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LITERATURE
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THE TEACHING OF PRONUNCIATION IN THE EFL TEACHERS'
TRAINING PROGRAM IN ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

BY
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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN
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JUNE, 2008

Declaration

I. The undersigned, declared that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university, and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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Abstract

The purpose of this descriptive study was to investigate the teaching of pronunciation in the EFL teachers' training program in Addis Ababa University. The attitudes of students and teachers towards pronunciation and its teaching, the components of pronunciation the teaching materials give precedence, the aims and presentation the procedures of pronunciation lessons were the focus points of the inquiry. The attitudes of the respondents (30% of the students and all the teachers) were determined by the data collected through the questionnaire (Major tool) and the interview (supportive). The material analysis was employed to evaluate the aims, procedures and the feature of pronunciation given priority. The findings showed that the teaching of pronunciation is inadequate and 'bottom-up' or structural in its approach (i.e. it is not aimed at intelligible pronunciation). The results showed that students exhibited a great desire for pronunciation; segmental features are given more priority than prosodic features. The aims of most pronunciation lessons focus only on recognition and accurate production of features. Exposure procedure was ignored; and teachers adhere to the traditional attitude that pronunciation should be taught atomistically (structural approach). Finally possible remedial measures and similar inquiries in other settings were recommended.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The EFL instruction now a days is observed to give intelligible pronunciation a significant place in the communicative scope. Speaking the English language competently partly requires the ability to produce its sounds in ways that are intelligible to other speakers (Harmer, 2001). The conscious awareness of pronunciation features that can obviously be used by a competent speaker helps for listening competently (Hedge, 2000; Lynch, 1983). Therefore, we can also assert that teaching intelligible pronunciation is addressing the communicative needs of learners.

The development of pronunciation teaching starting all the way from the traditional approach to the current communicative language teaching has shown a significant change of concern. Richards and Renendaya (2002) noted that it had almost no place and significance in the grammar translation method. Direct and audio lingual methods treated pronunciation in a discrete and narrow way (Morley, 1991).

Pronunciation teaching has broadened with significant consideration in the communicative era (Ibid). Hedge (2000:208), for instance, noted: "It is worth spending time giving separate consideration to the phonological aspects of learning English as perspectives on these have broadened and changed in recent years".

The coming of communicative approach, with its interest in the use of language in discourse, has been accompanied by a shift of emphasis in pronunciation teaching to supra-segmental and aspects of connected speech such as sentence stress, rhythm, and intonation (Hedge, 2000; Morley, 1991). This development of pronunciation teaching overtime has brought us to the increasing awareness of its communicative functions (Richards and

Renandya, 2002). Therefore, the present day EFL instruction claims adequate treatment of pronunciation as part of its communicative objectives.

The contemporary concern on pronunciation has brought about new principles to be addressed in its teaching. These include a) aiming at intelligibility, b) pronunciation as an essential component of communication, c) including segmental and supra-segmental with more focus on supra-segmental d) meaningful and contextual manner of teaching it..... etc (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994).

However, many English language programs are still defective for they do not incorporate the current perspective of pronunciation teaching within their instruction (Richards and Renandya, 2002). The primary reason here is that several language teachers still believe that pronunciation should be given a peripheral place; and they adhere to the traditional attitude (Harmer, 2001). For another, accurate production of segmental is the focus of most pronunciation lessons i.e. ignoring or giving insignificant coverage of supra-segmental (Morley, 1991). At last, pronunciation points are taught in isolation which is a typical traditional approach of pronunciation teaching (Brown, 1992; Hedge, 2000).

This challenge, thus, contributes to the failure many language learners encounter in communication as it fails to respond to the needs of learners (Brown, 1992). Morley (1991) also noted that different organizations and enterprises require employees' fluent speaking ability with intelligible pronunciation. Taylor (1993) witnessed that some second language speakers of English with high level of proficiency in other areas of the language are seen to be posed constantly to repeat their speech because of their poor pronunciation; they are then rated unintelligible. Therefore, it is difficult to guarantee effective communication and proficiency with out intelligible pronunciation.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The problem of teaching intelligible pronunciation in Ethiopia is reflected in the works of some researchers. For example, Geremew (2003) studied that the coverage given to English pronunciation in primary schools is negligible. Anegagregn (2007) also found out that the overall status of pronunciation teaching in high school EFL instruction is far less emphasized and the awareness of teachers about the teaching of comprehensible pronunciation is very little. In addition, the researcher's personal experience as teacher educator in teacher's training college rendered the opportunity to observe the situation very closely that many students complain that they faced communication problems partly because of pronunciation. For these reasons, the researcher studied the status of pronunciation teaching in teacher training programs.

The researcher's keen interest to study the problem on the tertiary level is for the reason that no similar study has so far been done on this level to the researcher's knowledge. Thus, the researcher studied the problem in the Teacher Training Program in Addis Ababa University.

This particular study tried to see the problem from two important perspectives. Attitude and approach are areas of concern of the present inquiry. Therefore, the attitude of English language instructors and students towards pronunciation; the component of pronunciation given priority; and the aim and the procedure of presentation of pronunciation lessons in the teaching materials were specific areas of concern.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this descriptive study was to investigate the status of the teaching of pronunciation in EFL teacher education program in Addis Ababa University by identifying attitudes towards pronunciation and approach of teaching. The following were the specific objectives of the study.

1. Determining the attitudes of teachers and students towards pronunciation and its teaching.
2. Identifying the component of pronunciation given priority
3. Assessing the procedures the teaching materials used to present pronunciation lessons.
4. Identifying the predominant aims of pronunciation lessons

1.4 Research Questions

The questions of this research are:

1. What are the attitudes of students towards pronunciation?
2. What are the attitudes of teachers towards pronunciation and its teaching?
3. Which pronunciation feature is given priority?
4. What are the procedures used to present pronunciation lessons?
5. What is the predominant aim of pronunciation lessons?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The researcher believes that this study is relevant for the following reasons.

1. The results of the study can help realize problems and causes in pronunciation teaching in Addis Ababa University so that remedial measures may be instituted by concerted efforts to improve the outcome of EFL instruction because intelligible pronunciation is a necessary part of language proficiency as indicated by a number of authorities.
2. More specifically, the findings of the study can serve as an input to the decisions that practitioners and material writers make to address the needs of students for comprehensible pronunciation.

3. The research can also suggest other researchers to make similar inquiries in other institutions to verify, amplify, or negate the findings of the study.

1.6 The Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This study was conducted to determine the status of the teaching of pronunciation in EFL teachers' training program at Addis Ababa University. The aspects looked into were attitudes of teachers and students, the component of pronunciation given priority, the presentation procedures and the aims of pronunciation lessons. The sources of the data were spoken English course teachers, students and the materials used to teach the courses spoken English I and II with in which pronunciation lessons are included explicitly. From the information obtained from the department, pronunciation is explicitly treated only with in the above courses.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The data to determine the attitudes of teachers were collected only through the questionnaire because the respondents did not volunteer to respond to the interview as they said that they were very busy and did not have time for it. Thus, the researcher believes that the reliability and validity of the findings would have been better if the interview had also been used.

1.8 Definitions of Terms

The following are definitions of important terms used and conceptualized as such through out the study.

1. Attitude:- It is an individual's belief or view point towards a thing or an idea or a person as a result of the individual's personal interest or/and as a result of the learning environment about the object (Gall et al, 1996).

2. Selection:- It is referred in terms of the size and priority given to pronunciation features in foreign language teaching (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994).
3. Presentation:- refers to the procedures followed in presenting pronunciation lessons in the materials (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994).
4. Speech production (micro-focus):- is an aim of pronunciation lesson which focuses on discrete features of voice and articulation (Morley, 1991).
5. Speech-performance (macro-focus) refers to an aim of pronunciation lesson which focuses on the global patterns of spoken English (i.e. pronunciation performance in language use) (Morley, 1991).

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 What is Pronunciation?

Some writers define pronunciation in general terms. Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994) refer to pronunciation as a significant sound production in two senses. Firstly, 'pronunciation is defined as the production and reception of sounds of speech' because of the fact that sound is a part of a code of any language (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994:3). Secondly, pronunciation is defined as a significant code of sound that is 'combined with other factors to make communication possible' because it is used to address message in context of use (Ibid). The second sense considers pronunciation in connection with acts of speaking.

However, Dalton and Seidlhofer give particular focus to the notion that pronunciation refers to the physical features of sound that are 'relevant in the achievement of meaning' in communication (p.3).

Similar to the above definition, Richards and Renendya (2002) refer pronunciation as the role of individual sounds and sound segments in speaking.

2.2 Teaching Pronunciation: Then and Now

Over the last half-century of language teaching, views on the teaching of pronunciation have changed dramatically (Brown, 1994). In the days of audiolingualism, language was viewed as a hierarchy of structures and the pronunciation component of a course focused on the articulation of phonemes and their contrasts within English and between English and native languages (Celce-Murcia and Goodwin, 1991; Morley, 1991, etc). The techniques used in pronunciation classes consisted of imitation drills, memorization of patterns, 'minimal pair exercises, and explanations of articulatory phonetics' (Brown, 1994:258). In short, in the heyday of

audiolingualism, pronunciation was treated in a very discrete manner aiming at accurate production of the sound system (Hedge, 2000; Morley, 1991).

