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THE IMPACT OF PRONUNCIATION TEACHING AND LEARNING ON READING AND SPEAKING SKILLS OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN ASIKUMA

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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Samuel Gyabaah Aboagye, a student of University of Education, Winneba hereby declare that with the exception of quotations and references contained published works which have been identified and acknowledged in this work, it is entirely my own work and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature: ……

Date: ……..

Supervisor's Declaration

I, Dr. Rebecca Akpanglo-Nartey, hereby declare that the presentation of this work was supervised by me in accordance with guidelines for supervision of project work as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Signature: ……

Date: ……..

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DEDICTAION

I dedicate this work to my dear wife, Felicia Aboagye Gyabaah and to my children, Nhyiraba, Ahenkan and Sikapa.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this dissertation is to discover the impact of teaching and learning of pronunciation on reading and speaking skills of students in Asikuma in the Asuogyaman District in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Specifically, it investigates the impact of teaching segmental and suprasegmental features on reading and speaking, impact of pronunciation teaching methods and ICT tools on reading and speaking and teachers‟ and students‟ perception on teaching and learning of pronunciation on reading and speaking skills. The research was carried out with 20 students and 4 teachers at schools in Asikuma. Qualitative methods: questionnaires, interviews, observations and tests were used to gain a better understanding of the impact of pronunciation on reading and speaking skills. The findings signify that pronunciation instruction is valuable to reading and speaking. Again, students and teachers think that using the right pronunciation techniques and ICT tools will improve the overall performance of students of English language. This study concludes by urging teachers to use the correct pronunciation techniques and methods and urges curriculum and syllabus designers to integrate pronunciation teaching into reading, speaking, and listening.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background and General Concepts

Kelly (1969, p. 87), regarded pronunciation as the "Cinderella of language teaching". It has been an area of neglect compared to other language skills and sub-skills. According to (Kelly 2000), it is neglected because of its complexity, dearth of scientific foundation, insufficient teaching materials, absence of EFL teachers with formal expertise in pronunciation and opposing ideas concerning the teaching of pronunciation, to name but a few. A very fact of neglecting pronunciation in language classrooms as Kelly (2000) put it arises from the teachers" doubt of how to teach it rather than their lack of interest in the topic. He continued further to pose a paradox between the mutual enthusiasm of both teachers and learners concerning pronunciation and the dearth of theoretical foundation for the topic; explaining that while teachers feel it quiet to upgrade their practical skill in pronunciation, language learners are also inclined towards pronunciation as a tool for better communication.

Many teachers are not aware of the importance of pronunciation, Harmer (2001). Teachers pay enough attention to grammar and vocabulary in learning a foreign language and they help learners become skillful in listening and reading. Majority of teachers think that pronunciation study is too difficult and monotonous for learners (Harmer 2001). According to harmer (2001), the lack of high quality, suitable teaching and learning materials and the lack of time to practice pronunciation are the major reasons that cause teachers not to pay attention to English pronunciation. Teachers think that they have too much to do and pronunciation instruction is just waste of their time.

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Essential among all the four language skills in English proficiency (i.e. listening, speaking, writing and reading), speaking seems is the most important because speaking includes all other skills of knowing the language (Ur, 1996). Thus, speaking of English which has become popular in the world, therefore making it an international language needs the appropriate pronunciation to make it easy to understand and interesting to listen to. English pronunciation is one of the most difficult skills to acquire and learners should devote a lot of time to improve their communication skills. Pronunciation teaching should therefore be given prominence in the classrooms to enable students communicate effectively.

According to Szynalski and Wojcik (www.antimoon.com), almost all the learners of English claim that they do not need to study pronunciation. Many of them are convinced that it is simply a waste of time. They just want to communicate in English and, as long as they are understood, little else matters. Unfortunately, numerous teachers are not aware of the importance of pronunciation. In the first place, they emphasize the role of grammar and vocabulary in the acquisition of a foreign language. According to Harmer (2001:183), "they feel they have too much to do already and pronunciation teaching will only make things worse." There are some teachers who argue that students acquire good pronunciation in the course of their studies without specific pronunciation teaching. However, the acquisition of reasonable pronunciation by some students without any effort from the side of the teacher depends on a major of factors. Kenworthy (1987: p. 4-9) specifies some of them, in particular the phonetic abilities of learners, integrative motivation and achievement motivation. Equally, it appears that the number of students who appreciate pronunciation is limited. Teachers have a huge responsibility to convince their students the essence of learning pronunciation rigorously and assist their

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students to pronounce English sounds correctly. If students do not have the opportunity to practice good pronunciation at the beginning of their learning, they may build their reading habits in a wrong way. It is generally recognized that pronunciation is the first and the most important thing native speakers notice during a conversation. Knowing grammar and vocabulary is important but useless if the speaker is unable to pronounce those structures or words correctly. When words are mispronounced, simplest words will prevent the speaker from communicating effectively in English. For this reason, learning words without pronunciation during beginning lessons is potentially damaging to the overall success of studying the English language.

Harmer (2001 p.183) also argues convincingly that it is thanks to pronouncing teaching that students not only become aware of different sounds and sounds features but can also improve their speaking immeasurably. Subsequently, Harmer (2001) claims that, „concentrating on sounds, showing where they are made in the mouth, making students aware of where words should be stressed-all these things give them extra information about spoken English and help them achieve the goal of improved comprehension and intelligibility.“ Some teachers claim that pronunciation teaching is discouraging; very few learners achieve native-like pronunciation. But it is worth emphasizing the fact that native-like pronunciation may be a goal only for some, and not all learners. According to Kenworthy (1987 P.3), „for the majority of learners a far more reasonable goal is to be comfortably intelligible“. Even though in this case pronunciation is not ideal, strong interference from the native language is not present and we are to understand a learner.

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Teaching proficient pronunciation has got more emphasis in recent years especially in ESL/RFL classroom. Many teachers and learners have come to the realization that poor pronunciation can bring about serious problems for learners, such as communication failures, nervousness, stereotyping and discrimination (Morley, 1998, P.22-23). Despite this awareness of the impact of pronunciation, English pronunciation teaching is being ignored in classroom throughout the world today, including Ghana. The reasons are because there are not many English teachers teaching techniques or strategies available for teachers in the classroom (Wei, 2006). Lu (2002) concluded that learners of ESL in have poor English pronunciation because they lack knowledge of English sounds. There is not much training in using phonetics symbols in the curriculum. Besides, English pronunciation teachers do not get appropriately qualified training in the use of phonetic symbols. The reason is not the lack of interest in teaching pronunciation but ambiguity in the best ways to help learners.

There are two contradictory opinions on teaching of pronunciation in the ESL classroom (Avery and Ehrlich, 1992). One opinion claims that the purpose of teaching pronunciation is to eliminate all remnant of a foreign accent through pronunciation training. The other view says that pronunciation teaching is ineffectual after a certain age due to decreasing skills among learners to develop native-type pronunciation in a second language. Avery and Ehrlich (1992) posits that none of those views is absolutely precise. Factors that should be considered as effective on learning the sound system of the second language are biology, socio-culture, personality and linguistic. These factors could avoid learners from making native-like pronunciation while speaking in a second language, so it is important that teachers must set realistic goals.

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Kachru (1990, 1992) recommends English language teaching expert to consider circumstantial realities before using pedagogic modals of global English; language education should reveal how the language is going to be utilized in the particular society.

According to Fraser (2000), teachers should be provided with courses and materials that help them improve their pronunciation instruction. She continued that second language education research should not be concerned with the significance of English pronunciation instruction but with the methodology of pronunciation instruction. Understanding pronunciation is the main objective of pronunciation instruction and it is a necessary component of communicative competence.

The goal of pronunciation instruction is not to ask learners to pronounce like native speakers. Instead, intelligible pronunciation should be the real objective of oral communication. The importance of reading among pupils in any society cannot be overemphasized as it is the key to academic, social and economic progression of the children. For effective communication, the teaching of English reading especially using pronunciation techniques must be effective. It is against this background that learners‟ of Asikuma Presby JHS and Acts 2 Christian School Asikuma should improve their pronunciation skills. Most of the school going children find it extremely difficult to express themselves effectively with others, master reading and pronunciation. This is not because they do not have the ideas of what to say but how to say it has brought the barrier in communication. In this paper, the researcher defines the term pronunciation, explains the goal of pronunciation, elaborates the impact of pronunciation on reading and speaking skills, states teachers and students perception about pronunciation state some techniques to teach pronunciation.

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1.1 Statement of the Problem

Strictly speaking it is observed that students in the remote areas in Ghana encounter speaking and reading challenges and the students of Asuogyaman district are no exception. The researcher having lived with the students in the community has observed that they are unable to communicate with volunteers (native speakers) who come to the school largely because the volunteers do not clearly understand what the students say.

Being able to speak English in a global society is helpful, thus, the acceptable pronunciation should be paramount among learners and this has resulted in much research in English aspects such as reading, writing and other language sets. It is necessary for teachers to apply a variety of alternatives and techniques that allow learners to improve their level of oral comprehensibility so that they can experience more success when they speak with other language speakers, be it native or not.

> Pronunciation teaching plays an important role in second language learning. Not only does pronunciation teaching make learners aware of different sounds, and their characteristics, but it also helps improve their speech tremendously (Harmer 2001:183).

It is therefore important for teachers and students to appreciate the impact pronunciation teaching and learning has on reading and speaking skills by using the proper pronunciation teaching strategies to overcome this problem.

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1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine how pronunciation teaching impacts on the speaking and reading skills of English learners in Royal Promise School and Asikuma Junior High school.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study was;

1. To illustrate the role of teaching segmental and suprasegmental features in reading and speaking.
2. To identify some classroom strategies and methods of teaching pronunciation to improve reading and speaking skills.
3. To identify teachers and students‟ perceptions of the role of pronunciation on reading and speaking.

1.4 Research Questions

The current study is intended to answer the following research questions:

1. What role does teaching of segmental and suprasegmental features play in speaking and reading?
2. To what extent does the usage of pronunciation strategies and methods help improve English reading skills?
3. What are teachers and students‟ perceptions of pronunciation teaching and learning and its impact on reading and speaking skills?

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1.5 Significance of the Study

Results of this study would be significant for all stakeholders of education such as policy makers and curriculum developers, teachers and students in the following ways:

This study could be of great value to policy makers and curriculum developers in designing modern instructional strategies and approaches for adoption by teachers as complements to the traditional methods of instructions.

It would enable teachers to adopt and utilize some techniques of teaching pronunciation in the classroom.

This study would motivate and equip students in pronunciation lessons and more importantly improve their English language skills.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study include the fact that it is not possible to generalize results since each class is different. There are learners whose learning style may not be analytic and learn language more holistically. This second group of learners may benefit from language exposure and interaction rather than from analysis of features. There are also learners whose state of mind may influence their level of participation involvement in class, or learners whose previous knowledge of pronunciation may be more developed than other learners because they have had more contact with the target language by having interacted with native speakers of English. Besides, the learning and acquisition of intelligible pronunciation is a long and challenging process for learners and they need time, support, feedback and timely instruction that helps them notice pronunciation features as they use the target language.

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1.7 Delimitation

Since this research work is aimed at finding out the impact of teaching pronunciation on the reading skills of Junior High school students, the study was restricted to students of Royal Promise Christian School and Asikuma Presby in the Eastern Region of Ghana. There are more than six hundred students in the school but it was limited to only the students and teachers of Junior High school department.

Pronunciation is a broader topic with both segmental and supra-segmental aspects to be talked about. But this study focused on the teaching aspects of pronunciation and its impact on the reading and speaking skills of students.

1.8 General Layout of Report

The study is divided into five (5) chapters. The chapter one focuses on the background of the study, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations and general layout of report. The chapter two (2) deals with the literature review. It reviews literature on the impact of teaching pronunciation on English speaking and reading skills.

The third chapter talks about the research design used, participants/population, sampling techniques, research instruments, equipment used in collecting data and analysis.

