



*Full Length Research Paper*

# **The Effect of Using Communicative Approach on Developing Pronunciation Sub-Skills**

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## **Abstract**

Pronunciation instruction is a prominent factor in foreign language teaching. A broad definition of pronunciation includes both suprasegmental and segmental features. After dealing with the review of literature, observation and meetings, the researcher stated the problem of the study. Objectives, importance, questions, hypotheses, tools, delimitations, sample, terms and references of the study were mentioned. Questions of the study were: (1) What are the sub-skills of English pronunciation that students in Special Diploma, at Faculty of Education, Beni-Suef University should develop before the use of communicative approach? (2) What is the effect of using communicative approach on the sub-skills of English pronunciation of students in Special Diploma at Faculty of Education, Beni-Suef University? (3) How far does the communicative approach affect the sub-skills of English pronunciation of students in Special Diploma at Faculty of Education, Beni-Suef University in general? Procedures included administering the diagnostic test after achieving validity and reliability. According to the results of the diagnostic test which is the first question of the study, the researcher started designing a program to help student develop their sub-skills of English pronunciation. Before administering the pre-test, the researcher determined validity as the test was submitted to juries, then reliability was achieved. Students' scores were low. Afterwards, the researcher started teaching the program to train students through the use of communicative approach. Students were given the instructional materials. The researcher made use of his Laptop to train students on the right pronunciation of words related to the program at the Faculty of Education at Beni-Suef. He used the communicative approach in teaching pronunciation dividing students into groups. Results of the study were as the following: To answer question 2, it is shown in table 5 that the means were mentioned showing the difference between the pre test and post test in every skill. To answer question 3, it is shown in table 4 that the value of T is 13.249. Recommendations and suggestions for further studies were mentioned in the end in the light of the results of the study

**Keywords:** Approach, effect, pronunciation, skill, program, development.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Pronunciation instruction is a prominent factor in foreign language teaching. Since sounds play an important role in communication, foreign language teachers must attribute proper importance to teaching pronunciation.

It is no paradox that communication is a mutual relationship between the speaker and the hearer. This means that a student must comprehend what he/she hears in the target language and must produce the sounds of the language he/she is trying to learn accurately. Unless he has sufficient knowledge of the sound patterns of the target language, he can neither encode a message to anybody nor decode the message

sent by another person by learning the sounds of the target language within his mother tongue. "Therefore, pronunciation instruction is of great importance for successful oral communication to take place since it is an important ingredient of the communicative competence" Hismanoglu (2006).

"The increasing demand for global competence and international communication and collaboration makes attaining proficiency in a second or foreign language more prominent and this proficiency should cover not merely vocabulary and grammar, but good pronunciation as well" (Lord, 2008:374-389).

Pronunciation is a set of habits of producing sounds. "The habit of producing a sound is acquired by repeating it over and over again and by being corrected when it is pronounced wrongly. Learning to pronounce a second language means building up new pronunciation habits and overcoming the bias of the first language" (Cook, 1996).

Pronunciation refers to the production of sounds which are used to make meaning. Pronunciation includes attention to the particular sounds of a language (segments), aspects of speech beyond the level of the individual sound, such as intonation, phrasing, stress, timing, rhythm (suprasegmental aspects), how the voice is projected (voice quality) and, in its broadest definition, attention to gestures and expressions that are closely related to the way we speak a language. "Abroad definition of pronunciation includes both suprasegmental and segmental features. Although these different aspects of pronunciation are treated in isolation here, it is important to remember that they all work in combination when we speak, and are therefore usually best learned as an integral part of spoken language" Gilakjani, (2012: 96).

### **Importance of Pronunciation and Intonation for Students**

1. Students should first of all learn to hear the sounds accurately and listen to them closely and carefully. The more they hear the differences between the various sounds of English language, the better they will articulate them. Students should undergo ear-training and constant listening to English native speakers or some equally good models. Then they should imitate the sounds heard, using their background knowledge to make the proper adjustment of their speech organs to reproduce the sound correctly. Wrong practice does not only waste time and effort but also create bad habits, which will be extremely difficult to eliminate.

2. While speaking a foreign language, pronunciation is of great importance. If a student can not pronounce correctly, he will not be able to make himself understood. A language is a tool of communication, but poor pronunciation can never be a good tool of communication.

3. Intonation is used to show a speaker's attitude. To learn to speak good English, one has to learn to speak with the correct intonation. The key to speaking a foreign language lies in a good mastery of its intonation, to which a priority always be given in our teaching and learning".Yong (2004:3-4)

There is also a tendency to focus on production as the main problem affecting learners. Most research however, shows clearly that the problem is more likely to be reception - what you don't hear, you can't say. Moreover, if the "English" sound is not clearly received, the brain of

the learner converts it into the closest sound in their own language. Thus the dental English fricative / θ / (sorry, phonetic symbols can't easily be displayed) in "those" ,becomes converted by Spanish speakers into the denatlizd Spanish /d/ , producing "dose" as this is what the speaker hears. Given this reality, it would seem logical to place a heavy emphasis on listening (reception) as a way into releasing appropriate pronunciation (production). Dalton, (1997: 1).

### **There are some ideas for focusing on specific pronunciation features. They are as the following:**

- **"Voicing**

Voiced sounds will make the throat vibrate. For example, /g/ is a voiced sound while /k/ is not, even though the mouth is in the same position for both sounds. Have your students touch their throats while pronouncing voiced and voiceless sounds. They should feel vibration with the voiced sounds only.

- **Aspiration**

Aspiration refers to a puff of air when a sound is produced. Many languages have far fewer aspirated sounds than English, and students may have trouble hearing the aspiration. The English /p/, /t/, /k/, and /ch/ are some of the more commonly aspirated sounds. Although these are not always aspirated, at the beginning of a word they usually are. To illustrate aspiration, have your students hold up a piece of facial tissue a few inches away from their mouths and push it with a puff of air while pronouncing a word containing the target sound.

- **Mouth Position**

Draw simple diagrams of tongue and lip positions. Make sure all students can clearly see your mouth while you model sounds. Have students use a mirror to see their mouth, lips, and tongue while they imitate you.

