (as participants), the relevant segments of their *oral interventions* (see Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1998) were analyzed through *prosodic*, *morphosyntactic* and *discursive* categories by underlining the close relationship between them.

To proceed into the analysis, we transcribed the interviews and annotated the phenomena related to orality. The transcription of oral was mainly adapted from Bertrand et al.'s (2008) *Enriched Orthographic Transcription* for the utterances in French and the prosodic elements. As to the morphosyntactic and discursive phenomena, they were annotated between arrowheads < > for a segment of utterance underlined. Table 1 shows below the conventions of transcription and annotation which we opted for. As far as the *reliability* of the analysis (Babbie, 2014) is concerned, the opinions of two experts in the field of French teaching were taken to verify the appropriateness of transcribed/annotated oral categories or phenomena arising from the interviews.

Table 1. Transcription and annotation conventions based on oral phenomena

Oral phenomenon	Convention
Word transcription	All words are transcribed orthographically (not phonetically) with lower case (except stressed ones) and without any punctuation figuring in writing.
Elision of vowels	Apostrophe x'x
Contraction or non-pronounced segment of discourse	Between parentheses (x)
Liaison	Low line between words x_x
Incomprehensible or inaudible discourse segment	Asterisk x*
Proper noun	Between dollar signs x
False start	Hyphen x-
Relevant empty pause	Three dots between brackets [...]
Accentuation	Noted with upper case X
Syllable lengthening	Colon x:
Intonation	Rising with upwards arrow x ↑ and falling with downwards arrow x ↓
Interviewee	Interviewee number between number signs #I$_{x\#}$
Segment of utterance subject to morphosyntactic and discursive variation	Underlined x
Description of morphosyntactic and discursive phenomena	Between arrowheads <x> after the underlined segment
More than one phenomenon	Plus sign x + x
English translation of an utterance	English translations are given between percent signs %x% without annotation.

Before proceeding into the analysis of orality, it should be emphasized that lexical features (such as the choice of a specific word, idiom or language register) and kinesics (e.g. body movements related to limbs, such as hand gesture, facial expressions, etc.) were left out of this study, as the characteristics of the oral system in French being our central focus.

Findings

Our analysis of the interviews at the prosodic, morphosyntactic and discursive levels is presented in the following lines. All these levels cooperate actively to convey meaning, i.e. interviewees organize their utterances at the morphosyntactic level bearing a close relationship with prosody, but they also implicate themselves pragmatically when giving their opinions about the pandemic, i.e. the topic in question: *What do people in the streets of Paris think about the coronavirus?* Yet, only the relevant parts to our problematic will be transcribed for carrying out analysis.

#I$_{1\#}$ | ça <neutral demonstrative + shifter> m' <shifter> inquiète quand MÊME ↑ hein ↓ <phatic> comme t- comme un peu tout l(e) mo:nde MAIS: ↑ <pragmatic organizer> [...] voilà ↓ <elliptic + syntactic recapitulative> MOI <thematization + shifter> j(e) <shifter> viens d(e) la campagne on nous dit PARTOUT faites attentio:n vous êtes à Paris <shifter + direct speech + present continuous> mais ça <neutral demonstrative + shifter> peut <modal verb> arriver chez nous <shifter> à la campagne aussi ↑ <implicit interrogation through intonation + post-commentary as delayed topic>

%That worries me anyway, right?! A little bit like everyone, but... That's it. Me, I'm coming from the countryside, and people are telling us everywhere, "Be careful, you are in Paris." But, this may also happen back at home, in the countryside as well?%

Here, the neutral demonstrative pronoun *ça* (*that*) as a shifter refers to the topic in question. As the pandemic becomes more and more serious at the time of the interview, I$_1$ (each interviewee will henceforth be referred to with a subscribed number as specified in Table 1) firstly expresses her concern with the argumentative adverbial locution *quand même* (*anyway*), stressed and endowed with a raising intonation; then, she shows her emotional response towards the situation and seeks for agreement with the intermediary of the phatic word *hein* (*right*) through a falling intonation, as if it was an implicit question. The recourse to the prepositional group *comme tout le monde* (*like everyone*) constitutes an argumentative pathos to persuade addressee by appealing common sense and empathy. With this in mind, we can claim that the stressed and upward toned *mais* (*but*), as a pragmatic organizer, repeats this pragmatic attempt for emotionally responding to the situation and seeking for agreement via an implicit question: *What could be done in such a situation?* In brief, I$_1$ takes a pragmatic position through her utterance. After a brief but relevant pause, she sums up the situation with a conclusive *voilà* (*that's it*) which functions as a recapitulative word rather than a presentative one. It is elliptic (see Éluerd, 2012) because it implies more than the word *voilà*

itself: *This is how the situation is.* Moreover, the use of this word adds conclusiveness to the utterance, which is also justified through falling intonation.

