Rewiew of Derwing, Tracey M.& Murray J. Munro. 2015. Pronunciation Fundamentals. Evidence-Based Perspectives for L2 Teaching and Research. 208 pages. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. ISBN: 978-90-2721-326-6. ────────────

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Although pronunciation in EFL has typically been neglected in language teaching methodologies (Harmer, 2001; Palacios, 2001; Rogerson, 2011; Underhill, 2013; Walker, 2014; Szpyra, 2015), recent years have witnessed a growing number of studies on classroom teaching in this area. Moreover, several publications have appeared in which pronunciation is the main area of focus, such as Speak Out! – the newsletter of the IATEFL PronSig group – and the Journal of Second Language Pronunciation. In addition, several annual conferences are now held which are based on research and teaching in pronunciation (Munro and Derwing, 2015). Studies tend to focus on theoretical aspects such as the reasons why pronunciation is important and should be taught in the classroom, factors which may influence the learning process, or whether one should aim at sounding native-like. The present book also deals with these theoretical topics, although more practical and pedagogical issues are also dealt with, as well as some considerations for future directions in teaching, research and the assessment of student pronunciation.

As the title indicates, this volume focuses on the teaching of pronunciation as a Second Language (L2), especially to adult learners. However, many of the topics dealt with will also probably be of interest to teachers and researchers whose students or experimental subjects are learning EFL. Although this book is rather short (173 pages, excluding references), it contains much theoretical and practical information regarding the importance afforded to pronunciation throughout the history of language teaching, its current status in L2 classrooms, and, as mentioned above, some considerations for future development. The book, then, is an essential resource for researchers and language teachers interested in the teaching of pronunciation.

The book is organised into ten chapters, each of which begins with a short anecdote, story, or the summary of an empirical study which encapsulates the content of the chapter. Chapter 1 is of an introductory nature; readers are first introduced to key concepts in the field of pronunciation and its teaching, such as Segmentals,

Suprasegmentals, Prosody, Fluency, Foreign Accent and Comprehensibility. In the remaining sections of the chapter, the authors concentrate in greater detail on the shift from the so-called Nativeness Principle towards the Intelligibility Principle by summarising the main effects this shift has had in the design and format of pronunciation teaching materials and tasks and by reviewing some of their own studies on intelligibility and comprehensibility.

In chapter 2, an overview is provided of significant developments affecting the field of teaching pronunciation over the recent decades. The way this chapter is organised differs from approaches taken in similar works that include descriptions of changes in the role of pronunciation in different teaching methods. Specifically, while Celce *et al.* (2010) and Rogerson (2011) tend to summarise the importance given to pronunciation in the Audiolingual Method or the Communicative Approach, the literature-review section here revolves around four areas: a) Description of Phonetics for Teaching Purposes, b) Teaching Materials and Technological Changes, c) Research on Adult Phonetic Learning and, d) Research Into Pronunciation Teaching. The second section, Classroom Teaching Materials and Innovations, will perhaps be of most interest to EFL researchers and teachers since the authors describe different traditional and modern techniques and resources available for teaching pronunciation, and they also include a short sub-section on technological developments, this is complemented by a whole chapter on the use of technology in the pronunciation classroom in chapter 7.

Chapter 3 addresses a number of factors which may influence the way in which students learn English pronunciation. The list of these factors is rather short compared to those in previous studies, such as Szpyra (2015). In particular, in the present volume emphasis is placed on what are perhaps the five most important personal and/or instructional factors: a) Age, b) Language Experience, c) Motivation, d) Language Aptitude, and e) Amount and Type of Pronunciation Instruction; by contrast, other influential factors such as Learning Strategies, Gender, or Degree of Exposure are only referred to very briefly in a section of one paragraph called Other Influences. One section in this chapter which is highly recommended, due to its innovative nature, is Applying Research Findings in the Pronunciation Classroom, where readers are provided with some teaching implications to take into consideration when teaching pronunciation inside the classroom according to the learners' age, previous language experience, motivation and their aptitude.

