Teaching Pronunciation in the English Language Courses at the University of Dhaka

Sabrina Ahmed Chowdhury[*]

Abstract: Teaching pronunciation at tertiary level is very difficult and at the same time extremely challenging for the teachers. In the English language courses at the University of Dhaka, teachers are trying their best to improve students' pronunciation. However, a lot of problems hinder the natural path of teaching and correcting pronunciation. This article, being exploratory in nature, tries to allocate the difficulties. It also tries to find out how these hindrances are overcome by the teachers. The author contends that the findings will help the teachers overcome the obstacles and follow a suitable way of teaching pronunciation to the students at the University of Dhaka.

Introduction

Teaching pronunciation is one of the least focused part of the curriculum in the tertiary level in our country. The main reason behind it is the fact that pronunciation is not a separate skill but a part of speaking skill. Again, speaking as a skill is not given as much importance as reading or writing in our language courses. Also, this skill is not tested in the examination which would motivate the students and the teachers to practice speaking and pronunciation. Furthermore, curriculum designers feel that students must have had ample practise of their English pronunciation in their primary, secondary and higher secondary levels. However, the need for teaching pronunciation was felt and addressed time and again by the teachers at tertiary level in our country.

A research was conducted in the English language courses to find out the current teaching-learning situation of pronunciation at the

[*] Assistant Professor, Department of English Language, Institute of Modern Languages, University of Dhaka

University of Dhaka. The research tries to give us a glimpse of the real classroom situation that exists in our language courses in different departments of our University.

Background

Pronunciation teaching is neglected by a large number of English language teachers as observed by Harmer (2007). They only give little attention to it in passing. Teachers tend to forget that for the students, one key success in learning to speak a foreign language is having good pronunciation (Bailey, 2005). Scrivener (2011) has pointed out some of the reasons why pronunciation is overlooked by the teachers. His findings illustrate that, some teachers may feel more uncertain about it than grammar and lexis or worried that they do not have enough technical knowledge to help students appropriately.

In the 1970's, influenced by anti-grammar movement, many teachers moved away from accuracy in grammar and pronunciation in order to enhance fluency. The result was that, several numbers of students managed to produce fairly fluent but barely comprehensible language. So, it is clear that fluency and accuracy are both important goal to pursue in CLT and/or TBLT (Lazaraton as cited in Brown and Lee, 2015, p. 347). Again, Hammerly (as cited in Hughes, 2002, p. 68) observed that second language teachers do not seem to care that students mispronounce sounds and make error in sentence construction. They think that all these problems are supposed to disappear through communicative classroom interaction. Hammerly concludes that there is no reason why they should and it is clear that most do not. In the context of our country it is commonly found that the students do not differentiate between phonemes like /ɪ/ and /i:/ the long and short vowels (sit/seat or bin/bean) making them all short vowels which distort meaning.

There are certain advantages of keeping time slots for pronunciation teaching during lesson plan. Working on pronunciation has two main advantages. It helps students understand the spoken English they hear to help them make their own speech more comprehensible and meaningful to others (Gower, Phillips and Walters, 2005). The first one is vital for communication. Unless the students understand what they hear, they will not be able to communicate. The second advantage,

intelligibility, is stated as the prime goal of pronunciation teaching by Harmer (2007). According to him, pronunciation teaching makes them aware of different sounds and features of the English language. It can also improve their speaking immeasurably. Showing the students the position of articulators in making sounds, concentrating on stress and intonation help them achieve the goal of improved comprehension and intelligibility.

Teaching pronunciation at tertiary level in Bangladesh as reported by Tahereen (2015); Begum and Haque (2016) is not less complicated than teaching grammar and comprehension. In every level in our education system, from primary to higher secondary, listening and speaking has never been the focus to be taught and tested. Because of their lack of practise, most of the students have never had the opportunity to correct their pronunciation. It was also observed by the author that students usually mispronounce certain words losing stress and changing the sound of certain syllables. For example, determined /dɪˈtəːmɪnd/ becomes /determaɪnd/.

