An Action Research Study of Pronunciation Training, Language Learning Strategies and Speaking Confidence

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DECLARATION

I, Patchara Varasarin, declare that the Doctorate of Education thesis entitled *An Action Research Study of Pronunciation Training, Language Learning Strategies and Speaking Confidence,* is no more than 60,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.

_____   _____ 23.2.2007_____
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESL   English as a Second Language

L2   Second Language

EFL   English as a Foreign Language

FL   Foreign Language

TEFL   Teaching English as a Foreign Language

TOEFL   Test of English as a Foreign Language

TESOL   Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages

LS   Learning Strategy/ Learning Strategies

LLS   Language Learning Strategy/ Language Learning Strategies

ABSTRACT

**An Action Research Study of Pronunciation Training, Language Learning
Strategies and Speaking Confidence**

English is a vehicle for international communication. In order to meet
the demands of modern society, English teachers need to pay more attention to
the development of learners' competence and focus on a more effective and
successful method. However traditional approaches to English language
teaching still dominate Thai classrooms. Language teachers should not focus
on reciting but should teach from their own understanding of language learning
and help learners gain more competence with confidence.

This study is a collaborative action research investigation to develop
pronunciation training and communicative competence for Thai students
studying English in Thailand. This study investigated pronunciation training
and language learning strategies, how they influenced the learning behaviour of
Thai students studying English and improved their speaking confidence. The
purpose of the training was to improve students' pronunciation and spoken
intelligibility. It drew upon data collected in pronunciation training in one
school in Thailand using language learning strategies and evaluated
improvement after being trained in developing speaking confidence. The
project contained two cycles, the first of which was to train five teachers using
pronunciation training and language learning strategies. We evaluated their
improvement in correct speech and in developing speaking confidence. In the
second cycle, these teachers in turn taught a group of four students each and
similar improvements were observed. The action phases showed the
implications of the importance of pronunciation training in the Thai context
and the usefulness of dictionary usage to help learners to improve their
competence and to have more confidence to speak English. The project
resulted in a change of policy by the school to include pronunciation teaching
and to allocate English classes to teachers who understood that process. The
pronunciation learning strategies in this study and those of other researchers

were presented to formulate strategies as a contribution for teachers to include teaching pronunciation in their classroom instruction.

The researcher intends that the data will be useful for language teachers to help them further their understanding of their students' learning behaviour to achieve improved pronunciation. In addition, the phonetic symbol system used in the training was chiefly inspired from the symbols of the International Phonetic Association (IPA) to be standardized and easy to apply. However, I would present here for references some coded symbols shown in this thesis which I used for readers who are unfamiliar with the IPA alphabet. They are /th/ =/T/, /th/ voiced = /Δ/, /zh/ = /Z/, /j/ = /dZ/, /sh/ = /Σ/ and /ch/=/tΣ/.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1   Background of the study

Thai students tend to use Thai speech patterns or styles when speaking English. Some will not speak out because they are afraid of making mistakes and are embarrassed. Pronunciation training and Language Learning Strategies (LLS) may improve their competence. This study focused on if and how pronunciation training with LLS increased confidence and improved learners to become intelligible speakers. Being an intelligible speaker is to understand and to be understood (Abercrombie, 1991). There are many English training courses teaching speaking but they do not focus on pronunciation. As English teaching has moved to language functions and communicative competencies, a new urgency for the teaching of pronunciation has arisen (Celce-Murcia, 1987; Morley, 1994; Gilbert, 1994). In Thailand however, pronunciation has not yet received similar attention. According to my experience, a great number of students have many difficulties in pronunciation. When speaking English, with very little or poorly trained pronunciation skills, they have problems either making themselves understood or understanding others.

1.1.1   Effects of limited knowledge of pronunciation

Research has shown that a command of native or close-to-native pronunciation of a foreign language is no easy task, especially for learners who begin studying a foreign language after puberty (Lenneberg, 1967; Seliger, 1978). Although non-native pronunciation and intonation are not necessarily obstacles to successful communication with English speakers from other parts of the world, too much accented or distorted speech will frequently give rise to misunderstandings, miscommunication and frustration

(Lu, 2002). Lu insists that incomprehensible non standard pronunciation and intonation will produce psychological nervousness in speakers, which is likely to also block their efforts to seek clarification or to paraphrase using alternative expressions with phonetically different pronunciation and intonation. Grice (1975) argues that all communication is intentional communication and that understanding is a matter of interpreting what is intended rather than decoding the referential meaning of utterances. However, Lu (2002) asserts in his report that it is obvious that this kind of interpretation should take the interlocutors' speech as its basis in face to face spoken interaction. But meanings are blurred, distorted, or buried when pronunciation is grossly unclear or inaccurate.

Pronunciation is a key element of the learning of oral skills in a second language. The role it plays in an English language program varies and the amount of time and effort devoted to it seems to depend to a large degree on the individual teacher. This means that it may or may not form part of regular classroom activity or student self-study. However, students often cite pronunciation as being very important and a priority for them (Willing, 1988). A review of Australian studies of teacher attitudes and practices revealed that pronunciation is an area that some teachers avoid or are reluctant to teach. Studies by Brown (1992), Claire (1993), Fraser (2000) and Yates (2001) suggest that teaching in ESL programs in Australia face some difficulties meeting the pronunciation learning needs of their students, and have indicated that many teachers tend to avoid dealing with pronunciation because they lack confidence, skills and knowledge. In addition to this, these studies found that curricula, methodology and the lack of suitable materials, all contributed to inadequacies of teaching and learning in this area, although both students and teachers see the value of intelligible pronunciation in second language learning.

Generally, pronunciation plays an important role in helping the learner become an intelligible speaker (Morley, 1998). Biyaem (1997) states that there are many obstacles for Thai teachers to teach English including insufficient English language skills. I learned that Thai teachers seldom

teach the phonetics of English words and few of them are familiar with phonetic symbols. As for learners, they wish they could speak English fluently but most of them think that English is too challenging for them to be competent because of interference from the mother tongue (Thai) particularly in pronunciation and being too shy to speak English. Sukamolson (1989) urges that Thai students have problems of listening to dialogues and texts as well as problems of pronunciation. English curricula in Thai schools cannot meet the demands for English. The skills needed most are listening and speaking which have minor focus in Thai secondary English books but are not the focus skills in tertiary education English curriculum (Wiriyachitra 2001).

I would like to help Thai students to be confident when speaking English. Confidence influences students to speak out (Morley, 1998). They will not be afraid of making mistakes or being blamed. The necessity of confidence in articulation is that when teaching pronunciation, working through a list of sounds and practice are important. With regular practice, learners improve their performance and feel confident (Avery and Ehrlich, 1992).

1.1.2 My inspiration and problem identification

The idea of pronunciation training to improve communicative competence and confidence of non-native speakers was clearly identified from my experience in pronunciation teaching. The development of my pronunciation teaching and training was as follows.

After I finished my Bachelors degree in 1976, I was inspired to think about the idea of pronunciation training from the TV shows in Thailand presented in Thai native language. I saw that the presenters were reluctant, uncomfortable and passed quickly when they had to speak English words. I wondered why Thai people were afraid of speaking English. What problems were they having? My interest has focused on this area since then. I completed my Masters degree in language learning in 1996 and discovered

that confidence increased when speakers improved articulation and with regular practice they could improve performance and confidence (Avery and Ehrlich, 1992).

As the researcher of this project, I was working with Thai Airways International, a Limited Public Company. I used to be an English teacher after graduation in one school before I became an air stewardess with Thai Airways International. While I was an air stewardess, I was also responsible for teaching English to Thai air stewards/stewardesses. At the time of this research, I was Manager of the In-flight Service Performance Report Administration Division. Although my job was not as an English teacher, teaching English was still my interest. I regarded it as my second job.

I was curious about why Thai students kept silent in an English class or when they were faced with foreigners. I served my curiosity by contributing to teaching English in my company. I have taught a group of staff that was weak in English. I helped students in many problem areas of English but my interest focuses on teaching Thai students to speak phonetically and correctly. I had a strong intention to develop and improve students' abilities to speak with both accuracy and fluency and to become intelligible speakers. I found that they tended to learn English word for word and to memorise the pronunciation of individual English words. Because they were unable to make use of phonetic symbols to remember unfamiliar words, they had difficulty developing extensive vocabularies in English.

1.1.3   Develop from accuracy based to fluency based learning

I continued teaching pronunciation as my second job after I finished my Masters degree, which was in the area of English language teaching. I found that students were happy to learn about the articulation of sounds and symbols. Staff reports were positive though they claimed that they needed more practice and I agreed that practice was the way to improve.

I know I can't speak as perfect as a native speaker just after one quarter's study. It is impossible. I am quite clear it is a long way to improve my English speaking. What is important is that I have learned the ways to improve my pronunciation and realised my weakness, then, I can practise and apply the rules to me in the future. (Staff's report, 2000)

The reports from the clerical staff reflecting on their achievement inspired me to search for answers and start the project of pronunciation teaching. They would happily speak English after the course although they were not fluent.

I regularly planned my lessons from the suggestions of learners, teachers and researchers to develop an appropriate course for learners. The lessons put more focus on learners' fluency. I searched from many researchers such as Morley (1991, 1998) and Derwing, Munro and Wiebe (1998) who state that effective English pronunciation training should include both 'segmental' and 'suprasegmental' aspects, that is sounds, stress and intonation. The terms segmental and suprasegmental aspects were defined by many researchers such as Morley (1991:26) as 'micro and macro level' and 'accuracy-based and fluency-based learning'. Therefore I revised my lesson plan adding suprasegmental aspects and taught my students, and it worked well.

In 2000 when my workplace wanted to improve the communicative skills of clerical staff, I volunteered to teach them this new lesson. I realised that only the study of sounds was not enough. It was better after I added stress and intonation (suprasegmental aspects).

I wanted to know if the same lesson was effective for other learners. Therefore I used the same pronunciation course to teach learners in this research study with the goal of achieving understandability or intelligibility. Kenworthy (1987) points out that pronunciation is tied to identity and

therefore the degree to which the learner seeks to identify with the English speaking group will directly influence that learner's pronunciation. For better results, I studied other pronunciation research to find how to make it more effective and found that within communicative approaches to language teaching, a key goal is for learners to develop communicative competence in the target language, and language learning strategies (LLS) can help them to improve their competencies (Oxford 1990a; Canale & Swain 1980). I added instruction on language learning strategies to the familiarisation session. Sharwood Smith (1981) and Derwing, Munro and Wiebe (1997) found that instruction which focused on general speaking habits as opposed to a concentration on individual segments has a positive effect on learners' abilities and their achievement.

1.2   Objectives

1.2.1   General objectives.

The study aimed to investigate pronunciation training and language learning strategies and establish if, how and to what extent those approaches increase confidence and improve communicative competence of learners.

1.2.2   Specific objectives

1. To demonstrate the importance of pronunciation training in a classroom, in order to prompt more teachers to reconsider the relationship between the student and pronunciation.

2. To investigate the use of a LLS framework, if and how it enhances the communicative competence, specifically, the learners' speaking skill.

3. To evaluate the effectiveness of the training, to see if, how and to what extent the approaches raise the learners' awareness of their improvement and confidence in speaking.

1.3   Research questions

The study sought answers to these questions:

1. Does pronunciation training and LLS increase confidence and improve communicative competence of learners?

2. To what extent does pronunciation training using segmental and suprasegmental aspects and LLS contribute to the improvement of learners' competence that help learners to speak confidently, and at what level?

3. What impact does training have on learner confidence and how is it reported?

1.4   Contribution to knowledge

This research was undertaken as action research and focused on two approaches: 1) pronunciation training and 2) Language Learning Strategies (LLS). Both were used in the training for participants. There were five English teachers and twenty students selected from teachers' classes, to establish if, how and to what extent the approaches increase confidence and improve the communicative competence of learners.

It is hoped that teachers will learn from the study about the importance of pronunciation and language learning strategies that support students' learning, and change their view of teaching. Also, further afield, I hope the study will help bring change in the Thai curricula in teaching English and the skills of English teachers will be focused on teaching pronunciation in class and introducing the strategies to help students achieve in their learning.

1.5   Structure of the research

The study was undertaken in two cycles to demonstrate the importance of pronunciation training and language learning strategies that support learners to achieve their language learning. It covers three areas that aimed to provide learners with a comprehensive insight into ways of teaching pronunciation and self directed learning.   First, the area of pronunciation: segmental aspects (the study of sounds), and suprasegmental aspects (the study of stress, rhythm and intonation).   Second, the area of language learning strategies and pronunciation learning strategies which learners used in the classroom to achieve their goals.   Lastly, I suggested the use of the dictionary to help learners to self-correct their pronunciation and support self directed learning.   The improvement and confidence gained from those three areas were recorded through learners' reports.

The pronunciation training was conducted according to Schmidt's (1990) three aspects of consciousness involved in language learning: awareness, intention and knowledge and using course outlines and materials from Dauer (1993), Celce-Murcia and Goodwin (1996) and Inouye, Sueres, and Inouye (1996).   The Collins Cobuild Learner's Dictionary was used to check the correctness of each word pronounced in class as well as self-directed learning and assessment.   Schmidt (1995) and Ellis (1997) stated that what learners notice in input is what becomes intake for learning and then the output of achievement.

The study and findings are shown and discussed in further chapters as follows.

Chapter 2   Literature Review, which discusses pronunciation learning and teaching including in Thailand; language learning strategies, definitions and classifications; how the strategies support learners in language learning.

Chapter 3   Methodology and research design, which shows the steps of how the study was undertaken and the characteristics of action research and its contribution to language study.

Chapter 4   Action research Cycle One, which discusses findings and analysis in the first cycle.

Chapter 5   Action research Cycle Two, which discusses findings and analysis in the second cycle.

Chapter 6   Suggested framework of teaching pronunciation and language learning strategies with explanation of the framework drawn from this study.

Chapter 7   Discussion and recommendations conclude the findings from Cycle One and Cycle Two and recommendations for further study of how to improve learners' pronunciation are discussed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews studies of the importance of pronunciation training, awareness raising, positive attitude and motivation that affect learners' acquisition, and discusses how language learning strategies help learners improve their pronunciation in the target language and lead to confidence in speaking. Discussions of English language learning and teaching in Thailand are also presented.

2.1   Introduction

In the field of English as a Second Language (ESL) the necessity for, and method of, teaching pronunciation has become a controversial topic. Many second language educators have varied opinions on the importance of including pronunciation practice within their lesson plans. Classroom activities should cater to what their students consider their most important personal goals or reasons for learning the language. For example, students may wish to build their vocabulary skills or strengthen their testing skills in English. Regardless of current trends or what students may feel their selected needs are, it is safe to say that teaching pronunciation is often considered essential in an ESL class where survival skills are imperative to the students' daily lives. In an ESL setting, the students must not only increase their English comprehension for the classroom, but also need to communicate and interact in English outside the class in various situations. Students need to understand and to be understood. If they cannot hear English well, they are cut off from the language except in printed form. If they cannot be understood easily, they are cut off from conversation with native speakers (Gilbert 1984). In the English as a foreign language (EFL) setting, survival skills play a less important role. English is not necessary for

students to communicate with each other. English is not often used to make friends or to be understood outside of the classroom. It would be easy, therefore, for the teacher to neglect implementing pronunciation tasks in their lessons because they feel there is little or no need for the students to work on that aspect of the language. This attitude denies the students the opportunity to gain precise command of the English language (Gilbert 1984).

The process of learning English is interconnected. This means that each area of the language that is being taught helps improve other aspect of the language. Pronunciation and listening comprehension are linked together by a unified system within which individual sounds are systematically related. Students need this sense of a system in order to make sense of the separate pieces (Gilbert, 1984). If the students' English pronunciation skills are improved, clearly their listening skills and speaking skills become more refined. Spelling skills are also improved when the knowledge of English pronunciation has been increased.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990:29) define learning strategies as "special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information" and classify these strategies into three major types: metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, and social/affective strategies (see Appendix A). Drawing on the research by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and Oxford (1990) enables us to compile a most comprehensive classification of language learning strategies with six major categories. The direct strategies consist of memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies; the indirect category contains metacognitive strategies, affective language learning strategies, and social strategies (see Appendix A). Oxford (1990b:71) distinguishes between direct LLS, "which directly involve the subject matter", i.e. the L2 or FL, and indirect LLS, which "do not directly involve the subject matter itself, but are essential to language learning nonetheless". One point to note about the learning strategies is that they "are not the preserve of highly capable

individuals, but could be learned by others who had not discovered them on their own" (O'Malley & Chamot 1990:31).

The argument that learning strategies are teachable also helps to break the myth that some learners have an aptitude for languages and thus achieve high language proficiency without too much effort. This preconceived notion may demotivate underachieving learners so much that they give up learning and teachers seem not to play a significant part in the language classroom.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, development in the area of second language acquisition research turned attention away from a teaching-centred perspective to one which included interest in how the actions of learners might affect their acquisition of language. In other words, the belief that individual learners' endeavours tend to be a governing factor in the language learning process gradually formed among a number of scholars (Schmitt 1997). Language teachers, therefore, were motivated to examine what individual learners, especially successful learners, do in their study in order to elicit useful information on the process of language acquisition. Rubin (1975) and Stern (1975) are two of the earliest researchers who shifted their focus from teaching methods and materials to a more learner-centred aspect, maintaining that successful language learners employ a variety of learning strategies in their study to facilitate language acquisition.

2.1.1 English language learning and teaching in Thailand

The importance of English as a world language and the advance of technology and education reform envisaged by the Thai Constitution are the key determinants for new developments in English language teaching and learning in Thailand in this decade (Wiriyachitra, 2004). The role of English in Thailand is quite important as it is in many other developing countries. In 1996 English was made compulsory for all primary students from Grade 1 onwards. Some ability in English is a requisite of higher education and all students must pass an English component in government universities'

undergraduate degrees (O'Sullivan & Tajaroensuk, 1997). A national survey of English use revealed English being used to communicate with native speakers and non-native speakers from countries such as Japan and Germany as an international language and that English is generally taught by Thai teachers in schools and in higher education (Wongsothorn, Sukakamolsun & Chinthammit, 1996). From surveys in one Thai university of learner needs, Baker (2003) showed that Thai learners wanted to communicate with English native speakers and the further surveys of Timmis (2002) showed their desire to speak English. In response to this it has been recommended that teachers aid learners to become aware of the accent like an English native speaker (Wongbiasaj, 2003).

Though English has been compulsory for all Thais from primary school level to university level, they fail to enhance their English proficiency, especially their listening and speaking skills (Srivarakan, 2002). Many English language centres such as Chulalongkorn University Language Centre (2000), mainly focus on teacher development. A main concept in education reform is that teachers have to improve their English proficiency. In addition, the Director of the Office of Academic Accreditation and Education Evaluation stated that results of the curriculum evaluation of 30,010 schools showed that two-thirds of them were below the educational standards set by the Office and most of the schools lacked quality teachers. Although 91% of the teachers hold at least a Bachelor's degree, their teaching skills are poor (Pithiyanuwat, 2006).

Factors that caused those difficulties in Thailand especially in the primary and secondary school are:

> …the teachers face many obstacles including insufficient English language skills. As for learners, they wish they could speak English fluently but most of them think that English is too challenging for them to be competent because of interference from the mother tongue (Thai) particularly in pronunciation and being too shy to speak English. (Biyaem, 1997:36)

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2.1.2 Levels of English skills of Thai students

English is generally the first foreign language that students must study in schools (O'Sullivan & Tajaroensuk, 1977). Thais' level of English proficiency is low in comparison with many countries in Asia e.g. Malaysia, Philippines, and Singapore. According to the Ministry of University Affairs, in March 2000 the average Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores of Thais were the same as for Mongolians but higher than for North Koreans and Japanese (Wiriyachitra, 2004). The revised proficiency-based curriculum will provide students with the opportunity to continue their English education without interruption and to facilitate life-long learning (Ministry of Education, 1996).

From studies of the levels of Thai students' English ability in speaking and listening between 1972 and 1988, Sukamolson (1989) concluded that students' listening skill in Grade 7- 9 was very poor. Students had problems in listening to dialogues and texts as well as problems of pronunciation. Wiriyachitra (2001) asserted that researchers have also suggested that the English curriculum in the Thai university cannot meet the demands of English used in the workplace. The skills used most are listening and speaking, which are not the focus skills in the Thai tertiary education English curriculum.

2.1.3 English problem sounds for Thai students

Language is a cognitive skill, which includes productive skills of writing and speaking and receptive skills of reading and writing as well as language components, namely vocabulary, structure and phonology (Wongsothorn & Pongsurapipat, 1992).

Jotikasthira (1999) stated that the English sounds which are considered problem sounds for Thai students can be divided into three categories:

- Sounds that do not occur in Thai: These sounds are /ϖ/ e.g. van, every; /T /or /th/ e.g. thin, breath; /Δ /or /ţħ/ e.g. mother, then; /ζ/ e.g. zero, nasal; /Σ /or /sh/ e.g. share, notion; /Z / or /zh/ e.g casual, beige; /tΣ/or /ch/ e.g. future, cherry; /dZ /or /j/ e.g. gentle, jelly and /γ/ e.g. gamble, legal.   Normally Thai students cannot pronounce these sounds because they do not exist in the Thai language

- Sounds that do not occur at the final position (They are different from Thai equivalents as to distribution, though existing in Thai). Although some English sounds exist in Thai, they do not occur at the final position in Thai and most Thai students fail to pronounce them when they appear finally in English words (Jotikasathira, 1999):

  a. /l/ substituted by /n/
  b. /f/ substituted by unreleased /β/
  c. /s/ substituted by unreleased /δ/
  d.   /s/ may be omitted when occurs after diphthongs   /ai/ e.g. nice, /au/ i.e. house, /Oi/ e.g. rejoice. This is because in Thai there is no consonant sound following these diphthongs.
  e. /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, and /k/ are pronounced as unreleased instead of released sounds because these sounds are pronounced unreleased when they occur in final position in Thai words.

- Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents: /r/, /i/, /e/, /u/, and /o/; that is, their production is not the same. The English /r/ sound can be formed in the ways depending upon different speakers and dialects. For example, retroflex and bent back is common throughout the Midland area (Francis, 1958). This retroflex /r/ is made by moving the sides of the tongue against the back teeth. The front of the tongue is lowered but the tip is turned upward and

withdrawn towards the back of the mouth, whereas the Thai /r/ sound is just a trilled /r/. Tense vowels such as /i/, /e/, /u/, and /o/ are slight diphthongs; that is, they are pronounced with a diphthongal quality. The degree of diphthongization is greatest when these slight diphthongs occur in a stressed syllable. On the other hand, the Thai vowels of /i/, /e/, /u/, and /o/ do not have this diphthongal quality.

The strategies for overcoming incomprehension are simply another aspect of the total communication-language learning process. Teachers need to help learners become aware of strategies they need for effective communication, whether in making themselves understood, or in understanding what another speaker has said (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992).

2.2   Theories about teaching pronunciation and language learning strategies

There have been various arguments and support for the effectiveness of pronunciation training on learners' achievement in communicative competence. Morley (1998) states that pronunciation plays an important role in overall communicative competence. Yong (2004) suggested that from the traditional ways of learning English, students neglected the basic knowledge of speaking. This may have been enough to meet the demands of English in the years when we had less communication with foreign countries. However, oral communication began to be more important when they arrived in this century with extended forms of communication with Western countries. Yong (2004) asserted that understanding by reading or writing would no longer be sufficient for the development of the economy and that communicating face to face personally or through the internet needed to be understood.

The focus of the pronunciation training in this study followed Smith's (1981) arguments that consciousness and awareness raising are important in second language acquisition though Krashen's (1985) position

was that pronunciation is acquired naturally. Furthermore clear instruction was important to the effectiveness of pronunciation training (Spada 1997, Pennington 1998) but this was contested by Suter (1976) who was not able to find a positive effect from instruction. Acton (1984) reported in detail on a program of instruction focusing on the link between pronunciation, affect, personality and social context, which was designed to help learners whose pronunciation had fossilised. However, no empirical evidence of its success was offered.

Derwing, Munro and Wiebe (1997) found a positive outcome of instruction which focused on general speaking habits as opposed to a concentration on individual segments. Derwing, Munro and Wiebe (1998) also found that both instruction in segmental accuracy and instruction in general speaking habits and prosodic features, led to improved pronunciation. Morley (1994:16) suggested that the focus on pronunciation teaching nowadays should be on designing "new-wave instructional programs". Moreover, she stresses that these new instructional designs should take into account not only language forms and functions, but also issues of learner self-involvement and learner strategy training. Students who have become active partners in their own learning have developed the skills to monitor and modify their speech patterns. Teachers' awareness of learning opportunities might create potential for a deeper understanding of language learning and language classroom interaction. Alwright (2005:9) defines the learning opportunity as a more developmental unit of analysis and assesses for well planning in language learning.

Pronunciation practice is also important for the students who plan to study abroad or are currently living abroad. Increasing their pronunciation skills beforehand can build confidence and make them feel less reluctant to venture out to speak English. Students' personal attitude and self-esteem are major factors in improving English pronunciation. It is not merely exposure that matters, but how the students respond to the opportunities of listening to

English spoken by a native speaker or of speaking themselves (Kenworthy, 1987).

Language learning strategies can help students to improve their language competencies (Oxford, 1990a). Canale and Swain (1980), whose article influenced a number of works about communication strategies in ESL/EFL teaching, recognised the importance of communication strategies as a key aspect of strategic competence. An important distinction exists, however, between communication and LLS. LLS are used generally for all strategies that ESL/EFL learners use in learning the target language and communication strategies are one type of LLS. Oxford (1990a) defined that LLS are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active and self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence.

Through the years, researchers interested in pronunciation learning have examined many variables in attempting to explain successful second language pronunciation ability. Studies have not been numerous, but have been productive. Research has shown (Vitanova & Miller, 2002) that learners can see improvement in both segmental and supra-segmental areas of pronunciation. However, once learners have mastered the basic sounds of English and identified some of the supra-segmental differences between their L1 and English, it is time to help them learn some strategies so that they can study more effectively on their own (Vitanova & Miller, 2002). Oxford (1986b) explains that learning strategies are of great importance because they improve language performance, encourage learner autonomy, are teachable, and expand the role of the teacher in significant ways. Given the pronunciation instruction that promotes learner strategy awareness more basic knowledge about the relationship between learning strategies and pronunciation is needed (Morley, 1998). Research into potentially important variables affecting pronunciation has been surprisingly absent from the literature (Peterson, 2000).

2.2.1 The importance of pronunciation learning and teaching on learner's improvement of Speaking Skills

The most important part of learning a second language rests on pronunciation (Pennington, 1996); thus speaking is so important in acquiring and using a language (Dan, 2006). Dan claims that language competence covers many aspects. Phonetics both in theory and practice constitute the basis of speaking above all other aspects of language and pronunciation is the foundation of speaking. Good pronunciation may make the communication easier, more relaxed and more useful.

Within the field of language teaching, ideas on the value of teaching pronunciation are often at variance. Some believe that teachers can do little to influence the natural course of English phonological development with its often less than satisfactory results. Arguments against the explicit teaching of pronunciation rely on two basic assumptions about the acquisition of second language phonology (Jones, 2002). Firstly it is virtually impossible for adults to acquire native like pronunciation in a foreign language (Burrill, 1985). This is supported by Elliot (1995), Guiora, Brannon, and Dull (1972), Major (1987), and Oyama (1976) pointing out that factors such as age, personality, cognitive style and native language phonology have been shown to influence learners' pronunciation. Secondly, the work of Krashen (1982) argues that pronunciation is an acquired skill and that focused instruction is at best useless and at worst detrimental.

Others believe that teaching can play an important role in helping learners develop ways of improving their pronunciation and shaping their attitude toward the importance of pronunciation (Richards & Renandya, 2002). The usefulness of teaching pronunciation is also a widely debated subject in the language teaching context. Fraser (1999) concluded that most ESL teachers agree that explicit pronunciation teaching is an essential part of language courses and confidence with pronunciation allows learners to

interact with native speakers, which are essential for all aspects of their linguistic development.

The field of development research indicates that teachers can make a noticeable difference if certain criteria, such as the teaching of suprasegmentals and the linking of pronunciation with listening practice, are fulfilled. Pronunciation instruction has tended to be linked to the instructional method being used. Pronunciation was almost irrelevant and therefore seldom taught in the grammar-translation method. With the emergence of more holistic, communicative methods and approaches to ESL instruction, pronunciation is addressed within the context of real communication (Celce-Murcia, Brinto & Goodwin, 1996; Morley, 1991). It is effective pronunciation teaching that offers learners a genuine choice in how they express themselves (Fraser, 1999). Carter and Nunan (2001) describe the complexity of the process of second language acquisition as an organic rather than linear process and students need to start pronunciation lessons early and continue through high-level Academic English levels. In addition, pronunciation teaching methods should more fully address the issues of motivation and exposure by creating awareness of the importance of pronunciation and providing more exposure to input from native speakers (Jones, 2002).

Pronunciation is the foundation of speaking. English, both written and spoken, has been accepted as the dominant means of communication for most of the world but some misunderstandings have been caused by inappropriate pronunciation (Yong, 2004). Poor pronunciation can condemn learners to less social, academic and work advancement than they deserved (Fraser, 1999, 2000). Good pronunciation may make the communication easier and more relaxed and thus more successful (Dan, 2006). Almost all learners rate pronunciation as a priority and an area in which they need more guidance (Willing, 1993; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1997). Although the study of foreign accents has always been a fascination for some researchers, the teaching of pronunciation and oral skills in general in foreign and second language classrooms has often been low on the list of priorities (Peterson, 2000).

The 16th Educational Conference held in Melbourne in 2003 by Germana ECKERT, Insearch Language Centre concerning Productive Skills in the Academic English Curriculum showed that the main focus of the current academic English curriculum leaves little room for pronunciation work. There are two important reasons for this. Firstly is the importance of good writing ability in academic English. Students quickly learn that writing is considered more important than other skills as it is weighted more in most tertiary institutions in Australia. Teachers spend more time working on students' writing and grammar skills in order that students are best prepared for exams and especially written exams. The time factor is the second important factor which causes students and teachers to leave little time for pronunciation in the classroom (Germana ECKERT, 2003)

Gilbert (1994:38) claims that:

Pronunciation has been something of an orphan in English programs around the world. Why has pronunciation been a poor relation? I think it is because the subject has been drilled to death, with too few results from too much effort.