The fourth chapter covers the results and findings of the study. The last chapter which is chapter five covers the conclusion, summarizes the finding and states relevant recommendations and suggestions for future research works.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

It is effective pronunciation teaching that provides learners a genuine choice in how they express themselves (Fraser, 199). One essential component to improve reading and speaking skills is pronunciation. In a 2002 study, Derwing and Rossiter found that 42% of the subjects surveyed in the study felt that pronunciation was their biggest linguistic obstacle, and 39% of all subjects surveyed in the study reported not knowing how to fix their pronunciation problems. In other words, no matter how well all the other aspects of English (grammar, speaking skills and writing etc) are taught, if pronunciation teaching is not given prominence the language acquisition process may be undermined.

Pronunciation can be defined as a set of habits of producing sounds. According to Gilakjani (2012), pronunciation is the habit of producing a sound is required by repeating it over and over again by being corrected when it is pronounced wrongly". Pronunciation refers to the production of sounds that we use to make meaning. It includes attention to the particular sounds of a language (segments), aspects of speech beyond the level of the individual sounds such as intonation, phrasing, stress, timing, rhythm (supra segmental aspects), how the voice is projected (voice quality) and its broadest definition, attention to gestures and expressions that are closely related to the way we speak the language (Dalton and Seidhofer (1994).

Pronunciation can be defined as a way in which a language is spoken, especially the way in which it is generally accepted or understood. It is expedient for teachers and students to take pronunciation lessons seriously to gain mastery of English language.

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2.1 Impact of Teaching and Learning of Segmental and Suprasegemental Features on Reading Skills

According to Levis (2005: 369), to a large extent, the importance of teaching pronunciation has always been determined by ideology and intuition rather than research. Teachers have intuitively decided which features have the greatest effect on clarity and which are learnable in a classroom setting. Derwing and Munroe, according to Levis (2005), recognizing this tendency towards teachers‟ intuition in determining classroom priorities, make an appeal for a carefully formulated research agenda to define how particular features actually affects speaker intelligibility. It is suggested in Derwing and Munroe‟s works, that instructional materials and practices of pronunciation "are still heavily influenced by common sense intuitive notions and that such intuitions cannot resolve many of the critical questions that face classroom instructions "/…. /" (Levis, 2005: 370). He adds that "/…. /" pronunciation teachers have emphasized on suprasegmentals features rather than segmental features in promoting intelligibility (Avery and Ehrlich, 1992; Munroe, 1991), despite paucity of research evidence for this belief.

Recent carefully designed studies have shown some support for the superiority of supra segmental instruction in the context of pronunciation for examination purposes (example, Derwing and Rossiter, 2005). Also, wider availability of software that makes suprasegmental discourse functions more accessible to teachers and learners will encourage working with suprasegmentals. However, the importance of supra segmental for communication in English as an International Language (EIL) is uncertain (Jenkins 2000; Lewis 1999).

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Gordon (2012 p.85) considers that some studies suggest more attention to suprasegmental (or prosody) and not segmentals (that is, vowels and consonants) in the instructions as "suprasegmentals seem to play a major role in what is perceived as clear and intelligible speech". However, a focus on the correct articulation of vowels can significantly improve listening and comprehension skills as well as articulatory skills. Introducing the phonetic properties of vowels is relatively easy. L2 teachers can train students to practice vowel distinctions and teach the articulatory properties of vowels, strengthening students" listening and articulatory skills. The focus on vowel sounds also supports the instructions in stress patterns of English, allowing students to more easily recognize individual words within the sentences (McCombs 2006). Moreover, both Harmer (2001, 183) and Hewings (2004;10-11) states that pronunciation teaching is very important and this does not make students aware of different sound and sound features but can also improve their speaking immeasurably. "Teachers should pay a lot of attention to those areas of pronunciation with which their students experience more problems, for example there are many individual sounds which can cause difficulties to L2 learners" (Harmer 2001, 183).

There is no simple answer to the question what aspect of pronunciation are most important. It is important for learners to attend to any aspect of their pronunciation that improves their intelligibility and helps them minimize miscommunication. What exactly a learner will find most difficult about English pronunciation will vary from learner to learner and the influence of their L2 plays an important role. However, in general it is essential that learners attend to both aspects of pronunciation which relates to larger units of speech such as stress, rhythm, intonation and voice quality (suprasegmental aspects) and how the various sounds of English are pronounced (segmental aspects) (Wates 2009; 18).

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Segmental and suprasegmental aspects of pronunciation are complimentary when we usually learn them as integral part of spoken language. Suprasegmental refers to the features of pronunciation that stretch over more than one sound or segment (Grant, 2014,). Roach (2001), illustrates that the most important suprasegmental features of speech are pitch, loudness, tempo (that is speed), and voice quality, but these are by no means the only ones. He further adds that the study of these features is often referred to us the study of prosody. According to Roach (2001), stress and intonation are considered as the supra segmental features which form the basis for especially important functions namely, consequently the researcher will move into a brief illustration to these two features only in the following paragraph:

2.1.1The Suprasegmental Features

Stress has been defined by the Adult Migrant English Center (2002, p.1). They claim that stress refers to "the prominence given to certain syllables within words and to certain syllables or words within utterances. It is signaled by volume, force, pitches, change and syllable length and it is often the place where we notice hand movement and other gestures when we are watching someone talking". Word stress is important for the following reasons:

i. Native speakers rely on stress to process what they hear and use it to identify words.
ii. Learners who know where to stress words are more confident speaking and reading English.
iii. Once you know which syllable you stress in a word, it will be much easier to apply vowel reduction.

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Intonation defines as “the melody of speech and is to be analyzed in terms of variations in pitch” (Roach, 2001, p.33). He claims that speakers can express various types of utterances such as questions and statements by using the intonation. To make it clearer the Adult Migrant English Center (2002) emphasizes intonation, and change of pitch as crucial features in signaling speakers meaning, particularly interpersonal attitudes. Additionally; AMEP argues that since intonation patterns are language – specific, learners need to acquire new ones for English in order to avoid inappropriate transfer from their first language, and thus perhaps inadvertently causing offence.

Though stress and intonation are two different features, they are practically and functionally interconnected. Kelly (2000) indicates that “the use of stress in speech helps to deliver and understand meaning in language utterance if it is closely linked with intonation”. Similar to this is intonation which has also very important functions. Kelly (2000) explains and illustrates how studying intonation only theoretically can badly affect the improvement in speaking rather than improving it as it is in the case of studying it theoretically and practically. It is needless to say, such features as stress and intonation are worthy important and functional to be practiced and taught practically. Roach (2000, p.183) explains more expressively the functions of stress and intonation by a very useful and meaningful question, so that he requests learners to imagine:

> What would be lost if we were to speak without intonation: you should try to imagine speech in which every syllable was said on the same level pitch, with no pauses, and no changes in speech or loudness. This is a sort of speech that would be produced by „mechanical speech“ device that made sentences by putting together recordings of isolated words (Roach, 2000, p.183).

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Working on intonation can, and should be, built into lessons from beginner level to advance level by teaching stress and intonation practically and theoretically. That is to say, student has to be competent and at the same time has the ability to perform it.

2.1.2 The Segmental Features

According to Spencer (1996), segments are individual sound phonemes. These phonemes carry the potential to make meaning. The phonemes might be consonants, vowels, diphthongs which is composed of two vowel sounds and triphthongs which are a combination of three vowel sounds. These consonants differ from each other‟s according to different concepts such as the manner of articulation, place of articulation and whether these segments are voice or voiceless. Cruttenden (2001); Wong (1987) highlights the impact of teaching some aspects of pronunciation including appropriate rhythm, intonation, and stress pattern (i.e. supra segmental aspects). Teaching such skills will enable the ESL/EFL learners to be more competent and effective in communication and make them able to speak fluently in the target language. Al-Fakhri (2003) confirms the vital role of segmental pronunciation and conveying the message accurately.

The researcher of this study believes that both segmental and suprasegmental features are equally important. Since the researcher believe in the effect of both segmental and suprasegmental features, any inefficiency in any of them can affect communication and may result in misunderstanding. For example, if a leaner in his or her conveying a message substitute one of the consonants or phonemes which are related to the segmental level such as the pronunciation of [b] instead of [p] or the use of the phoneme /s/ instead of the phoneme /θ/. A listener may misunderstand the message sent by the speaker; a listener may hardly figure out a word either it is „thin‟ or „sin‟.

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Also, if a speaker does not know the usage of stress, he can possibly pronounce the word present as a noun when it should be stressed as a verb. So, as teachers we should pay equal attention to both segmental and supra segmental features. This opinion is much supported by Kim (2001) when he mentions that segmental pronunciation is as important as suprasegmental pronunciation.

2.1.3 The Importance of Comprehensibility in Oral English and Reading

Pronunciation is a key aspect in the development of oral skills. Proper pronunciation is inherent to any competent speaker but this competence can be trained in any non-native speaker. The review of the previous literature on the topic shows that with careful preparation and integration, pronunciation can play a significant role in supporting the learners‟ overall communication skill (Pourhosein, 2012, p. 119). Nonetheless, the idea that learners should speak and sound like native speakers is not the trend nowadays, apart from being unrealistic idea. In fact, it is rare that L2 adult learners achieve native-like speech patterns (Moyer, 2004). Moreover, it is difficult to achieve native-like pronunciation in typical ESL classrooms after childhood (Kong, 2010). As Ur (1996) concedes, the aim of pronunciation is not to achieve a perfect imitation of native accent, but to get the learner to pronounce accurately enough to be easily and comfortably comprehensible to other speakers.

Teachers therefore have a role to play in the classroom by teaching students the correct sounds which will ultimately affect their speaking skills. According to Kang (2010) mutual intelligibility is a key issue for listeners and speakers. In order to achieve comprehensibility, both segmental-main focus in the teaching of pronunciation in former EFL approaches- and suprasegmental features must be paid

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attention to as the main components of good pronunciation and thus the key aspects to be with in a balanced and complementary way in the pronunciation class.

Inability of students to grasp phoneme and grapheme is a reason for poor reading results from students "inability to relate symbols, to associate the proper phoneme with the proper shape, or to match a visual sequence with an auditory sequence… The pupil has great difficulty acquiring phonic skills". And obviously, this lack of phonic skills results in their inability to associate experiences and meaning with symbols. The problems most EFL learners face while reading is that their knowledge of the language is incomplete." This lack creates serious difficulties with some texts (Williams, 1996, p. 4). In such situation, what happens is that EFL students unlike native learners" use reading to help them learn that language. As a result, their emphasis and concentration rest upon learning that language, and that the target reading loses its value and interest.

2.3 The Impact of Integrating Pronunciation Teaching and Learning into other Skills of English Language

Naturally, learning a language acquires the learning of four skills: Writing, Reading, Listening and Speaking. Above all is that each skill has its own features which by a language can be improved and mastered. Therefore, studying these skills separately and further studying their features in isolation clearly indicates that the language is imperfectly understood. James (1980, p.7) indicates that "for learning a language reading, speaking and writing should go together". So, such skills are to be considered as interconnected skills and their features as integrated ones. Regarding the interconnection among pronunciation, reading and speaking, the more students are able to pronounce and understand words, the more they develop interest in reading.

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Dalton and Seidhofer (1994) state some significance of sound on English reading and speaking skills. Firstly, it is significant because it is used as part of a code of a particular language. So, we can talk about the distinctive sounds of English. In this sense, we can talk about pronunciation as the production and reception of sounds of speech. Secondly, sound is significant because it is used to achieve meaning in contest of use. Here the code combines with other factors to make communication possible. In this sense we can talk about pronunciation with reference to acts of speaking.

Pronunciation is an aspect of language which is often given little attention, if not completely ignored, by the teacher in the classroom (Pardo 2004:7). Pronunciation is important because it does not matter how good learner‟s vocabulary or grammar is if no one can understand them when they speak! And to be understood, learners need a practical mastery of the sounds, rhythms and cadences of English and how they fit together in a connected speech. Learners with good pronunciation will be understood even if they make errors in other areas, while those with unintelligible pronunciation will remain unintelligible, and even if they have expressed themselves using an extensive vocabulary and perfect grammar.