The current study is based on the English Language course, i.e. the English Foundation Course. It was introduced in various Departments of the Arts faculty of the University of Dhaka in 1998. It was observed that the students of the University of Dhaka were having problems in finding suitable employment because of their lack of English skills (Khan, 2000). Its main objective was to enable the graduates of Dhaka University to work proficiently in English in all the sectors of the country, mainly the private sector where English is the medium of all official communication (Rahman, 1998). It is a matter of fact that people are often judged primarily by their verbal communication, and pronunciation plays a vital role here. So, in the English language courses, pronunciation should be given proper importance for the students' future.

Khan (2000) reported that approximately 1300 hundred students were enrolled in Foundation Course in different departments of the Arts faculty which was conducted by the teachers of the Department of English. The positive response of the course led to expansion among the other departments of the University. This expansion demanded decentralization. Currently, this English language course is known in different names such as English for Academic Purposes, Remedial

English etc. Also, the teachers are now-a-days appointed by the concerned department on a part-time basis. And generally, a single teacher is appointed to take the English class in a single classroom with all the students enrolled in that department. In some departments, the number of students is currently about 80-100.

The duration of the focused English language course in the University of Dhaka is one academic year. As per the policy, there are two 1 hour and 30 minutes classes. There should be sufficient time for the teacher to work with the students and help them develop their English speaking proficiency and pronunciation. However, some specific problems make it extremely difficult at times to teach pronunciation in the English language classes.

Rationale of the Study

The English language courses at the University of Dhaka is based on the beliefs of Communicative Language Teaching. Pronunciation, which is a pat of speaking skill does not get the emphasis as it should because teachers find it difficult to practise speaking in their classes. There are a lot of difficulties that hinder practising speaking and also pronunciation as a part of this skill. Speaking is neglected because of large class, mixed proficiency level, lack of training of the teachers in conducting group work activities, fear of losing control in noisy class, anxiety of the students, etc. (Chowdhury, 2013). So, practising pronunciation as part of speaking skill also becomes extremely difficult at times for the teacher. This study aims to identify the hindrances of pronunciation practice with a view to finding out a more successful way.

Both the students and the teachers of the English language courses are interested in teaching and learning of pronunciation. A questionnaire survey was conducted by the author for the purpose of needs analysis of the focused language course. The students were asked to suggest improvements they would like to see in the teaching-learning situation of the course. There were 56 responses. Among them, 11% of the students suggested that they would like more pronunciation teaching activities in their respective classes.

In light of the above response from the students, this research aims to conduct a study on the classroom teaching environment of the

University of Dhaka. It will show us the difficulties of teachers' in conducting pronunciation activities in English in their respective classrooms and also shed light on their struggle and successes.

Objective

There are a number of articles which deal with the pronunciation difficulties of Bangladeshi students. However, most of the available research have a holistic approach and are secondary research which does not deal with the English classrooms to find out the actual teaching-learning situation. This study is a primary research which goes into the classrooms at the University of Dhaka with a view to provide us with a picture of what the problems really are for both the students and the teachers. It mainly tries to find out the extent that teachers are able to deal with the day-to-day obstacles. It will also shed light on the successes and solutions worked out by the teachers themselves.

Literature Review

We can find a number of scholars who have addressed the problem of pronunciation teaching in different parts of the world. They have agreed that receptive awareness comes before productive competence (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994; Harmer, 2007; Scrivener, 2011; Cruttenden, 2011). Scrivener (2011) observed that getting the learners to produce the sounds themselves can be difficult. He believes that it is necessary to raise their awareness of the fact that there is something to work on. He also adds that the first step is to get them to hear the difference. Cruttenden (2011) also stresses that learners firstly need to hear and produce the sound contrasts and memorize the accentual patterns of words. Harmer (2007) again points out that when the learners can hear correctly, they are on the way to being able to speak correctly. The author has also found that making the students aware of features like the pronunciation difference among the final phoneme of the words like stopped, listened and shouted (/t/, /d/ and /ɪd/) helped in their understanding audio clips of native speakers in English. This motivated them to correct their pronunciation.

