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ANALYSIS OF TASKS AND ACTIVITIES IN ESL PRONUNCIATION BOOKS

BY

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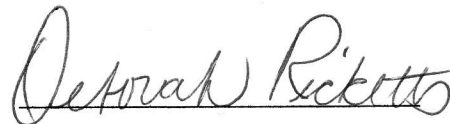
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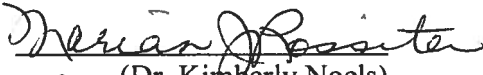766 Kilbirnie Dr.
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, a Project Report entitled "Analysis of Tasks and Activities in ESL Pronunciation Books" submitted by Deborah Ricketts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF EDUCATION in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL).

(Dr. Tracey Derwing)

(Dr. Kimberly Noels)

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Abstract

In this study, 16 English as a second language (ESL) pronunciation textbooks were examined. Accompanying audio CDs were excluded from the research. Twelve texts were beginner through advanced-level student books and four were teachers' manuals. All of the textbooks were published after 2004. The student texts were analyzed to determine the extent to which activities were communicative, contextualized, and spiraled. Instructional foci were examined for percentages of activities related to perception, production, segmental, and suprasegmental features. Findings suggested that percentages varied greatly between textbooks and across individual series. The teachers' manuals were reviewed for teaching tips, instructions, and pedagogical content. Results indicated that a broad array of information was imparted. Some manuals provided helpful teaching tips, explicit instructions, and pedagogical rationale for activities while others offered limited advice and reminders for instructors to monitor their learners' pronunciation.

Given that many ESL educators lack formal training in pronunciation, tables summarizing the findings in this study and an annotated bibliography were created to assist ESL instructors when choosing pronunciation-specific textbooks.

It is important for second language (L2) speakers of English to be intelligible (understood) when communicating. A great deal of research has been conducted on L2 intelligibility (Derwing & Munro, 2005, 2009; Field, 2005; Hahn, 2004; Munro & Derwing, 2008; Munro, Derwing & Sato, 2006; Trofimovich & Baker, 2006; Zielinski, 2008). Derwing and Munro (2005) defined intelligibility as "the extent to which a listener actually understands an utterance" (p. 385). If L2 speakers are not intelligible, serious difficulties can arise. For example, Munro et al. (2006) explained that "mispronunciations of individual vowels and consonants can cause listeners to hear the wrong words, as when a speaker says *sheep* instead of *ship*" (p. 69). The researchers also noted that "if first language intonation patterns are transferred directly into the second language, native listeners may misinterpret the speaker's intent" (p. 69). Such misconceptions can result in adverse reactions.

Research by Hahn (2004) examined the effect of primary stress (sentence stress) on intelligibility. Her research examined three lectures that were delivered by an L2 teaching assistant. In one lecture, the speaker used correct word stress. In another lecture, misassigned word stress was used, and in the third, there was an absence of word stress. Hahn discovered that native listeners remembered more of the lecture content when primary stress was correctly placed, and the speaker was evaluated more positively. She concluded that "primary stress contributes significantly to the intelligibility of nonnative discourse" (p. 218).

Because research such as Hahn's (2004) suggests that intelligibility plays a crucial role in effective communication, it is fair to say that pronunciation instruction should be a key consideration in ESL teaching. Hence, I will focus on research and pedagogy related to ESL pronunciation learning and instruction, and, in particular, I will examine the content of selected pronunciation textbooks to determine what instructional support is provided.

Literature Review

In a study conducted by Breitkreutz, Derwing, and Rossiter (2001), ESL educators acknowledged that some learners need pronunciation instruction. Furthermore, researchers have shown that a significant number of L2 learners have expressed a desire to improve their pronunciation (Derwing, Diepenbroek & Foote, 2012; Derwing & Rossiter, 2002; Levis & Grant, 2003). However, several studies indicate that many teachers are uncomfortable teaching pronunciation (e.g., Burgess & Spencer, 2000; Foote, Holtby & Derwing, 2011). Foote et al.'s (2011) survey indicated that "many instructors are reluctant to teach pronunciation in adult ESL classrooms, often because of lack of formal training" (p. 22). Foote et al. (2011) also scanned web sites of Canadian university TESL programs and found that only six appeared to offer pronunciation-specific courses, indicating that opportunities for formal preparation are few and far between.

The lack of formal training for teachers places accountability challenges on instructors. For instance, Thomson (2013) reported that "teachers must be capable of discriminating materials and techniques that are evidence-based from those that are not" (p. 225). Furthermore, Gorsuch (2001) explained that teachers must understand the theoretical foundations of language textbooks. She stated, "the assumption made by writers penetrate all aspects of the textbook -- what students are asked to do with a language and how they are asked to do it" (p. 120). Moreover, Celce-Murcia, Brinton, Goodwin, with Griner (2010) claimed that "teachers must have a thorough command of the English sound system and possess a principled methodology for teaching it effectively…Second, the teacher's knowledge base must also include an awareness of issues that negatively affect their students' intelligibility" (p. 43).

Darcy, Ewert, and Lidster (2012) argued that teaching pronunciation is challenging for several reasons. "Teachers are often left without clear guidelines and are confronted with contradictory purposes and practices for pronunciation instruction" (p. 93). Foote et al.'s (2011) survey of teaching practices in adult ESL Canadian programs found that for most teachers, no methodical approach was evident in deciding what or how to teach pronunciation. For example, some instructors included a variety of activities to address a broad range of pronunciation issues (e.g., word stress, rhythm and intonation) while other teachers focused on a narrower range of difficulties such as segmentals (vowels and consonants).

Some confusion could be related to uncertainty in research. For instance, Hahn (2004) commented that many pronunciation-related resources promote the teaching of suprasegmentals (prosody). "Knowing how the various prosodic features actually affect the way native speakers (NSs) process nonnative speech would substantially strengthen the rationale for current pronunciation pedagogy" (p. 201). Munro and Derwing (2008) suggested that "research on second language (L2) phonetic learning indicates that, even in adults, segmental acquisition remains possible through L2 experience. However, the findings of previous cross-sectional studies of vowel and consonant learning have proved difficult to interpret" (p. 479). Isaacs (2009) added that a challenge exists in finding a balance between teaching form and meaning. "In pronunciation pedagogy, this challenge is compounded because repetitive practice, which has been shown to enhance phonological acquisition and promote fluency, is widely viewed as being incompatible with communicative principles" (p. 1). Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) have proposed a communicative framework in which pronunciation tasks progress from more controlled practice to freer production practice. In controlled practice, the focus is on form whereas with freer practice the emphasis is on fluent production.

Another pronunciation teaching challenge reported by Darcy et al. (2012) is "the general lack of guidance from research in determining level-appropriate pronunciation activity" (p. 93). The authors' work on curriculum content prioritized pronunciation elements that are necessary at various language proficiency levels. For example, at a beginner level, they suggested the inclusion of phonics, vowel length, stress timing and intonation patterns of statements and questions. At an intermediate and high level, sentence stress, linking and intonation were recommended. In addition, Gilbert (2001) proposed six pronunciation priorities for beginner-level ESL learners; however, research related to level-specific instruction is limited.

As instructors face many challenges, it is fair to say that pronunciation instruction may not receive the attention it deserves in ESL programs. Derwing (2010) reported that "pronunciation still tends to be the neglected component of many language programs" (p. 24). Nevertheless, researchers and educators acknowledge the significance of teaching pronunciation. How then do learning institutions and teachers address instruction? Studies suggest that programs and untrained instructors who teach pronunciation may rely heavily on intuition and textbook resources (Bragger & Rice, 2000; Derwing & Munro, 2005; Thomson, 2013). However, there are drawbacks to this approach. Derwing and Munro (2005) indicated that "most materials have been designed without a basis in pronunciation research findings. This omission precludes teachers' understanding of the rationale for the content and activities suggested and thus does not allow for appropriate matching to students' requirements" (p. 389). Bragger and Rice (2000) reported that textbooks are used "for curriculum design, for lesson planning, as a basis for assessment, and perhaps too often, to define their [instructors'] approach to teaching" (p. 107).