Cook (2001: 86) notes that in language teaching, pronunciation has been as peripheral compared to vocabulary or grammar. The lack of emphasis on pronunciation in language teaching has hampered not just the students‟ ability to pronounce words, but also their fundamental capacity to process and learn the language. It is therefore imperative for educators to take teaching of pronunciation more seriously, not just for its own sake, but as the basis for speaking and comprehending. But Ur (1996: p. 55) has an opposite view and claims that probably the deliberate teaching of pronunciation is less essential than the teaching of grammar or vocabulary.

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Nevertheless, she adds that this does not mean it should not be done at all and recommends occasional short sessions directing learners‟ attention to and giving practice in aspects of pronunciation that are clearly problematic for them, as well as casual correction in the course of other activities. From Gimson‟s (1981:299) point of view, the teacher should deal systematically with the teaching of pronunciation, even though he may be forced to postpone the correction of some mistakes which occur in the early stages. Consistent attention to pronunciation regularly helps to reinforce the message that pronunciation is very important. According to Harmer (1993:186), a teacher has to decide when to include pronunciation teaching into lesson sequence. It is imperative that in different English lessons, pronunciation should be included in the lesson outline.

As the character of teaching English language as a foreign language (EFL) is strengthened every day, the necessity of clear communication between students is inherent. However, a great number of EFL teachers neglect teaching pronunciation and they rather focus on grammar and vocabulary (Harmer 2005, 183). It is proven that speakers whose pronunciation is listener friendly are able to lead a successful conversation even with their grammatical mistakes better than speakers whose grammar obey all the rules (Gilakjani, 2012). Pronunciation teaching has proven to be an essential part in English reading and every English lesson. Pronunciation activities do not only help students to be confident of different sounds and sound features, but it most importantly helps students to improve their reading skills. Focusing on where the sounds are in the mouth and which syllables are stressed in the in the words fortifies student‟s comprehension and intelligibility (Hammer 2003, 183). In connection with this, Gilakjani (2012, p.8) claims that “teaching pronunciation should be prioritized than teaching students‟ individual sounds or isolated words”.

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Pronunciation needs to be viewed as an essential part of communication. Therefore, in order to consolidate pronunciation skills (both comprehension and production), it is crucial to incorporate pronunciation activities into classroom through materials and tests. Good pronunciation skills do not only bring speakers confidence to communicate but it also improves their listening comprehension, the basis of an accomplished conversation.

Recently, Birch 2011) declared that knowledge of phonology and phonemic processing strategies are both required for reading skills. In her view, "children who have a deficit in phonological knowledge or processing will have impairment or delays in learning to read, especially in learning to read opaque writing systems. Assuming such a well-established link, Goswami (1993,2000) included that rich phonological awareness skills mark good readers while poor phonological skill mark poor readers. Thus, training children"s phonological skills would yield better readers.

Researchers (Goswami, 1993, 2000) point out that there exists a relationship between pronunciation, spelling and reading. Justifying such relationship, they referred to autographic analogy that one employs while reading. In their view, autographic, analogy is the ability to read new words based on known words (example, using "light" as a guide for reading "fighting"). As evidence for advance readers, Goswami cited the results of a study done by Marsh, Friedman, Wesch, and Desberg (1981), as cited in Goswami (1993) in which younger children were found to pronounce nonsense words by applying grapheme-phoneme correspondence rules while older children employ analogies.

On the contrary, being able to notice the differences and similarities in the sounds and rhymes of words, one may understand how these similarities and differences are

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represented alphabetically. In other words, phonological reading abilities (Goswami, 1990). In a similar line but for different perspective, Kahmi and Hinton (2000) reported a strong correlation between phonological awareness and reading skills that children with high phonological awareness skills are better readers than those with low phonemic awareness skills. Learners are likely to read through holistic recognition; that is, they employ their visual memories to pronounce known words. Walter (2009) claimed a direct relationship between pronunciation and reading comprehension. She believed that comprehension skills are independent of language, and thus they cannot be transferred to the second language. Rather, well comprehended L2readers can do it since they have accomplished to a degree that they can access, from the L2, their acquired skill in building mental structure.

Here are some of the reasons why incorporating pronunciation activities into every English class should take a key role:

- Using wrong sounds in words or wrong prosodic features in sentences may lead to misunderstanding as it is very difficult to work out what the speaker is saying.
- Even if the speaker has a cogent argument but has a poor pronunciation, it makes listeners feel unpleasant as speaker‟s accent is distracting or too heavy. It can undermine speaker confidence as well as make the listener think that the speaker lacks proper knowledge of English Language (Gilakjani 2012, P. 3).

In connection with this, Harmer (2005) claims that the way to achieve clear communication is not getting students to produce correct sounds or intonation, but it is rather to show them how English is spoken in the real world. The more students get

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exposed to some audio or videotape, materials, the greater their chance that the intelligibility gets improved.

Pronunciation is vital to proper communication because the incorrect use of pronunciation inevitably leads to the message being misunderstood by the recipient.

Pronunciation is the base of speaking. English language, in both forms of written and spoken has been recognized as the first means of communicating for majority of the people of the world but some misunderstandings have been caused by incorrect pronunciation (Yong, 2004). At the very least, students studying English as a second language should give all the aspects of English an equal importance. At best, however, those who wish to excel at the English language will always have to give pronunciation a higher priority. Although we expect poor pronunciation to impact negatively on speaking and listening, it also impacts negatively on reading. Recent researchers show that poor pronunciation has a very serious impact on reading, especially for second language learners.

2.4 Neglection of Pronunciation Teaching

In many language programmes, the teaching of pronunciation was brushed aside as many studies concluded that little relationship exists between teaching pronunciation in the classroom and speaking and reading skills. Pronunciation programmes were viewed as "meaningless non-communicative drill-and-exercise gambits" (Morley, 1991 p. 485-486). Suter (1976) and Purcell (1980) concluded that pronunciation instruction in class had little effect on the learner‟s pronunciation skills. However, Pennington (1989) questioned the validity of Suter and Purcell‟s findings as the factors of formal pronunciation training and the quality of the teaching the teaching could affect any research results.

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At this stage, it is crucial to explain why pronunciation is either totally overlooked or given less attention in many language programmes. Within the current of ELT, teachers determine to utilize pronunciation teaching in their classrooms (Derwing and Munroe, 2005). However, due to the absence of former training as well as the dearth of programme directives, teachers are left unguided so as to prepare themselves on how well to address their learners" needs (Gilner, 2008). Teachers therefore, internally skip pronunciation because "they lack confidence, skills and knowledge" (Macdonald, 2002 p.3).

Teaching pronunciation tends to be avoided by teachers for varied reasons. One reason might be that it is not considered as important as teaching grammar and vocabulary. Another reason might be the lack of competent teachers with sufficient knowledge in this field. It is also commonly assumed that pronunciation is acquired unconsciously by imitating a model and teaching it and therefore would be a waste of instructional time. The need for teaching pronunciation usually arises from particular problems that student face; it is not strategically planned (Kelly 2000). However, the fact that the situation has changed recently can be demonstrated by the existence of a lot of teaching materials dealing with pronunciation or pronunciation teaching.

Lack of emphasis on pronunciation development may be due to a general lack of fervor on the second language acquisition researchers, second language teachers and students, that pronunciation of a second language is not very important (Elliot, 1995). Furthermore, Pennington (1994) maintains that pronunciation which is typically viewed as a component of linguistic rather than conversational fluency, is often regarded with little importance in a communicatively classroom. According to Elliot (1995), teachers tend to view pronunciation as the least useful of the basic language

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skills and therefore they generally sacrifice pronunciation in order to spend valuable class time on other areas of English language. Teachers feel justified neglecting pronunciation believing that for adult foreign language learners, it is more difficult to attain target language pronunciation skills than other facets of second language acquisition. Possibly, teachers do not have the background or tools to properly teach pronunciation and therefore it is disregarded (Elliot, 1995).

Pronunciation teaching entails three serious risks for both teachers and students. First and foremost, the limited time of the classroom does not allow teachers to devote appropriate attention to pronunciation (Gilbert, 2008). Second, researchers and educationist have failed to guide teachers on how to teach pronunciation or even to teach it at all (Couper, 2006). Third, choosing to teach pronunciation, untrained instructors may mainly focus on pronunciation text books and software programmes regardless of their students‟ needs. As Derwing and Munroe (2005) further elaborated, this strategy is not beneficial because many of such materials lack theoretically sound grounds. In this regard, teachers‟ limited understanding of the rationale behind the suggested activities does not allow for appropriate matching to students‟ requirement. Moreover, such instructions “amount to the presentation and practice of a series of tedious and seemingly unrelated topics” (Gilbert, 2008, p.8) which is disappointing for teachers and students.

English pronunciation is one of the most difficult skills to acquire and learners should spend a lot of time to improve their pronunciation. Good pronunciation leads to learning while bad pronunciation promotes great difficulties in language learning (Gilakjan, 2012).

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In recent years, there has been immeasurable emphasis on teaching competent pronunciation in the classrooms. This is due to the increasing realization that poor pronunciation can cause serious problems for learners such as communication breakdowns, stereotyping and discrimination (Morley 1998).

There are two opposing views on the teaching of pronunciation in the classrooms (Averly, 1992). One view holds that the purpose of teaching pronunciation is to eradicate all trace of foreign accents through pronunciation drills. The other view holds that the teaching of pronunciation is futile after a certain age due to a decreasing ability among learners to develop native-like pronunciation in a second language. Averly and Ehrlich (1992) asserted that neither of those views is completely accurate. Factors that they should be considered as having an effect on the acquisition of the second system of a second language are biology, socio cultural personalities, and linguistic. These factors may prevent learners from attaining native-like pronunciation in a second language, so it is important that teachers set realistic goals. Kachru (1990) urges English language practitioners to consider contextual realities before adopting pedagogic modals of global image. Language education should reflect how the language is used in that specific society. Jenkins (1998 p.120), suggests that concept of a learning modal is still limited to the category of native varieties rather than embracing all different varieties of English to avoid possible confusion and inconsistencies in their language learning.

Gillette (1994) and Pennington agree that the learner‟s first language influences the pronunciation of the target language and it‟s a sufficient factor in accounting for foreign accent. So- called interference and negative transfer from the first language is

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likely to cause error in aspiration, intonation and rhythm in the target language and pronunciation of the basic formation of the vowel consonant.

Avery and Ehrlich (1992) suggest that teachers must focus on two areas when teaching pronunciation. Firstly, learners must be made aware of aspects of their pronunciation that result in other people being unable to understand them. Secondly, learners must be given the opportunity to practice aspects of the English sound system which are crucial for their own improvement.

2.5 Teachers' and Students' Perception on Impact of Teaching Pronunciation on Reading and Speaking Skills

Macdonald (2002) suggests that both teachers and teachers see some value in pronunciation although the extent of this is likely to depend on the learning context and a multiplicity of other factors. Therefore, if teachers feel uncomfortable with the teaching of pronunciation, they may avoid an explicit focus on it, or if they undervalue the need for pronunciation instruction, they might assume their students do not view it as particularly important.

2.5.1 Teachers Perceptions of Pronunciation Teaching on Reading and Speaking

As attitudes towards, and perceptions of, teaching pronunciation has shifted over the last two decades, it seems to have gained prominence in academic literature, yet how far this change translates into practice is questionable. Gilbert (2010) commented on the fact that pronunciation work still seems to be viewed as a supplementary rather than an integral language skill. There may be several reasons for this and some of them may be determined by investigating teachers‟ and attitudes towards pronunciation teaching and the impact pronunciation has on reading and speaking. Baker (2011) undertook some research to investigate teacher cognition relating to the

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impact of teaching pronunciation. Most of the participants had undertaken formal pronunciation training and were regular subscribers to a teaching journal (Baker, 2011, p.270-271). Therefore, although the researcher provided useful insights into teacher attitudes towards pronunciation teaching, the sample seem oriented towards a special interest in pronunciation teaching, the sample seemed oriented towards a special interest in pronunciation. Thus, it would be useful to research further whether teachers generally value an emphasis on pronunciation teaching and its usefulness and if so, to what extent and what the goals of such teaching should be.

