



TEACHING PRONUNCIATION: A STUDY ON THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KHULNA, BANGLADESH

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Abstract: Pronunciation is an integrated and integral part of second or foreign language learning since it directly affects learners' communicative competence as well as performance. Notwithstanding, the teaching of EFL/ESL pronunciation is still peripheral and neglected in the syllabus and classroom, especially in Khulna district in Bangladesh. It is a matter of regret that most of the school-level learners in our country are not taught English pronunciation and, hence, it is overlooked. The reasons are not far to seek. A good number of teachers in our country are not aware of the significance of teaching pronunciation and its impact on effective communication. Khulna is an industrial town, yet it is lagging behind in learning English. Although there are some government and non-government high schools here, no developed teaching and testing system of English Language is used in this region. Here the teachers follow century-old traditional testing system for writing and reading English. As for listening and speaking, there is no form of testing that can aid effective pronunciation teaching in secondary schools. Therefore, teaching pronunciation is highly ignored in this area. This paper reviews the notion of pronunciation teaching and gives a theoretical background for developing pronunciation teaching. It empirically studies the learners' and teachers' attitudes to the significance of accurate pronunciation teaching in English. Additionally, it reflects on their preferences and beliefs about pronunciation teaching. Finally, it provides some recommendations for effective remedial measures and feedback techniques for developing pronunciation teaching and learning in the light of the theoretical and empirical findings of the research.

Keywords: Competence, phonetics, stress, intonation, recommendation, globalization

Introduction

Communication lies at the core of existence of any human society. It has enabled mankind to progress and thus become advanced societies. Highly specialized skills, advances in technology, amazing inventions and remarkable breakthroughs in the fields of arts and sciences have limited value unless these are communicated effectively to their intended audience. Undoubtedly, in an age of globalization communication is of paramount importance. While English is not the most widely spoken language in the world when we look at it in terms of the number of native speakers, it is the world's most prominent language. *It has been estimated that out of the roughly 6 billion people that are alive today about 350 million speak in English* (Roger, 1980). Many factors point to the reason why learning English has seen exponential growth in the recent years. But it all boils down to the English language being the 'global language' of business, politics, international relations, culture, and entertainment for so many countries worldwide. And, that is just an understatement as, in fact, English is not an official language in many countries

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worldwide. It is the language most often taught as a foreign or second language. This is why; we need to keep in mind that it is the only one common language for worldwide communication. By one's having a good command over it, s/he can get various important opportunities not only in his/her own country, but also all over the world. So, to communicate properly in English is mandatory. To communicate effectively in English a person needs to have a good command over the four skills of English- listening, speaking, reading and writing. As speaking is one of the crucial factors to communicate properly in English, one need to remember that without perfect and appropriate pronunciation, speaking loses its communicative value. If the sounds of words are differing, it may lead the listener to some other meaning. If this happens, it is very much obvious that it is not a proper communication. Therefore, perfect pronunciation is an integrated and integral part of learning a second language. Communicative competence is one of the effective methods to approach EFL/ESL with perfect pronunciation. However, in this paper the researchers will try to focus on the teaching of pronunciation at the secondary school level in Khulna district.

Materials and Methods

The data collected through Questionnaire survey, Interview, and Classrooms Observation have been subjected to analysis. For this purpose, statistical measures, frequency, and percentage have been used. The data have been collected from some schools belonging to Khulna district, such as: Public School and College, Laboratory Govt. High School, Coronation Girls' School, Cantonment Public School and College, Jahanabad, Zia Secondary school. In this connection, one thing is worth mentioning -instead of using other statistical measures, mean and standard deviation, the researchers have used the mentioned measures of statistics to highlight the finding of the empirical investigation easily. The results of the analysis have been subsequently interpreted according to the objectives of the study. The presentation of these analyses and interpretation has been sequenced objective-wise. Firstly, the sections dealing with students' and teachers' survey and interview delineate the actual problems of teaching pronunciation. Secondly, the sections aiming at pointing the causes of overlooking the pronunciation teaching in Khulna suggest some remedial measures and feedback techniques to get rid of those problems.

The empirical study of the survey on the teachers and the students and interview shows that most of the teachers of Khulna district are not aware of teaching correct pronunciation. For this reason, students cannot communicate in English through pronouncing words correctly. The same condition is prevails in the other districts of Bangladesh.

Actually, this survey discloses the big gap that exists between the information provided by the teachers and that by the students. Both of these groups escaped many issues related to the teaching of pronunciation. However, all issues came to forefront when the empirical study was conducted by the researchers themselves on the teachers and the students belonging to different secondary schools in the country. For example, from the analysis of the results, it is found that most of the S.S.C. students do not know the meaning of pronunciation in teaching language and its significance in communication. Most of the teachers are also not helpful to make the students aware of it as it is not in the syllabus. Again, teachers do not teach the students carefully about the difference between the Bangla and English sounds. And, students are not aware of the differences that exist between American and British accents.

The survey also shows that in most of the cases teachers do not use English in the classroom. Even they do not encourage their students to use it. Though some teachers speak in English when they are in the class, they do not pronounce the words correctly. So, it is very likely that students fail to pick up the right pronunciation in English.

Now regarding the S.S.C. level English textbook, *English Grammar and Composition*, the researchers found that there is no trace of pronunciation teaching. In this very book there is never used any phonemic chart to teach students the basics of English pronunciation.