Tomlinson (2003) suggested that an analysis of materials can be beneficial in determining whether important elements have been overlooked. He described three types of assessment (pre-

use, whilst-use, and post-use). "Pre-use entails "making predictions about the potential value of materials for their users" (p. 23). Whilst-use includes features such as "clarity of instructions, …comprehensibility of texts, credibility of tasks,… and achievability of tasks" (p. 24). Post-use examines the impact of the materials on the user.

As textbooks are a common resource for instructors, especially novice teachers, it is important that L2 educators make wise selection choices. A study conducted by Derwing, Diepenbroek, and Foote (2012) examined 48 ESL general-skills textbooks of all proficiency levels and six teachers' manuals to determine the extent of pronunciation activities, how consistent pronunciation coverage was within and across different series of textbooks and whether pronunciation-related research was reflected in the types of tasks. Results indicated that pronunciation coverage in textbooks and consistency both within and across series varied greatly. Suprasegmental features (e.g., intonation and word stress) occurred most often, although a wide range of segmental features (vowels and consonants) were covered. The researchers expressed the view that a good pronunciation textbook should include a balance between segmental and suprasegmental features, contextualization for features such as intonation and stress, and interactive activities that are engaging for learners.

In addition to the Derwing et al. (2012) general-skills ESL textbook research, Gorsuch (2001) examined suprasegmental features in the pronunciation textbook *Clear Speech* (Gilbert, 1993); however, aside from this study, to the best of my knowledge, no research has analyzed pronunciation textbooks for content or instructional foci. The current research contributes to the literature by filling this gap. Eight research questions served as the catalyst for this study.

1. To what extent are pronunciation activities in each textbook communicative?

2. To what extent are pronunciation activities in each textbook contextualized?

3. To what extent are pronunciation activities in each textbook spiraled?

4. What percentage of activities in each pronunciation textbook focus on perception?

5. What percentage of activities in each pronunciation textbook focus on production?

6. What percentage of activities in each pronunciation textbook focus on both perception and

    production?

7. What percentage of activities in each pronunciation textbook has a segmental focus?

8. What percentage of activities in each pronunciation textbook has a suprasegmental focus?

Method

Twelve student pronunciation textbooks and four teachers' manuals were reviewed for

content. The student books were selected from those used in adult ESL college and university

programs in Edmonton and Calgary. Contacts were obtained from an ESL directory, and an

email was sent to instructors and coordinators to determine which books were most frequently

employed. The remaining books were chosen from catalogues of major ESL publishers

(McGraw-Hill, Nelson, Cambridge University Press, and Longman). See Appendix A for a list

of the books examined.

Each student textbook was reviewed page by page to determine the number of

communicative, contextualized, and spiraled activities. Communicative activities were defined in

the following way. Celce-Murcia (1987) explained that, "the communicative approach presents

language through tasks that focus on meaning, using activities such as role playing, problem

solving and games" (p. 6). In this study, communicative activities are those which require

learners to interact with one another and exchange information by listening and speaking to

negotiate meaning. In this paper, the terms 'activities' and 'tasks' are synonymous.

'Contextualized' was defined by Crystal (2008) as "specific parts of an utterance (or text) near or adjacent to a unit which is the focus of attention. The occurrence of a unit… is partly or wholly determined by its context... in order to clarify the meaning intended" (p. 108). In this study, an example of a contextualized activity would be practicing a dialogue containing vocabulary and phrases related to making a doctor's appointment. 'Spiraled' indicates "points revisited" (Derwing et al., 2012, p. 32) or reviewed. In the current research, spiraled activities contain concepts covered in previous chapters of a textbook such as counting syllables or practicing the same vowel and consonant sounds.

Textbooks were also reviewed to determine the number of activities that focused on perception, production, combined perception and production, and segmental and suprasegmental features. 'Perception' denotes "the process of receiving and decoding spoken, written or signed input" (Crystal, 2008, p. 356). 'Production' is defined as "the process of planning and executing the act of speech" (Crystal, 2008, p. 389). 'Segments' refer to "individual consonants and vowels," and 'suprasegmentals' represent "rhythm, intonation, stress" (Breitkreutz et al., 2001, p. 52).

During the process of identifying activities, if learners were instructed to read silently, write the spelling of a word, or underline a word, the task was not considered a pronunciation activity. If a single activity covered two aspects (e.g., perception and production in the same task), it was counted as two activities. Microsoft Excel was used to tabulate the number of communicative, contextualized, spiraled, perception, production, combined perception and production, segmental and suprasegmental activities in each textbook. Individual percentages were calculated based on the total number of activities per textbook (see Tables 1-8).

In addition to student textbooks, four instructors' manuals were examined for teaching tips, instructions, and pedagogical content. 'Teaching tips' are "presentation ideas that reinforce or extend the points students are learning" (Gilbert, 2012, p. vi). 'Instructions' mean "clear, explicit explanations" (Derwing et al., 2012, p. 36). 'Pedagogical content' denotes materials that "reflect the insights and findings from current theory and research on second language acquisition" (Tomlinson, 2003, p. 51). Two manuals were companion texts to the beginner-level student books, *Clear speech from the start* (Gilbert, 2012) and *Pronunciation pairs* (Baker & Goldstein, 2008). *Well said* (Grant, 2010) was a companion text to the intermediate level student book, and *Pronunciation practice activities* (Hewings, 2004) was a general teachers' resource text. Examples of teaching tips, instructions and pedagogical content were documented.

Results

Research Question One: To What Extent Are Pronunciation Activities in each Textbook Communicative?

The first research question focused on the extent to which activities were communicative. To answer this question, numbers and corresponding percentages were calculated for each textbook. Results indicated that the percentages of communicative activities varied greatly among textbooks, from 15% to 72% (see Table 1). The four beginner texts had a range from 16% to 34% while the intermediate and advanced books ranged from 15% to 72%. *Clear speech from the start* (Gilbert, 2012), *Clear speech* (Gilbert, 2012), *Focus on pronunciation 1* (Lane, 2013), *Focus on pronunciation 2* (Lane, 2013), *Focus on pronunciation 3* (Lane, 2005), *Well said intro* (Grant, 2007), and *Well said* (Grant, 2010) were examined across the series. *Focus on pronunciation 2* (Lane, 2013), *Focus on pronunciation 3* (Lane, 2005), and *Well said* (Grant, 2010) had a larger percentage of communicative activities at the intermediate and advanced

levels while *Clear speech from the start* (Gilbert, 2012) and *Clear speech* (Gilbert, 2012)

remained constant across the series. Generally, the beginner level textbooks contained fewer

communicative activities than the intermediate and advanced-level textbooks.

Table 1

Number and Percentage of Communicative Activities per Student Textbook

Textbook	Number of Comm. Activities	Percent (%)
Clear speech from the start	52	25
Clear speech	57	26
English pronunciation made simple	55	15
Focus on pronunciation 1	99	34
Focus on pronunciation 2	157	55
Focus on pronunciation 3	193	72
Pronunciation pairs	50	16
Pronunciation plus	101	44
Sound concepts	84	69
Targeting pronunciation	134	55
Well said intro	47	23
Well said	77	39

Research Question Two: To What Extent Are Pronunciation Activities in each Textbook

Contextualized?

To address research question two, numbers of contextualized activities were tallied for each textbook and percentages were computed. Contextualization varied from 12% to 30% among textbooks (see Table 2). The beginner books had a disparity of eighteen percentage points while the intermediate and advanced-level texts differed by eight percentage points. Across textbook series, *Clear speech from the start* (Gilbert, 2012) and *Clear speech* (Gilbert, 2012) had the widest discrepancy at twelve percentage points. In comparison, *Focus on pronunciation 1* (Lane, 2013), *Focus on pronunciation 2* (Lane, 2013), *Focus on pronunciation 3* (Lane, 2005), *Well said intro* (Grant, 2007) and *Well said* (Grant, 2010) series remained consistent. From the data, no obvious patterns were evident.

Table 2

Number and Percentage of Contextualized Activities per Student Textbook

Textbook	Number of Context.	Percent (%)
Clear speech from the start	61	30
Clear speech	41	19
English pronunciation made simple	53	14
Focus on pronunciation 1	73	25
Focus on pronunciation 2	71	25
Focus on pronunciation 3	70	26

Pronunciation pairs	38	12
Pronunciation plus	39	17
Sound concepts	29	24
Targeting pronunciation	50	20
Well said intro	40	19
Well said	41	19

Research Question Three: To What Extent Are Pronunciation Activities in each Textbook Spiraled?