Kenworthy (1987) suggested that whilst „intelligibility" is frequently cited as the ideal goal of pronunciation teaching. Derwing and Munro (2005, p.385) draw a distinction between „intelligibility"- which they define as the extent to which a listener actually understands an utterance, -„comprehensibility", by which they mean a listener"s perception of how difficult it is to understand the utterance or message, and „accentedness" describing a listener"s perception of how much an L2 accent differs from the variety of English commonly spoken in the community and it would be interesting to find out how a teacher measure intelligibility.

Macdonald (2002) is often cited in the teachers" views of pronunciation. His research, among teachers in Australia on English Language Intensive Courses for Teachers Overseas Students (ELICOS) and migrant programmes, worked on the premise that teachers were taken out of their comfort zone when teaching pronunciation and he investigated reasons for this reluctance. The teachers cited 5 main reasons: lack of formal curricula; lack of a framework for assessment; the uncertainty of how much to monitor and when/what to correct; and lack of appropriate training. Giving these factors, it is understandable that teachers may lack confidence when teaching

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pronunciation, which a decade later, still seems to be the case (Gilbert 2010; Baker 2011). In Baker‟s research among six teachers on various English language programmes in the USA, it transpired that other difficulties for teachers included the lack of time available to devote to pronunciation teaching and due to lack of materials, of translating theory into practice through effective activities (Baker, 2011, p.286). In addition, many experts such Underhill (2005, p.75), states the difficulty of teaching prosodic features due to their intangibility and a consequent lack of confidence among teachers to deal with this area.

Another element to be considered is the nature of classroom practice. The basic question, which relates to the impact of pronunciation on reading, is simply what to teach. Spencer (2000, p.193) highlighted some of the difficulties teachers face when dealing with pronunciation. These included selecting relevant features of pronunciation to focus on, the ordering of these features, awareness of the amount of details required, and the most effective methods to help students progress. As has been mentioned, integration of pronunciation in both communicative framework and with other skills in a lesson is, in the opinion of many practitioners difficult. Thus, it would be interesting to discover whether teachers feel pronunciation ought to be integrated and if so, how this be achieved to impact reading and speaking skills. Currently, it seems that little has changed in the last decade with respect to pronunciation teaching, even is worth investigating teachers‟ perceptions of pronunciation in the classroom and the impact it has on reading and speaking skills.

2.5.2 Students' Perceptions of Pronunciation on Reading and Speaking

Over the course of the last two decades, the role of learners‟ beliefs and attitudes towards pronunciation learning and teaching has been perceived as increasingly

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significant. Morley (1991) asserts that teachers should teach according to the needs of their students. Jenkins (2000) and Walker (2010) agree that in teaching English as a second language, the learners‟ needs are paramount. Consequently, research into students‟ and teachers‟ beliefs has increased in recent years. However, Simon and Taveniers (2011) states, research into thesis beliefs in relation to pronunciation is still quite rare. Nevertheless, there have been various studies, particularly during the last decade which attempt to deal with this gap in the literature. Cenoz and Lecumberri (1999, p.3) carried research among students at university of Basque Country and found that while all participants seemed to find English pronunciation difficult. Derwing and Rossiter (2002) researched learners‟ perceptions of their language needs with respect to pronunciation, reading and speaking skills, finding that 55% of the people in the study felt pronunciation and speaking English constituted a significant problem for them and 90% would undertake specialist pronunciation programme to improve their speaking skills. Other studies have also found that students seem to value the teaching of pronunciation. Tergujeff (2013), in a study carried out in Finland, found that students with a high level of English wanted more pronunciation teaching to enable them speak like native speakers.

Whilst intelligibility has become the generally agreed goal of pronunciation teaching (Jenkins 2000), recent research has highlighted that many students perceive native-like pronunciation as the ultimate goal in pronunciation (Tergujeff, 2013). Similarly, Subtirelu (2013) indicates that the course of his research, learners‟ goal change over time and with more exposure to the target language, opting initially for native-like pronunciation and later for an alternative model. However, the interviews in his research highlights that this change resulted from pessimism about attaining their true goal, rather than a decisive shift of their desired objective in the sense of the ultimate

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„place they would like to reach", even though they do not see it as viable. Students think that focusing on pronunciation instruction will enable them speak confidently, understand comprehension passages properly and to some extent acquire a native speaker"s accent.

Other researchers such as Morley (1991) argue that aiming for native like pronunciation can be demotivating and thus counterproductive. Teaching and learning of pronunciation should aim at improving reading, writing and speaking intelligibly rather than focusing on being trained to speak as a native speaker.

2.6 Strategies in Pronunciation Teaching

Given that the language teaching profession changed its position many times with respect to pronunciation teaching, it can be assumed that there have been changes in approaches and techniques and skills used to teach the skill. I would like to provide an overview of some of the approaches in teaching pronunciation.

Fraser"s (1999) Critical listening approach makes use of student recordings: their use is believed to be the most suitable since it externalizes speech and provides a means of subsequent analysis and feedback. This approach highlights the fact that there is a difference between what people think they are saying, what they actually produce, and how it is produced by others. Therefore, "prominence is placed on the instructor"s insight into where the learners are coming from in order to lead them to new understanding" (Fraser 1999 p.4). The instructors mandate is to help the listeners use speaker"s cues to interpret the message being communicated and the factors that lead to successful as well as unsuccessful exchanges. In her discussion, Fraser speaks of recordings of real-life interactions in which learners participate. The recordings were analyzed in a classroom where effective and ineffective strategies were identified and

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addressed with the assistance of instructor and classmates. Fraser (1999, p.6) suggests that methods that work well "are based on the insight that pronunciation is a cognitive skill and involves both „knowing" things (subconsciously) about language, and able to do things physically with the body". It is relevant to note that analysis of third-party interactions and student group recordings can also serve as input for discussion and reflection.

In addition, Aufderhaar (2004) recommends exposure to and analysis of genuine audio literature such as interviews and readings. Aufderhaar (2004) conducted a study into discourse intonation-based pronunciation training. Finding showed listening activities which exposed learners to intact and filtered samples of audio literature appeared to have positive influence on production as measured by both subjective and objective means. As Brown (1992) notes, there is a common assumption among teachers that perceptual and productive language skills such as speaking is taught through the same medium. As a result, many of them use the traditional listen-and-repeat approach in spite of the present tendency for communicative language teaching. Techniques based on this method are often production oriented and aim at improving student"s spoken English. Many of such techniques employ minimal pairs. The examples rat /ræt/ and /rot/ were used to show the phonemic principle in action; changing just one sound leads to a change in meaning. The same applies to words like the soap /səúp/ and /su:p/ and paper /"peipə/ and /pepə/. These are all examples of minimal pairs-words or utterances which differ by only phoneme. Teachers can use to good advantage in the classroom as a way of focusing on sounds which have been causing difficulties for students. The technique is useful for making learners aware of troublesome sounds through listening and discrimination practice.

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Another approach is offered by Kjellin (1999). Kjellin proposes that persistent pronunciation teaching combined with exercises that stimulate retraining of the speech articulators is a mode of acquisition similar to that of a first language but adapted for the adult‟s cognitive and physical assets and constraints. Kjellin (1999) states that training follows strictly ordered three-step process. The first step in the process involves learners singularly identifying targets‟ phonemes and phonological structures. This stage very much depends on the aid of the instructor who points out the salient features and then provides multiple repetition of a sample phrase in order to exemplify the realizations and its intra speaker variation of the target feature. Next is the automatization phase, which entails the learners producing multiple chorus repetitions of the sample phrase and receiving immediate feedback, encouragement and reassurance from the teacher. It is suggested that this kind of drilling helps train the speech organs and allows the learner to discover the category boundaries that yield permissible phonetic variability in target language speech. The last step is that of transferring the newly acquired skills to novel utterances. Kjelling (1999) contends that it may take place instantaneously if learners are motivated and teachers are enthusiastic but it is not specific in reference to instructional implementations. Of note, this kind of training lends itself well to the kind of lexical phrases that are often targets in commercial course books”. However, Catford (1987) proposes that silent articulation and introspection can lead to awareness of articulatory movements and gestures that might be obscured when attention is focused on processing the sound itself. It is of essence to note that direct and explicit training in the articulation of novel sounds result in significantly better performance when compared to auditory training alone. This approach is similar to tactile reinforcement. The use of the sense of touch is another frequently employed technique. Celce-Maucia (1996) calls this

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mode a visual reinforcement. One of the forms of this reinforcement includes placing fingers on the throat in order to feel the vibration of the cords, and I may be useful when teaching the distinction between voiced and voiceless consonants which affect speaking skills.

Generally, if instructions are to be provided, it has to be worked into other courses in the form of activities and techniques that target particular features. A look through referential texts (e.g., Celce-Murcia et al., 1996, Dalton and Seidlhogfer,1994) indicates that teachers do well in raising student‟s awareness regarding the target sound system and how its various element impact speaking of the English language. A selected text can serve as the basis for imitation, humming, ear training transformation, matching, discussion, noticing, discussion, prediction, recording, and self-assessment activities which target the discourse functions of intonation (Tench, 2005). Aufderhaar (2004) conducted a study into discourse intonation-based pronunciation training. Findings showed that listening activities which exposed learners to intact and filtered samples-prosodic and phonemic information on separate tracks of audio literature appeared to have a positive influence on production as measured by both subjective (raters‟ judgment) and objective (vowel duration) means. Consequently, Aufderhaar (2004) recommends exposure and analysis of authentic audio literature such as radio shows, interviews, and poetry readings. Ramirez (2005, p.29) suggests that combining a discourse intonation model and computer technology can make the “subconscious and elusive” nature of intonation easier to grasp. It is posited that comparison, analysis, and interpretation of pitch graphs of controlled and spontaneous speech provides concrete visual cues that highlight the role of intonation in speech.

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According to Kelly (2000:16), there are some strategies in pronunciation teaching:

2.6.1 Drilling

Drilling is the main way of pronunciation practice in classroom. Basic form of drilling involves teacher saying a word or structure and getting students to repeat it. According to Kelly (2000), the aim of drilling is to help students achieve better pronunciation of language items, and help them remember new item. Drilling often helps a process known as eliciting. It is to encourage students to bring up a new word, phrase of structure as they have studied before. Teachers generally use prompts, pictures, mimes etc. to help learning process along. Teachers‟ main roll of drilling is to provide a model of the word, phrase or structure for students to copy. Brown (2001, p. 272) stated about drills as follows:

> Drills offer an opportunity to drill and to listen and to orally repeat certain strings of language that may pose some linguistics difficulty- either phonological or grammatical. Drills are to language teaching what the pitching machine is to baseball. They offer limited through repetition and allows to focus on one element of language in a controlled activity. They can help to establish certain psychomotor pattern and to associate selected form with their appropriate context.

2.6.2 The Use of a Chain Drill in Teaching Speaking

A chain drill is one of the techniques used in Audio-Lingual Method. The use of a chain drill in teaching speaking gives some advantages for the students and the teacher. According to Larsen-Freeman (2000, p.37), “A chain drill gives students an opportunity to say the lines individually. The teacher listens and can tell which students are struggling and will need more practice”. A chain drill also lets students use the expressions in communication with someone else, even though the

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communication may be very limited. According to Larsen-Freeman (2000, p. 37), the example of using a chain drill in a classroom is as follows

The teacher addresses the student nearest her with, “Good morning, Jose”. He in turn, responds, “Good morning, teacher.” She says “How are you?” Jose answers, “Fine, thanks. And you? The teacher replies, “Finds”. He understands through the teacher‟s gestures that he is to turn to the students sitting beside him and greet her. That student, in turn, says her lines in reply to him. This chain continues until all the students have a chance to ask and answer the questions. The last student directs the greeting to the teacher. In using a chain drill, the teacher should know how to use the technique appropriately.