Results

Student's questionnaire survey and interview: As far as the survey of the students' questionnaire is concerned, it seems that only 30% students of the secondary school level said that they know what Pronunciation Teaching means in ELT. As for Question number: 2, 35% students said that they try to speak in English when they are in the class. Regarding Question number: 3, only 10% students agree that the teacher uses any model for teaching pronunciation in the class. Answers to Question number: 4 show that only 20% students know about the structural difference between Bangla and English sounds. Regarding Question number 5, it can be disclosed that more than 15 percent students said that the teacher teaches them sound patterns, rhythm, and intonation system of English. While considering Question number: 6, 80% students concurred that their teachers prompt them forward when they cannot understand what to say in a fluency activity. While giving answer to the Question number: 7, 80% students agreed that their teachers did not show the difference between the British and the American sounds. As for Question number: 8, more than 80% students share the same opinion that the overcrowded classroom disturbs their attention in the class. While giving answer to the Question number: 9, 80% had the same opinion that they cannot understand a native speaker of English because of the rising and falling of tone in his/her speech. Concerning Question number: 10, 80% students said that their teacher does not engage them in all the speaking activities of the textbook. Relating to the Question number: 11, 30% students agreed that the teacher likes to teach them the four skills of English language. Regarding Question number: 12, 80% students agreed that reading aloud can improve their pronunciation ability. As for the Question number: 13, it can be said that 80% students believed that a native speaker of English would be a good teacher for teaching pronunciation. In connection with Question number: 14, 90% students expressed that group-discussion is important in the class to increase the level of the learners' confidence in speaking. As for question number: 15, it can be said that 10% students said that their teacher arranges some group discussions and other necessary classes for developing pronunciation skill. While giving answer to the question number: 16, 20% students concurred that their teacher helps them in using their organs of articulation to produce different sounds of English. As to Question number: 17, 80% students said that they are afraid of their teacher and feel shy of other students while giving answers to the questions asked by the class teacher. While responding to Question number: 18, more than 80% students stated that their teacher does not teach them phonemic symbols by showing the phonemic chart. In relation to Question number: 19, 90% students agreed that their teacher does not use tape recorder alone with foreign language recording in the class. Concerning Question number: 20, 30% students answered in the positive and reported that their teacher never taught them how to look at the pronunciation of a word in the dictionary. While responding Question number: 21, 35% students said that they try to mimic the English speaker when they listen to a tape recorder. While giving reply to Question number: 22, 40% students said that their teacher never told them that one's mother tongue can interfere in his/her learning any other language. While reflecting on Question number: 23, which is the last question in the questionnaire, 60% students agreed that their teacher encourages them to listen to the news produced by the BBC to learn accents in English.

Teachers' questionnaire survey and interview: As far as the survey of the teachers' questionnaire is concerned, it seems that 65% teachers reported that they explained before the students what pronunciation means in language teaching and what is the importance of teaching pronunciation in a communicative situation. Secondly, 90% teachers said that they believe that learning a second or a foreign language is a matter of habit-formation from one's childhood. Regarding Question number: 3:75% teachers commented that they insist on using English language with the students in the classroom. Answer to the Question number: 4 show that only 35% teachers admitted that they follow any method of the pronunciation teaching system in the classroom. While responding to the Question number: 5: 80% teachers argued that they practice and implement the tasks and activities given by the compulsory textbook in the class. While

considering Question number: 6, 65% teachers said that they do not teach their students sound patterns, rhythm, and intonation system in English. Concerning question number: 7, 80% teachers to be one, that every word, every syllable, every phoneme uttered by them may contribute to the learners process of learning pronunciation. As for Question number: 8, 95% teachers had same opinion that the overcrowded classroom in our educational institutions makes it difficult for the teacher to keep control over and provide individual attention to the students. Regarding Question number: 9, 90% teachers disclosed the shortage of time is one of the main reasons for the learner's not learning a foreign language as thoroughly and as efficiently as one's own. Concerning Question number: 10, 65% teachers mentioned that they do not try to ignore teaching listening skills as it is not tested in the examination at the school level. Relating to Question number: 11, 30% teachers said that in the class they use only the compulsory textbook for English for learning the four basic skills-listening, speaking, reading, and writing. While giving answer to question number: 12, 20% teachers said that they divide the students in the class into a number or pairs and ask them to interview each other for improving their proficiency in speaking. As for Question number: 13, teachers said that they try to maintain a stress-free environment in the class so that students can communicate freely while remaining not being over-conscious of accuracy and correctness in speech. While responding to the Question number: 14, 80% teachers stated that they believe that group-discussion is important for increasing learners' confidence in speaking. It was also discovered that 45% teachers try to arrange group discussion and classes for the students for developing their pronunciation skill. While responding on Question number: 16, 40% teachers pointed out that they help students in using their organs of articulation for producing different sounds in English. While giving reply to Question number: 17, 65% teachers said that they monitor the students after giving them a task on pronunciation. In answer to question number-18, 70% teachers said that they have never shown in the class the chart containing English phonemic symbols, and it is due to their lack of academic facilities. Relating to Question number:19, 75% teachers had the same opinion that every school should have a language laboratory. Concerning Question number: 20, 60% teachers said that they expect from the students native-like fluency and accuracy. While giving answer to Question number-21, 80% teachers admitted that integrating multimedia technology in the EFL program in Bangladesh can attract students to learn pronunciation. Relating to Question number: 21, 45% teachers mentioned that if they correct every mispronounced sound of the students, they will feel discouraged to learn pronunciation. Finally, 85% teachers disclosed that they encourage their students to listen to the news programs produced by BBC news and CNN for learning proper accents in English.

