

# EXPLORING PRONOUNCING ENGLISH SOUNDS : BOOK REVIEW FOR JAPANESE LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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## Abstract

A book review is an analytical description and analysis of a work of literature that evaluates the work's merits and shortcomings in terms of plot, style, and substance. The purpose of this study was to investigate how Japanese speakers pronounce the English language. 'English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speakers' was written by Peggy Tharpe, M.A. TESOL, in 2021. In this book, she discusses the unique challenges that students face while learning a second language and offers advice on overcoming them. This study reviewed a book on methods for teaching English pronunciation using the library research approach. The writer employed data reduction techniques, including summarizing, highlighting key points, and focusing on basics to prepare the data for analysis. Then, based on the available data, which mostly consists of recorded materials, the writer presented the findings and drew conclusions. According to the results, this book is a valuable resource for those looking to teach or improve their students' English pronunciation, intonation, and accent reduction. This suggests that it was designed with native Japanese speakers in mind and may not be as effective for students of other languages. Those unfamiliar with phonetics or linguistics may find this book to be very technical. Thus, the statistics suggest that this book is a good choice for students learning English pronunciation.

**Keywords :** book review, pronunciation, english sounds

## Abstrak

*Resensi buku merupakan uraian analitis dan analisis suatu karya sastra dengan mempertimbangkan kelebihan dan kekurangan karya tersebut dari segi alur, gaya, dan substansi. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menyelidiki bagaimana penutur bahasa Jepang mengucapkan bahasa Inggris. Pengucapan, Intonasi, dan Pengurangan Aksen Bahasa Inggris untuk Penutur Bahasa Jepang ditulis oleh Peggy Tharpe M.A. TESOL, 2021. Di dalamnya, ia membahas tantangan unik yang dihadapi siswa saat mempelajari bahasa kedua dan menawarkan saran tentang cara mengatasinya. Penelitian ini mengulas buku tentang metode pengajaran pengucapan bahasa Inggris dengan menggunakan pendekatan penelitian perpustakaan. Penulis menggunakan teknik reduksi data termasuk merangkum, memilih poin, dan berkonsentrasi pada hal-hal mendasar agar data siap untuk dianalisis. Kemudian berdasarkan data yang tersedia yang sebagian besar berupa materi rekaman, penulis menggunakan penyajian data dan menarik kesimpulan. Hasilnya, buku ini adalah sumber yang bagus bagi mereka yang ingin mengajar atau meningkatkan pengucapan, intonasi, dan pengurangan aksen bahasa Inggris siswanya. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa ini dibuat dengan mempertimbangkan penutur asli bahasa Jepang dan mungkin tidak berfungsi dengan baik untuk pelajar bahasa lain. Mereka yang tidak terbiasa dengan fonetik atau linguistik mungkin menganggap buku ini sangat teknis. Oleh karena itu, statistik menunjukkan bahwa buku ini adalah pilihan yang baik bagi siswa yang belajar pengucapan bahasa Inggris.*

**Kata kunci:** resensi buku, pengucapan, bunyi bahasa inggris

## 1. Introduction

There are other, more successful ways that educators may employ in the classroom, particularly when it comes to teaching students proper pronunciation. "Technique is a preparation of activities in learning to achieve the desired learning objectives." (Brown, 2001) In order to accomplish the goals of teaching and learning, one must use appropriate teaching techniques. In

the classroom, it facilitates better, more enjoyable, and simpler learning. So, it's up to the instructor to think about what methods will work best for their kids.

Hewings (1993) identifies three primary approaches to teach pronunciation. The first is to anticipate which groups of students will have the most trouble with pronunciation and design lessons accordingly. Next, figure out where your pupils are struggling with pronunciation and devise lessons to strengthen those areas. Finally, find out which sections of your textbook are good opportunities to practice certain aspects of your pronunciation by reviewing the course outline.

Because it is an aspect of the English language that promotes the learning process, teaching pronunciation is important for language instruction. Speaking fluently and easily understood by others is the result of perfecting one's pronunciation; conversely, when one makes a mistake in pronouncing a word, it goes unnoticed (Basuki, 2016). Furthermore, the art of pronouncing words correctly is essential while learning a new language.