In the 1970s, as the language teaching profession began to experience a new revolution, explicit pedagogical focus on 'linguistic nuts and bolts' was disregarded by advocates of the process approach to language teaching (Brown, 1994:259). Pronunciation instruction became somewhat incidental to a course of study (Morley, 1991). Thus, the teaching of pronunciation in those times was still given a peripheral place in language instruction.

By the mid 1980s, pronunciation was given a central place to achieve full communicative competence as the language pedagogy turned its attention to grammatical structures, to focus on both fluency and accuracy and 'to the explicit specification of pedagogical tasks that a learner should accomplish' (Brown 1994:259). This mode of instruction tried to treat pronunciation features of a language without prioritizing the very essential phonological aspects that have greater importance in discourse (Morley, 1991; Hedge, 2000; Brown, 1994).

In contrast with the early approaches, the current approach to pronunciation teaching has come with a top-down approach in which the most relevant features of pronunciation stress, rhythm, and intonation are given precedence (Brown, 1994, Hedge 2000). It is a shift of focus from an attempt to build a learner's articulatory competence as the mastery of individual phonemes and allophones to the major organizing structures, i.e. supra-segmental features, because of their major roles in communication (Morley, 1991). Therefore, the present day EFL instruction views supra-segmental features of English pronunciation with greater priority than individual sounds.

2.3 Factors Affecting Pronunciation Learning

What are the significant factors within learners that affect pronunciation? Below is a list of these variables that EFL teachers need to deal with through an on going concern for students' progress to develop clear and comprehensible pronunciation.

2.3.1 Motivation and Concern for Good pronunciation

The extent to which learners' intrinsic motivation propels them toward improvement is the strongest influence of all possible factors (Kenworthy, 1987). EFL teachers can help learners to develop high motivation and concern by showing how clarity of speech or comprehensible pronunciation is significant 'in shaping their self image and ultimately, in reaching their higher goals' (Brown, 1994:261).

2.3.2 Native Language

As the native language is a very influential factor affecting a learner's pronunciation, 'EFL teachers should be familiar with the sound system of a learner's native language to diagnose L1 – L2 carryovers' (Brown, 1994:260)

The phonological differences between the learner's native language and English can be exhibited not only in the individual sounds but also in combinations of sounds and features such as intonation and rhythm (Kenworthy, 1987; Brown, 1994).

To put it in a nut shell, "the more differences there are, the more difficulties the learner will have in pronouncing English" (Kenworthy, 1987:4).

2.3.3 Attitude and Identity

It has been claimed that such factors as a 'learner's sense of identify and feelings of affiliation with speakers of the target language' are strong indicators of the acquisition of accurate pronunciation of a foreign language (Brown, 1994:261). Kenworthy(1987:8) also noted:

In many studies of attitude and motivation in language learning, it has been shown that those learners who show positive feelings towards the speakers of the new language tend to develop more accurate, native like accents.

The above three factors are considered the most relevant and are worth considering variables in pronunciation teaching (Brown, 1994). However, Kenworthy (1987) also mentioned other factors. These include Age, exposure and innate phonetic ability.

Therefore, any learner who wants to pronounce English comprehensibly needs to be aware of the factors and be helped by responsible EFL teachers to diagnose them.

2.4 Pronunciation and Intelligibility

Most teachers would claim that a native-like pronunciation is desirable for their learners (Stern 1983). However, it is accepted that intelligibility is the most sensible goal of teaching pronunciation (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994). The question here will be ‘what is intelligibility? Intelligibility is “being understood by a listener at a given time in a given situation” (Kenworthy, 1987:13). It means that understandability seems to replace intelligibility. Dalton and Seidlhofer(1994:9) tried to show understandability in the following phrases:

making yourself understood is not just a matter of accurate and clear articulation, and pronunciation cannot be considered or taught in isolation, dissociated from questions such as ‘why do we talk?’, ‘what determines how we talk to whom?, and getting our meaning across?

Although the foreign speaker cannot produce sound features accurately, it is quite possible for the listener to approximate or match the sound feature heard with the sound used by native speakers (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994).

Intelligibility as a goal means that we are aiming for ‘something close enough’ to native like performance (Kenworthy, 1987:13)

It has been said above that intelligibility is dependent on counts of sameness, but there are some other aspects of speech affecting a person’s intelligibility. For example, if a person’s speech is full of ‘self-corrections, hesitations, and grammatical restructurings’, then a listener will tend to find the person difficult to understand because it has been found that speakers who hesitate a lot also tend to exhibit many pronunciation problems (Kenworthy, 1987:13).

Another speaker factor is associated with speed. When we feel a speaker is speaking fast and face difficulty in understanding, more often, it is not the speed that caused the misunderstanding but ‘the fact that we can’t seem to pick out the most important bits-the crucial words-from the less important bits’ (Ibid:13). Features like stress, rhythm and intonation are essential in signaling the important bits of a message, and then there will be very less intelligibility problems in a rapid speech (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994; Celce-Murcia and Olshtain 2000)

Familiarity and Exposure are also mentioned as intelligibility factors. A person who is exposed to different accents of English will find it easier to understand those speakers with different accents because of the reason that he/she was familiar with those features of pronunciation (Kenworthy, 1987). It is to say that the more opportunity an EFL learner has to listen to different varieties of English, the more intelligible those accents are to him/her. Hence, the very important question to ask is not: what is accurate to native speaker, but: ‘what is appropriate and necessary to be able to communicate in specific situations?’ (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994:12).

2.5 Components of Pronunciation

We have talked about the goal of pronunciation teaching above; now we will look at the various aspects of pronunciation. The components of pronunciation are classified into three major components: segmentals, supra-segmental and aspects of connected speech (Kenworthy, 1987; Dalton and Seilhofer, 1994; Brown, 1994,).

2.5.1 Segmentals

First of all there are vowel and consonant sounds which perform different functions in the syllable in ways that each syllable has a vowel at its centre as in 'car', 'ball', etc., and the vowel is surrounded by the consonants (Kenworthy, 1987).

There are of course many theoretical problems connected with the vowel-consonant distinction. But the most common view is "Vowels are sounds in which there is no obstruction to the flow of air as it passes from the larynx to the lips,... but no doubt that sounds like S and D should be called consonants" as stated in Roach, P(1983:10).

In short, during the articulation of vowels, the air flows freely out of the mouth, but we produce consonants when the air stream is obstructed partially or completely somewhere in the vocal tract. Vowel sounds can be classified according to their tongue height, frontness or backness and lip-rounding (Roach, 1983). Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994), however, classified vowels according to quality and quantity where as consonants are classified with place, manner and voice. Diphtongs and triphthongs are also combinations of vowel sounds, indicating a movement from one vowel to another (Roach, 1983).

Vowels, consonants, diphtongs and triphthongs are sounds that we use to present our English words in speech (Kenworthy, 1987).

Most importantly, Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994) suggested that language teachers need to identify and focus on some certain sounds that can be difficult for EFL learners because of the nature of the learners' native language (interference effect).

Therefore, EFL learners have to learn to recognize and try to articulate these different speech sounds to be able to understand and to be understood in oral communication.

2.5.2 Supra-Segmental

Supra segmental aspects of pronunciation refer to the patterns of rhythm and the intonation contours that accompany sound sequences in oral communication (Celce-murcia and Olshtain, 2000:31). These supra-segmental features are also called prosody (Brown, 1994). In speaking a foreign language, the ability to process and to approximate the target prosody contributes greatly 'to negotiation of a holistic signal that can guide the listener's understanding of what the speaker is trying to say' (Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, 2000:31). Similarly, Ur, Penny emphasized the significance of supra-segmental features in communication and said "a learner may enunciate the sounds perfectly and still sounds foreign because of unacceptable stress and intonation" (1996:47). Therefore, because of their communicative importance prosodic features are essential components in pronunciation teaching (Taylor, 1993; Pennington and Richards, 1986; etc)

The following are considered as important supra segmental features of English:

I. Stress

Stress is defined as the production of a syllable or word with more force than the surrounding syllables or words (Celce – Murcia and Olshtain, 2000). Stress is a fundamental aspect in intelligible pronunciation that EFL learners should practice placing stress on syllables because English is a 'stress – timed' language (Pennington and Richards, 1986:210). Similarly, Pahuja

(1995) underlined that the use of stress characterizes English compared to many African languages. Hence, our students deserve to learn word and sentence stress patterns of English with a better focus.

English word has ‘a distinct stress pattern that interacts with other prosodic features’, and with incorrect word stress, the entire utterances can go wrong (Celce – Murcia and Olshtain, 2000:33). In multi –syllabic English words one of the syllables will be produced in prominence (Roach, 1983). In other words, the stressed syllable is heard louder with its vowel held longer and the consonant pronounced clearly (Kenworthy, 1987). These factors work together in combinations, but syllables may sometimes be stressed by one or two of the factors (Roach, 1983). For example, the first syllable in the word ‘mother’ and the second syllable in the word ‘a bout’ are stressed – made prominent (Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, 2000:33).