- **Intonation**

Word or sentence intonation can be mimicked with a kazoo, or alternatively by humming. This will take the students' attention off of the meaning of a word or sentence and help them focus on the intonation.

- **Linking**

We pronounce phrases and even whole sentences as one smooth sound instead of a series of separate words. 'Will Amy go away,' is rendered 'Willaymeegowaway.' To help learners link words, try starting at the end of a sentence and have them repeat a phrase, adding more of

the sentence as they can master it. For example, 'gowaway,' then 'aymeegowaway,' and finally 'Willaymeegowaway' without any pauses between words.

- **Vowel Length**

You can demonstrate varying vowel lengths within a word by stretching rubber bands on the longer vowels and letting them contract on shorter ones. Then let the students try it. For example, the word 'fifteen' would have the rubber band stretched for the 'ee' vowel, but the word 'fifty' would not have the band stretched because both of its vowels are spoken quickly.

- **Syllables**

- Have students count syllables in a word and hold up the correct number of fingers, or place objects on table to represent each syllable.
- Illustrate syllable stress by clapping softly and loudly corresponding to the syllables of a word. For example, the word 'beautiful' would be loud-soft-soft. Practice with short lists of words with the same syllabic stress pattern ('beautiful,' 'telephone,' 'Florida') and then see if your learners can list other words with that pattern.

- **Specific Sounds**

- Minimal pairs, or words such as 'bit/bat' that differ by only one sound, are useful for helping students distinguish similar sounds. They can be used to illustrate voicing ('curl/girl') or commonly confused sounds ('play/pray'). Remember that it's the sound and not the spelling you are focusing on.
- Tongue twisters are useful for practicing specific target sounds, plus they're fun. Make sure the vocabulary isn't too difficult.
- The Sounds of English, American Accent Training, and EnglishClub.com websites offer guidelines for describing how to produce various English sounds. "- Colorado State University (2012:1-2).

## **Factors Influencing Pronunciation Mastery**

Research has contributed some important data on factors that can influence the learning and teaching of pronunciation skills. Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin, (1996), Gillette (1994), Graham (1994) and Pennington (1994) discussed the following factors.

**"Age."** The debate over the impact of age on language acquisition and specifically pronunciation is varied. Most researchers, however, agree that adults find pronunciation more difficult than children do and that they probably will not achieve native-like pronunciation. Yet experiences with language learning and the ability to self-monitor, which come with age, can offset these limitations to some degree.

## **"Amount and type of prior pronunciation instruction"**

Prior experiences with such pronunciation instruction may influence learners' success with current efforts. Learners at higher language proficiency levels may have developed habitual, systematic pronunciation errors that must be identified and addressed.

## **"Aptitude"**

Individual capacity for learning languages has been debated. The ability to recognize and internalize foreign sounds may be unequally developed in different learners.

## **"Learner attitude and motivation"**

Nonlinguistic factors related to an individual's personality and learning goals can influence achievement in pronunciation. Attitude toward the target language, culture, and native speakers; degree of acculturation (including exposure to and use of the target language); personal identity issues; and motivation for learning can all support or impede pronunciation skills development.

## **"Native language"**

Most researchers agree that the learner's first language influences the pronunciation of the target language and is a significant factor in accounting for foreign accents. So-called interference or negative transfer from the first language is likely to cause errors in aspiration, intonation, and rhythm in the target language. Florez, (1998:2)

"The pronunciation of any one learner might be affected by a combination of these factors. The key is to be aware of their existence so that they may be considered in creating realistic and effective pronunciation goals and development plans for the learners. For example, native-like pronunciation is not likely to be a realistic goal for older learners; a learner who is a native speaker of a tonal language, such as Vietnamese, will need assistance with different pronunciation features than will a native Spanish speaker; and a twenty-three year old engineer who knows he will be more respected and possibly promoted if his pronunciation improves is likely to be responsive to direct pronunciation instruction" ( Ibid:3).

In spite of the fact that more and more demands are being placed on the foreign language (FL) teaching profession, the foreign language teacher preparation itself is currently faced with a number of challenges all over the world. "One of these challenges is the need for a more qualified FL teacher though there is not much consensus on what "qualified" is or how to measure it in most contexts where English is taught as a foreign language" (Lewis et.al. 2000). However, like many of these contexts, teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) in Egypt has a long history in suffering from some major problems. Cullen (1994) assigned certain features

of the process of TEFL in Egypt as he himself was involved in the field of in-service training in Egypt and Bangladesh for seven years. These features are: "1- English is taught as a compulsory foreign language , 2- Teacher's contact with the language itself or the natives is non-existent, 3- New communicative textbooks are being introduced and this in turn requires a good teacher with a good command of the communication skills of the foreign language s/he is to teach, 4- English curriculum emphasizes the use of English, as opposed to the mother tongue in the English classroom and this is reinforced by school supervisors to the extent that FL teachers are partially assessed on the ground of their FL use in their classes". EL-Ebyary, (2005: 1)

## Review of Literature

Previous studies will be divided as the following:

### (1) Studies Related to Oral Proficiency, Phonological Instruction Communication Skills

Calfee et al. (1969). This study deals with the acquisition of Literacy Project's basic goal is to determine the processes by which children learn to read, and to identify reasons many fail to learn. One part of the process is the formation of correspondences between letter patterns and the sounds for which they stand. To determine the extent of such correspondences, tests of pronunciation of synthetic words were conducted. A list of these words was prepared to test the pronunciation of predictable patterns, such as (final "e", "c" before "e" and "i", and "c" before "a", "o" and "u"), and unpredictable patterns (vowel digraph spellings such as "ai" and "ou"). Responses were recorded and transcribed by graduate students trained in phonetics. Participants were third, sixth and eleventh graders, and college students. A good third grade reader showed mastery of predictable letter-sound correspondences. This mastery increased through high school, but correlation with reading achievement decreased, presumably because this ability is only one of many necessary for skilled reading. Poor readers made more and wild errors in correspondences than good readers.

Bowen, (1979). In this study, a term-project assignment for a course in phonetics for prospective teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL) is described. The project involves six steps: (1) identification of a specific pronunciation problem for study; (2) analysis of the problem; (3) development of a self-instructional program; (4) recording the program on audio-tape; (5) evaluation of the taped program; and (6) regular progress checks with the instructor. The tapes are kept by the department for use with specific pronunciation

problems of individual students. In addition to increasing the department library, the projects provide the students with experience in laboratory exercises and construction of remedial exercises. A transcript of a term-project on "can" and "can't" is included.

