

MODULE 1

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UNIT 1 QU'EST CE QUE LA PHONOLOGIE?**CONTENTS**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit will introduce you to phonology in general, and to French phonology in particular. You will be given the definition of phonology and learn the difference between phonetics and phonology.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define the system of sounds of any language, particularly of French sounds;
- determine how these sounds function in the system of communication;
- identify the various phonological theories; and
- distinguish between phonetics and phonology.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Qu'est-Ce Que La Phonologie?

Here, you will learn the definition of phonology and all about it.

3.2 Definition

In order to understand how phonetic transcription works, it is necessary to understand the basic principles of phonology. *Phonologie* is the description of the systems and patterns of sounds that occur in a language. It involves studying a language to determine its distinctive sounds and to establish a set of rules that describe the set of changes that take place in these sounds when they occur in different relationships with other sounds.

Many experts have worked on phonology. It is important for you to know these experts; they have been categorised to their schools of thought.

3.3 Major Examples of Schools of Thought in Phonology

There are two major schools of thought as described below:

3.3.1 The Functionalists

These experts believe that phonology is part of phonetics. In other words, phonetics and phonology are like two sides of the same coin. The following are names of some functionalists: André Martinet, Gabriel Manessy, Mautrice Houis, etc.

3.3.2 The Generativists

For these experts, phonetics and phonology are distinct areas of study. Here, phonology is defined as the system of sounds contrasts in a particular language. Among the generativist, you have Noam Chomsky, Morris Halle, Paul Kiparsky, etc.

3.4 Phonological Classification of Sounds

Note that every language has its own distinctive sounds. Also note that the smallest segments of sounds that can be distinguished by their contrast within words can be grouped together into phonemes. Phonemes are the abstract units that form the basis for writing down a language systematically and unambiguously.

Taking French as an example, you have the following categories of phonemes: consonant phonemes and vowel phonemes (see details in units 4 and 5).

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, you have learnt about the essentials of phonology, giving examples of French language to illustrate the theory. You should note that every language has its own peculiar phonological specifics. You must not generalise.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has equipped you with the basic knowledge in phonology; especially you are now aware of the concept of phonology and of how it works when you consider a particular language.

This unit will help you understand with ease the system of French sounds. This implies that this unit will be useful for the full understand of the whole course.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is phonology?
2. Are the sounds of French the same with those of your mother tongue?
3. What make(s) the difference(s) between languages?
4. List the different sounds in French and those of your mother tongue.
5. List sounds that are similar to French and your mother tongue.
6. List the French sounds that do not exist in your mother tongue.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Alo, P. O. (1999). *Elément de base en Phonétique et le Phonétisme du Français*. Lagos: Rothmed Press International.

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UNIT 2 PHONÉTIQUE ET PHONOLOGIE

CONTENT

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Phonétique et Phonologie
 - 3.2 Représentation des sons et des Phonèmes
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 - 3.2.2 Représentation des Phonèmes
- 4.0 Conclusion
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- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In unit 1 of this course, you have learnt what phonology is all about. So also in the course FRE 201, you have learnt what phonetics is all about. This unit of FRE 305 is a way to bring both phonetics and phonology together with the view to making you realise and understand that it's all about the study of sounds (physically and functionally) of any given language.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- make a clear distinction between phonetics and phonology
- mention the phonetic and phonological descriptions of sounds of a language, especially French language, with more emphasis on the phonological aspects.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Phonétique et Phonologie

As a reminder (the distinction between phonetics and phonology has been taught in previous unit), you should retain that both deal with the study of speech sounds; while phonetics deals with the physical nature as well as the description of sounds produced, phonology treats the function of sounds in speech. You can study the phonetic characteristics of a language you do not understand or speak. But it is impossible for you to study the phonological aspects

of a language if you do not speak nor understand that language. In other words, phonology is concerned with the differences in pronunciation that correspond to differences in meaning: that is what is called distinctive oppositions. Consider the following examples for a better understanding of the concept:

Rouge [Ruʒ] (red)

When you replace the first consonant type with [b], you then have two different words 'bouge' [buz] (for move) and 'rough' [Ruʒ] (for red) that constitute what is called *paire minimale*: two words that differ in meaning with only one sound making the difference between them. When you replace a sound with another one in a *paire minimale*, you do what is called commutation.

In phonetics, you talk of sound you can hear, produce and measure. In phonology, you talk of phoneme, which is an abstract entity as opposed to other phonemes in the language.

3.2 Répresentation des Sons et Phonèmes

In transcription, as you were taught in phonetics, sounds and phonemes are represented differently.

3.2.1 Répresentation des Sons

Sounds are transcribed the way they are produced or articulated and always put in what is known as crochets phonétiques: [].

