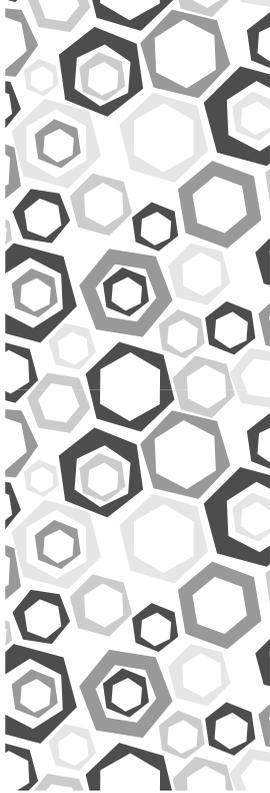


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Preface

Welcome! Teaching English pronunciation can be a challenge. It requires some technical knowledge about phonology; an ability to predict the problems students may have; plus a good supply of strategies, tools, and activities to help students understand and practice. Teaching pronunciation implies that the teacher can provide a good pronunciation model for students to follow, give explanations and demonstrations of things the students need to know, and lead them through a series of practice activities to help them make their new pronunciation automatic.

There are many good books about teaching pronunciation. So why do we need another one? First, all the existing books are simply *books*. They are written on paper, representing sounds only through written symbols and descriptions. They may come with a CD with recordings of exercises, but sound is not an integral part of the “story.” Pronunciation is a unique topic that really needs sound as part of the presentation. With recent innovations, authors can now provide explanations that combine words and sounds.

Second, books and articles about teaching pronunciation have almost always been written with an audience of mainly native speakers of English in mind. Besides assuming that readers have an instinctive knowledge of the sounds and “music” of English, most books don’t touch on many issues that teachers who have learned English as a second language want and need to know about—questions that may not occur to native-speaker teachers. This book has been written with special consideration of the needs and interests of nonnative speakers of English, who are, after all, the majority of English teachers worldwide. (Canagarajah, 1999). I assume that most of these teachers are working in **English as a foreign language** (EFL) situations, that is, in countries where English is not a commonly spoken language and students have few chances to hear English in everyday life.

Of course, native speakers also need the same types of information and can benefit from an introduction to the system behind the sounds, the problems their students might have, and ideas about how to help students overcome these problems. After all, the details of pronunciation are an aspect of language that most native speakers are not consciously aware of.

What's in This Book?

I've tried to choose the topics related to pronunciation, phonology, and pedagogy that are most necessary for EFL or **English as a second language** (ESL) teachers to know about and to explain them simply and clearly. In this book, you will read about

- the pronunciation of American English: Both individual sounds and the musical aspects of pronunciation, such as **intonation, rhythm, and word stress**;
- typical problems that students may have in learning the pronunciation of English;
- some ways to teach pronunciation to your students in an interesting and meaningful way, including suggestions for teaching tools and types of activities.

The explanations and examples in this book are based on the pronunciation of **standard American English**. This is because it's the variety of English that I speak and the kind I've always taught, not because I think it has any superiority over other varieties of English. When it seems helpful, we'll also look at differences between standard American English and other varieties.

This book contains basic information about the pronunciation of English and suggestions for ways to introduce and practice sounds and other aspects of pronunciation. The accompanying website also contains sound recordings and video tutorials to supplement the text. When you see , go to www.tesol.org/beyondrepeatafterme to hear the audio recordings. There are also videos to accompany many of the chapters in this book. These videos repeat some of the basic information from the chapter, but with sound. By reading the text and watching the videos, I hope you'll be able to increase your understanding of how the English sound system works and get ideas for ways to help your students develop good pronunciation habits.

At the end of the book is a selection of resources that you might find interesting and helpful, as well as a glossary. The terms in the glossary are bolded the first time they appear in a chapter.

My Background

I'm a teacher. I've taught all aspects of English, including many, many pronunciation classes, for more than 25 years. I have a master's degree in **linguistics** from California State University, Fresno, where my coursework gave me a foundation in phonology, along with linguistics in general. For the past 14 years I've been teaching in the ESL and **Teaching English as a Foreign Language** (TEFL) programs at the University of California, Irvine Extension (UCI). I've taught the Teaching Pronunciation Skills course that is part of UCI Extension's TEFL Accelerated Certificate Program for more than a decade to students from many countries. The topic choices in this book are based in part on my TEFL students' insightful questions, comments, and stories about their teaching situations and experiences. Thank you, TEFL students!

I'm a native speaker of English, but I've also been a learner of other languages, including German, Japanese, Spanish, French, Latin, Russian, and Sanskrit. This is not to say that I speak all those languages well, but I've studied them. I know what it's like not to be able to hear the difference between unfamiliar new sounds, to struggle to pronounce them, and to feel satisfaction when I finally can (if that ever happens). I've experienced language classes where the teacher valued pronunciation and taught it well and others where pronunciation was basically ignored.

I know that the thought of teaching pronunciation can be intimidating, whether English is your native language or not, but it will be much less scary if you equip yourself with some basic knowledge and ideas for teaching techniques and activities. I hope you find this book helpful in reaching that goal.