Fryer (1987). In this study selected papers from the 1986 Southern Conference on Language Teaching on instruction for language proficiency are presented: "The Foreign Language Teacher: Confronting an Ever-Changing Profession" (Robert Di Donato); "Restructuring a Traditional Foreign Language Program for Oral Proficiency" (Filisha Camara-Norman, James Davis, Karen Smyley Wallace); "Brothers Grimm Bicentennial: Blueprint for a Community Celebration" (Sigrid Scholtz Novak); "Florida: State of the Foreign Language Arts" (Gabriel M. Valdes); "Planning and Teaching for Listening Proficiency" (Mary Harris, Jean Jendrzewski); "Early Foreign Language Reading" (Douglas R. Magrath); "Memory Hooks: Clues for Language Retention" (Leslie Stickels, Marsha Schwartz); "Purpose Produces Proficiency: Writing-Based Projects for an Integrated Curriculum" (Linda S. Evans); "Phonetics, the Basis for all Levels of Proficiency in French Pronunciation" (Dorothy M. DiOrio); "Implications of Brain Hemisphere Research for Second Language Teaching and Learning" (Ernest A. Frechette); and "Listening Skills Development Through Massive Comprehensible Input" (Theodore B. Kalivoda).

Buzash, (1994) in this study, the evolution of a 2-week summer honors program in French for high school students, inaugurated in 1980 and conducted on a university campus, is chronicled. The program was designed to offer enriching experiences in language review, new skill building, French culture, understanding of French phonology, and conversation on topics of interest to students. All instructional materials were created by the director. Activities were conducted from early morning into the evening, with little homework required and with socializing encouraged. The program has been well received. Of the 310 participants over the first 12 years, a majority have placed in the 90th percentile of their high school classes. Posttests, administered since 1983, show skill improvement equivalent to one college semester during the course. Post-program questionnaires reveal student responses to and relative benefits gained from the grammar/structure, phonetics, reading, oral, language laboratory, conversational, and group social segments of the course. Overall, students gained substantially in skills, confidence, and enthusiasm. The program has drawn students from 155 high schools in 7 states and a broad demographic base. Some student comments are included.

Simoes, Antonio R., M. (1996) dealt with analyzes changes in oral communication skills of five American adult learners who participated in a five-week study abroad program in Spanish. Subjective analyses of

recordings of participants upon their return show that four participants increased their command of the vocabulary and were more at ease in discourse interaction.

Chen, (2009) stated that Oral proficiency is an important goal in second language learning not only for communication, but also for developing reading and writing skills. Use of cooperative learning (CL) strategies has been shown to successfully improve second language learning in many cases for its focus on individual accountability and positive interdependence (Kagan and McGroarty, 1993; Kagan, 1995). This quasi-experiment, with a pre-post test two-treatment, formed by expanding across program design investigated (1) the effect of phonetic and phonological instruction on the oral proficiency, specifically, pronunciation skills of Spanish-speaking ESL students with and without cooperative learning structures, and (2) the impact of phonetic and phonological instruction, implemented with and without cooperative learning structures, on subjects' articulation of individual target phonemes. Instructional materials incorporated articulatory phonetics, including voicing, place and manner of articulation presented in a variety of formats, engaging participants in individual and group activities.

Findings showed that the oral proficiency of ESL students in both groups improved with statistical significance after phonetic/phonological instruction. However, the difference in improvement between the Cooperative Learning Group and the Conventional Group was not statistically significant to claim that the cooperative learning structure, in this study, was a major differential factor. Pedagogical implications for the classroom were discussed based on the findings. Recommendations were made for future qualitative research on implementation of phonetic/phonological instruction in a cooperative learning setting.

Pawlak, (2011). This study deals with developing the ability to speak in a foreign language is an arduous task. This is because it involves the mastery of different language subsystems, simultaneous focus on comprehension and production, and the impact of a range of social factors. This challenge is further compounded in situations in which learners have limited access to the target language. Thus, there is a need to explore issues related to teaching, learning and testing speaking with a view to translating the guidelines based on theoretical positions and research findings into feasible and context-specific pedagogical recommendations. This is the rationale behind this book, which considers speaking from leading theoretical perspectives, investigates individual variables which affect its development, and reports the results of studies focusing on different aspects of its instructed acquisition. Part 1: Theoretical Perspectives on Instructed Acquisition of Speaking, contains the following chapters: (1) Instructed Acquisition of Speaking: Reconciling Theory and Practice (Miroslaw Pawlak); (2) Authenticity in Oral

Communication of Instructed L2 Learners (Agnieszka Nowicka and Weronika Wilczynska); (3) Formulaic Sequences in the Output of Instructed L2 Learners (Piotr Bialas); (4) Formulaicity vs. Fluency and Accuracy in Using English as a Foreign Language (Agnieszka Wrobel); (5) Talking the Same Language: Sociocultural Aspects of Code-Switching in L2 Classroom Discourse (Jan Majer); and (6) Speaking in English for Academic Purposes in the Light of Lingua Franca English and Sociocultural Theory (Anna Nizegorodcew). Part 2: Speaking and Individual Variables, continues with these chapters: (7) Near-Nativeness as a Function of Cognitive and Personality Factors: Three Case Studies of Highly Able Foreign Language Learners (Adriana Biedron); (8) "I Am Good at Speaking, But I Failed My Phonetics Class" Pronunciation and Speaking in Advanced Learners of English (Ewa Waniek- Klimczak); (9) Oral Skills Awareness of Advanced EFL Learners (Krystyna Drozdziel -Szelest); (10) Pronunciation Learning Strategies Identification and Classification (Aneta Calka); (11) Metaphonetic Awareness in the Production of Speech (Magdalena Wrembel); (12) Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety from the Perspective of Polish Students of German Studies (Krzysztof Nerlicki); and (13) The Relationship between Language Anxiety and the Development of the Speaking Skill: Results of a Longitudinal Study (Ewa Piechurska-Kucie). Part 3: Research into Instructed Acquisition of Speaking, provides: (14) On the Authenticity of Communication in the Foreign Language Classroom (Sebastian Piotrowski); (15) Ways to Proficiency in Spoken English as a Foreign Language -- Tracing Individual Development (Irena Czwenar); (16) Task Repetition as a Way of Enhancing Oral Communication in a Foreign Language (Anna Mystkowska-Wiertelak); (17) The Use of the Internet and Instant Messengers in Assisting the Acquisition of Speaking Skills in English Lessons (Mariusz Kruk); (18) Investigating the Perception of Speaking Skills with Metaphor-Based Methods (Dorota Werbinska); (19) Phonetically Difficult Words in Intermediate Learners English (Jolanta Szpyra-Kozłowska); and Transcultural Interference, Communities of Practice and Collaborative Assessment of Oral Performance (Przemyslaw Krakowian).