In recent years there has been a shift from the idea that, in order to be considered a good speaker of a particular language it is absolutely necessary for one to aim at obtaining a pronunciation as native-like as possible towards less-demanding approaches in which more emphasis is placed on Intelligibility. A direct consequence of these changes is the fact that nowadays not all pronunciation mistakes are considered

to be as serious as others, and learners of a particular language may be regarded as efficient speakers even if they have foreign accents. This area of discussion, that is, pronunciation errors and the gravity of errors, is dealt with in chapter 4. The chapter can be considered to represent a real innovation in the field of teaching pronunciation, since the authors present a thorough description of what actually constitutes a pronunciation error and stress the fact that not every error will have the same negative consequences on communication; moreover, this chapter fills a gap in the existing literature in the sense that it includes an extensive classification of learners' errors at both the segmental and suprasegmental level depending on whether a sound or segment has been inserted, deleted, substituted or distorted. Afterwards, the authors provide a considerable number of practical reasons why pronunciation errors occur in the classroom, referring here to various approaches and models for the analysis of these mistakes, including: a) Contrastive and Error Analysis, b) Best's Perceptual Assimilation Analysis, and c) Flege's Speech Learning Model.

In chapter 5 the authors summarise key aspects from previous research into the teaching of pronunciation. There are six main subsections; in the first, a summary is given of the findings of previous studies looking at whether and how often pronunciation is taught in L2 classrooms, or the frequency with which pronunciation appears in teaching materials in comparison to other language areas. Sub-sections two and three directly concern pronunciation teachers; the former deals with teacher-training by reviewing several survey-based studies on describing teachers experience and degree of confidence when teaching pronunciation and the latter includes a short review and discussion on the issue of whether non-native speakers of a particular language can be efficient pronunciation teachers. The following sub-section involves an extensive description of those empirical studies that indicate the effectiveness of pronunciation instruction, that is, studies with positive results in the sense that they found that students could improve and develop their pronunciation abilities within the classroom, and not only autonomously. This section is crucial within the history of the field of teaching pronunciation, since one of the arguments for not teaching this area of language in the classroom has been that it is something that students have to learn by themselves at their own speed. The final two sub-sections in chapter 5 are concerned with Curriculum Issues and Curriculum Development. In the former, the authors discuss whether pronunciation should be taught in isolation or integrated with other skills, they give the readers ideas as to when to introduce pronunciation in the classroom, and provide arguments in favour of mixed L1 pronunciation classes; finally, in the section on Curriculum Development, the authors describe a number of previous studies carried out on issues including, a) Syllabus Design, Materials Development and Resource Selection, b) Assessment, and c) Instructional Planning and Implementation, among others.

Chapter 6 is entirely devoted to the issue of assessment, a topic which until now has typically received only partial treatment in handbooks on teaching pronunciation; hence, this chapter fills a clear gap in the existing literature. It begins with a summary of some spoken proficiency tests used by different educational institutions. The authors then provide a description of the three main types of tests that can be used for assessing pronunciation in the classroom: a) Needs Assessment; b) Formative Assessment, and c) Summative Assessment. The first type, Needs Assessment, is extensively analysed and readers are given detailed descriptions of the main requirements in order to use these tests: the test should not be very long, teachers should record tests so that they can listen to them again, different elicitation tasks should be used, etc. The following section contains quite a long list of currently available written and electronic materials that teachers can use in order to design, test and assess their students' oral abilities. The authors then devote a few paragraphs to outlining the basic phonetic knowledge teachers should have in order to be able to assess students correctly. Finally, two fundamental concepts that ought to be taken into account when designing and implementing tests are explained, these being Reliability and Validity. In the final section, the relatively new approach to assessment, Technology-Based Testing, is discussed; due to its innovative character, this section is well worth reading before designing a spoken task or test.