Most of the literature on pronunciation deals with what and how to teach, while the learner remains a silent abstract in the classroom. Morley (1994) underlines that the prevalent focus on pronunciation teaching nowadays should be on designing new wave instructional programs. Moreover she stresses that these instructional designs should take into account not only language forms and functions, but also issues of learner self-involvement and learner strategy training. In other words, students who have developed the skills to monitor and modify their speech patterns if necessary should become active partners in their own learning. Yule, Hoffman and Damico (1987) assert that self-monitoring is critical for creating independent and competent learners and is a necessary part of the consciousness raising process. Finally, expansion activities are made for

students to incorporate the language in their own use (Harmer, 2001; Celce-Murcia, 1991; Richard-Amato, 1988; Krashen, 1987).

Kriedler (1989) states that correct and clear pronunciation are considerably important in language learning. Without them, learners may not be understood and may be poorly perceived by other English speakers. They need to have confidence in their ability to speak. Good pronunciation takes time to build up, as there are many factors involved. Learners need to hear a lot of English before they can develop a feel for the sounds of English. The learners become more confident and motivated in learning the language because of the teaching aids and materials such as tape recordings of native speakers, pictures of mouth and articulations used in the class along with the provision positive reinforcement (Phinit-Akson, 2002; Quilter, 2002; Estrada & Streiff, 2002; Wu, 2002; and Jay, 1966)

Pronunciation is a very important factor in the speech process (spoken language) when the speaker achieves the goal to communicate effectively by being understood. The speech process is a process that involves several stages, beginning with the speaker's ideas and ending with the understanding of those ideas by the listener (Dauer, 1993).

Dauer (1993:8) (see Figure 2.1) states that the speaker thinks, decides what he or she is going to say and puts the ideas into words and sentences of a particular language. The speaker's brain then transforms the words and sentences into nerve impulses that it sends to the muscles in the speech organs. The speaker's speech organs move. The lungs push air up through the larynx and into the mouth and nose. The air is shaped by the tongue and lips and comes out of the speaker's mouth as sound waves. The sound travels through the air. Sometimes, the sound is changed into electrical signals, as in a telephone or tape recorder, and then is changed back into sound waves by an electronic speaker. The listener hears the sounds when the sound waves hit his or her ear. The ear changes the sound waves into nerve impulses and sends them to the brain. The listener understands the message. The listener's brain identifies specific speech sounds, interprets them as words and sentences of a particular language, and figures out their

meaning. The importance of good pronunciation starts from the process of the speech organs move (pronunciation) which is related to the proficiency of the speakers until the sounds travels through the air.

Figure 2.1   Speech process (spoken language)

Speaker thinks

↓

Speech organs move

↓

Sound travels through air

↓

The listener hears

↓

The listener understands the message
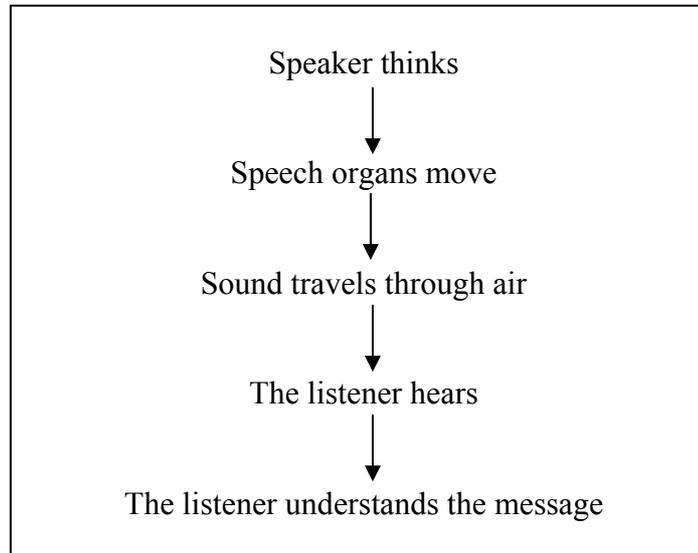
Dauer (1993) asserts that at any point in this process, there could be a problem that results in the message intended by the speaker not being understood by the listener. Effective oral communication depends on accuracy in all stages. The articulation of particular sounds is included that the listener identifies some speech sounds incorrectly or figures out a different meaning from the one intended by the speaker. Problems are listed as follows:

- The speaker does not know the right words or grammar to put his or her idea into language.
- The speaker cannot produce a particular sound.
- There is too much background noise or a bad telephone connection.
- The listener is hard of hearing.
- The listener identifies some speech sounds incorrectly or figures out a different meaning from the one intended by the speaker.

(Dauer, 1993)

Research has contributed some important data on factors that can influence the learning and teaching of pronunciation skills. Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996), Gillette (1994), Graham (1994) and Pennington (1994) discuss age and native language. They agree that adults find pronunciation more difficult than children do and that they probably will not achieve native-like pronunciation. Yet experiences with language learning and the ability to self-monitor, which come with age, can offset these limitations to some degree. These experiences include the amount and type of prior pronunciation instruction. Prior experiences with such pronunciation instruction may influence learners' success with current efforts. Learners at higher language proficiency levels may have developed habitual, systematic pronunciation errors that must be identified and addressed. The ability to recognise and internalise foreign sounds may be unequally developed in different learners. Learner attitude and motivation related to an individual's personality and learning goals can influence achievement in pronunciation. Attitude toward the target language, culture, and native speakers; degree of acculturation (including exposure to and use of the target language); personal identity issues; and motivation for learning can all support or impede pronunciation skills development.

Views of pronunciation training in the classroom

In recent years, there has been a greater emphasis on teaching competent pronunciation, especially in ESL/EFL classrooms. This is due to the increasing realisation that poor pronunciation can cause serious problems for learners, such as communication breakdowns, anxiety, stereotyping and discrimination (Morley, 1998). Yet English pronunciation is neglected in classrooms throughout the world today, including Asia. One of the reasons that it is neglected or ignored is because not many English pronunciation teaching strategies or techniques are available to teachers in the classroom (Wei, 2006). Lu (2002) concluded that learners of ESL in Hong Kong have poor English pronunciation because they seem to lack a knowledge of English sounds. There is no practice in using phonetic symbols required in

the curriculum. Moreover teachers of English pronunciation do not receive relevant professional training in the use of phonetic symbols. The reason is not unwillingness to teach pronunciation, but uncertainty as to how best to help learners' pronunciation is one of the most difficult areas for learners as well as teachers (Fraser, 1999).

There are two opposing views on the teaching of pronunciation in the ESL classroom (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992). One view holds that the purpose of teaching pronunciation is to eradicate all traces of a foreign accent through pronunciation drills. The other view holds that the teaching of pronunciation is futile after a certain age due to a decreasing ability among learners to develop native-like pronunciation in a second language. Avery and Ehrlich (1992) assert that neither of those views is completely accurate. Factors that should be considered as having an effect on the acquisition of the sound system of a second language are biology, socio-culture, personality, and linguistics. These factors may prevent learners from attaining native-like pronunciation in a second language, so it is important that teachers set realistic goals. Kachru (1990, 1992) and Kachru and Nelson (1996) urges English language teaching practitioners to consider contextual realities before adopting pedagogic models of global English; language education should reflect how the language is used in that specific society. Jenkins (1998: 120) suggests that concept of a learning model is still limited to the category of native varieties rather than embracing all different varieties of English to avoid possible confusion and inconsistency in their language learning.

Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin, (1996) Gillette (1994) Graham (1994) and Pennington (1994) agree that the learner's first language influences the pronunciation of the target language and is a significant factor in accounting for foreign accents. So-called interference or negative transfer from the first language is likely to cause errors in aspiration, intonation, and rhythm in the target language and pronunciation of the basic formation of the vowel or consonant etc.

Fraser (1999) added that in the quest for effective teaching, it is worth diagnosing carefully the nature of the difficulties that may be encountered. There is a significant skill component for learners. Pronunciation is not just a cognitive 'knowing-that', it is also a physical 'knowing-how', similar to playing a sport or musical instrument. Learners need motivation and time to really practise pronunciation. It is worth spending class time discussing with learners their own ideas about what is involved in learning pronunciation. Lu (2002) claims that learners suggest they should practise speaking. Learners need help in overcoming both their expectation that pronunciation is a subject which can be learned by listening to a teacher, and the psychological and social barriers that make it difficult for them to practise effectively. In addition, there is also a significant cognitive component in pronunciation learning, which is much less often acknowledged. It is useful to think of learning to pronounce a new language as involving a kind of concept formation rather than as a purely physical skill.

The teachers must focus on two areas. Firstly, learners must be made aware of aspects of their pronunciation that result in other people being unable to understand them. Secondly, learners must be given the opportunity to practise aspects of the English sound system which are crucial for their own improvement (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992). Firth (1992) stated that learners' achievement of a near perfect standard may individually vary to the degree in motivation, sensitivity to accuracy, age and education factors which are beyond a teacher's control.

However, teachers should pay attention to the development of self-correction techniques and self-monitoring strategies. Self-correction is the ability to correct oneself when a pronunciation error has been pointed out by teachers or peers. It is critical that the teacher help to develop strategies which will allow the learner to self-correct and self-monitor by focusing on motivation (learners should understand why accuracy of oral production is important), explanations (description and demonstration appropriate to proficiency levels), practice (adequate opportunities to practise) and

feedback (receive supportive and accurate feedback from teachers and learners in class).

The role of pronunciation in schools of language teaching has varied widely from having virtually no role in the grammar-translation method to being the main focus in the audio-lingual method where emphasis is on the traditional notions of pronunciation, minimal pairs, drills and short conversations (Castillo, 1990). Situational language teaching, developed in Britain, also mirrored the audio-lingual view of the pronunciation class (Richard & Rodgers, 1986). Morley (1991:484) states:

> The pronunciation class…was one that gave primary attention to phonemes and their meaningful contrasts, environmental allophonic variations, combinatory phonotactic rules, and pronunciation of the basic formation of vowel or consonant etc., along with…attention to stress, rhythm, and intonation.

During the late 1960s and the 1970s, questions were asked about the role of pronunciation in the ESL/EFL curriculum, whether the focus of the programs and the instructional methods were effective or not. Pronunciation programs were viewed as "meaningless non communicative drill-and-exercise gambits" (Morley, 1991:485-486). In many language programs, the teaching of pronunciation was pushed aside, as many studies concluded that little relationship exists between teaching pronunciation in the classroom and attained proficiency in pronunciation. The strongest factors found to affect pronunciation, i.e. native language and motivation, seemed to have little to do with classroom activities (Suter, 1976; Suter & Purcell, 1980).

Suter (1976) and Suter and Purcell (1980) concluded that pronunciation practice in class had little effect on the learner's pronunciation skills. The attainment of accurate pronunciation in a second language is a matter substantially beyond the control of educators. They qualified their findings by stating that variables of formal training and the quality of the training in pronunciation could affect the results, as would the area of

pronunciation that had been emphasised, that is 'segmentals' (individual sounds of language) or 'suprasegmentals' (the 'musical patterns' of English, melody, pitch patterns, rhythm, and timing patterns (Gilbert, 1987). Pennington stated that there was "no firm basis for asserting categorically that pronunciation is not teachable or that it is not worth spending time on…" (1980:20). Pennington (1989) questioned the validity of Suter and Purcell's findings as the factors of formal pronunciation training and the quality of the teaching could affect any research results. Also, Stern (1992:112) stated that "There is no convincing empirical evidence which could help us sort out the various positions on the merits of pronunciation trainings".

If the above views represent a split in the teaching of pronunciation, what can the teacher do to improve their students' pronunciation if improvement can be obtained? Jones, Rusman, and Evans (1994) found that students with prior exposure to phonological rules and principles, although they do not always produce more accurate pronunciation, seem to be better equipped to assess their own speech and to be more aware of their particular problems.

Changing outlooks on language learning and teaching have influenced a move from teacher-centred to learner-centred classrooms. Within the field of education over the last few decades a gradual but significant shift has taken place, resulting in less emphasis on teachers and teaching and greater stress on learners and learning. This change has been reflected in various ways in language education and applied linguistics, ranging from the Northeast Conference paper (1990) entitled 'Shifting the Instructional Focus to the Learner an annual Learners' Conference' held in conjunction with the TESL Canada convention since 1991, 'Key works on the learner-centred curriculum' (Nunan, 1988, 1995) and 'Learner-centredness as Language Education' (Tudor, 1996).

Concurrently, there was a shift from specific linguistic competencies to broader communicative competencies as goals for teachers

and students (Morley, 1991). Morley states the need for the integration of pronunciation with oral communication, with more emphasis from segmentals to suprasegmentals, more emphasis on individual learner needs, and meaningful task-based practice and introducing peer correction and group interaction (Castillo, 1990). Research has shown that teaching phonemes is not enough for intelligibility in communication (Cohen, 1977). With the emphasis on meaningful communication and Morley's (1991:488) premise, that "intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communication competence", teachers should include pronunciation in their courses and expect students to do well in them. Without adequate pronunciation skills, the learners' ability to communicate is severely limited. Morley believes that not attending to a student's need is an abrogation of professional responsibility (1991).

Other research gives support to Morley's belief of the need for professional responsibility when a given non-native speaker's pronunciation falls below the level at which he or she will be able to communicate orally no matter how good his or her control of English grammar and vocabulary might be (Celce-Murcia, 1987). Gilbert (1984) believes the skills of listening comprehension and pronunciation are interdependent so that if speakers cannot hear English well and cannot be understood easily, they are cut off from conversation with native speakers. Nooteboom (1983) also has suggested that speech production is affected by speech perception; the hearer has become an important factor in communication discourse. This illustrates the need to integrate pronunciation with communicative activities to give the students situations to develop their pronunciation by listening and speaking. The current research and the current trend reversal in the thinking of pronunciation shows there is a consensus that a learner's pronunciation in a foreign language needs to be taught in conjunction with communicative practices for the learner to be able to communicate effectively with native speakers.

Language features involved in pronunciation

Pronunciation training includes micro-level skill (accuracy-based learning), macro-level skill (fluency-based learning) and awareness-raising classroom activities. At the micro-level skill, learners should be trained both in segmental (a study of sounds) and suprasegmental features (training in stress, intonation, rhythm, linking) (Morley, 1979, 1991; Gilbert 1984 and Wong, 1987). Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996), Gilbert (1990), and Morley (1991) describe segmentals as the basic inventory of distinctive sounds and show the way that they combine to form a spoken language. In the case of North American English, this inventory comprises 40 phonemes (15 vowels and 25 consonants), which are the basic sounds that serve to distinguish words from one another. Pronunciation instruction has often concentrated on the mastery of segmentals through discrimination and production of target sounds via drills consisting of minimal pairs.

Segmentals and suprasegmentals transcend the level of individual sound production and are produced unconsciously by native speakers. But suprasegmentals extend across segmentals. Since suprasegmental elements provide crucial context and support (they determine meaning) for segmental production, they are given a more prominent place in pronunciation instruction.

Suprasegmentals include stress, rhythm, adjustments in connected speech, prominence, and intonation. Stress is a combination of length, loudness, and pitch applied to syllables in a word e.g. HAPpy, FOOTball. Rhythm is the regular, patterned beat of stressed and unstressed syllables and pauses e.g. with weak syllables in lower case and stressed syllables in upper case: they WANT to GO later.

Adjustment in connected speech is modification of sounds within and between words in streams of speech

e.g. ask him /ask him/ becomes /aes kim/.

Prominence is the speaker's act of highlighting words to emphasise meaning or intent

e.g. give me the BLUE one (not the yellow one).
Intonation is the rising and falling of voice pitch across phrases and sentences
e.g. are you REAdy?

There are, also, strong differences in inflection, stress and intonation among the various regional varieties of English e.g. American, Australian, Indian, and local UK dialects. Internationally, English teachers refer in their teaching to the sounds, stress and intonation of The International Phonetic Association (IPA).

Speech can be broken down into pronunciation and intonation, accuracy and fluency or can be categorised in terms of strategies or it can be regarded as a form of interaction and analysed using the methods of pragmatics or discourse analysis. This means that the accurate speaker may communicate effectively (Skehan, 1998). It should include all aspects of English pronunciation and the goal of pronunciation teaching is to foster communicative effectiveness (Wong, 1987).

Pronunciation learning and the target of comfortable intelligibility

Morley (1991) states that the goal of pronunciation should be changed from the attainment of perfect pronunciation to the more realistic goals of developing functional intelligibility, communicability, increased self-confidence, the development of speech monitoring abilities and speech modification strategies for use beyond the classroom. Abercrombie (1991) defines comfortable intelligibility as pronunciation which can be understood with little or no conscious effort on the part of listener. Morley (1991) also states that the overall aim is for the learner to develop spoken English that is

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easy to understand, serves the learner's individual needs, and allows a positive image as a speaker of a foreign language. In addition, the learner needs to develop awareness and monitoring skills that will allow learning opportunities outside the classroom environment. It is obvious that creating a stronger link between pronunciation and communication can help increase learners' motivation by bringing pronunciation to a level of intelligibility and encouraging learners' awareness of its potential as a tool for making their language not only easier to understand but more effective (Jones, 2002).

Pronunciation is clearly a central factor in learners' success in making themselves understood (Elson, 1992). Morley (1991) also states that intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communication competence that teachers should include in courses and expect learners to do well. The ability to employ stress, intonation, and articulation in ways that support comprehension is a skill that for learners from many language backgrounds will only come slowly. Elson (1992) urges that learners need to be encouraged to immerse themselves in the target language and to persist in spite of the difficulties that are part of the language-learning process. The experience of unintelligibility or incomprehension grows larger because of sensitivity to 'correctness' or the need to communicate successfully in the target language. The speaker's self image and sense of accomplishment is closely bound to understanding and being understood. The result can be a high degree of frustration for the speaker or listener who might see each moment of incomprehension as a personal fault and responsibility. Klyhn (1986) observes that learners should be made aware that every message they utter needs to be understood.

2.2.2 The importance of language learning strategies in language learning and teaching

Language learning and teaching is being focused increasingly on learners and learning rather than on teachers and teaching. Many studies

have been conducted to explore language learning strategies such as O'Malley et al, (1985 and 1990); Politzer & Groarty, (1985); Prokop, (1989) and Oxford, (1990). In parallel to this new shift of interest, how learners process new information and what kinds of strategies they employ to understand, learn or remember the information has been the primary concern of research dealing with the area of foreign language learning. This section provides the background of language learning strategies, definitions and taxonomies of language learning strategies presented by several researchers. It also stresses the importance of language learning strategies for foreign language learning.

Definition of language learning strategies

Language learning strategies are used by learners to complete speaking, reading, vocabulary, listening or writing activities presented in language lessons. Recognizing that there is a task to complete or a problem to solve language learners will use whatever metacognitive, cognitive or social affective strategies they possess to attend to the language learning activity (Oxford,1990:9). However, novices may be less efficient at selecting and applying strategies to task (O'Malley & Chamot, 1995:146) although experienced language learners can approach the problems in a systematic way and are usually successful in selecting appropriate strategies to complete a task. Regardless of language learning experiences, both groups of learners will need instruction in how to use strategies efficiently as a way to improve language learning and performance (Wenden, 1987:8; O'Malley & Chamot, 1995:81; Cohen,1998:69). It is important that both direct and indirect LLS are interconnected, and provide support one to the other (Oxford, 1990a:14).

Research into LLS began in the 1960s. Particularly, developments in cognitive psychology influenced much of the research done on LLS (Williams & Burden, 1997:149). In most of the research, the primary concern has been on identifying what good language learners report they do

to learn a second or foreign language, or in some cases, are observed doing while learning (Rubin & Wenden, 1987:19). Carton (1966) published his study which was the first attempt on learner strategies. In 1971, Rubin started research focusing on the strategies of successful learners and stated that such strategies, once identified, could be made available to less successful learners. Rubin (1975) defined learning strategies as the techniques or devices which a learner may use to acquire knowledge. Oxford (1990:24) advanced a somewhat broader definition as "Learning strategies are steps taken by students to enhance their own learning."

Weinstein and Mayer (1986:315) defined learning strategies (LS) broadly as "behaviour and thoughts that a learner engages in during learning which are intended to influence the learner's encoding process." Later Mayer (1988:11) defined LS as "behaviours of a learner that are intended to influence how the learner processes information." These early definitions from the educational literature reflect the roots of LS in cognitive science, with its essential assumptions that human beings process information and that learning involves such information processing. Clearly, LS are involved in all learning, regardless of the content and context. LS are used in learning and teaching maths, science, history, languages and other subjects, both in classroom settings and more informal learning environments.

Wong-Fillmore (1976), Tarone (1977), Naiman Frohlich, Stern and Todesco (1979), Cohen and Aphek (1981), Wenden (1982), Politzer and McGroaty (1985), Chamot and O'Malley (1987), Conti and Kolsody (1997) and many others studied strategies used by language learners during the process of foreign language learning. Researchers have experimented with instructing language learners to use selected learning strategies as a way to improve language performance. The positive results showed students who had LLS training significantly outperformed the students who received no training (O'Malley & Chamot, 1995:68). Wenden (1987) reported that providing students with a checklist of criteria to self-evaluate their oral production resulted in successful use of self-evaluation as a learning strategy. Cohen and Aphek (1980) and Ellis (2002:157) found that better

performance in recall of new words by using paired associations occurred when learners formed associations than when associations were not found. The consensus of these investigations and others (Bialystok, 1983; Gagne, 1985; Dadour, 1996; Sano, 1999; Johnson, 1999) tell us that LLS are teachable and training language learners to use selected learning strategies can have positive effects on task performance and the language learning process.

Research by Robbins (1996) and Grunewald (1999) also provides insights into instructional sequences and teaching approaches. The research discovered the feasibility of learning strategies instruction in Japan. Robbins (1996) provides a qualitative description of the instructional sequences used to implement strategy instruction at two universities in Kyoto. As a framework for strategy instruction, Robbins used the problem solving process model. Grunewald's action research (1999) also provides empirical evidence of how strategies instruction has been integrated into foreign language lessons. As a teacher of German in a Japanese university, Grunewald developed an optional supplementary system of useful LLS which were identified for each language skill presented in the course book and were integrated into the weekly language lessons. The teaching approach used for strategies instruction included awareness raising, explicit naming of strategies, practice and self-evaluation and monitoring.

It is essential to review broader views of language learning strategies to give teachers more understanding of students' learning and their further study on language teaching.

Learning strategies and learning style

O'Malley and Chamot (1990:1) defined learning style as "the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information". From this definition, it can be noted that LLS are distinct from learning styles, which refer more broadly to a learner's natural, habitual, and preferred way(s) of absorbing, processing and retaining

new information and skills" (Reid, 1995:7). The strategies serve as special behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information or skills (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Oxford (1990a: 9) stated that LLS allow learners to become more self-directed, expand the role of language teachers, are problem-oriented, involve many aspects not just the cognitive, can be taught, are flexible, and are influenced by a variety of factors. Vann and Abraham (1990:192) found evidence that suggests that both good and unsuccessful language learners can be active users of similar LLS though both lacked what are called metacognitive strategies, which would enable them to assess the task and bring to bear the necessary strategies for its completion.

Within second language (L2) and foreign language (FL) education, a number of definitions of LLS have been used by key figures in the field. Early on, Tarone (1983:67) defined learning strategies (LS) as "an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language to incorporate these into one's interlanguage competencs".

Other researchers have defined the term LLS as follows:

> …any set of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information (Wenden & Rubin 1987:19).

> …intentional behaviour and thoughts used by learners during learning so as to better help them understand, learn, or remember new information (Richards & Platt 1992:209).

> …a learning strategy is an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language (Faerch, Klaus & Kasper, 1983:67).

…the concept of learning strategy is dependent to achieve certain goals and learning strategies can be regarded as broadly conceived intentional directions and learning techniques (Stern 1992:261).

Finally, building on work in her book for teachers (Oxford, 1990a), Oxford (1992, 1993:18) provides specific examples of LLS and this helpful definition.

> …language learning strategies - specific actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques that students (often intentionally) use to improve their progress in developing L2 skills. These strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language. Strategies are tools for the self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability.

An additional comment on strategy definition is found in Johnson (2001:18) "…techniques for coping which learners develop in relation to strategic competences".

All language learners use LLS either consciously or unconsciously when processing new information and performing tasks in the language classroom. Since the language classroom is like a problem-solving environment in which learners are likely to face new input and difficult tasks given by their instructors, learners attempt to find the quickest or easiest way to do what is required, that is, by using LLS. Going back to the definition problem, the notion of consciousness can be traced easily in Oxford's definition (1990), even though she does not mention consciousness in her definition. Cohen (1998) links the conscious use of learning strategies to the goal, that is, the learning of second or foreign language. Another point raised by Johnson (2001:53) is "…whether or not the word strategy should be confined to conscious action."

From these definitions, a change over time may be noted from the early focus on the product of LLS (linguistic or sociolinguistic competence), to a greater emphasis on the processes and the characteristics of LLS that are

distinct from learning styles. These characteristics refer more broadly to a learner's natural, habitual, and preferred way(s) of absorbing, processing, and retaining new information and skills (Reid, 1995). However, there appears to be an obvious relationship between one's language learning style and usual or preferred language learning strategies.

Although the terminology is not always uniform, with some researchers using the terms 'learner strategies' (Wenden & Rubin, 1987), others 'learning strategies' (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Chamot & O'Malley, 1994) and still others 'language learning strategies' (Oxford, 1990a, 1996), there are a number of basic characteristics in the generally accepted view of LLS. Firstly, LLS are learner generated. They are steps taken by language learners. Secondly, LLS enhance language learning and help develop language competence, as reflected in the learner's skill in listening, speaking, reading, or writing the L2 or FL. Thirdly, LLS may be visible (behaviours, steps, techniques, etc.) or unseen (thoughts, mental processes). Fourthly, LLS involve information and memory (vocabulary knowledge, grammar rules, etc.). It is clear that a number of further aspects of LLS are less uniformly accepted. When discussing LLS, Oxford (1990a) and others such as Wenden and Rubin (1987) note a desire for control and autonomy of learning on the part of the learner through LLS. Cohen (1990) insists that only conscious strategies are LLS and that there must be a choice involved on the part of the learner, processes which are consciously selected by learners and which may result in action taken to enhance the learning or use of a second or foreign language, through the storage, retention, recall, and application of information about the language (Cohen, 1998).

Oxford added that LLS,

- allow learners to become more self-directed
- expand the role of language teachers
- are problem-oriented
- involve many aspects, not just the cognitive

- can be taught
- are flexible
- are influenced by a variety of factors (Oxford, 1990a: 9)

Finally Cohen (2003a) stresses again the conscious nature of language strategies and states that language learning strategies and language use strategies are both types of the broader term strategies. Transfer of a strategy from one language or language skill to another is a related goal of LLS, as Pearson (1998) and Skehan (1989) have discussed. Skehan (1998) asserts, however, that the ability of learners to transfer the strategy may vary due to their memory capacity and speed of analytical processing with working memory.

On the basis of Skehan's (1998) and Oxford's (1990) discussion about LLS, a theoretical process model was formulated (McIntosh & Noels, 2004). Each numbered pathway shown in Figure 2.2 corresponds to language proficiency. Specifically, need for cognition in language learning will be positively associated with self-determination. Self-determination in language learning was related to all six types of LLS and was positively related to the use of memory and cognitive strategies. Numbers 10 through 15 respectively hold that all six LLS will positively contribute to L2 proficiency.

Figure 2.2   Theoretical process model for study variables
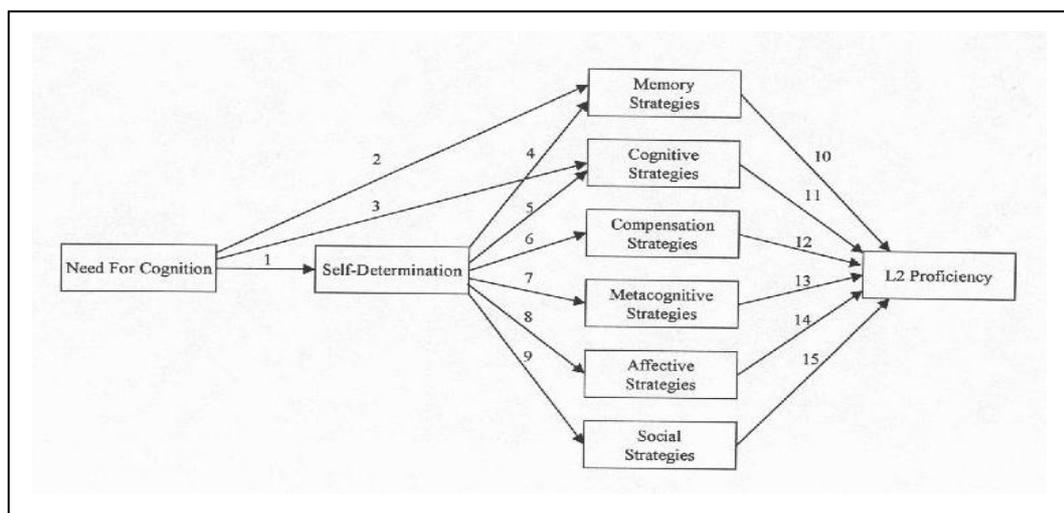
(McIntosh & Noels, 2004:24)

The following section outlines how various researchers have categorised LLS.

Classifications of language learning strategies

LLS have been classified by many scholars, and there are literally hundreds of different but often interrelated strategies (Wenden & Rubin, 1987; O'Malley et al., 1985; Oxford, 1990; Stern, 1992 and Ellis, 1994). However, most of these attempts to classify LLS reflect more or less the same categorizations of LLS without any radical change. Rubin's (1987), Oxford's (1990), O'Malley's (1985), and Stern's (1992) classifications of LLS classifications of language learning strategies are presented as follows:

Oxford (1990b) divides LLS into two main classes, direct and indirect. She has developed a fairly detailed list of LLS in her taxonomy. Firstly, she distinguishes between direct LLS, which directly involve the subject matter, i.e. the L2 or FL, and indirect LLS, which do not directly involve the subject matter itself, but are essential to language learning (Oxford, 1990b: 71). Secondly, each of these broad kinds of LLS is divided in three main types of direct LLS and indirect LLS. Oxford (1990:9) sees the aim of LLS as being oriented towards the development of communicative competence. Oxford's (1990:17) taxonomy of LLS is useful for the development of the action in this project and is summarized in Appendix A. LLS are interconnected, both direct and indirect, and they support one another (Oxford, 1990a:14-16). In the social LLS, for example, a student might ask questions of peers, thereby co-operating with others, and in response to the answer the student receives the student might develop some aspect of L2/FL cultural understanding or become more aware of the feelings or thoughts of fellow students, the teacher, or those in the L2/FL culture. What is learned from this experience might then be supported when the same student uses a direct, cognitive strategy such as practising to repeat what has been learned or to integrate what was learned into a natural conversation with someone in the target language.