   In response to research question three, the number of spiraled activities for each textbook and a corresponding percentage were calculated. The percentage of spiraled activities varied greatly, with a range from 2% to 41% (see Table 3). One intermediate textbook, *Sound concepts* (Reed & Michaud, 2005) skewed the figures. The variance across beginner-level textbooks was eight percentage points. Across series of textbooks, *Focus on pronunciation 1* (Lane, 2013), *Focus on pronunciation 2* (Lane, 2013), *and Focus on pronunciation 3* (Lane, 2005) varied the most at five percentage points. Nine of the 12 books contained fewer than 15% spiraled concepts. The data indicate that a small percentage of pronunciation features in textbooks were revisited in later chapters.

Table 3

Number and Percentage of Spiraled Activities per Student Textbook

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Textbook	Number of	Percent

	Spiraled Activities	(%)
Clear speech from the start	29	14
Clear speech	34	15
English pronunciation made simple	8	2
Focus on pronunciation 1	18	6
Focus on pronunciation 2	28	10
Focus on pronunciation 3	14	5
Pronunciation pairs	43	13
Pronunciation plus	7	3
Sound concepts	50	41
Targeting pronunciation	42	17
Well said intro	21	10
Well said	16	8

Research Question Four: What Percentage of Activities in each Pronunciation Textbook Focus on Perception?

In answer to the fourth research question regarding perception-related activities, tasks were counted and divided by the total number of activities to arrive at a percentage. In some instances, activities were counted twice because they incorporated both perception and production. If the number of perception activities totaled 194, this was added to the number of production tasks (e.g., 129) and tallied for a sum of 323 activities. To arrive at a percentage, 194 was divided by 323 resulting in 60%. Amongst the books, perception activities ranged from 44% to 60% (see

Table 4). Beginner-level texts had the lowest disparity and ranged from 52% to 60% whereas the

intermediate and advanced-level texts ranged from 44% to 57%. Ten of the 12 texts had a 50% to

60% focus on perception activities. Beginner level books had a slightly higher focus on

perception-related activities than advanced-level books.

Table 4

Number and Percentage of Perception Activities per Student Textbook

Textbook	Number of Perception Activities	Percent (%)
Clear speech from the start	194	60
Clear speech	205	55
English pronunciation made simple	255	44
Focus on pronunciation 1	285	52
Focus on pronunciation 2	281	51
Focus on pronunciation 3	256	52
Pronunciation pairs	313	52
Pronunciation plus	217	53
Sound concepts	102	49
Targeting pronunciation	229	56
Well said intro	200	59
Well said	188	57

Research Question Five: What Percentage of Activities in each Pronunciation Textbook

Focus on Production?

Research question five focused on production activities. A similar process to that for research question four was used to arrive at the figures displayed in Table 5. The results parallel those for perception. Of the 12 textbooks, 10 had a production emphasis of between 40% and 50% (see Table 5). The intermediate and advanced-level texts had a somewhat greater emphasis on production related activities. For instance, the range for beginner-level texts was 40% to 48% while the intermediate and advanced-level books ranged from 44% to 57%.

Table 5

Number and Percentage of Production Activities per Student Textbook

Textbook	Number of Prod. Activities	Percent (%)
Clear speech from the start	129	40
Clear speech	165	45
English pronunciation made simple	331	57
Focus on pronunciation 1	259	48
Focus on pronunciation 2	266	49
Focus on pronunciation 3	235	48
Pronunciation pairs	289	48
Pronunciation plus	194	47
Sound concepts	106	51

Targeting pronunciation	179	44
Well said intro	139	41
Well said	145	44

Research Question Six: What Percentage of Activities in each Pronunciation Textbook Focus on both Perception and Production?

Regarding research question six, activities containing both perception and production foci were totaled and corresponding percentages were calculated using the same process as for the individual foci. The tasks in research question six are the same tasks as in research question four and five. The figures in Table 6 simply show how many activities contained both perception and production together. The range among textbooks was 37% to 48% (see Table 6). There was less variability than for the individual perception and production tasks, and there were similar percentages of mixed tasks in beginner and advanced-level textbooks.

Table 6

Number and Percentage of Both Perception and Production Activities per Student Textbook

Textbook	Number of Mixed Percep. and Prod. Tasks	Percent (%)
Clear speech from the start	118	37
Clear speech	153	41
English pronunciation made simple	217	37
Focus on pronunciation 1	246	45

Focus on pronunciation 2	262	48
Focus on pronunciation 3	228	46
Pronunciation pairs	281	47
Pronunciation plus	181	44
Sound concepts	85	41
Targeting pronunciation	165	40
Well said intro	131	39
Well said	132	40

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Research Question Seven: What Percentage of Activities in each Pronunciation Textbook has a Segmental Focus?

   In responding to research question seven, some activities were coded as both segmental and suprasegmental and were thus counted twice. Therefore, the total number of activities is higher than the actual number of activities. Segmental emphasis among textbooks had a wide span, with a range from 32% to 90% (see Table 7). *English pronunciation made simple* (Dale & Poms, 2005) was an outlier at 90% and skewed the results; as the next closest percentage was 64%. The range for beginner textbooks was considerable, from 43% to 64%, but the more advanced-level texts ranged from 32% to 90%. No patterns were evident across textbook series. Eight of the twelve texts had a segmental emphasis of approximately 40-60%.

Table 7

Number and Percentage of Segmental Activities per Student Textbook

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Textbook	Number of	Percent

	Segmental Activities	(%)
Clear speech from the start	88	43
Clear speech	93	40
English pronunciation made simple	334	90
Focus on pronunciation 1	144	48
Focus on pronunciation 2	183	57
Focus on pronunciation 3	133	49
Pronunciation pairs	217	64
Pronunciation plus	109	48
Sound concepts	54	37
Targeting pronunciation	79	32
Well said intro	111	51
Well said	113	55

Research Question Eight: What Percentage of Activities in each Pronunciation Textbook has a Suprasegmental Focus?

To answer research question eight, the suprasegmental emphasis was computed using the same process as that for segmentals. Table 8 indicates that suprasegmental emphasis varied greatly among textbooks with a range between 11% and 69%. A vast difference was observed between beginner-level and advanced-level books (see Table 8). *English pronunciation made simple* (Dale & Poms, 2005) had only 11% suprasegmental activities, far fewer than any other text. Ten of the twelve textbooks had a suprasegmental focus of between 40 to 60%. Two of the

four beginner texts had more than a 50% emphasis on suprasegmentals and a third was close at

49%. Of the eight higher-level books, five contained more than a 50% focus on suprasegmentals.

Table 8

Number and Percentage of Suprasegmental Activities per Student Textbook

Textbook	Number of Suprasegmental Activities	Percent (%)
Clear speech from the start	119	58
Clear speech	138	60
English pronunciation made simple	39	11
Focus on pronunciation 1	158	52
Focus on pronunciation 2	137	43
Focus on pronunciation 3	140	51
Pronunciation pairs	124	36
Pronunciation plus	120	52
Sound concepts	94	64
Targeting pronunciation	172	69
Well said intro	107	49
Well said	91	45

Teachers' Resource Manuals

The four teachers' manuals were analyzed for teaching tips, instructions provided, and pedagogical content. The information varied so greatly among textbooks that only the most common features were compared.

Types of teaching tips. A wide range of presentation ideas were represented. One helpful tip offered in *Clear speech from the start* (Gilbert, 2012) and *Pronunciation pairs* (Baker & Goldstein, 2008) was the use of backward buildup practice for the pronunciation of pronouns (e.g., its) and long sentences which targeted rhythm and intonation. An example was provided to explain the term backward buildup. Other resources, such as the text *Jazz chants* (Graham, 1987), were suggested for additional support in teaching rhythm. *Well said* (Grant, 2010) provided guidance regarding what to teach if chapters were not presented in sequential order. *Pronunciation practice activities* (Hewings, 2004) and *Well said* (Grant, 2010) presented ideas on how to adapt materials for learners at various language proficiency levels and how to make some activities more communicative. *Pronunciation practice activities* (Hewings, 2004) provided tips on the length of time and preparation materials that were required for each activity. *Pronunciation pairs* (Baker & Goldstein, 2008) provided suggestions for activities to link segmental practice to other class work. For example, to reinforce the vowel sound /iy/ as in the word 'tea', a suggestion was to teach introductions with phrases such as 'pleased to meet you'.