Because it is associated with oral communication, pronunciation competence is vital and aids pupils in speaking effectively. For those who want to communicate verbally, mastering pronunciation is more crucial than having a solid grasp of grammar and vocabulary (Basuki, 2018). This implies that pronunciation is the initial aspect people notice when evaluating someone's English proficiency. The pronunciation of the target language is the first thing that people notice, which generates a good impression about the speaker's competency; hence, achieving native-like proficiency is one of the primary aims of both learners and instructors of English (Khan, 2009). In fact, when someone is speaking English, it allows the listener to gauge the speaker's reliability in terms of pronunciation.

Given the foregoing, it should come as no surprise that several scholarly publications have noted that English instructors have a hard time correcting their students' pronunciation for a variety of reasons. Not all pupils exercise their pronunciation skills, as instructors are still hesitant to use ways to correct and enhance students' pronunciation (Taqiyuddin, 2021). Teaching English as a second language does not focus on phonemes, diphthongs, or any other aspect of pronunciation, according to other sources.

Given the importance highlighted above, the author opted to compose a review specifically focusing on the book titled "Pronouncing English Sounds for Japanese Speakers" (Book Review).

## **2. Method**

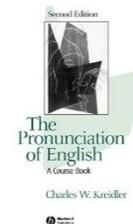
The research methodology employed in this study was a literature review based descriptive qualitative research. This study explored and outlined effective methods for teaching pronunciation through book reviews, underscoring its significance. An analysis of data from one book and a comparison with another would be ideal for the researcher. Examining the book reviews alongside the main book was the major focus of the investigation.

**Table 1.** The Main Book Identity of the Book Review

Author	Peggy Tharpe M.A TESOL
Book Title	English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction For Japanese Speakers
Page	213
Publisher	American Pronunciation Coach
Publication date	May 24, 2021
Language	English
ASIN	B095SZWD2F

**Table 2.** The Comparison of a Main Book

Author	Charles W. Kreidler
Book Title	The Pronunciation of English
Page	327
Publisher	Wiley-Blackwell; 2nd edition
Publication date	January 26, 2004
Language	English
ISBN	1405113366



The data analysis in this study involved multiple stages. "Data analysis is a systematic process of locating and collating data obtained from interviews, field notes, and other understandable materials," explains by Hamzah (2020). Three procedures were used to examine the data in this study. Data reduction by summarizing, picking points, and concentrating on fundamentals was also used to prepare and evaluate the data. After that, the writer drew conclusions based on the data that was accessible, which mostly consisted of documents, and displayed the data

### 3. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents and discusses the study's results in relation to the suggested research topics. In response to the study query "How did the researcher review the book English Pronunciation, Intonation and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speakers?" the results of the evaluation of the book on English pronunciation were disclosed.

#### 3.1 Book Introduction

Published in 2021 by Peggy Tharpe, this book aims to help Japanese speakers with their English pronunciation, intonation, and accent reduction. Both educators and students will find useful information in this book. Using her expertise as a pronunciation instructor and accent reduction coach, Peggy Tharpe (M.A. TESOL) discusses the unique difficulties that students face while learning a second language.

Discover how to teach and learn English pronunciation, intonation, and accent reduction with the assistance of this book's explanations, new pronunciation guides, and online courses. If you are not a native English speaker and wish to improve your pronunciation, this book is for you.

### 3.2 Book Outline

#### 1. General view of the book

You may find advice on how to teach and study English pronunciation, intonation, and accent reduction, as well as details about new pronunciation guides and online courses, in this book. This book covers seven topics: preparing to use the terminology, speaking a stress-based language, vowel sound mastery, consonant sound separation (R and L), managing groups of consonants, intonation patterns, and other sounds.

#### 2. State the topic of each chapters of the book

There are seven chapters in this book that thoroughly describe each aspect. Additionally, the writer provided learners with a brief link to a video that explains the content. According to the researcher, there are a total of seven sections to this book.

##### **Part one: getting ready.**

This section provides a comprehensive discussion of the symbols that represent sounds, references and resources, feedback, and the interaction that exists between the jaw, lips, and tongue muscles. The first part of this lesson focused on the sounds and the symbols that represent them, as well as the methods that may be used to teach English pronunciation using the international phonetic alphabet. Linguists will find a use for this instrument. In order to demonstrate technique, the teacher will demonstrate a variety of different ways to spell a sound. For example:

##### a. Vowels:

ā = bait, bay, weight, wane

ē = beat, seed, relieve

æ = bat, mask, adequate

etc.

