

## **A Linguistic Approach to the Application and Teaching of the English Alphabet**

*by Edward Y. Odisho*

Hardcover: 238+viii pp.

Publisher: The Edwin Mellen Press ([www.mellenpress.com](http://www.mellenpress.com)); 2004

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The book approaches the nature of the alphabet and its teaching as a universal concept as well as a language-specific one. With focus on the teaching of the English alphabet, the book calls for a departure from the traditional phonics approach simply because of its failure to objectively and accurately handle the alphabet as a linguistic system and an important tool of oracy and literacy. Typically, phonics fails to recognize all the functionally relevant identities of the alphabet, and it seriously confuses between and among those identities in a manner that renders the teaching of language skills and subskills—listening, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, etc—highly unreliable and even erroneous. The alternative approach recommended here scrutinizes the nature of the alphabet and comes up with four different linguistic identities: phoneme, grapheme, nomeneme, and sequeme. Each is objectively reexamined and redefined so as to identify where and how each identity should be recognized and applied. This radical distinction implies the institution of different methodologies and strategies to teach them. Additionally, the book emphasizes the significant differences in the teaching of the alphabet in the context of different languages, especially in the linguistically and culturally diverse learning situations encountered in ESL, bilingual and foreign language classes. Finally, the overall approach, methodology and the techniques recommended for the teaching of the alphabet as a linguistic system is solidly embedded in the most recent findings in the field of education, linguistics, cognitive and developmental psychology, including the Multiple Intelligences Theory.

“This book provides a thought-provoking examination of the complex relationships between writing systems and the teaching of language skills. It challenges the reader to question long-standing assumptions about phonics and its role in the acquisition of oral and written language competencies among students of diverse linguistic backgrounds. In this critical study of the linguistic foundations of literacy, Edward Odisho examines in detail basic concepts from multi-lingual perspectives, contributing significantly to a clearer understanding of the complexities in acquiring language competencies. . . .contributes significantly to clarification of the linguistic misunderstandings, myths, and inaccuracies found in current phonics and spelling approaches... This book will serve as a catalyst for changing literacy instruction and the preparation of teacher candidates.” – Dr. Beverly Otto, Professor, Teacher Education, Northeastern Illinois University

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## **Techniques of Teaching Pronunciation in ESL, Bilingual & Foreign Language Classes**

*by Edward Y. Odisho*

Softcover: 154+xv pp.

Publisher: LINCOM EUROPA ([home.t-online.de/home/LINCOM.UROPA](http://home.t-online.de/home/LINCOM.UROPA));

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Learners and teachers of languages as a native, second and foreign and other professionals benefit greatly from this book. It presents a systematic and holistic approach to the teaching of pronunciation that is cognitive in pedagogical foundation and multisensory in implementation. The approach is consistent with the recent orientations in cognitive sciences, especially Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory. The book gears the approach, methodology and techniques of teaching pronunciation away from the behaviorist audiolingual method dominated by the 'repeat-after-me' technique and the notorious letter-based phonics tradition so unjustifiably domineering in the teaching of the so-called Language Arts in the United States.

Because the approach adopted in this book is cognitive, it believes that pronunciation is the function of the brain prior to being a function of the vocal organs; this is more so in the case of adult learners of pronunciation. All the techniques used in this book aim at enabling the brain to first perceive and recognize the problematic sounds before attempting at producing them. Learners need to be able to transform the initial correct impressions of sounds into cognitive habits that are activated subconsciously and automatically.