Rubin (1987) makes the distinction between strategies contributing directly to learning and those contributing indirectly to learning. According to Rubin, there are three types of strategies. These are 1) learning strategies, 2) communication strategies, and 3) social strategies. O'Malley et al. (1985:582-584) divide LLS into three main subcategories: metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, and socioaffective strategies. According to Stern (1992:262-266), there are five main LLS. These are management and planning strategies, cognitive strategies, communicative-experiential strategies, interpersonal strategies, and affective strategies.

LLS and LLS training may be integrated into a variety of classes for L2/FL students (Lessard-Clouston, 1997). This appears to be becoming more popular, especially in intensive English programs. Texts such as Ellis and Sinclair's (1989) or Rubin and Thomson's (1994) might be used in order to help L2/FL learners understand the language learning process, the nature of language and communication, what language resources are available to them, and what specific LLS they might use in order to improve their own skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Graham (1994:169) declares that

> …LLS training needs to be integrated into students' regular classes if they are going to appreciate their relevance for language learning tasks; students need to constantly monitor and evaluate the strategies they develop and use; and they need to be aware of the nature, function and importance of such strategies.

Within communicative approaches to language teaching a key goal is for the learner to develop communicative competence in the target language, and LLS can help students in doing so. After Canale and Swain's (1980) influential article recognized the importance of communication strategies as a key aspect of strategic (and thus communicative) competence, a number of works appeared about communication strategies in language teaching. An

important distinction exists however, between communication and LLS. Communication strategies are used by speakers intentionally and consciously in order to cope with difficulties in communicating in a target language (Bialystok, 1990). The term LLS is used more generally, for all strategies are therefore, just one type of LLS. For all second language teachers who aim to help develop their students' communicative competence and language learning an understanding of LLS is crucial. As Oxford (1990a:1) puts it, LLS

> …are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement, and are essential for developing communicative competence.

In addition to developing students' communicative competence, LLS are important because research suggests that training students to use LLS can help them become better language learners. Early research on good language learners by Naiman, Frohlich, Stern, and Todesco (1978, 1996), Rubin (1975) and Stern (1975) suggested a number of positive strategies that such students employ, ranging from using an active task approach in and monitoring one's language performance to listening to the radio and speaking with native speakers. A study by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) also suggests that effective language learners are aware of the LLS they use and why they use them. Graham's (1997) work in French further indicates that language teachers can help students understand good LLS and should train them to develop and use them.

A caution must also be noted as Skehan (1989: 76) states, 'Good LLS are also used by bad language learners but other reasons cause them to be unsuccessful.' In fact Vann and Abraham (1990: 192) found evidence that suggest that both good and unsuccessful language learners can be active users of similar LLS, though it is important that they also discovered that their unsuccessful learners "apparently…lacked…what are often called metacognitive strategies… which would enable them to assess the task and bring to bear the necessary strategies for its completions". It appears that the

number and range of LLS are important if language teachers are to assist students both in learning and in becoming good language learners.

Since the amount of information to be processed by language learners is high in the language classroom, learners use different LLS in performing the tasks and processing the new input they face. LLS are good indicators of how learners approach tasks or problems encountered during the process of language learning.   In other words, LLS, while non-observable or unconsciously used in some cases, give language teachers valuable clues about how students assess the situation, plan, select appropriate skills so as to understand, learn, or remember new input presented in the language classroom.

According to Fedderholdt (1997:1), the language learner capable of using a wide variety of language learning strategies appropriately can improve his language skills in a better way.   Metacognitive strategies improve organization of learning time, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. Cognitive strategies include using previous knowledge to help solve new problems. Socioaffective strategies include asking native speakers to correct their pronunciation, or asking a classmate to work together on a particular language problem. Developing skills in three areas, such as metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective can help the language learner build up learner independence and autonomy and control learning.

Lessard-Clouston (1997:3) states that LLS contribute to the development of the communicative competence of the students. Being a broad concept, LLS are used to refer to all strategies foreign language learners use in learning the target language and communication strategies are one type of LLS. It follows from this that language teachers aiming at developing the communicative competence of the students and language learning should be familiar with LLS. As Oxford (1990:1) states, LLS "…are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active self-directed movement, which is essential for developing communicative competence."   Besides developing the communicative

competence of the students, teachers who train students to use LLS can help them become better language learners.

Helping students understand good LLS and training them to develop and use such good LLS can be considered to be the appreciated characteristics of a good language teacher. Whether it is a specific conversation, reading, writing, or other class, an organised and informed focus on LLS and LLS training will help students learn and provide more opportunities for them to take responsibility for their learning (Lessard-Clouston 1997:3).

Pronunciation learning strategies

Based on Oxford's (1990) definition of learning strategies, pronunciation learning strategies can be taught as steps taken by students to enhance their own pronunciation learning. While there appear to be no published studies that deals with pronunciation learning strategies separately from other study (Peterson, 2000), a few investigations have looked at pronunciation as one of a number of skills associated with learning style use. O'Malley et al. (1985a) asked 70 high-school ESL students about the learning strategies they used to help them with nine different oral language tasks, one of which was pronunciation. They stated that students reported using numerous learning strategies for pronunciation. However, their results were not reported in such a way as to indicate which specific strategies may have been used for pronunciation learning.

Two older studies do however, document a number of language learning strategies that were used specifically for pronunciation learning. Naiman et al. (1978) conducted interviews with 34 good language learners, asking them to describe their language learning experiences. A number of strategies involved in pronunciation learning emerged, as they did from the diary of Rivers (1979), who recorded her own experiences learning Spanish, her sixth language, during five weeks abroad. She published her diary

without analysis, but several pronunciation learning strategies and tactics are seen clearly at work.

According to Oxford's (1990) strategy classification system, direct and indirect strategies, the pronunciation learning strategies and tactics that learners used in learning pronunciation were categorized and documented. Peterson (2000) later investigated Oxford's study and condensed it into 12 basic pronunciation learning strategies which provide a wider range of specific pronunciation learning tactics than had been previously documented. Learners reported they used these pronunciation learning strategies and tactics to improve their pronunciation learning. Strategies are plans or methods to obtain a specific goal and affect the overall pattern; tactics are maneuvers, details that affect particular ways to control a situation.

Pronunciation learning strategies have been useful in planning the teaching of pronunciation as well as analysing the data reported from teachers and students in this study. Pronunciation learning strategies based on Oxford's (1990) and Peterson's (2000) studies are included in Appendix B.

2.3   Pronunciation training to develop speaking confidence

Teachers now agree that explicit pronunciation teaching is an essential part of language courses (Fraser, 1999). Firstly, confidence with pronunciation allows learners the interaction with native speakers that is so essential for all aspects of their linguistic development. Secondly, poor pronunciation degrades good language skills and condemns learners to less than their deserved social, academic and work advancement. The learners' ability to communicate is severely limited without adequate pronunciation skills. Limited pronunciation skills can undermine learners' self confidence, restrict social interactions and negatively influence estimations of a speaker's credibility and abilities (Morley, 1998). Self confidence refers to

the belief that a person has the ability to produce results, accomplish goals or perform tasks competently (Dörnyei, 2001). Gilbert (1984) believes the skills of listening comprehension and pronunciation are interdependent so that if learners cannot hear English well and cannot be understood easily, they are cut off from conversation with native speakers. The process of learning English, as with any other language, is inter-connected. Pronunciation and listening comprehension are linked together by a unified system within which individual sounds are systematically related. Students need this sense of a system in order to make sense of the separate pieces (Gilbert 1984.). If the student's English pronunciation skills are improved, clearly their listening skills and speaking skills become more refined.

Both speaking and listening require bottom-up processing: speaking requires clear articulation of phonemes or sounds, and listening requires accurate comprehension of phonemes (Celce-Murcia, 1991). Without phoneme discrimination skill, students can neither express themselves nor understand others fully. Even though the specific role of phoneme discrimination in listening and speaking is not clear, phoneme discrimination skill certainly provides students with increased confidence. Avery and Ehrlich (1992) argue the necessity of confidence in articulation that when teaching pronunciation, we must concern ourselves with much more than simply working through a list of sounds. Even if students have learned to produce sounds, they are often so self-conscious about their pronunciation that they are too nervous to use these sounds in front of a group of people. Human muscles do not respond well to nervousness. When speakers get nervous, knees and hands shake as well as the little muscles the speakers use in articulation. With regular practice, learners would improve their performance and feel confident (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992). The presence of increased productivity or regular practice will lessen frustration, anxiety and thus increase confidence (Dickinson, 1987; Oscarson, 1989; Gardner & McIntyre, 1991; Swain & Hart, 1993; Ellis, 1994; McNamara & Deane, 1995; O'Malley & Pierce, 1996; Rivers, 2001)

Figure 2.3 shows that, in the nerves cycle, muscles will not respond when speakers feel nervous. So listeners will not understand, and speakers will be more nervous. The positive cycle shows that confidence increased when the speakers are understood. Low anxiety and nerves, and perceptions of competence would develop self confidence (Clemont et. al, 1994; Noels & Clemont, 1996). Having confidence in articulation therefore gives students room to express themselves in conversation. This applies also to listening comprehension. Students who are very familiar with phonemes or sounds should have confidence in discriminating sounds. In conclusion, confidence in pronunciation that learners gain from the training allows learners the interaction with native speakers that is so essential for all aspects of their linguistic development (Fraser, 1999).

Figure 2.3:   Nerves cycle and positive cycle

Nerves Cycle

Student gets → Muscles
nervous; fears   do not
people   respond
won't understand

People
do not
understand

Positive Cycle

I speak slowly   I feel confident

I sound confident   People understand me
(this relaxes me)

(Avery & Ehrlich, 1992)

47
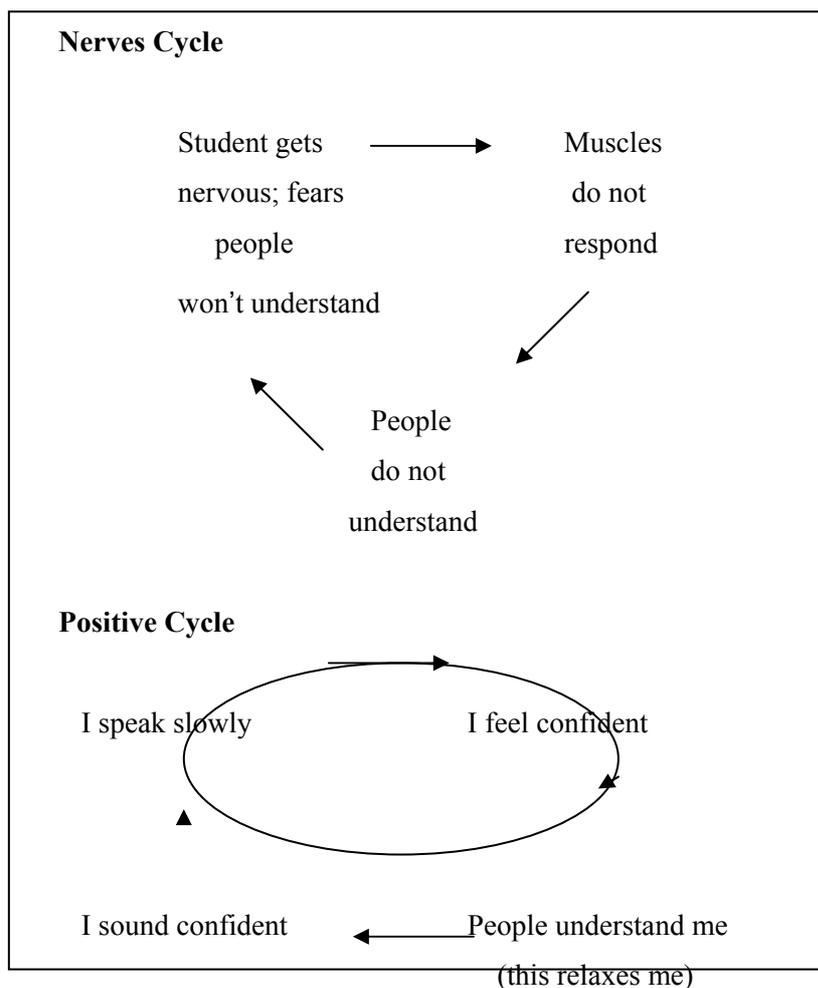
The speaker requires clear articulation of phonemes or sounds, and the listener requires accurate comprehension of phonemes (Celce-Murcia, 1991). Avery and Ehrlich (1992) assert that speakers of another language feel confident if they understand and are understood by the listeners.

My research design was strongly influenced by Avery and Ehrlich (1992) who concluded that to attain native-like pronunciation in a second language or foreign language, learners must be made aware of aspects of their pronunciation that result in other people being unable to understand them. The methodology and research design in pronunciation training are presented in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1　Introduction

The main focus of this study was on whether pronunciation training improved learners' pronunciation. I wanted to know which strategies learners used to help them and if they developed confidence to speak English after the training. It is hoped that the findings from this study in a classroom context will encourage pronunciation teaching and learning. These goals could only be achieved through action and reflection and so led me to action research. McNiff and Whitehead's claim (2005:1) about action research has motivated and supported the idea.

> Action research is a common-sense approach to personal and professional development that enables practitioners everywhere to investigate and evaluate their work, and to create their own theories of practice.

In addition, Whitehead (1989) and McNiff (1993) assert that action research constitutes a look at the questions in the class of things which disturb us and tries to find out the solution. The teacher's position is not only as teacher but also as researcher (Stenhouse, 1983). The teacher can develop professional competence as well as improve students' learning through action research (McNiff, 2003).

3.2 Why action research is the appropriate methodology for this study

The initial conception of action research emphasised its potential to empower and emancipate participants through cycles of reform based on reflection and action (McDonough, 2006). Action research can inform teachers about their practice and empower them to take leadership roles in their local teaching contexts (Mills, 2003). This study was completed in two cycles aimed to present the improvement of learners' pronunciation through training in one school in Thailand and to see if and how language learning strategies instruction contributed to their improvement. Learners participated in the training and reflected on their improvement and reported how it happened. A change in English language teaching to include the importance of pronunciation and language learning strategies was strongly believed to assist learners' improvement. This was taught separately to the English syllabus normally taught, which includes English grammar. Action research was a particularly appropriate framework for research into language teaching (Wallace, 2000).

3.2.1 A framework for change and improvement

A review of action research frameworks reveals several common features. An action research project seeks to create knowledge, propose and implement change and improve practice and performance (Stringer, 1996). Kemmis and McTaggert (1988) suggest that the fundamental components of action research include the following: 1) developing a plan for improvement, 2) implementing the plan, 3) observing and documenting the effects of the plan, and 4) reflecting on the effects of the plan for further planning and informed action. New knowledge gained results in changes in practice

(Fullan, 2000a). Action research is often conducted to discover a plan for innovation or intervention and is collaborative.

Mills (2003) developed a framework for action research based on Kemmis and McTaggart's (1998) formulation of action research. Action research describes the problem and area of focus, defines the factors involved in the area of focus, for example the curriculum, student outcomes or instructional strategies. It develops research questions, describes the intervention or innovation to be implemented and also develops a timeline for implementation. In addition, it describes the data to be collected and develops data collection and plans analysis. Finally, it carries out the plan and reports the results.

The defining features of action research also reflect the qualities of leaders in collaborative cultures of change. These qualities include a deep understanding of the organization, vision and insight, a quest for new knowledge, a desire for improved performance, self-reflective activity and a willingness to effect change (Fullan, 2000a, 2000b).

3.2.2 A framework for a participative small scale study that can be evaluated

Academic action research is conducted by teachers and for teachers. It is small scale, contextualised, localized, and aimed at discovering, developing, or monitoring changes to practice (Wallace, 2000). Its contribution emphasises an individual teacher's professional self-development rather than its potential to initiate large-scale reform (Burns, 1999; Rainey, 2000).

Definitions of the typical features were summarised by Burns (1999:34) and Mills (2003:4) as follows.

Action research is contextual, small scale and localized. It identifies and investigates problems within specific situations. It is evaluative

and reflective as it aims to bring a change and improvement in practice. It is participatory as it provides for collaborative investigation by teams of colleagues, practitioners and researchers. Changes in practice are based on the collection of information or data which provides the impetus for change (Burns, 1999:34).

Action research is any systematic inquiry conducted by teacher researchers to gather information about the ways that their particular school operates how they teach, and how well their students learn. The information is gathered with the goals of gaining insight, developing reflective practice, effecting positive changes in the school environment and on educational practices in general, and improving student outcomes (Mills, 2003:4).

The linking of the terms 'action' and 'researcher' according to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) highlights the essential feature of the approach trying out ideas in practice of its importance to increase knowledge about the curriculum, teaching and learning. The result is improvement in what happens in classroom and school.

Action research stated by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988:5)

…is a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken
by participants in social situations in order to improve the
rationality and justice of their own social or educational
practices, as well as their understanding of these practices
and the situations in which these practices are carried out.

Lewin (1946), an originator of action research theories, described action research as proceeding in a spiral of steps, each of which is composed of planning, action and the evaluation of the result of the action. In practice, the process begins with a general idea that some kind of improvement or change is desirable. Lewin also urged that it is the way groups of people can

organise the conditions under which they can learn from their own experience and make this experience accessible to others.

Action research is known by many other names, including participatory research, collaborative inquiry, emancipatory research, action learning, and contextual action research but all are variations on a theme (O'Brien, 2001). O'Brien urges that there are other key attributes of action research that differentiate it from common problem-solving activities that we all engage in everyday. Primary is its focus on turning the people involved into researchers. People learn best, and more willingly apply what they have learned when they do it themselves. Secondly, the research takes place in a real-world situation, and aims to solve real problems. Finally, the initiating researcher makes no attempt to remain objective but openly acknowledges their bias to the other participants. A more succinct definition is,

> Action research…aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to further the goals of social science simultaneously. Thus, there is a dual commitment in action research to study a system and concurrently to collaborate with members of the system in changing it in what is together regarded as a desirable direction. Accomplishing this twin goal requires the active collaboration of researcher and client and thus it stresses the importance of co-learning as a primary aspect of the research process. (Gilmore, Krantz, & Ramirez 1986:24)

O'Brien (2001) stated that "action research is learning by doing that is when a group of people identify a problem, do something to resolve it, see how successful their efforts were and, if not satisfied, try again." The researcher studies the problem systematically and ensures the intervention is informed by theoretical considerations. Much of the researcher's time is spent on refining the methodological tools to suit the situation and on collecting, analysing and presenting data on an on-going, cyclical basis (O'Brien, 2001).

A variety of potential tools are listed in six categories (Brown, 1995). They are existing information, tests, observations, interviews, meeting and questionnaires. All these tools share three important characteristics that must be considered in selecting or creating them: reliability, validity and usability. This led the researcher to evaluate records in a more rigorous way in order to gain reliable, valid and useful information.

3.3   A model of action research

Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) developed a simple model of the cyclical nature of the typical action research process. Each cycle has four steps: plan, act, observe and reflect. Figure 3.1 presents a clear concept of action research.

Figure 3.1   Simple action research model

Plan

Act

Cycle One

Observe

Reflect   Plan

Cycle Two   Act

Reflect   Observe
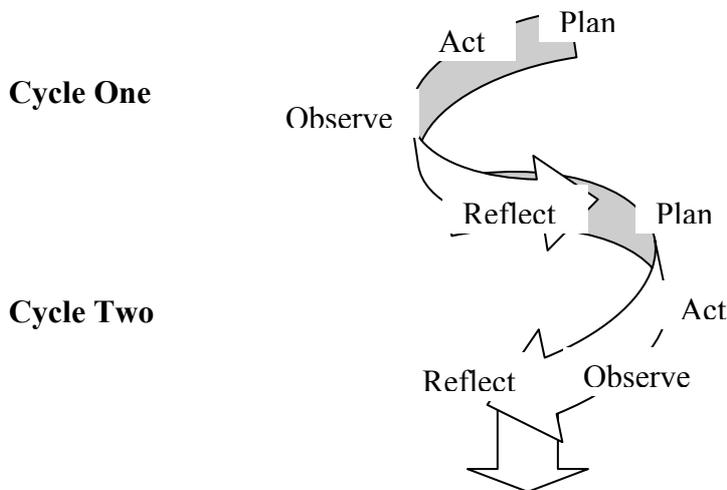
(adapted from MacIsaac, 1995)

Susman (1983) gives a more elaborate listing. He distinguishes five phases to be conducted within the research cycle (Figure 3.2). Initially, a problem is identified and data is collected for a more detailed diagnosis. This is followed by a collection of possible solutions, from which a single plan of action is implemented. Data on the results of the intervention are collected and analyzed and the findings are interpreted in the light of how

successful the action has been. At this point, the problem is re-assessed and the process begins another cycle. This process continues until the problem is resolved.

Figure 3.2   Detailed action research model

Identify or defining a problem

Diagnosing

Identifying general findings   Considering alternative courses of action

Specifying Learning

Action planning

Studying the consequences of an action   Selecting a course of action

Evaluation

Taking Action
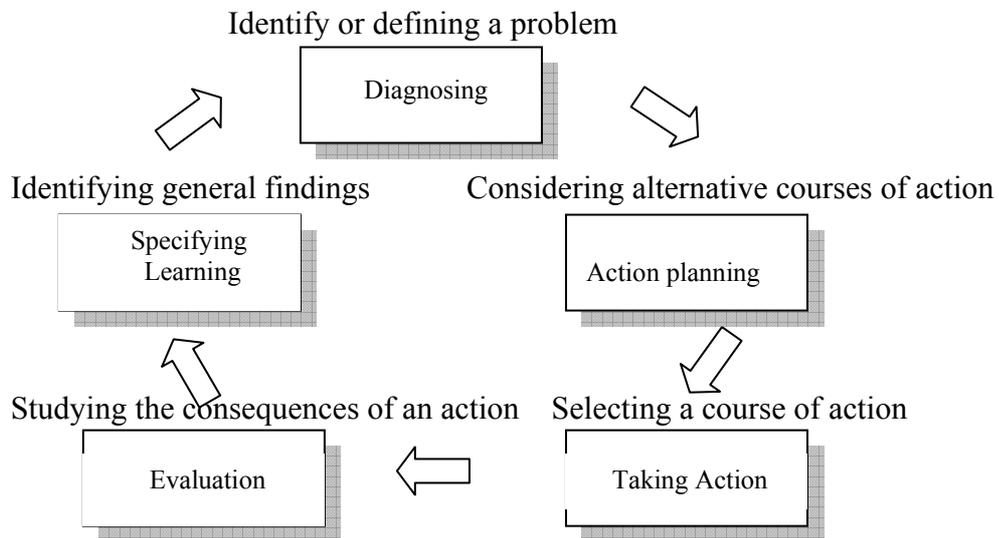
(adapted from Susman, 1983)

Action research is used in real situations since its primary focus is on solving real problems. It is often that those who apply this approach are practitioners who wish to improve understanding of their practice. Problems requiring action research on the requisite methodological knowledge to deal with them are not focused (O'Brien, 2001). It is more of a holistic approach to problem-solving rather than a single method for collecting and analyzing data. It allows for several different research tools to be used as a project is conducted.   These various methods which are generally common to qualitative research include keeping a research journal, documenting data collection and analysis, participant observation recordings, self assessment tools such as reflective report etc, structured and unstructured interviews and case studies.

3.3.1   Steps of action research

According to theories, researcher's role is to implement the action research method in such a manner as to produce a mutually agreeable outcome for all participants, with the process being maintained by them afterwards. The main role is to nurture local leaders to the point where they can take responsibility for the process, understand the methods and are able to carry on when the initiating researcher leaves.

Perry and Zuber-Skerrit (1991:76) developed a model for action research which used the concept of thesis action research by the researcher and core action research projects as the action phase of the thesis action research (Figure 3.3). The model has the following elements. During the planning phase of the research a problem is formulated, including the research design and rationale and a literature survey is carried out to justify the research methodology. In the action phase, the action researcher works with a work group's thematic concern through planning, acting, observing and reflecting on practices through the core action research projects. During the observation phase of the thesis action research, the researcher is expected to describe clearly both the research and the procedure. He/she will then carry out an analysis and evaluation of the results of his actions, both content and process, in light of the literature survey. The reflection element of the thesis action research project analyzes the reflections gathered during the project. Propositional conclusions are formed from the thesis (for example, a new theoretical model). The thesis should also include knowledge claims and limitations and propose areas for further research.

Figure 3.3   Initial action research model
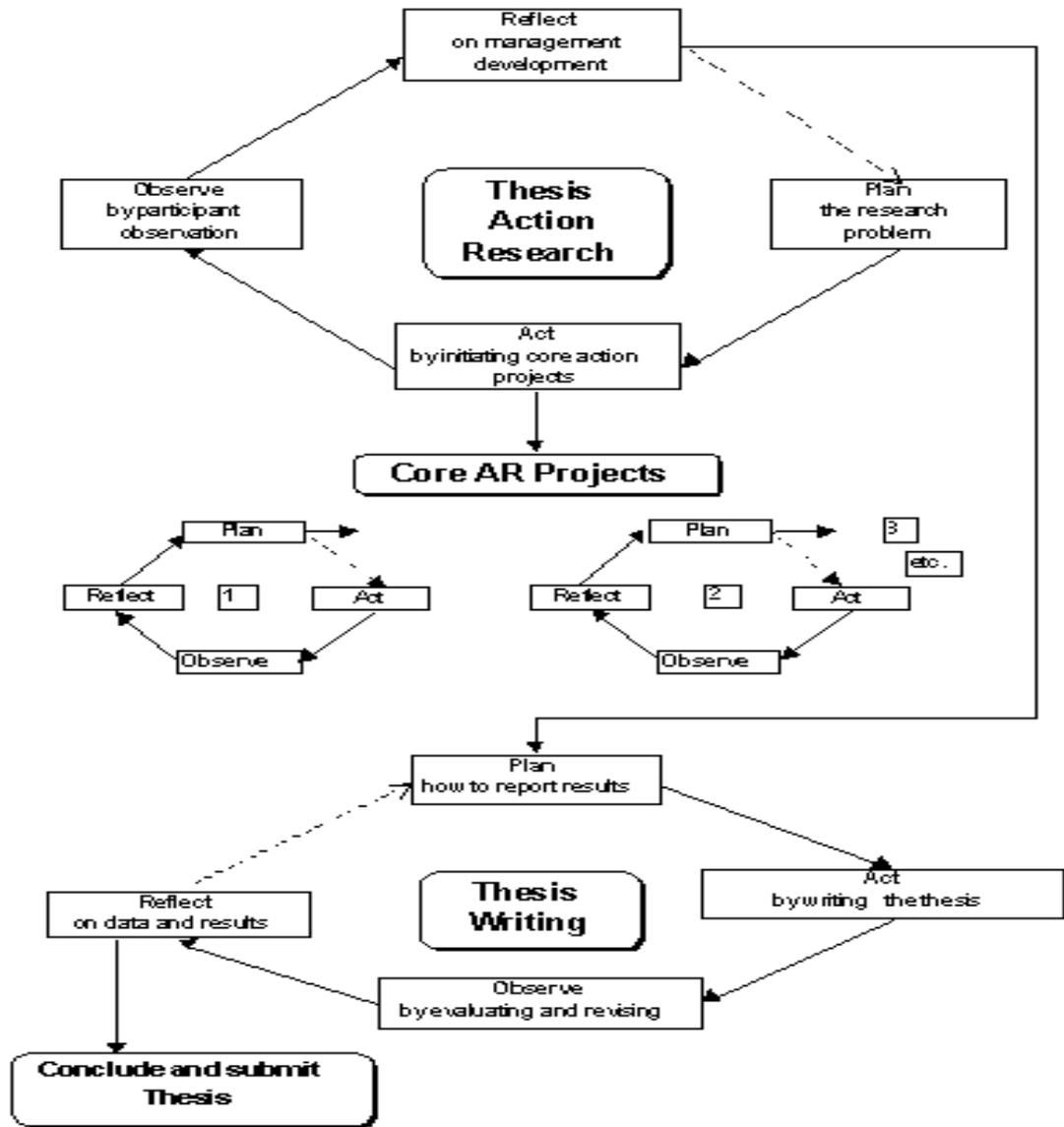
(Perry & Zuber-Skerrit. 1991)

Following the methods from Susman (1983), Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), Perry & Zuber-Skerrit (1991) and (O'Brien, 2001), the research followed procedures and steps of action research in order to find the best way to improve the learners' pronunciation as well as identifying the best language learning strategies to use in the study.

3.3.2 Construction of the project

I decided to undertake an action research project through which I taught learners how to produce sounds, rhythm and intonations that are both the segmental and suprasegmental aspects suggested by Morley (1991). Limited pronunciation skills can undermine learners' self-confidence (Morley, 1998). Whilst the learners' standard of achievement may vary individually, in motivation and sensitivity to accuracy, these with age and education factors are beyond a teacher's control (Firth, 1992). The teacher's attention to the development of self-correction techniques and self-monitoring strategies (so called language learning strategies or LLS), could help. Firth confirmed that it is crucial that the teacher help to develop strategies which will allow the learner to self-correct and self-monitor by focusing on motivation explanation, practice and feedback.

I decided to undertake action research to investigate the effect of teaching pronunciation on confidence and intelligibility. I based my research in a school with teachers (Cycle One) and with students in grades eight to ten (Cycle Two). Sukamolson (1989) concluded that Thai students' listening skills in these grades were very poor. Students had problems listening to dialogue and texts as well as problems of pronunciation. My research purpose was strongly influenced by Avery and Ehrlich (1992) who concluded that to attain native-like pronunciation in a second language or foreign language, learners must be made aware of aspects of their pronunciation that result in other people being unable to understand them. They asserted that speakers of another language feel confident if they understand and are understood by the listeners. In addition Celce-Murcia (1991) felt that the speakers required clear articulation of phonemes or sounds, and the listeners required accurate comprehension of phonemes.