Chapter 7 in this volume is also innovative. It focuses, as mentioned above, on the use of new technologies for teaching pronunciation. There is useful information here on topics such as recent technological changes in society and the emergence of new technologies, some of the benefits of using technological resources in the classroom, and how to individualise lessons for teaching pronunciation. Throughout this chapter, the authors also describe and review a variety of tools that are currently being used in pronunciation classrooms, from both a theoretical and a more practical point of view, to practise students' perceptive and productive oral skills. These materials are divided into four main categories: a) Digitised Speech, b) Visual Speech Representations, c) CAPT, and d) the Internet. Among the materials described in the chapter are audio-video software like Skype, Smartphone apps, digital recording programmes such as English Accent Coach, Audacity and Pocket Wave Pad, audio applications and software which generate spectrograms like Praat.

In chapters 8 and 9, the authors return to the topics of Intelligibility, Foreign Accent and Accent Reduction. More particularly, in the former there are several sections with reviews and comparisons of previous studies on attitudes towards foreign accent or accented speech, studies in which having an accent is considered part of one's identity, and research on the role that context plays in these issues. A few pages on World Englishes and ELF follow this. Two highly innovative sections in this chapter are the

discussions of the Role of the Interlocutor and of Willingness to Communicate; in the former, the authors deal with the issue of whether students can be trained to become better language listeners; in the latter section, the main features of the Willingness to Communicate framework are outlined and discussed. At the end of the chapter, readers can again find a very useful section on pedagogical implications with several ideas on how to deal with issues of Foreign Accent and Intelligibility in the classroom. Chapter 9, in turn, focuses mainly on outlining the Principles of the Business Model for Accent Reduction and the Medical Model for Accent Modification.

The final chapter, although short, is a must-read for researchers interested in the teaching of pronunciation, since it discusses the future directions in which the field of L2 pronunciation research, learning and teaching will hopefully move, according to the many empirical studies and detailed descriptions outlined in the previous chapters. This chapter is divided into five main areas of possible future progress, these areas coinciding with the same broad topics dealt with at various points in the volume: a) Future Directions for Pronunciation Research, b) Future Directions for Teaching Pronunciation, c) Future Directions for Assessing Pronunciation, d) Future Directions for Technology-Based Pronunciation Classrooms and Materials, and e) Future Directions for the Society. Finally, at the end of the book there is a short glossary in which the main notions used throughout the different chapters are defined.

For future editions of this volume, a small number of modifications might be made. To begin with, the section on World Englishes and ELF could be longer, since research is currently being done on the acceptance of non-native accents as correct models for learning and teaching pronunciation; moreover, although the authors' description of Jenkins' Lingua Franca Core (2002) is quite detailed, perhaps a table with the main features within this framework would illustrate the data in a clearer way, thus making it easier for the reader to understand. Another minor criticism is that teacher-related factors such as Teacher Training, Teaching Skills and Motivation, which have also been found to affect the way students learn pronunciation (Szpyra, 2015), are not addressed within the book. Finally, regarding the general structure and order of the chapters, several changes may perhaps be considered. Firstly, it is surprising that sections on previous research in areas such as the importance and efficiency of teaching pronunciation in the classroom, and whether it is necessary for teachers to receive proper training courses before teaching in this area, do not appear until chapter 5, nearly halfway through the book. Secondly, it may be feasible for chapters 3 and 8 to appear consecutively since they refer to similar issues – Accent, Intelligibility and Errors; perhaps, these chapters could even be combined into one single chapter. Similarly, chapters 4 and 6, which revolve around Pronunciation Errors and Error Gravity and Assessment of L2 pronunciation, respectively, could also be

brought together in a chapter on Pronunciation Errors, Correction and Assessment, for example.

The previous shortcomings by no means undermine the great value of this book from a didactic and research point of view, since, as already mentioned, the authors not only describe topics which are considered crucial within the field of teaching pronunciation from a theoretical point of view, but also include many practical ideas concerning how to make the most of experimental studies and incorporate them in the classroom. In other words, the approach they follow shows that research on L2 language and language teaching within the classroom are two areas that should go together, an idea with which I strongly agree. Hence, I would like to conclude with warm congratulations for the authors of this volume; I am already looking forward to reading their future articles and books.

Acknowledgements

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