The teacher's role is thus very much important in pronunciation teaching. Only practical proficiency is not enough for the teacher. The teachers should know about the language he/she is teaching.

Furthermore, making learners notice things by consciousness raising is as crucial to pronunciation as it is to the teaching of other aspects of language such as grammar and vocabulary (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994). So, the differences of the target language with the mother tongue should be made clear to the learners from the very beginning. One aspect which makes pronunciation teaching easier is the fact that we have a monolingual group in our English language classes at the University of Dhaka. The reason is that Bangladesh is a monolingual country having Bangla as the national official language (Chowdhury, 2007). Gower, Philips and Walters (2005) points out the advantages of having a monolingual group. One advantage, according to them, is that it is easy to pick out the English sounds which are difficult for all the students in the class.

Khaghaninejad and Fahandejsaadi (2018) also stresses on the importance of the use of contrastive analysis by the English language teacher at tertiary level. They claimed that the sound system and syllabic structure of the L1 have some impacts on the pronunciation of the target language sentences. With the application of a contrastive analysis, ESL/EFL teachers can find out on which particular phonological characteristics the students may have problem during learning. They showed a contrastive analysis between the sound system of Farsi and English. They found that due to the difference between the Farsi and English phonological systems, the advanced students had difficulty with the absent phoneme and consonant clusters. Moreover, it was revealed that the pronunciation of these features by Iranian students were not totally perceivable by the native English speakers. They claimed that contrastive analysis may provide insights into the differences between the L1 an L2 of the students. They concluded that this insight will help the teachers to become more aware of the impact of L1 and the problems that the students will have to deal with in learning English.

Suryani, Syahrizal and Fauziah (2019) have found that teachers' knowledge and skill to access and use the technology are needed to facilitate the learning and teaching process. They have found that using technological help like audio-visual aid and computer enhanced pronunciation teaching materials made pronunciation teaching easier for both the teachers and the learners.

Beatrice (2020) argued that learners do not have to achieve native like pronunciation. However, they should surpass the threshold level to ensure that their pronunciation does not distort the meaning of what they communicate. Her findings show that in Kenya, the teachers found it difficult to work on students' pronunciation because of their lack of training in this area.

The pronunciation problems faced by the students and the importance of the use of contrastive analysis to teach English language to Bangladeshi students were addressed by a number of scholars in our country (Rahman, 1995; Tahereen, 2015; Rahman, 2016; Begum and Hoque, 2016).

Rahman (1995) pointed out the difficulties in pronunciation of English by Bangladeshi students. The article assumes a holistic view of all English language learners in different levels throughout the country. He stresses that not only the phonemes but also the supra-segmental features of English are difficult for the English learners. He observed that in our country, English is spoken with an accent related to the mother tongue which pays little attention to the sound patterns, stress and intonation systems of English making their speech often unintelligible to native speakers. Similarly, Bangladeshi speakers sometimes do not fully understand native speakers of English.

Tahereen (2015) has also agreed with Rahman (1995) and explained that there is a lot of delicate differences between the students' L1 and L2 which create problem for Bangla speakers to learn English pronunciation. She has also pointed out the differences between the two languages and explained the reason behind the difficulty in pronunciation. According to her, it is because of the lack of input in the previous levels that the students were unable to achieve intelligible pronunciation. She stated that before tertiary level, most of the students did not have any experience in receiving instruction in English. Moreover, students of different regional dialects mispronounce certain words in English because of their dialectal influence. However, the article does not provide any first-hand experience of teaching English pronunciation at the tertiary level.

The Bangla Phonetic Alphabet (BPA) was used by Rahman (2016) to help English language learners correct their pronunciation. He also

pointed out the sounds that are absent in Bangla and showed an easy way to learn them with the help of audio/video clips. He has tried to make the diphthongs easier for Bangladeshi learners of English. This self-study guide book can enhance autonomous learning. However, there is no instance of using it in our classes.