Additionally, each manual provided tips for error correction, although not all of the corrections suggested would necessarily affect intelligibility. For instance, practice was recommended for the initial consonant sounds /d/ and / ð/ in the words 'dough' and 'though' and /z/ and /ð/ in the words 'Zen' and 'then'.

Generally, many of the remaining hints were more advice than teaching strategies, such as practicing vocabulary to prepare for a subsequent activity.

Instructions. A wide range of instructions were provided. First, all of the texts included a diagnostic assessment tool, although two of the four books did not provide explicit instructions on how to administer or score the test and only one contained a sample score sheet. Second, *Pronunciation pairs* (Baker & Goldstein, 2008) presented explanations on typical segmental pronunciation difficulties learners were likely to have followed by instructions on how to make individual sounds, although some terminology was presented later in the book. For example, an instruction for variations in the vowel sound /ʌ/ contained information for the sound being longer before a voiced consonant, yet voicing was explained in a later chapter, so the instructions for teaching the sound were incomplete. Third, only *Clear speech from the start* (Gilbert, 2012) contained a glossary of terms; *Pronunciation practice activities* (Hewings, 2004) explained key terms in the introduction section. Fourth, a wide variety of specific reminders to monitor features such as linking, producing a rise or fall in intonation, and focusing on word or sentence stress occurred; however, many were vague reminders to monitor pronunciation. Finally, other instructions directed L2 teachers to model, read, and review rules with learners.

Generally, *Clear speech from the start* (Gilbert, 2012) and *Well said* (Grant, 2010) appeared to provide the clearest instructions and rationale for activities.

Pedagogical content. The activities described in *Clear speech from the start* (Gilbert, 2012), *Pronunciation practice activities* (Hewings, 2004), and *Well said* (Grant, 2010) were based on pedagogical principles. In describing the rationale for many tasks, researchers were cited. Much of the research was related to features that affect intelligibility, such as mispronunciation of individual vowel and consonant sounds, word and sentence stress, and intonation. However, content in the student textbooks did not consistently address the most important segmental sounds or rationales concerning the intended meaning of particular intonation patterns (e.g., new

and contrasting information). These three texts also contained a bibliography of references and pronunciation-specific textbooks as well as a list of scholarly journal articles to support instructors. *Pronunciation pairs* (Baker & Goldstein, 2008) tended to emphasize information on difficulties that learners would likely encounter with segmental and suprasegmental features although pedagogical support was not noticeably evident.

Discussion

The results indicated that pronunciation textbooks varied greatly in content and that careful consideration is required in choosing a text to best meet the needs of ESL learners. This discussion will address the results of each research question individually.

Communicative Activities

In general, the data indicate that a greater percentage of communicative activities were represented in more advanced-level textbooks than beginner-level books. A reason for this may be that limited language proficiency at a novice level would require practice tasks with less complex communicative exchanges.

Conversely, the data showed that seven texts were comprised of fewer than 40% communicative activities. Levis and Grant (2003) commented that "although current pronunciation-based texts include communicative activities, most are organized around pronunciation features" (p. 14). Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) suggested a five-stage communicative framework for pronunciation lessons, which included "analysis and consciousness raising to listening discrimination and finally production" (p. 45). As production is the final stage, this could explain why many pronunciation tasks tend to be more controlled and less communicative in practice.

Contextualized Activities

The data indicated that contextualization of activities varied greatly (12% to 30%) with beginner textbooks displaying more disparity. According to Isaacs (2009), "currently existing instructional materials on pronunciation do not fit the bill in terms of providing authentic, context-rich activities that provide focused practice for the specific area of pronunciation to be targeted, nor do they always draw on research evidence" (p. 4). Isaacs's argument is supported by the level of inconsistency and low percentages of contextualized activities throughout the texts that were examined in this study.

Spiraled Activities

The data indicated that a small percentage of content was spiraled. Nine of the 12 textbooks examined contained fewer than 15% of revisited pronunciation points. This information is consistent with the findings of Derwing et al. (2012) on general-skills ESL textbooks in which they discovered that only one series of books in the 12 that were analyzed repeatedly returned to a pronunciation topic that was previously presented. The researchers made the following comment:

> Changing one's pronunciation requires monitoring one's own speech and noticing errors, as well as making adjustments to productions in real time. The complexity of this task suggests that it is important for textbooks to review individual pronunciation features repeatedly and to link pronunciation to other language content for reinforcement. (Derwing et al., 2012, p. 26)

Perception Focus

In examining perception-related activities, the data indicated that beginner-level texts had a slightly higher focus than advanced-level books, with 52% to 60% and 44% to 57% respectively (see Table 4). Of the 12 texts, 10 had between 50% and 60% perception-related activities.

Derwing and Munro (2005) explained that "numerous studies have suggested than many L2 production difficulties are rooted in perception. Evidence also indicates that appropriate perceptual training can lead to automatic improvement in production" (p. 388). This research may offer a rationale for the high concentration of perception-focused activities in the present study and the common use of discrimination tasks in the textbooks that were examined. It is possible that some textbook publishers consider perception-related research in the selection of activities.

Production Focus

Regarding the data on production, the range for beginner to advanced level texts was 40% to 48% and 44 to 57% respectively (see Table 5). It appears that production-focused activities increased slightly in the books targeted at higher language proficiency levels. On the other hand, 10 textbooks had a strong emphasis on production of between 40% and 50%. A possible explanation could be the belief held by some textbook authors that production practice enhances listening. For example, Gorsuch (2001) reported one author's support for speech production and practice as "a means to be able to hear the sounds of English speech" (p. 122). Perhaps, other textbook authors share this belief.

Both Perception and Production Foci

In examining the data for combined perception and production, nine books contained 40% to 48% of activities with both foci. Theories regarding the relationship between perception and production differ in the literature. For instance, Gorsuch (2001) reported that "if L2 learners do make use of a single shared mental representation for both speech perception and production, it may be that improvement in one area may result in improvement in another although any such improvement may not be parallel" (p. 122). Second, Brière (1966) showed that a focus on

perception results in better production of L2. Third, Lightbown, Halter, White, and Horst (2002),

conducted a follow-up study of grade 8 students after six years in a comprehension-based ESL

program (e.g., reading and listening) and compared them with ESL learners who had studied for

the same period of time in a regular program (e.g., including listening and oral production as

well as reading and writing). The researchers found that although the students in the perception-

based program had comparable comprehension levels to the students in the regular program, the

additional scaffolding that was provided during instruction in the regular program appeared to

enhance those students' oral English skills. The researchers suggested that "beyond the beginner

level, continued development in the second language…is enhanced by opportunities for output

practice as well as feedback and guidance from a teacher" (p. 452). Finally, research by Darcy et

al. (2012) indicated that a focus on both perception and reception are necessary for pronunciation

enhancement. This research may provide support for the consistent representation of both

perception and production tasks found in the current study.

Segmental Emphasis

Segmental focus among the textbooks varied tremendously; however, only two books

contained less than 40% segment-related activities, and eight texts had a range of 40% to 60%

(see Table 7). Yet, Munro et al. (2006) cautioned that it is important to focus attention on the

sounds that most affect intelligibility and comprehensibility. Foote et al. (2011) observed that

"one of the most common activities used to practice segmental distinctions is minimal pairs,

words that differ by one sound such as bug/rug or hat/hate" (p. 5). The researchers recommended

that minimal pairs be chosen carefully and said, "A concept that is useful in determining which

sounds to teach is that of functional load (FL) (Catford, 1987). A phoneme with a high FL is

more likely to be important in distinguishing between two words than one with low FL" (p. 5).

For example, according to Catford's (1987) Relative Functional Load Table (p. 89), the vowel

contrast in the word pairs 'pull' and 'pole' is ranked considerably lower in the hierarchy than in

the word pairs 'bit' and 'bat'. In addition, all of the textbooks placed more emphasis on

consonants than vowels, likely because there are more consonants.