Pufahl Rhodes, (2011). This study is about how well our schools are preparing students to become global citizens who can communicate in languages other than English. To answer this question, we surveyed a nationally representative sample of more than 5,000 U.S. public and private elementary and secondary schools. Results identify current patterns and shifts over time in five key areas of K-12 foreign language education: amount of language instruction; languages and program types offered; curriculum and instruction; teacher certification, professional development, and teacher shortages; and the effects of education reform. Results reveal that despite some positive developments, overall

foreign language instruction has decreased over the past decade and the achievement gap has widened. The article concludes with recommendations on how to progress toward achieving foreign language proficiency for all students.

Engwall (2012). This study states that pronunciation errors may be caused by several different deviations from the target, such as voicing, intonation, insertions or deletions of segments, or that the articulators are placed incorrectly. Computer-animated pronunciation teachers could potentially provide important assistance on correcting all these types of deviations, but they have an additional benefit for articulatory errors. By making parts of the face transparent, they can show the correct position and shape of the tongue and provide audiovisual feedback on how to change erroneous articulations. Such a scenario however requires firstly that the learner's current articulation can be estimated with precision and secondly that the learner is able to imitate the articulatory changes suggested in the audiovisual feedback. This article discusses both these aspects, with one experiment on estimating the important articulatory features from a speaker through acoustic-to-articulatory inversion and one user test with a virtual pronunciation teacher, in which the articulatory changes made by seven learners who receive audiovisual feedback are monitored using ultrasound imaging.

Sato, (2012). This study states that the content that test-takers attempt to convey is not always included in the construct definition of "general" English oral proficiency tests, although some English-for-academic-purposes (EAP) speaking tests and most writing tests tend to place great emphasis on the evaluation of the content or ideas in the performance. This study investigated the relative contribution of linguistic criteria and the elaboration of speech content to scores on a test of speaking proficiency. A speaking test was designed and administered to Japanese undergraduates to determine what criteria English teachers associate with general oral proficiency. Nine raters were recruited to rate 30 students' monologues on three topics, using intuitive judgments of oral proficiency (referred to as "Overall communicative effectiveness"). Following this, they assigned scores to the monologues using five criteria: "Grammatical accuracy", "Fluency", "Vocabulary range", "Pronunciation", and "Content elaboration/development". The raters were also asked to provide open-ended written comments on the factors contributing to their intuitive judgments. Statistical analyses of the scores--Rasch measurement, multiple regressions, and multivariate generalizability (G) theory analysis--revealed that "Content elaboration/development" made a substantive contribution to the intuitive judgments and composite score. The present study enriches our understanding of general oral proficiency and the construct definition of proficiency tests.

## Commentary

Regarding the review of literature, it is obvious that the present study is different as it deals with certain skills according to the diagnostic test. Having a look at the previous studies, it is shown that Calfee,; and Others(1969) deal with how the acquisition of Literacy Project's basic goal is to determine the processes by which children learn to read. Bowen, (1979). In this study, a term-project assignment for a course in phonetics for prospective teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL) is described. It is shown that the present study is not similar to those two studies mentioned previously. Fryer Medley, (1987). In this study selected papers from the 1986 Southern Conference on Language Teaching on instruction for language proficiency are presented. Buzash, (1994) in this study, the evolution of a 2-week summer honors program in French for high school students. Simoes, Antonio R., M. (1996) dealt with analyzes changes in oral communication skills. Chen, (2009) stated that Oral proficiency is an important goal in second language learning. (Kagan and McGroarty, 1993; Kagan, 1995). This quasi-experiment, with a pre-post test two-treatment, formed by expanding across program design investigated the effect of phonetic and phonological instruction on the oral proficiency, specifically, pronunciation skills of Spanish-speaking ESL students with and without cooperative learning structures, and; besides, the impact of phonetic and phonological instruction, implemented with and without cooperative learning structures, on subjects' articulation of individual target phonemes. Pawlak and Waniek-Klimczak (2011). This study deals with developing the ability to speak in a foreign language is an arduous task. Pufahl Rhodes, (2011). This study is about how well our schools are preparing students to become global citizens who can communicate in languages other than English. Engwall, (2012) states that pronunciation errors may be caused by several different deviations from the target, such as voicing, intonation, insertions or deletions of segments, or that the articulators are placed incorrectly. Sato, (2012) states that the content that test-takers attempt to convey is not always included in the construct definition of "general" English oral proficiency tests. Through this dimension, it has been shown that there are differences between the present study and each study mentioned in the review of literature

## Studies Related to the Communicative Approach and Pronunciation of English:

### Studies are arranged chronologically

Paulston, (1975). This paper gives practical suggestions

for the ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher who must prepare adult foreign students for academic life in the United States. The paper is based on activities carried out at the English Language Institute of the University of Pittsburgh. It is divided into three sections, according to language skills: speaking, reading, and writing. For speaking, the basic grammar text used is Mary Bruder's "MMC: Developing Communicative Competence in English," which consists of dialogues and mechanical and communicative drills. The complementary texts are Kettering's "Developing Communicative Competence: Interaction Activities in English as a Second Language" and Paulston, Britton, Brunetti, and Hoover's "Developing Communicative Competence: Role Plays in English as a Second Language." Kettering's book contains three basic types of activities: social formulas and dialogues, community-oriented tasks, and problem-solving activities. "Role Plays" contains exercises where the student is assigned a fictitious role from which he has to improvise some kind of behavior toward the other characters in the exercise. Pronunciation is taught with a sound-symbol approach. The reading program is still in an experimental stage, but an integral part of it is teaching advanced grammatical patterns for decoding only. A set of materials for controlled composition is being developed for the teaching of writing. Several samples are provided.

