

Teaching Pronunciation and Grammar

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This presentation will focus on two areas of fairly critical value in Chinese Language teaching: the importance for teachers to have a good grasp of Chinese grammar and how to teach non-native speaker's grammar and pronunciation. There is sometimes perceived to be hostility toward teaching grammar in language teaching circles today. This has led to an unfortunate de-emphasis and neglect of Chinese grammar in teacher training. Yet motivated students hunger for direction in producing well-formed sentences. While it is certainly outmoded to lecture on language mechanics in the foreign language classroom, Chinese language teachers must have a thorough grounding in the grammar of Chinese. That foundation should inform the Chinese language instructor's curriculum design and underpin the communicative and proficiency oriented tasks and challenges that teachers develop for students. In this presentation I will focus on practical ways that teachers can conceptualize grammar and pronunciation, paying particular attention to

- Imparting grammar.
- The subtleties of Chinese grammar that are often overlooked.
- The subtleties of Chinese pronunciation that are often overlooked.
- Teaching pronunciation and tones.

Bio



Dr. Richard VanNess Simmons is Professor of Chinese and Chair of the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures at Rutgers University. At Rutgers he teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on the modern and Classical Chinese language, grammar, historical phonology, and dialectology. His research focuses on the history, geography, and relationships of the Chinese dialects. He has received numerous grants and awards to support his scholarship, including a multi-year grant from the Henry Luce Foundation. Simmons' publications include *Chinese Dialect Classification—A Comparative Approach to Harngjou, Old Jintarn, and Common Northern Wu* (1999, with a Chinese translation published in 2010), *Issues in Chinese Dialect Description and Classification* (1999), *Chinese Dialect Geography: Distinguishing Mandarin and Wu in Their Boundary Region* (2006), *Handbook for Lexicon Based Dialect Fieldwork* (2006), and *Shanghainese Dictionary And Phrasebook* (2011).