With in a particular sentence a word happens to receive greater stress than the others and we call this kind of emphasis sentence stress (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994). Content words that carry more meaning such as nouns, main verbs, adjectives and some adverbs receive major stress whereas functional words such as articles, pronouns, auxiliary verbs and prepositions are unstressed (Ibid). In speech, we highlight the more important word by using stress to signal the listener to pay attention to the core meaning of utterances (Kenworthy, 1987). Thus, difficulty in using correct stress patterns will cause communication breakdown. In connection to this, Roach, P.(1983:91) said "Incorrect stress placement is the major cause of intelligibility problems for foreign learners, and is therefore a subject that needs to be treated very seriously"

II. Intonation

“The pattern of pitch variation in a sentence is referred to as intonation” (Brinton, 2000:62). Intonation is also called melody of speech (Roach, 1983).

Speakers can change the pitch of their voice by making it higher or lower in such a combination as rise – fall – rise or fall – rise – fall (Kenworthy, 1987).

Intonation is a meaningful supra segmental feature of speech which plays a central role in conveying attitudinal and emotional meanings (Celce-murcia and Olshtain, 2000, Brinton, 2000, Dalton and Seidlohofer, 1994). Intonation errors miscommunicate the speaker's stance, politeness, and intentions as asserted by many scholars. .

Most of all Celce Murcia and Olshtain(2000:31) emphatically address language teachers on faulty intonation usage and it's impact in the following phrases:

...the existence of such problems, however, underscores the urgency of getting language teachers to understand how intonation functions in oral discourse, as well as the necessity of helping them to develop some strategies for teaching appropriate intonation to non-native speakers of English.

2.5.3 Connected – Speech

This is another special feature of pronunciation in which sounds of words change when they come in to contact with others in a rapid speech (Roach, 1983). Assimilation and elision are two most common features that occur in casual speeches and they are briefly summarized below (Adapted from Roach, 1983:120-129).

I. Assimilation

When the influence of adjacent sounds with each other occurs to become a like in connected speech, the phenomenon is termed as Assimilation (Ibid). Roach(1983) indicated three kinds of assimilations these are a) Regressive: when the first sound of the following word influences the last sound of the previous word, b) progressive: when the last sound in the first word influences the first sound in the following word and c) Coalescent: when there is mutual influence, or fusion of sounds in connected speech.

Assimilations commonly occur in some consonant sounds for example /t/ becomes /p/ before bilabial consonants, /t/ becomes /k/ before velar consonants, and final plosives become fricatives or nasal when followed by the two.

II. Elisions

Elision refers to the omission of phonemes in a word or phrases. Native speakers unconsciously produce elision to make pronouncing easier.

To mention some examples, Schwa /ə/ is elided before consonants, unstressed vowels and consonants at word initial, final or middle are omitted.

Therefore, aspects of connected speech are indispensable components of pronunciation teaching that influence the intelligibility of foreign language speakers (Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, 2000)

2.6 Approaches to Teaching Pronunciation

Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994) present the approach to teaching pronunciation in terms of selection and presentation. That is to say, items are first selected and then the procedure of teaching the selected items will follow. Below are these two procedures briefly discussed as summarized from Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994:68-73)

2.6.1 Selection

In selection there are two variables to be considered: size and attention. Size refers to 'aspects to be given priority' (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994:69).

Selection of size is determined by the approach followed. The bottom-up approach prioritizes segmentals rather than supra-segmental where as top down approach follows the reverse (Ibid).

The bottom-up approach is based on the belief “teach the segmentals and supra segmentals will take care of themselves”, while top-down approach presupposes “once prosodic features are in place, segmentals will follow by their own accord” (Ibid: 70).

The question here is: which way to take? Taking either of the directions is not suggested by Dalton and Seidlhofer. Selection should be based up on such factors as ‘purpose of learning’, ‘level of learners’, ‘learners’ needs of a particular learning situation (Ibid:70). Similarly, Brown, D (1992) noted that the selection should be made in terms of the effect items have on intelligibility and their importance for communication.

The second component of selection, ‘attention’ considers that the focus in selection should be based ‘primarily on where the students are coming from and where they are going to’ (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994:70). In other words, especial attention should be given to some aspects of the phonological items based up on the students’ background (L1-L2 distinction) and the purpose of teaching (Brown, 1994; Hedge, 2000; Kenworthy, 1987).

In short, selection of pronunciation items should be made in terms of their communicative functions. Moreover, and attention on the possible difficulty areas will bring about intelligibility in communication (Ibid).

2.6.2 Presentation

The presentation phase includes ‘exposure, exercise and explanation’ as possible classroom procedures (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994:71). These three different procedures address different functions in presentation.

The exposure procedure follows implicit way of teaching, i.e. ‘no explicit attention is paid to the specific features of pronunciation’, (Ibid: 71). This is based on the belief “the use of language is motivated by some communicative purpose, sounds will be heard as significant and will be learnt as such” (Ibid: 72).

The exercise procedure, however, refers to ‘the traditional procedure of identifying specific sound features and providing practice in perception and production’ (Ibid: 72). It focuses on the explicit forms practice of the pronunciation features, i.e. it encourages imitation (Ibid).

In the explanation procedure, the 'conscious awareness of phonetic and phonological facts' is the basic notion (Ibid: 72). It promotes explanation of the phonological aspects of a language because of the claim that inference or imitation will not be possible without conscious awareness of the sounds of speech (Ibid).

However, Dalton and Seidlhofer suggested the combination of all the three procedures as an appropriate way to present pronunciation features rather than choosing one from the other.

2.7 Pronunciation and Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative approaches to language teaching emerged with a great concern for the functional and communicative aspects of language and a shift of emphasis to language use and discourse (Hedge, 2000; Richards and Rogers, 2001). It has influenced the language pedagogy with the notion that all features that affect communication and discourse should be the concerns of the professionals (Tench, 1981; Richards and Rogers, 2001). As a result, interaction, authenticity, meaningfulness, context and focus on the learner have come to be given a significant place in language teaching (Ibid). This paradigm shift has brought about a new perspective to pronunciation teaching, communicative pronunciation teaching (Morley, 1991).

What is involved in communicative pronunciation teaching? Firstly, a focus on a holistic approach of teaching marks the greater importance of prosodic features prior to discrete phonological concern (Morley, 1991). Secondly, pronunciation features are taught in context that involves the presentation of natural discourse or real life communicative situation that engages the learner in meaningful manipulation of phonological items (Richards and Renendya, 2002). Then, pronunciation teaching is integrated with other language skills because of the fact that pronunciation is an integral part of other linguistic components in real life communication (Morley, 1991).

The involvement of learners and the role teachers' play are also significant features of communicative pronunciation teaching. In a communicative lesson', "when learners are actively involved in their own learning, pronunciation study is most profitable (and most pleasant)" (Morley, 1991: 503). A teacher is not simply supposed to teach and correct mistakes but 'supplies information, provides a wide variety of practice opportunities, ... and encourages the learner', monitors and modifies the learners' production and performance in relation to pronunciation (Ibid: 507).

2.7.1 Balancing Holistic and Atomistic Approaches

The current view on creating a balance between holistic and atomistic approaches renders the former a primary importance (Okita, 1999). For example, Wong (1983) as cited in Hedge asserts "if students are given early instruction on how to set their articulatory organs to produce the typical voice quality of North American English Speakers, then it will be easier for them to produce individual sounds" (2000:285). For example, students can be provided with a record of competent/native speakers speech and asked to note any characteristics in pronunciation for consciousness raising practice. Hedge(2000:216) noted that such an activity has the advantage of: "exposing learners to communicative situations in which various elements of pronunciation integrate before they move on to recognize and practice the elements more atomistically".

2.7.2 Integrating Pronunciation Teaching

Integrating different aspects of pronunciation in a lesson is another recommended task in teaching speaking skill of English. Hedge(2000:286) commented on how integration can be made for a better way of teaching different aspects of pronunciation as indicated in the following:

There are usually ample opportunities to integrate work on both segmental and supra segmental features in to lessons which focus

on speaking, either through activities which prepare for speaking tasks or through follow up activities.

Further, integrating individual sounds, word stress and sentence stress can easily be drawn out of many different classroom activities (Ibid). Such an integration helps to present key features of English pronunciation ‘that can give big rewards to the learner in exchange for relatively modest input of practice time’ (Ibid:286).

CHAPTER THREE

3. Methods of Research and Procedures

3.1 Method of Research

The descriptive method of research was used in this study. Descriptive method of research is a fact finding study with adequate and accurate interpretation of the findings (Creswell J. 2003). It describes what is; and it describes with emphasis what actually exists: current conditions, practices, situations, or any phenomena (Ibid). Since the present study was concerned with the present status of the teaching of pronunciation in the EFL teachers' training program in Addis Ababa University, the descriptive method of research was an appropriate method to use.