Celce-Murcia, (1983). Methods designed to effectively teach pronunciation to university level nonnative speakers of English are described. Following a historical overview of educators' attitudes toward the relative importance of teaching pronunciation, teaching techniques that have been used in the past are surveyed. The relevance of the communicative approach is discussed. To apply this approach to the teaching of English pronunciation, four steps should be employed: (1) identify sounds that are problematic for the class, (2) look for contexts that naturally offer an abundance of lexical items with these target sounds, (3) develop communication oriented tasks requiring the use of these words, and (4) develop several exercises for each problem area to reinforce learning. Several pronunciation exercises are presented to illustrate these principles. It is concluded that by making systematic use of communicative activities in the pronunciation classes, students can have the opportunity to practice pronunciation in a way that better facilitates transfer to the real communication of the outside world.

Naiman (1987). The communicative approach used in the teaching of second languages is also effective in teaching pronunciation of English as a second language. Communicative principles and activities in the areas of consonants and vowels, contractions, reduced expressions and linking, suprasegmentals, and monitoring are discussed.

Van Theunissen, (1987). A systematic and explicit approach to evaluation of pronunciation is proposed.

Generalizability theory was applied in order to comprise all relevant factors in one psychomotor model. French and German pronunciation tests (in Appendix) were devised and evaluated. Common pronunciation problems for native Dutch speakers were incorporated.

Stevens (1989). Describes the University of Delaware's drama-based approach to enhancing the intelligibility of international teaching assistants (ITA). This training addresses the segmental and suprasegmental features of ITA pronunciation within the context of cultural, pedagogical, and linguistic factors unique to the university classroom environment, and results in improved communicative competence and confidence.

Graham, (1990). At an employer's request, a course was developed to improve the speech skills, and remediate fossilized speech, of six Asian engineers and scientists. All had spoken English for many years, and averaged 10 years of residence in the United States. These students were recorded reading a dialogue as well as in free speech. A needs assessment was performed by analyzing the recordings and by tests of grammar and listening comprehension. Based on the results, instruction focused on developing more comprehensible speech, using existing knowledge of vocabulary and structure. Emphasis was placed on suprasegmentals and certain problematic phonemes, with some work on grammatical errors. Techniques were used to stimulate student motivation to improve speech. Instruction consisted of teacher explanations and demonstrations, structured oral practice, communicative activities, and laboratory and home work with language tapes. At the end of the course, three students clearly demonstrated improvement. All students felt they had benefited from the course and petitioned to have it extended. Teaching students with fossilized speech requires a different approach, focusing more on form and paying greater attention to student motivation. Small classes, individualization, and improvement of student self-monitoring are advisable.

Elliott, (1997) discusses research on phonological instruction that indicates that improvement in pronunciation for adult foreign language learners is possible via a multimodal methodology designed to accommodate individual learning styles. An extension of this research examines experimental subjects' improvement in pronunciation accuracy and pinpoints areas where pronunciation instruction is beneficial.

Morley, (1998). "Discusses the importance of emphasizing speech and pronunciation in English-as-a-Second-Language classrooms, examines factors driving the new movement in speech and pronunciation teaching, potential learner problems, first steps in program planning, setting realistic pronunciation goals, current directions in instructional focus, an approach paradigm for communicative pronunciation teaching, and questions and answers about teacher training.

Salter, (1999). This paper describes a study which examined the effectiveness of explicit instruction in English intonation in listening tasks in an English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) course taught to four Japanese high school students. The students' exposure to real-world English listening situations had been limited, and the majority were focusing more on grammar in their preparation for university entrance examinations. Initially, instruction took a bottom-up approach, beginning with phoneme-level pronunciation practice without analysis of the communicative value of intonation choices. Later in the course, pronunciation instruction was top-down, focusing on production in minimal contexts, questions, and syllables. A decision was made to concentrate on yes-no and wh- questions in listening instruction, teaching students how to diacritically mark intonation in these contexts. Over a period of several weeks, it was found that the students had significant difficulty in distinguishing between grammatical and discourse considerations in their listening. It is suggested that the theoretical constructs of key and termination be used as starting points for moving beyond grammatical boundaries in classroom listening instruction.

Neri et al. (2006). The current emphasis in second language teaching lies in the achievement of communicative effectiveness. In line with this approach, pronunciation training is nowadays geared towards helping learners avoid serious pronunciation errors, rather than eradicating the finest traces of foreign accent. However, to devise optimal pronunciation training programmes, systematic information on these pronunciation problems is needed, especially in the case of the development of Computer Assisted Pronunciation Training systems. The research reported on in this paper is aimed at obtaining systematic information on segmental pronunciation errors made by learners of Dutch with different mother tongues. In particular, it is aimed at identifying errors that are frequent, perceptually salient, persistent, and potentially hampering to communication. To achieve this goal we conducted analyses on different corpora of speech produced by L2 learners under different conditions. This resulted in a robust inventory of pronunciation errors that can be used for designing efficient pronunciation training programs

## Commentary

Paulston, (1975). This paper gave practical suggestions for the ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher who must prepare adult foreign students for academic life in the United States. As it has been shown, there are differences between the present study and the studies stated before. Celce-Murcia, (1983) described methods designed to effectively teach pronunciation to university level nonnative speakers of English. Naiman, (1987) discussed Communicative principles and activities in the

areas of consonants and vowels, contractions, recued expressions and linking, suprasegmentals, and monitoring. Van; Theunissen, (1987). In this study, a systematic and explicit approach to evaluation of pronunciation was proposed. Stevens, (1989). investigated the University of Delaware's drama-based approach to enhancing the intelligibility of international teaching assistants (ITA). Graham, (1990). In this study, a course was developed to improve the speech skills, and remediate fossilized speech, of six Asian engineers and scientists. Elliott, (1997) stated that improvement in pronunciation for adult foreign language learners is possible via a multimodal methodology designed to accommodate individual learning styles. Morley, (1998). "Dealt with an approach paradigm for communicative pronunciation teaching and questions and answers about teacher training. Salter, (1999). This paper describes a study which examined the effectiveness of explicit instruction in English intonation in listening tasks in an English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) course taught to four Japanese high school students. Neri ; Cucchiari, Strik, (2006). The research aimed at obtaining systematic information on segmental pronunciation errors made by learners of Dutch with different mother tongues.