2.6.3 Giving Feedback

Giving feedback is making correction which is used by teachers in order to reduce errors made by students in pronunciation. Giving more feedback will help students accurately in their own use of language. When teachers give feedback, they should have different kinds of correction techniques or strategies. For instance, teachers give feedback by practicing rising and falling of their intonation, giving one that is chosen for student which is true or false, and writes some correction on board. By giving feedback, teachers can actually reduce students‟ errors. Consequently, students will be more confident in pronouncing English words.

2.6.4 Pronunciation Test

Brown (2004) stated that a test, in simple terms, is a method of measuring a person‟s ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain. A test measured an individual‟s ability, knowledge or performance. Furthermore, according to Hughes (2003:8), there are some purposes of testing in the teaching and learning process:

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i. To measure language proficiency.

ii. To discover how successful students have been in achieving the objectives of a course of study.

iii. To diagnose students‟ strengths and weaknesses, in identifying what they know and what they don‟t know.

iv. To assist placements of students by identifying the stage or part of a teaching programme and most appropriate to their ability.

Obviously, pronunciation is tested globally in different types of conversational exchange and interview that go on in the classroom. What seems to be insufficient is the testing of accuracy, which is testing to assess the learner‟s management of specific features, segmental or supra-segmental. Jenkins (2002) emphasizes that communicative pronunciation competence can be achieved more through improving supra-segmental production in preference to segmental.

2.7 Teaching Aids for Pronunciation, Reading and Speaking

Media are kinds of substances which are used by a teacher during the teaching and learning process to support the presentation of the lesson (Fredenstein, 1981). Thus, media have an important role in teaching and learning. Therefore, learners are able to understand better the material presented in a certain way. Media can help students in acquiring lessons that are being taught. Brown (1992) states that that one of the major developments following the audio medium are video recorders and software. Celce-Mauricia (1996) lists other advantages of multimedia enhancement:

1. Access to a wide variety of native-speaker speech samplings
2. Opportunity for self-pacing and self-monitoring of progress
3. One and one contact without a teachers‟ contact supervision

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4. An entertaining, game like atmosphere for learning

Video recording may serve both as a source of learning material and feedback. Students may not only view a naïve speaker‟s production of speech but can also see and hear themselves if videotaped.

An audio-visual aid is one medium of teaching pronunciation. Fredenstein (1981:275) says that there are three media order to run the teaching and learning process effectively and efficiently. They are visual, audio and audio visual.

Film is the medium of teaching which has benefits for teachers and students. As the teacher analyses students‟ responses to the questions and situations which are projected, both teacher and learner benefit from evaluative strength of audiovisual aids. One of the best uses of film is to bring to children experiments and demonstrations which are ordinarily impractical in the classroom. Goldwyn (1993) states that English teachers seem to have liked film because of its artistic seriousness which in turn meant that is worth studying, pupils also liked this out of the ordinary treat so different from most of their lessons in school. Forney (2009) suggests that film is a great tool for students because it allows them to learn outside of the average school parameters such as books, lectures, papers, and the like.

Teachers use film in many different ways and for a variety of purposes: to communicate information, to change or to strengthen attitudes, to develop skills, and to stimulate interest, to raise problems, to seek moods, to emotionalize learning. They sometimes use films to test abilities of their students to apply principles to problem situation.

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According to Gilbert (2008) while it may be easy to see the benefit of good pronunciation instruction for increasing intelligibility, it is just as useful for increasing listening comprehension. Students who are taught about English prosodic patterns often report improved understanding of speech on TV, in films, and face-to-face conversation. These days, films are often chosen as an authentic material, since we can expect that authentic materials to increase learners‟ motivation. In order to comprehend spoken utterances, knowledge of sound system will be necessary. Brown (1981) states that the loss of training in phonetic changes impinges not only on teaching of pronunciation but also on the teaching of listening comprehension

A word can be spoken in different ways by various individuals or groups, depending on many factors such as: the area in which they grew up, the area in which they now live, if they have a speech or voice disorder, their ethnic group, their social class, or their education. Therefore, watching films make it possible for students to keep practicing, and responding about the pronunciation skill that they receive. When the students are already in the real time and situation of English, it is easier for them to understand the use of certain expression for certain conditions or occasions. It is important to say right thing in the right time because it helps to improve the pronunciation skill. Meanwhile, using it inappropriately can result the opposite effect. It is a great help for the learning process and also give a great benefit to the learners. The mastery of pronunciation then is believed supported by the conversation in films that is involved the students into communication in real time.

2.8 Conclusion

There is a crucial need for learners to be equipped with phonological skills since a neglect of pronunciation instruction would have knock-on effects throughout the

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whole language learning process. Pronunciation is not just about producing the right sounds or stressing the right syllables, it is also about helping students understand what they hear. English language teachers should therefore provide learners with a body of knowledge concerning the chronological awareness skills. In fact, developing such skills is crucial in the flourishing of other language competencies including listening, speaking, reading and writing. For instance, according to Morley (1991), teachers may employ pronunciation-oriented listening practice and spelling-oriented pronunciation practice in order to raise learners‟ awareness in speech modification processes as they work to become intelligible, communicative, confidence speakers of English. The present study also recommends teacher trainers to stress the significance of pronunciation instructions to teachers and supply them with thorough background knowledge of phonetics and phonology, as well as supra segmental.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHOLDOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter sets out to document the research procedures used in this study on impact of pronunciation on English reading and speaking skills. After first describing the research site and participants, this chapter provides the methodological steps that were taken to both collect and analyze the data in accordance with the goal of the research.

3.1 Research Site

The site selected for this study was Asikuma circuit in the Asuogyaman District Assembly in the Eastern region of Ghana. This was narrowed down to the Asikuma township which has one cluster of government school and one private school (Royal Promise Christian school) owned by a non-governmental organization. The students in these two schools engage in other trading activities and farming after school just to survive and as a result of this education has become a secondary issue for majority of the children. The factors below informed the researcher‟s decision to select those schools:

1. The researcher is very familiar with the area and schools; therefore, getting data from participants was not a difficult to do.
2. The mode of communication in these schools is English but the teachers do not incorporate pronunciation in their scheme of work.
3. These schools are among the schools which perform creditably well in the BECE within the Asuogyaman district, but the researcher realized that, the students are unable to read fluently and even if they do, they sound incoherent and the words are not pronounced properly.

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3.2 Population

Population is the entire group of individuals or objects having common observable characters. That is to say the group has some common observable characteristics and each member can be identified as having these characteristics. According to Castillo (2009), research population is usually generally a large collection of individuals or objects that is the main focus of a scientific query. Also, Burns and Grove (1993:79) defined population as all elements (individuals, objects and events) that meet the sample criteria for inclusion.

The population used for this research work comprised students of Royal Promise and Asikuma Presby JHS. Even though the researcher is not a resident of Asikuma, he works in Royal Promise School, a school owned by a non-governmental organization so he decided to use the school. Since the entire study was limited to the above schools, it would be useful to provide a description of the schools. The two schools have about one hundred and twenty students in the JHS department and there are seventeen teachers in the two schools who take care of many areas of study.

3.3 Sampling Size and Sampling Technique

Four teachers were selected; two teachers from each school. The four English teachers who participated were teachers with vast teaching experience in English language and they were the only English teachers in the JHS department. The two English teachers from Royal Promise were retired teachers from the government sector while the other two teachers from Asikuma Presby JHS have 10 years and 16 years teaching experience respectively. Two of the teachers in Asikuma Presby taught English language and other subjects in the primary school for five years before their new role

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as JHS teachers. These teachers were chosen because they primarily teach English language as a subject.

The simple random sampling technique was used to select the forty (40) pupils made up of twenty males and twenty females. The students who participated were mainly the form two students. The form two students were chosen because the form three students had their attention on their Basic Education Certificate Examination. Twenty students each between the ages of 13 and 19 years were selected from the two schools. Pupils picked pieces of papers with yes and no written on them. Those who picked yes were selected for the study.

3.4 Data Collection Strategies

The researcher made use of qualitative data collection approach. The researcher used this approach because it provides detailed and quick description in the case of observation and captures direct quotes in the case of interviews and is considered more valuable or informative if left as narratives. Selinger and Shohamy (1989) state that the use of variety of methods to collect data equally helps to give the research findings validity through triangulation; the source of the behavior through different sources. In this qualitative research, the researcher used a number of instruments which included interview, observation, questionnaire and test.

3.4.1Interviews

The researcher used interview as data collection tool because it is integral to qualitative research and it helps the researcher to capture direct quotations about people‟s perceptive of things. The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewee says and probe further if necessary (Kvale, 1996). One-to-one interview was used for the teachers because they were not many. The

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researcher used both structured and semi-structured interview. The structured interview was used to collect demographic information about the participants. The purpose of the semi-structured interview was to explore teachers‟ perception about impact of teaching English pronunciation on English language speaking and reading. To give the interviewees the opportunity to justify their questionnaire responses and to provide explanations as to the statistical patterns that emerged from the analysis of questionnaire data the semi structured type was chosen (Dornyei, 2007). The semi structured type suited the purpose of this particular research because there was a degree of flexibility as to the number and kind of questions asked and, thus, the interviewee could further elaborate on issues raised in the cause of the interview and, thus, provide in-depth responses to certain questions.

All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. This method gave the researcher the opportunity to concentrate on the interviewees rather than having to break eye contact in order to write things down; there is no doubt that “note-taking disrupts the interview process” (Dornyei 2007, p.139). Again, “it enables him to avoid having to make snap judgments about what to note down and what to omit” (Wray et al, 1998, p.182).

Four different interview schedules were used, two for the teachers and two for the students. The interview for each teacher lasted for 30 minutes, and that for each student lasted for less than 25 minutes. The audio recall interviews involved the participants listening to the recorded interviews from the recorded observations that showed some aspects of pronunciation teaching (i.e., giving explanations or feedback, teaching a technique, having students participate in a group activity etc) and then recounting his thoughts at the time the event took place.

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3.4.2 Questionnaire

Khan (2012) defines questionnaire as a written document listing a series of questions pertaining to the problem under study, which the investigator is required to answer. It is a carefully selected and ordered set of questions which is presented to respondents to obtain data. To ascertain more about the impact of teaching and learning of English pronunciation on reading and speaking skills, the questions were given out to students and teachers-with similar questions for each group. Most of the questions were based on using a Likert scale format. Most statements required respondents to select one of four categories from „strongly agree" – „strongly agree or rate their answers on a number scale from one to four. Space was provided after each question for the respondents to provide further answers or add comments.

3.4.3 Observation

There are two main types of observation in qualitative research. These are complete observation and participant observation (Gall, 1996). Complete observation is where the researcher observes the situation without taking part while participant observation is where the researcher gets involved in the whole phenomenon. The researcher used the complete observation for the study. The researcher observed the teachers two times in a week for one month to see how they teach pronunciation and to know the content they teach in preparing their students for reading. The students were also observed during break when communicating with their peers and how they contributed in class discussions to check their pronunciation.

The observation helped the researcher to get information about things the participants will not want to talk about and also helped the researcher to understand the context within which people interact.

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3.4.4 Test

Two tests were conducted for the students to measure their pronunciation skills. The first test was conducted in the researcher‟s first observation. The second test was conducted for the students after the teacher has adopted pronunciation teaching techniques and strategies in their delivery of lessons.

The researcher gave the students comprehension questions to read and answer the questions that followed. Marks were scored on how the students answered the comprehension questions and how they pronounce key words in the comprehension questions.

3.5 Data Analysis Presentation

The data collected was analyzed using inductive analysis and thematic analysis (Patton 2002), whereby, recurring regularities in the interview and observation data were looked out for, which represented a regular pattern. The researcher then worked back and forth between data and the categories created to check on meaningfulness and accuracy of the categories and placement of data in categories. Data from the study was presented using the narrative logic approach (Chenail, 1995). This was employed because the researcher wanted to use quotes from participants effectively and transition from one example to another just as narrators employ in story-telling.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

All the respondents participated on the basis of informed consent. There was no pressure or coercion; the researcher provided sufficient information and assurances to allow the individuals to understand the implications of participants. The researcher assured them of their privacy and anonymity.

