

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

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On 2008-03-25, Nathan Sanders wrote:

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).

I looked in a few apparently IPA-using French-English and French dictionaries: they all use "that upside-down-e" for the vowel in "je" and the first vowel in "jeter", but they use ø (slashed o) for the one in "jeu".

Are the dictionaries consistently misusing the IPA or idealizing French pronunciation, or am I wrong in thinking that "upside-down-e" means "schwa"?

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

Do you mean in different accents?

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