Classroom observation: As far as the observation of classroom is concerned, the researchers observed that 40%students are encouraged to speak in English with correct pronunciation. As for the Question number: 2, the researchers found that 75% students are not being told by the teachers what pronunciation means in ELT. Thirdly, 80% teachers don't pay attention to the weak students of the class. Fourthly, 65% teachers tolerate students' errors in producing different sounds in English. Besides, 70% teachers teach only from the textbook prescribed for the class, and only about 30% teachers want to teach them other relevant lessons and they recommend for them different books on pronunciation, besides the compulsory textbook. Concerning question number: 7, researchers saw that 80% students are afraid of the class teacher and feel shy of other students when one speaks in English. 90% teachers pay no time to pronunciation teaching as there is no explicit instruction in the syllabus to teach it. 70% teachers become impatient when a student mispronounces a word repeatedly. Concerning question number: 10, they found that teachers do not use different figures, maps, tables, and pictures in the class for teaching pronunciation. 80% teachers do not encourage their students to practice and develop the four language skills. In the classroom, only 40% teachers give feedback to student's performance in each lesson. 15% teachers interrupt their students in the mid-flow during communicative activities to point out pronunciation errors. 80% teachers do not try to maintain a standard of English while giving a

lecture in the class. 60% teachers try to compromise deliberately between the new form of CLT and the old Grammar-Translation Method. 70% teachers present their lectures so fast that the students cannot keep pace with them. Researchers observed that 80% teachers do not arrange any debate competition in the class for developing students' oral fluency. 50% classroom procedures include minimum explanation and the maximum of practice. 90% teachers neglect the practice of intonation, stress, and rhythm in the class. Only 30% students in the class try to use a dictionary with phonetic transcription in it. There are only 10% listening tasks in the classroom. Again, it is seen that about 20% students try to communicate in English in the classroom. Furthermore, classes often consist of a large number of students and those who sit at the back cannot get any attention from their teacher. 30% students work in a team in the class to present their problems to the class teacher. There is no separate schedule in a week for teaching and practicing speaking skill in the class.

Discussion

In Bangladesh, teachers have been trying to teach English in the context of CLT for more than a decade. Still today, they are left behind other Asian countries because of the grey influence of age-long methods on the prevalent teaching system. Most of the secondary school teachers here put primary emphasis on reading and writing skills and only secondary and little emphasis on listening and speaking skills. If sometimes listening and speaking are taught in the class, the main component of the speaking skill is utterly ignored, that is teaching the right pronunciation. Till today, our classrooms are not well-equipped to motivate the learners to speak freely in English. Here it is the teachers who are active and all in all in the class, while the learners are passive. So, the learners feel shy to communicate in English, let alone the question of learning the correct pronunciation. Again, the few teachers who are experts in pronunciation teaching are not sincere enough to teach the students the correct accent of English. It is really pathetic. Along with this, textbooks, especially the books meant for the students of the secondary school level are not so well-planned regarding imparting the knowledge about the theories of pronunciation, which in the CLT has been always emphasized, as a vital thing for effective pronunciation.

Significance of pronunciation in the perspective of Bangladesh: As we know that Bangladesh is a developing country, it is necessary for us to realize that without a good command over pronunciation in English, we cannot keep pace with the global village. In spite of this reality, one's knowledge of English is still regarded as a yardstick of education and the ability to speak this language correctly is regarded as an index of quality education in our country. As effective communication is of great importance, school teachers should choose first to work on the problems that significantly hinder the act of communication. They should remember that students also need to learn the strategies to deal with the misunderstanding and complexities regarding English Pronunciation. In fact, English pronunciation involves too many complexities for learners to strive for complete elimination. A student's first language often interferes with his/her English pronunciation. A parallel source of difficulty is the habit of hearing, which we have already mastered. Only the appropriate pronunciation teaching can solve both the two problems. In fact, teaching pronunciation gives importance to fluency, accuracy, and intelligibility or comprehensibility in producing sounds of the target language. And, *Pronunciation involves far more than individual sounds. Word stress, sentence stress, intonation, and word linking all influence the sound of spoken English, not to mention the way we often slur words and phrases together in casual speech* (Baker, 1982). It is often difficult for a student to reach the exact pronunciation by spellings because there is much incoherence between literal spelling and pronunciation of various words in English language. So, only a teacher can move away the student from spellings to phonemic script for his/her learning the correct pronunciation. Teaching pronunciation is also needed because learning the phonemic script involves not just getting to know the symbols, but also making sure that students can make the right sound for each one.

Again, English pronunciation involves too many complexities for learners to strive for a complete elimination of accents, but improving pronunciation will boost self esteem, facilitate communication, and, possibly, lead one to a better job or at least more respect in the workplace not only in our country, but also abroad. So, it is necessary to gain success in all these areas that are full of complexities. For this purpose, we need to let every speaker know correct pronunciation. We do not think that teachers need to try to turn people into sounding like native speakers. But at least, they need to get them to be capable of being understood by a variety of listeners. This goal cannot be achieved unless students are provided with the best kind of teachers and sufficient logistic support.

Techniques of teaching pronunciation: English Language Teaching (ELT) is given more importance in the realm of language practice day by day as English is the most common means of international communication. Of the 150 member countries of the United Nation, only 14 are ESL (English as a Second Language), 117 are EFL, and 19 have English as their native language (Crystal, 2003). All over the world, English is taught in different situations and different contexts. Brown (1991) citing Moag says that ELT can be wholly instrumental or wholly integrative in nature. He says, whenever anyone uses English, it is, in part at least, to serve some purpose, which is instrumental. The fact that one is learning and using English, for whatever purpose reflects at least some degree of willingness to identify with others who use the language integrative (Moag, 1982; cited in Brown, 1991). Majority of the ELT students are instrumental and international, rather than integrative and intra-national. So, it can be said that all learners study English for some specific purposes.