3.2 The Subjects of the Study and the Sampling Design

The subjects of this study were spoken English teachers and students of the Department of the English Language Education.

The total number of EFL teacher trainees of all years is 320. From these 30% was selected with a stratified random sampling technique as a representative sample with a proportional size from every grade level (i.e. a total of 96 respondents).

The questionnaire was distributed to the students and 94 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved.

There were five instructors giving spoken English courses. All of them were selected. In addition, two other instructors who taught the course in the previous year were also included to increase the number of respondents. However, the actual number of the copies of the questionnaire filled-up and retrieved was six.

3.3 Methods of Collecting Data and Development of the Research Instrument

The methods of collecting data used were the survey technique and material analysis. Since, the research is a descriptive study, the survey and material analysis were the most appropriate methods to use in gathering data (Creswell J. 2003).

3.3.1 The Questionnaire

Attitudes can be measured using a questionnaire (Gall et.al, 1996). Hence, the questionnaire was used to measure attitudes of teachers and students towards pronunciation and its teaching.

After reading and studying samples of questionnaire from some related studies, the researcher prepared his own questionnaire separately for the teachers and the students.

For validation purposes, the questionnaire was given to four spoken English instructors from Arbaminch and Bahirdar Universities who were studying in the post graduate studies and five students from AAU, Institute of Languages Studies, Department of English as a Foreign Language . The students did not participate in the study as they were not from the Language Education Department. After they had filled up the copies, the researcher asked them some questions to find out their assessment of the questionnaires. They were asked if all the items were clear and unequivocal to them; if the number of items were adequate enough to collect the desired information; and if all the items were relevant to the research problem. All the teachers said that the items were too many; there were repetitions; but the length was alright. The students were asked whether or not there were items they could not understand and said that there were too many of items; and most of the items were clear. Then the few questioned items were omitted and most were revised for more clarity and definiteness.

The copies of the teachers' questionnaire were then distributed by the department's secretary and by the researcher to the respondents.

A graduating EFL teacher trainee helped the researcher to distribute the students' questionnaire to the respondents.

3.3.2 The Interview

To support the data collected through the questionnaire, students were also interviewed. Teachers did not volunteer to respond to the interview.

Items of the interview were open-ended. Since it was used as a secondary tool and because of time constraint, it was conducted with only five volunteer respondents. The interview was prepared by the researcher himself, commented by his advisor, and revised before it was conducted.

The researcher took notes of students' responses because respondents did not want to be recorded when asked.

3.3.3 The Material Assessment

Evaluation of the materials was made to see 1.the components of pronunciation given priority, 2.the aims of pronunciation lessons and 3.the procedures the material uses to present pronunciation points.

The materials analyzed are used to teach spoken English courses. Both materials (for spoken English I and II) consist of five units each. Pronunciation points take separate sections. Every pronunciation part includes exercises, notes, procedures of presentation, students and teacher roles and instruction, and steps to follow in using the recorded cassettes as teaching aids. Both the teacher and all the students have the copies of the materials. The researcher prepared a check-list after reading and studying samples of checklists from other related studies.

3.4 Methods of Data Organization and Analysis

The data gathered through the questionnaires were tallied and tabulated under every item. Then by using frequency, percentage and mean value, the responses were organized.

The data collected by the checklist from the evaluation of the material were first tabulated with their frequency and percentage values.

The responses from the students' interview were interpreted along with the discussion of responses to the questionnaire under their respective categories.

The analysis and interpretations of the data were made by sorting the responses in different sections and categories. Under every category, the data were interpreted and discussed. At last, based on the findings conclusions and recommendations were made.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Analysis, Presentation and Discussion of Data

The analysis and discussion of the data gathered by different instruments are presented in three parts: students' responses, teachers' responses and document/material analysis.

The responses from the students and the teachers are discussed under different categories. Each category incorporates responses about items of a similar issue. In the discussion of the attitude scale items, the mean value of each item was first calculated to identify the relative attitude of the respondents. In addition, other items that are prepared for the same purpose (attitude) are also included in the discussion with their percentage value. Moreover, the data collected from the interview are incorporated in the discussion in support of their respective category.

The mean score of every item was compared with the value given for the responses.

4.1 Presentation, Interpretation and Discussion of Students' Responses

The data gathered from the students' questionnaire was discussed under three different sections. The first section refers to the students attitudes towards the skill of pronunciation. This section includes the desires and beliefs of the learners' towards English pronunciation (the affective component).

The second section, is concerned with students' attitudes towards the relevance of learning the different aspects of pronunciation. This was to find out the attitudes of students about the different aspects of pronunciation and, their relative importance in learning (the cognitive and behavioral component).

The third section refers to the students' attitudes towards the current instruction of pronunciation in spoken English lessons.

4.1.1 The Attitudes of Students towards English Pronunciation: The Affective Component

The following tables show students' attitudes towards the different components of pronunciation and their demands to learn them.

Table 4.1: Students' attitudes towards pronunciation

Item no.	Items	Responses										Total	Mean
		SA		A		U		DA		SDA			
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1	I believe that good English pronunciation is currently very important to be successful in the university and to be effective communicator in the world of work	69	73.40	22	23.40	-	-	3	3.19	-	-	94	4.64
2	I want to improve my knowledge and skill of pronunciation.	71	75.53	18	19.15	3	3.19	2	2.13	-	-	94	4.68
7	I appreciate second language speakers who speak English like the natives (like Americans or British)	58	61.70	28	29.74	1	1.06	7	7.45	-	-	94	4.46

The first item requires respondents' attitudes on the importance of pronunciation. The mean score shows a 4.64 value. This reveals that tremendous number of the students (96.8%) expressed their agreement with the relevance of English pronunciation for effective communication.

Item number 2, similar to the first one but more specifically demands the learners' want on improving their pronunciation skill. The result of the item showed a 4.68 mean value, in which 75.53% of the respondents strongly agreed. Hence, the learners have a great desire to improve their English pronunciation for the reasons they mentioned in the next table.

Item number 7 was designed to know the students' attitude towards a native like pronunciation which is related to identity issues that is regarded as an important factor in second/foreign language acquisition. The table above shows that only 7.45% of the respondents disagreed to appreciate a native-like proficiency where as, 91.44% (61.70% strongly agreed and 29.74% agreed) of them showed their agreement. Thus, a 4.46 mean value reveals that a huge number of the students are happy with a native-like pronunciation performance.

From the results of the above three items, we can see that students believe that English pronunciation is an important component in communication and that they want to improve their knowledge and skill of it. Moreover, the respondents showed almost no identity problems if they speak like the natives rather they appreciate it. This kind of attitude is believed to be a fertile ground for second/foreign language leaning because identity issues make learners to resistant in learning pronunciation (Brown, 1994; Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994).

In connection to the above information, respondents were also asked to provide reasons regarding their necessities and lacks in learning English pronunciation. Table 4.2 below shows the results of the responses. Summary of the respondents' reasons behind their responses is also discussed.

Table 4.2 Students needs for pronunciation

Item no.	Items	Responses				Total
		Yes		No		
		F	%	F	%	
13	Do you encounter difficulties when you speak in or listen to English because of pronunciation problems?	86	91.49	8	8.51	94
11	Do you want to improve your knowledge and skill of English pronunciation	92	97.87%	2	2.13	94

Item number 11 was designed to know if respondents actually need to improve their pronunciation skill and to cross-check their responses in the attitude scale in table 4.1. As the data on table 2 shows, 97.87% of the respondents want to improve their knowledge and skill of English pronunciation for a number of reasons they mentioned for item No. 11.1.

Most of them said that pronunciation is very important for effective listening and fluent speaking abilities in English. Some others said that without good pronunciation communicating with native speakers and other second language speakers of English is very difficult. Still, others said that they need pronunciation because they want to speak English like native speakers. They also repeated this response with interview item number 1(Appendix B) and most of them replied that they wanted to improve English pronunciation because good pronunciation helps them to develop confidence in using English to communicate with foreigners and to be effective English language teachers to work along with the plasma lessons in the future.

Under item number 13, students were asked whether or not they encounter communication difficulties because of pronunciation problems. As table 4.2

shows, 91.49% of them responded that they face pronunciation related problems when they listen and/or speak in English. They were also asked (item number 13.1) to identify some communicative situations where they experienced pronunciation related problems that resulted in communication breakdown.

As a response to item number 13.1, most of them said that because of their poor awareness and skill of pronunciation they often find it very difficult to understand movies in the English language, to talk to foreigners and to listen to international Radio and Television broadcasts. Some of them added in the interview (no. 2) that they are so troubled during listening tests when a recorded material is used and a respondent also mentioned 'it was shame for me to frequently ask another person what was said when foreigners preach in the church.'

In short, it can be possible to infer from the above responses that many students need a conscious awareness of pronunciation features and intelligible pronunciation skill to help them be successful in their studies, entertainment and other communicative needs for future job opportunities (as teachers working with plasma instructions). There are also demands of pronunciation in social interactions (such as in the church) for some respondents. Therefore, one can understand how much pronunciation is a difficulty area for our students that should be addressed appropriately in our EFL instructions. Because of the growing needs of learners and the challenges they face in communications pronunciation should be taught to foreign language learners with due consideration (Morley, 1991; Brown, 1992).