Suprasegmental Emphasis

Although the texts varied considerably, 10 textbooks had a 40% to 60% emphasis on

suprasegmental features (see Table 8). Also, five of the eight advanced-level books and three of

the four beginner-level texts had more than a 50% focus on suprasegmentals. Trofimovich and

Baker (2006) noted that suprasegmental features play a role in foreign accents at all levels of

experience. This may explain why the beginner textbooks had a high focus in this area.

Several studies have discussed the importance of suprasegmental features for pronunciation.

For example, Derwing and Rossiter (2003) examined pronunciation changes that resulted in

intermediate ESL learners over a 12-week period. One group received instruction in segmental

features (vowels and consonants), another in global features (e.g., stress and intonation), and a

third group received no particular pronunciation instruction. Learners were rated at the beginning

(Time 1) and the end (Time 2) of the instruction. Findings suggested that " the only group that

showed overall improvement over time was the Global instruction group, whose ratings of

comprehensibility and fluency were significantly higher at Time 2" (p. 13). Moreover, Hahn

(2004) confirmed the importance of primary stress on intelligibility in her research. In addition,

Field (2005) reported that the incorrect position of lexical stress affected intelligibility. Finally,

Foote et al. (2011) expressed the view that "a good pronunciation textbook should have a balance

between practice on individual sounds and work on prosodic variables. There is little purpose in

having students practice isolated phrases because intonation and stress are better understood in

context" (p. 20). The findings of the textbook coverage in the current study appear to reflect the

research findings which suggest that a balance should be struck between segmentals and

suprasegmentals.

Instructors' Manuals

Overall, it seemed clear that publishers of ESL instructors' manuals recognize that certain

features of pronunciation are more important to teach because of their impact on communication

and intelligibility. However, gaps were evident by the limited number of teaching tips. This

could be explained by Celce-Murcia et al.'s (2010) interpretation of Communicative Language

Teaching in which they state that many advocates have not "developed an agreed-upon set of

strategies for teaching pronunciation communicatively" (p. 9). This may be reflected in

publishers' materials as well.

Regarding instructions, the range was broad. In materials development, Tomlinson (2003)

suggested that the following criteria-related questions be asked "are the instructions: succinct?

sufficient? self-standing? standardized? separated? sequenced? staged? Such a subdivision can

help to pinpoint specific aspects of the materials which could gain from revision or adaptation"

(p. 28). These criteria were not consistent in the texts that were examined here. Some

instructions were explicit although many were missing, vague, or unsequenced.

In addition, pedagogical content varied across textbooks. Three books contained a

pedagogical rationale for activities; however, the amount of detail and explanation of the

rationale varied. The other text contained little pedagogical content. This corresponds with

research by Derwing et al. (2012) on ESL general skills textbooks. As directions to instructors

varied greatly, their suggestion was "in most instances, more explicit information about the

nature of the pronunciation foci would provide teachers with a rationale for the activity and guidance to help them explain the activities to students" (p. 36).

There are limitations to the current study. First, no measure of inter-rater reliability was made because the coding of activities was carried out by only one person. Second, consistency in coding within and between textbooks may have varied due to the wide range of activities and the subsections within a single activity. To strengthen the results of this study, reliability would need to be addressed. Also, a greater number of textbooks could be examined.

Recommendations and Conclusion

This study fills a gap in the literature as it examined the content of pronunciation-specific textbooks. Derwing et al. (2012) examined how well general skills ESL textbooks addressed pronunciation. The two studies have a number of similar findings. First, both demonstrated that spiraling of activities is extremely limited. Second, the degree to which segments and suprasegmentals were included varied across textbooks. Although some pronunciation textbooks had a more even balance of these features, a similar recommendation to that for general-skills ESL books can be made in that publishers should consider functional load in the selection of segmental materials and activities. Third, more explicit instructions and explanations of activities would provide added support for L2 learners and educators. Since many instructors lack formal training in pronunciation, greater attention to sound pedagogical principles, particularly in teachers' manuals, could provide guidance for educators in setting instructional goals and enhancing pronunciation teaching. Further collaboration among educators, researchers and publishers is necessary.

Additional findings from the current study showed that more communicative and contextualized activities are required. Isaacs et al. (2009) noted that there is an "existing gap

between pronunciation and communicatively orientated instruction" (p. 4). She also conveyed a similar message regarding contextualized materials.

Finally, less variability was observed in combined perception and production foci although percentages of combined activities were slightly fewer in lower-level textbooks. Darcy et al. (2012) argued that one objective of pronunciation instruction is to focus on both perception and production skills. " Research also suggests that providing pronunciation instruction early could maximize the benefits of L2 exposure… because the bulk of perceptual and phonetic learning in the late-onset SLA takes place within the first year of intensive exposure to the L2" (p. 94). The authors suggested that pronunciation instruction be introduced in the early stages of SLA rather than only at more advanced proficiency levels. As limited pronunciation materials appear to exist at beginner levels, publishers may want to consider focusing on this area in the future.

As a result of this study, an overview of content in pronunciation-specific textbooks has been established. A clearer picture is available regarding percentages of activities with instructional foci on perception, production, segmental, suprasegmental and the extent to which activities are communicative, spiraled and contextualized. Further research is required to assess the variety of tasks types (e.g., listen and repeat, sound discrimination) and the effectiveness of these activities, to determine whether adequate coverage exists in the areas that affect intelligibility.

In conclusion, the findings of this study show that pronunciation textbooks vary greatly in content and quality. It is unrealistic to presume that textbooks can address all of the needs of individual L2 learners and instructors or that they can be used as the sole source for pronunciation programs; nevertheless, they do provide structure and guidance for educators. To help support instructors in choosing a pronunciation textbook, an annotated bibliography is

included with this study (see Appendix B). Remarks made in the annotation are solely the

opinion of the author and are not intended to promote or discredit any of the textbooks.

Finally, to improve the quality of pronunciation instruction and enrich the learning experience

of students, educators must be accountable and committed to self enhancement and

professionalism. Attending conferences (e.g., Pronunciation in Second Language Learning and

Teaching, TESL Canada, and TESOL), taking a personal interest in pronunciation by reading

and discussing current literature and sharing it with colleagues, and attending local TESL

meetings and workshops are ways to gain background knowledge in the absence of formal

training. Moreover, instructors should consider taking pronunciation-related credit courses to

gain confidence and competence in teaching pronunciation. Perhaps, Massive Open Online

Courses (MOOCs) taught by qualified pronunciation professors and linguists will be a viable

form of professional development in the future. As educators, it is in our best interest to take the

initiative.

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Appendix A

List of Pronunciation Textbooks Analyzed

Student Textbooks

Baker, A., & Goldstein, S. (2008). *Pronunciation pairs: An introduction to the sounds of English* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Dale, P., & Poms, L. (2005). *English pronunciation made simple.* White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.

Gilbert, J. B. (2012). *Clear speech from the start: Basic pronunciation and listening comprehension in North American English* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Gilbert, J. B. (2012). *Clear speech: Pronunciation and listening comprehension in North American English* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Grant, L. (2007). *Well said intro: Pronunciation for clear communication.* Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

Grant, L. (2010). *Well said: Pronunciation for clear communication* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

Hewings, M., & Goldstein, S. (2012). *Pronunciation plus-Practice through interaction.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Lane, L. (2005). *Focus on pronunciation 3.* White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.

Lane, L. (2013). *Focus on pronunciation 1* (3rd ed.). White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.

Lane, L. (2013). *Focus on pronunciation 2* (3rd ed.). White Plains, NY: Pearson

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Miller, S. F. (2007). *Targeting pronunciation: Communicating clearly in English*

      (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

Reed, M., & Michaud, C. (2005). *Sound concepts: An integrated pronunciation course.*

      New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Teachers' Manuals and Resource Textbooks

Baker, A., & Goldstein, S. (2008). *Pronunciation pairs: An introduction to the sounds of*

      English Teacher's Manual. (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Gilbert, J. B. (2012). *Clear speech from the start: Basic pronunciation and listening*

      comprehension in North American English, Teacher's resource and assessment book.