There are different theories for teaching pronunciation. It is not necessary to learn all the theories by heart. Rather, a perceptive implementation of the theories in the classroom is needed and desired. In the same way, it can be said that the teaching of pronunciation can only be successful by the practical application of it in the classroom. The following are some of the controversial and important questions to answer for pronunciation teaching:

- What are the major problems and errors that occur in pronunciation teaching?
- When do we include pronunciation teaching in a lesson sequence?
- What is the appropriate age of pronunciation teaching?
- Should a phonetic or phonemic script be used in teaching pronunciation?

These are some of the issues which carry great importance in the field of pronunciation teaching. But these questions bring us to a final thought: Why should we study pronunciation and its integral parts like phonetics, rhythm, or intonation? Apart from a general interest in all the abilities of the human speeches, phonetics deals with the very practical end of language study. For a successful foreign language study, pronunciation teaching with different models and ways is invincible. This section deals with the techniques of giving feedback on the mistakes of pronunciation. Teaching and learning another language other than one's mother tongue is such a delicate and complex task that every step taken by a teacher should be positive and wise.

Major problems and errors in teaching pronunciation: The extensive study of linguists has made it clear that it is very difficult to find two languages with identical sound patterns in the world. For this reason, teachers of foreign languages find it hard to teach their students the sound patterns of the target language (L2) as pronunciation is mostly based on a physiological basis. Actually, each language has its own characteristics and interrelated mouth positions. Undoubtedly, the frequently occurred pronunciation problem in L2 is a foreign accent, which is inevitable if students attempt to produce the sounds of a new language while keeping their mouths shaped and their tongues placed as for similar sounds in their native language. Students must be made aware of the overall sound pattern of the new language before starting to learn it. Adopting a new system of articulator positions requires steady practice and muscles training, which can facilitate correct sound production. So, a major consideration when dealing with pronunciation is

to discover which errors are the most significant ones. In this respect, Collis and Mess (2003) have tried to give range of errors in general terms in the following ways:

- Errors which lead to a breakdown of intelligibility
- Errors which give rise to irritation or amusement
- Errors which provoke few such reactions and may even pass unnoticed

Obviously, the first category of errors is the most significant one. For successful communication, there is no other way but to communicate comprehensibly and with intelligibility. The second group often refers to those which draw attention to the foreignness of an accent. The third category is not so important, as it does not hinder a communicative situation.

Ur (1991), in this context, says that some pronunciation errors common to the speech of many speakers of English as a foreign language are: difficulty in pronouncing the *th* sound /ð/ and /θ/, difficulty in pronouncing the neutral 'schwa' vowel, a tendency to give uniform stress to the syllables that should be lighter or heavier, a tendency to shorten diphthong and turn them into monothongs; for example the sound /ei/ as in a way tends to be pronounced more like a French /e/.

Ur (1991) thinks that errors which produce no comprehension problems occur in much pronunciation teaching and learning:

What the students can hear: It has been said that some students face special problems in hearing some sounds. It is very usual that speakers having different mother tongues cannot pronounce some sounds of English. The Bengali speakers of English face different problems in pronouncing different sounds of English. For example, there is no equivalent of Bengali /o/ in English. Hence, the Bengali speakers generally pronounce the English diphthong/ əʊ/ as Bengali /o/ (Hasan, 1997)

The intonation problem: For many teachers, the most problematic area of pronunciation is intonation. Many students find it very difficult to hear different tunes and to identify the different patterns of rising and falling tones. And for this reason most of the time they cannot understand a foreigner's accent.

We think that the key to successful pronunciation teaching is not so much getting students to produce correct sounds or intonation tunes, but rather to have them notice how English is spoken either on the audio or the videotape or from the teachers themselves. If awareness of making different sounds of the target language can be increased among them, their own intelligibility level will ultimately rise.

Impact of the learners' age on teaching pronunciation: The age of our students is a major factor in our decisions about how and what to teach during a language study. For example, we might expect children of primary age acquiring much of the foreign language through play, whereas for adults we can reasonably expect a greater use of abstract thought. Rivers (1968) suggests some techniques and steps for pronunciation teaching as the different with age. There may have techniques and varying emphasis. The younger child is less self conscious about making strange sounds and behaving in ways which are different from those of his fellow and of the community around him. But the adolescent strives to make themselves acceptable in an adult world and wish to behave in a way which distinguishes him from silly children. However, the teacher who teaches English as a second language or foreign language to the adults might be tempted to avoid teaching pronunciation since the Lenneberg's (1967) Critical Period Hypothesis suggests that adults would not be able to achieve native-like fluency. This is reinforced by the current language learning methodology, namely Communicative Language Teaching, failing to know what to do with the teaching of pronunciation (Krashen and Terrell, 1983). Hammond (1995) notes that adults who are learning a second language or foreign language are capable of "perceiving and articulating subtle" differences. However, the inference is that these must be explicit. Segmental does not

need to be taught technically, although a background in phonetics would be useful (Thompson and Gaddes, 2005).

Importance of using a phonemic or phonetic script in teaching pronunciation: Now a day, many methodologies advocate the teaching of the phonology of English language with the aid of phonetic scripts (usually the symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet or IPA) or a phonemic script (several systems of phonemic symbol are in use). English has got forty-four distinctive sounds while the alphabet has only twenty-six letters. This discrepancy sometimes creates problems. For example, a single letter can represent several different sounds. To handle these kinds of problems, a phonetic alphabet was created, usually called the IPA, which makes it possible to show clearly how the native English speakers of the U.S.A and the UK pronounce words. The chart of IPA is given below:

iy beat	I bit	ʌ bud	a bob	ɔ bought	ow beat
	ɛ bet	æ bat	ʊ book	uw boot	ə about
ey bay	ay bike	aw cow	oy boy		
p pen	b Ben	t tip	d dip	k car	g gun
l lip	r red	m men	n neat	ŋ sing	h hat
f fish	v vest	θ thin	ð the	s see	z zoo
ʃ ship	ʒ leisure	č chew	ʃ judge	y yes	w win

IPA is worth learning and it is useful when studying English for the following reasons:

- IPA makes learners aware of the distinctive sounds in English. It helps them focus on sounds that do not exist in their native languages.
- Learners can see as well as hear that sounds are similar or different in English to those in their own language.
- A visual representation helps learners with errors. They cannot always hear their mistakes; the symbols help them realize that remedial work is needed.
- IPA helps learners use dictionaries more effectively. Students can learn how to pronounce new words without the teacher's help.