I taught the teachers in Cycle One and they taught the students in Cycle Two in order to see if the pronunciation training had an effect if it was taught by others than the researcher. I analyzed learners' improvement by comparing the learners' pronunciation of problem sounds to Thai people (Jotikasthira, 1999) recorded before, with those recorded after the training. Further data were collected from reflective reports (self-monitoring), group discussion, peer observation and observation of critical friends.

The purpose of my study was if, how and to what extent, the pronunciation training and language learning strategies increased confidence and improved communicative competence of learners. My contribution was in three areas. Firstly, to demonstrate the importance of pronunciation training in a classroom, in order to prompt more teachers to reconsider the relationship between student learning and pronunciation. Secondly, I wanted to investigate the use of a LLS framework, if and how it enhances the communicative competence, specifically, the speaking skill of the learners. Thirdly, to evaluate the effectiveness of the training using learners' reflective reports, to see if, how and to what extent the approaches raise the learner's awareness of their improvement and confidence in speaking.

I developed three primary research questions and a secondary research question to focus my study. My research questions were:

- Does pronunciation training and the use of LLS increase confidence and improve communicative competence of learners?

- To what extent do pronunciation training using the segmental and suprasegmental aspects and the LLS contribute to the improvement of learners' competence and at what level?

- And what impact does training have on learner confidence and how is it reported?

My secondary research question was "Can teachers teach their students using the same method as the researcher?"

Although I began with a specific plan for my research, I had to leave open the possibility of changing or adapting my research methodology to suit the situation. The emergent character of action research provided this flexibility. I started with a question for which there were no clear answers in the beginning. The methods I decided to use were the best guesses I could make based on my initial literature review.

I adapted the Perry and Zuber-Skerrit (1991: 76) model for a post-graduate action research study for my research. This model uses the concept of thesis action research phase which the researcher defined the research problem and initiated the core action research and core action research projects as the action phase of the thesis action research. In my project, the pronunciation training was conducted as an action research cycle, with stages to plan, act, observe and reflect (Lewin 1946, Susman 1983, Kemmis & McTaggart 1988, Perry & Zuber-Skerrit 1991, MacIsaac 1995, O'Brien 2001). It included micro-level (segmental and suprasegmental features) and macro-level skills training featuring, oral communication activities like role play, group discussions (Morley, 1991), student centred activities such as role play and listening discrimination (Brown, 1995). The goal of the pronunciation training in this course was not to approximate a native speaker but to achieve comfortable intelligibility (Abercrombie,1991:14). Abercrombie defines comfortable intelligibility as pronunciation that can be understood with little or no conscious effort on the part of listener. The achievement was measured in two areas: 1) the improvement of the participants' speaking skill and their speaking confidence, and 2) the effectiveness of the training course and LLS.

Figure 3.4 shows the design, methodology and stages of pronunciation training undertaken in the action research cycles. It highlighted the linking of the terms 'action' and 'researcher' and essential

feature of trying out ideas in practice as a means of increasing knowledge about the curriculum, teaching and learning Kemmis and McTaggart's (1988) and Perry and Zuber-Skerrit's (1991) thesis action research and core action research project. The result is improvement in what happens in the classroom and school.

In Cycle One, I (the researcher) was the trainer and five volunteer teachers were the teacher-learners. The pronunciation training was divided into three stages which included segmental and suprasegmental aspects, a study of sounds, stress, rhythm and intonation. Direct and indirect LLS were observed for data analysis and evaluation in terms of their improvement and increased confidence. An English dictionary was used to check the accurate pronunciation as part of practice and self-directed learning.

In Cycle Two, five volunteer teachers who were the learners in Cycle One acted as teachers to validate teaching pronunciation training. There were twenty students in this cycle, four students in each class. They were trained using the same stages and outline as in Cycle One.

Figure 3.4: **Action research and stages of pronunciation training**
Cycle One and Two

Cycle One
Outcomes

Researcher as a trainer

Participants
5 teacher volunteers
Plan

1. Improvement
2. Confidence
3. Comfortable
   intelligibility

Stage 1
10 hrs

Stage 2
10 hrs

Stage 3
10 hrs

Reflect

Act

Data analysis and Evaluation

Segmental and Suprasegmental

Observe

Data Collection
Direct and Indirect LLS

Cycle Two
Outcomes

Teacher- learners as teachers

Participants
20 student volunteers

Plan

1. Improvement
2. Confidence
3. Comfortable
   intelligibility

Stage 1
10 hrs

Stage 2
10 hrs

Stage 3
10 hrs

Reflect

Act

Data analysis and Evaluation

Segmental and Suprasegmental

Data Collection Direct and Indirect LLS

3.4 Plan

3.4.1. Defining the problems

From my own observation in a research study of the English needs of clerical staff (Varasarin, 2002) and my teaching experience, the greatest problem for Thai students in learning English is pronunciation, especially for Thai students who were brought up in Thailand. The problem makes them feel shy and lessens their confidence to speak. Moreover, they do not understand what the speaker says to them. The responses they make are nodding and smiling. Many of the sounds used in the English language are foreign to them. Some English sounds are different from Thai and they are not familiar to Thai students. Therefore, they do not know how or what to do to produce these sounds. As a result, they had no confidence when communicating with foreigners for fear that the listeners will not understand what they were saying (Varasarin, 2002).

Since pronunciation training is not included separately in the Thai school curriculum, I planned to draw attention to it by starting with teachers in Cycle One and students in Cycle Two. Students cannot get good knowledge and skills if teachers do not have them. I started Cycle One with teachers and in Cycle Two they worked with students. From this experience I expected to be able to evaluate the method of pronunciation training.

3.4.2. Recruitment of participants

Letters were sent to private schools in one area of Thailand and the first ten schools that sent the requests back to me were selected. I called back to those ten schools to give more details about pronunciation training and my research plan to the Head of the school. From these conversations, I

selected one from those ten whose time available matched my plan. I planned to give the training in summer when I was free from work but most schools in Thailand were closed. This school was the only school from those ten that provided a summer course and could be available when I was free.

3.4.3. Course design

This action research was conducted in two cycles. The purpose of the first cycle was to trial a course of pronunciation training. The second cycle was to gain useful data on the ability of other teachers to deliver the program and also data on the improvement of the process of delivery. The Perry and Zuber-Skerritt (1991:76) model suggests that a PhD core action research project needs to progress through at least two or three cycles to make a distinct contribution to knowledge.

The English Pronunciation training was conducted using course outlines and materials from Dauer (1993) Celce-Murcia, and Goodwin (1996) and Inouye, Sueres and Inouye (1996). The Collins Cobuild Learner's Dictionary was used to check the correctness of each word pronounced in class as well as self-directed learning and assessment. Schmidt (1990) identifies three aspects of consciousness involved in language learning. These embrace noticing and what learners notice in input is what becomes intake for learning, whether a learner deliberately attends to a linguistic form in the input or if it is noticed purely unintentionally. If it is noticed it becomes intake. It is a condition for language acquisition (Schmidt, 1995). Ellis (1997) proposed a model based on the Schmidt process of language acquisition that the input becomes intake, involves learners noticing language features in the input, absorbing them into their short term memories and comparing them to features produced as output for items to be stored in long term memory.

According to the theories and concepts mentioned above, I designed the course (see Appendix C). I taught pronunciation both segmentals and

suprasegmentals to five volunteer teachers in the first cycle and they taught twenty volunteer students using the same syllabus in the second cycle. The teaching program included the study of sounds, rhythm and intonation as well as Dictionary usage as a reference of accurate pronunciation.   I recruited a colleague who is an English teacher at the same school to act as an observer of my Cycle One class. The teachers observed each other's classes in Cycle Two. The period of the training for both cycles was approximately thirty hours, divided into three stages of ten hours. Each stage was completed in 1 week at their school with approximately five two-hour-sessions.

          The time of the training was after school because I wanted them to relax and focus on the training. I started the session by introducing myself and clarified the purpose of the training to familiarize them with the course and establish an easy atmosphere in order to motivate the learners for effective learning.   As Dörnyei (2001:116) notes, "teacher skills in motivating learners should be seen as central to teaching effectiveness". Learners in both cycles were interviewed and completed a self-assessment questionnaire on their pronunciation (see appendix D) before each cycle to assess their needs, and were tape recorded reading a passage for a pre-test. They were tape-recorded reading the same passage for a post-test after the training to evaluate their improvement in English problem sounds for Thai students.   All learners and observers wrote a reflective report after each session according to guidelines provided (see Appendix E). Group discussions were conducted on two occasions, half way through and at the end of each weekly stage. The five teachers were advised of teaching pronunciation and Language Learning Strategies to teach in Cycle Two. Results from the group discussion, students' interviews, and the report of Cycle One were reviewed to revise and develop the syllabus for improvement as well as to match the students' needs in Cycle Two.

In Cycle Two, the teacher learners taught twenty volunteer students the same syllabus after school which was the same period as in Cycle One. The students were selected from volunteers. Letters were sent to parents of volunteer students for permission (see Appendix F). There were three stages of training. The researcher, Cycle One observer, and each teacher acted as observers and gave feedback. Students wrote reflective reports and motivated each other as critical friends. Critical friends can stimulate, clarify and extend thinking and feel accountable for their own growth and their peers' growth (Francis (1995). Students gathered in one classroom for each group after school because they were from different classes. Classes were arranged five days a week after school. I introduced on the day of the first session to give the students an overview of what they would get from the course. Parents were invited to observe the class on the opening day. From their conversation, they said they had given permission because they were certain that it was good for their children and were pleased that their children had good opportunities. Teachers independently prepared their training session to share their participations except the content of the syllabus. Shared participation gains more accountability and willingness (Senge, 1999).

Cycle One: Teachers as learners

Five participants were selected from twelve volunteer teachers in the selected private school. Participants were pre-interviewed and selected on the basis of their inspiration to improve their speaking. All teachers had an English language background, but not in English pronunciation training. Some of them had experience in English teaching.

Teachers were interviewed and selected from their concerns, interests and willingness to develop their English. I was pleased that the teachers who were not English teachers (T3, T4) volunteered to participate in this project. From the interview (March, 2004) they were shy to pronounce English words since they were young, because they had never been taught how to do so and had no role model. They had hated English classes so they kept silent

and murmured when they had to practise. Sometimes they ran away when they were forced to speak English or pronounce any English words. The pronunciation training was their first opportunity to overcome this. It was a good sign that teachers who had negative attitudes to English were interested in the training although they were only two out of the five teachers. I gave them clear instructions that they had to teach their students after the training session. They agreed and committed that they would try hard to do so. The other three English teachers gave their opinion that although they taught the English subject, they had never focused on pronunciation.

The following is background information about the five teachers who participated in the training.

Teacher 1 (T1) is 33 years old. T1 had graduated in English and has fair English proficiency. T1 has English teaching experience at secondary level for 8 years.

Teacher 2 (T2) is 24 years old. T2 had graduated in a non-English field and had fair English proficiency. T2 also has teaching experiences in English at primary level for 1 year.

Teacher 3 (T3) is 27 years old. T3's education background is not related to English. T3's English proficiency is fair. T3 has teaching experience but it is not related to English, for 2 years.

Teacher 4 (T4) is 25 years old. T4's education background is not related to English and has poor English proficiency. T4's teaching experience is only 3 months and it is not related to English.

Teacher 5 (T5) is 47 years old. T5's education background is in English and has fair English proficiency. T5's teaching experience is in English at primary level for 11 years.

Cycle Two: Students as learners

In Cycle Two, twenty participants were selected by teachers from volunteer students in grades eight to ten from those teachers' classes in the summer school. Teachers selected four students each. Their ages were from twelve to thirteen years old. There were five groups for five teachers, four students in each group. Letters were sent to the parents of the twenty students for permission because the course was an extra course from small classes and students had to spend two hours after school.

3.4.4. Activities and reports

At the beginning of the training session

Learners in both cycles read a passage and tape recorded it to compare the improvement after the training. The passage below was used for recording.

Learning to speak a foreign language fluently and without an accent isn't easy. In most educational systems, students spend many years studying grammatical rules, but they don't get much of a chance to speak. Arriving in a new country can be a frustrating experience. Although they may be able to read and write very well, they often find that they can't understand what people say to them. English is

especially difficult because the pronunciation of words is not clearly shown by how they're written. But the major problem is being able to listen, think, and respond in another language at a natural speed. This takes time and practice. (Dauer, 1993:6)

Learners then were asked to complete the self analysis (Appendix D) concerning their difficulty pronouncing sounds and words, and completed a questionnaire before starting pronunciation training in the first week in order to self diagnose their strengths and weaknesses (Appendix G) and become aware of what helps them to learn English (Cohen, 2003).

<u>During the training sessions</u>

During accuracy-based training, learners practised pronouncing correct sounds using a tape recorded native voice and materials from Dauer (1993), Celce-Murcia, and Goodwin (1996) and Inouye, Sueres, and Inouye. (1996). They were advised to remember the symbols of consonant and vowel sounds so it would be easier when checking the pronunciation of words in the dictionary. They worked in pairs in order that they could help each other correct mistakes as well as to motivate each other as critical friends.

During fluency-based training learners listened and repeated after the voices of native speakers on a tape using the interactive speech method of the Humming Bird: Pronunciation Course in American English (Inouye, Sueres & Inouye, 1996). At the end of the week, they prepared a piece of dialogue and practised in pairs. At the end of stage three, they performed a role play. During the activities at the fluency-based level, learners used a dictionary as a reference for correct pronunciation both for correctness of sounds and word stress. For sentence stress and intonation, they checked with the pattern provided in the session (Dauer, 1993)

The learners wrote reflective reports on their improvement and the effectiveness of the training every day. The researcher and observers wrote a report on on-going events and activities in class. All of these were completed for every session. There was a group discussion mid-week and at

the end of each stage. The training was undertaken five days a week therefore discussion was arranged on Wednesday and Friday each week. In week 3 of stage three in Cycle One, the team, teacher learners, observer and researcher evaluated and discussed the syllabus for students in Cycle Two.

3.5   Act and observe: pronunciation training and data collection

The linking of the terms 'action' and 'researcher' according to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) highlights the essential feature of the approach that tries out ideas in practice as a mean of increasing knowledge about the curriculum, teaching and learning. The result is improvement in what happens in classroom and school.

3.5.1.   Stages of pronunciation training

There were three stages of pronunciation training. The purpose was to give the learners knowledge of the segmental aspect (sounds), suprasegmental aspect (stress, rhythm, intonation) (Morley, 1991) and to study learners' acquisition of the direct and indirect language learning strategies (LLS) (Oxford, 1990b).

The goal was that the study would improve the learners' pronunciation in speaking English (Morley, 1991) and develop confidence to speak at the level of comfortable intelligibility (Abercrombie, 1991). Pedagogic phonological tasks could be scaled down to those items which are essential in terms of 'intelligible pronunciation' (Jenkins 2000).

Pronunciation training included micro-level skill (accuracy-based learning), macro-level skill (fluency-based learning) and awareness-raising classroom activities. At the micro-level skill, learners were trained both in segmental (a study of sounds) and suprasegmental features (training stress, intonation, rhythm, linking, etc.) (Morley, 1991).

The instructions of direct LLS were included in activities provided and indirect LLS were advised at the beginning of Stage 1 (Oxford, 1990a and 1990b). The instructions informed the learners about the achievement of learning language using direct and indirect LLS. Understanding and controlling direct LLS may be one of the most essential skills that teachers can help learners develop and it is important that they teach their students metacognitive skills in addition (Anderson, 2002). The goals of strategy training are to provide learners with the tools to become aware of what helps them to learn the target language most efficiently, and monitor and self evaluate their performance (Cohen, 2003). Oxford (1990b) claims that memory strategies (direct LLS) will aid in entering information into long-term memory and retrieving information when needed for communication.

Cognitive LLS are used for forming and revising internal mental models and receiving/producing messages in the target language and compensation strategies are needed to overcome any gaps in knowledge of the language. All are called direct LLS. Indirect LLS (Oxford, 1990b) are metacognitive strategies which help learners exercise executive control through planning, arranging, focusing and evaluating their own learning, affective LLS which enable learners to control feeling, motivations and attitudes related to language learning, and social strategies which facilitate interaction with others.

Anderson (2002) urges that learners who are aware and know what to do have strategies for finding out or figuring out what they need to do. My suggestions were to raise learners' awareness of the importance of those strategies. The learners used the strategies independently. Oxford (1990a) states that within communicative approaches to language teaching, a key goal is for the learner to develop communicative competence in the target language, and language learning strategies (LLS) can help students to improve their competencies. The learners in both cycles reflected on their improvement and how they felt about the training through reflective reports. The observer and the researcher kept records on learners' improvement and

the effectiveness of the course. By monitoring their use of learning strategies, students are better able to keep themselves on track to meet their learning goals (Anderson, 2002). There were three stages of pronunciation training. Each stage lasted thirty hours and was divided into three weeks of ten hours. Details were as follows.

<u>Stage one (ten hours.): Segmental aspects of consonant sounds</u>

The goal of this stage was to raise learners' awareness about the mistakes in pronunciation of words they may make when speaking. Learners were introduced to the importance of pronunciation training and LLS and learned about the articulation of consonant sounds (segmental aspects) and how to use the English Dictionary to help them read English words correctly. It was expected that learners be able to pronounce each consonant sound symbol phonetically and correctly and use the dictionary to help them as well. The practice of pronouncing sounds and words, recognizing and writing consonant symbols and looking up words in the dictionary were in this stage. The training activities enabled the student to look up words in the dictionary and pronounce consonant sounds together in pairs. Participants were required to remember sound symbols as well as to differentiate the place and manner of articulation. Moreover, they had to listen to the tape of a native speaker's sample sounds and practise. This stage was done both in Cycle One (for teachers) and Cycle Two (for students).

Table 3.1:   Stage one of pronunciation training

Segmental aspects (sounds)	Stage 1 Time:10 hrs
Descriptions	• The importance of pronunciation training • Articulation of consonant sounds: place and manner • How to use English-English Dictionary
Goals	• Awareness raising & Direct LLS
Expected Progressions	• Pronounce each sound symbol phonetically and correctly. • Familiarize with sound symbols.
Activities	• Look up words in a Dictionary and pronounce consonant sounds together/pair works.

	• Remember symbol game
	• Differentiate place/manner of articulations
	• Listen to tape of native speaker's sample sounds and practice
	• Reflective report
	• Group discussion

Participants were observed and evaluated on their improvement for the segmental aspect (sounds) which consisted of the articulation of consonant sounds including place and manner of articulation. The evaluation covered the importance of pronunciation training as well as how to use the English Dictionary.

At this stage, speech organs and their importance were reviewed for familiarization. The differences of sounds are from sounds of articulations, that is when wind passes through speech organs beginning with the glottis, vocal

folds and larynx (Figure 3.5), then obstructs in the mouth in different places and produce different sounds, that we called place of articulations.

Figure 3.5:   Speech organs

1. nose
2. nasal cavity
3. upper lip
4. upper teeth
5. tooth ridge
6. hard palate
7. soft palate (velum)
8. lower lip
9. lower teeth
10. tip of the tongue
11. front of the tongue
12. back of the tongue
13. larynx
14. vocal folds
15. glottis
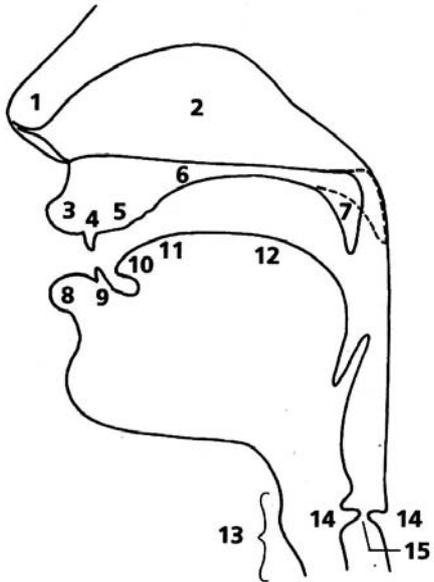
Side View of the Speech Organs

Vocal folds are where the voiced (vibration) and voiceless sounds are made. The place of articulations consists of a tongue (tip, front and back), palates (hard and soft), lips, teeth and a tooth ridge (Figure 3.6). For example when the tongue tip gets close to a tooth ridge, it produces /t/, /d/, /s/, /z/ sounds (Figure 3.6-Alveolar) or when putting the upper lip and lower lip together it becomes /p/ and /b/ sounds (Figure 3.6-Bilabial).

Figure 3.6:   **Place of articulations**

Bilabial
Upper lip/lower lip

Labio-dental
Lower lip/upper front teeth

Interdental
Tip of tongue/upper front teeth

Alveolar
Tip of tongue/tooth ridge

Palato-alveolar
Front of tongue/hard palate

Velar
Back of tongue/soft palate
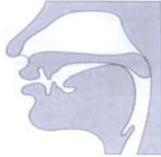
Glottal/Glottis
The gap/the vocal cords is used
to make audible friction

(Dauer, 1993)

The same place of articulation with a different manner of articulation produces different sounds, e.g., /t/, /d/ (Stop) and /s/, /z/ (Fricative). See Figure 3.7.

Figure 3.7:   Manner of articulations

Manner of Articulation

A *stop* stops the air completely.

An *approximant* lets a lot of air flow out.

A *fricative* lets a little noisy air pass out.

An *affricate* first stops the air, then lets a little noisy air pass out.

Nasal /n/: air flows out the nose.
Nasal
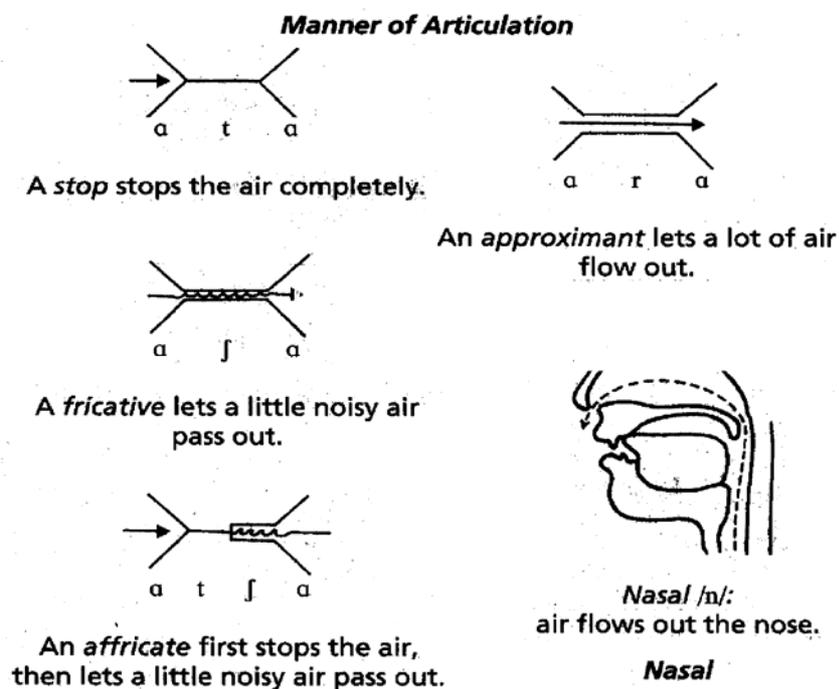
(Dauer, 1993; Celce-Murcia, and Goodwin, 1996)

Stage two (ten hours): Segmental aspects of vowel sounds

The objective of this stage was to raise the awareness of the direct language learning strategies in the activities provided. In addition, it was expected that students pronounce words phonetically and correctly and create familiarity with consonant and vowel symbols.

Table 3.2:   Stage two of pronunciation training

Segmental&suprasegmental aspects (sounds &stress)	Stage 2 Time:10 hrs
Descriptions	- Articulation of vowel sounds - Mouth shape - Word stress
Goals	Awareness raising & Direct LLS
Expected progressions	- Pronounce words phonetically and correctly - Familiar with consonant and vowel symbols
Activities	- Look up words/sound symbols in a Dictionary and pronounce each word together (consonant + vowel sounds) / pair works - Differentiate mouth shape /listen to tape and practice - Word stress practice - Reflective report - Group discussion

Participants were observed for the segmental and suprasegmental aspects (sounds and stress) consisting of the articulation of vowels sounds (Figure 3.8) including observing mouth shape (Figure 3.9) and word stress.

The articulation of vowel sounds was introduced to show learners how those sounds are produced so they would correctly pronounce them, especially, the voicing (Celce-Murcia & Goodwin, 1996). The mouth shape will control the deviation of voice production to be clearly pronounced (Dauer, 1993).

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Figure 3.8:   **Articulation of vowel sounds**
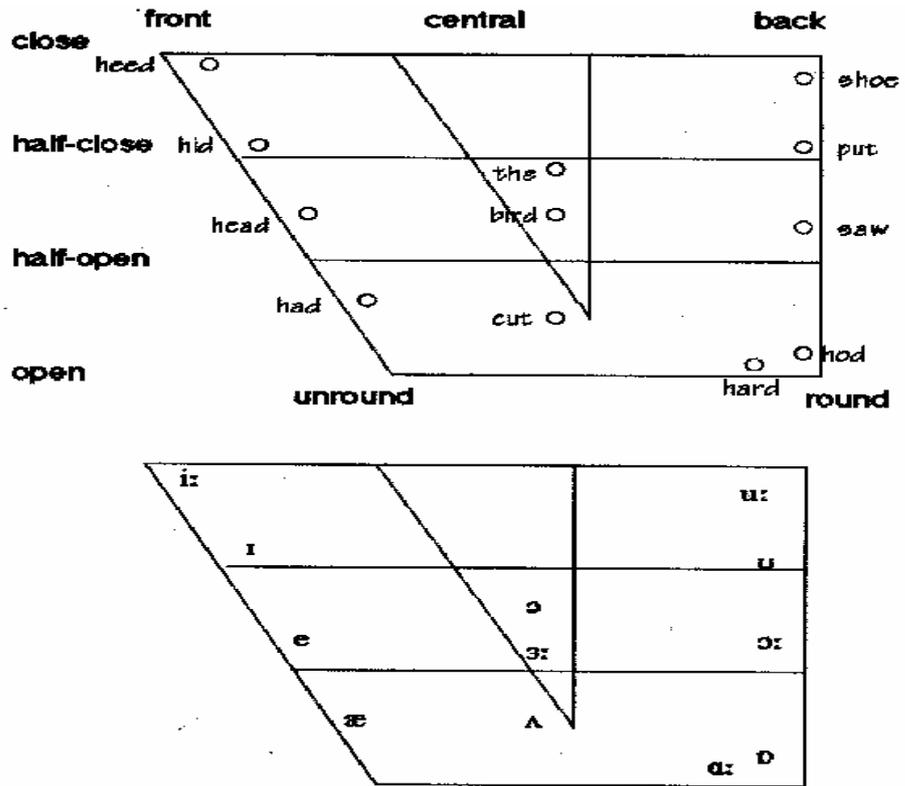
(Celce-Murcia, and Goodwin, 1996)

Figure 3.9:   **Mouth shape of vowel sounds**
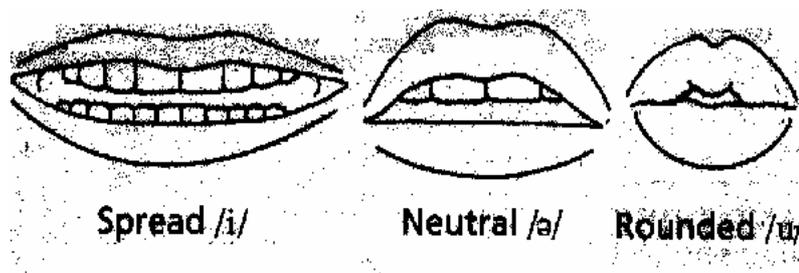
(Dauer, 1993)

The training activities required the students to look up words or sound symbols in the dictionary and to pronounce each word together in pairs. Also, participants were required to remember sound symbols as well as to differentiate the mouth shape of English pronunciation (Figure 3.10) (Inouye, Sueres & Inouye, 1996), listen to the tape and practise. Moreover, it also required participants to practise word stress and write a reflective report. Group discussions were conducted in Cycle One and with critical friends in Cycle Two.

Figure 3.10:   Mouth shape of English pronunciation

MOUTH POSITIONS
Eight positions of the lips and jaw that create the sounds of English:

1. **OPEN**
Stretch your jaw open, two finger's width. Open your throat, like a yawn. Relax your lips and face.

2. **TRIANGLE**
First smile. Now drop your jaw, at least one finger's width. Your mouth forms an inverted triangle.

3. **BASE**
In Base position, your teeth are one finger's width apart. Your lips and jaw are relaxed.

4. **PUCKER**
Push your lips forward but not together, similar to a kiss. There is a small space between your teeth.

5. **O - SHAPE**
Your lips come forward and together, forming an "O" shape. Your jaw inside is open one finger's width.
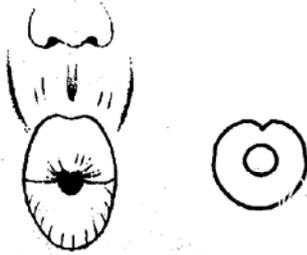
6. **LIPS - IN**
Start with your jaw in **base** position. Now roll your top and bottom lips in.

7. **BOTTOM-LIP-IN** *(BLI)*
Start with your jaw in **base** position. Roll your bottom lip into your mouth. Your top teeth touch your bottom lip. You can see your top front teeth.
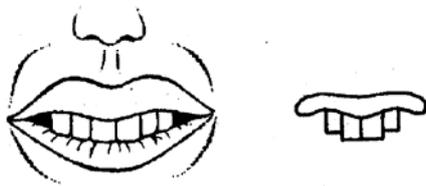
8. **CLOSED** *(smile)*
Close your jaw. Top and bottom front teeth touch, lower jaw forward. Smile. You can see your front teeth.

(Inouye, Sueres & Inouye,1996)

<u>Stage three (ten hours): Suprasegmental aspects of rhythm and intonation</u>

The objective of this stage was to make the participants practise and tape in pairs using a native voice from which the roles of short sentences were presented and finally to write a reflective report. This stage was covered in both Cycle One (for teachers) and Cycle Two (for students).