In their study at tertiary level, Rahman and Mamun (2015) stated that many of the teachers in our country may not be well aware of the effectiveness of using audio-visual aids. In the five language classes that they have observed, it was found that some audio materials were used such as phonemic chart, songs, conversations etc. The visual aids used in the classes were pictures, video clips, movie clips, documentary etc. It was found that most of these audio-visual materials were used in speaking and listening activities including pronunciation teaching.

Begum and Hoque (2016) analysed the pronunciation of 35 tertiary level students. They also conducted a survey on the opinion of 10 English language teachers' about the students' pronunciation problems and its sources. It was found out that lack of proper pronunciation teaching methods from the primary to higher secondary level are the main source of these problems. However, teaching and learning of pronunciation of the students in tertiary level were not dealt with in the article.

Most of the studies implemented in the area of teaching pronunciation concentrated on the analysis of pronunciation errors produced by Bangladeshi learners and pronunciation difficulties and problems faced by students. There is a vast difference between analysing the problems and giving suggestions for probable solutions; and finding out the challenges that exist both for the teachers and the students and how these obstacles are handled by them in real classroom situation. Hence, this study aims to investigate the instructors' approaches on teaching pronunciation as well as to fill the gap in the present literature. The study is thus unique in its field as it focuses on the learner, the teacher and the classrooms at the University of Dhaka.

Methodology

In this study, a mixed methods research structure was applied to get a better understanding of the situation. Miles and Huberman (1994), Strauss and Corbin (1998) are some of the supporters of this approach (Dornyei, 2016). The latter pointed out that the issue is not whether to

use one form or another but rather how both might work together to foster the development of theory. They also explained that both approach should contribute in a circular and evolving way with each method contributing to the theory in ways that only each can.

One of the major strengths of mixed methods research is its concept of triangulation introduced in the 1970s (Denzin, 1978; Brewer and Hunter, 1989; Creswell, 1994; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998, 2003 cited in Dornyei, 2016). The main strength of mixed methods research is that methodological triangulation can help to reduce the inherent weakness of individual methods by offsetting them by the strength of another, thereby maximizing both the internal and external validity of research. Lazaraton (2005 cited in Dornyei, 2016) prefers mixed methods research because in a combination of quantitative and qualitative method, each highlights reality in a different yet complimentary way. Triangulation was used by Denzin (1978 cited in Dornyei, 2016) to refer to the generation of multiple perspectives on a phenomenon by using a variety of data sources, investigators, theories or research methods with the purpose of corroborating an overall interpretation.

In this study, among all the faculties and Institutes of the University of Dhaka, four randomly chosen departments from four different faculties and institutes were taken under consideration. These were, Department of Microbiology, Department of Arabic, Department of World religion and Culture and Institute of Disaster Management and Vulnerability Studies. Nunan (1992) pointed out that in those situations in which it is not feasible to collect data from the entire population, the researcher must resort to sampling. The sampling procedure which was chosen among all the procedures is known as cluster. The target population consisted of the students of these four departments.

At first a questionnaire survey was conducted among the students to find out the problems. There were both quantitative and qualitative questions. Questionnaires are considered as one of the good ways of gathering data on attitudes from a large group of participants. The reason behind this is that it permits researchers to collect information that participants can report about themselves like their beliefs and motivation (Mackey & Gass, 2005)

Secondly, teachers were interviewed in light of the findings. There were five teachers as one of the department had two sections. The

interview enabled the researcher to gather details and insights that were not accessible through the questionnaire survey alone.

Lastly, four classes from each department were observed to validate the information found from both the teachers and the students. Thus the classroom situation was also analysed. Seliger and Shohamy (1989) pointed out that by using multiple procedures in a single study, it is possible to obtain data from a variety of sources simultaneously. Again, through the use of different perspectives or a holistic one a study can gather as much information as possible.