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CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.0 Introduction

This chapter analyzes the results and findings of the study. Data was collected by the researcher through interviews, questionnaires, observations and tests of which were based on the three objectives at the beginning of this paper. The data was analyzed in order to achieve these objectives:

1. Identify the role that teaching of segmental and suprasegmental features play in speaking and reading.
2. Identify how the usage of pronunciation strategies and methods help improve English reading skills.
3. Identify teachers‟ and students‟ perceptions of pronunciation teaching and learning and its impact on reading and speaking skills.

4.1 Impact of Teaching Segmental and Suprasegmental Features of Pronunciation on Reading and Speaking

All the respondents claimed that segmental and suprasegmental improve reading and speaking. The teachers stated there is a strong connection between pronunciation, reading fluency, decoding and comprehension and a well-developed phonological awareness has been pointed as a fundamental factor in the proficiency of readers and speakers of English.

Ten questions were posed to the teachers about the roles segmental and suprasegmental teaching play on reading and speaking.

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Table 1: The impact of teaching segmental and suprasegmental on reading and speaking

Question numbers	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Stress and intonation improve reading and speaking skills	0(0%)	0(0%)	1(25%)	3(75%)
2	Pronunciation teaching helps students to articulate words properly	0(0%)	0(0%)	3(75%)	1(25%)
3	Pronunciation teaching helps students to understand passage	1(25%)	3(75%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
4	Pronunciation improves oral discourse	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	4(100%)
5	Good pronunciation improves communication skills	0(0%)	2(50%)	2(50%)	0(0%)
6	English lesson should focus more on pronunciation	0(0%)	0(0%)	3(75%)	1(25%)
7	Pronunciation teaching should be integrated in all lessons	0(0)	0(0)	1(25%)	3(75%)
8	Proper pronunciation gives confidence.	0(0%)	0(0%)	1(25%)	3(75%)
9	Teaching pronunciation enables students to answer comprehension questions	1(25%)	3(75%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
10	Pronunciation helps in decoding of words	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	4(100%)

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Table 2: Students responses on the impact of pronunciation teaching and learning on reading and speaking

Question number	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Pronunciation learning helps in answering comprehension	9(22.5%)	12(30%)	9(22.5%)	10(25%)
2	Pronunciation improves reading	0(%)	0(0%)	12(30%)	28(70%)
3	Pronunciation teaching should be integrated in all lessons	11(27.5%)	23(57.5%)	6 (15)	0(0%)
5	Proper pronunciation gives confidence.	5(12.5%)	7(17.5%)	21(52.5%)	7(17.5%)
6	Pronunciation improves oral skills.	0(%)	0(0%)	10(25%)	28(75%)

4.1.1 Stress and Intonation Improve Reading and Speaking Skills

Three teachers representing seventy-five percent (75%) strongly disagreed while twenty-five percent (25%) agreed that stress and intonation are the major features in that it improves reading and speaking. The teachers who disagreed stated that segmental also play a key role in speaking. They further stated that segmental features deal with individual sounds that can be better managed because their articulation is localized. It was observed that segmentals were the main features the teachers used despite their claim that they relied on stress and intonation to enable students to read at times.

The findings of this study are surprisingly the opposite of the priority proposed by some applied linguistics. Bowen (1985), for example, suggested that pronunciation

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teaching might follow a sequence built-in priority: fluency, stress, rhythm and intonation, and vowels and consonant. The results of this study are in consonants with some studies which concludes that vowels and consonants are the essential features of pronunciation along with sounds in combination, stress and intonation (Jenkins 2002).

4.1.2 Pronunciation Teaching Helps Students to Decode, Articulate Words and Read Fluently

The teachers claimed that teaching stress predicts reading accuracy of words. There is a link in suprasegmental phonology in fluency and comprehension during the reading of connected text. Three teachers representing 75% strongly agreed and one teach agreed that pronunciation teaching helps students to articulate words properly. The teachers were of the opinion that during pronunciation lessons, students are taught how to use the speech organs such as jaws, tongue and lips to produce different sounds while which ultimately affect speaking and reading. Decoding and reading comprehension in elementary schools‟ children have been shown to correlate and decoding efficiency often predict success in reading comprehension. (Goff, Pratt, & Ong, 2005)

It was observed that students with pronunciation difficulties demonstrated a reduced reading rate and therefore read less text in the same period of time than other fluent readers. This slower rate can suggest that the person is using more cognitive demands to identify isolated words than the people who read with greater automaticity.

4.1.3 Pronunciation Teaching Encourages Students to Read and Understand Passages and Solve Comprehension Questions

Even though teachers believed that pronunciation teaching encourage students to read there were varied responses as to whether it enhances students‟ ability to read. One

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teacher disagreed while three teachers strongly agreed that teaching pronunciation helps students to understand comprehension passages. Again, the teachers disagreed that pronunciation teaching helps students to solve comprehension questions. The teachers opined that answering comprehension questions has got more to do with vocabulary than pronunciation teaching.

However, one major role the researcher made was that pronunciation creates love for reading and learning among students. Children who are phonologically inclined love reading and as they read, they learn new things alongside. Unfortunately, during the period of the research the researcher observed that the students in Royal Promise School hardly patronize the library even though the school had a library stalk with interesting reading materials. A teacher interviewed indicated that, *because the students are poor readers, they do not like reading at all.*

For effective comprehension of the communicative intention, it is necessary to process the correspondent syntactic structure and detect prosody variation in language. Suprasegmental aspects of speech occur through intensity, speed and stress (Jenkins 2000). Prosody is essential in organizing verbal messages and transforming perceptual input in structural patterns that organize and store information in working memory.

4.1.4 Pronunciation Improves Oral Discourse

It was intriguing that all the teachers and students agreed and strongly agreed that pronunciation improves oral discourse. A student who was interviewed had this to say. “I hardly answer or read in the classroom because my mates make fun of me if I do not pronounce words correctly. It killed my interest to read”. The National Reading Panel Report (2000) research shows that difficulty in phonological awareness

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is a predictor of poor reading and oral development. The panel was of the view that students who were introduced to pronunciation learn to read with speed and with fluency and that influence positively on their oral and communication skills. These oral and communication skills are developed as a result of reading which is also well developed through phonological awareness.

4.1.5 Good Pronunciation Improves Communication Skills

There was a split view as to whether pronunciation instruction improves communication skills; 50% agreed while 50% disagree. Ten (10) students representing twenty-five percent (25%) and twenty (20) students representing 75% share the opinion that teaching and learning pronunciation improves communication skills. The teachers stated that if the listener needs to guess what sound you are trying to produce, it is going to be harder to understand the ideas the speaker wants to say. One of the students who claimed to receive tutorials from a volunteer (a native speaker from America) stated that other volunteers hear her clearly because of the pronunciation training she receives from her tutor.

4.1.6 English Lesson Should Focus more on Pronunciation to Improve reading and Speaking

The above excerpts from the interviews and observation with the participants indicated that pronunciation plays a major role in reading and speaking and thus its deficit among students has a great negative effect on them. The teachers felt they need to do more in their pronunciation lessons by focusing on stress and intonation and agreed that phonology is one of the most important types of linguistics language for the learners to draw on in order to comprehend a spoken language.

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The students and teachers of this study viewed teaching pronunciation as very crucial in the development of learner‟s speaking skills, nonetheless, less important than vocabulary and grammar. All the teachers stated that through pronunciation teaching most of their students improve their reading and speaking skills. However, three of the teachers who admitted the impact of pronunciation teaching on reading and speaking were of the view that pronunciation plays lesser role for passing the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). According to the teachers, majority of the external examination questions are related to vocabulary and extensive writing. The teachers stated that when the Basic Examination Certificate Examination is released, they are judged on the number of students who passed English language but not the number of students who have exquisite pronunciation skills.

4.1.7 Pronunciation Teaching Should be Integrated in all Lessons to Improve Reading and Speaking

Eleven (11) students representing twenty-seven percent (27.5%) strongly disagreed, twenty-three (23) students representing fifty-seven and half percent (57.5%) and six (6) students representing fifteen percent (15%) strongly agreed, agreed and disagreed respectively that pronunciation teaching and learning should be integrated in all English lessons.

All the teachers claimed that an equal degree of quality in all three levels (grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation) is required for English reading and speaking skills and called for inclusion of pronunciation teaching in all English lessons. This view is correct because poor pronunciation can lead to miscommunication. The view that pronunciation is responsible to a greater extent for the intelligibility of L2 learners‟ oral discourse is also prevalent in other relevant literature and has been demonstrated

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by various researchers. Rajadurai (2000) states that pronunciation is a vital element for effective speaking and refers to evidence which points to a threshold level where pronunciation is concerned; "speakers who fall below this level will have communication problems no matter how well they control other aspects of the language speaking" (Rajadurai, 2000).

4.1.8 Proper Pronunciation Gives Confidence

All student participants attributed their lack of confidence when pronouncing some words to their lack of practice. The perception was shared by one of the teachers who participated in this study. He stated, "it is disappointing that some students will never speak in class because they fear being taunted when they make mistakes". Speaking a language well and intelligibly regardless of the situation a language user can be found in, appears to be the utmost demand and desire among learners and users of a foreign language. Pronunciation is an inevitable part of speaking skills, and inadequate speaking skills can have serious negative effects on the speakers" confidence to speak up, restraining from speaking in front of a group and not participating in social interactions.

4.1.9 Proper Pronunciation Enables Students to Answer Comprehension Questions

Three of the teachers disagreed while one strongly disagreed that pronunciation teaching enables student"s answer comprehension questions correctly. The teachers who disagreed stated that understanding comprehension has nothing to do with pronunciation but rather depends on vocabulary.

The researcher observed that the students with poor reading and pronunciation could not answer comprehension questions. Most of the students who could not read to understand comprehension passages rather copied the same questions and some

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sentences in the passages directly as their comprehension answers when students were given passages to read and answer. However, it is significant to point out that proper pronunciation and reading culminates into answering comprehension questions. There is a relation between prosody and linguistic processing, and still, about the connection of prosody and reading comprehension mediated by working memory (Jenkins,2002).

4.2 Pronunciation Methods and ICT Tools Help Improve English Reading and Speaking Skills

All participants believed that for pronunciation teachers to be more effective and for it to improve reading and speaking skills, there is the need for teachers to use correct teaching methods and ICT enhanced tools to achieve the desired results. The teachers were asked about the impact computer enhanced tools and specific pronunciation methods has on reading and speaking skills.

4.2.1 Pronunciation Methods Improve Reading and Speaking Skills

The researcher believes that some pronunciation lessons have impact on reading and speaking skills and sought to find to out whether the teachers share in his opinion and to what extent.

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Table 3: The techniques teachers use and to what extent it impacts on reading and speaking skills.

Methods of pronunciation teaching	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Using explicit phonological rules improves reading and speaking skills	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	4(100%)
Using phonics instructions	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	4(100%)
Articulation exercises (i.e., drilling, chaining and giving feedback)	0(%)	0(0%)	1(25%)	3(75%)
Choral responses from all learners in class	(0%)	0(0%)	2(50%)	2(50%)

4.2.1.1 Using explicit Phonological Rules

The teachers claimed to teach the phonological rules of English (i.e. stress placement, spelling to sound rules in the class) which helps the students to read. In the interview, all the teachers admitted that they use the phonological rules because it enables students to pronounce words properly. The teacher who claimed to use the phonological rules often stated that some of the children are able to pronounce words properly largely because she uses the phonological rules. There are two writers who argue for the need of explicit instruction of those rules (Kelly, 2000) and those who believe in the implicit presentation of those rules rather spelling to sound rules (Fitzpatrick, 2000) because of the varying effects of the two. Unfortunately, the teachers did not associate themselves to any of those rules. However, it was observed that the teachers themselves are not well informed about the phonological rules as they claim to use. The researcher realized that the teachers have no idea about major types of phonological rules like assimilation, dissimilation and deletion.