Table 3.3:   Stage three of pronunciation training

Segmental&suprasegmental aspects (sounds, stress &intonation)	Stage 3 Time:10 hrs
Descriptions	• Sounds review / Word stress review • Sentence stress • Intonation: pitch, rhythm, linking, pausing • Sentence endings to communicate emotion • Wrap up
Goals	• Awareness raising and Direct LLS, confident to speak
Expected progressions	• Read sentence phonetically and correctly and confidence in speaking
Activities	• Practise with tape /pair works • Role play of short sentence • Reflective report • Group discussion

Participants were observed for the segmental and suprasegmental aspects (sound, stress and intonation) which consisted of the review of sound and word stress including sentence stress, intonation (pitch, rhythm, linking, and pausing), the sentence ending to communicate emotion, place and manner of articulation. It also created awareness of Direct LLS and persuaded participants to have confidence to speak, and read sentences phonetically and correctly.

3.6   Reflect: data analysis and evaluation

I was initially unsure about how to analyse the data from this one core action research project. An answer was provided by Sankaran (1997,

2001) who drew attention to Hackman (in Frost & Stablein 1992) commenting on the 'exemplary' research conducted by Gersick:

> One lesson we learn from this research is about the value of staying very close to the phenomenon one is studying, rather than do scholarly work at arm's length... the research question should drive the methodology.... Connie invented a unique research methodology specifically tailored to her particular research question (Hackman 1992: 75).

After reading about Gersick's 'exemplary research' and Hackman's comments on her research, I decided that I would look at the data collected during the stages of training and the strategies used in the study in different ways such as reflective reports, group discussion and observation to make sense of the data. Therefore, my data analysis used multiple methods of analysis. It used several ways of looking at my data but in each instance I carried out the analysis to sufficient depth to bring to the surface the answers relevant to my research questions. Thus I had, like Gersick, stayed close to my phenomenon and formulated a research (analysis) methodology that was tailored to my particular research questions.

In action research, the observers and learners should also participate in analysing the data (Chenitz & Swanson 1986). This was achieved through sharing the analysis of the reflective reports and discussing in the meetings, getting feedback from them (the observers and learners) and incorporating their comments into my analysis. Learners were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the training by writing a reflective report, to see if, how and to what extent the approaches raise a learner's awareness of their improvement and confidence in speaking.

To reflect and evaluate the improvement of learners and English pronunciation class effectiveness, the following methods were used.

3.6.1. Sources of data

Observations

In Cycle One, an English teacher observed and provided reports. In Cycle Two, teachers acted as observers. They observed each other's classes. Lessard-Clouston, 1997 states that by observation the teacher will be able to see what LLS students use both direct and indirect.

Field notes

The researcher wrote field notes of the classes both when acting as teacher-trainer in Cycle One and observer in Cycle Two.

Reflective reports

Learners in both Cycle One and Two wrote reflective reports about classes, their improvement, confidence to speak, and strategies used to acquire skills and knowledge in both cycles. In this study reflective reporting was used to evaluate the learners' improvement, the strategies they used to achieve their goal and how they felt the training course and dictionary usage were important. The use of reflective reporting to evaluate the effectiveness of the training was urged by Schön's (1987) idea of reflection-in-action. Knowing-in-action is seeing and recognizing without listing together separate features; the knowledge we reveal in our intelligent action is publicly observable, but we are unable to make it verbally explicit. For Schön, thought is embedded in action and knowledge-in-action is the centre of professional practice. Reflection-in-action, according to Schön is concerned with thinking about what we are doing in the classroom while we are doing it. This thinking is supposed to reshape what we are doing. Pennington (1992) asserts that reflective practice should become the means for not only enhancing classroom practices, but also developing motivated and confident ESL/EFL learners. The reflection serves a two-fold purpose. First, it serves as a tool for encouraging self-awareness and learner's

involvement in the pronunciation improvement process. Second, the learner shows their perception through it and what he/she finds most valuable in the course (Pennington, 1992).

Group Interviews

Formal interviews were conducted to select the participants and during the training session. Interviews before or after class, stated by Lessard-Clouston, (1997) provide information about students' goals, LLS and understanding of a particular course being taught. Group discussion was conducted mid week and at the end of each week to discuss the ongoing evidence and evaluate the progress and effectiveness and to adjust the syllabus for Cycle Two.

Critical friends

In Cycle Two, learners facilitated, stimulated and observed each other for their changes and improvement. Working with other language learners will improve one's listening and speaking skills (Earle-Carlin and Proctor, 1996). Francis (1995) says that critical friends can stimulate, clarify and extend thinking and feel accountable for their own growth and their peers' growth.

Tape recordings

Learners did a pre-test, reading a short passage that was tape recorded. The passage was recorded as a post-test to compare to problems of prior practice of the first recording. Audio recording of learners both cycles during the training session were provided and replayed for discussion. Data from tape recording as pre-test and post test were transcribed to show the improvement on the problem sounds of participants. English sounds which are considered problem sounds for Thai students are divided into three categories: (Jotikasthira, 1999):

1. Sounds that do not occur in Thai: /ϖ/ e.g.; van; every, /T /or /th/ e.g; thin; breath, /Δ /or /th/ e.g.; mother; then, /ζ/ e.g.; zero; nasal, /Σ /or /sh/ e.g; share; notion, /Z /or /zh/ e.g.; casual; beige, /tΣ/or /ch/ e.g; future; cherry, /dZ /or /j/ e.g; gentle; jelly, and /γ/ e.g.; gamble; legal.

2. Sounds that do not occur at the final position. (They are different from Thai equivalents as to distribution, though existing in Thai):

   a. /l/ substituted by /n/

   b. /f/ substituted by unreleased /β/

   c. /s/ substituted by unreleased /δ/

   d. /s/ may be omitted when it occurs after diphthongs /ai/ e.g nice, /au/ e.g house, /Oi/ e.g. rejoice.

   e. /π /, /β/, /t/, /δ /, and /k/ are pronounced as unreleased instead of released sounds

3. Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents: /r/, /i/, /e/, /u/, and /o/; that is, their production is not the same

To reflect the outcomes of the training, I brought data from observation, group discussion, field notes and reflective report as references. I grouped and coded all data and put them in the table of invention (Table 3.4) to ensure that every aspect was included and that any educational situation can be understood in terms of the interactions between teachers, students, subject matter, and milieu.

Table 3.4:   **Table of invention**

	teachers					students					subject matter					milieu				
Teachers																				
students																				
Subject matter																				
milieu																				

(Schwab, 1969)

Although the Table is usually used to find the thematic concern before starting action research, I found that it could be modified and used as a framework for evaluation (Schwab, 1969). The data transcribed from the pre-test records were compared to the post-test for learners' improvement on

problem sounds to Thai students. The data were analysed and are presented in Chapters 4 and 5.

CHAPTER 4

ACTION RESEARCH CYCLE ONE

4.1   Introduction

The purpose of this cycle was to train five volunteer teachers to speak phonetically correct English on the basis of comfortable intelligibility, that is to understand and be understood. I wanted to see if and how the training improved learners' communicative competence, their speaking confidence and what strategies they used in the class. I started Cycle One in April 2004. There were three stages of pronunciation training including the advice on direct and indirect language learning strategies and dictionary usage to check the correctness of pronounced words and for their self-directed learning. This chapter's presentation follows four steps: plan, act, observe and reflect. Planning has been outlined in Chapter 3 so this chapter presents an account of the action (teaching) undertaken and its outcomes.

4.2   Action and observation

4.2.1 Stages of pronunciation training, direct and indirect LLS and dictionary usage

There were three stages of the training, ten hours each, starting with segmental aspects in the first and second stages which were the study of consonant and vowel sounds respectively, including dictionary usage. In stage three, the suprasegmental aspect, rhythm, stress and intonation were taught. The lesson plans are shown in Appendix C.

Stage one: Segmental aspects of consonant sounds

The first week of the class began with the study of consonant sounds, dictionary usage, activities and practice. It took five days, two hours a day.

Week one: Day one

Each teacher was audio taped reading the diagnostic passage and giving a short speech in front of the class. Using self-analysis questions, I asked them what problems they noticed in each other's speech and why some people were more difficult to understand than others. For example, I asked which vowels and/or consonants they had difficulty with. Did they omit some sounds that they should not, or add sounds that do not belong? Did they pronounce consonants at the ends of words or omit some of them? Could they pronounce some sounds perfectly in one position in a syllable but not in another? All of the questions were asked to raise their awareness of the importance of pronunciation training.

Teachers were asked to complete the questionnaire (Appendix D) to self-evaluate before learning. I discussed the answers with the teachers in class. All of them agreed that they have been making mistakes without recognising them. No one had told them before. I transcribed sounds from teachers' records and noted down sounds that teachers could not pronounce to compare with the post-test at the end of the session. Data from tape recording as pre-test and post-test were transcribed and divided into three categories according to Jotikasthira (1999) to show the improvement on the problem sounds of participants. The data from the tape recording in Table 4.1 was shown in categories of problem sounds to Thai students.

Table 4.1:   **Problem sounds of teachers: Cycle One**

Cycle 1	Pre-test (problem)		
Teachers	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
T1	/ϖ, th , zh , j /	a., b., e.	/ρ/
T2	/thr, j, zh, γ /	a., b., e.	/ρ/
T3	/zh, th, j, γ/	a., b., c., e.	/ρ/
T4	All sounds	All sounds	/ρ/
T5	/zh, j/	_	/ρ/

Table 4.1 shows the data of sounds that teachers incorrectly pronounced from the pre-test records. Teacher 4 mispronounced sounds in all three categories and Teacher 5 did not have any problem with sounds in category 2. In category 2, Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 had problems with sub-categories a, b and e. They pronounced a. /n/ for /l/, b. unreleased /b/ for /f/,and e. /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/ and /k/ were pronounced unreleased in stead of released. Teacher 3 had problems with sub-categories a, b, c and e. Teacher 3 pronounced a. /n/ for /l/, b. unreleased /b/ for /f/, c. unreleased /d/ for /s/, and e. /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/ and /k/ were pronounced unreleased in stead of released. All teachers could not pronounce /r/ sounds in category 3. The sounds in category 1 that most teachers mispronounced were /j/, /th/ and /zh/ (see appendix H for details).

Figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 show the number of teachers who mispronounced sounds in each category.

Figure 4.1:   **Cycle One: Pre-test - teachers' problem sounds in category 1 (sounds that do not occur in Thai).**

Teachers' problem sounds in category 1 (Cycle One)
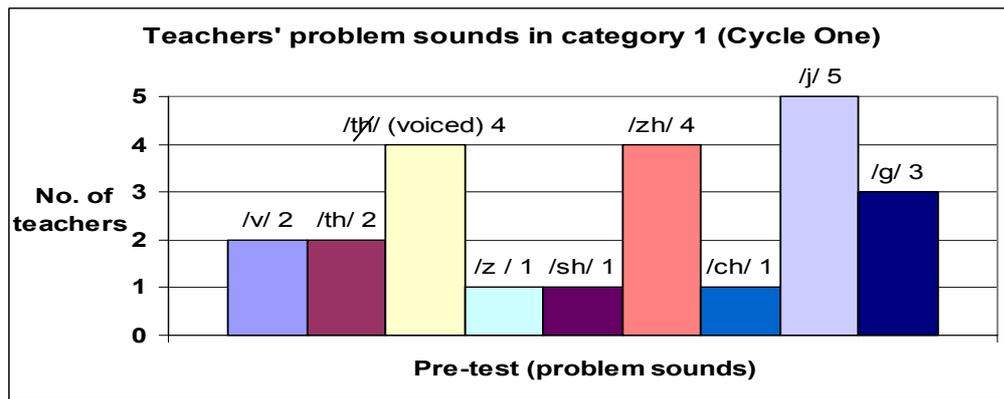
Figure 4.1 shows that all teachers incorrectly pronounced /j/. Four of them mispronounced /th/ (voiced) or /th/ and /zh/. The /g/ sound was incorrectly pronounced by three teachers, /v/ and /th/ by two

teachers and /z/, /sh/ and /ch/ by one teacher.

Figure 4.2: **Cycle One: Pre-test - teachers' problem sounds in category 2**

(sounds that do not occur in final position).

Teachers' problem sounds in category 2 (Cycle One)
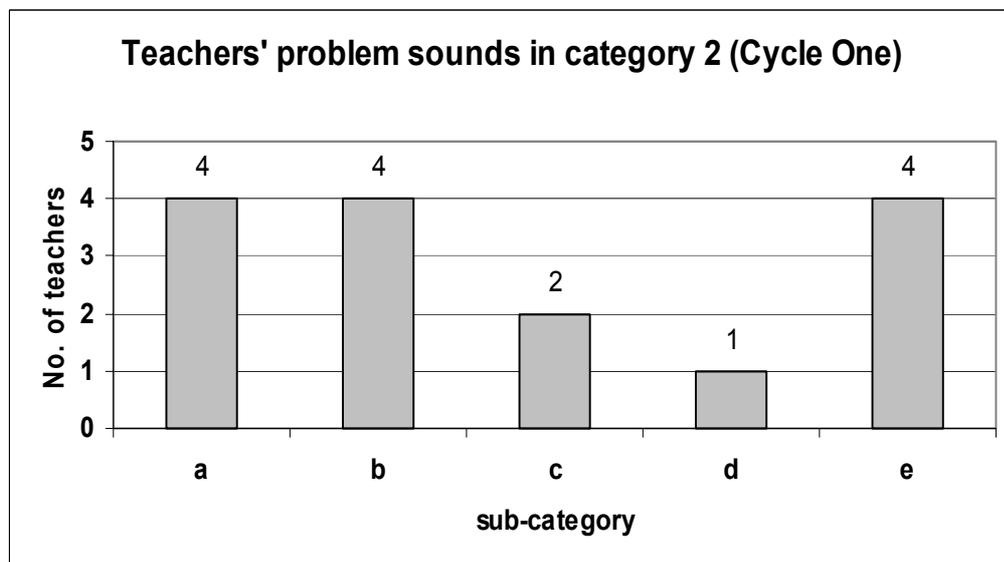
Figure 4.2 described category 2 where four out of five teachers incorrectly pronounced sub-category a (/l/ substituted by /n/), sub-category b (/f/ substituted by unreleased /β/) and sub- category e (/π /, /β/, /t/, /δ /, and /k/ are pronounced as unreleased instead of released sounds). The sub-category c (/s/ substituted by unreleased /δ/) and sub-category d (/s/ is

omitted when occurs after diphthongs) were mispronounced by 2 teachers and 1 teacher respectively. All teachers could not pronounce /r/ in category 3 as shown in Figure 4.3 but they correctly pronounced vowel sounds.

Figure 4.3: **Cycle One: Pre-test -Teachers' problem sounds in category 3 (sounds that phonetically different from Thai equivalents).**

Teachers' problem sounds in category 3 (Cycle One)
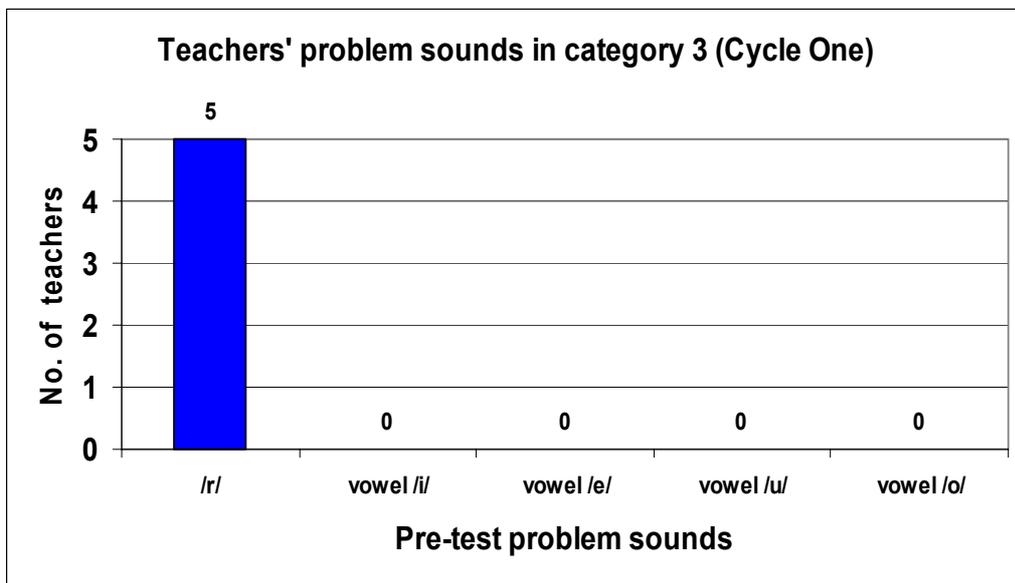
Week one: Day two

I started the class by introducing the phonetic alphabet. I pointed out the differences between spelling and pronunciation and encouraged them to use the dictionary as a reference. The general principles of how consonants are formed, how they are placed and the manner of articulation and especially voicing were covered (see Figure 3.6 and 3.7). Most learners produced phonetically correct consonant sounds according to the diagram shown in class after they had been introduced to how to pronounce them.

<u>Week one: Day three-four-five</u>

Activities conducted included the direct LLS and practice of sounds (Direct LLS: Memory, Cognitive and Compensation strategies). On day three, learners were advised about what and how direct LLS help them achieve their learning. On day four and five Learners had to look up words in the dictionary in pairs and remember the phonetic symbols, play guessing game and correct each other. They listened to a tape of a native speaker's sample sounds and practiced at the end of the class.

Teachers' responses in week one

The responses of teachers from their reflective reports identified the following issues.

<u>Recognition of the importance of segmental aspects</u>

Teachers realised that the segmental aspect of sounds is important to pronounce words correctly. They agreed that this was the first time they had ever been taught.

> I agreed that the segmental aspects (sounds) were important and there was no one taught before (Teacher 2 reflective report week one).

<u>Realisation of mistakes</u>

After the introduction of sounds in week 1, teachers self evaluated and realised that they had been mispronouncing some sounds. They also realised that the training would improve their pronunciation mistakes. They were eager to improve all of those mistakes from this course.

> I had a difficulty with /v/ sound and it is improved (Teacher 1- reflective report week one).

Teachers had the ability to evaluate their mispronunciation. They were willing to improve those sounds from the training.

Now I know I mispronounced some consonant sounds and I want to improve them from this course (Teacher 2-reflective report week one).

<u>Understanding of phonetic symbols, LLS and dictionary</u>

Teachers realised that using the dictionary as a reference helped correct their pronunciation of English words by reading phonetic symbols. They showed through the affective LLS that they enjoyed learning. They reported that the phonetic symbols learned from the training was easy.

I agreed that it was useful to remember all symbols of consonants. I have never used the English dictionary before. It was fun and helpful (Teacher 3-reflective report week one).

Teachers reported the usefulness of the dictionary to help them read English words. They said that it was very easy.

The use of dictionary was very helpful. The dictionary was the easy way to help learners read English (Teacher 4-reflective report week one).

<u>Motivation to teach this approach in class to students</u>

Teachers realised the importance of pronunciation training and wanted to offer students the same training. They showed their understanding of the training and it was the easy way to give guidance to read words correctly.

I want to include the articulation of consonant sounds focusing on place and manner of articulation learning in school syllabus (Teacher 1-reflective report week one).

Teachers agreed that pronunciation training is one way to improve English speaking. It was easy and important to teach in classroom.

It was essential to teach the articulation of consonant sounds in classroom. I found it was easier to guide students and let them practise (Teacher 5-reflective report week one).

Stage two: Segmental aspects of vowel sounds

The second week was the week of vowel sounds. The mouth shape to support the correctness of pronouncing words was introduced and practised from the tape. Both consonant and vowel symbols and how to pronounce them were also integrated and practised.

Week two: Day one
This covered learning about the vowels diagram and how to pronounce correct English vowels compare to Thai vowels. Participants had to differentiate the places of articulation of vowel sounds, high-mid-low and front-central-back (see Chapter 3, Figure 3.8, 3.9).

Week two: Day two
This covered consonant and vowel sounds and mouth shape practice (see Chapter 3, Figure 3.10).

Week two: Day three-four-five:
Wrap up and practice, and looking up words in dictionary. At this stage, learners were assigned to prepare a speech to be given at the end of the course in week three. To control the correctness of this speech, they were

allowed to reproduce a speech already written. They had to prepare for the accuracy of speech by looking up words in the dictionary and transcribing into phonetic symbols words that they cannot pronounce correctly and practise. The advantages of a speech are that it can be practised in advance; everyone got a chance to speak and it can be easily tape-recorded for feedback and self-evaluation (Kriedler, 1989). Teachers listened to their recordings and evaluated themselves.

Teachers' responses in week two

The responses of teachers from their reflective reports showed the following issues.

<u>Recognition of the importance of segmental aspects of consonant and vowel sounds and mouth shape practice</u>

Teachers realised that correct articulation of vowel sounds depended on the correct mouth shapes. The practice of voice on tape helped improve it.

I thought that articulation of vowel sounds depends on mouth shape. I followed the voice from tape and I can do it. It works (Teacher 1-reflective report week two).

Teachers realised that the segmental aspects of both consonant and vowel sounds were important. Both aspects must be taught and integrated when pronouncing words to become native-like speakers.

I thought that the articulation of consonant and vowel sounds must be taught simultaneously. When I integrate both sounds in words they became native-like sounds (Teacher 2-reflective report week two).

<u>Self evaluation on improvement and motivation</u>

Teachers self evaluated and reported that their pronunciation had been improved after practising, though they felt it was hard. They could not do it the first time. The only way to help them was to practise hard.

The articulation of consonant sounds and word stress was hard and I could not do it. I'll practise more (Teacher 3-reflective report week two).

Teachers showed confidence that they could do it. They motivated themselves to practise more although it was difficult.

I never thought I could read (out loud), until I learned the articulation of consonant and vowel sounds, though it was difficult (Teacher 4-reflective report week two).

Teachers motivated themselves that they have been well trained and they are confident that they would pronounce correct English sounds.

I'm sure I can do it (Teacher 4-reflective report week two).

<u>Impact of dictionary usage on improvement</u>

Teachers confirmed the usefulness of the dictionary as a reference to correct and confirm the reading even though those unknown words were difficult to read. Their ability to read more words with correct pronunciation was improved by using the dictionary.

Looking up words in the dictionary was helpful to me to read difficult words (Teacher 4-reflective report week two).

Stage three: Suprasegmental aspects: stress, rhythm and intonation.

The last week of the training was at the suprasegmental level, a study of sentence stress, rhythm and intonation with activities and practice for their confidence. At the end of the week, teachers read the same passage from the pre-test and were tape recorded. Teachers also gave a speech to check their understanding of phonetic symbols and dictionary usage.

Teachers' responses in week three

The responses of teachers from their reflective reports identified the following issues.

<u>Relationship of good pronunciation to increased confidence</u>

Teachers were told that their pronunciation had improved after the training. Teachers showed confidence to speak English and to teach their students in the classroom.

I felt confident to pronounce and teach in class. I was very happy to hear that my American friends told me, "Your pronunciation is getting better" (Teacher 1-reflective report week three).

<u>Recognition of pronunciation training, practice and improvement</u>

Teachers realised that all aspects of the pronunciation training were important.

I thought that all aspects were equally important for my improvement (Teacher 5-reflective report week three).

Teachers reported that improvement was gained from practising hard. They felt that the training was very helpful to their progress.

I agreed that it would be harder if I did not practise. I found that it was fun and helpful and I really think I made big progress in it

(Teacher 3- reflective report week three).

<u>Realisation of the importance of segmental and suprasegmental aspects</u>

Teachers realised that the correctness of sounds, rhythm, pitch and intonation were important. Putting them together made the pronunciation more phonetically correct.

Learning about word stress and intonation with sound aspects was like the completed jigsaw puzzle (Teacher 2-reflective report week three).

<u>Ability to avoid bad habits and self correct</u>

Teachers reported that they gained the ability to self correct mispronunciation after learning all aspects.

It is very important that I realise when I said something wrong and most of the time I correct myself (Teacher 2-reflective report week three).

Teachers agreed that they had been mispronouncing words and it became a bad habit. They had now learned the correct pronunciation and would avoid those bad habits.

What I learned about the pronunciation of some words was wrong. It has become a bad habit to pronounce those words in a wrong way and I don't even notice it (Teacher 3-reflective report week three).

<u>Understanding symbols and motivation to pass on the skill to others</u>

Teachers could read English words from phonetic symbols they have learned from the dictionary. They realised the importance of it and were motivated to teach others.

Now I could read English from symbols. I would like to tell and teach others. And using dictionary as teacher is very convenient (Teacher 4-reflective report week three).

Realisation of the importance of pronunciation training and improvement to a career of teaching English

Teachers realised that their pronunciation improvement was very important to their teaching career, especially the ability of verbal communication.

Improving pronunciation is very helpful to my career, because the ability of verbal communication is very important (Teacher 4-reflective report week three).

Understanding the suprasegmental aspect

Teachers agreed that the suprasegmental aspects (intonation: pitch and rhythm) were important which they had not noticed before. Now they understood where to emphasise when reading and speaking. Their English was improved.

The pitch and rhythms of word are like music. I thought that it was easy for students. Before I took this course, my speech was very flat (Teacher 5-reflective report week three).

Teachers did not know about suprasegmental aspects of sentence stress and intonation but they could give correct emphasis after the training.

The most important thing is I didn't realise it, but now I know a lot how to divide thought groups and where I should make an emphasis when I read sentences (Teacher 5-reflective report week three).

In conclusion, teachers recognised the importance of the training from the first week. They reported that it was new to them and no one had taught them before. More importantly they showed their motivation and were inspired to teach pronunciation in the classroom. They were certain and confident that the method of training helped improve their intelligible speaking. After all they realised their mistakes and gained the ability to self correct those mistakes and avoided bad habits. Also, they agreed that dictionary usage was useful and fun and it was one way to improve reading and speaking.

I noted down information about teachers' development and course effectiveness. I underscored the importance of speech-monitoring abilities and speech modification strategies for use beyond the classroom as an important goal for pronunciation teaching. To be able to self-monitor, learners must be aware of the phonological features and patterns underlying the second language (Morley, 1994). The learners, however, stressed the value of detailed pronunciation instructions. It is particularly interesting that all of them reflected on their improvement. I learned from their reports that learners valued attention to and targeting specific phonetic features in controlled practice. However, they pinpointed the need for communicative activities. They wrote that they had learned many rules to tell them how to speak correctly, and they thought the most important was to learn from life by speaking English outside the classroom with native speakers.

4.3   Reflection on teachers' improvement Cycle One

I brought together data from observation, group discussion, field notes and reflective reports. I grouped and coded data from all reports and findings according to the research questions. The purpose was to focus on the objectives framework of the study. The data was put in the table of invention (Schawab, 1969) before analysing and reflecting to ensure that all aspects were covered and any educational situation can be understood in terms of the interactions between teachers, students, subject matters and milieu.

Table 4.2 presents coding using numbers from 1 to 6 and the relationships of the interactions between researcher, peer, teachers, pronunciation training, direct and indirect LLS and the dictionary usage. The data from the reports were categorised and grouped according to the identified codes. Below are descriptions of coding.

Code 1: Indicates improvement

Code 2: Shows comfortable intelligibility in speaking

Code 3: Shows comfortable intelligibility in listening

Code 4: These aspects should be included in classroom teaching

Code 5: New or fun activity, what I need

Code 6: Makes me feel confident

Table 4.2:   Coding of data of research questions

	(A) Researcher						(B)Teachers (T1-5)						(C) Pronunciation training& direct LLS						(D) Dictionary usage					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
(1) Observer																								
(2) Teachers (T1-5)																								
Researcher's observation																								
(3) Direct LLS																								
(4) Indirect LLS																								

The analysis of outcomes from reports, observations and group discussion were then coded alphabetically and marked in the table of each coding concerned. They were y, r and p. Code y = yes, Code r = need revision, Code p = more practice will improve. The table was read from the left column (1), (2), (3) and (4) to show the relationships and the interactions between columns (A), (B), (C) and (D) according to the Code y, r and p respectively.

The categorised numbers 1-6 were highlighted, presented and analysed in sections. The section 4.3.1 presents Code 1 (Table 4.3), section 4.3.2 presents Code 2 and 3 (Table 4.5), and section 4.3.3 presents Code 4, 5 and 6 (Table 4.7) to give clear references.

4.3.1 The impact of the pronunciation training on the teachers' improvement

The improvement of learners' communicative competence

Table 4.3 shows learners' improvement from teachers' reports, observers and researcher with the interaction to pronunciation training, LLS and the dictionary usage.

Table 4.3: The pronunciation training and the teachers' communicative competence improvement

y = yes, r = need revision, p = more practice will improve

	(A) Researcher						(B)Teachers (T1-5)						(C) Pronunciation training& direct LLS						(D) Dictionary usage					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
(1) Observer	-						y						r						y					
(2) Teachers (T1-5)	y						y						y						y					
Researcher's observation																								
(3) Direct LLS	y						y						-						y					
(4) Indirect LLS	y						-						y						y					

Note: Code 1: Indicates improvement

The observer reported that learners had improved their communicative competence after they had been trained. It was suggested that stage 1 of pronunciation training (Direct LLS) should be simplified because it took time for a learner to remember all phonetic symbols. Mostly it was hard for learners who did not have an English background although at the end of the course they all showed improvement. Dictionary usage was also helpful.

From reflective reports on their improvement and by observing each others, teachers (Teachers 1-5) agreed that the pronunciation training improved their communicative competence. Teachers stated in their reports that direct LLS (Memory strategies, Cognitive LLS and Compensation strategies) and learning how to use the dictionary were very supportive to pronunciation improvement.

Regarding the direct LLS, the researcher observed that learners showed improvement when they had remembered all phonetic symbols and understood how to use the dictionary. It helped them pronounce English words correctly. In the classroom, learners showed their participation (indirect LLS) and helped, corrected each other, and practised together for their improvement.

The improvement of the teachers' problem sounds

I transcribed sounds from the tape recordings of each teacher and placed those sounds in three categories. I analysed the change into two main categories. They were 'had improved' (IP) or 'need practice' (P). Improvement (IP) means that those sounds were pronounced correctly every time they were read. The 'need practice' (P) meant that learners sometimes incorrectly pronounced sounds.