As it has been shown, there are differences between the present study and those studies mentioned in the review of literature related to the communicative approach and pronunciation of English.

## Context of the Problem

Investigating students about their programs in pronunciation, most of them said that they forgot all about phonetics after they finished their studying as undergraduate students. Some of them said that they studied certain programs in certain centers. Others said that they are in a bad need of a program to develop pronunciation sub-skills. The researcher asked students in special Diploma at Faculty of Education at Beni-Suef about sub-skills of pronunciation, and most of them said that they have no idea about sub-skills. The researcher asked some staff members at the Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Education, they said that most students are not well enough in pronunciation. So, the researcher began to think of designing a pronunciation based program to develop their skills

In order to justify that the problem of the study deserves investigation the researcher designed a diagnostic test and submitted it to juries to achieve validity, and reliability was being achieved and then the test was administered. Reliability is shown in the following table 1:

It is obvious in the previous table that reliability ranges from 0.801 to 0.860 and the total is 0.896. So, the diagnostic test was appropriate to be administered.



**Table 1.** shows reliability of the diagnostic test.

	Alpha
total	0.896
7	0.832
6	0.860
5	0.858
4	0.801
3	0.817
2	0.834
1	0.824

**Table 2.** Shows means and standard deviation of the diagnostic test

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
total	29	14.0345	8.07651
7	29	1.6724	1.70229
6	29	1.8966	1.16020
5	29	3.7069	8.97866
4	29	3.4828	9.00147
3	29	1.0345	1.01710
2	29	6.5000	12.19411
1	29	2.8793	1.85960

**To answer the first question which is "What are the sub-skills of English pronunciation that students in Special Diploma, at Faculty of Education, Beni-Suef University should develop before the use of communicative approach?",** a diagnostic test will be administered to know points of weaknesses in order to prepare an English pronunciation based program based on such points of weaknesses. The results of administering the diagnostic test will show the skills which students are requested to develop. The following table shows means and standard deviation to decide points of weaknesses on which the new program will be based Table 2.

It is shown in table 2 that the mean in question 1(Fill in) is 2.8793, while standard deviation is 1.85960. The mean in question 2 (Answer the following questions) is 6.5000 and standard deviation is 12.19411. In question 3(Same or different), the mean is 1.0345, while standard deviation is 1.01710. In question 4(Regrouping), the mean is 3.4828, while standard deviation is 9.00147. The mean in question 5 (Miscellaneous ways of testing pronunciation) is 3.7069 and standard deviation is 8.97866. In question 6(Testing word stress), the mean is 1.8966, while standard deviation is 1.16020. In question

7(Transcribing), the mean is 1.6724, while standard deviation is 1.70229.

Through the results in table 2, it is obvious that students' standards are low and they are in a bad need of a pronunciation program to develop their skills. These results were considered one of indicators showing that there should be some materials for students in Special Diploma to help them in this area which is important in English at Faculty of Education at Beni-Suef Governorate.

### **Problem of the Study**

In the light of the aforementioned information and according to the results of the diagnostic test , the researchers' observation during teaching Methods of Teaching at the Faculty of Education at Beni-Suef, it has been obvious that students in Special Diploma are in need of a program to develop their skills and sub skills in pronunciation. An approach is also required to teach such a program to develop the pronunciation sub-skills and the researcher selected the communicative approach as it is used in Egypt nowadays.

## Questions of the Study

According to the problem, the researcher stated the following questions:

- (1) What are the sub-skills of English pronunciation that students in Special Diploma, at Faculty of Education, Beni-Suef University should develop before the use of communicative approach?
- (2) What is the effect of using communicative approach on the sub-skills of English pronunciation of students in Special Diploma at Faculty of Education, Beni-Suef University?
- (3) How far does the communicative approach affect the sub-skills of English pronunciation of students in Special Diploma at Faculty of Education, Beni-Suef University in general?

## Objectives of the Study

The present study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- (1) Investigating students level using a diagnostic test
- (2) Determining the sub-skills of pronunciation that students in special diploma should develop
- (3) Designing an English pronunciation program to develop certain sub-skills according to the diagnostic test.
- (4) It is hoped to investigate the effect of using communicative approach to teach the program
- (5) As students are major in English, it is expected that the program will help students renovate their pronunciation to practise the English language accurately and fluently
- (6) It is hoped to develop students' standards in special diploma

## Tools of the Study

Tools are as the following:

- (1) A diagnostic test prepared by the researcher to know the sub-skills in which students are weak
- (2) An achievement test (pre/post test) prepared by the researcher

## Terms of the Study

**-Approach** is a way of dealing with somebody/something; a way of doing or thinking about something such as a problem or a task. She took the wrong approach in her dealings with them.

## The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2012:1)

**Approach** according to Anthony is as a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning. An approach is axiomatic. It describes the

nature of the subject matter to be taught. Shooing Home (2010:2).

## The operational definition will be Shooing Home's

**Effect:** Something brought about by a cause or agent; a result. Farlex (2012:1)

Effect is a noun meaning outcome, consequence or appearance. To affect is a verb meaning 'to transform' or 'to change'.

-Grammar-Monster.com (2012:1).

## The operational definition will be the second one

**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 sound, such as intonation, phrasing, stress, timing, rhythm (suprasegmental aspects), how the voice is projected (voice quality) and, in its broadest definition, attention to gestures and expressions that are closely related to the way we speak a language. A broad definition of pronunciation includes both suprasegmental and segmental features. Although these different aspects of pronunciation are treated in isolation here, it is important to remember that they all work in combination when we speak, and are therefore usually best learned as an integral part of spoken language. Gilakjani, (2012:96)

**Pronunciation** :In pronunciation, emphasis should be on suprasegmental features of pronunciation—not segmental aspects—to help learners acquire communicative competence (Seferoglu, 2005).