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4.2.1.2 Using Phonics Instructions

Three of the teachers spoke about teaching phonics as a means of teaching pronunciation and learning phonics to enhance the learners‟ reading ability. One of the teachers compared phonics with the Akan speaking Twi dialect and insisted that the learners need to learn phonics in order to read easily. She further commented that the work the learners do on phonics and reading help them succeed in written tests because the learner acquires better reading abilities through phonics and reading aloud practices. Through the participants‟ commentaries, it is revealed that phonics is considered a means of teaching pronunciation and a basic element of teaching how to read. A strong connection between reading and pronunciation is found; the teachers seem to consider pronunciation instruction as a means of developing reading ability in addition to a means of developing oral communication.

4.2.1.3 Articulation Exercise

In responding to articulation exercises like reading aloud activities and drilling, three out of the four teachers representing seventy-five (75%) stated that they often use articulation exercises. One of the teachers clearly stated that such exercise is an integral part of pronunciation lessons and helps to improve reading skills in English. Fifty percent (50%) of the teachers claim they use drilling in delivering their pronunciation lessons.

The researcher observed that the teachers used their tongues and lips to shape their pronunciation as well as the children‟s pronunciation. The teachers explained that to be able to produce sounds, words and sentences which are clear and can be easily understood and interpreted by others, right through to being able to engage in complex conversations articulation exercises is needed in the classroom.

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4.2.1.4 Choral Responses

In responding to articulation exercises like reading aloud activities, all the teachers claimed to employ pronunciation practice that is both choral and individual responses when reading a text. All the teachers stated that they often use individual responses because it promotes differentiating strategy which enables teachers to address each students‟ reading and speaking difficulties. The researcher observed the students pronouncing words individually as the teachers served as facilitators. Tench (1981, p.29) discusses the advantages and disadvantages associated with each method in detail on the impact it has on reading skills; for example, an advantage of the choral response is "the immediate increase in number of activities per learner; the disadvantage is that any fault of the individual learner is usually completely masked by the volume of the choral response".

4.2.2 Impact of using ICT tools on Pronunciation, Reading and Speaking

The researcher interviewed all the respondents to find out how the use of ICT tools to improve the teaching and learning of pronunciation on reading and speaking. Some of the teachers and students indicated they use computer and phones to improve their pronunciation lessons so the researcher based on this to find out how ICT tools affect their pronunciation, reading and speaking lessons.

4.2.2.1 It Helps to Pronounce Words Properly

All the respondents shared the opinion that ICT helps them to pronounce and transcribed words properly. One of the teachers stated, "anytime I am in a dilemma as to how some words are pronounced, I consult my talking dictionary which gives me the correct pronunciation". What was very fascinating was that the researcher

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observed the teachers using their phones often in the class with the excuse that they wanted to ascertain how certain words are pronounced correctly.

4.2.2.2 ICT Should be Used Instead of Traditional Teaching Methods

The findings indicated that the teachers showed their interest and enthusiasm and in support of this technology because the impact it has on reading and speaking skills. The teachers believed that using ICT enhances reading and speaking than traditional teaching methods, it builds confidence in oral discourse and gives a graphic picture to the children. The students shared the teachers‟ opinion with the view that ICT tools like videos provide them the opportunity to see how words are pronounced and because of the graphic picture the words stick in their mind.

All the teachers showed their positive views towards ICT tools because it had high capability in teaching pronunciation that was actually impossible to find it in using traditional teaching methods.

The teachers believed that ICT increased their self-awareness and it provided an enjoyable environment to teach pronunciation effectively. The interviews showed that the teachers do not believe in traditional teaching methods as one of the teachers pointed out that computer technology should be used by teachers for teaching pronunciation because it brings about native-like pronunciation and provides an interactive environment for instruction.

4.2.2.3 Rise of Confidence and Makes the Class Enjoyable

The researcher observed that some of the students were timid in the class and failed to answer questions during pronunciation lessons with the fear of being ridiculed when they pronounced words wrongly. The teachers stated that having pronunciation

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lessons without ICT tools make the class boring because the students hardly contribute to class discussion. The use of multimedia give stimulates to undertake the tasks that the students may otherwise avoid. In an ICT enabled pronunciation learning class, the students would conduct the activities on a computer software platform and they will not have any sort of hesitations or inhibitions. It would make repetitive tasks more interesting and would have content which could be multimedia formats. Vallabi (2002, 142) opines that, "the use of technology redistributes teachers‟ and classmates‟ attentions, less-able students can become more active participants in the class because, class interaction is not limited to that directed by the teacher".

4.2.2.4 It gives feedback

The interview revealed that teachers used computer technology in their pronunciation instruction regarding its high capability in providing useful means to present pronunciation materials and creating an authentic environment where they heard, saw, and repeated the English words. It offered them a chance to use many pre-recorded materials. Individuals could compare their sounds to a native speaker model. The above findings are also consistent with the findings of Butler-Pascoe and Wiburg (2003), and Kim (2006). They stated that computer Assisted Pronunciation Training (CAPT) software enhances speaking skills.

4.2.2.4 ICT Should be the Only Tool for Instruction During Pronunciation Lessons

Thirty-five (35) of the students were of the view that pronunciation teaching should be a collaborative effort with the help of teachers and the use of ICT tools. However, some of the students were quick to add that the teachers should act as facilitators rather than dominating the class during teaching. One of the students stated "we want to have a good accent and having videos of native speakers help in this direction but

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unfortunately we struggle to understand all the time unless our teachers help us sometimes so our teachers are much needed during pronunciation lessons".

4.3 Tests

4.3.1 Analysis of First Test Scores

During the first week of the researcher"s observation, the researcher gave the students comprehension passage. Without any intervention by the researcher, the students read the passage while the researcher graded them on reading coherence, how they pronounced key words and how they answered the comprehension questions orally. The researcher recorded the marks scored by each student without telling them the marks they scored.

Table 4: Marks obtained by students on first reading test recorded

Range of Marks	Percentage	No. of Students (tally)	Class %
0-5	0-25	15	37.5%
6-10	30-50	20	50
11-15	55-70	5	12.5
16-20	80-100	-	-
Total	**100**	**40**	**100%**

The data in the table 4 above represents the raw marks and their percentage equivalents obtained by the forty (40) students on the reading comprehension and pronunciation test. Based on the data in the table, fifteen (15) students representing thirty-seven (37%) of the students scored marks ranging between zero to five (0-5) which represents zero to twenty five percent (0-25%) of the marks of twenty.

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The table also indicates that twenty (20) students representing fifty percent (50%) of the students obtained marks from six to ten (6-10) which represents thirty to fifty percent (30-50%) of the total marks. Five (5) students representing twelve and half percent (12.5%) of the students scored marks which ranged from eleven to fifteen (11-15) representing fifty five percent (55-75%) of the total marks.

None of the students scored marks between sixteen and twenty (16-20) which represents eighty to hundred percent (80-100%) of the total marks. The researcher set the pass marks at fifty plus one percent (51%) so it is obvious from the table that thirty-five (35) students representing eighty-five percent (85%) did not pass. They scored marks between zero (0) to fifty percent (0-50%). Only five (5) students representing twelve and half (12.5%) of the students passed. They had marks ranging from eleven to fifteen (11-15).

This is an indication that the reading and pronunciation performance of the students was poor. Even though all students failed, the students at Royal Promise performed better and the teacher attributed this to the fact that she teaches pronunciation often. Most of the students could not read and pronounce words correctly.

4.3.2 Analysis of second Test Scored

Reading and pronunciation test was administered to the students after the teachers decided to use the pronunciation teaching strategies and some of the teaching aids like computer and videos. The students were given similar comprehension questions as the first test. In conducting the test, students were given simple comprehension passages and they were required to read and answer the comprehension questions orally. The scores are presented below:

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Table 5: Marks obtained by students in the second test

Range of Marks	Percentage	No. of Students (tally)	Class %
0-5	0-25	-	-
6-10	30-50	10	25
11-15	55-70	22	55
16-20	80-100	8	20
Total	**100**	**40**	**100%**

In the table 4 on the second test, no student scored marks ranging from zero to five (0-5) which represents zero to twenty five percent (0-25%) of the total marks of twenty.

It is also evident from the data that ten (10) students representing ten percent (10%) of the students scored marks between six and ten (6-10) which accounts for thirty to fifty percent (30-50%) of the total marks. Twenty two (22) students representing fifty percent (50%) of the students scored marks ranging from eleven to fifteen (11-15) of the total marks; while eight (8) students representing twenty percent (20%) of the students scored marks between sixteen to twenty (16-20) which represents eighty to hundred percent (80-100%) of the total score.

These scores showed massive improvement over the initial test scores of the students. Thirty students (30) representing seventy five percent (75%) of the students passed as five students representing twelve and half percent (12.5%) who passed in the initial test. The crucial role teaching and learning of pronunciation plays in the development of the reading and speaking

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4.4 Perception and Attitude of Teachers Towards Pronunciation Instruction on Reading and Speaking Skills

With the development of the communicative approach, the importance of pronunciation teaching has been recognized in academic literature (Brinton, 2012). However, it is not clear how it is approached in practice and teachers and students‟ attitude towards pronunciation lessons. A positive perception on pronunciation lessons relative to speaking and reading will reinforce the students and teacher‟s decision to prioritize pronunciation lessons.

4.4.1 Teachers' Perception of Pronunciation

The findings from the teachers‟ questionnaire are considered in three categories: the impact of pronunciation, experience in the class and the goals of pronunciation instruction. Within each of these two areas, two types of questions were asked. Those about the values and the goals of pronunciation practice address both teachers‟ views and what they think students‟ perceptions are.

Table 6: Teachers perception on impact of pronunciation on reading and speaking skills

Question Number	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I think pronunciation teaching is useful for my students	0(0%)	0(0%)	3(75%)	1(25%)
2	I think pronunciation teaching has direct relation with reading	0(0%)	0(0%)	2(50%)	2(50%)
3	I think pronunciation teaching has direct relationship with speaking	0(0%)	0(0%)	3(75%)	1(25%)
4	I think pronunciation teaching should be integrated in all lessons	1(25%)	1(25%)	2(50%)	0(0%)
5	I think pronunciation teaching is more relevant than vocabulary	4(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

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Majority of the teachers agreed that pronunciation teaching is useful for students; their responses to questions 1 and 2 amplify such perceptions. It is interesting that 25% and 75% agreed and strongly agreed respectively that they think pronunciation is important and that it should be integrated into other lessons.

Questions 2 and 3 address how teachers feel about the impact of teaching pronunciation on reading and speaking skills. None of the teachers felt that teaching pronunciation has no impact on reading skills while 50% agreed, 50% strongly agreed and think that pronunciation teaching has impact on reading and speaking skills. With regards to teachers‟ perception on the relationship between pronunciation, reading and speaking, 75% agreed while 25% strongly agreed. Given the overwhelming agreement on teachers‟ perception about the impact of teaching pronunciation on reading and speaking skills, it is surprising that teachers do not attach much importance to teaching of pronunciation as compared to vocabulary.

4.4.2 Students' Perception About Impact of Pronunciation on Reading and Speaking Skills

The findings from the students had two broad components: the perception of impact on pronunciation practice and students‟ pronunciation goals.

