

# Dr. Petar Guberina

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## Founder of the Verbotonal Method



Doctorate University of Paris (1939)  
Honorary Head Department of Romance Language Studies  
Tenured professor of French and Phonetics, University of Zagreb  
Member of the Academy of Arts and Science of Croatia  
Scientific Advisor SUVAG Centre of Zagreb

Dr. Petar Guberina was born May 22, 1913 in Sibinek, Dalmatia, and died January 22, 2005, in Zagreb, Croatia.

Professor Petar GUBERINA completed his classic secondary studies at Sibinek high school. He graduated from the University of Zagreb with a degree in French and Latin (1935), then continued his studies at the Sorbonne in France, where he earned his doctorate in 1939.

His thesis, prepared under the supervision of Professor P. Fouche, and in particular Professor Marouzeau, was entitled "Logic and stylistic values in complex propositions." This work paved the way for genuine linguistic analysis of the speech, with particular emphasis at the outset on the importance of rhythm, intonation and gestures as optimal factors in the structuring, and consequently the acquisition, of languages. The work provided him contact, which proved to be significant, with the Geneva School (F. de Saussure – Piaget).

He was a Professor at the College of Arts and Literature at the University of Zagreb from 1951 to 1983. He then began as Professor of French and Head of the Romance Languages Department (1951 – 1965). In 1954, he founded the Phonetics Institute and in 1965, the Phonetics Department of which he became the Head at the time of his retirement in 1983, and where he devoted his time to research.

Professor Petar Guberina's research on " the Linguistics of the Speech " revolutionized the learning of modern languages and resulted in the Global-Structural Audiovisual Method (SGAV) developed with P. Rivenc of CREDIF.

From then on, he was presented to scientists of worldwide acclaim in the area of Biomedical and Social Sciences. The Verbo-tonal method was developed on every continent in the world. A substantial number of establishments around the globe (several hundred in all) apply the verbo-tonal principles and procedures and use specific electro-acoustical equipment in the area of therapy and training for persons with impaired hearing, children with altered speech and in the treatment of speech disorders.

The basic principles of the verbo-tonal system can be found as components in all modern foreign language teaching methods, and are generally acknowledged starting points applied by manufacturers of electro-acoustic equipment for use in audiological diagnosis and hearing aids.

The bibliography of the verbo-tonal system contains over 1,000 titles published in 10 languages.

Professor Guberina has been a member of the Croatian Academy of Arts and Science since 1963. He was Director of SUVAG Polyclinic (formerly the SUVAG Centre) founded by the Croatian government in 1961. Today, he is a Scientific Advisor for the Centre.

Since 1982, the SUVAG Centre has been a world core of development and training for the Verbo-tonal system. The Centre has conducted research and scientific investigation into several international research projects, in particular four American government-funded projects, the most important of which (1961) was entitled " Restricted Bands of Frequencies in Auditory Rehabilitation of the Deaf ", and other more recent work in 1991.

As experts and researchers, the Centre took part (in 1989) in a European Union project called " COST 219 " targeting improvement in the operation of a telephone designed for the hearing impaired.

In 1992, as part of the TEMPUS programme, a project was accepted in the area of verbo-tonal education (Hearing and Speech Pathology ; foreign language teaching) and the organisation of international post-graduate university studies (Masters). The programme included collaboration with the Zagreb School of Medicine and universities from four European countries : Belgium, France, Italy and Spain.

Professor Guberina was also a scientific investigator for several years for UNICEF, UNESCO and the UN as part of their activities in the World Health Organisation.

In France, he was awarded the Legion of Honour :

- Knighthood in 1968.
- the Officer's Cross in 1989, which he was awarded in main quadrangle of the Sorbonne in Paris.

Source for biography: <http://www.suvag.com/ang/histoire/guberina.html>.