## The operational definition will be Gilakjani's

### Program

**Program:** It is considered to be "a series of steps to be carried out or goals to be accomplished"; "they drew up a six-step plan"; "they discussed plans for a new bond issue" The Free Dictionary.(2012:2)

**Program:** A computer program is a set of instructions for a computer to perform a specific task. Programs generally fall into these categories applications, utilities or services. Bolton,(2012:1).

**The operational definition** will be related to the Free Dictionary.

**Development:** The development of oral language is one of the child's most natural--and impressive--accomplishments. This digest presents an overview of the process and mechanics of language development, along with implications for practice. Genishi, C. (2012:1)

**Development** involves change. This change must be cumulative and systematic; random change is not considered to be developmental in nature. Whereas the

concept of growth refers to the addition of new components or skills through the appearance of new cells, development refers to the refinement, improvement, and expansion of existing skills through the refinement of cells already present. More specifically, three basic criteria must be met before change can be considered to be development:

1. The change must be orderly—not random fluctuations of behavior.
2. The change must result in a consistent modification in behavior.
3. The change must contribute to a higher level of functioning in the individual. Hooper; Umansky (2009:44)

### **The operational definition will be the second one**

**Sub-skill** is an element of a wider skill. English Dictionary. (2012:1)

**Sub-skill** is a skill that makes up part of a larger skill. Lexic.us (2012: 1).

**The operational definition will be related to Lexic.us**

### **Delimitations of the Study**

(1) Students in special Diploma at Faculty of Education at Beni-Suef University

(2) Pronunciation skills:

1. Manners of sounds
2. Differentiation of sounds
3. Pronunciation of vowels and diphthongs
4. Stress of sounds
5. Tonic sentences
6. Intonation, rhythm and prominence
7. Assimilation
8. Miscellaneous ways of testing pronunciation
9. Transcription of words
10. Transcription of sentences

### **Description of the Program**

The program is taken from different resources as the following:

-McMahon, A. (2002) *An Introduction to English Phonology* Edinburgh University Press

-Roach, P. (1998). *English Phonetics and Phonology. A Practical Course*. Second Edition, Cambridge University Press. Forel, Claire-A and Genoveva P. (2005). *PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY*. Reader for First Year English Linguistics, University of Geneva.

-Power, T. (2007). "English Language Learning and Teaching. Assimilation", Retrieved from: <http://www.btinternet.com/~ted.power/assimilation.html>, on 6/4/2012

-Bobda, A. S. (1993: 18-21). "Testing Pronunciation", in *English Teaching Forum* Vol. 31 N.3

The program includes definition of Phonetics; besides the difference between Phonetics and Phonology. This part is taken from: Forel, Claire-A and Genoveva Puskás, (2005:3, 48-50). The researcher made use of the material written by Ted Power. (2007:1-7) It is entitled "

English Language Learning and Teaching. Assimilation". It involves the following parts

1. / t / changes to / p / before / m // b / or / p /
2. / d / changes to / b / before / m // b / or / p /
3. / n / changes to / m / before / m // b / or / p /
4. / t / changes to / k / before / k / or / g /
5. / d / changes to / g / before / k / or / g /
6. / n / changes to / ŋ / before / k / or / g /
7. / s / changes to / f / before / f / or / j /
8. / z / changes to / ʒ / before / f / or / j /
9. / θ / changes to / s / before / s /

The program also involves certain questions related to articulation of sounds and consonants written by McMahon A. (2002:34). This book is entitled "An Introduction to English Phonology"

There are other parts which are taken from English Teaching Forum Vol. 31 N.3, 1993. They are "TEST SEGMENTS" and TESTING WORD STRESS.

The last part involves Monophthongs and diphthongs, written by McMahon, A. (2002: 73-78)

After designing the program, the researcher stated the pre test format. It was submitted to Juries to state validity, then reliability was stated in table 3.

It is obvious in the previous table that reliability ranges from 0.806 to 0.897 and the total is 0.889. So, the pre-test is appropriate to be administered

A pre- test will be used by the researcher before teaching the program

### **Procedures of the Study**

After administering the pre-test, the researcher started checking students' answers, their scores were low. It was an indicator showing students' standards in pronunciation. The researcher started teaching the pronunciation program following the communicative approach.

### **Principles and Characteristics of the Communicative Approach**

The basic principles underlying the communicative approach are as the following:

(a) "The theory of language learning underlying the approach is holistic rather than behaviouristic. Thus, language acquisition is seen as a creative process, not as habit formation.

(b) Communicative competence, as spelt out by Widdowson (1978), implies knowledge of the grammatical system of the language as well as performance. Grammar is taught as the intuitive knowledge of language use – a language tool rather than a language aim.

(c) The communicative approach gives priority to the semantic content of language learning. Pupils learn

**Table 3.** shows reliability of the pre-post test

<b>Skills</b>	<b>Alpha</b>
skill 1	.806
skill 2	.857
skill 3	.831
skill 4	.838
skill 5	.848
skill 6	.896
skill 7	.897
skill 8	.838
skill 9	.818
skill 10	.845
Total	.889

the grammatical form through meaning. This new strategy helps the learners apply what they have learnt of the linguistic knowledge, to real life situations.

(d) Communication is the interaction between speakers. This approach provides communicative functions (uses) and notions (semantic themes and language items).

(e) The approach sets out to incorporate socio-cultural allusions and psycholinguistic components. These factors give learners motives, facts and basic cultural insights for immediate use in realistic situations.

(f) The approach sets realistic learning tasks and activities that create situations in which, questions must be asked, information recorded, information recovered from text, knowledge, ideas, reminiscences exchanged, emotions and attitudes expressed in one way or another, (Levine 1972).

(g) Pupils are encouraged to risk error in communicating information or their thoughts and feelings. Fluency is given more weight than accuracy.

(h) The communicative methodology does not assume that the teacher is the centre of all classroom activities. The communicative methodology is a pupil – centred approach to foreign language learning. The teacher's role is that of an organizer of activities". Elmaksoud, (2010:11-12).

These characteristics are to be taken into accounts while teaching the pronunciation based program. Students are taught such characteristics and they are requested to communicate during teaching the program .They are also given the opportunity to communicate through the Internet and discuss points of difficulties in phonetics.