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Table 7: Students perception on the impact of pronunciation teaching and learning on reading and speaking

Question Number	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I think learning pronunciation will improve my reading skills	0(0%)	0(0%)	18(45%)	22(55%)
2	I think learning pronunciation will improve my speaking skills	0(0%)	0(0%)	20(50%)	20(50%)
3	I think learning pronunciation will enable me speak like native speakers	4(10%)	3(7.5%)	9(22.5%)	24(60%)
4	I feel learning pronunciation will improve my communication skills	3(7.5%)	7(17.5%)	16(40%)	14(35%)
5	I think learning pronunciation is as important as vocabulary	5(12.5%)	12(30%)	15(37.5%)	8(20%)
6	I think pronunciation teaching should be given more prominence	4(10%)	6(15%)	15(37.5%)	15(37.5%)

Questions 1-4 addresses the value of pronunciation and it is not surprising that majority of the students agree or strongly agree that pronunciation teaching and learning has impact on reading, speaking and communication skills. Fifty percent (50%) agreed while fifty percent (50%) also strongly agreed that pronunciation learning will enable them to read fluently. The students‟ opinion about the goal of pronunciation clearly reflects the teachers view about pronunciation. However, the students‟ major goal in pronunciation is to have a native-like accent while the teachers focused on intelligibility.

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The students‟ answers to question 6 are in contrast to teachers‟ responses. The students think pronunciation teaching is equally important and expect the teachers to give more attention to pronunciation teaching. Only four students representing ten percent (10%) strongly disagreed, six (6) students representing fifteen percent (15%) disagreed, fifteen (15) students representing thirty-seven and half (37.5%) agreed while fifteen (15) students representing thirty-seven and half (37.5%) also strongly agreed that pronunciation teaching should be given prominence.

4.4.3 Teachers' Perception versus Students' Perception

While teachers and students tend to agree on the fundamental values of teaching pronunciation on reading and speaking, there is a slight difference between students‟ and teachers‟ perceptions. This underlines the need for more effective communication between teachers and students for the desired goals of pronunciation teaching on speaking and teaching skills to be achieved.

There is no question that students‟ needs and expectations must be taken into account when teaching, as highlighted by Morley (1991). This research suggests that the students‟ ultimate goal of pronunciation is to have a native-like pronunciation. If teachers ascertain the real ambitions of students and respond to their opinions, there will inevitably be some effects on classroom practice. The disparity between teachers‟ and pronunciation goals illustrates the need for teachers to seek and listen to their students‟ opinions. However, students should realize that it is impossible to have a native speaker‟s accent in ELS classroom.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study analyzed and interpreted in the previous chapter. Implications of the findings of this present study are also given and discussed after which concluding remarks provided.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The findings from the study answered the three research questions posed in chapter of this study. As the researcher gathered answers to the questions, "What role does teaching of segmental and suprasegmental features play in speaking and reading? To what extent does the usage of pronunciation strategies and methods help improve English reading skills? And What are teachers‟ and students‟ perceptions of pronunciation teaching and learning and its impact on reading and speaking skills?", the recurring themes became apparent. These themes are:

5.1.2 The Role Teaching Segmental and Suprasegmental Features play in Speaking and Reading.

The teachers and students in this study view pronunciation teaching and learning as an essential vehicle to improve reading and speaking. The teachers employed both segmental and suprasegmental in their lessons to improve reading and speaking. All the teachers focused more on suprasegmental which they believed help in reading and speaking.

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It is also evident from the findings that when teachers taught intonation and stress properly, it does not only help students to pronounce words properly but also improve the reading and speaking skills of the students by:

1. Making students read fluently
2. Giving students confidence when communicating.
3. Enhancing students‟ abilities to answer comprehension questions properly.
4. Enhancing students‟ abilities to decode words.
5. Improving oral and communicating skills.

The students in this research view pronunciation learning as very essential. The findings from the questionnaires amplifies that the students focus more on pronunciation learning than the teachers because they believe learning pronunciation improves speaking skills and reading skills and ultimately enhance their accents to speak like native speakers. It is evident students are willing to focus more on pronunciation activities that will improve their reading and speaking skills.

All the teachers and students confirmed that they felt teaching pronunciation is valuable for their learners and indispensable in teaching reading and speaking. They feel that pronunciation should be integrated in all areas of English and that it was particularly important for students to make themselves understood and to understand native speakers as well.

5.1.3 Pronunciation Strategies help Improve English Reading Skills

Teachings and students were emphatic that employing the correct techniques and teaching materials for pronunciation lessons impact on the reading and speaking skills. Based on this study, the techniques such as phonological rules, and other

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pronunciation teaching approaches had beneficial effect on learner"s reading skills. Videos and other technology enhanced materials were also acknowledged as pronunciation materials that equip students to read and speak fluently.

5.1.4 Teachers' and Students' Perception on Pronunciation on Reading and Speaking Skills

The students and teachers think pronunciation practice as important element in speaking and reading. Students believe that if much time is devoted to pronunciation teaching it will enable them speak fluent English and read coherently. The students have the perception that if teachers focus more on pronunciation teaching, it will improve their speaking skills which will positively affect their communication skills. This clearly indicates that students are willing to focus more on pronunciation because they feel it is a major vehicle for them to read and speak fluently and also plays a key role in comprehension lessons.

5.2 Recommendations

In this section, the researcher will be touching on the pedagogical implications that the findings of this research work have on the impact of teaching and learning of pronunciation on reading and speaking skills.

5.2.1 Policy Makers

Policy makers in education are responsible for coming out with educational policies and they are expected to make right decisions for the right reasons in order to promote education and ensure that products of their policies are of benefit to the country. In this regard, the researcher urges policy makers to take a second look at the basic schools in Ghana and their products so that they could plan to ensure an improved system and for the best. Policy makers are to ensure teachers have the requisite

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teaching and learning materials to improve pronunciation, reading and speaking lessons.

5.2.2 Curriculum and Syllabus Designers

The present curriculum and the teaching syllabus of basic schools do not make enough provision for explicit instruction in pronunciation unlike vocabulary and grammar. The findings of this research have shown that majority of the students cannot read fluently and struggle to pronounce words correctly because pronunciation teaching is not well integrated into speaking, reading, writing and listening. The researcher therefore advises that in designing in designing or reviewing subsequent English syllabus for basic schools, explicit instructions in pronunciation should be integrated into all lessons.

5.2.3 Textbook Writer

Pronunciation teaching and learning which is considered as being the basis of learning to read and speak, has not been given much priority by textbook writers and users. Textbook writers are should prioritize pronunciation lessons as the high schools. They should also provide adequate opportunity or activities for practice in the form of exercises. Contents should include materials which will help improve pronunciation teaching to impact on reading and speaking skills.

5.2.4 English Language Teachers at the Basic Level

Teachers of English at the basic levels should attend training and workshops and training on pronunciation and let the knowledge they acquire impact on the other skills of English. Language teachers must be trained and re-rained to make them to be abreast of changes and innovations in the subject and the approaches to teaching pronunciation. In-service training in the form of seminars and workshops should be

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organized to stimulate healthy debates, discussions and sharing of ideas on the teaching and learning of pronunciation in relation to reading and speaking.

5.4 Conclusion

The processes of learning to speak and read are extremely complex and variable. The skills required to recognize, process and ultimately understand written and spoken word are numerous and demanding. This research has indicated that students, who are instructed in pronunciation skills, improve their reading and speaking skills. It is the opinion of the researcher that pronunciation should be integrated into all English lessons. To maximize student development, teachers must be trained in phonology, use the requisite pronunciation teaching techniques and teaching materials. This research has indicated that students, who are instructed in specific pronunciation techniques, improve their phoneme segmentation and reading comprehension passages. Doing so will provide a solid foundation in the individual sounds that make up the English language and will eventually increase fluency in connected text. When reading becomes easier and more natural, more time and energy can be spent on reading comprehension, which is the ultimate goal of reading.

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APPENDIX A

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

The impact of teaching segmental and suprasegmental on reading and speaking

This questionnaire is for research purposes only and the aim is to gain a better understanding of teaching and learning of pronunciation on reading and speaking skills. The questionnaire is anonymous and any information you provide will remain confidential.

Please tick one option for each sentence. If you would like to add any other extra information to your answer, kindly write comments below the question:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Teaching segmentals and suprasegmentals improve reading and speaking skills Comments:				
Pronunciation teaching helps students to articulate words properly Comments:				
Pronunciation teaching helps students to understand passages				

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Comments:	…… …… …… …… ……
Pronunciation teaching improves oral discourse Comments:	…… …… …… …… ……..
Good pronunciation improves communication skills Comments	…… …… …… …… ……
English lesson should focus more on pronunciation. Comments	…… …… …… …… ……
Pronunciation teaching should be integrated into all lessons Comments	…… …… …… …… ……..
Proper pronunciation gives confidence.	……

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Comments:	…… …… …… ……
Teaching pronunciation enables students to answer comprehensions Comments:	…… …… …… …… ……
Pronunciation teaching helps students to decode words Comments:	…… …… …… …… ……

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APPENDIX B

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The impact of pronunciation teaching and learning on reading and speaking skills

This questionnaire is for research purposes only and the aim is to gain a better understanding of teaching and learning of pronunciation on reading and speaking skills. The questionnaire is anonymous and any information you provide will remain confidential.

Please tick one option for each sentence. If you would like to add any other extra information to your answer, kindly write comments below the question:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Pronunciation learning helps in answering comprehension questions. Comments:	…… …… …….....			
Pronunciation improves reading. Comments:	…… …… …… ……..			

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Pronunciation teaching helps students to understand passages Comments:	…… …… …… ……
Pronunciation teaching improves oral discourse Comments:	…… …… …… ……
Good pronunciation improves communication skills Comments	…… …… …… ……
English lesson should focus more on pronunciation. comments	…… …… …… ……
Pronunciation teaching should be integrated into all all lessons comments	…… …… …… ……
Proper pronunciation gives confidence. Comments:	…… …… …… ……

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APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Do think pronunciation teaching helps students to read and speak fluently?
2. Do you it is important to focus on pronunciation and if you do why?
3. Do you feel pronunciation teaching should be integrated in all lessons?
4. Has pronunciation teaching got any relationship with reading, speaking, writing and listening?
5. Which pronunciation features is more impactful on reading and listening?
6. How do identify which features of pronunciation to focus on?
7. What is your general perception of pronunciation teaching and learning?
8. What is your attitude towards learning and teaching of pronunciation?
9. How does ICT tools affect teaching and learning of pronunciation, reading and speaking?
10. What pronunciation techniques do you use and how does it affect reading and speaking?

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APPENDIX D

SAMPLE OF THE PASSAGE READING FLUENCY TEST

Ali set out from the house that morning with much enthusiasm knowing that he was going to meet his child friend Kofi. He had heard that his friend was occupying a very high position in a reputable company.

Kofi could hardly recognize Ali when the latter entered the former‟s well refurbished office. So you can‟t recognize me, your classmate, Sikakrom JHS? Does money blind people and erase their memory? Can ten short years change you so complete as to make you forget an intimate friend?‟ Kofi then suddenly recognized him. „Sorry, Ali. You have changed so much I couldn‟t make you out at first glance. Please, sit down. What can I do for you?

Ali reluctantly sat down. He admired Kofi‟s tidy office and dignified personality – the well-groomed hair, the attractive shirt and tie. Ali removed a small bottle from the breast pocket of his dust-covered shirt, poured out some white substance in his palm and sniffed it greedily.

Kofi noticed all that but suppressed his anger. „I learn that luck has given you great wealth, Kofi!‟ Ali said. „Indeed, some people are lucky! He added, and pulled out a crumpled cigarette and a box of matches. I‟d rather wished you didn‟t smoke here. I keep my air fresh,‟ Kofi politely ordered. Ali was shocked. „Hei, Kofi, what a complete change! What bird must have lent you its wings for you to soar so high? Oh, luck, you can really change people! Just ten short years!

Look here, Ali, leave luck out of this. I worked diligently for seven years to acquire a good degree and a job. I never relied on luck for success.

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APPENDIX E

CONSENT FORM

The purpose of this study is to identify the impact pronunciation teaching and learning has on speaking and reading skills in your school.

I confirm that I willingly take part in this research carried out by Samuel Gyabaah Aboagye for dissertation at University of Education, Winneba. I understand that the information I provide will remain confidential, that the discussion in which I am taking part is recorded solely from research purposes and I consent to the recording of this discussion. The researcher has agreed that I may have access to the research findings.

Signed:

……

……