For the teacher, IPA is worth knowing and using because:

- IPA is the more professional way to show students that he knows something about practical phonemics.
- The teacher's familiarity with IPA gives the learners more confidence in him.
- IPA helps with remedial words. The teacher can reinforce the correct sound by pointing to the chart or by writing the transcription on the board.
- It is easier to teach sounds when they are graphically represented.

Various models of teaching pronunciation: It is essential to decide on a model of teaching pronunciation for the students who are learning the pronunciation of English as a foreign language. It will really assist the non-native learners in Bangladesh and other countries where all

students have got the same L1.

A pronunciation model should have the following qualities as noted down by Adam Brown (1991): Ease of learning, Intelligibility and Identity.

The model must be easy to learn, and it should be very close to the pronunciation of learner's mother tongue. The minimum difference between L1 and L2 is the maximum the students learn a good accent of the target language. In fact, the model should be chosen keeping in view the level of students' ability and the context in which the foreign language is learnt. To improve the learner's pronunciation the teacher can make some attempts to teach pronunciation in some overt ways. It is possible that they are nervous while dealing with sounds and intonation. Perhaps this feeling makes things worse. They may claim that even without a formal pronunciation syllabus and without specific pronunciation teaching, many students seem to acquire acceptable pronunciation in the course of their studies. These kinds of demands have given rise to many models of teaching pronunciation:

The top-down model of teaching pronunciation: According to this "top-down" concept, language is produced and interpreted with reference to a larger meaningful context. In case of pronunciation, general properties of speech, such as rhythm and voice quality, get more importance. Pronunciation is described as something that conveys many different types of messages that are related to the information structure of a discourse, the speakers' attitude and mood and other social and psychological features. (Brown and Yule 1983). Likewise, while listening to anything, the language users also employ those to interpret the full import of messages conveyed by the speaker.

The bottom-up model: The Bottom-up model of pronunciation teaching begins with the articulation of individual sounds and works up towards intonation, stress, and rhythm. Here the central idea is that if you teach the segmental first, the suprasegmental features will be subsequently acquired without the need of instruction.

RP as a model in teaching pronunciation: RP or the Received Pronunciation of English has been advocated by many linguists as a perfect tool for removing confusion about the accents of English to be used for pronunciation teaching. At one point, it became impossible to decide as to which variety of pronunciation is appropriate for the learning of English accents. And that time standard emerges, that the British English, RP gives English language conformity.

Other native accents as model: But now-a-days, several alternatives to RP have been proposed as pronunciation model for ELT. General American is the language of two-thirds of the population of America. On the other hand in the whole part of Scotland, of everyone speaks Scottish English. India has got its own accents of English. Actually, with the globalization the concept of RP seems to get less attention today. So, now English has become a *lingua-franca* which can be used in many different ways.

Examples of teaching pronunciation: Ur (1991) has given many ideas for improving learners' pronunciation. Among these, imitation of the teacher or recorded model of sounds, words, sentences, imitation drills-repetition of sounds, words, and sentences, choral repetition of drills, varied repetition of drills, learning and performing dialogues, etc have been given much importance. He also gives importance to learner's self-correction through listening to the recording of his/her own speech. Imitation drills work very well with the children. But the same techniques cannot be used for adults or adolescent learners. Karl (1990) has contracted different sounds of learning activities which can guide students in producing different sounds of English with which they may have problem. Two of them have been shown below:

Word-association drills: It is one of the easiest ways to create the scope for the students to study specific problems regarding sounds. By concentrating on the phonemes /ɛ/ and /æ/, the teacher might ask his students to repeat antonyms of the following words- sick, sit, thin- more with the attention to the fact that the words they will select all contain /ɛ/ and /æ/, if they are having

problems making the correct word-association.

Transformation drills: Phonemes that carry grammatical significance, such as /s/ and/z/ for pluralization, possessive formation, or third person singular present and /t/, /d/ for past formation, are easily treated through transformation drills which stress a regular structural change from one sentence to another.

All these various activities provide a satisfactory means of giving the students pronunciation practice while s/he is communicating in a meaningful way. Again, teachers can use different techniques for teaching pronunciation.

Working with sounds: Working with sounds is an important part of pronunciation teaching. The teacher should be aware of the sounds of vowels, diphthongs, and consonants, especially those that are different and a challenge for most of the English language learners. It is really helpful for students if the teacher could show or demonstrate the position of the lips when this sound is made and then get the students make the sound-for example, how voiced and voiceless sounds can be made, how the lips get rounded and un-rounded in articulating different vowel sounds.

Working with the phonemic or phoneme chart: Using a phonemic chart in a classroom is another technical way to help the students with pronunciation. The teacher should give them ideas about vowels, consonants, sounds, monothongs, diphthongs, and about all the phonetic or phoneme sounds. And, the better way is to show the chart and to help the students identify specific symbols.

