

Re: French verb conjugation: "je harcele"? or "je harcelle"?

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- *From:* Nathan Sanders <nsanders@xxxxxxxxxxxxx>
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In article <jd2ob5-8hc.ln1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>, Adam Funk <a24061@xxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

On 2008-03-25, mb wrote:

Also, can we please stop the highly irritating habit of calling the e muet "schwa"? This is not Hebrew or English and the e muet has zilch to do with that. It is misleading.

Isn't "schwa" the phonetic terminology for that sound in any language, not just the one (Hebrew) that the term comes from?

I think the issue is that French schwa is not actually "that sound" (a mid central unrounded vowel), but rather a mid front round vowel, somewhat like [o] and [oe] (in fact, I *think* I recall that it can be analyzed as just an unstressed positional variant of the /o/ and /oe/ phonemes, but I'm not sure about this).

Of course, English schwa isn't always "that sound" either, often being higher (and sometimes fronter) than true mid central.

Nathan

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