



## Text Accentuation as a Major Aspect of Diction, Vocal Technique, and Musicality

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Although IPA is a precious tool for lyric diction, its exclusive information misses out the main musical aspect of the language: its prosody. When the text is submitted to music, **accentuation** remains its major component.

It reflects in speech the constant game of tension and repose that rules all human physiological behaviours, therefore singing.

In this workshop, singers will sing a piece in Italian and one in French. I will show how proper use of the **accentuation** renders the full musical nature of the text, enhances **musicality** and can highlight **artistry** and **technique**.

French and Italian stand at opposite ends of evolution from Latin and their **accentuation** system is utterly different. It mostly belongs to the word in Italian. In French, it indicates the frontiers of phrases – or breath groups – and conditions the rarities of the language: colour of the many vowels, liaisons, mute [e] and syllable prominence. Italian is usually more familiar to singers and easier than French. I will show how, by integrating a complete and authentic **diction**, they can feel more efficient, emotional, and more comfortable.

Good **diction** means intelligibility, and a thorough respect of the poetry in its musical nature and style. Proper **accentuation** reveals the musical essence of the text and renders the complete design of the composer. It reawakens the real sense of **movement** of the text that singers - and teachers - tend to erase for the benefit of the composer's music only.

I never separate **interpretation** from **technique** and **diction**. The singer needs to be touched deeply by the words in his own mouth that touches his heart.

The best **technique** should give the listener the sensation the singer is talking to him spontaneously and following IPA without a real sense of **accentuation** tends to solidify and stiffen music, text and breath. The singer then misses out the solar elegance of the Italian language and the lightness and flexibility of French.

The brain will use the same path as in conversation if it believes we are singing our thought. This requires an ultimate use of speech: phonemes and **accentuation**.