ɪ READ	ɪ SIT	ʊ BOOK	u: TOO	ɪə HERE	eɪ DAY		
e MEN	ə AMERICA	ɜ: WORD	ɔ: SORT	ʊə TOUR	ɔɪ BOY	əʊ GO	
æ CAT	ʌ BUT	ɑ: PART	ɒ NOT	eə WEAR	aɪ MY	aʊ HOW	
p FIG	b BED	t TIME	d DO	tʃ CHURCH	dʒ JUDGE	k KILO	g GO
f FIVE	v VERY	θ THINK	ð THE	s SDX	z ZOO	ʃ SHORT	ʒ CASUAL
m MILK	n NO	ŋ SING	h HELLO	l LIVE	r READ	w WINDOW	j YES

Phonemic chart

A phonemic chart gives the students a visual image of the sounds .A visual representation helps the learners do away with the errors.

Working with stress and intonation: Stress is important in individual words, phrases and sentences. There is one common way to show the diphthong /ai/ in words like play, bide, hide etc or to give them the examples of the use of stress in simple, complex or compound words and sentences. It is necessary to teach both word stress and sentence stress. However, there are no hard and fast rules as to which comes first. Let us now look in some detail at a possible ‘recipe’ we might use for teaching word stress:

- Start with two syllable words, and try to choose words with simple phonemes that are not likely to distract learners' attention or undermine their confidence.
- Ask learners to identify the stressed syllable from your pronunciation of the word. Make sure that they are not using higher level of knowledge based on the spelling of the word. If you think this is happening, as it may with learners who have had previous book-learning of English, try using some nonsense words.
- Write the words on the board, and ask learners to copy them into their books. Then say the word several times and ask them to underline the stressed syllable.
- Underline the stressed syllable on the board and check their answers.
- Discuss any errors, and then ask the learners, all together then one at a time, to repeat the words back to you. In judging their production, focus on the stress pattern rather than on phonemes, but do correct any glaring phoneme errors.
- Comment throughout on the fact that one of the syllables of each word is louder than the other. It is true that stressed syllables are usually longer and at higher pitch than other syllables. But getting into that can confuse the learners, because we also talk about length in relation to vowel length, and about pitch in relation to intonation. So, use these concepts with caution.
- When you find they are doing well, try giving some more tricky exercises, such as saying some words with stress on the wrong syllable and asking them to judge if you have said them correctly or incorrectly. If you feel they are up to it, try getting them to say the stress on the wrong syllable.
- When all this is mastered well, move on to the words of three syllables and more. When learners are performing well with these, give more complex exercises, such as asking them to group words into stress pattern families.

Sentence stress and word stress are closely linked with each other in the sense that:

- they are both about one syllable being louder than others, and
- they both depend on learners being able to hear and conceptualize that relative loudness before they can use it appropriately
- sentence stress is quite different, though, in the role it plays in language
- word stress is fixed, as an essential part of the word.
- sentence stress is variable, and is controlled by the speaker as part of the meaning of the sentence. There are no hard and fast rules about sentence stress to match rules like 'The word 'monster' is stressed on the first syllable'.

Therefore, it is useful to teach sentence stress in terms of the important word(s) in a sentence receiving the stress, rather than in terms of words in particular grammatical categories (content words, for example) receiving the stress. It is true that the word 'important' is subjective, but stress is subjective. For example, it is quite possible to stress a function word like 'to' if it is important on that occasion (e.g. 'I'm going to the shops').

Another important component of pronunciation is intonation which is controlled by a different part of the brain, and less accessible to conscious intervention. It is necessary to teach the students the way of using changes in pitch to convey meaning because it enables us to express surprise, pleasure, disappointment, irony, excitement, and other such feelings. There are other ways to teach intonation. Students can make dialogues without humming the tune of what they want to say in such a way that other students can understand them. The act of reading aloud a text in the class reveals students' understanding of intonation and sense group.

Working with sounds and spelling: There is no complete one-to-one correspondence between letter and phoneme for learners. Ur (1991) gives some teaching ideas. The teacher can

- dictate the students by giving them random lists of words that have similar spelling problems of complete sentences.
- prepare a set of pairs of words which differ from each other in one sound letter combination (such as, dip//deep, live//leave, ship//sheep etc)
- use the phonemic chart to highlight the links between the alphabetical spelling of words and their pronunciation

In this way, students can be made to interpret and understand some underlining link between English spelling and pronunciation.

Developing the use of mime and gesture for teaching pronunciation: Underhill (1994) has described in many ways the importance of mime and gesture for teaching pronunciation in English. By mime, Underhill means a helpful exaggeration of the actual physical movements involved in producing a sound, for example, rounding the lips for /u/ sound. On the other hand, by gesture he means other non-verbal signals that help learners shape and modify sounds, but which are not part of the muscular movement of the sound itself, e.g. using the fingers to 'draw out' or lengthen a vowel sound. Mime is based on the visual aspects of sounds where gesture can be a substitute of the teacher's instruction. Gestures draw attention to some aspects of the place or manner of articulation of the sounds of English language. For example, for the sounds /f/ and /v/, the mime will be a contact between the lower lip and teeth exaggerated slightly, and the gesture will be a contact between lip and teeth, after that moving the fingers slowly forward for the length of the mime.

