Preface

Extending the scope of interest beyond the description of individual varieties of English, the broad ‘accents’ theme as developed in this volume, includes phonetic and phonological characteristics of first, second or third languages. Contributors to the volume teach and do research on a variety of relevant aspects, as represented in our section headings.

The multi-perspective approaches offered in this volume all develop one theme: variability in pronunciation. We believe the book offers a unique combination of psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic and pedagogical approaches, with individual contributions investigating the effect of selected conditioning factors on the pronunciation of English and other languages. Despite the wealth of approaches, a strong phonetic background unifies individual contributions to the volume. The book contains a large body of original, primary research which will be of interest to experienced scientists, practitioners and lecturers as well as to graduate students planning to embark on empirical investigation of the nature of a sound system.

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