After exposing the subject matter, I$_1$ proceeds to the thematization of herself via the subject pronoun *moi* (me) carrying a prosodic accent; therefore, she engages subjectively in her utterance. Thereafter, the recourse to present continuous, to direct speech and to modal verb highlights orality. However, the last part of the utterance is more interesting: *mais, ça peut arriver chez nous, à la campagne aussi* (*but, this may also happen back at home, in the countryside as well*). First of all, I$_1$ seems to assert her opinion but the rising intonation at the end transforms suddenly her potential assertion into a question. Indeed, this clause exemplifies very well the tendency for obtaining in the easiest way possible the linguistic economy that speakers strive for. In addition to this, the prepositional group *chez nous* (*at home*) is repeated at the end with *à la campagne aussi* (*in the countryside as well*). On the one hand, as both prepositional groups co-refer to the same reality, the second one constitutes a textual anaphora (see Charaudeau & Maingueneau, 2002; Maingueneau, 2007). Nevertheless, the latter also introduces a typical oral feature called *post-commentary*, where the theme is exposed after its commentary at the end of the utterance (see Riegel et al., 2009). In sum, the syntactic sequence of topic followed by commentary in thematization is reversed to obtain the symmetrical structure of commentary followed by topic; hence, the denomination *post-commentary*. It should be noted that the post-commentary is not necessarily a delayed theme/topic; it may also amplify a commentary by bringing out extra information.

#I$_{2\#}$ | on <indefinite personal pronoun> se la:ve un peu PLUS les mains ↓ […] c'est tout ↓ <presentative + post-commentary as clarification> on s- <false start> je me lave un peu plus les mains dès que je sors en <shifter + increase in speech flow + reformulation> publi::c <enumeration> euh <filled pause> que ce soit pisci:ne cinéma: magasi:n etc <presentative + enumeration> […] je me lave les mains dès que je rentre […] donc c'est juste une petite <presentative + linguistic error> euh: <filled pause> CHANGEMENT D'HABITUDE

%We wash hands a little bit more... That's all. I wash hands a little bit more as soon as I go out in public, er, such as pool, theater, shop, etc. I wash hands as soon as I return home. So, it is just a small, er, habit change.%

I$_2$ begins with the bivalent pronoun *on* (referring both to *people* and *we*). After a brief pause, he recapitulates the fact of washing hands with a clarifying post-commentary in the form of presentative *c'est tout* (*that's all*). Then, he corrects his false start and reformulates his previous utterance by implicating himself more via *je me lave* (*I wash*). The speech is accelerated for this reformulating utterance to gain time. Thereafter, he lists a number of public spaces where people wash hands by beginning with the generic term *public* (*public*), stalling the enumeration for a brief moment with the pause filler *euh* (*er*) and moving toward the more specific terms (*pool, theater, shop*). Here, the syntax stays in perfect harmony with the prosody, for the last syllable of each item in the list is prolonged. In the utterance *donc, c'est juste une petite, euh, changement d'habitude* (*so, it is just a small, er, habit change*), I$_2$ makes an error while spelling *une petite* (*a small*) which should have been *un petit,* as the

word *changement* is a masculine noun. Lastly, the pause filler *euh* (*er*) which precedes the stressed group of words *changement d'habitude* (*habit change*) does not result from hesitation, but it pragmatically prepares the accentuation of this group of words.

> #I_{3#} | pour être honnête <utterance modality> nous <thematization> on <personal pronoun> revient d(e) $milan$ ↓ en PLUS ↑ […] et euh: <filled pause> ben <pragmatic discourse organizer> là bas après les mesures sont plus euh: <filled pause> so(nt) un peu plus FORTES qu'ici ↑ c'est à dire qu'i(l) y avait des solutions hydroalcooliques un peu partout: <increase in speech flow + presentative + enumeration> euh on a pris no(tre) temperature à l'aéroport alors qu'à $paris$ (il) (n')y a pas du tout ↑ <increase in speech flow + contraction + absence of *ne* + enumeration>
>
> %To be honest, us, we are coming back from Milan. In addition to this, and er, well, there after all, the measures are, er, a bit stricter than here; in other words, there were hydro-alcoholic solutions a little bit everywhere. Er, they measured our temperature at the airport, while in Paris, there weren't any (measure) at all.%

