

The principle

By establishing a relation between a bar code on a self-adhesive label (placed on a support of choice, depending on need) and a digital (recorded) sound content, B.A.Bar tirelessly and on demand reproduces the sound information which, due to insufficient memory capacity, has disappeared or been lost from memory! B.A.Bar can also be used as a traditional AAC device, enabling people without speech to communicate better.

In other words...

- For those who can no longer find their words, B.A.Bar helps to **recover** them...
- For those who do not hear their pronunciation flaws, B.A.Bar points them out so that, wherever possible, the persons themselves can **improve their pronunciation...**
- For those unable to construct a sentence correctly, B.A.Bar contributes to **auto-correction**, by making that person conscious of the mistakes he or she has made...
- For those who cannot find their way any longer, B.A.Bar can **remind them which road to take...**
- For those who cannot accomplish a job because they no longer remember what to do or how to do it, B.A.Bar **tirelessly repeats the missing information...**

Results

With about ten cases from 1998 and a hundred users monitored by more than thirty teams since May 2000, B.A.Bar has been evaluated by persons aged from 26 months to 89 years. The quality of the results obtained is broadly due to the fact that it allows the user to prolong the educational or therapeutic work of the professional, either autonomously or in cooperation with friends and family. A summary report of the results was drawn up in November 2000. In June 2001 the evaluation period was concluded with the international second B.A.Bar seminar. The detailed congress report as well as the corresponding synthesis can be obtained at FST.

How does it work?

1 Choose a text

State what you want to record (this may be a word or one or more phrases, an animal noise or a piece of music, for example).

2 Attach a label

Detach a new label containing a bar code and place it on the desired spot (an object, a picture, a text, in a book, on an exercise book page, etc...).

3 Programming mode

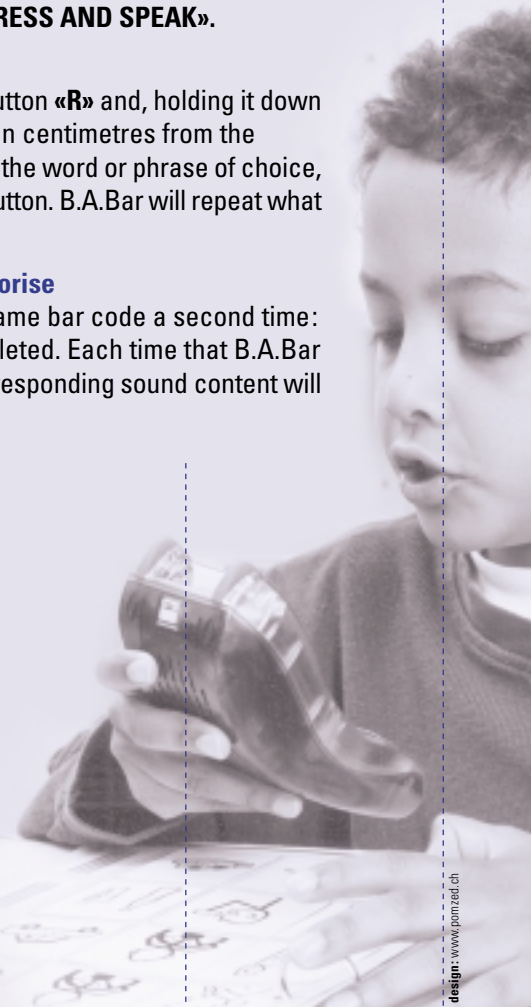
Present B.A.Bar to the label; seeing it for the first time, B.A.Bar knows that it must programme this label. It then says: **«PRESS AND SPEAK»**.

4 Record

Press the recording button **«R»** and, holding it down and speaking about ten centimetres from the apparatus, pronounce the word or phrase of choice, then release the **«R»** button. B.A.Bar will repeat what it has heard.

