

**Elina Tergujeff & Maria Kautonen (Eds.).** *Suullinen kielitaito – Opi, opeta, arvioi*,

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*Suullinen kielitaito – Opi, opeta arvioi*, edited by Elina Tergujeff and Maria Kautonen, is a handbook for the teaching and evaluation of second language (L2) spoken language skills for L2 teachers and teacher students in Finland. The book is written in Finnish and introduces and discusses different theoretical and practical aspects of pronunciation teaching and spoken language proficiency. Tergujeff and Kautonen have gathered together language teachers, linguists and researchers across Finland to write a collection of texts containing research based theory and pedagogical methods for L2 pronunciation teaching in classrooms. The authors use the term *pronunciation* in its broader meaning, including not only individual sounds but also word and sentence stress, rhythm and intonation. The book consists of eleven chapters, each focusing on a specific aspect of learning, teaching and evaluation of L2 spoken language skills. The collection can be roughly divided into three parts. Chapter 1, written by the editors, focuses on discussing the importance of L2 pronunciation and spoken language skills in general. Chapters 2–5 present different theoretical aspects to L2 pronunciation learning, whereas Chapters 6–11 focus on the more practical aspect of L2 teaching by introducing various pedagogical methods and evaluation techniques that can be applied to different classroom environments. Each chapter of the book begins with a short list of the topics of the upcoming text and ends with a checklist of the main conclusions.

The book begins with a short introduction by the editors describing the aims and contents of the following chapters. In the introduction, the editors emphasize that the

book has been written for everyone working with L2 teaching and learning regardless of the language in question. The foreword is followed by short introductions of the authors who have contributed to the book chapters.

Chapter 1, written by the editors, highlights the importance of L2 spoken language skills and explicit pronunciation teaching. Tergujeff and Kautonen write that pronunciation instruction should be considered as an integral part of L2 teaching, since intelligibility is greatly affected by intonation and pronunciation. They also argue that the aim of explicit pronunciation teaching should not be nativelike speech, but speech that is intelligible to as many listeners as possible. In Chapter 2, Riikka Ullakonoja and Hannele Dufva discuss pronunciation learning and the various factors affecting it from a more general perspective. The chapter explains how language background, age, learning setting and orthographic conventions may affect L2 pronunciation learning. In addition, Ullakonoja and Dufva discuss the role of motivation and the importance of observing the individual needs and motivations of each learner. They encourage teachers to adapt their methods to the needs of each learner group by using a wide range of spoken language exercises, such as games, competitions and storytelling. In Chapter 3, Pekka Lintunen and Hannele Dufva discuss the importance of recognizing and defining the *goals* and *models* for L2 pronunciation. They emphasize that learners should be introduced to different varieties of the target L2 in order to raise their awareness of the variation of different pronunciation *models* within a single language. In Chapter 4, Mikko Kuronen writes about the phonetic and prosodic targets in pronunciation learning and discusses the causes underlying the challenges in learning phonetic features of an L2. The theoretical section of the book concludes with Chapter 5, where Mia Halonen

examines the complicated issue of accents and accentedness and the attitudes that people, especially Finns, have towards accented speech.

The more pedagogically oriented part of the book begins with Chapter 6, where Tergujeff introduces different ways of using ready-made teaching materials and textbooks creatively in classroom teaching. Tergujeff advises teachers to adapt traditional textbook exercises, for example by asking students to read texts out loud in different intonations, emotions, speeds and intensities, or instructing them to pay attention to words that contain a particular sound when listening to a text or a song. Chapter 7 (written by Tergujeff, Heinonen, Ilola, Salo and Kara) discusses the significance of constructive feedback and introduces practical methods and exercises for teaching L2 spoken language skills in a classroom setting. For example, the authors describe roleplay, improvisation, singing, active listening and connecting speech and movement as fun and effective ways of practicing L2 pronunciation and communication. In Chapter 8, Saara Laakso writes about speech comprehension as a part of spoken language proficiency. She highlights that speech comprehension can, and should, be practiced in the classroom just as any other part of L2 proficiency. Next in Chapter 9, Kari Moilanen presents and discusses various helpful methods for teaching L2 pronunciation to students with learning difficulties. For example, Moilanen describes how individual sounds can be practiced through exaggeration and repetition, and a piece of paper or a mirror may be helpful in demonstrating aspiration and articulation, whereas words may be easier to learn when each syllable is stressed with a rhythmic hand movement. Sari Ahola, on the other hand, focuses on the evaluation of L2 spoken language proficiency in Chapter 10. Ahola discusses the different aspects of spoken language evaluation and emphasizes that, even though reviewers should always strive