## RESULTS OF THE STUDY

After carrying out the program, implementing character-

istics of the communicative approach and administering th pre/post test, the following results are shown (Table 4).

It is clear in the previous table that there are statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post test in all sub-skills and the total scores. These differences are in favour of the post test. Means and standard deviations of the pre-test and post test are shown in the following table 5.

## DISCUSSION, ANALYSES AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE STUDY

In the diagnostic test, means showed that students ' levels were low. In the pre-test students' levels were low except few students got scores that were appropriate in certain skills. They might be studying courses in phonetics and phonology before. In the post test, students' scores were better in comparison with the pre-test. This is because they made use of the program and characteristics of the communicative approach were taken into account while teaching. Students told the researcher that they studied the program well and made use of it. This means that students at Faculties of Arts and Faculties of Education are in a bad need of training programs in phonetics. Considering T test, it has been shown that there were statistically significant differences in favour of the post test. The effect of communicative approach was clear through analyses of results as shown in the tables (4 and 5).

**To answer the second question which is:** "What is the effect of using communicative approach on the sub-skills of English pronunciation of students in Special Diploma at Faculty of Education, Beni-Suef University?", it is clear in table 5 as the following:

In skill 1(Manners of sounds), the mean in the pre test is 1.8378 while it is 2.8378 in the post test. In skill

**Table 4.** shows means, standard deviation of the pre-post test and T value.

	Paired Differences			t	d.f.	Sig.
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean			
skill 1	1.00000	.67700	.11130	8.985	36	.01
skill 2	1.16216	1.65854	.27266	4.262	36	.01
skill 3	1.64865	1.25203	.20583	8.010	36	.01
skill 4	1.59459	.82359	.13540	11.777	36	.01
skill 5	1.68919	.82791	.13611	12.411	36	.01
skill 6	1.35135	.73470	.12078	11.188	36	.01
skill 7	2.95946	1.34049	.22038	13.429	36	.01
skill 8	1.18919	.81948	.13472	8.827	36	.01
skill 9	1.44595	.80609	.13252	10.911	36	.01
skill 10	1.24324	.85490	.14054	8.846	36	.01
total	14.55405	6.68205	1.09852	13.249	36	.01

**Table 5.** Shows means and standard deviation between the pre test and the post test.

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
skill 1	post	2.8378	37	.48668
	pre	1.8378	37	.45726
skill 2	post	3.7838	37	1.03105
	pre	2.6216	37	1.13899
skill 3	post	3.9459	37	.84807
	pre	2.2973	37	.99624
skill 4	post	3.5541	37	.79742
	pre	1.9595	37	.63877
skill 5	post	2.6892	37	.51843
	pre	1.0000	37	.64550
skill 6	post	2.3514	37	.61084
	pre	1.0000	37	.65617
skill 7	post	4.2432	37	1.03160
	pre	1.2838	37	.88616
skill 8	post	4.0000	37	.70711
	pre	2.8108	37	.74862
skill 9	post	3.0811	37	.81235
	pre	1.6351	37	.69371
skill 10	post	2.9865	37	.50671
	pre	1.7432	37	.87100
total	post	32.7162	37	6.24337
	pre	18.1622	37	4.39073

2 (Differentiation of sounds), it is clear that the mean in the pre test is 2.6216 while it is 3.7838 in the post test.

In skill 3 (Pronunciation of vowels and diphthongs), it is clear that the mean in the pre test is 2.2973 while it is 3.9459 in the post test. In skill 4 (Stress of sounds), it is shown that the mean in the pre test is 1.9595 while it is 3.5541 in the post test. In skill 5 (Tonic sentences), it is clear that the mean in the pre test is 1.0000 while it is 2.6892 in the post test. In skill 6 (Intonation, rhythm and prominence), it is clear that the mean in the pre test is 1.0000 while it is 2.3514 in the post test. In skill 7 (Assimilation), it is obvious that the mean in the pre test is 1.2838 while it is 4.2432 in the post test. In skill 8 (Miscellaneous ways of testing pronunciation), it is clear that the mean in the pre test is 2.8108 while it is 4.0000 in the post test. In skill 9 (Transcription of words), it is shown that the mean in the pre test is 1.6351 while it is 3.0811 in the post test. In skill 10 (Transcription of sentences), it is clear that the mean in the pre test is 1.7432 while it is 2.9865 in the post test.

**To answer the third question which is:** "How far does the communicative approach affect the sub-skills of English pronunciation of students in Special Diploma at Faculty of Education, Beni-Suef University in general? ", it is clear in table 4 that the mean is 14.55405, standard deviation is 6.68205. Std. Error Mean is 1.09852 and the value of T is 13.249. So, it is shown that there is an improvement in all skills when it is differentiated between the pre test and the post test in the present study.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

-As far as teachers' English proficiency is concerned, it is recommended to reach the minimal level at least in a period of given time.

-Students should be provided with varies types of courses.

-It is suggested to combine summative assessment with formative assessment to adopt multiple, flexible evaluation methods and techniques.

-It is recommended to emphasize the evaluation of language performance rather language competence.

-Some teachers assume that the communicative approach in the NC is a kind of oral way without teaching grammar, obviously that is not correct. In order to clear up the misunderstandings like this, it is recommended to help teachers know what the communicative approach is and how to use it by means of lectures, demonstration and short-term training programs.

- The more the old and new approaches we get to know, the more vision we will be competent to implement in English teaching in this new century.

-As for pioneers in teaching-reform, leaders should support them not in words but in deeds, understand them and show tolerance towards them if their efforts result in failure. Only in such an easy environment can the teachers be willing to join the work in teaching-reform.

Suggestions for further Studies According to the results of the current study, the following studies are suggested:

- (1) The effect of using a stress- based program on developing some speaking sub-skills
- (2) The effectiveness of a pronunciation based program on developing some of the listening sub skills.
- (3) Environmental factors and their effect on pronunciation of English as a foreign language
- (4) Evaluating ethnic groups influence on pronunciation of English as a foreign language
- (5) The Effect of audio-visual aids on pronunciation of English as a foreign language and as a second language
- (6) The effect of an intonation based program in English on developing sub-skills of speaking

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