      (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Grant, L. (2010). *Well said: Pronunciation for clear communication, Instructor's*

      manual. (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

Hewings, M. (2004). *Pronunciation practice activities: A resource book for teaching*

      English pronunciation. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Appendix B

Annotated Bibliography of Pronunciation Textbooks

Beginner-Level Student Textbooks

Baker, A., & Goldstein, S. (2008). *Pronunciation pairs: An introduction to the sounds of*

    English (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

    This textbook is intended for high beginner to low intermediate-level learners. It comes with

an audio CD that includes listening excerpts of activities contained in the text. The book has a

greater emphasis on segmental than suprasegmental features and is divided into two sections,

vowels and consonants. Vowels are introduced first. A table of North American English (NAE)

phonetic vowel and consonant symbols is included and referenced throughout the text. Each unit

focuses on one vowel or consonant sound and includes a diagram of the mouth and instructions

for pronunciation of the sound. This is followed by word pairs (e.g., 'ship' and 'sheep') for

practice in sound discrimination. More of the high functional load (FL) vowel contrasts occur

than consonants, so careful selection of content is recommended. Catford (1987) suggests that

teachers "might want to concentrate on those phonemic oppositions with a high functional load

and give less attention to those with a low functional load" (p. 89).

    Units also contain a student self test, vocabulary and dialogue practice, a suprasegmental

feature, and conversation practice that incorporates vocabulary and suprasegmental features. This

is followed by spelling variations and common expressions containing the targeted sounds.

Interactive activities such as role plays, discussion and games are present in some units although

freer practice is less common at this level. Less than 14% of the content is recycled and

contextualized. The recycled material consists of eight review chapters located after every five or

six units of instruction. The review chapters serve as progress checks for learners and are

restricted to mainly listening and writing tasks; therefore, no pair work or communicative

activities are included. A one-page description of the text organization and an explanation of the

content are outlined for the learner. Extra practice activities are available on the website

www.cambridge.org/pronunciationpairs

The text also contains two pages of notes for instructors. An accompanying instructor's manual

is available and is reviewed in a separate section of this paper. Headings for each activity and

colour coded text boxes keep the book organized and easy to follow.

In general, this text would be appropriate for specific segmental needs of a learner.

Supplementary information is required for pedagogy and suprasegmental features.

Gilbert, J. B. (2012). *Clear speech from the start: Basic pronunciation and listening*

comprehension in North American English (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge

University Press.

The textbook targets low to high beginner-level learners. It does not include a CD although

the audio for each unit can be downloaded from the following website.

www.cambridge.org/clearspeech

The book has 15 units and a concluding review chapter. Segments and suprasegmentals are

integrated into every unit with a focus on features that affect intelligibility such as high FL vowel

and consonant sounds, syllable stress, primary word stress, and intonation patterns. A table of

NAE phonetic vowel and consonant symbols is included and utilized throughout the text. Each

unit begins with a heading, which highlights and explains the teaching point for the chapter. On

average, 12 practice activities follow the teaching point. There is a strong emphasis on listening,

repetition, pronunciation-related spelling, vowel rules, and suprasegmental rules and practice.

Even though rhythm and intonation are practiced, thought groups are not represented. All units

contain a minimum of three partner tasks, which involve checking, confirming or correcting information. Because this book is intended for beginners, activities are mainly controlled practice; freer practice tasks such as role plays and discussion are not included.

Finally, there are six pages of instructor's notes, which include the pedagogical rationale for the selection of materials and activities. For example, a unique, four-tiered, colour coded pronunciation pyramid is displayed in every unit. Tiers progress from an individual vowel sound, to a strong syllable, to word level and sentence level. The pyramid is a reminder that features of spoken English are integrated. In addition, six principles are outlined to provide further rationale. For instance, the most important points are taught first, and these points are meant to assist learners with "listening comprehension and intelligibility" (p. xi).

The appendices include mouth, lip and tongue diagrams along with extra vowel and consonant practice activities. An instructor's manual is available for teacher support and will be reviewed later in this paper.

In summary, this text is highly recommended as there is a nearly equal focus on both segmental and suprasegmental features, and it contains activities based on sound pedagogical principles and rationale. Explanations are clear and coloured text boxes and headings keep the book organized and simple to follow. This text also includes elements that Darcy, Ewert and Lidster (2012) suggest are appropriate for lower proficiency levels such as phonics (spelling), vowel length, final consonant clusters and basic intonation.

Grant, L. (2007). *Well said intro: Pronunciation for clear communication.* Boston, MA:

         Heinle & Heinle.

This book is designed for high beginner to mid-intermediate level learners and is divided into two parts. The first part covers four units of the important suprasegmental features for

intelligibility, and the second part introduces consonants and vowels. A table of phonetic

symbols and an explanation of textbook-specific symbols for intonation, linking, and stress are

included and used throughout the text.

The first unit contains an instructor's checklist and three activities with which to assess a

learner's pronunciation needs. The second unit contains a table with examples of key

pronunciation features and a rating scale for learners to assess their own needs. The checklist

and table are supportive tools as they provide a starting point for instructors to establish

instructional goals and for students to set learning goals. The third unit contains activities that

require the use of a dictionary. Listening and writing activities address syllables, primary word

stress and phonetic symbols. Research by Hahn (2004) indicates that stress has a significant

impact on intelligibility, so this chapter is an excellent feature of the textbook. The remaining

chapters contain listening tips, tasks for perception practice, pronunciation rules with practice

activities, and communicative activities. The chapters move from controlled form-focused

activities to more communicative, meaning-focused speaking activities such as information gap

tasks, discussion, role plays, and oral presentations. Optional TOEFL speaking practice activities

are included. Approximately 23% of the activities are communicative and 20% are

contextualized. Each unit has authentic materials for listening and pair work, including samples

of business cards, food labels, menus, and newspaper cartoons. Learners are provided with

homework assignments that can be practiced in real-world contexts. These include leaving a

telephone voicemail message and ordering food. Some of the activities and homework tasks

could be challenging for learners and may need to be modified.

Two student pages in the text provide simplified pedagogical explanations related to

intelligibility, comprehensibility, pronunciation learning, and accented speech. Three pages are

included for instructors outlining the main features and organization of the text. The text does not come with an audio CD although it is available for purchase along with an instructor's manual. There does not appear to be an online website for extra practice.

Generally, this book is recommended for the balance of segmental and suprasegmental content and for its strong focus on intonation. It also contains a wide range of engaging activities to accommodate aural, visual, and tactile learning styles.

On the other hand, the text has headings that are somewhat confusing. For example, listening tasks are considered activities, and practice tasks are considered exercises. For a high beginner to mid-intermediate level learner, there is a great deal of print on every page. This could be intimidating for some learners and instructors. Also, the text is printed entirely in black and grey, which may make the book less visually appealing.

The communicative activities (e.g., describing how to so something, telling a story, and giving instructions to practice thought groups and pausing) may seem relatively simple, but these tasks require monitoring and feedback from an instructor. Thought groups and the underlying principles can be challenging to teach; therefore, some prior pronunciation knowledge would be valuable.

Lane, L. (2013). *Focus on pronunciation 1* (3rd ed.). White Plains, NY: Pearson
         Education.

This book was created for beginner level learners and is divided into three sections. The first two cover vowels and consonants and the third covers stress, rhythm and intonation. Although phonetic symbols are referenced in the segment sections of the text, a reference table has not been included in the text. Each unit includes a presentation point followed by three types of practice (focused, communicative, and extended). The activities progress from more form-

focused to meaning-focused. The extended practice is meant to enhance fluency and could be challenging for learners at a beginner level.

Each segment unit has an illustration of the mouth with instructions for how to produce the sound. More emphasis is placed on consonants than on vowels; however, of the minimal pair consonant coverage, some are of low FL in English phonemic contrasts (e.g., /y / and /dʒ / in the words 'Yale' and 'jail' and /ʃ/and /tʃ/ as in the words 'sheep' and 'cheap' according to Catford's (1987) Relative Functional Load Table (p.88). Therefore, it is important for instructors to choose activities that focus on frequently occurring contrasts.

The suprasegmental features contain elements that affect intelligibility (e.g., stress and rhythm) according to Hahn (2004). Of the beginner level textbooks that were examined, this one contains the most comprehensive coverage of rhythm and thought groups.