For example, you consider the following words: une fille (a girl); un garçon (a boy); un livre (a textbook). These words are transcribed phonetically as follows [yifij- the fille, œ̃aeso-du garçon, œ̃livR], [gɑRsə] and [livR] respectively.

3.2.2 Répresentation des Phonèmes

Phonemes are transcribed the same way like sounds and are put not in crochets phonétiques but rather in what is called *barres obliques* / /. For example, when you consider the same words as in 4.1 above, you have the following phonological transcriptions: / nfij/, /gɑRsə/ and [livR] respectively.

Also, the symbol ~ is used to oppose two phonemes or two paires minimales. For example, in [Ruʒ] and / buz/ which constitute a *paire minimale*, the phonemes /R/ and /b/ are opposed to one another; this opposition is represented as follows: /R/ ~ /b/.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, you have learnt how to make the difference between phonetics and phonology, with necessary technical terms, using French language as example.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has made you understand clearly the difference between phonetics and phonology, as well as the respective symbolic representations in concrete terms. With this, you will encounter no difficulty in understanding the subsequent units of this course.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is phonetics?
2. What is phonology?
3. What is or are the difference(s) between phonetics and phonology?
4. Transcribe the following words both phonetically and phonemically and point out the differences between the transcription: classe; maitre; la maitresse; je mange; il sort;
5. Consider the two words: maitre and naïtre; transcribe them and explain the difference between them.
6. Give examples of paire minimale in your mother tongue or in English.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Brousseau, A. M. et Nikiema, E. (2001). *Phonologie et Morphologie du Français*. Montreal: Collection Champs Linguistiques, FIDES.
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UNIT 3 PHONOLOGIE ET MORPHOLOGIE

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- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 La Morphologie ou Morphonologie
 - 3.2 Le Morphème
 - 3.3 Représentation du Morphème
 - 3.4 Représentation du Morphophonème
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will learn the possibility of merging phonology and morphology in the description of various phonemes of words, particularly in speech. For better understanding, you need to know the definition of both words. You learnt what phonology is all about in the previous unit, revisit it. As for morphology, it is defined as the study of word formation in a sentence, with the smallest significant entity called morphème.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the different morphemes of a word; and
- link sounds with meanings in a particular language.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 La Morphologie ou Morphonologie

It is the study of the phonological structure of morphemes.

3.2 Morpheme

As defined earlier, a morpheme is the smallest meaningful element of a word or of a speech.

For example, consider this sentence in French: “Les boxeurs souffrent”. In this example, the morphemes are as follows:

Le + s + box + eur + s + souffr + ent (you have a total of 7 morphemes). Each of these morphemes has a meaning, in the sense that it plays a vital role in the understanding of the whole sentence.

There are two categories of morphemes:

- (i) The lexical morphemes, also called radicaux, e.g. box and souffr.
- (ii) The grammatical morphemes, also called affixes (prefixe ou suffixe); e.g. le, s, eur, s, and ent.

3.2 Réprésentation des Morphèmes

In morphological representation, both categories of morphemes, lexical and grammatical, are combined to give a word its full meaning.

For instance, consider the following examples:

- les étudiants travaillent beaucoup. The underlined words can morphologically be analysed as follows, sorting out the different morphemes.
- (i) étudiants:
 - 'etud' is the lexical morpheme (LM) or le radical nominal.
 - i is the first grammatical morpheme called morpheme suffixal verbal, as it is added to the LM to form the verb étudier.
 - 'ant' is the second grammatical morpheme called morpheme suffixal nominal, as it is added to the morphème verbal to obtain étudiant.
 - s is the last grammatical morpheme called morpheme suffixal du nombre pluriel.
- (ii) travaillent
 - travail: lexical morpheme, le radical nominal
 - i: first grammatical morpheme called morpheme suffixal verbal, as it is added to the LM to form the verb travailler.
 - 'ent': second grammatical morpheme called morpheme suffixal verbal de terminaison, as it represents the normal ending of the verb conjugated at the 3rd person plural of present tense.

3.3 Réprésentation du Morphonophonème ou Morphoneme

From the definition of phoneme in unit 2 and of morpheme in unit 3 you can deduce that a morpheme is constituted of phonemes.

