Marcin Łączek

"Pronunciation in EFL Instruction. A Research-Based Approach", Jolanta Szpyra-Kozłowska, Bristol [etc.] 2015 : [recenzja]

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Jolanta SZPYRA-KOZŁOWSKA, *Pronunciation in EFL Instruction. A Research-Based Approach*, (=Second Language Acquisition: 82, Series Editor: David Singleton), Multilingual Matters, Bristol etc., 2015, 249 pp.

It is indeed with great interest that I read J. Szpyra-Kozłowska's *Pronunciation in EFL Instruction. A Research-Based Approach*. The book, in its theoretical plane, comprises a profound analysis of pronunciation instruction to English as a foreign language learners. Being part of foreign language teaching empirical paradigm, its methodological plane, revealed by the book's subtitle, explicitly links theoretical knowledge with practical applications in the field of glottodidactics. Glottodidactics established itself as a separate field of study (F. Grucza 2013a, 2013b) yet in the second half of the 1960s. Indeed, its research includes areas traditionally associated with foreign and second language teaching – teaching and learning in all institutional contexts, and all age groups as well as foreign language methodology of teaching, and research on second language acquisition (S. Grucza 2013a, 2013b, M. Olpinska-Szkiełko 2013). F. Grucza (2013a, 2013b) stresses the importance of the analysis of linguistic communication by saying that any glottodidactic interactions are also acts (processes) of people communicating between one another. J. Szpyra-Kozłowska, in turn, in her work, uses the term *phonodidactics* as synonymous with pronunciation pedagogy or pronunciation teaching. Pronunciation pedagogy, B. Seidhofer (2006) writes, is undergoing a move both from sound manipulation exercises to communication activities as well as from a focus on isolated forms to the functioning of pronunciation in discourse.

J. Szpyra-Kozłowska, in her considerations, follows a discourse-oriented approach to EFL pronunciation instruction where both prosodic and suprasegmental elements matter although, as she (2015: 112) points out, "the issue of intelligibility does not reside in the segmentals versus suprasegmentals dichotomy, but follows from the degree of phonetic and phonological distance/similarity between the L1 and L2 in terms of these two aspects of pronunciation." In a similar vein, she (2015: 117) further states that "Polish learners require more training in segments than in suprasegments [and] [w]hether the same holds true for other L1 speakers remains to be tested and empirically verified."

In fact, the desire to develop pronunciation similar to that of a native speaker which, according to J. Eckerth et al. (2009: 45) "may arguably be the strongest indicator of native or non-native speech, and may play a large role in how intelligible non-native speakers are" (as opposed to the development of comprehensible pronunciation only propagated during the heyday of the grammar-translation method) is a response to the changing educational realities. The need to learn a foreign language with the main aim of speaking it communicatively leads two Frenchmen: Claude Marcel and François Gouin and an Englishman: Thomas Prendergast (all referring in their analyses of language teaching to the observations of a child-like language acquisition) to come up in the mid- and late nineteenth century with the idea of a new language study movement (or, rather, approach): the Reform Movement. At the same time, the contributions of

Henry Sweet, Wilhelm Viëtor and Paul Passy lay the foundations for a new scientific discipline: phonetics with the establishment in 1886 of Dhi Fonètik Tîcerz' Asóciécon (FTA); renamed in 1889 to L'Association Phonétique des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes (AP) and, eventually, in 1897, to L'Association Phonétique Internationale (API) – the International Phonetic Association. The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), the most widely known system of phonetic transcription which gives new insights into the speech processes follows and, consequently, improves foreign language teaching significantly. Speech, rather than the written word, commences to be the primary focus and grammar, it is maintained, should only be taught inductively (J.C. Richards/ T.S. Rodgers 2004). But H. Sweet (1877) and P. Passy (1908), F. Grucza (2013b) notices, are also phoneticians who introduce into linguistics the concept of distinctive function (for the first time, though, the term as such is used by J. Winteler) as well as authors of significant sound distinction: a sound distinction that differentiates meanings (cf. F. Grucza 2013a). Silent Way and Community Language Learning further promote the role of pronunciation until its peak is reached during communicative approach (also known under the terms: the functional approach/ notational-functional approach/ communicative language teaching) which is a response to the changing educational realities in Europe by the end of the sixties (mainly to, based on behaviouristic psychology and structural linguistics, the audio-lingual method). As G. Nagaraj (2005: 41) notices, "[t]he development of language learning or teaching from form-based to a meaning-based approach: the move towards an eclectic approach from a rigid method: the shift from teacher-fronted to learner-centred classes: are all subsumed under the broad term communicative approach." In fact, it then becomes clear, A.P.R. Howatt (1984: 280) makes a remark that the situational approach: "[h]ad run its course. There was no future in continuing to pursue the chimera of predicting language on the basis of situational events. What was required was a closer study of the language itself and a return to the traditional concept that utterances carried meaning in themselves and expressed the meanings and intentions of the speakers and writers who created them."