I_3 enunciatively puts himself as the guarantor of his utterances, and he pragmatically prepares, through the prepositional group *pour être honnête* (*to be honest*) and the discourse organizer adverb *ben* (*well*), his argumentation *là-bas après* (*there after all*) and the examples listed after the reformulation connector *c'est-à-dire* (*in other words*). When I_3 conveys information about the strict measure examples taken in Milan for the pandemic, the speech flow is again increased, as it was the case for the previous example with I_2. Moreover, I_3 firstly justifies (or exemplifies) his opinion by resorting to the presentative *il y avait* (*there were*); then, when he talks about Paris, the intonation rises at the end of the contracted presentative *y a pas du tout* (*there weren't any [measure] at all*), and transforms the latter into an implicit question directed to the addressee to denounce the current situation in Paris and to seek for agreement at the pragmatic level. Hence, I_3 indirectly criticizes the Parisian authorities for not having taken measures. As illustrated in this example, even a simple increase of intonation may have an impact on the pragmatic functions of utterances.

> #I_{4#} | on <indefinite personal pronoun> sait très bien qu'en étant dans les transports: euh <filled pause> on est à proximité des des_ <repetition> autres personnes ↓ donc euh <filled pause> donc on (ne) <absence of *ne*> peut rien faire quoi <phatic>
>
> %We/people know very well that while being in transportation vehicles, we are nearby other persons; so, we can't do anything, I mean.%

The colloquial filler *quoi* is very frequently utilized by French speakers at the end of their utterances. It usually undertakes a double pragmatic function: First of all, it sums up what the speaker has just said; thus, it increases the assertive value of what has been said. Furthermore, it may also be considered as an implicit question to seek for agreement from the addressee's side (and to convince her/him). In consequence, it signifies simultaneously *I*

mean (*in brief*) and *isn't it true* (like the meaning of the interjection *hein*). However, the assertive pragmatic value of *quoi* prevails over the interrogative one, for the concomitant intonation always falls down.

Our linguistic analysis of the video leads us to the proposal of a *task* about orality, aimed at improving the listening and speaking skills for the level B2 (advanced/independent speakers) which turns out to be more relevant to our point of view, for the level in question simultaneously underlines the elements of coherence, i.e. the semantic and logical organization of a discourse, and of cohesion, i.e. the linguistic markers of coherence in a written or oral text (Charaudeau & Maingueneau, 2002; Maingueneau, 2007). Furthermore, the B2 level is also of particular importance when taking into account *argumentative speech* (where ideas are justified with arguments) as part of task-based activities in classroom (or during the oral part of the exams called *Diploma in French Language Studies* -or DELF for short in French- for the obtainment of B2 level), due to the fact that it requires preparation on the students' side in terms of putting into action a coherent progression and a cohesive linkage of linguistic elements during speech.

The title of the task may be for example *Record a video and broadcast it on the internet, where you will speak in French about your life during the pandemic*. For the elaboration of the task, we would like to refer to a workshop that we participated in about the issue; it was conducted by a French teacher trainer, Martine Emorine, in the French Teaching Department of Istanbul University on May the 4th 2011. According to Emorine (2011), the elaboration of a task is organized around four criteria to follow: setting general objectives, defining linguistic/communicative skills (but also intercultural ones, e.g. any form of contact with the French culture, activities requiring extralinguistic skills such as the ability to make research on the Internet, etc.), dividing the task into steps, and determining evaluative modalities. A possible design for the progression of the given task is exemplified below in Table 2.

Table 2. Example of a task design

General Linguistic/ Communicative Objective	Specific Linguistic/ Communicative Skill	Step	Evaluation
Listening	Retrieval of the specific oral traits in an authentic (not conceived in advance for pedagogical reasons) audiovisual document in French with background noise, various speech flow rates, gestures/facial expressions, sometimes overlapping utterances, etc.	Students watch a video in classroom for identifying specific oral traits. The teacher gives a lecture about orality, followed by a collective discussion about the topic.	Formative evaluation (where students receive feedback from the teacher for the entire process)
Research	Research about oral phenomena (prosodic, morphosyntactic and	Students make research about the topic in the	

	discursive elements) and vocabulary related to the topic	library/at home through printed/online documents, books, videos, etc.
Speaking = Argumentative monologue + Group debate	Use of appropriate prosody in French Use of appropriate morphosyntax in French Use of appropriate vocabulary in French Use of argumentative connectors Use of pragmatic discourse organizers in French	Students make a presentation in classroom as an argumentative monologue. Then, they discuss the topic with their peers through Q&A session, group debate, etc.
Elaboration of the video	All the previous skills combined	Students record the video at home and broadcast it online.

