
Book Review: Jones, T. (Ed., 2016). *Pronunciation in the classroom: The overlooked essential*. Alexandria, VA: TESOL Press (ISBN 978-1-942799450)

Terry Leotta

Auckland Institute of Studies, New Zealand

This edited collection from TESOL Press comprises 12 chapters focusing on the teaching of pronunciation in the second language classroom. Looking at the issue from both theoretical and practical aspects, it draws attention to an often neglected, yet demonstrably important area of second language acquisition, namely pronunciation. While addressed to teachers of English, the theoretical focus and the practical application of the exercises provided throughout no doubt make this publication also useful for teachers and syllabus planners of other language courses.

Classroom teachers and academics alike are well provided for, with each section prefaced by a theoretical underpinning that is consistently followed by clear, step-by-step tasks and resources for the classroom. In addition, a useful reference list is included at the conclusion of each chapter.

The book opens with a foreword by Judy Gilbert on the importance of pronunciation and the central role played by prosody (rhythm and melody). Editor Tamara Jones's introduction then highlights the gap between the integration of pronunciation and real teaching contexts. The introduction is followed by 12 chapters in which various teachers and academics set out to make a clear case for the inclusion of pronunciation teaching at all levels of English language proficiency class.

Broadly grouped into four sections, Chapters 1 and 2 deal with the importance of words in the conveyance of meaning and the essential role played by word stress in effective verbal communication. Chapters 3 to 6 focus on the need to incorporate key elements of prosody, specifically prominence, intonation, and thought groups, into listening and speaking

lessons. In Chapters 7 to 9, the authors make a clear case for the incorporation of pronunciation into grammar lessons. The final three chapters posit that pronunciation can and should also be included in reading and spelling lessons. The publication concludes with an exhortation to language teachers to overcome what for many is trepidation around pronunciation teaching, and to acknowledge its centrality vis-à-vis enhancing communicative competency.

In conclusion, this publication is a useful addition to the body of work on pronunciation teaching and its importance. The central thrust of the authors is that such a key skill is neglected due to both a lack of understanding the vital role pronunciation plays in the communication process, and the uncertainty that many teachers experience over how best to incorporate this skill into their lessons. The rationale and activities provided throughout this book do an excellent job of showing us both why and how this should be accomplished.