Examples: When you consider the lexical morphemes etud which is derived from etude, you have the following phonemes: /é/ + /t/ + /u/ + /d/, making four phonemes for the morpheme étud.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, you have learnt how phonology and morphology are related, and how both constitute what is known as morphology. You also learnt some technical terms like morpheme and morpheme.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has enabled you get acquainted with the relationship between phonology and another aspect of linguistics which is morphology, with the smallest meaningful unit called morpheme. Unit 1, unit 2, and unit 3 constitute altogether the first three aspects of French linguistics.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is morpholgy
2. What is morpheme?
3. What is a morpheme?
4. How is a morpheme represented?
5. Compare phonological and morphological representations, and show the difference between both.
6. Conjugated *parler* at present tense, third person plural and analyse it morphologically.
7. Consider these words: *defaire, étudier, étudiante, appellation, découragement*. Analyse each word morphologically, explaining the various morphemes therein.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Brousseau, A. M. et Nikiema, E. (2001). *Phonologie et Morphologie du Français*. Montreal: Collection Champs Linguistiques, FIDES.

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UNIT 4 DESCRIPTION PHONOLOGIQUE DES PHONÈMES VOCALIQUES DU FRANÇAIS

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- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Phonèmes Vocaliques
 - 3.2 Phonèmes Oraux
 - 3.3 Phonèmes Nasals
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit will introduce you to the phonological description of French vowel phonemes. You will learn the total number of vowel phonemes existing in the French language and their respective phonological features.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the different vowel phonemes in the French language system; and
- do a phonological description of each vowel phoneme.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Les Phonèmes Vocaliques du Français

In the French language system, you have 16 vowels comprising of 12 oral and four nasal.

3.2 Phonèmes Vocaliques Oraux

You should note that the 12 oral vowels are classified as follows according to the place of articulation:

- voyelles antérieurs: [i, e, ε, a] (front)
- voyelles médians: [Ø, ə, œ] (central)
- voyelles postérieurs: [u, o, ɔ, α] (back)

3.1.1 Description Phonologique des Phonèmes Vocaliques Oraux

Each oral vowel phoneme is described with specific phonological features as follows:

Phonème /i/	Sonant	+	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	+	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	-	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	+		
	Bas	-		
Phonème /e/	Sonant	+	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	+	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	-	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	-		
	Bas	-		
Phonème /ɛ/	Sonant	+	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	+	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	-	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	-		
	Bas	+		
Phonème /a/	Sonant	+	Arrière	+
	Syllabique	+	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	-	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	-		
	Bas	+		
Phonème /ʊ/	Sonant	+	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	+	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	-	Arrondi	+
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	+		
	Bas	-		

Phonèmes /Φ/, / ə/	Sonant	+	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	+	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	-	Arrondi	+
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	-		
	Bas	-		
	Phonème /œ /	Sonant	+	Arrière
Syllabique		+	Coronal	-
Consonantique		-	Arrondi	+
Continu		+	Voisé	+
Nasal		-	Antérieur	-
Haut		-		
Bas		+		
Phonème / u /		Sonant	+	Arrière
	Syllabique	+	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	-	Arrondi	+
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	+		
	Bas	-		
	Phonème / o/	Sonant	+	Arrière
Syllabique		+	Coronal	-
Consonantique		-	Arrondi	+
Continu		+	Voisé	+
Nasal		-	Antérieur	-
Haut		-		
Bas		-		
Phonème / ə /		Sonant	+	Arrière
	Syllabique	+	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	-	Arrondi	+
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	-		
	Bas	+		
	Phonème / α /	Sonant	+	Arrière
Syllabique		+	Coronal	-
Consonantique		-	Arrondi	+
Continu		+	Voisé	+
Nasal		-	Antérieur	-
Haut		-		
Bas		+		

3.2 Phonèmes Vocaliques Nasals

You should note that there are three nasal vowels in French, which include:

- voyelle antérieure [ɛ]
- voyelle médiane [œ]
- voyelle postérieures [ə, ɔ]

3.2.1 Description Phonologique des Phonèmes Vocaliques Nasal

Each nasal vowel phoneme is described with specific phonological features.

Phonème /ɛ/	Sonant	+	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	+	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	-	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	+	Antérieur	-
	Haut			
	Bas	+		
Phonème /œ/	Sonant	+	Arrière	+
	Syllabique	+	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	-	Arrondi	+
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	+	Antérieur	-
	Haut	-		
	Bas	+		
Phonème /ə/	Sonant	+	Arrière	+
	Syllabique	+	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	-	Arrondi	+
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	+	Antérieur	-
	Haut	-		
	Bas	+		
Phonème /ɔ/	Sonant	+	Arrière	+
	Syllabique	+	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	-	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	+	Antérieur	-

Haut	-
Bas	+

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, you have learnt what the vowel phonemes are in the French sound system. You have also learnt the phonological description of each of the 16 vowel phonemes existing in the language.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has enable you identify the different vowel phonemes of the French language. This unit has also availed you with the proper phonological description of the phonemes using the appropriate technical terms.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Trouvez des paires minimales pour opposer les phonèmes /u/et /i/ aux autre voyelles fermées.
2. Trouvez des paires minimales pour opposer le phonème /oe/ aux autres voyelles ouvertes.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Alo, P. O. (1999). *Éléments de base en Phonétique et le Phonétisme du Français*. Lagos: Rothmed International Ltd.