Table 4.4:   **The improvement of teachers' problem sounds Cycle One**

Teachers	Pre-test (problem)			Post test (improvement)		
	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Teacher 1	/ϖ, th, zh, j/	a., b., e.	/ρ/	P /j/	IP	P
Teacher 2	/th, j, zh, γ /	a., b., e.	/ρ/	IP	IP	IP
Teacher 3	/th, th, j, γ/	a., b., c., e.	/ρ/	P /th, th/	P /c.	P
Teacher 4	All sounds	All sounds	/ρ/	IP	IP	IP
Teacher 5	/zh, j/	_	/ρ/	IP	_	IP

Coding: IP= had improved, P= need practice

Teacher 4 who could not pronounce any sounds correctly before the training could pronounce correct sounds at the end of the class. All learners initially could not pronounce /r/ sound but had improved after the training except Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 who still needed more practice. Teachers 2, 4 and 5 were three learners who had improved sounds in all categories at the end of the training (see appendix I for details).

Learners' pronunciation had improved in almost all categories after the training. Figures 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 show the findings.

Figure 4.4:   **A comparison of pre-test and post-test of teachers' pronunciation in category 1 (Cycle One)**
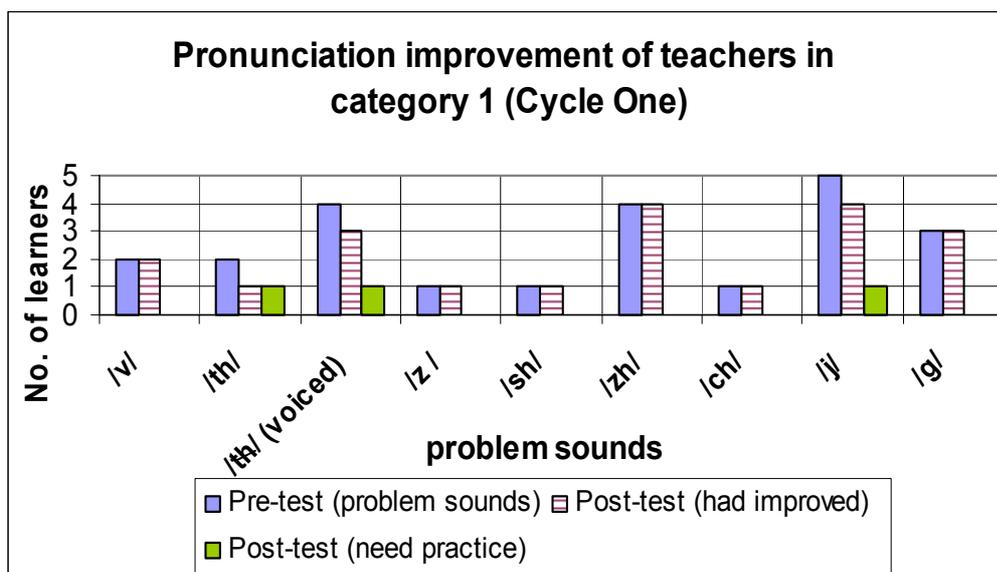
In category 1 (Figure 4.4), teachers' pronunciation of problem sounds had been improved after training in six out of nine sounds, /v/, /z/, /zh/, /sh/, /ch/ and /g/. They needed further practice in only three sounds /th/, /th/ voiced sound and /j/ sounds.

Figure 4.5: **A comparison of pre-test and post-test of teachers' pronunciation in category 2 (Cycle One)**
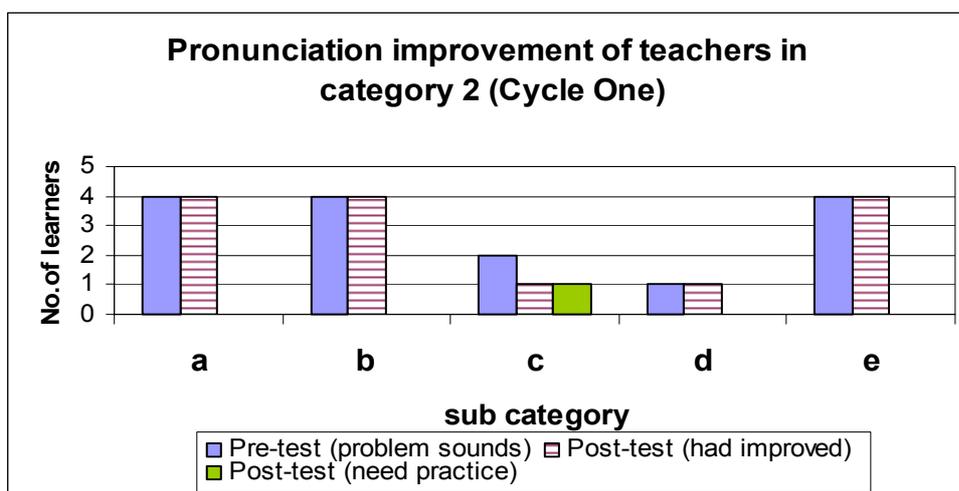
In category 2 (Figure 4.5), they needed further practice only in sub category c (/s/ substituted by unreleased /δ/). Other sub-categories (a, b, d and e) were improved after the training (a = /l/ substituted by /n/, b = /f/ substituted by unreleased /β/, d =/s/ is omitted when occurs after diphthongs, e =/π /, /β/, /t/, /δ /, and /k/ are pronounced as unreleased instead of released sounds). In category 3 (Figure 4.6), two teachers had to practise more on their pronunciation of /r/ sound. Others had improved.

Figure 4.6: **A comparison of pre-test and post-test of teachers' pronunciation in category 3 (Cycle One)**

Pronunciation improvement of teachers in category 3 (Cycle One)

No. of learners

5
4
3
2
1
0

/r/
problem sound

☐ Pre-test (problem sounds) ☐ Post-test (had improved)
☐ Post-test (need practice)
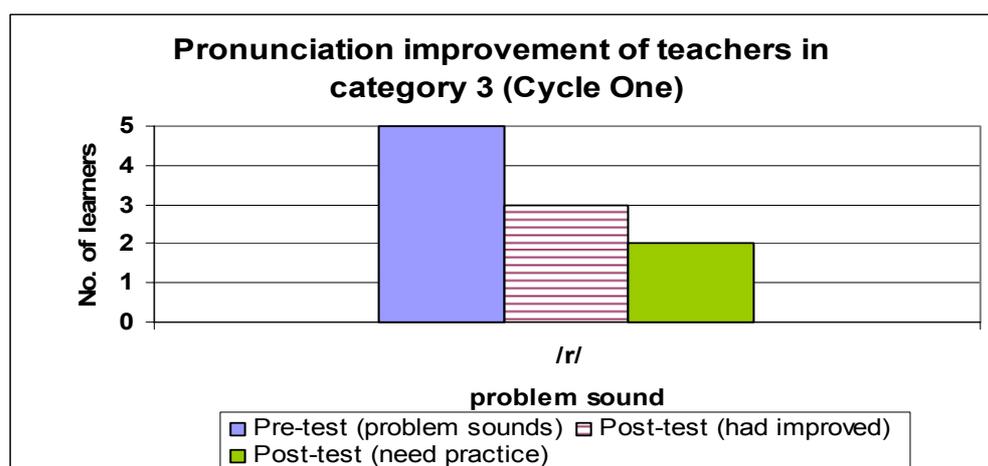
4.3.2 The impact of language learning strategies on the improvement of the teachers' communicative competence.

The objective of the study of communicative competence was to improve learners' comfortable intelligibility communicative competence in both speaking and listening. Therefore the data matched the objective. Table 4.5 presents the data in Code 2 and Code 3.

Table 4.5: The extent of language learning strategies' contribution to the improvement of teachers' communicative competence.

y = yes, r = revision, p = more practice will improve

	(A) Researcher						(B) Teachers (T1-5)						(C) Pronunciation training& direct LLS						(D) Dictionary usage					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
(1) observer		-	-					y	y					y	y					y	y			
(2) teachers (T1-5)		y	y					y	y					y	y					y	y			
Researcher's observation																								
(3) Direct LLS		y	y					-	-					-	-					y	y			
(4) Indirect LLS		p	p					-	-					y	y					y	y			

Note: Code 2: Shows comfortable intelligibility in speaking

Code 3: Shows comfortable intelligibility in listening

Comfortable intelligibility in speaking

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Teachers showed improvement in their speaking competence after they had been trained how to pronounce English sounds' segmental and suprasegmental aspects as well as the direct LLS. The dictionary usage helped them practise and check whether their pronunciation was correct. Teachers needed more practice on indirect LLS in the training course.

Comfortable intelligibility in listening

From observation, group discussion and critical friends, it was evident that learners were attentive to the new knowledge on pronunciation learning. Their improvement was to the extent of comfortable intelligibility. Through activities, they showed that they understood what the others said to them. The teachers were happy that the listeners understood what they had said.

Although all agreed on their competence of intelligibility speaking, the researcher observed that teachers needed advice and practice on indirect LLS
(metacognitive strategies, affective LLS and social strategies) to be more focused, motivated and facilitate each other.

The use of indirect LLS of the teachers each stage in Cycle One.

The teachers' use of indirect LLS shown in Figure 4.7 clarifies the effect of indirect LLS reported during the training. Affective LLS lowered anxiety; stimulated self-encouragement and took the emotional temperature down. Affective LLS are concerned with the learner's emotional requirements such as confidence and enable learners to control feelings, motivation, and attitudes related to language learning (Oxford, 1990a).

Social strategies include asking questions, i.e. asking for clarification or verification; co-operating with others, co-operating with peers or co-operating with proficient users of the new language; empathising with others developing cultural understanding or becoming aware of others' thoughts and feelings (Oxford, 1990a). Metacognitive strategies help learners regulate and exercise executive control through planning, arranging, focusing, and evaluating their own learning (Oxford, 1990a).

To focus on the use of learners' indirect LLS, Figure 4.7 shows a comparison of the teachers' use of LLS in stage 1, stage 2 and stage 3.

Figure 4.7   The use of LLS by teachers in Cycle One
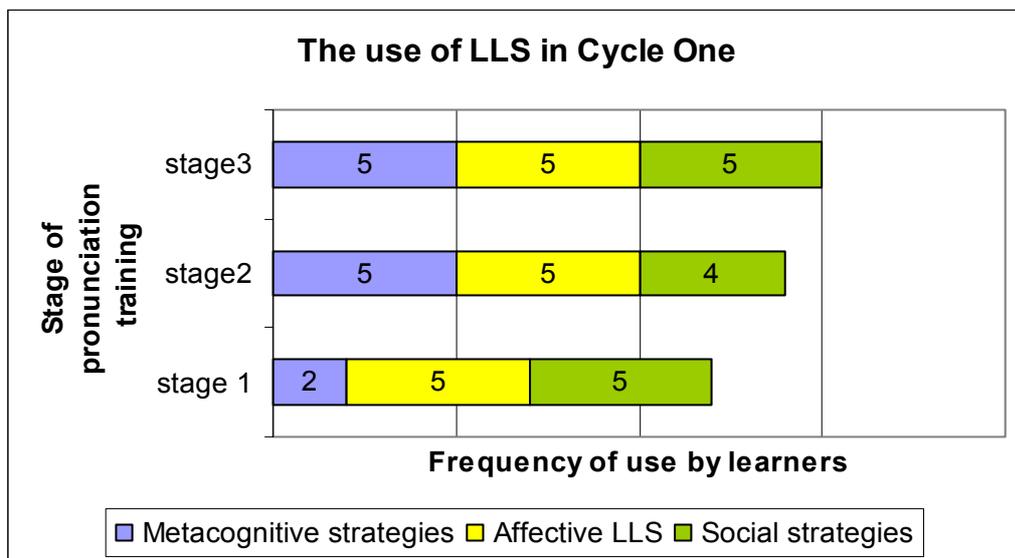
The figure shows that the indirect LLS played important roles in their improvement at the end of the training. It shows that the teachers used fewer metacognitive strategies in stage one than in stage two and three.   There were two teachers, teachers 1 and 5, that showed metacognitive strategies in stage one while teachers 2, 3 and 4 did not. The use of social strategies declined a little in stage two while the use of metacognitive strategies increased. Teacher 1 did not report on social strategies in stage two while teacher 4 used all strategies in all stages. Teachers used all three strategies

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in stage three for their achievement. Affective LLS was the strategy that all teachers reported they use every stage.

Tables 4.6.1, 4.6.2 and 4.6.3 in the next section show precise indirect LLS descriptions of each teacher's use at each stage as follows.

In stage one (Table 4.6.1), all teachers showed their affective LLS and social strategies. Teachers 1, 3, 5 showed that they were happy and attentive while Teachers 2 and 4 showed affective LLS in a more negative attitude. Teacher 2 felt embarrassed to mispronounce the sounds in class and Teacher 4 was afraid to pronounce incorrect sounds but tried hard. All of them realised the importance of practice with friends for their improvement. Moreover Teacher 5 showed affection and helpfulness to guide and cheer up others. Only teacher 1 and teacher 5 showed metacognitive strategies at this stage.

Table 4.6.1:   Cycle One: The use of indirect LLS in stage one: ten hours

Metacognitive strategies = M, Affective LLS = A, Social strategies = S

Stage 1	*M*	*A*	*S*
T1 (M) concentrate (A) attentive (S) practise with friends	✓	✓	✓
T2 (A) feel embarrassed to mispronounce in classroom (S) ask how to pronounce		✓	✓
T3 (A) want to learn more(S) practise with friends		✓	✓
T4(A)fear that it is not correct but try hard (S) ask friends how to do		✓	✓
T5(M) know what to do (A) happy to learn (S)guide /cheer up others	✓	✓	✓

T=teacher

Table 4.6.2 shows that all learners used the metacognitive strategies and affective LLS in stage two. They were all happy to have learned about how to pronounce consonant sounds correctly. They realised the importance of practice for their improvement. Teachers 1, 2, 4, and 5 knew that they had to prepare themselves before each session by remembering the

consonant symbols before continuing the vowels lesson in week three. Teacher 3 who had never practised felt unhappy to see others' improvement and discussed with them those strategies used. There was no report on social strategies by Teacher 1. Teacher 1 was self-motivated and had planned to remember consonant symbols.

Table 4.6.2:   Cycle One: The use of indirect LLS in stage two: ten hours

Metacognitive strategies = M, Affective LLS = A, Social strategies = S

Stage 2	*M*	*A*	*S*
T1 (M) must remember consonant symbols before learning vowels (A) feel happy to know	✓	✓	
T2(M) cannot pronounce if not practise hard, have to remember symbols well (A) happy to know all (S)practise with others	✓	✓	✓
T3 (M)never practise, feel down (A)but happy in class (S) discuss how to	✓	✓	✓
T4 (M) prepare, practise before session (A) eager to learn, practise (S) discuss, practise with friends	✓	✓	✓
T5 (M) well prepared (A) happy to have learned (S) help / advise others	✓	✓	✓

T=teacher

It was remarkable that all teachers used all three categories of indirect LLS in stage three, the last week of the training (Table 4.6.3). Therefore it was evident that language learning strategies helped improve teachers' competence in the pronunciation training (Figures 4.4, 4.5, 4.6) although some sounds needed more practice.

Table 4.6.3:   Cycle One: The use of indirect LLS in stage three: ten hours

Metacognitive strategies = M, Affective LLS = A, Social strategies = S

Stage 3	*M*	*A*	*S*
T1(M)plan to teach (A)happy to improve (S)confident to teach	✓	✓	✓
T2(M)(A) cannot do it well if not try hard (A) confident, have to practise more (S) practise with others	✓	✓	✓
T3 (M) (A) improve though cannot compare. (A) have to practise more(S) discuss	✓	✓	✓
T4 (M)(A)always practise, feel improve (A)if not cannot do it (S)confidently	✓	✓	✓
T5 (M)(A) improve (S) talk with native friend and get compliments	✓	✓	✓

T=teacher

Teachers recorded their use of LLS in their reflective reports as follows.

Metacognitive strategies

The pronunciation learning strategies reported in metacognitive strategies in Cycle One are 'Planning and preparing for a language task' and 'Self evaluation and self directing'. Details are as follows.

Planning and preparing for a language task

Teachers realised that they must practise and prepare well before each class. They reported that this was the way to learn and improve their pronunciation.

I must concentrate on the practice assignment (Teacher 1-reflective report week one).

Teachers set their goal that they must practise both consonant and vowel sounds for their improvement.

My pronunciation will be improved through consonant and vowel sounds practice (Teacher 1- reflective report week two).

Teachers were aware that they must prepare themselves for each class to improve their pronunciation. They reported they must remember the consonant symbols before they continued with vowel sounds. The most important was that they must practise.

If I prepare well I will know what to do and feel improved (Teacher 5-reflective report commented in week one, two and three).

Teachers planned their learning so that, before continuing on vowel sounds in the next session, they must remember all consonant sounds.

I must remember all consonant sounds before learning vowels (Teacher 1-reflective report week two).

Teachers realised that to improve their pronunciation they must practise hard otherwise they would not do it. They must remember all symbols well for their first start.

I will not do it if I do not try hard. I have to remember all symbols well (Teacher 2-reflective report week two).

Teachers planned their lesson to practise before each class.

I have to prepare myself and practise before each class (Teacher 4-reflective report week two).

Self evaluation and self directing

Teachers directed themselves to be attentive to the class. They realised that it was useful for their improvement.

I must be attentive to the class for improvement because it is very useful (Teacher 1- reflective report week one).

Teachers self evaluated that their pronunciation was improved through the practice.

I feel it is better but I have to practise more (Teacher 3-reflective report week three).

Teachers reported that their pronunciation has been improved through the training and practice.

I always practise and feel improved (Teacher 4-reflective report week three).

Affective LLS

The pronunciation learning strategies reported in affective LLS in Cycle One are 'Control feelings and motivating', 'Having a positive attitude to the training and learning', 'Showing confidence to share knowledge with others' and 'Fulfilling their expectations'. Details are as follows.

<u>Controlling feelings and motivating</u>

Teachers realised the usefulness of the training. They were embarrassed to mispronounce words and believed that the training was the way to improve their pronunciation. With their attentiveness and practice, they would overcome those mistakes.

I feel embarrassed to mispronounce in the classroom. I should be more   attentive (Teacher 2-reflective report week one).

Teachers realised that the training would improve their pronunciation. They felt that they wanted to learn more about it.

I want to learn more about pronunciation (Teacher 3-reflective report week one).

Teachers were uncertain about their pronunciation whether it was correct when they practise. But they were confident that practising hard would help.

I fear that it is not correct when I practise but I will try hard (Teacher 4-reflective report week one).

Teachers liked the training and strongly believed that it helped improve their pronunciation through practice. They were confident and eager to learn and practise more.

I am eager to learn and practise (Teacher 4-reflective report week two).

Teachers were aware of the importance of practising and they were not happy if they did not work hard.

I feel down that I do not practise hard like other teachers (Teacher 3-reflective report week two).

Having a positive attitude to the training and learning

Teachers liked to learn about pronunciation. They showed their satisfaction with the training. .

I feel very happy to know about this (Teacher 1-reflective report week two).

I am very happy to know aspects of pronunciation (Teacher 2-reflective report week two).

I feel very happy in class (Teacher 3-reflective report week two).

Furthermore they reflected that they would not be able to pronounce sounds correctly if they had not been trained.

I am happy I have learned it (Teacher 5-reflective report week one-two).

If I had not learned it, I could not do it (Teacher 4-reflective report week three).

Showing confidence to share knowledge with others

Teachers' reflective reports confirmed their improvement and increase in confidence after the training. The training make them feel confident to pronounce sounds because they did it correctly though they could not do it well and needed more practice in some sounds.

Though I cannot do it well, I feel more confident and have to practise more (Teacher 2-reflective report week three).

I feel confident to pronounce English words after I have been trained (Teacher 3-reflective report week three).

Teachers showed their confidence in their improvement from the training. Their confidence and achievement motivated them to teach others. They had to plan to teach their students.

I must plan to teach my students (Teacher 1-reflective report week three).

Now I feel confident to teach my students (Teacher 1-reflective report week three).

Fulfilling their expectations

Teachers were happy to have improved after the training which was their goals in English learning. They were proud and confident when they were understood by a native speaker.

I am very happy that my pronunciation of English sounds has improved (Teacher 1-reflective report week three).

I feel my pronunciation has improved. (Teacher 4-reflective report week three)

Now my pronunciation is improved. (Teacher 5-reflective report week three)

I talk to a native speaker who is my friend. I get a compliment that my pronunciation is improved. (Teacher 5-reflective report week three)

Social strategies

The pronunciation learning strategies reported in social strategies in Cycle One are 'Co-operating with others' and 'Asking for help'. Details are as follows.

<u>Co-operating with others</u>

Teachers reported that their pronunciation was improved because they practised with friends.

The way to improve my pronunciation is to practise with friends (Teacher 1-reflective report week one).

I always practise with friends (Teacher 3-reflective report week one).

Some teachers taught their friends when they had learned how to do it.

I give a guidance of how to do it to friends when I can do it (Teacher 5-reflective report commented in week one and two).

When I practise, I like to practise with others in class (Teacher 2-reflective report commented in week two and three).

<u>Asking for help</u>

In their learning, teachers reported that they practised together, helped each other and discussed how to pronounce accurately.

I always ask my friends how to pronounce the sounds. It is the way to correct my pronunciation (Teacher 2-reflective report week one).

They worked together and corrected the incorrect sounds

I ask friends, discuss and we practise together. It is the way I learned (Teacher 4-reflective report commented in week one, two and three).

I discuss the ways to pronounce it more correctly with friends in class and instructor because it is more difficult this week (Teacher 3-reflective report commented in week two and three).

4.3.3 Impact of the pronunciation training on the teachers' confidence.

From Table 4.7 it can be seen that the pronunciation training was fun, though it was new to them and pronunciation training with direct LLS and the dictionary usage should be included in classroom. They said it was what they needed to learn and they felt confident to speak after the training.

Table 4.7: **Impact of the pronunciation training on the teachers' confidence**

y = yes, r = need revision, p = more practice will improve

	(A) Researcher						(B) Teachers (T1-5)						(C) Pronunciation training& direct LLS						(D) Dictionary usage					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
(1) Colleague (peer)				-	-	-				-	y	y				y	-	r				y	-	y
(2) Teachers (T1-5)				-	y	y				y	y	y				y	y	p				y	y	y
Researcher's observation																								
(3) Direct LLS				y	y	y				y	y	y				-	-	-				y	-	y
(4) Indirect LLS				y	y	y				-	-	-				y	-	y				y	-	y

Note: Code 4: These aspects should be included in classroom teaching

Code 5: New or fun activity, what I need

Code 6: Makes me feel confident

The table of invention was again used to analyse the impact of the pronunciation training on the teachers' confidence by listing the data from reflective report, observation and researcher's notes and coded as 4, 5 and 6.

From researcher and observer data, we concluded that learners enjoyed practising English pronunciation. The observer recorded the change of learners' accents and observed that with clearly voiced sounds, learners had a native like accent but the training needed to revise activities within the direct LLS to gain more confidence.

Development of native like accent with voiced sounds

From observation of the improvement of voiced sounds, it was reported that learners had pronounced voiced sounds clearly and native-like, though these sounds were not found in Thai.

There are no voiced consonant sounds in Thai and they are hard to pronounce. However, it sounds like a native speaker when the learners did it (Observer's report week 1).

The observer indicated that learners improved their communicative competence and confidence after they had been trained. Dictionary usage was, also, helpful. Learners showed improvement in their speaking competence after they had been trained how to pronounce English sounds using segmental and suprasegmental aspects as well as the direct LLS. The dictionary usage helped them practise and check whether their pronunciation was correct. Teachers needed more practice on indirect LLS in the training course.

The improvement of communicative competence, the increase of confidence and the importance of dictionary usage.

The observer also suggested that learners felt confident while learning in class, had fun with the activities and enjoyed practising in class with others.   It was reported that they checked the correctness of pronunciation in the dictionary.

I observed that teachers confidently pronounced words and interacted with each other in role play and activities in class. They checked pronunciation of words in the dictionary quite often to be phonetically correct (Observer's Report week 3).

Teachers agreed that the pronunciation training improved their communicative competence. Teachers stated in their reports that direct LLS (memory strategies, cognitive LLS and compensation strategies) and learning how to use the dictionary was very supportive of pronunciation improvement.

Using the direct LLS, I observed that learners showed most improvement when they had remembered all phonetic symbols and understood how to use the Dictionary. It helped them pronounce English words correctly.   In the classroom, learners worked together (using the indirect LLS) helped and corrected each other, and practised together for their improvement.

From observation and group discussion, it was evident that the teachers were attentive to the new knowledge for learning pronunciation. Their improvement was to the extent of comfortable intelligibility. Through activities, they showed that they understood what others said to them. The learners were happy that listeners understood what they had said. From my observations, I concluded that the learners who created opportunities to practise outside the classroom using their meta-linguistic awareness showed the highest level of improvement in the end of the course.

Understanding how to self correct and improved intelligibility.

The teachers reported that they learned how to improve their pronunciation and they knew their weaknesses. They accepted that their pronunciation improved but was not perfect. Perfection was still a long way.

I know I can't speak as perfect as a native speaker after just the 3 week training. This is impossible. I am quite clear it is a long way to improve my English speaking. What is important is that I have learned the ways to improve my pronunciation and realized my weakness, and then I can practise and apply the rules to me in the future (Group discussion, week three).

Now that I know what can make my speech more understandable, like opening my mouth, speak louder, lowering my voice pitch, and keep a key words list always with me to work on, I feel I'm constantly improving (Group discussion, week three).

Confidence to speak after the training

Teachers reported in group discussion that they knew how to pronounce correct sounds intelligibly and it made them more confident. They did not fear that no one would understand them.

Sometimes for fear of people not understanding or misunderstanding me, I prefer to keep quiet and am unwilling to involve in other conversation. I think by improving my pronunciation I will be more willing to open up and speak (Group discussion, week three).

They engaged more actively and willingly in conversation. They agreed that poor pronunciation was a great obstacle to participating in

conversation.

> Because poor pronunciation is one of the biggest obstacles to communicate with others, I felt depressed for I can't give clear information to others. Now I am more confident (Group discussion, week three).

4.4 Indirect LLS: pronunciation learning strategies and tactics used by teachers

This study revealed the indirect pronunciation learning strategies that the teachers as learners used in this study. These perhaps had never before been documented for Thai learners as pertaining specifically to pronunciation learning although further research study will probably reveal direct strategies and additional strategies. Tables 4.8.1, 4.8.2 and 4.8.3 compare the data of indirect pronunciation learning strategies used by teachers: metacognitive strategies, affective LLS and social strategies respectively, with the use by participants that had been previously categorised, documented and reported by Oxford (1990) and Peterson (2000).

For each broad strategy, the table also shows all of the specific tactics that pertain to it; the tactics used in this study appear first, followed by Oxford's (1990) and Peterson's (2000). Eleven strategies (four were new) and twenty four tactics (nineteen were new) were repeated in this study by teachers. The new strategies and tactics are highlighted in affective LLS (Table 4.8.2). All findings are directly quoted from teachers' reflective reports and are listed below.

Table 4.8.1 **Teachers' pronunciation learning strategies with metacognitive strategies and data based on Oxford (1990), Peterson (2000)**

Indirect LLS Group: metacognitive strategies

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported		
	Teachers'	Oxford's	Peterson's
Finding out about target language pronunciation	N/A	• acquiring a general knowledge of phonetics • reading reference materials about the rules	N/A
Setting goals and objectives	• concentrating on the practice assignment • concentrating on consonant and vowel sounds for improvement	• deciding to focus one's listening on particular sounds.	• deciding to focus one's learning on particular sounds. • deciding to memorise the sounds (or the alphabet) right away.
Planning for a language task	• preparing oneself well before each class to be	N/A	• preparing for an oral presentation by writing difficult-to-

	improved		pronounce words very large in one's notes.
	• preparing oneself and practise before each class		
	• planning to remember all consonant sounds before learning vowels		
Self evaluating And self directing	• being more attentive to the class for improvement because it is useful	N/A	• recording oneself to listen to one's pronunciation.
	• will be practising more though feel improved		
	• always practising and feel improved		

Pronunciation learning strategies that teachers used in metacognitive strategies were setting goals and objectives, planning for a language task, and self evaluating and self directing. There were eight new tactics (highlighted) revealed from the teachers' reflective reports. The teachers used fewer (n=2) metacognitive strategies in stage one, the study of consonant sounds. (Ref. Figure 4.7)

Table 4.8.2   Teachers' pronunciation learning strategies with affective LLS and data based on Oxford (1990), Peterson (2000).

Indirect LLS Group: affective learning strategies

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported		
	Teachers'	Oxford's	Peterson's
Using humour to lower anxiety	N/A	• having a sense of humour about mispronu nciations.	N/A
Controlling feelings and motivating	• feeling embarrassed to mispronounce sounds in classroom that motivated more attention	N/A	N/A
	• wanting to learn more about		

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported		
			pronunciation
	• fearing that it is not correct when practicing but will try hard		
	• being eager to learn and practise		
	• feeling down when do not practise hard like others but will do it harder		
Having positive attitude on the training and learning	• feeling happy to know about pronunciation	N/A	N/A
	• feeling very happy to be in classroom and to have learned it		
	• feeling to have ability to do it from the training		
Showing one's confidence and to share knowledge with others	• feeling confident to have been improved after the training	N/A	N/A
	• feeling confident to teach others because of one's improvement		
Fulfilling one's expectations	• being happy about one's improvement	N/A	N/A

The tactics used in affective LLS found from the study were controlling feelings, having positive attitude on the training and learning, showing their confidence to share knowledge with others and fulfilling their expectations. These mentioned tactics were not documented in Oxford's and Peterson's lists. As stated in Figure 4.7 all teachers reported that they used affective LLS in every stage of the training. Therefore these will hopefully be useful to the pronunciation teaching for successful Thai students.