4.1.2 Students' Attitudes towards Learning the Components of Pronunciation: The Cognitive Component.

As mentioned in 4.1 an attempt has been made to identify the students' belief and knowledge about the relevance of learning the different aspects of English pronunciation. Both positive and negative items were designed to elicit the information as indicated in table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Students' attitudes towards features of pronunciation

Item no.	Items	Responses										Total	Mean
		SA		A		U		DA		SDA			
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
3	I don't think that learning vowel and consonant sounds of English and how they are pronounced in words and speech is important for me like grammar and vocabulary.	-	-	4	4.26	6	6.38	36	38.3	48	51.06	94	4.36
4	I think that learning word and sentence stress patterns are helpful for me to understand the focus point when people are speaking in the English language competently.	65	69.15	25	26.6	4	4.26	-	-	-	-	94	4.65
5	I don't think that the knowledge of intonation feature of English is very important for me to be effective listener of the language.	-	-	8	8.51	20	21.28	34	36.17	32	34.04	94	3.96
6	I need to learn pronunciation features such as consonant and vowel sounds, stress and intonation in combination.	67	71.28	23	24.47	2	2.13	2	2.13	-	-	94	4.63

The items shown in table 4.3 were designed in an attempt to know students particular awareness about the different phonological features of English, their role in oral communication and the value of learning them in combination or in integration.

Item number 3 requires the respondents' to show their agreement or disagreement on learning the distinctive vowel and consonant sounds of English and how they are pronounced in words and speech. 89.36% of the respondents disagreed to show their awareness about the value of learning the segmental features. The responses with a 4.36 mean value tell us that most of the students recognize the need of learning distinctive sound features and how they are pronounced in words and speech.

Under item number 4, students were asked the role of stress to understand the focus point in speech. An overwhelming response (95.75%) of agreement was given by respondents to show the significance of learning word and sentence stress patterns to help them realize important points in speech. The mean score shows a 4.65 value which shows the margin of the strength of their agreement in learning the different word and sentence stress patterns in English.

Item number 5 was designed to ask students' attitudes towards the importance of the knowledge of intonation features for listening competently in English. The table above shows a 3.96 mean score in which 70.21% of the respondents disagreed whereas 21.28% and 8.5% of them showed no opinion and agreement respectively to the item. Since it is a negative item, 70.21% of the respondents have a positive attitude towards learning intonation patterns of English.

The last item in table 4.3, item number 6 was designed to know the respondents' attitude towards learning different components of English pronunciation in an integrated manner, the result was a 4.63 mean value in

which 95.75% of the respondents agreed to learning segmental and prosodic features in combination.

Hence, we can see from the above discussion that most students want to learn the different aspects of pronunciation. The respondents are concerned with stress, intonation, rhythm and aspects of connected speech in addition to individual vowel and consonant sounds. This awareness of what pronunciation entails and the significance of learning them seems to provide more support on earlier discussions with table 4.1 and 4.2 which revealed the respondents' attitude towards proficient pronunciation in general. Most important of all is the students desire to learn prosodic features because pronunciation means more than a matter of distinctive sound segments, incorporating other spoken features of language behaviors which are even more important if foreign language learners are aware of their importance and if they make their effort to learn them (Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, 2000; Hedge, 2000; Brown, 1994; Kenworthy, 1987; Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994, etc.)

4.1.3 Students' Attitudes to the Pronunciation Lessons Provided.

This section attempts to reveal the students attitudes to the actual pronunciation lessons particularly, on the instruction of the pronunciation component of spoken English courses.

Table 4.4: Students' attitudes towards their Pronunciation Lessons

Item no.	Items	Responses										Total	Mean
		SA		A		U		DA		SDA			
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
8	I believe that the coverage given to pronunciation points is very less in spoken English lessons	7	7.45	11	11.70	27	28.72	25	26.60	24	25.53	94	2.49
9	I believe that the spoken English instructors often give me enough support to improve my English language pronunciation	10	10.64	15	15.96	42	44.68	14	14.89	13	13.83	94	2.95
10	I believe that the spoken English courses helped me a lot to improve my knowledge and skill of pronunciation	9	9.57	15	15.96	13	13.83	35	37.23	22	23.40	94	2.51

The data in table 4.4 represents three interrelated views of students on the actual pronunciation instruction incorporated in spoken English courses. The items were made to elicit respondents' attitudes towards a) the coverage given to pronunciation points b) the degree of support and encouragement the spoken English instructors provide and c) the overall impact and contribution the spoken English course made on the development of students' comprehensible pronunciation.

Item number 8 asks students' belief on the coverage given to pronunciation features in spoken English lessons. As the table shows, most of the respondents (52.13%) disagree, i.e. they believe there is enough coverage of features of pronunciation in spoken English lessons; 28.72% of them replied with no opinion (undecided), where as 19.15% agreed to say that the coverage is very less. However, the mean value of the responses (2.48) indicates that there is a scattered view of responses with a little negative inclination to show positive attitude towards coverage.

Regarding the students' feelings on the help and support provided by their spoken English course teachers (item number 9), 44.68% of them preferred no opinion (undecided), where as 28.72% responded with disagreement. The rest (26.60%) agreed that their teachers often give them enough support to improve their pronunciation skill. The mean score of the responses appeared to be 2.95. Hence, it can be said that most students were not satisfied with the help and support their teachers might have been giving in relation to pronunciation lessons.

In addition, interview question number 3 was made to ask the degree of encouragement teachers provide; some of them said that their teachers often encourage them but others said that their teachers don't like pronunciation lessons and they don't give them enough support.

Item number 10 asked students' belief on the help or contribution spoken English courses in general and pronunciation lessons in particular provide to their improvement in knowledge and skill of pronunciation. It is shown above on the table that 60.63% of the students disagreed. It means that pronunciation lessons did not help them to improve their phonological skill of the English language. The mean score of the responses shows a 2.51 value which shows students' dissatisfaction on the pronunciation lessons.

There are also other items that further try to illustrate the above point of discussion.

Table 4.5: Students' attitudes on the pronunciation activities and teachers' support

Item no.	Items	Responses				Total
		Yes		No		
		F	%	F	%	
16	Do the spoken English course materials include activities that alert students to similarities and differences in intonation stress, etc between your native language and the English language?	21	22.34	73	77.66	94
17	Do you often receive feed back from your spoken English teacher on repeated performances with respect to intonation, stress and aspects of connected speech?	39	41.49	55	58.51	94

The items in table 4.5 were prepared to know students beliefs on the nature of pronunciation activities and the roles teachers played to help students develop their prosodic skills and awareness of several aspects of connected speech that are believed to be helpful for intelligibility as recommended by different writers.

With item number 16, students were asked whether or not the spoken English course materials include activities that alert students to similarities and differences in intonation, stress, etc between Ethiopian language and the English language. The data in the table shows that 77.66%of the students replied that these comparisons were not included in the lessons. Thus, the responses of the majority of the students, is not different from the previous discussion on similar points in table 4.4. How ever, this result should not be

taken as vivid evidence to claim the inadequacy of the teaching materials and the activities because a thorough analysis of the teaching materials is presented and discussed in a section a head after the discussion of the teachers' responses.

Item number 17 asks students whether or not teachers' often give them feedback on repeated performance with respect to intonation, stress and aspects of connected speech. For this item, 58.51% of the respondents said they do not often receive feedback on repeated performances regarding supra segmental and aspects of connected speech, where as 41.49% replied 'yes'. Any it might still be possible to approximate the result to the view that a considerable number of the students were not satisfied with the feedback spoken teachers provided on their repeated performances in relation to prosodic and connected speech aspects of pronunciation.

In connection to students' feelings to the above points another item (item number 14) was also included in the questionnaire. It specifically requires students to identify pronunciation aspects which they spent more time practicing, i.e. aspects their teachers dealt with more during pronunciation lessons. Most of them replied that they mostly practiced 'saying words with their right pronunciation' and 'practicing individual vowels and consonant sounds. Some students also added the use of stress in words and sentences. Few others claimed the use of intonation and changes of sounds that are common in connected speech. Therefore, most students believe that pronunciation lessons focus more on accurate production of words. In the interview (Item no. 4) students were asked to show their reaction towards the over all pronunciation teaching. Most of them believed it to be inadequate. One student said 'we practice saying words with their right pronunciation which is very difficult for me and most of us for get to use it in normal speaking'

4.2 Presentation and Interpretation of Teachers' Responses

The responses from teachers were presented and discussed in three major categories. There are the attitudes of teachers towards the significance of pronunciation to EFL learners, the view of teachers on the teaching of pronunciation and their attitude on the current attention given to pronunciation teaching in spoken English courses.

4.2.1 Teachers' Attitudes towards the Significance of Pronunciation: The Affective and Cognitive Component.

This part of the discussion is concerned with teachers' views on the role pronunciation plays in foreign language learning.

