

The Formation of the Opposition between Oral and Nasal Vowels in the French Language

Mamasoliyeva Gulchexra Abduxalilovna

Andijan State Institute of Foreign Languages

Senior Lecturer of the Department of Theory and Practice of the French Language

E-mail: mgulichexra@mail.ru

Abstract: This article explores the formation processes of the opposition between oral and nasal vowels in the French language and provides a scientific analysis of these phenomena.

Keywords: oral vowel, nasal vowels, nasalization marker, stressed vowel, assonance analysis, phonological analysis, opposition.

The opposition between oral and nasal vowels within the Romance language group is primarily observed in French and Portuguese. However, in the French language, this phonological contrast has fully developed and carries significant functional importance. It plays a crucial role in distinguishing various word pairs.

Scholars provide different explanations for the emergence of nasalization (i.e., nasal sounds) in French. For instance, A. Dauzat attributes this phenomenon to the influence of the Celts, while N. A. Shigarevskaya considers it a result of the disappearance of closed nasal consonants. This process represents one of the fundamental phonetic laws in the evolution of the French language, leading to the reduction of certain previously existing sound combinations.

Assonance is a poetic and phonetic phenomenon in which the stressed vowel sounds of words correspond to each other, creating a form of harmony. While assonance is similar to rhyme, it is based solely on vowel sounds and is predominantly found in poetic texts.

In the French language, assonance is particularly significant for analyzing historical sources and poetic texts. For example, in *La Chanson de Roland*, certain words share the same stressed vowel yet do not form assonance, indicating the presence of phonetic changes such as nasalization. Therefore, assonance plays a crucial role not only in poetry but also in phonological analysis in the French language.

In French: "*L'amour toujours court*" – Here, the vowel sound "*ou*" creates assonance.

In Uzbek: "*Shodlik keldi, bahor keldi*" – In this example, the vowel sound "*o*" forms assonance.

From the earliest stages of the French language, the distinctive feature of nasal vowels had already developed. In Old French, nasalization affected all vowel sounds except for the vowel "*i*". As a result, a system of nasalized vowels emerged.

"in, ün, um, on, en, an"

However, nasal vowels have always exhibited specific orthographic characteristics: they were accompanied by a co-articulated nasal sound in pronunciation. This factor influenced their development and transformation.

As this process evolved, some nasal sounds merged. For example, "*en*" and "*an*" combined into "*vent*" (pronounced [*vänt*]), while "*in*" changed to "*ven*". Similarly, analogous changes were observed in words like "*bonum*" (becoming [*bön*]) and "*bona*" (evolving into [*bone*]). By the 16th century, the process of nasalization had undergone a complete transformation. Previously, any vowel undergoing nasalization was followed by an audible nasal consonant. However, after the 16th century, nasal consonants at the end of a word or syllable were assimilated by the preceding vowel and disappeared from pronunciation. For instance:

bonum → [**bön, bö**]

However, if a vowel followed the nasal consonant, denasalization (the loss of nasal articulation) occurred:

bona → [**böne**] → [**bö**]

Thus, oral and nasal vowels became independent phonemes. In modern French, traces of this nasalization process are preserved in certain orthographic markers. For example, the presence of double nasal consonants ("*nn*" or "*mm*") reflects earlier pronunciation rules. This historical evolution highlights the long-standing phonetic development of nasalization in the French language.

The formation of the distinction between oral and nasal vowels in French played a crucial role in the historical development of the language. This process primarily occurred through the differentiation of nasal vowels from their oral counterparts. The process of denasalization in the 16th century further reinforced this distinction, leading to the emergence of independent nasal vowels in French.

From a phonological perspective, nasal vowels are essential for semantic and lexical differentiation in French. For example, the words *bon* (good) and *bonne* (good – feminine) are distinguished precisely due to nasalization. Moreover, the influence of nasalization has contributed to unique morphological changes and pronunciation norms in the French language.

Therefore, the development of nasal vowels has served as one of the key factors in the evolution of the overall phonetic system of the French language and has retained its significance in modern French.

REFERENCES:

1. Chigarevskaya H. *Traité de phonétique française*. M., 1982 p.28
2. Brunot F., Brunei Ch., *La grammaire historique de la langue française*. Paris, 1956
3. A. Dauzat. *Histoire de la langue française* 2009. 472 c
4. Abduxalilovna, M. G. (2024). Fransuz tilidagi cho ‘ziq unlilar tarixi va fonetik tahlili. *American journal of education and learning*, 2(4), 171-174.
5. Abduxalilovna, M. G., & Xamro o‘gli, s. h. (2025). Fransuz tili fonetikasida tovushlarning o‘ziga xos xususiyati. *shokh library*.
6. Abdukhalilovna, M. G. (2024). Methodology of teaching phonetic materials in teaching the French language in general secondary schools. *Ethiopian International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 11(09), 36-38.
7. Abduxalilovna, M. G. (2024). Fransuz tili adabiyotida gradatsiyaning qo ‘llanishi. *International Journal of Education, Social Science & Humanities*, 12(4), 707-710.
8. Abduxalilovna, M. G., & Maftuna, K. (2023). fransuz tili tovushlardagi tarixiy o ‘zgarishlar. in *interdiscipline innovation and scientific research conference* (Vol. 2, No. 14, pp. 171-173).
9. Abduhalilova, M. G. (2020). Comparative phonetics of French and Uzbek sounds (as example of French and Uzbek languages). *Евразийский научный журнал*, (1), 70-72.