

## REVIEW

MARK HANCOCK, *English pronunciation in use (intermediate): Self-study and classroom use* (second edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Pp. 208. ISBN: 978-0-521-18512-7.  
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This new edition of Mark Hancock's popular *English Pronunciation in Use (Intermediate)* follows the *In Use* format of explanations on the left-hand page and related exercises on the right-hand page. It is possible to buy the book with or without five audio CDs. Unlike the series' *Elementary* (Donna & Marks 2007) and *Advanced* (Hewings 2007) levels, a CD ROM with interactive activities is not (yet?) available to support the *Intermediate* book. Over half of the book's content has been modified or is entirely new and seems appropriate to the target readership of mainly 'students of intermediate level (B1 and B2)' (p. 6). I have successfully used the first edition since 2003 with B1/B2 level French university students from a variety of fields. My non-linguist students and first-year English students will find this edition easier to work with, as it uses less specialist terminology than the first edition. In fact, the 'To the teacher' introduction explicitly states: 'In order to simplify the jargon in the book, many of the terms you may be familiar with are not used' (p. 8).

This trend towards simplification is also apparent in the section and unit headings. The content is divided into five sections and 66 units dealing with the following topics: Sounds (Letters and Sounds, 20 units; Combining Sounds, 6 units), Stress (Word Stress, 5 units; Stress Patterns, 5 units), Intonation (9 units), Pronunciation in Use (5 units for each of three sub-sections: Speed, Tone, and Accents), and Reference (6 units). In the first edition, the content of the units 'Introduction to syllables' and 'Introducing letters and sounds' overlapped. The former have disappeared from the new edition, leaving room for an improved first unit ('Playing with the sounds of English') which presents the content more effectively. The book's units can be covered in order but it is 'probably more useful and interesting to vary the order' (p. 7). Clear guidelines on how best to use the book are provided in a section 'To the student'.

The accent presented as a model to copy is Southern British. Other native and non-native accents are used in listening activities but are not intended to be copied. Even though this is clearly explained in the 'To the student' introduction in both editions, some students were frustrated and confused because it was not clear enough which model they should imitate. Moreover, in the first edition, features that were 'important for listening' were indicated by a speech bubble next to the left-hand page explanation. In the new edition, these have all been moved into Section D, 'Understanding pronunciation in use'. This change should make the distinction between receptive awareness and productive skill more obvious.

The book's user-friendliness is also evident in the roughly alphabetical organisation of Section A; '[t]his was considered to be a more intuitive route into the material for non-specialist users' and 'helps to highlight sound-spelling regularities. . . . Vowels are paired according to their spelling, not their potential for being confused with one another. Consonants are paired mainly where they share the same place of articulation' (p. 8). Learners who want to work on minimal pairs can find them in Section E4, 'Sound pairs'.

Section C covers tonality and tonicity, where other pronunciation workbooks (e.g. Rogerson & Gilbert's (1990) *Speaking Clearly*) use terms such as thought groups, basic sentence stress and sentence focus. In 'To the teacher', Hancock justifies his terminological choices ('speech units', 'main stress' and 'emphasising'), briefly explaining how various

terms that users may know are related (tonality, tone units, speech units, tonicity, tonic stress, main stress, contrastive stress; see p. 8). Unit 45 provides an introduction to rising and falling tones but tone is not covered in any detail until Section D, 'where the focus is on receptive awareness' (p. 8).

Section D includes recordings from local radio and natural conversation in order to increase 'students' awareness of the pronunciation features of natural speech' (p. 9). These units could almost form the basis for a separate book devoted to listening. Units 59 and 60 are truly ground-breaking, as they 'explain which pronunciation features are high priority and which are not important for learners aiming to use English mainly as a Lingua Franca with other non-native speakers' (p. 9). Section E5 is entirely devoted to ELF and emphasises how this edition aims to give learners concrete guidelines for interacting with different speakers. In addition, Section E3, 'Guide for speakers of specific languages', provides short lists of book units covering segmentals which 'you could leave out' or which 'it would probably be useful for you to do' (p. 143). It is worth noting that none of the units marked as 'may be important for ELF' (Section E5, p. 164) are mentioned in these lists, which are extrapolations from Swan & Smith's (2001) *Learner English*. These sections of Hancock's book will almost certainly need updating for the next edition as research reveals more about priorities and the relative importance of features in different contexts.

In terms of the book's graphic features, the font is a clear non-serif and coloured type is used extensively and intelligently in both the explanation and the exercise pages in order to focus readers' attention on specific aspects. Colour is also a welcome addition to the Answer Key. Photos have replaced approximately half of the drawings from the first edition.

The only thing missing from this book is some statistical information about frequency of spelling–sound correspondences, such as provided by Carney (1994). For example, according to Carney ⟨a⟩ is pronounced like the vowel in *cat* in 91% of occurrences and 90% of '⟨a⟩ + final ⟨e⟩' spellings are pronounced like the vowel in *day*. Such useful details could easily have been added to the spelling information provided in many of the units in Section A, 'Sounds', helping learners to improve their predictive abilities (see Dickerson 1994).

To conclude, this new edition of Mark Hancock's book is even more user-friendly, succinct and practical than the first edition. It will be a delight to use it this year.

## References

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