Equipment-based teaching of pronunciation: With the advancement of science and technology, a lot of equipment has been invented to teach and learn language. Since we are living in the age of science and technology, we have to use various materials to learn and teach pronunciation correctly. CALL (Computer Assisted Learning Language), ATALL (Autonomous Technology-Assisted Language Learning), and CLTA (Communicative Language Teaching Approach) are the latest invented science and technology-based teaching and learning processes. Through these systems, the teacher can teach the exact pronunciation to the students. In this case, s/he uses various extra-linguistic materials. CALL denotes computer-based learning which is marked by two important features: individualized learning and bidirectional learning. ATALL and CLTA are also computer and other equipment-based learning and teaching process. The basic reasons behind the use of computer-assisted language learning include:

- I. authentic pronunciation
- II. experiential learning
- III. motivation
- IV. achievement
- V. authentic materials for study
- VI. greater interaction
- VII. individualization, and
- VIII. global understanding

Technology brings about dramatic changes in teaching English using various methodologies avoiding simply automatic fill-in-the-gap exercises. There has been some success in using 'CALL' and 'ATALL' in particular computer-dominated 'communicative competence'. The first is learning pronunciation under this system is a particular way -the students can read sentences on the screen and the computer gives feedback as to the accuracy of the expression usually in the form of visual sound waves. The second is software where the learner gives commands to control the pace of learning while accepting the most relevant issues and skipping unnecessary items or doing remedial waste of difficult concepts.

Recommendations

Regarding the development of teaching pronunciation, the first thing that should be taken into account is that teaching pronunciation should be included as mandatory in the syllabus with a view to developing the students' skill in speaking English. Secondly, it is necessary to train the teachers on pronunciation teaching efficiently. The empirical study also shows that sound pattern, rhythm, and intonation are inseparable parts of teaching pronunciation of English. So, the school teachers of the secondary level in Bangladesh, especially those from the Khulna district, can include the following issues:

- The teacher can explain the new sounds to the students properly by using phonemic chart, place of articulation, manner of articulation, force of articulation, and figure of organs of speech, etc.
- S/he can also clarify the similarity of different sounds in English. Drilling is also helpful. However, before that it is necessary for them to know how to produce the new utterance correctly.
- When teaching pronunciation, the focus is on the sound, not on the meaning. That's why place of articulation, manner of articulation, and force of articulation should be taught adequately. To teach a sound, the teacher should ensure that the students hear the sounds first and practice them orally and repetitively.
- The teacher may explain well how to make the sound by his/her using the mother tongue, if it is felt necessary.
- Motivation is a highly significant factor in pronunciation. The more the students will be motivated, the more they will learn correct pronunciation.
- The sounds to be heard and spoken should be clearly highlighted in short utterances.
- Students should be given opportunity to hear the same thing said by more than one voice.
- The English sounds can be demonstrated in contrast with other English sounds or else with sounds from the native language.

This research comes up with some specific recommendations for the secondary school level teachers regarding the teaching of pronunciation in Bangladesh, especially at Khulna. The teachers should encourage the students to:

- imitate them or reordered model of sounds ,words, and sentences
- record their own speech contrasted with the native model
- follow systematic explanation and instruction(including details of the structure and movement of the parts of the mouth)
- imitate drill: repetition of sounds ,words, and sentences
- practise choral repetition of drill
- practise varied repetition of drill
- learn and perform dialogue
- learn perfect tongue twister
- make self-correction through the listening or recording of one's own speech
- follow the feedback given by him/her properly
- use extra linguistic materials
- listen to B.B.C., CNN, and other English news channels to improve pronunciation

In fact, each and every school should set up a well-equipped language lab to facilitate the teaching of pronunciation. The researchers are optimistic about the fact that those suggestions will be helpful for the teachers as well as the learners while dealing with English pronunciation.

Conclusion

This paper examines the problems that teachers face while teaching the secondary school level students in Khulna district about the rules of English pronunciation. In addition, it also tries to find out the effective remedial measures and feedback techniques for developing speaking skills with correct pronunciation. Since our economy depends on foreign aid, we have to communicate with the developed countries properly. Our learning of pronunciation will be enriched, if we use technological equipment in this regard. As Khulna is a much neglected area in the case of learning English, the government, teachers, authorities, and above all, the students should take effective measures to learn English, especially to learn correct pronunciation. In view of the present study, it can be said that our teachers, syllabus designers, materials developers, and education policy makers deliberately or non-deliberately ignore the problems of pronunciation teaching in English at the secondary school level. But, it is high time that they focused on teaching pronunciation to the school level students. Therefore, effective pronunciation components have to be incorporated in the materials, classroom activities, and testing tools to gain the said end. And, for this our teachers have to be trained in EFL/ESL pronunciation. Unless teachers are sincere enough to make our students communicatively competent by adopting the four skills of English, the main goal of Communicative Language Teaching can never be achieved.

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Appendix-1

Results and Interpretations of the Student's Questionnaire Survey and Interview:

Practice of teaching and learning of English pronunciation

No	Questions	Yes	No
1	Do you know what pronunciation means in language teaching?	30%	70%
2	Do you try to speak English when you are in the class?	35%	65%
3	Does your teacher use any model for pronunciation teaching in the class?	10%	90%
4	Do you know that there are the differences between Bangla and English sounds?	20%	80%
5	Does your teacher teach you the sound patterns, rhythm, and intonation system of English?	15%	85%
6	Does your teacher prompt you forward when you cannot understand what to say in a fluency activity?	80%	20%
7	Does your teacher show the differences between British and American sounds in the class?	20%	80%
8	Do you think that the overcrowded classroom disturbs you to do the class attentively?	90%	10%
9	Do you think that you cannot understand a native speaker of English because of the rising and falling of tones?	80%	20%
10	Does your teacher engage you in all the speaking activities of your textbook in the classroom?	30%	70%
11	Does your teacher like to teach you the four skills of English language learning?	10%	90%
12	Do you think that reading aloud can improve your pronunciation ability?	80%	20%
13	Do you think that a native speaker of English will be a good teacher for English pronunciation teaching in Bangladesh?	80%	20%
14	Do you think that group-discussion is important in the classes to increase learners' confidence level in speaking?	90%	10%
15	Do your teachers arrange any group discussion and other necessary classes for developing pronunciation skill?	10%	90%
16	Does your teacher help you in using your organs of articulation to produce different sounds of English?	20%	80%
17	Are you afraid of your teacher and shy of other students while answering the questions of the class teacher in English?	80%	20%
18	Have your teachers taught you phonemic symbols by showing the phonemic chart?	15%	85%
19	Does your teacher use tape recorder with foreign language recording in the class for good pronunciation teaching?	10%	90%
20	Have your teachers ever taught you how to see the pronunciation of a word in the dictionary?	30%	70%
21	Do you try to mimic the English speaker when you listen to a tape recorder?	35%	65%
22	Has your teacher ever told you that our mother tongue habit can interfere in our learning of other languages?	40%	60%
23	Does your teacher encourage you to listen to the BBC news for learning good accent?	60%	40%