Concerning the authentic audiovisual document (video) to listen to in classroom, which also provides the starting point for the achievement of the task, it should address students' already acquired competences but also introduce new linguistic/communicative elements (lexically and culturally). At the same time, it should not exceed 5 minutes (the video we analyzed lasts approximately 2 minutes) for not disrupting student concentration; moreover, the video may be subjected to a linear listening (to retrieve orality aspects as linguistic elements) after a global (like skimming in reading) and a specific listening (like scanning in reading) (see Bertocchini & Costanzo, 2008). In brief, the listening phase aims to sensitize students to orality.

As far as the speaking skill is concerned, the pedagogical goal is to enable students, within a real argumentative monologue (then, debate), to orally make use of pragmatic discourse organizers together with argumentative connectors in French language by adhering to its prosodic and morphosyntactic particularities (see also Council of Europe, 2005, 2020; Wattier, 2017).

Conclusion and Discussion

This study took as its departure point the specific aspects of orality compared to written communication. A theoretical review of the issue displays a considerable amount of research about the analysis of specific oral traits and their pedagogical implications in FFL classroom, as well as activities recommended to this end (see among others Abbadie et al., 2002; Bertocchini & Costanzo, 2008; Bertrand et al., 2008; Cicurel, 2011; Desmons et al., 2005; Emorine, 2011; Guichon & Tellier, 2017; Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1998; Pacthod & Roux, 2004; Tellier & Cadet, 2014; Wattier, 2017). Our results match the findings of the above-mentioned

literature as far as the phenomena specific to orality are involved. Yet, this study tried to emphasize the interconnections between the oral phenomena examined.

The data collected through real interviews reflects more or less the natural conditions through which the oral communication in French is established. With this in mind, we can claim that speech has its own modalities compared to writing which essentially and mostly constitutes the model for representing a foreign language in classroom. Yet, the communication in a foreign language mostly occurs through oral channel, i.e. people listen or speak more than they write something for example. Thus, in order to make students acquire listening and speaking skills, foreign language teachers (but also course books) may emphasize more the particular aspects of orality (here for French), which become more relevant within speech through real/naturalistic audiovisual documents, i.e. language teachers may analyze French orality (within real audiovisual documents) together with their students to raise awareness among them and to improve their corresponding skills through classroom activities. In the above-mentioned perspective, this study mainly revealed the *recourse to specific oral procedures by the interviewees* (as spontaneous speakers) during speech. These relevant procedures are mentioned in the following lines.

It should be pointed out that kinesics and lexical aspects in oral communication were left out of this study for methodological reasons. Hence, the analysis was rather focused on the prosodic, morphosyntactic and discursive peculiarities of orality. These peculiarities were firstly examined within the theoretical framework. Thereafter, our analysis of an interview-based video allowed us to bring out some close interplay between the *intonation/accentuation*, the *morphosyntactic sequencing* and the *use of some discursive markers*. We contend that the interplay between *intonation* and meaning, the use of *thematization*, indefinite or personal pronoun *on*, neutral demonstrative pronoun *ça*, filler *euh*, presentative constructions with *c'est*, direct speech, phatic words such as *hein/quoi*, and the omission of the adverbial particle *ne* should especially be highlighted in this respect.

When a linguistic and communicative competence-based approach is adopted (see Béacco, 2007), it would be seen that the concept of orality requires the consideration of two fundamental phases within a pedagogical point of view: Firstly, language teachers select an audio-visual document on which they manage classroom activities. Yet, the document chosen should be subjected by teachers to a linguistic scrutiny as part of pre-pedagogical analysis (see Moirand, 1979) and elaboration of classroom activities. Here, the main goal is to detect particular oral features which will be highlighted in classroom, i.e. as part of the listening skills. The second phase is reserved to pedagogical activities for enhancing speaking skills based on oral features. For this purpose, we proposed a task which may raise teacher/student awareness about orality.

All in all, this study may be expanded in future to other discursive genres specific to oral language (such as televised debates, daily conversations, telephone communications, oral communications within public services, oral presentations, etc.). In that way, the FFL course contents and course books may be revised.

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