Table 4.6: Teachers' attitudes on the relevance of pronunciation

Item no.	Items	Responses										Total	Mean
		SA		A		U		DA		SDA			
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1	I believe that with poor knowledge and skill of English pronunciation one can not be rendered as intelligible even if he/she is proficient in other aspects of the language	2	33.3	1	16.6	2	33.5	1	16.6	-	-	6	3.67
		3		7		3		7					
2	I believe that pronunciation is an extra element and it should be taught to students only if there is plenty of time,, i.e. other aspects of the language should always be given priority	2	33.3	1	16.6	1	16.6	-	-	2	33.3	6	2.83
		5		7		7				3			
5	I believe that effective oral communication requires control of supra-segmentals more than control of the target language's vowel and consonant sounds	-	-	3	50	1	16.6	2	33.3	-	-	6	3.17
						7		3					

Under item 1 spoken English teachers were asked their belief on the place of pronunciation in a foreign language communicative competence. And the mean score of the responses turned out to be 3.67 which means that the average response shows a positive inclination. In other words, 3 out of 6 respondents (50%) agreed that a person can not be regarded as proficient with out intelligible pronunciation even if he/she is very good at other aspects of the target language. However, 2 of the respondents (33%) showed no opinion and 1 (16%) of them disagreed. The result, of course, shows some of the teachers are not aware of the place of pronunciation in communication.

The other item (number 2) required teachers to decide their position on the belief that pronunciation is an extra element and it should be taught to EFL students only if there is plenty of time after addressing other areas of the language. Here 50% of them agreed with the belief where as 33% disagreed and only 1 person (16%) showed no opinion. As table 6 shows, half the respondents believe that pronunciation is an extra element and students should learn it only if there is extra time having dealt with other areas of the target language. Therefore, as the mean score (2.83) of the responses show the teachers can be said to incline to a negative attitude towards the pronunciation component of a foreign language.

The last item (number 5) shown in the table demands teachers feelings on the belief that effective oral communication requires control of supra segmentals more than control of the target language vowel and consonant sounds. The item exhibited a 3.17 mean value of responses which means that most of them incline to agree with the item. 50% (3 of the respondents) agree that effective oral communication require more of supra-segmental control than distinctive sound segment control. However, 33% (i.e. two of them) disagree and think that effective oral communication is more of a matter of individual sound segment control.

Therefore, we can infer from the above discussion that most of the teachers seem to have a positive attitude towards the place of pronunciation in

communication. However, they do not want to treat it equally as the other areas of the language in their instruction. Hence, such belief stands against the needs of their students we have seen in the previous section

4.2.2 Teachers' Attitudes towards the Teaching of Pronunciation: The Behavioral Component

This category presents teachers' view of addressing pronunciation in EFL instructions. It tries to depict the belief teachers have on the how of pronunciation teaching.

Table 4.7: Teachers' attitudes on the focus of pronunciation teaching

Item no.	Items	Responses										Total	Mean
		SA		A		U		DA		SDA			
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
4	I believe that any pronunciation teaching must focus first on segmental destination before prosody	2	33.3	2	33.3	1	16.6	1	16.6	-	-	6	2.17
6	I believe that pronunciation practice must be an integral part of any oral communicative lesson for EFL learners	1	16.6	3	50	1	16.6	1	16.6	-	-	6	3.67
8	I think that helping my students to recognize features of pronunciation such as stress, intonation and connected speech is essential for their use of English	2	33.3	2	33.3	1	16.6	1	16.6	-	-	6	3.83

Item number 4 above requires teachers to respond to the belief that any pronunciation teaching must focus first on segmental distinction before prosody. 66.66% of the teachers (i.e. 4 of 6) replied to agree with the item. The average response was calculated to be 2.17, and shows that most of them believe that distinctive sound system should precede prosodic features in pronunciation teaching. However, writers recommended the other way. For example, Celce-Murcia and Olshtain noted “a pronunciation course must focus first and foremost on supra segmentals as they have the greatest impact on the comprehensibility of the learner’s English” (2000:31). Giving priority to prosodic features of English not only improves students’ comprehensibility but is also less frustrating for learners (Ibid). Therefore the teachers can be said to have the counter productive belief on the priority pronunciation features should be given in teaching.

The belief that pronunciation practice must be an integral part of any oral communicative lesson for EFL learners was posed to respondents under item number 6. As the table shows 66.67% of them agreed with the item with a 3.67 mean value of responses. Unlike the above view teachers here show a positive attitude towards the coverage pronunciation should take in oral communicative lessons.

Item number 8 on the table was concerned with teachers’ opinion on the statement ‘helping students to recognize features of pronunciation such as stress, information and connected speech is essential for their use of English.’ As the data on the table reveals, 66.66% of the respondents agreed with the notion of helping students to recognize supra segmental features and aspects of connected speech. Thus, a 3.83 mean score of responses shows a positive attitude towards the item.

Let us now see the belief of teachers on the goal of pronunciation teaching in table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8: Teachers' attitudes on the goal of pronunciation teaching

Item no.	Item	Responses				Total	
		Native-like		Intelligible			
		F	%	F	%	F	%
9	Which of the following do you think should be the goal of teaching/learning English pronunciation for EFL learners?	-	-	6	100	6	100

Item number 9 asked respondents what they think should be the goal of teaching English pronunciation to EFL learners. A remarkable result was found that all of the teachers believe in teaching English pronunciation to help students achieve intelligible or comprehensible pronunciation rather than native-like performance. This belief actually conforms to the renewed goal of communicative pronunciation teaching. Many writers recommended that what is relevant for EFL learners is 'to achieve comfortable intelligibility' (Kenworthy, 1987: 13). Dalton and Seidlhofer also explained that in teaching pronunciation for second language learners of English "the relevant question to ask is not: what is correct in relation to a native-speakers norm (RP or other wise)? But: what is appropriate and necessary to be able to communicate in specific situations? (1994:12).

Therefore, from the discussion made on teachers' responses so far we can have the following points, teachers have positive attitude towards pronunciation in general (i.e. positive affective behavior), they also reflected positively on the goal (intelligibility) of pronunciation teaching. However, some of them do not still want to see the phonological component of English as an equally important component as other aspects of the language and they still seem to adhere to the tradition belief that any pronunciation teaching must focus on segmental distinction before prosody, i.e. a bottom up approach to pronunciation teaching is what they think of.

4.2.3 Teachers' Attitudes towards the Actual Teaching of the Pronunciation Component of Spoken English Lessons

In this particular sub-section, it was tried to investigate the instructors' perceptions of the pronunciation lesson they currently deliver as part of spoken English courses. The items included tried to consider beliefs on the focus pronunciation is given in the materials, the role of teachers and perceptions on the learners.

Table 4.9: Teachers' attitudes of the pronunciation lessons

Item no.	Items	Responses										Total	Mean
		SA		A		U		DA		SDA			
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
5	I believe that spoken English lessons provide students with adequate and meaningful practice to improve their English pronunciation	1	16.67	1	16.67	1	16.67	2	33.33	1	16.67	6	2.83
7	I don't think that such pronunciation features as intonation, stress, rhythm and aspects of connected speech are given more focus than vowel and consonant sounds in the spoken English course.	-	-	1	16.67	2	33.33	2	33.33	1	16.67	6	3.5

Half of the respondents believe that the spoken English lessons do not provide students with adequate and meaningful practice to improve learners' English pronunciation as Shown in table 4.9, item number 5 above. However, two of the instructors (i.e. 33.33% of them) do not agree with their colleagues perceptions. The average response shows a 2.83 mean value and means that there is an inclination to negative attitude on he procedures and activities the lessons provide. This point was further cross checked in the documents analysis section ahead in this chapter.

Item number 7 was prepared to know teachers' opinion on the focus prosodic features and aspects of connected speech are given by spoken English courses they (instructors) teach. Half of them disagreed with the statement, i.e. they believe that those features are covered in the materials well enough. But two of them preferred no opinion (undecided). The mean value (3.5) also shows that the average responses incline towards a positive attitude on the focus given. Relative focus was also the concern of the analysis made on the materials.

Therefore, most teachers believe that the course tried to include pronunciation point that have greater communicative importance, but they don't feel that the materials or the lessons do not adequately provide their learners with meaningful activities to help them develop intelligible control of pronunciation.

There was also an open ended item on the questionnaire (item number 12) that was prepared to know teachers' concern to their students needs in relation to pronunciation. The item asks instructors opinion on the current teaching of pronunciation in spoken English lessons in connection with problems learners face in speaking and listening to the English language. They responded that 'there is lack of exposure of students to authentic materials' so the students kept on suffering during listening and remained poor in speaking and listening. Another respondent stated 'the low level of schema knowledge of students makes it difficult to help them improve their awareness of pronunciation through listening. Similarly, another teacher wrote 'students have problems of comprehending and hearing/producing the sounds'. Hence, teachers seem worried that even though there is a huge demand of pronunciation on the students' side, the lessons are inadequate and do not expose learners to meaningful authentic materials for ear training activities.