The vast amount of qualitative data that were gathered went through the process of Thematic Analysis. Thematic Analysis is a method for identifying and analyzing patterns in qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This type of analysis is known for its accessibility, flexibility and can be applied within a vast range of qualitative research. This method gives us a step by step way of analyzing the data. At first, the data were familiarized by the researcher. Secondly, the data were coded. In the third phase, themes were searched and identified. Fourthly, the themes were put together and reviewed. In the fifth phase, the themes were defined and named. Lastly, the themes were written up which involves weaving together the analytic narrative, data extracts and contextualizing it in relation to existing literature.

In addition, latent level analysis as opposed to manifest level analysis was given emphasis in this study Here, the analysis of all the types of data collected from the three different procedures came together to give us a more comprehensive view of the actual teaching-learning situation.

Findings

The findings from the students, the teachers and the classes observed are discussed in this section. The same phenomenon is focused from three different angels. These are presented below:

Students – The questionnaire survey contained both quantitative and qualitative questions on the pronunciation of students. They were asked if any specific activities were done in class to improve their pronunciation. There were 132 responses. Here, only 49 participants or

37.12% replied in the affirmative. On the contrary, 83 respondents or 62.88% replied that no substantial activities were done in this respect.
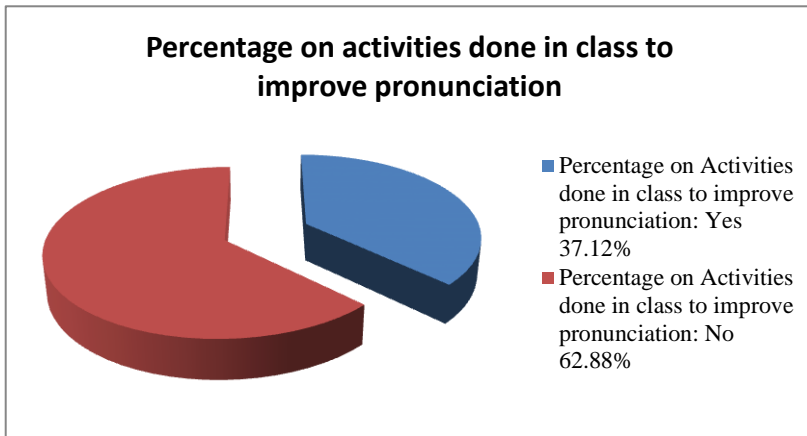

Figure: Students' report on pronunciation activity in class.

The respondents who answered in the affirmative were then asked to specify the activities that were done to improve their pronunciation. A large number of students replied they are corrected during prepared speech which they deliver in front of the class. They are also corrected on every other opportunity. One of the participants stated,

> Our teacher helps us a lot with pronunciation, correcting if we are wrong. That helps a lot. (participant 25)

Some students mentioned that especially correction occurs when they are reading aloud from a text. One of the respondents stated,

> Reading in front of the class paves the way for us to rectify our pronunciation. (participant 115)

This opportunistic teaching is the extent of pronunciation teaching for the students of some departments.

Students from two departments stated that they are taught IPA. IPA is the International Phonetic Alphabet which lists the sounds of all the languages. Each sound is called a phoneme and it is represented by a symbol (Roach, 2010). Other activities as specified by the students are; pair work, pronunciation competition etc. Only a few of the fortunate students, about 12%, said that they watched pronunciation online, or listened to tape-scripts provided by the teacher.

Teachers - There were different types of strategies, followed by different teachers, regarding the teaching of pronunciation. One of the strategy involves teaching IPA symbols,

> …so that they (students) can understand the pronunciation of the word all by themselves without the help of the teachers. (teacher 4)

He also pointed out the new sounds (for example, the $/ʒ/$ sound as in 'vision') with the help of contrastive analysis. Another strategy is that, the teacher sometimes takes his laptop computer to the class and gives them an idea of the place and manner of articulation. He gives pronunciation practice by showing them video. He also explains the difference between Bangla and English pronunciation, stress and intonation. In addition, we find teacher using listening tape scripts from a global textbook. He also has pronunciation drills in his class as it is not a large class and he is provided with audio visual support. Again, one strategy is the correction of pronunciation errors by the teacher. The teachers sometimes pronounce some words and tells the class to pronounce them following him. Lastly, one of the teachers asks the students to download dictionary with pronunciation in their mobile. He then gives them a few words and asks them to find out the pronunciation. However, we also find that one of the teachers is not motivated to do any pronunciation activity because he feels that the students are not interested. As speaking is not evaluated in the Examinations, some students do not feel an immediate need to be proficient in pronunciation.