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UNIT 5 DESCRIPTION PHONOLOGIQUE DES PHONÈMES CONSONANTIQUES DU FRANÇAIS

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 - 3.2.1 Les Occlusive Orales
 - 3.2.2 Les Occlusives Nasals
 - 3.3 Les Constrictives
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit will introduce you to the phonological description of French consonant phonemes. You will learn the total number of consonant phonemes existing in the French language and sound system and their respective phonological features.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the different consonant phonemes in the French language system; and
- do phonological description of each consonant phoneme.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Les Phonèmes Consonantiques du Français

In the French language system, you have two categories of consonant phonemes: ‘les occlusives’ and ‘les constructives.’

3.2 Les Occlusives

You should learn that there are 6 occlusives in French; these include: [p, b, t, d, k, g].

3.2.1 Description Phonologique des Occlusives

You have the following features to describe each of the phonemes called occlusives:

Phonème /p/	Sonant	-	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	-	Voisé	-
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	-		
	Bas	-		
	Phonème /b/	Sonant	-	Arrière
Syllabique		-	Coronal	-
Consonantique		+	Arrondi	-
Continu		-	Voisé	-
Nasal		-	Antérieur	-
Haut		-		
Bas		-		
Phonème /t/		Sonant	-	Arrière
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	+
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	-	Voisé	-
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	+
	Haut	-		
	Bas	-		
	Phonème /d/	Sonant	-	Arrière
Syllabique		-	Coronal	+
Consonantique		+	Arrondi	-
Continu		-	Voisé	+
Nasal		-	Antérieur	+
Haut		-		
Bas		-		
Phonème /k/		Sonant	-	Arrière
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	-	Voisé	-
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	+		
	Bas	-		
	Phonème /g/	Sonant	-	Arrière
Syllabique		-	Coronal	-
Consonantique		+	Arrondi	-
Continu		-	Voisé	+
Nasal		-	Antérieur	-

Haut	+
Bas	-

3.3 Les Constrictives

Note that there are 13 constrictives in French divided into different categories as follows:

-	6 Fricatives:	[f, v, s, z, ʃ, ʒ]
-	3 Nasales:	[m, n, ŋ]
-	2 Latérales:	[l, R]
-	2 Médiannes:	[j, w]

3.3.1 Description Phonologique des Constrictives

You should note that the constrictives are described each as shown below:

Phonème /f/	Sonant	-	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	-
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	+
	Haut	-		
	Bas	-		
Phonème /v/	Sonant	-	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	+
	Haut	-		
	Bas	-		
Phonème /s/	Sonant	-	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	+
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	-
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	+
	Haut	-		
	Bas	-		
Phonème /z/	Sonant	-	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	+
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	+
	Haut	-		

Phonème /ʃ /	Bas	-		
	Sonant	-	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	+
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	-
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	+		
Phonème /ʁ /	Bas	-		
	Sonant	-	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	+
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	-		
Phonème /m /	Bas	-		
	Sonant	+	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	+	Antérieur	+
	Haut	-		
Phonème /n /	Bas	-		
	Sonant	+	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	+
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	+	Antérieur	+
	Haut	-		
Phonème /ɲ /	Bas	-		
	Sonant	+	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	+	Antérieur	-
	Haut	+		
Phonème /l /	Bas	-		
	Sonant	+	Arrière	+
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	-		
Phonème /R /	Bas	-		
	Sonant	+	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	+

	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	-	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	+
	Haut	-		
	Bas	-		
Phonème /J /	Sonant	+	Arrière	-
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	-
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	+		
	Bas	-		
Phonème /W /	Sonant	+	Arrière	+
	Syllabique	-	Coronal	-
	Consonantique	+	Arrondi	+
	Continu	+	Voisé	+
	Nasal	-	Antérieur	-
	Haut	+		
	Bas	-		

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, you have been taught the consonant phonemes of the French language system. You have also learnt the phonological description of each of the phonemes.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has enabled you identify the 19 consonant phonemes of the French language. This unit has also availed you with the proper phonological description of each of the consonant phonemes using appropriate features.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Find out the phonemes contained in the following words: bonbon; papa; mon frère; chercher; signe.
2. Attempt the phonological description of each of the phonemes you found in (1) above.
3. Trouvez des paires minimales avec les phonemes suivants: /k/, /z/ et /v/.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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