4.3 Interpretation and Discussion of the Pronunciation Lessons in the Materials

In order to evaluate the approach of EFL pronunciation teaching of a material, Dalton and Seidlhofer recommended that the investigation should be made in terms of 'selection and presentation' (1994:70). Evaluation of the selection dimension considers the size of pronunciation features which is given priority and attention. Moreover, the aims of the exercises in relation to recognition and production were made. The production component includes two major categories: 'speech production (micro-focus), i.e. a focus on discrete features articulation, and 'speech performance' (macro-focus)' i.e., a focus on holistic or global patterns of spoken English (Morley, 1991:497).

The presentation component on the other hand, considers the availability and use of such procedures as 'exposure, exercise and explanation' (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994:71).

It was from the above perspectives that two major objectives of the study, i.e. identifying the feature of pronunciation given priority and the recurrent procedure used, were addressed.

4.3.1 Identifying the Component of Pronunciation Given Priority

To investigate the pronunciation feature the materials incorporate with more focus, each feature of pronunciation included in every lesson was identified. Frequency and percentage value were used to show the relative priority of aspects in the materials.

Table 4.10: The size of pronunciation components

No	Aspect	Course				Total	
		Spoken E.I		Spoken E.II			
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1	I Segmental	2	25	2	28.57	4	26.67
	Distinctive sound segments (vowels, consonants, Diphtong)						
2	Syllables and word stress	3	37.5	1	14.29	4	26.67
3	II Supra-segmental	1	12.5	-		1	6.67
	Sentence stress						
4	Intonation	-		2	28.57	2	13.33
5	Rhythm	-		1	14.29	1	6.67
6	III Connected speech	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Assimilation and Ellison						
7	Contractions and weak forms	2	25	1	14.29	3	20
	Sum	8	100	7	100	15	100

As can be seen from the table above, the majority of the pronunciation lessons included in both courses focus on segmental aspects. 53.34% of all the lessons focus on teaching individual sound segments, pronouncing words by syllabification and stress; whereas no exercise was concerned with significant aspects of connected speech such as Assimilations and Elisions. Only 20% of them focused on teaching contractions and weak forms.

Therefore, it is now possible to say that the segmental features were given priority much more than those aspects of pronunciation which are believed to have greater communicative importance. Moreover, as the table shows, the first course (spoken English I) far more emphasized segmental features and gave very insignificant place for supra-segmental features (i.e. only a lesson on sentence stress). This kind of pronunciation teaching is known as bottom-

up or structural (Hedge, 2000, Kenworthy, 1987, Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994, etc).

4.3.2 Evaluating the Procedure and the aim of Pronunciation Lessons

Investigation of the aim of the pronunciation lessons was made by analyzing the type of activities inline with what the students are expected to do in every pronunciation lesson. Hence, it was tried to identify every lesson’s objectives in terms of recognition (discrimination) and production (both ‘micro’ and ‘macro’ focus).

Table 4.11: The aims of pronunciation lessons

No	Aspect	Aim					
		Recognition (Discrimination)		Production			
				Micro-focus (Accurate production)		Macro-focus (speech Performance)	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Segmental	8	33.33	8	53.33	1	6.67
2	Supra-segmental	4	26.67	3	20	1	6.67
3	Aspects of connected speech	3	20	3	20	-	-
	Total	15	100%	14	93.33%	2	13.34

As can be seen from table 11, 100% of the lessons in both courses were aimed at discriminating the pronunciation features and 93% of them were also aimed at accurate production of aspects. Almost all the exercises require students’ accurate production by imitation. The most frequent technique was ‘listen and repeat’, i.e. students were asked to give the correct pronunciation in every exercise. Only 2 lessons require individual students with some kind of controlled speech performance and yet all the pronunciation exercises are to be done individually, i.e. they do not require interaction among students.

No pair and group work activities were included to initiate language use aimed at acquiring intelligible pronunciation. This kind of approach ignores the fact “pronunciation is never an end in itself but a means to negotiate meaning in discourse” (Dalton and Sedlhofer, 1994: preface)

From the above discussion, it can be possible to say that the teaching of pronunciation in the given institution is inadequate as it does not engage learners in using features of pronunciation meaningfully in discourse. Richards and Renendya(2002:183) assert:

In order to become competent speaker and listener, a language learner needs to attend to the meaningful correlates of pronunciation features in the immediate linguistic context of communication.

A good pronunciation lesson ‘prioritizes the importance of supra segmental in communication’, ‘whole person learner involvement’ and ‘a focus on meaningful practice based on learners’ real-life situation’; because “pronunciation is an integral part of communication” (Marley, 1991:493-495). Thus, the pronunciation lessons investigated merely focused on discriminating features (structural approach)

Table 4.12: The presentation procedures of the lessons

No	Procedure	Course				Total of both courses	
		Spoken E-I		Spoken E-II		F	%
		F	%	F	%		
1	Exposure	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	Exercise	8	100	7	100	15	100
3	Explanation	6	75	3	42.86	9	60

The above table shows that no exposure procedure was identified in all the lessons. It also reveals that most lessons (60%) use explanation procedure, whereas all the lessons attempt to give exercise. However most exercises are

not integrated and presented with a very narrow context (i.e. word level and sentence level in most cases).

The result indicates that exposure is ignored in the lessons though it is recommended by writers in the area. Exposure is a decisive factor for language acquisition in general and pronunciation learning in particular (Brown, 1994; Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994). Exposure procedure helps the learning of intelligible pronunciation in a way that ‘the use of language will be motivated by some communicative purpose and sounds will be heard as significant and will be learned as such’ in the context of some task or activity (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994:71-72). Thus, we can infer that the materials are inadequate in such regards.

Furthermore, the great imbalance that existed between the procedures as shown in table 12 tells us that the pronunciation component of the materials also fail to account for the communicative instruction of pronunciation. Dalton and Seidlhofer suggested: “the appropriate way of pronunciation teaching is to combine all the three procedures in various ways rather than precluding one over the other” (1994:72).

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

This study was conducted for the purpose of determining the status of teaching English pronunciation in Addis Ababa University, Language Education Department. The descriptive method of research was utilized. A random sampling technique was used for gathering data from the students. All the spoken English teachers in the department were also taken as respondents. The questionnaire and the material analysis served as major instruments for collecting data, whereas the interview was considered as a supportive instrument. A 30 percent representative sample of the students was the respondents and the check list was used to evaluate the pronunciation lessons in the materials.

Regarding the first research question; ‘what is the attitude of students towards pronunciation?’, amongst them, 94.68% have positive attitude and wanted to be proficient in pronunciation. Moreover, 91.44% of the respondents expressed their appreciation for a native like pronunciation proficiency.

The second question of the study was ‘what is the attitude of teachers towards pronunciation?’ and 50% of the respondents, for example, believe that knowledge and skill of pronunciation is essential for intelligible EFL performance. However, half of them said that pronunciation should be taught to students only if there is plenty of time and 66.66% of them said that pronunciation teaching must focus first on segmental features before prosody.

The third research question was ‘which feature of pronunciation is given priority in the material? The finding from the materials evaluation showed that more than 53% of pronunciation lessons deal with segmental features

and only 26.6% of the pronunciation lessons are spent on supra segmental features.

The fourth question was ‘what is the predominant aim of the lessons?’ and it was found out that almost all the pronunciation lessons are aimed at accurate production and discrimination of pronunciation features (micro-focus).

The last research question was ‘what is the predominant procedure used to present components of pronunciation?’ The findings showed that ‘exposure’ procedure is forgotten. The materials demand ‘exercise’ procedure to present features of pronunciation all the time and most lessons also require explanation.

5.2 Conclusions

From the interpretations of the data and the findings, the following conclusions were made.

The findings from the students responses show that the learners have positive attitude towards pronunciation. They also expressed their needs of pronunciation to become competent communicators of English and also to be effective EFL teachers in the prospect. Students desire for proficient English pronunciation was because of the problems they face in listening to competent speakers (natives and non-natives) and the challenges they might have faced to be understood when they were talking to foreigners. However, they were not able to clearly identify those aspects of pronunciation that have greater communicative importance. This might be the result of very limited awareness raising lessons they have gone through.

The interpretation and the findings of the teachers’ responses showed that the instructors have positive attitude towards pronunciation at large. However, they favored the teaching of segmentals as prior to supra-segmental features. This shows that the teachers still adhere to the structural (bottom-up) approach to teaching pronunciation. On the other hand, they suggest

that intelligible/comprehensible pronunciation should be the goal of learning/teaching pronunciation. This conflicting view shows teachers' limited knowledge of the communicative approach of teaching pronunciation.

Regarding the component of pronunciation given priority, segmental features were given greater focus in pronunciation lessons and very little emphasis was given to prosodic features and aspects of connected speech. In addition, almost all the exercises are aimed at simple discrimination and accurate production of features. They do not engage students in meaningful practice in speech performance. Furthermore, no pronunciation lesson allows interaction of students in pairs or in groups that encourage language use, i.e. all the exercises are to be done individually. Hence, the materials are inadequate to help students achieve intelligibility in pronunciation.