Another problem pointed out was the lack of space for the teachers to sit and give extra time to the weak students. As they are part time teachers, the authority is less concerned about their sitting arrangement than the full time faculty. The teachers also find it difficult to manage extra time as they have commitments elsewhere.

Lack of logistic support and large classes are other problems that were pointed out by the teachers. Overcrowded classes hinder free movement of the teacher and to help the weaker students.

Class Observation - In two of the classes, it was observed that the teachers helped the students by correcting their pronunciation while they read from the text. Even when students asked questions or answered a question from the teacher, they were corrected. The frequent corrections were among /s/, /z/ and $/ɪz/$. In one class, the

teacher spent a few minutes to teach three IPA phonemes. Some of the students were observed to write the Bangla equivalent sound. The teacher also corrected the mispronunciation between /d $_3$ / and /z/. Apart from that, a new sound that is not found in Bangla was practiced using a drill of words. It was also observed that students of a large class were divided in four groups to take part in a drill as whole class drill would make too much sound which may disturb nearby classes.

In another class it was again observed that, the teacher asked his students to listen to the pronunciation of a specific word from their dictionary that had previously been downloaded in their mobiles. Even during reading comprehension activity, the students looked up the meaning of new words and listened to its pronunciation with the help of their cell phone. The students seemed interested to correct their pronunciation and the class seemed livelier because of this use of technology. In addition, it was observed that this technology helped student autonomy.

Analysis

Activities done in class to improve students' pronunciation were reported by only 37% of the students. According to the students these are, correction done by teacher when students deliver prepared speech, or when they read from text, or when they take part in pair work. Actually we can see that most of the students have not taken part in pronunciation focused activities to correct their pronunciation. Only a few students stated that they listened to audio tape scripts provided by the teacher. Thus we can perceive that, with a few exceptions, all the teachers resorted to opportunistic teaching. Harmer (2007) supported opportunistic teaching by saying that taking a problem at the moment when it occurs can be a successful way of dealing with pronunciation. In addition, he suggested that the teachers should use discrete slots for teaching pronunciation. According to him, separate pronunciation slots can be extremely useful, and provide a welcome change of pace and activity during a lesson.

Among the five teachers, four of them reported that they had activities to improve pronunciation. The teacher who had a regular group of 33 students reported that he taught IPA and he took his laptop and showed them videos on pronunciation. During teaching language

courses at the Institute of Modern Languages at the University of Dhaka and also in two private Universities, I have also found that teaching IPA to the students are very much rewarding. Some of those students carried small sized or pocket dictionaries and checked and corrected their pronunciation in every opportunity they got. Harmer (2007) suggested that if the students are only asked to recognise rather than produce the different symbols, then the strain is not so great. It is easier for them if they are introduced to the various symbols gradually rather than all at once. In my previous research (Chowdhury, 2013) the teachers reported that they found it difficult to make the students realise that English has a different way of pronunciation. As they are used to speak a syllable timed language, Bangla, it is difficult for them to produce the difference between long and short vowels which changes the meaning of a word.

The teacher who had a large class of 55 students used audio tape scripts from a global textbook. He also ran pronunciation drills. Rest of the teachers with larger groups of about 70-80 students, who did not have audio visual support, faced problems in teaching pronunciation. Two of them stated that they corrected students' pronunciation when they found mispronunciation. However, one teacher (teacher 1) asked his students to download dictionary with pronunciation in their mobiles and asked them to listen to the correct pronunciation. He also occasionally gave them some words to find out the correct pronunciation. Class observation also confirms that students listen to the pronunciation of a new word and are benefitted by it. Khaghaninejad and Fahandejsaadi (2018) also stressed the need of international intelligibility of the students. Again for that we need differentiated teaching which is difficult in a large class. Harmer (2007) stressed on the fact that we need to get students to identify their own individual pronunciation difficulties so that we can help them. Differentiated teaching, where the student works on his individual problem, is especially appropriate because students may be more aware of their pronunciation problems than they are with grammar or vocabulary issues. Tahereen (2015) suggested the use of cell phones in the classroom for pronunciation teaching. Here, we can see that both opportunistic teaching and differentiated teaching was done successfully with the help of cell phone in one of the classes at the University of Dhaka. Another positive side is that the correction is

