

---

# Pronunciation Pairs: An Introductory Course for Students of English

Review by Emily J. Kling,  
Ohio University

---

PRONUNCIATION PAIRS: AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE FOR STUDENTS OF ENGLISH. Ann Baker and Sharon Goldstein. Cambridge University Press, 1990. Pp. 152. \$11.95

*Pronunciation Pairs: An Introductory Course for Students of English* is a perfect supplement to a beginning level listening and speaking class. A teacher's edition, a student book, and four cassettes comprise the program by Ann Baker and Sharon Goldstein, which takes after the British book *Sheep or Ship*. *Pronunciation Pairs* is the American English version.

*Pronunciation Pairs* is a well-organized text divided into two sections: a section for vowel sounds and a section for consonants. The format of all the units is the same. This enables the students and/or teachers to follow the sequence of the units or simply to choose units on particular sounds that seem to cause difficulty.

The section on vowels begins with the high front vowels and continues through to the high back and ends with the English diphthongs. The section on consonants begins with relatively easy to pronounce stops, [p, b, t, d, k, g] and continues through to fricatives, affricates, and approximants, ending with the hard to pronounce sounds such as "th," "l," and "r." There are four review units in section A but none in section B.

The units begin with a clear, simple drawing of the mouth and tongue with arrows showing directions for moving the tongue to produce the desired sound. Following are two practice exercises that are in the book as well as on tape.

"Practice 1" contains vocabulary for the specific sound with corresponding illustrations. The student is directed to listen and repeat the sound after the speaker. "Practice 2" consists of vocabulary that will be used in the dialogue that follows. The taped dialogues found in the next exercise consist of two or three people speaking about a variety of topics such as vacations, bank robbers, love, and TV commercials to name a few. The dialogues are simple and repetitive but provide practice for the listener. Next is an exercise on intonation or stress. This is also on tape. This exercise provides the knowledge to continue to the following exercise: "Conversation."

The "Conversation" exercise commands students to work in small groups practicing the aforementioned sounds. The students practice speaking to each other

usually in the form presented in the "Dialogue" section. For example if in the "Dialogue" section the students heard people ordering in a restaurant, in the "Conversation" section, they practice ordering in a restaurant.

The final exercise in the unit is "Spelling." Here a list of words with different spellings of the same sound is presented. This helps the student recognize the same sound in many different forms. It is appropriate to end with this section because the words used in the unit are now grouped according to their various spellings. I think this is an effective way to summarize the unit.

Following unit 2 the "Practice 1" is different from that which was mentioned above. In every other unit, "Practice 1" is an exercise using minimal pairs. The sound presented in the preceding chapter is compared with the new sound using the minimal pair format. Some of the same words and pictures, introduced in the previous section, appear again. This provides for cohesiveness and allows the student to contrast the sounds easily. With this format the listener applies what she/he learned in the preceding unit to learn what is presented in the next unit.

*Pronunciation Pairs* is a well-planned text that presents American English sounds in a simple and logical manner. It can be used with adults or adolescents. The presentation of minimal pairs allows beginning level students to produce and compare sounds. This text can be used effectively in a listening and speaking class.

### About the Reviewer

*Emily J. Kling is currently working on her MA in Linguistics at Ohio University and teaches ESL part-time at Morrison Elementary School in Athens. She served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Dominican Republic from 1991-1993 where she taught English to students in the seventh and eighth grade.*