The procedure of presentation was also inadequate because of the total neglect of 'exposure' but repeated use of exercise only on recognizing features and micro-focus accurate production with explanation. Hence, 'exercise and explanation were the most dominant procedures used for presenting pronunciation points. Besides, all the exercises do not require interaction among students.

Therefore, the approach of teaching is structural or bottom up and far less communicative to help learners acquire comprehensible pronunciation.

5.3 Recommendations

Based up on the findings and conclusions drawn the following recommendations are made.

The EFL teacher training program in Addis Ababa University should address the needs of learners on intelligible pronunciation by providing the necessary support on how pronunciation functions in language use through a greater focus on supra-segmental and aspects of connected speech that have greater communicative function than distinctive sound segments.

It is also essential to assist teachers to relate the 'what' of pronunciation to 'how' in their actual teaching. Moreover, the materials should provide adequate tasks to initiate meaningful practice by using a combination of 'Exposure', 'Exercise' and 'Explanation' procedures. Furthermore, the exercises should also engage learners in a macro-focus speech performance in addition to the articulation of distinctive features. After all, exposure is one of the major factors that affect intelligibility-the desired goal of learning/teaching a foreign language.

Finally, it is recommended that similar researches should be conducted in other places. Other researchers should also make inquiries into the status of the teaching of pronunciation in other universities so that if similar problems and deficiencies are found, concerted efforts may be exerted to improve pronunciation teaching in all higher institutions in the country.

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APPENDIX A
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed to elicit information for the purposes of Master of Arts (M.A) research in English Language Teaching. Its main purpose is to obtain information on the attitudes of students towards pronunciation.

This would help to determine the status of the teaching of pronunciation in the EFL teachers' training program in Addis Ababa University. As your responses are very important for the results of this study, you are kindly requested to give genuine response to each item of the questionnaire. The information provided by you will be strictly confidential and will be utilized only for the purpose of academic research. I request you to kindly co-operate and respond to each item.

Thank you very much in advance for your kind cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Tewodros Leulseged

Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

Institute of Languages Studies

Addis Ababa University

General Instruction

- i. Please read each item and put a tick (✓) mark against the option(s) of your choice (s) at the right side of each page of the questionnaire.
- ii. Where extended response is demanded, please write up on the space provided.

I. General Information

1. Year

First year ()

Second year ()

Third year ()

II. Please read the following statements and respond by putting a tick (✓) mark against your options

Key:

Strongly Agree – SA

Disagree – D

Agree – A

strongly disagree – SD

Undecided – U

S. No.	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	I believe that good English pronunciation is currently very important to be successful in the university and to be effective communicator in the world of work.					
2	I want the knowledge and skill of English pronunciation to be effective speaker and listener of the language.					
3	I don't think that learning vowel and consonant sounds of English and how they are pronounced in words and speech is important for me as compared to grammar and vocabulary.					
4	I think that learning word and sentence stress patterns are helpful for me to understand the focus point when people are speaking in the English language competently.					

5	I don't think that the knowledge of intonation features of English are very important for me to be effective listener in the language.					
6	I need pronunciation features such as consonant and vowel sounds, stress and intonation to be included in my oral communicative courses like that of vocabulary, and other areas of the language.					
7	I appreciate second language speakers who speak English with a native like pronunciation (like Americans or British).					
8	I believe that the coverage given to English pronunciation is very less in spoken English lessons					
9	I believe that my speaking English instructors give me enough support to improve my English language pronunciation.					
10	I believe that spoken English courses and/or help me a lot to improve my knowledge and skill of pronunciation.					

III. Please read the following questions carefully and put a tick (✓) mark against your options.

11. Do you want to improve your knowledge and skill of English pronunciation?

A. Yes []

B. No []

11.1 Why? or Why not? _____

12. Do you need the knowledge and skill of English pronunciation to be a good English language teacher?

A. Yes []

B. No []

12.1 Why? _____

13. Do you encounter difficulties when you speak or listen in English because of pronunciation problems?

A. Yes []

B. No []

13.1 In which of the following situations do you face difficulties because of pronunciation? Put a tick (✓) mark against your option (s)

A. When my instructors speak to me in English []

B. When I watch movies... .. []

C. When I listen to foreign music in English []

D. When I talk to foreigners in English []

E. When I listen to international Radio and Television broadcasts.. []

F. When I talk to my classmates in the English language... .. []

G. please add if there is more _____

14. Which of the following pronunciation features if included in the pronunciation lessons of spoken English courses, were given more focus and emphasis, i.e. those you have spent more time on practicing/learning? put a tick (✓) mark in the box of your options.

A. Practicing individual vowel and consonant sounds of English... []

B. Practicing English sounds specially those which are not found in your mother tongue... .. []

C. Saying words with their right pronunciation []

D. The use of stress in words and sentences... .. []

E. The use of intonation in speech... .. []

F. The changes of sounds that are common in connected speech ... []

G. Please add if there are others _____

15. What problems have you faced when you were learning pronunciation lessons in class? _____

16. Do the Spoken English course materials include activities to alert students to similarities and differences in intonation stress etc. between Ethiopian languages and the English language?

A. Yes ... []

B. No ... []

17. Do you often receive feedback from your spoken English instructor on repeated performances with respect to intonation, stress and aspects of connected speech?

A. Yes ... []

B. No ... []

18. Please add any further comments that you think might be useful regarding pronunciation and its teaching _____

Appendix B

Students' interview

1. What is your opinion about learning English pronunciation? How important do you think it is to you?
2. What problems do you encounter during pronunciation lessons?
3. How often does the spoken English teacher encourage and monitor students during pronunciation lessons?
4. How do you evaluate the current teaching of pronunciation in spoken English courses? Do you think you have improved your English pronunciation with the help of the course?
5. What do you think should be made to improve pronunciation teaching in A.A.U?

APPENDIX C
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
GRADUATE PROGRAMME
TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed to elicit information for the purposes of Master of Arts (M.A) research in English Language Teaching. Its main purpose is to obtain information on the attitudes of teachers towards pronunciation.

This would help to determine the status of the teaching of pronunciation in the EFL teachers' training program in Addis Ababa University. As your responses are very important for the results of this study, you are kindly requested to give genuine response to each items of the questionnaire. The information provided by you will be strictly confidential and will be utilized only for the purpose of academic research. I request you to kindly co-operate and respond to each item.

Thank you very much in advance for your kind cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Tewodros Leulseged

Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

Institute of Languages Studies

Addis Ababa University

I. Please read the following statements and respond by putting X mark under each alternative that most accurately represents your idea.

Key: Strongly Agree – SA

Disagree – U

Agree – A

Strongly disagree – SD

Undecided – U

S. No.	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	I believe that with poor knowledge and skill of English pronunciation one cannot be rendered as intelligible even if he/she is proficient in other aspects of the language.					
2	I believe that pronunciation is an extra element and it should be taught to students only if there is plenty of time i.e. other aspects of the language should always be given priority.					
3	I believe that the EFL speaking skill instruction at the university provides students with adequate practice to improve their English pronunciation.					
4	I believe that any pronunciation teaching must focus first on segmental distinction before prosody.					
5	I believe that effective oral communication requires control of supra segmentals more than control of the target language vowel and consonant sounds.					
6	I believe that pronunciation practice must be an integral part of any oral communicative lesson for EFL learners.					
7	I don't think that the spoken English courses I teach gave enough coverage and attention to such pronunciation features as intonation, stress, rhythm and aspects of connected speech a part from distinctive vowel and consonant sounds.					
8	I think that helping my students to features of pronunciation such as stress, intonation and connected speech is essential for their use of English like that of vocabulary and grammar.					

II. Please put a tick [✓] mark against your options for the following questions.

9. Which of the following should be the goal of teaching English pronunciation for EFL learners?

A. native like pronunciation... .. []

B. intelligible/comprehensible pronunciation... .. []

... .. []

10. Which of the following do you think are problems for your students?
Put a tick [✓] mark in the box where you think is(are) problem(s).

A. Producing/saying distinctive English sounds which are not available in their mother tongue... .. []

B. Using stress in words and sentences and understanding the meaning when they are said to them... .. []

C. Using intonation in their speech and understanding its meaning when they listen... .. []

D. Recognizing the changes of sounds in connected speech... []

E. Please add if there is more _____

III. Please Give Answers Briefly To The following questions

11. Give your personal reaction to the following views by taking your students and the situation they are in into consideration.

11.1 The teaching of pronunciation should be given more emphasis in the university's English language teaching programmes _____

11.2 The teaching of pronunciation should be given little emphasis in the English language teaching programmes. _____

12. What do you say about the current teaching of English pronunciation in spoken English instruction in relation to problems/difficulties your students face in speaking or listening to the English language?

13. What are the practical problems you face while you teach English pronunciation? _____

13.1 Please suggest solutions to these problems _____

14. Please add any further comments that you think might be useful regarding pronunciation and its teaching _____