made by the students themselves. It relieves the teacher of a burden because during correction, awkwardness, inhibition, embarrassment and fear of losing face tend to come to the fore and the teacher may face difficulty in handling the situation (Hedge 2019).

The findings state that teachers in all the classes are not giving equal effort to correct and improve the pronunciation of the students. They are not even using the same strategies. In the interview we find one teacher (teacher 5) saying that students are not interested. When asked to clarify the statement it was found that the teacher did not have audio-visual support and was unable to use activities focusing pronunciation. As stated earlier, when learners were asked to express what improvements in the course they would like to see, about 11% of the participants specified that they wanted teaching of pronunciation as a part of the course. This implies that because of the lack in logistic support and large class the teachers find it difficult to keep up their motivation for teaching pronunciation in the course. The difficulties were also pointed out by the teachers in my previous research (Chowdhury, 2013). Here also, we find different degree of effort and a lack of coordination among the teachers.

Each teacher followed a technique that he/she liked or found easier to carry out. However, it is the combination of different techniques that will appeal to different types of learners and make the teaching more fruitful. In addition, it was found that a low cost technology like mobile phone can help a great deal in teaching. These type of successes should be encouraged and be allowed to spread among the other classes.

Suggestions and further directions

Although there are different strategies for teaching pronunciation, success depends on individual teacher and the dynamics of the group of students he/she teaches. However, there are some suggestions that can work and has proved to work in certain situations:

- Separate pronunciation slot should be integrated by the teacher in the lesson plan. The practise may last only three to six minutes. However, they may prove significant in the course of the time.
- In teaching lexical items, stress and intonation, the teacher should let the students hear the words being used naturally in the context of a short phrase or sentence (Scrivener, 2011).

The students can also be allowed to repeat after the teacher. The teacher can use audio CDs from global textbooks on pronunciation teaching for the purpose. He/she may also play from audio texts downloaded in his/her cell phone as most of the large classes have sound system and a mike in the dais.

- Teaching IPA gradually and not at the same time. This action fosters learner autonomy.

- The sounds of English and its difference with Bangla can be pointed out with the help of contrastive analysis.

- Books on pronunciation which shows the sound contrasts between short and long vowels can be used. This was reported to be effective by the students of ESOL (English for Students of Other Languages) in my class at the Institute of Modern Languages, University of Dhaka.

- Training of the teachers to implement all these above mentioned strategies is a dire need, especially for Computer Assisted Language Learning. In the study taken up by Rahman and Mamun (2015), language teachers found that using audio-visual aids made classes more interactive than lecture based classes, helped in teaching pronunciation and vocabulary and above all generated ideas for discussions as speaking activities.

- A common forum for teachers should be established to share their successes. For example, other students could benefit by using dictionaries in their cell phones. At the same time, other teachers may find it easier to teach pronunciation.

- We also need full time teachers in the language courses who are able to give extra time if needed for the weaker students. They can connect, share and help each other and be second examiners of each other's scrips.

- The teachers should be encouraged to do action research on pronunciation teaching.

- Last, but probably the most important change needed is the evaluation of speaking skill. As speaking is not evaluated in the examination, there is no way of evaluating pronunciation of the students. Only when speaking is evaluated, it will solve the problem of motivation of teaching-learning pronunciation for both the students and the teachers.