##### b. Consonants :

k = Kathy, Catherine, accord, accent

kw = quick, queen, quarter, question

θ = toothpaste, think

etc

The second point focuses on available resources and references, recommending websites and mobile applications that can aid in learning English phonetics. The list includes merriam-webster.com, soundsofspeech.app, englishclub.com, manythings.org, playphrase.me, myYouTubechannel, and Netflix.

It is recommended that you get feedback with regard to the third point. When practicing new sounds, it is essential to get feedback from peers, whether it comes from a teacher or a student. This point emphasizes the importance of seeking feedback from peers. By doing so, we will be able to assess whether or not to make modifications to our strategy. It is essential to possess the information since it enables one to eventually make their voice heard. This is the last point, which consists of your jaw, lips, and tongue. If one wishes to seem natural while speaking English, it

provided instructions on how to hold one's lips in such a manner as to imitate the sounds of the English language rather than one's native tongue. The intricacies of the English jaw posture, tongue position, and lip workout are going to be discussed in this part on the English language.

### **Part two: how to speak in a stress based languages**

Speaking a stress-based language, hearing the soundprints of your words, stress and length, syllable stress mastery, short sharp sounds to highlight stress patterns, rate and late ends, and finally, endings with -cian, -sion, and -tion are the seven subjects that are covered in this article.

### **Part three: mastering vowel sounds**

In this section, we will discuss ten topics, including the following: the variations between Japanese vowels and English vowels, the powerful ae, the letter a mixups and reductions, the distinctions between bet, bait, and bat, the sounds of O, the variances between UH and AH, the sounds of Ū and Ū̄, the distinctions between ER, IR, and UR, and lastly, vowel plus ER.

### **Part four: separating R and L**

There are five different subjects that are discussed in this section: R and L, dark L, final R, strengthen R and L, and adjectives and adverbs that include L and R together.

### **Part five : other consonant sounds**

The following eighteen points are covered in this section: final N, N versus NG, consonant pairs, the reason why T changes to D, the invasive O after T and D sounds, S and Z, S that sounds like TH, different CH J ZH S Z, different S, Z, T, D before E and I, consonant mixups, finals -s and sinal -ed, TH sounds, H and F, W and Y, QU = KW, and finally, B versus V. This section contains a total of eighteen points.

### **Part six: managing groups of consosmnats**

This part is comprised of the following elements: consonant clusters, S consonant clusters, final clusters, disappearing syllables, BL-BR, CL-CR, PL-PR, GL-GR, and the five specific points that were discussed before.

### **Part seven: intonation patterns**

Here are the four most important components of this section: asking questions rather than making statements, using responsive intonation, widening one's pitch range, and lastly, being able to summarize.

## **3.3 Highlight Part of The Book**

A comparison and contrast is made between these two books: "The Pronunciation of English" by Charles W. Kreidler and "English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speaker" by Peggy Tharpe M.A. TESOL. Both of these books are written by their respective authors. Individuals who are not native English speakers are the target audience for both publications, and the purpose of both publications is to improve pronunciation. Two books, "The Pronunciation of English" by Charles W. Kreidler (2004) and "English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speaker" by Peggy Tharpe M.A. TESOL (2021), are compared

in this section with regard to their respective narratives, writing styles, strengths, and weaknesses. Both of these books were published in 2004 and 2021, respectively.

To begin, it is important to recognize that the two works deal with different subjects. The book "The Pronunciation of English" makes a comprehensive exploration of the English sound system, including everything from the rules that govern the usage of particular sounds to the methods that are used to articulate those sounds. The individuals who are intended to read it are linguists, language teachers, and advanced English as a second language students who are interested in enhancing their speaking abilities. On the other hand, the course titled "English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speaker" is designed to assist native Japanese speakers in improving their English pronunciation, intonation, and accent. There are two books on the topic of English pronunciation: one is geared at Japanese speakers, while the other is focused on intonation and accent reduction. This section compares and contrasts seven chapters from each of these books.

### **1. Chapter 1 : Symbol for sounds**

Although "English Pronunciation, Intonation and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speaker" and "The Pronunciation of English" both discuss the use of symbols to represent English sounds, the former devotes an entire chapter to the topic, while the latter discusses the topic in a more general sense.

### **2. Chapter 2 : How to speak in a stress based language**

In general, both books discuss stress and rhythm in English; however, "English Pronunciation, Intonation and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speaker" devotes an entire chapter to the topic and is more focused on Japanese speakers. On the other hand, "The Pronunciation of English" has a more in-depth examination of the subject as part of a more general examination of English pronunciation.

