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### The System of Speech Interruption: Schreberian Thoughts on Speech Education at the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers

The goal of this paper is to highlight several notions which orient the teaching practices which focus on speech, in our communication training at Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers. And finally, to mobilize a few “exotic” main ideas from the famous *Memoirs of a Neuropath* by David Paul Schreber, published in 1903, and which were the object of countless commentaries and analyses by psychoanalysts, beginning with Freud himself (*The Case of Schreber*).

Schreber, in fact, was a particular instance of a “system of speech interruption”, the description of which seemed appropriate to us as we encounter it in our work on speech. There are, in our societies, psycho-sociological institutions of individual speech interruption. These mechanisms are not simply means of deprivation or confiscation, already amply described, but complex mental processes designed to lead subjects to suspend oral effectuation in the most ordinary circumstances in private life and at work. The “delirious” notions of Schreber provide an unexpected but pertinent descriptive framework, produced by a person who experiences more than any other, this kind of common interruption procedure in speech. “Common” here means “that which happens to everyone in the course of speech”. Schreber has therefore posed pseudo-theoretical summaries, unlike any others, and from this point of view, is appropriate for the real practice of speech when the subject is confronted with the primary question which occupies our educational methods of speech: why do I remain silent? (Schreber replies: “Because I am an idiot or something like that...”). It is precisely because of his situation, his need to describe how his speech was interrupted and his thought forced, that Schreber’s pseudo-theoretical neologisms fit the realities of speech and thought of the subjects who we encounter in our work.

This atypical theoretical equipment allows us, somewhat ironically, to find what we hear in our workshops when the question is asked: “What happens when I remain silent rather than say what I like?”

Moreover, through two concrete examples, we would like to show how we use a theatrical teaching methodology to try and direct the trainees with whom we work towards a self-interrogation of their own system of speech interruption. Again, Schreber with his “pretending to be” directs us towards a theatricality, production of the self, towards the on stage reconstruction of life’s moments which allow the subject to re-invest in that which we call oral paradoxes: simultaneous constraints to silence and to speech, nothing is said that has not already been said, that which cannot be said with certainty must remain unspoken, etc. Consequently, our work focuses on the contradiction of the actor who “pretends to be” and who accomplishes the impossible synthesis between being himself and someone else. The effects on those who stutter are well known and it is not surprising that theatricality is used for treatment in the paradoxical positioning of speech.