Table 4.8.3   Teachers' pronunciation learning strategies with social

strategies and data based on Oxford (1990), Peterson

(2000)

Indirect LLS Group: social strategies

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported		
	Teachers'	Oxford's	Peterson's
Cooperating with peers	• practising with someone else	N/A	• studying with someone else
	• guiding someone else to do it		• teaching or tutoring someone else

Asking for help	• asking someone else to correct one's pronunciation • asking someone how to pronounce correctly • discussing about pronunciation in order to have learned from someone else	• asking someone else to correct one's pronunciation • asking someone else to pronounce something	N/A

Like Oxford's and Peterson's, the strategies that teachers used in social strategies were cooperating with peers (friends) and asking for help. There was nothing new in this study compared to Oxford's and Peterson's findings. Although there was nothing new in teachers' use of pronunciation learning strategies, there was one tactic used that presents a new finding. The tactic was discussing pronunciation in order to learn from someone else. From Figure 4.7, teachers reported they used less social strategies in stage 2 of training, the study of vowel sounds (n=4).

4.5   Implications for pronunciation teaching and learning in Cycle One

The observer suggested that stage one of the pronunciation training with direct LLS should be simplified because it took time for participants to remember all the phonetic symbols. Mostly it was hard for learners who did not have an English background though at the end of the course they showed improvement even though they had planned to remember consonant symbols before continuing the next stage.

I observed that learners also needed advice and practice on indirect LLS (Metacognitive Strategies, Affective LLS and Social Strategies) to be more focused, motivated, and able to facilitate each other, though all agreed that their competence to speak intelligibly had increased.

From my observation, the learners realized the relationship between listening and the production of speech when they spoke and listened to a native speaker from a tape in the practice session. I believe that this ability to transfer strategies from the classroom environment to the use of language in a natural setting is a main factor in developing independent learners, who will continue to improve beyond the pronunciation course they were taking. The learners noted that they found motivation to continue to work on their pronunciation after the course because they felt equipped with the knowledge to approach this task autonomously. To write a reflective report on self development built their awareness of pronunciation practice. They would continue to use the dictionary as taught in class as a reference for unfamiliar words.

The value of group discussion

The information from group discussions was positive. Participants urged that their pronunciation had been improved, especially, when they pronounced difficult sounds. They have learned that they can change their habits of English pronunciation even though they have been there for a long time. They realized the importance of place and manner of articulation that if they misplace it, the sound will be different. They also urged that a course leader is important to give advice and control classroom activity aiming for English pronunciation accuracy. It was good to individually discuss the problem after the class so they could correct their pronunciation promptly. They gave evidence that Teacher 4 who was the weakest in English did well in the training, and was the one to improve all problem sounds which she could not pronounce at the beginning. Furthermore Teacher 4 could read English words from phonetic alphabets more efficiently.

The observer also pointed out that learners were encouraged to practise correct pronunciation in order to make the speech and perform the role play activity. They would try their best to pronounce sounds as

accurately as they could. Therefore it would be good to maintain these activities.

On the consonant and vowel sounds introductory sessions, learners needed more practice activities. Practice hours must be extended using the native voice on tape. Most learners seemed to understand how to produce all sounds using the picture of speech organs. (See Chapter 3, Figure 3.5)

The value of role play and more practice

From observation, it was reported that learners improved their pronunciation through role play activities and when they made a presentation.

> Learners tended to learn more quickly when they practised in the role play activities, and when they made speech presentations (Observer's note week 3).

4.6   Plans for Cycle Two

From group discussion at the end of week 3, learners suggested that we needed to develop a pronunciation syllabus. The reason was to make it easier for the students (see Appendix J for lesson plan, Cycle Two). They were agreed that vowel sounds should be taught at Stage 1 instead of Stage 2 because this would be easier to practise.

> Though we pronounced correct consonant sounds, we found it difficult to put them in words because we don't know the vowel sounds. To practise vowel sounds, we can use nonsense syllables (Group discussion week   three).

The observer supported this idea.

There was a hard time for learners to practise consonant sounds with uncertainty of vowel sounds even though they knew those words (Group discussion week three).

I switched vowel sounds familiarization from stage two to stage one for Cycle Two. Teachers also had to describe consonant and vowel sounds more distinctively. The observer noticed that learners were happy to attend the class but they were confused about how to articulate the consonant and vowel sounds.

Learners revealed their interests in teaching instruction and I was satisfied to give advice. When I asked about other aspects and activities, participants agreed that they should remain the same, except Teacher 4 who was weak in English and was afraid to introduce LLS to her students and wanted me to help. I agreed that I would do the LLS introduction and 'Teachers' would do the pronunciation training.

I know what they are but I want to concentrate on pronunciation teaching which is hard for me but important to the project (Teacher 4 Group discussion week three).

Teaching awareness from discussion with teachers in Cycle One

Teaching awareness was discussed prior to Cycle Two based on feedback from teachers that students should be advised to

- Recognize the importance of pronunciation (that is, accept that accuracy is important and they need to attend to it).

- Develop an awareness of areas of deficiency.

- Develop ability to monitor their own pronunciation.

- Learn to focus on pronunciation of native speakers and try to use this as a model (through listening to tape recordings).

- Realise that not managing the sounds correctly the first time does not mean they cannot learn how to do it and achieve this through practice.

From researcher and peer observation, we concluded that learners enjoyed English pronunciation practice. We were certain that with regular practice, learners would improve their performance and feel confident.

The action research Cycle Two began two weeks after I had finished Cycle One. Chapter 5 presents the data from students as learners taught by teacher-learners this cycle.

CHAPTER 5

ACTION RESEARCH CYCLE TWO

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this stage was for the teachers, who were the participants in Cycle One, to teach twenty volunteer students, four for each teacher, the same pronunciation course. The aim was to see if the teachers could make their experience accessible to others and enable them to speak phonetically correct English on the basis of comfortable intelligibility.

Cycle Two ran from April 2004 to the beginning of May 2004, two weeks after the first cycle session, when I received the permission from learners' parents (Appendix F permission letter to parents). The teachers were advised how to plan the lessons and how to teach their students in order

to ensure the same instruction. I followed the four stages of action research - plan, act, observe and reflect. They ran as follows.

5.2   Planning stage

In group discussion after Cycle One, teachers suggested that in the segmental aspect, vowel sounds must be taught in week one in substitution to consonant sounds. I changed the lesson plan according to their suggestion (Appendix J).   Before Cycle Two started, the five teachers and I had a discussion about the lesson plan and teaching method. It was agreed that I introduced language learning strategies to students before the pronunciation session.

5.3   Action and observation

5.3.1   Stages of pronunciation training, direct and indirect LLS and dictionary usage

As in the first cycle, there were three stages of training, of ten hours each. We started with segmental aspects, with the minor change that vowel sounds were taught first and consonant sounds in the second stage (in the first cycle, we began with consonants and then vowel sounds), including dictionary usage. In stage three, the suprasegmental aspects, rhythm, stress and intonation were taught.

Stage one: Segmental aspects of vowel sounds

The first week of the class began with the study of vowel sounds, dictionary usage, activities and practice. It took five days, two hours a day.

Week one: Day one

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I spent the first hour introducing the LLS to all students in one room before they were separated into their classes for pronunciation training. Students were audio taped reading the diagnostic passage (Appendix G) and reading a short speech in front of the class. The short speech was distributed to students in class so they saw it for the first time and read it without any preparation. The teachers explained the self-analysis questions (Appendix D) to the students to ensure understanding before they were asked what problems they noticed in each other's speech and why some people were more difficult to understand than others. For example, which vowels and/or consonants did they find difficult? Did they omit some sounds that they should not, or add sounds that do not belong? Did they pronounce consonants at the ends of words or omit some of them? Could they pronounce some sounds perfectly in one position in a syllable but not in another? All of the questions were asked to raise their awareness of the importance of pronunciation training. After that they filled in the questionnaire for self evaluation before learning. Teachers noted down the answers of the questions that the students discussed. After the discussion, teachers summarised the problems that arose from the discussions. Students noticed the mistakes they had made in class and agreed that they had not recognised them before. Furthermore no one had taught them how to correct those mistakes if they made them.

The teachers and I noted down sounds that students could not pronounce to compare with the post-test at the end of the session. Data from tape recordings of the pre-test and post-test were transcribed to show the improvement in the problem sounds of participants. I discussed the data with the teachers to reach agreement. English sounds which are considered problem sounds for Thai students were divided into three categories (Jotikasthira, 1999) and I used those as references to analyse the improvement of each learner.

The data from the tape recording of problem sounds to Thai students was shown in Figures 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3. The figures show the number of learners who mispronounced sounds in each category transcribed from the

pre-test records. Details of each student who mispronounced sounds are presented in Appendix K. The data were compared with the post-test in Figures 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 respectively.

Figure 5.1:   Cycle Two: Pre-test - students' problem sounds in category one (sounds that do not occur in Thai).
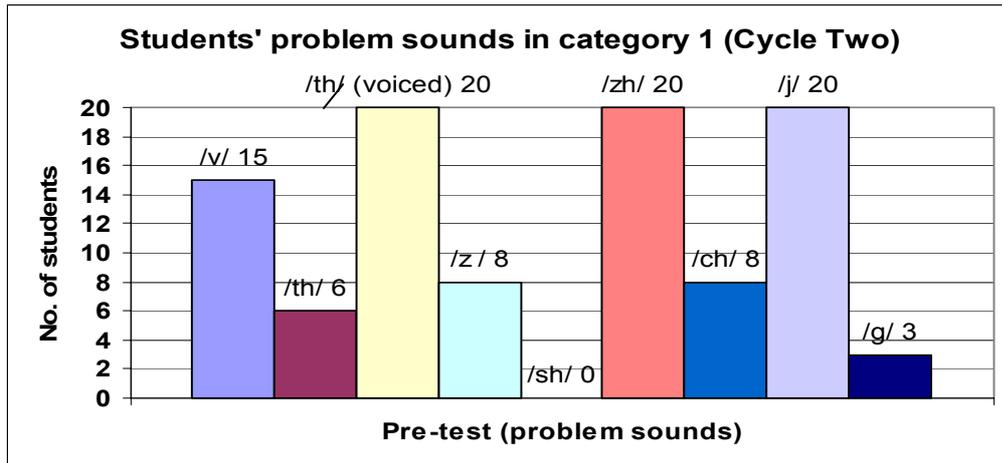
Figure 5.1 shows that there were three sounds that all students mispronounced. They were /th/ voiced, /zh/ and /j/. No one had difficulty with /sh/. Fifteen students could not pronounce /v/. Eight students mispronounced /z/ and /ch/, six mispronounced /th/ and three mispronounced /g/.

Figure 5.2:   Cycle Two: Pre-test students' problem sounds in category 2

(sounds that do not occur in final position).
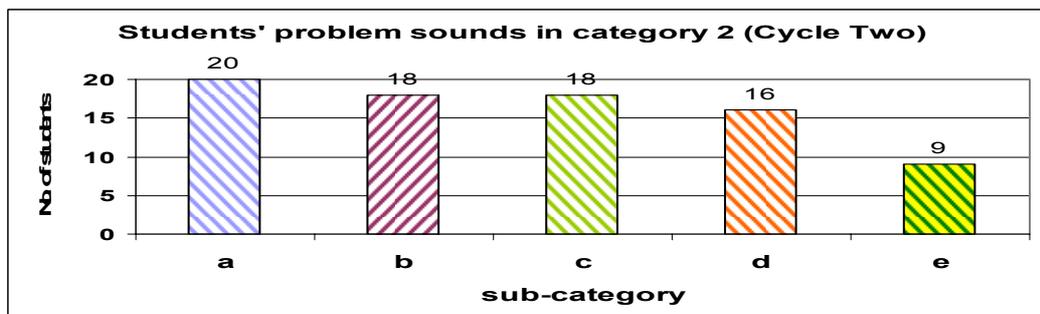
Figure 5.2 shows that all students could not pronounce sounds in sub-category a. Eighteen students could not pronounce sounds in category b and c, sixteen and nine students mispronounced sub-category d and e respectively. (a= /l/ substituted by /n/, b= /f/ substituted by unreleased /β/, c= /s/ substituted by unreleased /δ/, d= /s/ may be omitted when occurs after diphthongs /ai/ e.g. nice, /au/ e.g. house, /Oi/ e.g. rejoice, e= /π /, /β/, /t/, /δ /, and /k/ are pronounced as unreleased instead of released sounds.)

Figure 5.3: **Cycle Two: Pre-test - students' problem sounds in category 3 (sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents).**
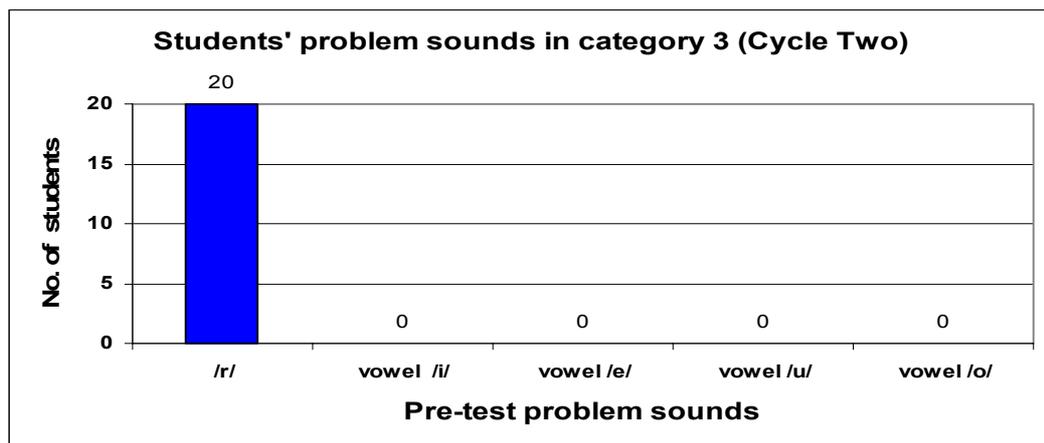
From Figure 5.3, it was reported that all students did not know how to pronounce /r/ correctly but they did not have a problem with vowel sounds in category 3.

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<u>Week one: Day two</u>

This was spent learning about the vowels diagram and how to pronounce correct English vowels compared to Thai vowels. Participants had to differentiate the places for the articulation of vowel sounds, high-mid-low and front-central-back (see Chapter 3, Figures 3.8, 3.9).

<u>Week one: Day three</u>

This covered vowel sounds and mouth shape practice. The mouth shape to support the correct pronunciation of words was introduced and practised from the tape (see Chapter 3, Figure 3.10).

<u>Week one: Days four and five</u>

Students had to look up words in the dictionary in pairs and remember the phonetic symbols of vowel sounds. They listened to a tape of a native speaker's sample sounds and practised.

Students' responses in week one

The responses of students from their reflective reports identified the following issues.

<u>Recognition of importance of mouth shape practice</u>

Students enjoyed mouth shape practice. They realised that mouth shape was important and that practice was useful to pronounce correct sounds.

Mouth shape practice is fun. It helps pronounce clear sounds. (Student 1-reflective report week one)

<u>Recognition of importance of segmentals</u>

Apart from mouth shape practice, students reported on the importance of sound symbols.

Symbols of sounds can help to pronounce and read words. (Student 4-reflective report week one)

<u>Understanding of phonetic symbols, LLS and the dictionary</u>

In pronunciation training, phonetic symbols that represent English sounds were taught. The first step was to understand those symbols and try to pronounce them correctly. With the mixing of those sounds learners then read words and pronounced them phonetically correctly. The dictionary enabled them to self-correct each word pronounced. Students reported they understood phonetic symbols and dictionary usage was easy and important to their understanding.

Using the English dictionary is fun and easy to differentiate the sounds (Student 1-reflective report week one).

Dictionary usage was not only helpful for understanding phonetic symbols but also reading words.

The dictionary was helpful and it is an easy way to read words (Student 5-reflective report week one).

Besides the understanding of phonetic symbols, students showed the use of LLS and the dictionary and they must remember symbols to be able to read words from the dictionary. They used to look up words for the meaning but they knew it helped to read words from the training. Students added that the English dictionary supported their understanding of phonetic symbols. They reported that though it was new to them, they agreed that it helped.

I've never used the English dictionary before and it helps (Student 3-reflective report week one).

It is new things that help. It is fun though it was hard and we must remember symbols to help to read words (Student 2-reflective report week one).

I can read more words than before when I read from the symbols in the dictionary (Student 9-reflective report week one).

They showed their interest in using the dictionary. It was new to them and no one taught them before

No one taught before. I am interested in using dictionary for pronunciation reference (Student 11- reflective report week one).

The dictionary is very useful to read correct words rather than the meaning (Student 17- reflective report week one).

Stage two: Segmental aspects of consonant sounds

The second week was the week of consonant sounds. Both consonant and vowel symbols and how to pronounce them were integrated and practised.

Week two: Day one

I started the class introducing the phonetic alphabet. I pointed out the differences between spelling and pronunciation, and encouraged them to use the dictionary as a reference. The general principles of how consonants are formed, how they are placed and the manner of articulation and especially voicing were gone over (see Chapter 3, Figures 3.6 and 3.7). Most learners produced the consonant sounds correctly after they had been taught how.

Week two: Day two

Activities conducted included the direct LLS and practice of sounds (Direct LLS: Memory, Cognitive and Compensate strategies) (see Appendix A for details of direct LLS).

Week two: Days three, four and five

These were devoted to summarising, practising and looking up words in the dictionary. At this stage, students were assigned to prepare a speech to be given at the end of the course in week 3. To control the correctness of the speech, they were allowed to copy from books or the internet. They had to prepare for the accuracy of the speech by looking up words in the dictionary, transcribing into phonetic symbols the words that they cannot pronounce correctly, and practise. The advantages of a speech are that it can be practised in advance, everyone gets a chance to speak, and it can be easily tape-recorded for feedback and self-evaluation (Kriedler, 1989). Teachers listened to the students' recording and evaluated.

Students' responses in week two

The responses of the students from their reflective reports raised a number of issues.

Understanding of phonetic symbols and the dictionary

In the first week, students reported on phonetic symbols and the dictionary and they reconfirmed in week two that they understood the phonetic symbols and the dictionary usage. It helped them read words and it was easy.

I can read words that I could never read before from the dictionary (Student 10- reflective report week two).

Phonetic symbols are easier than I thought (Student 16- reflective report week two).

They had previously used the dictionary only to find the meaning.

The dictionary can help reading words correctly besides giving meaning of words (Student 18-reflective report week two).

Understanding LLS and dictionary

Students also reported their understanding of the LLS and dictionary in week 2. They realised that they had to remember all consonant and vowel symbols in order to pronounce correct words and to be like native speakers.

I had to remember all symbols though it is hard because it is the best way to pronounce words (Student 2-reflective report week two).

Students knew that the correctness of consonant and vowel sounds was the way to have a native-like accent. But they had to remember all symbols.

Correct vowel and consonant sounds made me more like native speaker (Student 10-reflective report week two).

For better speaking, I must remember consonant and vowel sounds (Student 15-reflective report week two).

Firstly I have to remember all symbols. Then I can read words from the   dictionary (Student 16-reflective report week two).

Students reported they knew how to read words correctly by mixing consonant and vowel sounds even the words they could not read before. It was easy.

I had difficulty reading words but now I know how to read it. I can do it correctly (Student 12-reflective report week two).

Mixing all sounds together made them easy to read all words (Student 14-reflective report week two).

Stage three: Suprasegmental aspects: Stress, Rhythm and Intonation.

The last week of the training was at the suprasegmental level, a study of sentence stress, rhythm and intonation with activities and practice. At the end of the week, learners read the same passage from the pre-test and were tape recorded. Learners also gave a speech presentation to check their understanding of phonetic symbols and the dictionary usage.

Students' responses in week three

Responses of students from reflective reports were as follows:

Students showed appreciation to teachers and pronunciation training

Students showed they admired teachers and the pronunciation training. Furthermore, they felt that it was easy.

I appreciate that I have a chance to learn about pronunciation. I feel that it is easy to speak. I want to thank teacher for this (Student 8-reflective report week three).

Limits to student understanding

In spite of the progress made, some students reported they still had limited reading ability.

I do not believe I can read all words in the dictionary (Student 11-reflective report week three).

Students felt confident and eager to learn

Nevertheless, students' reports showed that they were happy undertaking the work and that they had confidence that practice would give improved results.

Though it was hard, I am happy to know it. I feel confident that by practising more, I will do it better (Student 1-reflective report week three).

They became more confident in their ability to improve pronunciation and were eager for more practice.

I feel confident to pronounce words and would like to have more in classroom (Student 8-reflective report week three).

Confidence was related to the enjoyment of successful learning.

I like it and feel confident (Student 17-reflective report week three).

Students gained confidence from their success and in turn were motivated to practise and achieve more.

<u>The importance of segmental and suprasegmental aspects</u>

Students realised that both segmental and suprasegmental aspects were important and helpful to their pronunciation and native-like accent.

Correct vowel, consonant sounds and word stress made it more like native speaker (Student 7-reflective report week three).

Pitch and rhythm were like music and it was helpful (Student 8-reflective report week three).

Stress and Intonation make me more like native speaker (Student 13-reflective report week three).

I have fun with intonation (Student 19-reflective report week three).

In conclusion, students recognised the importance of the training from the first week and reported that it was new to them and that no one had taught them before. They were certain and confident that the method of training helped improve their intelligible speaking. They agreed that dictionary usage was useful and fun. They had inspiration and suggested to having more practice in the classroom.

It was confirmed by the reports that to be able to self-monitor, learners must be aware of the phonological features and patterns underlying the second language (Morley, 1994). They also reflected on their improvement and confidence.

5.4 Reflection on students' improvement in Cycle Two

I gathered data from observation, group discussion, field notes and reflective reports to show the outcomes of the training, grouped and coded them before putting them in Table 5.1 (Schawab, 1969) to ensure that all aspects were covered and any educational situation can be understood in terms of the interactions between teachers, students, subject matters, and milieu.

Table 5.1 presents coding using numbers from 1 to 6 and the relationships of the interactions between researcher, peer, teachers, pronunciation training, direct and indirect LLS and the dictionary usage. The data from the reports were categorised and grouped according to the identified codes. Below are descriptions of coding.

Code 1: Indicates improvement

Code 2: Shows comfortable intelligibility in speaking

Code 3: Shows comfortable intelligibility in listening

Code 4: These aspects should be included in classroom teaching

Code 5: New or fun activity, what I need

Code 6: Makes me feel confident

Table 5.1: Coding of data of research questions

	(A) Teacher 1-5						(B) Students (1-20)						(C) Pronunciation training& direct LLS						(D) Dictionary usage					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6

(1) Teachers (peer)																								
(2) Students (1-20)																								
Researcher's observation																								
(3) Direct LLS																								
(4) Indirect LLS																								

(Schwab, 1969)

The analysis of outcomes from reports, observations and group discussion were then coded alphabetically and marked in the table of each coding concerned. The codes were y, r and p. Code y = yes, Code r = need revision, Code p = more practice will improve. The table was read from the left column (1), (2), (3) and (4) to show the relationships and the interactions between columns (A), (B), (C) and (D) according to the Code y, r and p respectively.

To make it more precise, the data of students one to twenty were identified in groups of four students, totalling five groups for five teachers. The categorised numbers 1-6 were highlighted, presented and analysed in sections. The section 5.4.1 presents Code 1 (Table 5.2), section 5.4.2 presents Code 2 and 3 (Table 5.3) and section 5.4.3 presents Code 4, 5 and 6 (Table 5.6) to give clear references.

5.4.1 The impact of the pronunciation training on the students' improvement

This section shows the improvement of students on communicative competence and problem sounds after being trained.

The improvement of students' communicative competence

Table 5.2 shows the data reported from teachers, students and observers.

Table 5.2: The pronunciation training and the students' communicative competence improvement

y = yes, r = need revision, p = more practice will improve

	(A) teachers T1-5						(B) students S1-20						(C) pronunciation training& direct LLS						(D) dictionary usage					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
(1) Teachers as peers	y						y						Y						y					
(2) Students	y						y						p						y					
Researcher's observation																								
(3) Direct LLS	y						y						-						y					
(4) Indirect LLS	y						p						y						y					

Note: Code 1: Indicates improvement

Teachers and observers reported that students improved their communicative competence after they had been trained. There was an implication from the students that it would be better and their competence would be much improved if they had practised more in the training session. All reported that dictionary usage was useful and was part of their improvement. It was also reported that direct LLS (Memory strategies, Cognitive LLS and Compensation strategies) and learning how to use the dictionary was very supportive to pronunciation improvement.

The researcher observed that students showed most improvement when they had remembered all phonetic symbols and understood how to use the dictionary. It helped them pronounce English words correctly. In the classroom, students showed their participation (indirect LLS) and helped, corrected each other, and practised together for their improvement though it was evident that they needed more practice.

The improvement of students' problem sounds

I transcribed sounds from tape recordings of each student and placed those sounds in three categories. I analysed the improvement into two main categories. They were 'had improved' (IP) or 'need practice' (P). The 'had improved' category was allocated to those sounds pronounced correctly every time in the reading. The 'need practice' indicated that they sometimes pronounced them incorrectly.

The sounds that some students did not improve and needed practise in category 1 were /th, th, z, zh, j, γ/. In category 2 they were sub-category a (/l/ substituted by /n/), sub-category c (/s/ substituted by unreleased /δ/) and sub-category b (/f/ substituted by unreleased /β/) respectively. In category 3 some students needed further practice in /r/ sounds. S7, S9 and S17 needed practice after further training. See Appendix L for details of students' improvement.

Figure 5.4: **Cycle Two: A comparison of pre-test and post-test of students' pronunciation in category 1**
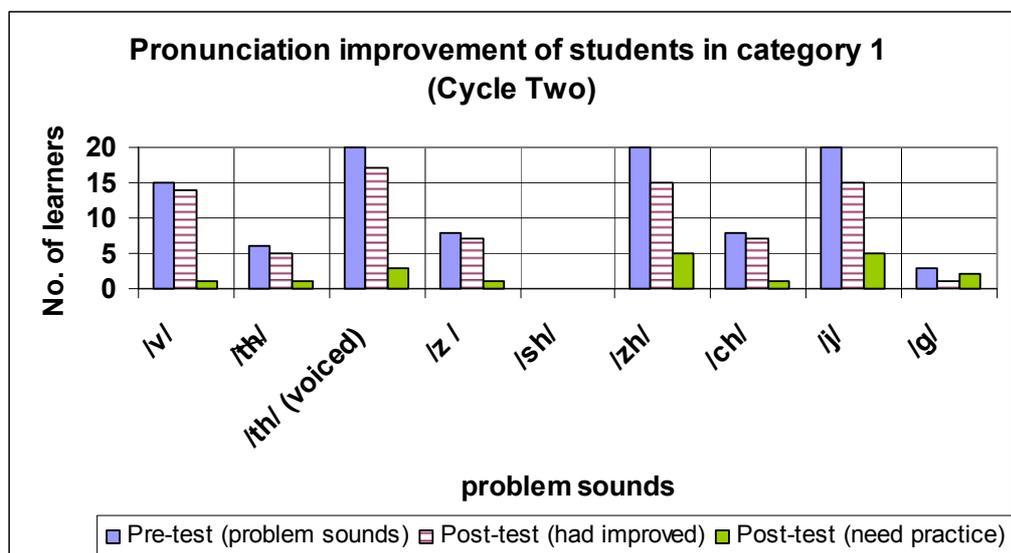
Figure 5.4 compared students' pronunciation before and after the training. Students showed improvement in all sounds though some needed further practice. Five students still needed practice on /zh/ and /j/ but many students had improved some other sounds (see Appendix L).

Figure 5.5: **Cycle Two: A comparison of pre-test and post-test of students' pronunciation in category 2**

Pronunciation improvement of students in category 2 (Cycle Two)

■ Pre-test (problem sounds) ⊟ Post-test (had improved)
■ Post-test (need practice)
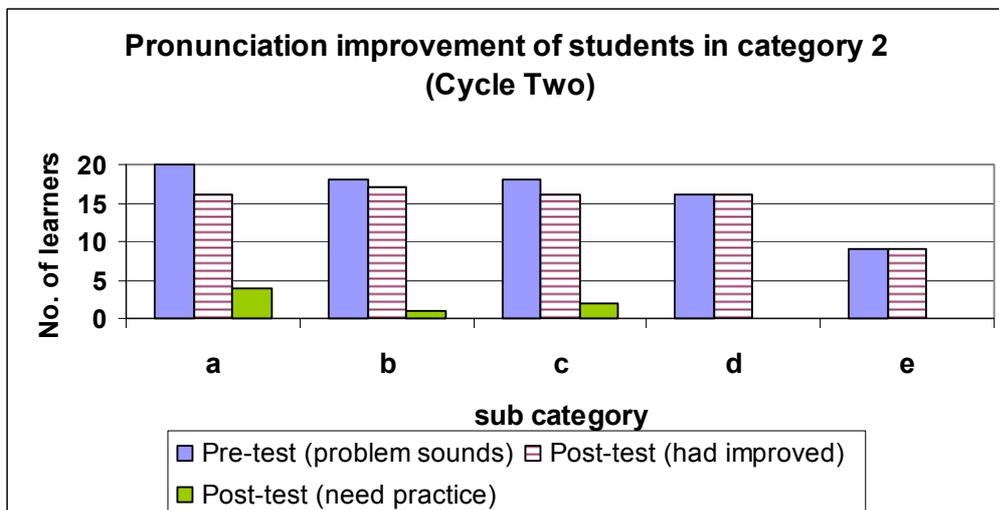
Almost all students improved sounds in category 2 as follows. Sixteen students improved sounds in subcategory a from twenty while four needed practice, seventeen students improved sounds in subcategory b from eighteen while one needed practice, sixteen students improved sounds in subcategory c from eighteen while two needed practice and all students improved sounds in category d and e.