Appendix-2

Results and Interpretations of the Teacher's Questionnaire Survey and Interview:

Practice of teaching and learning of English pronunciation

No	Questions	Yes	No
1	Do you tell the students what pronunciation means in language teaching and the importance of pronunciation teaching in a communicative situation?	65%	35%
2	Do you believe that learning a second or a foreign language is a matter of habit-formation from the childhood?	90%	10%
3	Do you insist on using English language among the students in the classroom?	75%	25%
4	Do you follow any method of the pronunciation teaching system in the classroom?	35%	65%
5	Do you practices and implement the tasks and activities given by the compulsory textbook in the class?	80%	20%
6	Do you teach students the sound patterns, rhythm, and intonation system of English?	35%	65%
7	Do you believe that every word, every syllable, and every phoneme uttered by you may contribute to the learners learning pronunciation?	80%	20%
8	Do you think that the overcrowded classrooms of our educational institutions make it difficult for the teachers to keep control and provide individual attention?	95%	05%
9	Do you think that the shortage of the time allowed is one of the main reasons why a foreign language is not learnt as thoroughly and as efficiently as one's own?	90%	10%
10	Do you sometimes try to ignore teaching listening skills as it is not tested in the exam at school level?	65%	35%
11	Do you use in the class only the compulsory textbook for English for learning the four skills-listening, speaking, reading, and writing?	30%	70%
12	Do you pair up students in the class and ask them to interview each other for growing speaking proficiency?	20%	80%
13	Do you try to maintain a stress-free environment in the class so that students can communicate freely without being over-conscious of speaking correctly?	30%	70%
14	Do you think that group-discussion is important in the class to increase learners' confidence level in speaking?	80%	20%
15	Do you arrange group discussion and other necessary classes for students for developing their pronunciation skill?	45%	55%
16	Do you help students in using their organs of articulation to produce different sounds of English?	40%	60%
17	Do you monitor the students after giving them a task on pronunciation?	65%	35%
18	Have you ever shown a chart of English phonemic symbol in the class?	30%	70%
19	Do you think that every school should have language laboratory?	75%	25%
20	Do you expect from the students native-like fluency and accuracy?	60%	40%

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21	Do you think that integrating multimedia technology in the EFL program in Bangladesh can attract students to pronunciation teaching?	80%	20%
22	Do you think that if you correct every mispronounced sound of the student, s/he will feel discouraged to learn pronunciation?	45%	55%
23	Do you encourage students to listen to BBC news and CNN to learn good accents?	85%	15%

Appendix-3

Results and Interpretations of the classroom Observation:

Practice of teaching and learning Pronunciation of English language in the classroom

No	Questions	Yes	No
1	Does the teacher encourage the students to speak in English with correct pronunciation?	40%	50%
2	Does the teacher tell the students what pronunciation means in ELT?	25%	75%
3	Is the teacher giving special attention to the weak students of the class?	30%	70%
4	Are students' errors in making different sounds of English tolerated in the class?	65%	35%
5	Does the teacher teach only from the textbook of that particular class?	70%	30%
6	Does the teacher recommend different books on teaching pronunciation besides the compulsory textbook?	30%	70%
7	Is the student afraid of the class teacher and shy of other students when s/he speaks in English?	80%	20%
8	Does the teacher pay no time to pronunciation teaching as there is no explicit instruction in the syllabus to teach it?	90%	10%
9	Does the teacher become impatient when a student mispronounces a sound again and again?	70%	30%
10	Does the teacher use different figures, maps, tables, and pictures in the class for teaching pronunciation?	10%	90%
11	Does the teacher encourage students to practice and to develop the four language skills?	20%	80%
12	Does the teacher give feedback to the student's performance in each lesson?	40%	60%
13	Does the teacher interrupt students in mid-flow during communicative activities to point out pronunciation errors?	15%	85%
14	Does the teacher try to maintain a standard of English while giving or speaking lecture in the class?	20%	80%
15	Does the teacher try to make a compromise deliberately between the new form of CLT and the old Grammar-Translation method?	60%	40%
16	Does the teacher give lecture too fast so that the students cannot keep pace with him/her?	70%	30%
17	Does the teacher arrange any debate competition in the class to develop oral fluency?	20%	80%
18	Does the classroom procedure include minimum explanation and maximum practice?	50%	50%
19	Is the practice of intonation, stress, and rhythm neglected in the class?	90%	10%
20	Do all the students in the class use a dictionary with phonetic transcription in it?	30%	70%

21	Do they have any listening tasks in the classroom?	10%	90%
22	Do the students communicate in English in the classroom?	20%	80%
23	Is the classroom so big that the students at the back cannot get attention from the teachers?	60%	40%
24	Do the students work in a team in the class to present their problems to the class teacher?	30%	70%
25	Is there any separate schedule in a week for teaching and practicing the speaking skill in the class?	20%	80%