for objectivity, there is always some subjectivity involved since even the most experienced reviewers are subconsciously affected by their personal attitudes and preconceptions. Therefore, Ahola argues that it is important for reviewers to be aware of their own subjective views and the possible effects they might have on their evaluations. Finally, Chapter 11 offers more detailed descriptions of the most relevant pronunciation goals for English (written by Tergujeff), Spanish (Kallio), Italian (La Grassa), French (Kalmbach), Swedish (Kuronen), German (Fuchs), L2 Finnish (Aho, Nikonen and Toivola), Russian (Moilanen and Ullakonoja) and sign language (Takkinen, Wainio, De Weerd and Jantunen).

This collection of texts is thoughtfully edited and the book covers all the essential aspects of learning and teaching L2 spoken language skills. The book introduces a great mix of theoretical and practical views on pronunciation teaching and learning. The theoretical part of the book draws mostly from contemporary research in L2 acquisition without diving too deep into the more abstract theoretical frameworks in the field. This makes the book approachable for the reader while offering a pragmatic and helpful overview of the theoretical principles underlying pronunciation learning for teachers working in L2 classrooms. In addition, the texts present fresh aspects and easily applicable practices to L2 pronunciation teaching, ranging from adapting textbook exercises and using speech recording technology to demonstrating prosodic features of speech with body movements (Chapters 7–9).

There is an evident need for this kind of a book among Finnish L2 teachers. There is an increasing focus on spoken language skills and pronunciation in Finnish schools, but teachers often feel that they do not have enough resources or expertise to teach L2 pronunciation to their students (Tergujeff, 2013). This book responds to these needs and

fulfills its purpose as a helpful and valuable guide to teaching L2 spoken language skills in classrooms. Furthermore, it offers a more general perspective on L2 pronunciation without focusing on any specific language, which makes it relevant for all language teachers and students regardless of the L2 they are working with. Moreover, the fact that the book is written in Finnish makes it accessible and easy to use for Finnish readers.

The theoretical part of the book provides a research based and comprehensive introduction on why explicit pronunciation teaching is important (Chapters 1&7; see e.g. Derwing, Munro, & Wiebe, 1998) and furthermore, how varying factors related to language background, learning setting and motivation affect the relevant pronunciation goals of each individual learner (Chapter 2; see e.g. Ullakonoja & Dufva, 2016). Most importantly, the authors emphasize the *intelligibility* and *comprehensibility* aspect of L2 speech (see e.g. Derwing & Munro, 2015) reminding the reader that successful L2 pronunciation learning does not mean attaining nativelike speech. In addition, the theme of realistic and attainable *pronunciation goals* is discussed in depth and the outdated yet persistent views on foreign accents and accented speech are viewed critically (Chapters 3–5). Although contemporary research on L2 pronunciation focuses primarily on intelligibility and comprehensibility, the ideal of nativelike L2 pronunciation is, unfortunately, still strong in the Finnish educational system and the attitudes of Finnish L2 learners. The authors succeed in reminding and convincing the reader that completely nativelike speech is usually not the most purposeful *goal* in L2 pronunciation teaching or learning, even if learners wish to strive towards a certain native *model* in their own speech (Chapter 3). It is important to remind students and teachers that accented L2 speech can be completely intelligible and comprehensible, and

that certain native or non-native accents should not be regarded as more prestigious or more desirable than others.

To summarize, the book is a cohesive collection of texts that challenges the reader to evaluate their own thoughts on L2 pronunciation as well as provides them with clear and concise advice on how to apply new methods to everyday teaching settings. The collection has been written and curated with thought and purpose to serve the needs of professionals and students working with L2 teaching and pronunciation. This book is a practical and truly helpful guidebook to pronunciation teaching for all language teachers, experienced and inexperienced, on all levels of education. I sincerely hope it will be adopted as a textbook for teacher training programs in Finland to offer future L2 teachers support and guidance in L2 pronunciation teaching and evaluation practices.

#### References

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