The text is well organized as each section summarizes the content and communicative themes for individual units. Units have coloured headings for every activity with subheadings that provide instructions about the activity (e.g., listen and repeat). Of the beginner textbooks, this one has the greatest variety of activities for each presentation point.

The book comes with an audio CD and a website that includes downloadable answer keys and audio scripts. It does not appear that an instructor's manual exists. As a result, instructors would find some prior pronunciation knowledge and supplementary information helpful.

This text is recommended for its nearly equal representation of perception, production, segments, and suprasegmental foci. In addition, roughly 34% of the activities are communicative and 25% are contextualized. For a beginner level text, this book rates high in every feature that was analyzed in the current study.

Intermediate to Advanced-Level Student Textbooks

Dale, P., & Poms, L. (2005). *English pronunciation made simple.* White Plains, NY:

       Pearson Education.

The text is intended for intermediate to advanced-level learners and is divided into three

sections; vowels, suprasegmental features and consonants. Approximately 90% of the book

focuses on segments with the greatest emphasis on consonants. The vowel and consonant

sections have a consistent format and begin with a teaching point followed by an explanation of

how to produce a sound, possible pronunciation difficulties, and hints to produce the sound

accurately. A greater number of high FL vowel contrasts than consonant contrasts are

represented. This textbook uses the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) symbols, which are

slightly different than the NAE symbols. This could present confusion for an instructor who is

not familiar with phonetics or linguistics.

The suprasegmental features of basic syllable, word and sentence stress are presented.

Information related to rhythm and intonation is somewhat limited; therefore, this text would not

be ideal for teaching suprasegmentals.

An instructor's manual does not accompany this book; however, the first appendix contains

13 pages of notes to support instructors. A Teacher's Record Form has been designed to assess

learners' pronunciation needs although vowel and consonant sounds are the main focus. A

detailed summary sheet for vowel and consonant errors is also included.

Authentic materials such as recipes, reading passages, and poems are represented with

production being the greatest emphasis. The text is well organized with subheadings to the left of

each activity; however, the book is printed in black and grey and may not be visually appealing

to some individuals. There is an audio CD for the self-check exercises although audio for the

textbook content must be purchased separately. No online references complement the book.

Generally, this textbook would be appropriate if listening discrimination of segmentals is required. Careful selection of high frequency English vowel and consonant sounds is recommended.

Gilbert, J. B. (2012). *Clear speech: Pronunciation and listening comprehension in North American English* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

The text is recommended for intermediate-level learners and is an extension to the beginner-level text, so the layout, presentation of teaching points, types of practice activities, and online listening support are similar. The book has a slightly greater emphasis on production and suprasegmentals. Basic pronunciation rules for vowels, consonants, and stress are reviewed. More complex concepts for segmental and suprasegmental features are covered including a detailed chapter on thought groups and rules. The activities are more demanding in terms of linguistic complexity, with longer dialogues and more complex vocabulary. The appendices contain extra consonant practice and more advanced tasks for word stress, sentence focus and thought groups. This book is highly recommended for the same reasons as the beginner-level text.

Grant, L. (2010). *Well said: Pronunciation for clear communication* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

The text targets high intermediate to advanced level learners and is an extension to the beginner level book. It is divided into four parts (two introductory chapters, consonant sounds, suprasegmentals, and a segmental practice section). The introductory units contain a photocopiable assessment tool. Dictionary practice activities address segments, syllables and primary word stress.

Elements such as word stress, sentence stress, intonation, rhythm and linking are represented. These pronunciation elements were recommended by Darcy et al. (2012) as inclusions in a mid-level to advanced level pronunciation curriculum. This textbook places a greater focus on communicative activities; as a result, the tasks require a high degree of language proficiency and additional skills such as comprehension, application, and inferencing. Also, activities are complex and demanding. Examples of activities include explaining bar and line graphs, making an appointment using a schedule, interviewing a classmate, and reporting information. The chapters allocated to suprasegmentals contain complex listening tasks and detailed explanations of concepts. This is evident in the sections on thought groups, focus words, intonation and connected speech. To support segmental instruction, a chart is displayed with explanations of front, central and back vowels, and a consonant chart contains phonetic-related terminology such as stops, fricatives, affricates, and nasals. A website includes these terms and illustrates how to pronounce English consonant sounds. The textbook refers to the web page although the web reference is not related to this book. The website follows.

www.uiowa.edu/~acadtech/phonetics/english/frameset.html

As with the beginner text, this book contains a great deal of print on every page; consequently, it could be daunting for language learners. In addition, there is an assumption that both instructors and learners have prior pronunciation knowledge. For this reason, the text is recommended for instructors with a background and training in linguistics or pronunciation, and for learners with prior exposure to pronunciation concepts. An instructor's manual accompanies this student text.

Hewings, M., & Goldstein, S. (2012). *Pronunciation plus-Practice through interaction.*
New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

The textbook is intended for intermediate-level learners and is divided into eight sections including an introduction on how to check pronunciation, vowels, consonants, consonant clusters, stress and rhythm, connected speech, intonation, spelling, and pronunciation rules. The units can be completed in any order depending on learner needs. A key to NAE phonetic symbols is the only phonetic support in the text other than a limited number of mouth diagrams. No explanations about how to produce individual sounds or how to correct errors are available, and there is an underlying assumption that learners and instructors have basic pronunciation knowledge. The text is printed in black and grey, and rules and explanations are not highlighted. Units have short, clear simple headings for each activity although there is no rationale to explain why the tasks have been selected.

The segmental units begin with listen, repeat, and check activities then proceed to partner work. A variety of activities are contained in each chapter and the tasks vary among units. Suprasegmental chapters address stress, rhythm, sounds in connected speech, and intonation. Each chapter in the text has an average of three pages, so if more detail on a particular pronunciation element is required, additional resources could be consulted.

The book could not be used as a sole source for learning or teaching pronunciation. Supplementary resources for pedagogical rationale are recommended. As there are a variety of communicative activities, selected ones could be chosen based on the needs of the learners. The text does not have an accompanying manual for instructors, and no website support appears to be available.

Lane, L. (2013). *Focus on pronunciation 2* (3rd ed.). White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.

This book is recommended for intermediate learners and is the second in a series of three textbooks. It is divided into four sections (vowels, consonants, word stress and rhythm and

intonation) and has a similar layout and organization to the first book, so a presentation point is followed by focused and communicative practice.

The segment sections review some of the material covered in the beginner text, and then introduce additional vowel and consonant sounds. More emphasis is placed on consonants than vowels with some low FL minimal pairs presented. The suprasegmental section places emphasis on words stress, rhythm and intonation. More detailed explanations of presentation points exist and activities are more demanding and complex than the earlier book. Online web support is available for this textbook (see the beginner text for details). As an instructor's manual does not appear to be available, teachers would definitely require background knowledge in pronunciation to present the concepts. This book is highly recommended for its communicative activity focus, at 55%. Instructors should select segments carefully in order to teach the ones that cause their students the most difficulty.

Lane, L. (2005). *Focus on pronunciation 3.* White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.

This version of the text is an older black and grey print publication although the layout is similar to the coloured 2013 copy. The book targets advanced learners. More emphasis than in the other books is placed on suprasegmental features. For instance, 12 chapters are dedicated to rhythm and six cover intonation, whereas the intermediate textbook combined these features in eight chapters. Pitch range and tag questions have important roles to play in communication and are introduced in this book. They tend to be more difficult concepts to teach and learn which may be a reason why just one other textbook included these topics.

The book is highly recommended for its emphasis on communicative activities (72%) and its representation of segmental and suprasegmental features. Vowel and consonant contrasts of high FL and those that are problems for students should be selected when teaching.

A teacher considering this book would require sound pronunciation knowledge in order to confidently deliver instruction to learners because numerous concepts related to phonetics and pronunciation are introduced.