Conclusion

Improvement in pronunciation cannot be achieved in a day, a week or a month. It may be months before a student can perceive the improvement. For the teacher, it may be after the language course finishes that the positive side of pronunciation teaching can become apparent. However, even an unofficial evaluation can show the progress, and motivate both the students and the teacher. The teacher should not refrain from implementing new strategies now and then. It is unto the teacher himself/herself to test different strategies and find out the best suited ones for the unique class he/she is teaching right at the moment.

References

Bailey, K. M. (2005). Speaking. In D. Nunan (Ed.), *Practical English language teaching: Speaking* (pp. 47-66). New York, USA: McGraw-Hill.

Beatrice, M. N. (2020). Pronunciation pedagogy and intelligibility issues in language acquisition. *International Journal of English Language Teaching* Vol. 7, No. 1; 2020.

Begum, A. & Hoque, M.A. (2016). English pronunciation problems of the tertiary level students in Bangladesh: A Case Study. *Researchers World, 6*, 51-61.

Brown, H.D. & Lee, H. (2015). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy.* Essex, UK: Pearson Education Limited.

Chowdhury, S. A. (2013). Practicing the speaking skill in English in a large class: Difficulties and challenges in the Foundation Course in the University of Dhaka. *Journal of the Institute of Modern Languages, 24*, 43-58.

Chowdhury, S. A. (2007). The question of national and official language of Bangladesh and the status of English. *The Bangla Academy Journal, 2*(1), 82-91.

Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2013). Teaching thematic analysis: Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The psychologist*, *26*(2), 120-123.

Cruttenden, A. (2011). *Gimson's pronunciation of English.* London, UK: Hodder Education.

Dalton, C. & Seidlhofer, B. (2014). *Pronunciation*. Hampshire, UK: Oxford University Press.

Dörnyei, Z. (2016). *Research methods in applied linguistics*. Hampshire, UK: Oxford University Press.

Gower, R. Phillips, D. and Walters, S. (2005). *Teaching practice: A handbook for teachers' in training.* London, UK: Macmillan Publishers Limited.

Harmer, J. (2007). *The practice of English language teaching* (3rd ed.). Essex, UK: Pearson Education Limited.

Hedge, Tricia (2019). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Hampshire, UK: Oxford University Press.

Hughes, R. (2002). *Teaching and researching speaking*. Essex, UK: Pearson Education Limited.

Khaghaninejad, M.S. & Fahandejsaadi, R. (2018). Intelligibility of language learners to native speakers: Evidence from Iranian ESL learners conversing with Canadians. *International Journal of English Language and Translation Studies, 6*(1), 93-104.

Khan, R. (2000). The English foundation course at Dhaka University. *The Dhaka University Studies*, *57*, 77-110.

Mackey, A., & Gass, S. M. (2005). Second language research: Methodology and design. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Nunan, D. (1992). *Research methods in language learning*. New York, U.S.A: Cambridge University Press.

Rahman, A. (2016). *English pronunciation guidebook for native Bengali speakers*. Dhaka, Bangladesh: ZAMOSC Mobile Schools.

Rahman, H. (1995). Problems of pronunciation for Bengali learners of English. *Journal of the Institute of Modern Languages, 1995-96,* 1-17.

Rahman, S. (1998). *ELT in Bangladesh: A socio-psychological study of public and private universities in Dhaka* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.

Rahman, S. & Mamun. A. A. (2015). Effect of audio-visual aids in English language teaching: A study at tertiary level in Bangladesh. *Journal of the Institute of Modern Languages, 26*, 49-76.

Roach, P. (2010). *English phonetics and phonology*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Scrivener, J. (2011). *Learning teaching: The essential guide to English language teaching*. London, UK: Macmillan Education.

Seliger, H. W. & Shohamy, E. (1989). *Second language research methods*. Oxford University Press.

Suryani, L., Syahrizal, T., & Fauziah, U. N. E. (2019). *Using ORAI application in teaching pronunciation.* Indonesian EFL Journal, 5(2), 93-102. doi: 10.25134/ieflj.v5i2.1835.

Tahereen, T. (2015). *Challenges in teaching pronunciation at tertiary level in Bangladesh. International Journal of English Language and Translation Studies, 3(1)*, 09-20.