### **3. Chapter 3 : Mastering vowel sounds**

"English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speaker" takes a more narrowly focused approach with a dedicated chapter and exercises for mastering English vowel sounds, whereas "The Pronunciation of English" delves deeper into the theory and practice of English pronunciation as a whole, covering vowel sounds in greater detail. Both books are available on Amazon.com.

### **4. Chapter 4 : Separating R and L**

The book "English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speaker" takes a more practical approach by including a chapter and exercises that are specifically devoted to distinguishing between the "R" and "L" sounds in English pronunciation. On the other hand, "The Pronunciation of English" covers the subject in a more comprehensive manner and provides more in-depth explanations of the sounds and how to articulate them.

## 5. Chapter 5 : Other consonants sounds

The book "The Pronunciation of English" covers the topic in a more comprehensive manner and provides a more in-depth explanation of the various consonant sounds. On the other hand, the book "English Pronunciation, Intonation and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speaker" takes a more targeted and practical approach, with individual chapters devoted to the various consonant sounds. The course titled "English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speaker" may be more suitable for students who wish to concentrate on specific sounds that are particularly challenging for Japanese speakers. On the other hand, the course titled "The Pronunciation of English" may be more suitable for students who want to acquire a more comprehensive understanding of English pronunciation.

## 6. Chapter 6 : Managing groups of consonants

Charles W. Kreidler's "The Pronunciation of English" offers a more comprehensive overview of phonetics and phonology, whereas Peggy Tharpe's "English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speakers" is more tailored to the needs of Japanese speakers learning English and focuses on managing consonant sounds. Both books are available on Amazon.com. The book "The Pronunciation of English" written by Charles W. Kreidler, on the other hand, is primarily concerned with the management of English pronunciation in general.

## 7. Chapter 7 : Intonation Patterns

In a nutshell, both publications are concerned with intonation patterns; however, Peggy Tharpe's book includes activities and exercises that are intended to aid Japanese speakers in improving their intonation patterns while they are studying English as a second language. The work of Charles W. Kreidler is regarded to be a more comprehensive reference on English pronunciation due to the fact that it provides a more in-depth examination of a wide range of phonetic and phonological difficulties, including intonation patterns in a number of English dialects.

Secondly, the writing style of the book is another wonderful aspect of the book. Each of the two books is very easy to read and quite straightforward to comprehend. The book "The Pronunciation of English" is a highly academic study that goes further into the theoretical and technical components of the English communication system. In order to provide readers with a wealth of examples, illustrations, and exercises to help them improve their pronunciation, this book is included. It is the goal of the more pragmatic "English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speaker" to assist native Japanese speakers with their pronunciation of the English language. This is accomplished by detailing specific measures that they may follow to become more proficient in the language. Students may utilize the audio tools that are included in the package to hear and improve their pronunciation of certain words

"The Pronunciation of English" has a number of advantages, one of which being the extensive amount of information it provides, which includes an in-depth examination of the phonetics and phonology of the English language. Linguists and language teachers who are interested in gaining a more complete understanding of the discipline will find this resource to be quite beneficial. The booklet titled "English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speaker" is, on the other hand, an accessible and practical resource that provides Japanese speakers with specific ideas and exercises to improve their English pronunciation. Not only does the writer

provide text, but they also give a web link and an application that is pertinent to the assignment. Despite the fact that it was released in 2021, the book continues to be valuable for teachers and students in other Asian nations, such as Indonesia, despite the fact that it was written with Japanese speakers in mind, primarily to explain the phonetic contrasts between English and Japanese.

Last but not least, we need to discuss the nomenclature of deficiencies. Some readers who are searching for a more pragmatic approach to the topic may be dissuaded from reading "The Pronunciation of English" due to the fact that it places a strong focus on academic studies. In addition, those who are not already acquainted with phonetics and phonology may have a difficult time comprehending the concepts that are presented in the book. The fact that "English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speaker" is only focused on the Japanese language may make it less useful for students who are learning languages other than Japanese. This book may be considered quite technical by anyone who are not acquainted with phonetics or linguistics. Those who are interested in improving their English competence may wish to explore elsewhere since the focus is placed more on pronunciation than on general language learning.