Miller, S. F. (2007). *Targeting pronunciation: Communicating clearly in English*

(2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

The text is designed for intermediate to advanced learners. There are five units, the first of which has two chapters. The first chapter contains an assessment tool and includes a student survey and an instructor's evaluation form. The evaluation has a listening component, and scores can be accessed by students online. A website is provided. The second chapter is an overview of segmental and suprasegmental features. Explanations for suprasegmentals concepts are somewhat unclear and pronunciation tips are not based on pedagogy. For example, one tip suggests that slow speech, many pauses and short thought groups makes speech easier to understand, yet there is no research to substantiate this claim. The remaining four units contain a heavy emphasis on suprasegmental features (69%), so segmental support is limited to a modified version of an IPA chart, a vowel chart, and mouth diagrams. Many lower frequency consonant and vowel sounds are represented with unclear explanations about how to make the sounds. In addition, pronunciation terms are used although not well explained.

Chapters contain listening tasks followed by partner and group practice. Activities move from more controlled to communicative practice. A high percentage of communicative activities are represented, at 70%. This is the highest percentage of the 12 texts that were examined. Each chapter has an authentic task that is completed outside of the classroom such as recording a telephone message or calling a business to request information. As well, learners are encouraged to maintain a reflection journal of daily life experiences. Every chapter ends with a self quiz and

a website for additional practice activities. At the end of each unit, there is a progress check

activity.

An audio program can be purchased. In addition, there is an instructor's website with

explanations and suggestions for activities, teaching tips and correction strategies. The website

follows.

http://college.hmco.com/esl/instructors

A website for students which includes activities, worksheets and answer keys is available at the

following address.

 http://college.hmco.com/esl/students

The textbook is written in black and grey and contains a great deal of print on each page. This

may be overwhelming for some learners. Headings describing the type of task provide

organization for the book.

It would be difficult for a learner or an instructor to rely solely on this text. Supplementary

information for segmental features and references and explanations based on sound pedagogical

principles is recommended.

Reed, M., & Michaud, C. (2005). *Sound concepts: An integrated pronunciation course.*

New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

This text is recommended for intermediate to advanced level learners. Support to instructors

is offered in eight pages of notes describing the layout of the text, components of pronunciation,

hints for teaching and a reference list of scholarly pronunciation articles. A glossary of terms, an

IPA and vowel chart, mouth diagrams, and a photocopiable speaking diagnostic are included. For

students, there is a log page to record difficult pronunciation elements. Each chapter contains

journal activities, checklists, and strategies for self monitoring. A self-assessment section follows every third chapter in the book.

Syllables, stress and intonation are the three main units with three chapters dedicated to each topic. Pedagogical principles such as functional load are referred to for minimal pairs. Suffix stress is also based on research. For example, Murcia-Celce, Brinton, Goodwin, and Griner (2010) suggest teaching stress shift with the following suffix endings 'tion', 'ical', 'ity' as these account for approximately 90% of all stress shifts. These suffixes are represented in *Sound Concepts*. The chapters on rhythm, thought groups, and intonation are detailed, and a rationale is provided for the intended meaning in intonation activities.

This textbook contains the highest percentage of spiraled activities (41%) of the books that were examined and the second highest percentage of communicative activities (69%). A student audio CD is available for purchase as is a teacher's manual.

This text is highly recommended based on its pedagogical content and its equal representation of perception and production activities. For instructors, prior exposure to pronunciation concepts would be beneficial as this textbook contains a number of pedagogical principles.

Teacher Manuals and Resource Textbooks

Baker, A., & Goldstein, S. (2008). *Pronunciation pairs: An introduction to the sounds of*

        English Teacher's Manual. (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

This manual follows the general organization of the beginner level student textbook. It contains two pages of notes for instructors describing the text layout with a description of pronunciation difficulties students are likely to have, a description of tasks, and how to extend pronunciation practice into other classroom activities. A seven-page overview section provides instructors with added information on activities and suggestions about how to address

difficulties. One helpful suggestion includes backward buildup practice if students have difficulties with rhythm. An example of a backward buildup exercise is included. For the most part, the background notes, explanations, and instructions tend to be advice rather than teaching tips, and little in the way of pedagogical rationale is provided to explain the tasks. The authors advocate demonstrating, modelling and having students read the directions for making a sound; however, some specific reminders to monitor pronunciation (e.g., syllable stress) also occur. Notes describing difficulties that students are likely to have and how to produce sounds are a large focus of each chapter. As the text has a greater emphasis on segments (64%), more detailed explanations of vowel and consonant-related sounds and activities are represented.

The text contains a diagnostic test although the scoring criteria and instructions are somewhat vague. There is no glossary of terms, nor is there supplementary support in the way of scholarly articles. Simplified explanations for terms such as 'dark l' and 'flapped' are provided, although they may not be detailed enough for instructors with little of no pronunciation background. Because the manual accompanies the student book, it does offer some added support for instructors; however, supplementary material is recommended.

Gilbert, J. B. (2012). *Clear speech from the start: Basic pronunciation and listening comprehension in North American English, Teacher's resource and assessment book.* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

As this text complements the beginner level student book, it follows the same general organization. The manual offers a great deal of support to instructors. For instance, the first three pages outline the layout of the text while six additional pages describe the relationship between speaking and listening, rhythm and reading, segmentals and suprasegmentals. Three additional pages include content on pedagogical reflections such "accent addition" is better than "accent

reduction" (p. xi). The text also contains a glossary of terms, a bibliography of scholarly articles and pronunciation-specific textbooks, listening and speaking diagnostic tests, extra vowel and consonant practice activities, and a unit quiz for each chapter in the student textbook. A diagnostic test with a profile sheet provides guidance for instructors; however, the scoring sheet could offer more detail and the instructions could be clearer.

The text is well organized and easy to follow. Every chapter contains teaching tip boxes. Some tips cite or refer to research on a specific topic with a rationale for activities. Answer keys are included in every unit for listening and writing tasks.

In general, this text is highly recommended for the support it offers to instructors.

Grant, L. (2010). *Well said: Pronunciation for clear communication Instructor's manual.* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

This text accompanies the intermediate level student book and follows the same general organization. Plenty of support is available to instructors including five pages of notes describing flexible sequencing of chapters and teaching strategies for error correction and activities. The text also includes five pages of charts with common pronunciation difficulties for both segmental and suprasegmental features for 14 language groups.

An assessment tool is provided for instructors. The Speech Profile Form and assessment tasks are reproducible, and a sample scoring sheet is available with clear instructions. A reference list of journal articles and related pronunciation textbooks is also provided. Chapters contain background notes on selected topics with cited research, instructor notes, rationales for activities, and suggestions for extra practice materials. The text is well organized, easy to follow and a highly recommended supplement to the student book because of the support it offers to instructors.

Hewings, M. (2004). *Pronunciation practice activities: A resource book for teaching*

English pronunciation. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

   This book does not accompany a student text. It is a collection of practice activities that

instructors can use for beginner through to advanced level learners. The text has

a 22-page introduction of background knowledge to support instructors. It explains key

pronunciation and phonetic terms, outlines rationales for the most important pronunciation

features to teach, and it offers techniques and strategies for teaching pronunciation. Activities

have been designed for both segmental and suprasegmentals features. Chapters have a text box

which describes the teaching point, language proficiency level, approximate length of time for

activities, and explicit instructions and procedures for each task.

   There is a comprehensive 26-page diagnostic test, which is divided into sections for vowel

and consonant sounds, weak and contracted forms, word stress, prominence, and tone

(intonation). Photocopiable student handout sheets and teacher reference sheets are included for

each part of the test. Explicit instructions on how to administer and grade the test are provided

for instructors.

   An audio CD is included which contains excerpts from the listening test and the listening

activities in the textbook. A bibliography of research journals and additional pronunciation

textbooks is available. Common pronunciation difficulties for 13 language groups are outlined in

a separate section of the book.

    Because the text was printed in the United Kingdom, phonetic symbols include British vowel

sounds. Moreover, the context for many of the activities is also British based, so cultural

connotations for content such as limericks and poems will need to be explained. Careful

selection of activities is recommended in order to target a North American ESL audience.

In general, the textbook is recommended for the wide variety of activities that target each language proficiency level and for the number of tasks which address intelligibility issues. Furthermore, it contains detailed pedagogical content, and it has an excellent assessment tool with explicit scoring instructions. The diagnostic tool is valuable support for instructors requiring a place to begin because it offers guidance in determining learner needs and establishing instructional goals.