Communicative Approach – a cooperative collection of different communicative methodologies with the help of which both "'language for communication' and 'language as communication'" are taught (E. Olshtain/ M. Celce-Murcia 2008: 707), originally introduced in multilingual L2 classrooms in second language contexts, and gradually enriched by the theory of language as communication (D.H. Hymes 1964, 1972) or the theory of competence (N. Chomsky 1965) – in Polish education settings specifically brings about the foundations of the discursive method developed by F. Grucza (1995) who, au fond, propagates the significance of discursive skill. The latter is not identified with the ability to talk though – a solely phonetic ability (J.C. Styszyński 1999: 108). In fact, discursive skill, according to J.C. Styszyński (1999: 108), is a much broader term that includes the knowledge of both lexis and grammar of the language spoken, and expressive and interactive pragmatics alike.

Pronunciation in EFL Instruction. A Research-Based Approach consists of 249 pages, opens with contents followed by preface after which there are three consecutive chapters (1. "English Pronunciation Teaching: Global Versus Local Contexts", 2. "Global and Local Pronunciation Priorities", 3. "Pronunciation Inside and Outside the Classroom: A Holistic Multimodal Approach)". As J. Szpyra-Kozłowska (2015: viii-ix)

puts it: "[t]o make the book both general and specific, global and local, as well as interesting to various readers and certainly not only to Polish readers, each chapter consists of two parts (Part A and Part B), the first of which provides a general theoretical discussion of a given issue while Part B contains a presentation of several experimental studies carried out by the author and meant to examine the problems raised in Part A empirically and to verify various theoretical claims." The subchapters of Part A then are": A.1.1 "Why Should Pronunciation Be Taught?", A.1.2 "Why is Pronunciation Teaching Often Neglected?", A1.3 "Goals of Pronunciation Teaching/Learning", A.1.4 "EFL Versus ELF: English Pronunciation Models Debate", A.1.5 "EFL, ELF or NELF?", A.1.6 "Which Native Pronunciation Model?", A.1.7 "EFL Versus ESL", A.1.8 "Diagnosing the Local Teaching Context. Learner-related and Teacher-related Determinants of Pronunciation Instruction", A.2.1 "How to Establish Pronunciation Priorities", A2.2 "Selected Proposals for English Pronunciation Priorities", A.2.3 "Focus on the Pronunciation of Phonetically Difficult Words", A.2.4 "Pronunciation and Spelling", A.2.5 "Segmentals Versus Suprasegmentals", A.3.1 "Developing Concern for Good Pronunciation", A.3.2 "A Holistic Multimodal Approach to Phonetic Training", A.3.3 "Selected Pronunciation Teaching Techniques", A.3.4 "Pronunciation Learning Outside the Classroom", A.3.5 "Providing Feedback", A.3.6 "Problems with Pronunciation Teaching Materials". In turn, the subchapters of Part B are: B.1.1 "Attitudes to Accented Speech and its Users", B.1.2 "Native Accent Models or ELF? A Questionnaire Study", B.1.3 "Diagnosing the Pronunciation Teaching Context in Poland", B.2.1 "Intelligibility and Global Versus Local Errors", B.2.2 "Other Phonetically Difficult Words", B.2.3 "Pronunciation Priorities for Polish Learners", B.3.1 "Motor Training Versus Cognitive Training", B.3.2 "Effectiveness Versus Attractiveness of Pronunciation Teaching Activities", B.3.3 "Employing Elements of Drama", B.3.4 "Phonetic Error Correction". The titles of both the chapters and subchapters perfectly grasp the issues analysed and, for this reason, I have decided not to refer to their contents at all. Concluding remarks (here: chapter 4) after which there are: references, author index and subject index are yet to be found in the book.

Pronunciation in EFL Instruction. A Research-Based Approach by Jolanta Szpyra-Kozłowska – a truly pilot investigation on Polish grounds – is clearly intended for a wide range of recipients including, first and foremost, EFL (but also English as a second or additional language) students or teachers/teacher trainees. It provides the reader with a good overview of current findings and research projects in the field, clarifies the future direction, sensitises (both amateur and professional) researchers to the underlying issue as well as provides them with rich data allowing teasing out this very important aspect of foreign (second or additional) language teaching and learning – in fact, "[i]n addition to deciding what to say, speakers must decide how to say it" (G. Ward/ B.J. Birner 2008: 119). The work's structure is clear, efficient, and to the point, and it fits within the range of already published works, discovers and proposes relevant ideas or takes an evaluative and critical stance towards acknowledged theories and approaches while, at the same time, introducing fresh views, suggestions and responses. The conclusions are a good synthesis of the analyses made, and do open toward further research in this dynamic field.

To conclude, the implications drawn from this study are significant and, therefore, for all the reasons mentioned above, I highly recommend *Pronunciation in EFL Instruction. A Research-Based Approach* by Jolanta Szpyra-Kozłowska to anyone interested in glottodidactics. And it is a real "must have" for any enthusiast au fait with the area of EFL pronunciation.

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Marcin ŁĄCZEK
University of Warsaw