Both "The Pronunciation of English" and "English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speaker" are very helpful resources for anyone who are learning English and are interested in improving their pronunciation. While the first one is a comprehensive guide on phonology and phonetics for the English language, the second one is a collection of helpful activities and advice for those who speak Japanese. The two volumes will be of the greatest use to readers who have diverse degrees of English proficiency, different goals for their education, and a level of acquaintance with phonetics and phonology.

### **3.4 Evaluate The Book**

The material that is presented in the book "English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speakers" written by Peggy Tharpe is organized in a way that is both straightforward and thorough. Using the author's various ideas and techniques, you will learn the principles of English pronunciation, how it varies from Japanese pronunciation, and how to enhance your accent, intonation, and pronunciation. You will also learn how to improve your pronunciation. The exercises and practice drills that are included in the book provide readers with the opportunity to put their newly acquired information to work. In the event that you are a Japanese speaker who is interested in improving your English pronunciation, you are in luck since the material is not only comprehensive but also effective.

Second, this book was prepared with the reader's requirements in mind; it is geared specifically for native Japanese speakers who are interested in improving their pronunciation, intonation, and accent while they are speaking English. Because of this, it is an excellent choice for meeting the needs of this particular population. In order to provide Japanese speakers with particular guidance on how to improve their pronunciation, the author provides a breakdown of the differences between Japanese and English pronunciation. It is expected that readers will be able to put what they have learned into practice and improve their pronunciation skills with the aid of the many examples and practice exercises that are provided in the book. The fact that the book is available in both paperback and Kindle formats ensures that it will be able to attract a vast number of readers. The organization of the book is fairly easy and does not need any explanation. For the purpose of making the content more accessible, it was well-organized, with headers, subheadings, and bullet

points. It is possible that those who learn best via visual methods would find the many diagrams and graphics that are provided throughout the book to be beneficial.

### ***Discussion***

It is vital to provide students with the appropriate teaching in pronunciation in order to improve their comprehension of suprasegmental and segmental pronunciation. The results of the study provide solutions to the research problems that prompted the researchers to carry out the investigation. For the purpose of addressing the research issue, the researcher conducted a descriptive qualitative study in which they studied a book on the phonetics of the English language. It is possible that our examination will continue in light of the following inquiry: "How did the researcher review the book of English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speakers?"

Released in 2021, 'An Anthology of Peggy Tharpe's Work on English Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent Reduction for Japanese Speakers' showcases her contributions in this field. It is possible that the information that is offered may be beneficial to both students and teachers. Both students and instructors of Japanese English may benefit from the novel approaches presented in this book, which also tackles the topic of what factors contribute to the improvement of Japanese speakers' performance in English.

With the assistance of this book's explanations of new pronunciation guides and online courses, you will be able to discover how to teach and learn English pronunciation, intonation, and accent reduction. Preparing to utilize the terminology, speaking a stress-based language, mastering vowel sounds, separating consonant sounds (R/L), managing consonant groups, intonation patterns, and extra consonant sounds are the seven components that make up this course.

The first step in writing a book review is to introduce the book, then to describe the content of the book, then to emphasize the most essential features of the book, and finally to evaluate the book. To begin, there is the introduction, which establishes the context by providing an overview of the book's subject matter, determining the audience that will be reading it, and explaining the subject matter's field of study. As a second step, you should offer an overview of the structure and substance of the book by outlining its chapters and parts and describing them. Lastly, highlight the most important sections. The purpose of this step is for the reviewer to conduct an analysis of the book's thesis by selecting certain chapters or subjects to investigate. Lastly, take a look at the book that you have. In this part, the primary focuses were on analyzing the structure of the material, determining its price and value for money, and describing the manner in which it fulfills the requirements of the consumers. Also included in the analysis are recommendations for what to purchase and what not to purchase.

### **4. Conclusion**

In the event that you are a Japanese speaker who is seeking for a book that can assist your pupils with their English pronunciation, accent reduction, and intonation, I strongly recommend that you read this book. Each of the following topics was discussed: pronunciation, intonation, and accent reduction; techniques for teaching and learning English; and pronunciation. The first step in writing a book review is to introduce the book, then to describe the content of the book, then to emphasize the most essential features of the book, and finally to evaluate the book. The information that is offered in this book is not only comprehensive but also well-organized. An

overview of the principles of English pronunciation was provided by the author, who also compared it to Japanese pronunciation and provided a wide range of techniques for improving one's own intonation, accent, and pronunciation. For the purpose of assisting Japanese speakers in improving their English pronunciation, the information available is comprehensive and helpful.

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