5 Confirm and memorise

If correct, show the same bar code a second time: the recording is completed. Each time that B.A.Bar sees this label, its corresponding sound content will be produced!



B.A.Bar: but also...

For those who can no longer find their words, B.A.Bar helps find them...

Between a concept and its corresponding verbal form, there is a link. Not knowing this link means not finding the word or words that we need (indeed, on such occasions do we not say, «it's on the tip of my tongue...»)? It also happens that we occasionally «get the wrong link». In such cases, we talk about a slip of the tongue.

The frequent absence of this link is one of the symptoms often found in handicapped persons suffering from trisomy, autism or other kinds of mental disability. Observations show that these persons frequently have difficulty in expressing themselves verbally.

In these cases, the task of the therapist and the teacher consists mainly of stimulating the subject so that he or she experiences the existence of this link as often as possible, and in a pertinent manner.

By giving the student the possibility to repeat, autonomously, on request and as many times as desired, a word or sentence connected with a given situation or concept, B.A.Bar contributes to the birth, or rebirth, of the aptitude of «finding one's words».

For those unable to construct a sentence correctly, B.A.Bar contributes to auto-correction, by making that person conscious of the mistakes he or she has made...

Difficulty can be experienced in perceiving the mistakes one has made, in particular from the grammatical point of view. Traditionally, it is in their relationships with adults that children become aware of their mistakes and, progressively, are able to correct them.

To complement this situation, having reference texts (in B.A.Bar), which one subsequently tries to reproduce, while at the same time directly recording and listening, can contribute to significant progress.

To describe what an image evokes, while at the same time recording one's words in B.A.Bar for subsequent listening, can contribute to becoming more aware of one's own mistakes... and to progressively correcting them, in an autonomous manner on the one hand, and with the help of a third person on the other.

For those who cannot accomplish a job because they no longer remember what to do or how to do it, B.A.Bar tirelessly repeats the missing information...

Doing a maths exercise, doing handicraft work, remembering the names of little friends, knowing the use of time throughout the day, remembering the route to take for going to therapy, dressing, brushing teeth, going to the toilet by oneself, all these activities are only possible if one remembers certain instructions, and the order in which the different sequences have to be accomplished.

In addition to a conventional action, having at one's disposal a coach whose patience is practically infinite, certainly makes it easier to accomplish tasks that were so far only possible in the presence of a third person who was ready to repeat, when necessary, the missing information...

For those who do not hear their pronunciation flaws, B.A.Bar points them out so that, wherever possible, the persons themselves can improve their pronunciation...

We have all made the experience of listening to ourselves after having been recorded! In general, we are surprised to discover certain characteristics that escape us when we «listen to ourselves speaking» live (for example, the broadness of our accent...). This curiosity can take on enormous proportions if we suffer from pronunciation difficulties, not to say dysarthria.

The inability to perceive sufficiently well one's mistakes on this level is to be penalized on at least two levels: on the one hand, not being conscious of one's mistakes, and on the other, not seeing the possible progress being accomplished with appropriate therapy.

B.A.Bar is equipped with a sophisticated recorder capable of reproducing, with a minimum of manipulation, what one has just said quasi immediately; as a result, a better perception of one's own verbal output is obtained, thus improving the chances of auto-correction.

Thanks

This project is financed entirely by donations. FST therefore thanks its donors as well as the 70 or so professionals (therapists, teachers, trainers) and the handicapped persons and their families who have proved to be the true actors in the evaluation of this project.

Examples of use

There now exist hundreds of exercises created during the evaluation. In general, the bar codes contain a word or phrase relating to a drawing or a designated object. The user hears them as many times as the exercise requires. Here are a few of them:

- 1 Establish a link between an image, the written word and the pronounced word.



- 2 Document a recipe for cooking: the code contains the explanation required to prepare the dish, with the preparation stages also being represented by a photograph.



- 3 Make a communication table «talk» in order to help learning and application by third parties who do not understand the meanings of the pictograms used.