Figure 5.6: **Cycle Two: A comparison of pre-test and post-test of students' pronunciation in category 3**

Pronunciation improvement of students in category 3 (Cycle Two)

■ Pre-test (problem sounds) ⊟ Post-test (had improved) ■ Post-test (need practice)
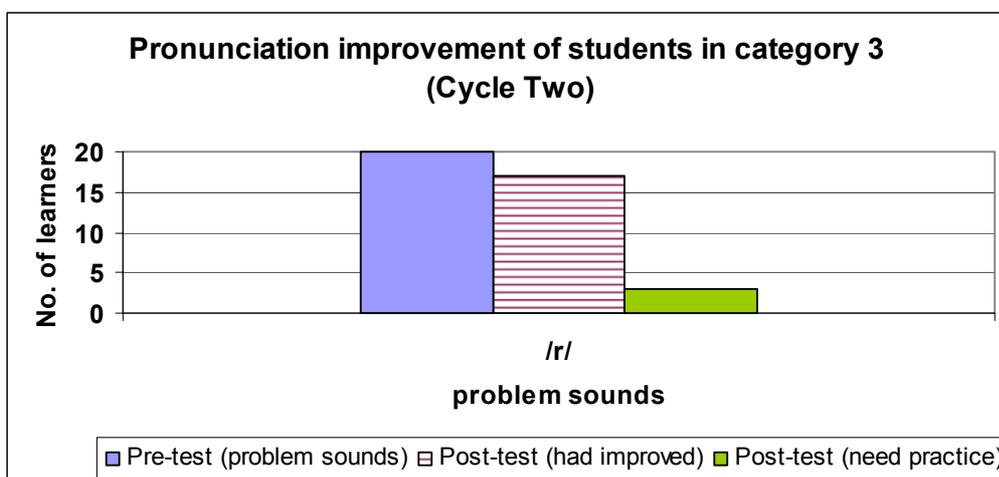
Seventeen students improved /r/ pronunciation while three students needed practice.

5.4.2 The language learning strategies and the improvement of students' communicative competence

From observation, group discussion and critical friends, it was evident that students were attentive to the new knowledge on pronunciation learning. Through activities, they showed that they understand what the others said to them. The speakers were happy that the listeners understood what they said. The students remarked that they needed more practice through pronunciation training of segmental and suprasegmental aspects with direct and indirect LLS to help them improve their speaking and listening at the level of comfortable intelligibility. Dictionary usage was one factor in their improvement.

Table 5.3: The extent of language learning strategies' contribution to the improvement of students' communicative competence.

y = yes, r = revision, p = more practice will improve

	(A) teachers T1-5						(B) students S1-20						(C) Pronunciation training& direct LLS						(D) Dictionary usage					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
(1) Teachers as peers		y	y					y	y					-	-					y	y			
(2) Students		y	y					y	y					-	-					y	y			
Researcher's observation																								
(3) Direct LLS		y	y					y	y					-	-					y	y			
(4) Indirect LLS		p	p					p	p					y	y					y	y			

Note: Code 2: Shows comfortable intelligibility in speaking

Code 3: Shows comfortable intelligibility in listening

The use of indirect LLS of the learners at each stage in Cycle Two.

To focus on the use of learners' indirect LLS, Figure 5.7 shows a comparison of the use of LLS by groups of the students in stage one, stage two and stage three. The frequency of use of LLS by each group from group 1 to 5 is shown. The figure indicates that the uses of LLS were varied at each stage. In stage one and two, students used all categories of indirect LLS to help their learning. Four groups of students used metacognitive strategies and affective LLS while three of them used social strategies. All groups reported they used metacognitive strategies in stage two, three in affective LLS and only one in social strategies. In stage three, four groups used metacognitive strategies but all students reported using affective LLS. The students did not report the use of social strategies in stage three.

Figure 5.7   The use of LLS by groups of students in Cycle Two
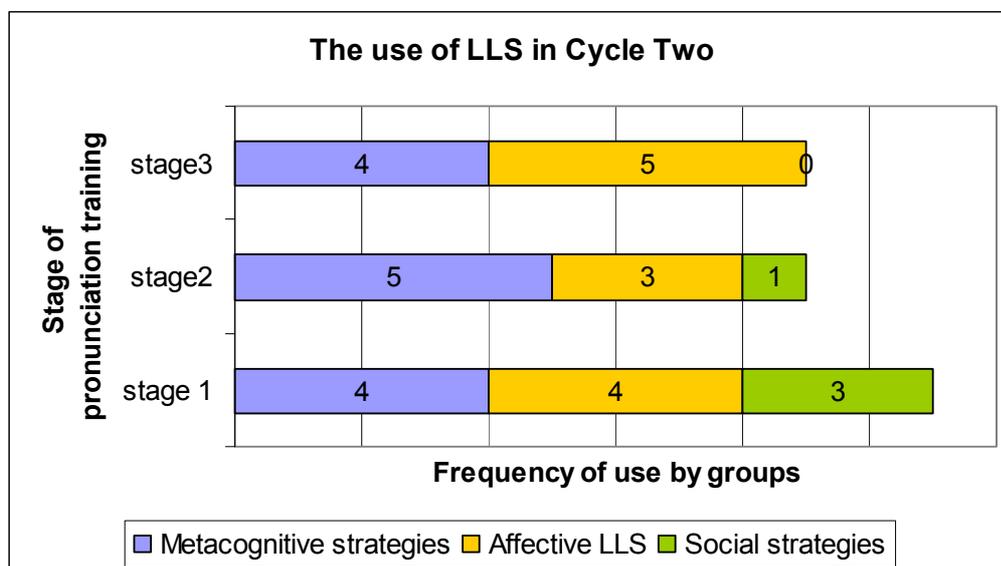
From the reflective reports, I coded the data reported on indirect LLS in group and presented them using codes for each group. TG1 = students 1-4 in Teacher 1 class, TG2 = students 5-8, TG3 = students 9-12, TG4 = students 13-16, and TG5 = students 17-20 in Teacher 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively.

Table 5.4.1 shows that students used all strategies in stage one. The uses were varied. Hsiao (2004) stated that students' choice of strategy used depends on their understanding of their learning processes and on which strategies have been successful in the past. From the table four groups used metacognitive strategies except TG2 and four groups used affective LLS except TG3. TG1 and TG4 showed no social strategies in stage one. Students may need instruction in metacognitive strategies and affective LLS prior to social strategies for their achievement.

Table 5.4.1:   Cycle Two: The use of indirect LLS in stage one: 10 hours

metacognitive strategies = M, affective LLS = A, social strategies = S

Stage 1	M	A	S
TG1 (M) will attend all sessions and practise all sounds. (A) Happy to be in class.	✓	✓	
TG2 (A) Dictionary practice is fun. (S) Friends are helpful.		✓	✓
TG3 (M) Must prepare for next step. (S) discuss with friends is good for me.	✓		✓
TG4 (M) Must be attentive. (M) Must remember symbols for next step. (A) This is good	✓	✓	
TG5 (M) Should study hard. (A) This is great. (S) Like to share with others.	✓	✓	✓

In stage two, all students used metacognitive strategies. Nearly all students used affective LLS except TG3 and only one group, TG4, reported they used social strategies.

Table 5.4.2:   Cycle Two: The use of indirect LLS in stage two: 10 hours

metacognitive strategies = M, affective LLS = A, social strategies = S

Stage 2	M	A	S
TG1 (M) Consonant should be with vowel sounds. (A) Vowel sounds are easier.	✓	✓	

	M	A	S
TG2 (M) Practice is the best way to remember all. (A) It is the way to improve it and I like it.	✓	✓	
TG3 (M) Must practise more on consonant sounds	✓		
TG4 (M) Improvement is target. (A) I am happy I can do that.(S) Better do it with friends.	✓	✓	✓
TG5 (M) Should learn more. Practise and see what improve.	✓		

There were no reports on social strategies in stage three. The affective LLS were used by all students. There was no report on metacognitive strategies from TG2.

Table 5.4.3:   Cycle Two: The use of indirect LLS in stage three: 10 hours

metacognitive strategies = M, affective LLS = A, social strategies = S

Stage 3	M	A	S
TG1 (M) but must practise. (A) No more Thai accent. (A) Reading with fun.	✓	✓	
TG2 Wow! (A) He understands me, I understand him.		✓	
TG3 (M) Good guideline (A) Feel native-like speaker.	✓	✓	
TG4 (M) Now have good accent. (A) Fun to learn all of these. Feel happy to know.	✓	✓	
TG5 (M)(A) Have done it, though not fluent but understand and be understood.	✓	✓	

Metacognitive strategies played an important role in stage two in that all groups reported they used them while affective strategies were reported by all groups in stage three. Regarding instruction needed, it was evident that only TG4 used social strategies in stage two (Table 5.4.2) compared to stage three where no social strategies were used (Table 5.4.3).

According to Stevick (1998), teachers should know that stage one is the so called 'womblike security stage'. Students feel secure in their comfort zone until they develop to stage two, 'the kicking stage'. As students gain knowledge and some confidence, they begin to take small risks and work their way into the outside world. TG 4 reported the use of social strategies in stage one of pronunciation training. Stage three of pronunciation training compares to Stevick's stages three, four and five when students feel more secure and continue to have an understanding attitude and finally develop to perfect the new skill. At this stage, social strategies were not needed. Their choice of strategy used depends on their understanding of their learning processes and on which strategies have been successful in the past (Hsiao, 2004). At last when students achieved their goal, they reported on affective strategies. It may be useful for language teachers to prioritise and carefully design their LLS instruction on the use of learners' LLS mentioned.

Metacognitive strategies

The pronunciation learning strategies reported in metacognitive strategies in Cycle Two are 'Setting goals and objectives', 'Planning and arranging for a language task' and 'Self directing and self evaluating on improvement'. Details are as follows.

Setting goals and objectives

In learning pronunciation, students knew how to learn and they planned that they must practise consonant sounds to improve their pronunciation (TG3 reflective report- week 2) and planned and motivated themselves by setting the target of improvement (TG4 reflective report- week two).

Planning and arranging for a language task

Students realised the importance of segmental aspects that they must remember the phonetic symbols before continuing the next session.

I must remember symbols for next step (TG4 reflective report- week one).

Students planned to attend all sessions of training and practise all sounds for their achievement as well as preparing themselves for the next step attentively.

I must prepare myself ready for the next step (TG3 reflective report- week one).

Students realised that they must remember and practise all sounds because consonant and vowel sounds must be together. They also planned to practise consonant sounds more. Improvement was their target.

Consonants should be with vowel sounds. I have to remember all of them (TG1 reflective report- week two).

Students knew that practising was the way to achieve their goal.

The best way to remember all we had learned is to practise (TG2 reflective report- week two).

I must practise well (TG1 reflective report- week three).

Self directing and self evaluating on improvement

Students directed themselves in pronunciation learning, in order to achieve their goal of improvement and had to be attentive to all sessions and practise hard.

I will attend all sessions and practise all sounds (TG1 reflective report- week one).

I must be attentive because it is good (TG4 reflective report- week one).

I should study hard (TG5 reflective report- week one).

Students who evaluated their pronunciation have improved through practise.

I should learn more and practise. My pronunciation is improved (TG5   reflective report- week two).

Now I have good accent (TG 4 reflective report- week three).

I have done it though it is not fluent (TG5 reflective report- week three).

Students evaluated the pronunciation training as good and it supported their improvement. They reported their pronunciation had been improved through the training though it was not fluent.

It is a good guideline for improvement (TG3 reflective report- week three).

Affective LLS

The pronunciation learning strategies reported in affective LLS in Cycle Two are 'Having a positive attitude to the training and learning' and 'Fulfilling their expectations'. Details are as follows.

<u>Having a positive attitude to the training and learning</u>

Students felt happy to participate in the pronunciation training. This feeling motivated them to learn and practise.

I am happy to be in class (TG1 reflective report- week one).

Students reported that vowel sounds were easier than consonant sounds. They realised that to practise was the way to improve their pronunciation and they were very happy they could do it.

Vowel sounds are easier (TG1 reflective report- week two).

Practice is the way to improve pronunciation and I like it (TG2 reflective report- week two).

Students enjoyed the activities and showed their happiness to learn. Learning happily motivated and helped them develop their ability to learn and gain knowledge.

This is great. I like it and enjoy the activities (TG5 reflective report- week one).

Students enjoyed the dictionary practice. Their affection motivated them to learn and practise. Moreover when they could do it, they reported they were very happy.

Dictionary practice is fun (TG2 reflective report- week one).

Students realised that the pronunciation helped them with their Thai accent. They showed that they enjoyed reading and had fun.

It is fun to learn all of these. I feel happy to learn (TG4 reflective report- week three).

I am happy that I can do it (TG4 reflective report- week two).

Fulfilling their expectations

Students were happy and excited that their pronunciation had been intelligibly improved.

I am so excited that I understand when listening to others and being understood when speaking (TG2 reflective report- week three).

I have no more Thai accent, I enjoy reading. It is fun (TG1 reflective report- week three).

I am a native-like speaker (TG3 reflective report- week three).

I understand what others say and I am understood by them (TG5 reflective report- week three).

Social strategies

The pronunciation learning strategies reported in social strategies in Cycle Two are 'Co-operating with others'. Details are as follows.

Co-operating with others

Students showed their appreciation to practise, discuss and share their knowledge with friends. They reported the helpfulness of discussing, sharing and working with friends (TG 2, 3, 5 reflective report- week one; TG 4 week two).

5.4.3   Students' confidence and pronunciation training.

From the reports, the students, teachers and peers saw that the training was fun and should be included in the classroom. Teachers and peers concluded that students enjoyed leaning how to pronounce each sound, word and intonation. Concerning confidence, students reported that they would be more confident if they had practised more. But teachers and peers agreed that students gained more confidence to speak than before the session.

Table 5.5:   Impact of the pronunciation training on the students' confidence

y = yes, r = need revision, p = more practice will improve

	(A) teachers T1-5	(B) students S1-20	(C) pronunciation training& direct LLS	(D) Dictionary usage

	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
(1) teachers as peers				-	-	y				-	-	y				y	y	y				y	y	y
(2) students				-	-	y				y	-	y				y	y	p				y	y	y
Researcher's observation																								
(3) direct LLS				y	-	y				y	y	y				-	-	-				y	-	y
(4) indirect LLS				y	y	y				y	y	p				y	-	y				y	-	y

Note: Code 4: These aspects should be included in classroom teaching

Code 5: New or fun activity, what I need

Code 6: Makes me feel confident

Students showed improvement in their speaking competence after they had been trained how to pronounce English sounds using segmental and suprasegmental aspects as well as the direct LLS. The dictionary usage helped them practise and check whether their pronunciation was correct. Students needed more practice on indirect LLS in the training course.

Ability to self correct

Teachers observed that students had ability to self-correct by using the dictionary as reference to check whether their pronunciation was correct. Furthermore they checked each other when working together.

> When practising consonant and vowel sounds, my students use the dictionary as a reference to correct themselves (Group discussion week two).

> My students correct themselves when they practise in pairs
> (Group discussion week three).

The researcher's and teachers' observations indicated that students enjoyed activities and practice. Some showed their confidence increased and they helped others in class. We were certain that with regular practice, all students would improve their performance and feel confident. As we observed with the teachers in Cycle One, speakers need to overcome a

nervous cycle to feel confident to speak, feel relaxed, speak slowly and clearly so that a listener will understand (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992). In this case Thanasoulas (2002) claimed that the motivation of being understood increased students' self-confidence and created autonomy.

<u>Confident to speak after the training</u>

From the group discussion, participants explained that they were shy to speak with English native-speakers. They gained more confidence to speak to them after the training.

> I used to run away from Farang (foreigners), but now I walk to them and ask what I can do for them. My mother is proud of me (Group discussion week three).

Students reported that they felt sad before this training that they could not read words in class. They were confident when they had been trained and they could read now.

> I felt depressed for I could not read in class. Now I am more confident (Group discussion week three).

As observed by teachers, the pronunciation training and LLS helped improve students' pronunciation and confidence increase. Students knew how to learn and concentrated on more self-practice and practice with friends. Most of the problem sounds were improved though practice was needed on some sounds.

5.5 Indirect learning strategies: pronunciation learning strategies and tactics used by students

Oxford (1990) and Peterson (2000) categorised the existing list of documented pronunciation learning strategies into a useful breakdown of

strategies. They are shown in Table 5.5.1, 5.5.2 and 5.5.3 and compared to the findings from this study. The discussion is limited to the indirect LLS since the direct LLS in this study have been taught in the training and included in the teaching materials. Eleven pronunciation learning strategies emerged out of the overall list of thirty two tactics (the use of strategies): finding out about target language pronunciation, setting goals and objectives, planning for a language task, self evaluating and self directed, ability to evaluate the training, using humour to lower anxiety, controlling feelings and motivating, having positive attitude on the training and learning, fulfilling one's expectation, cooperating with peers, and asking for help. For each broad strategy, the table also shows all of the specific tactics that pertain to it; the tactics of the students appear first followed by tactics from Oxford's (1990) and Peterson's (2000). Eight strategies (four were new) and twenty tactics (eighteen were new) were used in this study by students. The new strategies and tactics were highlighted. These findings are directly quoted from students' reflective reports and are listed below according to which the students pertain. A comparison of the use of teachers and students will also be discussed in Section 5.7.

Pronunciation learning strategies that students used in metacognitive strategies (Table 5.6.1) were setting goals and objectives, planning for a language task, self evaluating and self directing and ability to evaluate the training. There was one strategy and eight new tactics revealed from the students' reflective reports. The students reported they used more metacognitive strategies in stage 2 (n=5), the study of vowel sounds (see Figure 5.7).

Table 5.6.1   Students' pronunciation learning strategies metacognitive Strategies and data based on Oxford (1990), Peterson (2000)

Indirect LLS Group: Metacognitive Strategies

Pronunciation	The use (tactics) reported

Learning Strategies	Students'	Oxford's	Peterson's
Finding out about target language pronunciation	N/A	• acquiring a general knowledge of phonetics • reading reference materials about the rules	N/A
Setting goals and objectives	• targeting on improvement • focusing on consonant sounds.	• deciding to focus one's listening on particular sounds.	• deciding to focus one's learning on particular sounds. • deciding to memorise the sounds (or the alphabet) right away.
Planning for a language task	• preparing oneself ready for the next step • practising well so can remember all sounds • planning to remember all consonant and vowel sounds and symbols	N/A	• preparing for an oral presentation by writing difficult-to-pronounce words very large in one's notes.

Indirect LLS Group: Metacognitive Strategies (con't)

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported		
	Students'	Oxford's	Peterson's
Self evaluating	• being more attentive to all classes for improvement because it is good • realising that one's pronunciation is improved and accent is good so should study hard, learn more and practise	N/A	• recording oneself to listen to one's pronunciation.
Ability to evaluate the training	• realising that the training is a good guideline for improvement so should be attentive	N/A	N/A

The tactics used in affective LLS found from the study (Table 5.6.2) were having a positive attitude on the training and learning, and fulfilling their expectations. The ten tactics mentioned in the table have extended Oxford's and Peterson's work. As stated in Figure 5.7, all students reported they used more affective LLS in stage 3 (n=5), a study of rhythm, intonation etc. and less used it in stage 2 (n=3), a study of vowel sounds. It was apparent that it took time for the students to enjoy the class.

Table 5.6.2   Students' pronunciation learning strategies affective LLS and data based on Oxford (1990), Peterson (2000)

Indirect LLS Group: Affective Learning Strategies

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported		
	Students'	Oxford's	Peterson's
Using humour to lower anxiety	N/A	• having a sense of humour about mispronunciations.	N/A
Having positive attitude on the training and learning	• feeling happy to join the class • appreciating to practise for improvement • judging vowel sounds are more easier • feeling of fun and happy to learn • feeling happy and enjoy activities • enjoy reading with correct pronunciation and no more Thai accent	N/A	N/A

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	• feeling to have ability to do it from the training • showing appreciation on dictionary practice		
Fulfilling one's expectations	• being happy about being native-like speaker • being happy and excited to understand and be understood	**N/A**	**N/A**

The strategy that students used in social strategies (Table 5.5.3) was cooperating with peers (friends). There was nothing new in this study from the previous one. From Figure 5.7, students reported they did not use social strategies in stage three of the training and used fewer in stage two (n=1) and stage 1 (n=3).

Table 5.6.3   Students' pronunciation learning strategies social

strategies and data based on Oxford (1990), Peterson (2000)

Indirect LLS Group: Social Strategies

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported		
	Students'	**Oxford's**	**Peterson's**
Cooperating with peers	• practising with someone else • feeling like to learn and share with others	**N/A**	• studying with someone else • teaching or tutoring someone else
Asking for help	**N/A**	• asking someone else to correct one's pronunciation • asking someone else to pronounce something	**N/A**

5.6 A comparison of teachers' and students' improvement and the use of language learning strategies

This section aims to compare 1) pronunciation improvement between teachers and students, and 2) the use of pronunciation learning strategies between teachers, students and Oxford's and Peterson's findings.

5.6.1 Comparison of pronunciation improvement

The tests made before and after the training showed evidence of the improvement in teachers' and students' pronunciation problem sounds in all categories (see Figure 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10). The dotted lines (Figure 5.8, 5.9) and compared bar levels (Figure 5.10) show the improvement in each category.

Figure 5.8 compares the pre-test and post-test of learners' pronunciation. It reveals that in Cycle One, there were six problem sounds out of nine in category 1 which all teachers had improved after the training.(☺ = symbol representing sounds that all have improved) however, not all students had improved all sounds in Cycle Two.

Figure 5.8   Pronunciation improvement in category 1 (Cycle One and Two)

Pronunciation improvement in category 1 (Cycle One)

Pronunciation improvement in category 1 (Cycle Two)
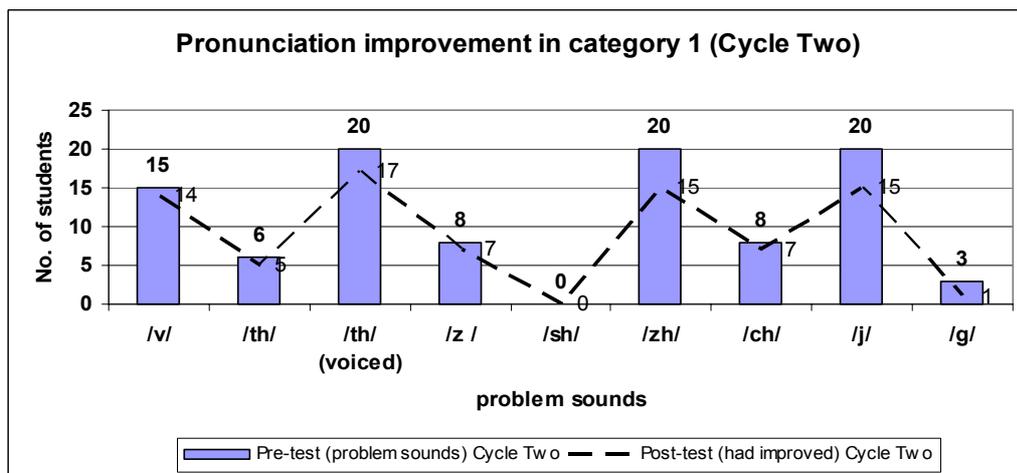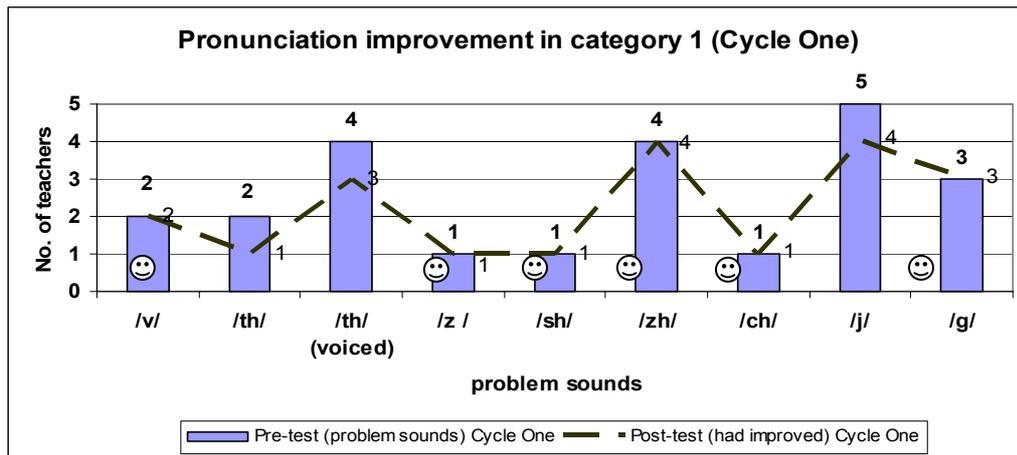
☺ = sounds that all have improved

Students could not pronounce all sounds except /sh/ sound which no one mispronounced. They could not improve all sounds that they mispronounced. Fourteen of fifteen students had improved /v/, /th/ five of six, /th/ voiced seventeen of twenty, /z/ seven of eight, /zh/ fifteen of twenty, /ch/ seven of eight, /j/ fifteen of twenty and /g/ one of three. Teachers could not pronounce all sounds but had improved after the training except /th/ which one of two teachers had improved, /th/ voiced three of four and /j/ four of five. There were six sounds (total =9) or 67% that all teachers improved: /v/, /z/, /sh/, /zh/, /ch/ and /g/.

Figure 5.9 shows five sub categories of sounds in category 2. In Cycle One, four out of five categories or 80% (categories a, b, d and e) were improved after the training. There were two teachers who could not pronounce sounds in category c and one teacher had improved. In Cycle

Two, two categories or 40% (categories d and e) were improved, in category a, sixteen of twenty students had improved, seventeen of eighteen students had improved in category b and sixteen of eighteen students in category c had improved. Categories d and e were categories that all had improved after the training.

Figure 5.9   Pronunciation improvement in category 2 (Cycle One and Two)
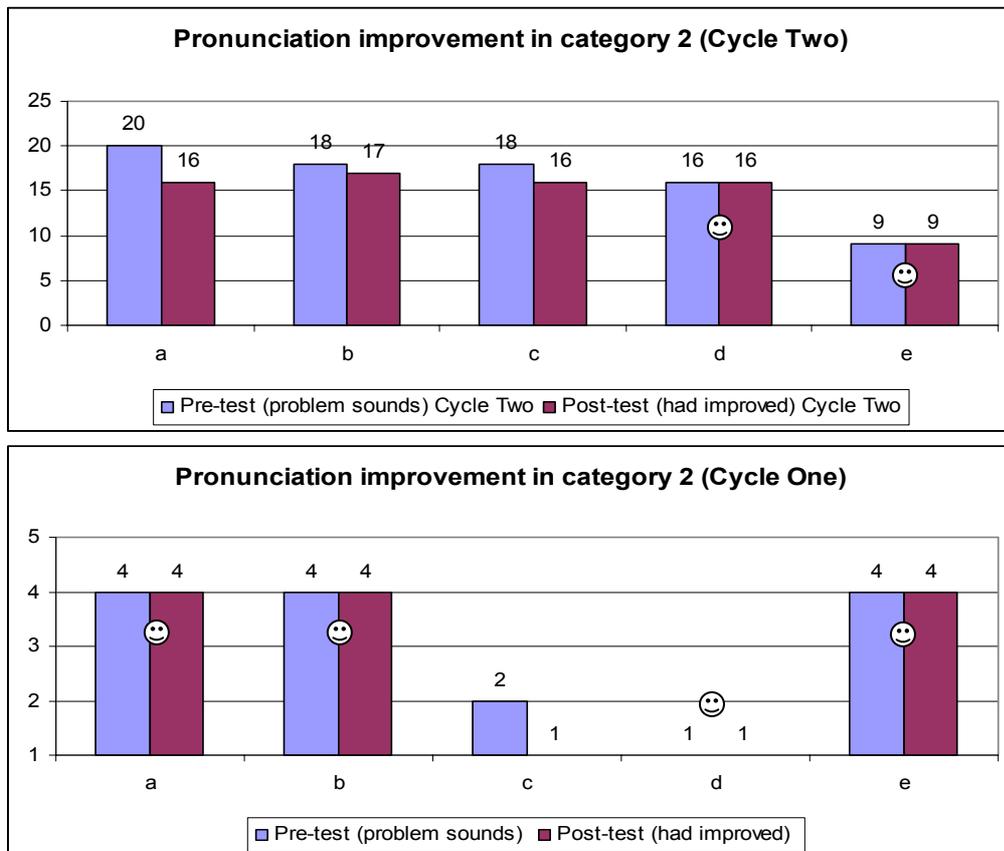
☺ = sounds that all have improved

Figure 5.10 shows that all learners could not pronounce /r/ sounds. The data revealed that 3 of 5 or 60% of teachers have been improved in Cycle One, and 17 of 20 or 85% of students in Cycle Two improved after the training.

Figure 5.10   Pronunciation improvement in category 3 (Cycle One and Two)

Pronunciation improvement in category 3
(Cycle One and Two)

- Pre-test (problem sounds) Cycle One ■ Post-test (had improved) Cycle One
- Pre-test (problem sounds) Cycle Two □ Post-test (had improved) Cycle Two
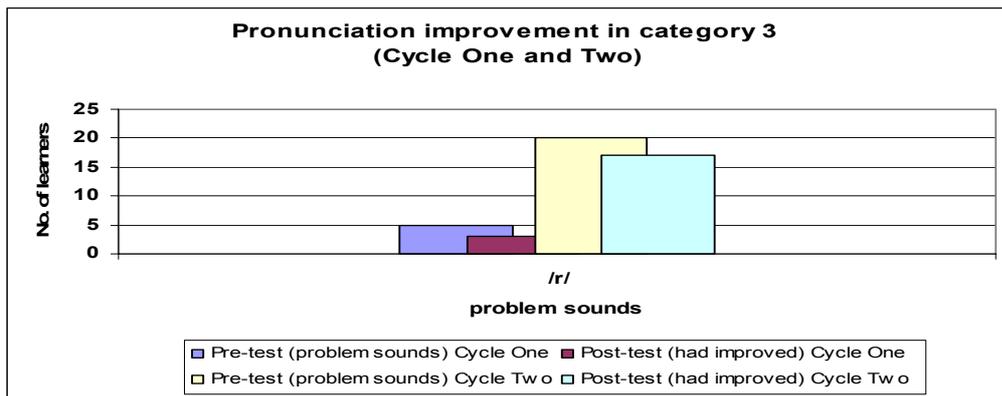
5.6.2 The use of language learning strategies of teachers compare to students

Figure 5.11 shows the maximum and minimum numbers of the use of the strategies in all Cycles and stages. Teachers used metacognitive strategies less in Cycle One, stage 1. Affective LLS and social strategies were used less by students in Cycle Two, stage 2 and stage 3 respectively.

Figure 5.11   Use of language learning strategies in Cycle One and Two

The use of LLS in Cycle One and Two

□ Metacognitive strategies □ Affective LLS □ Social strategies
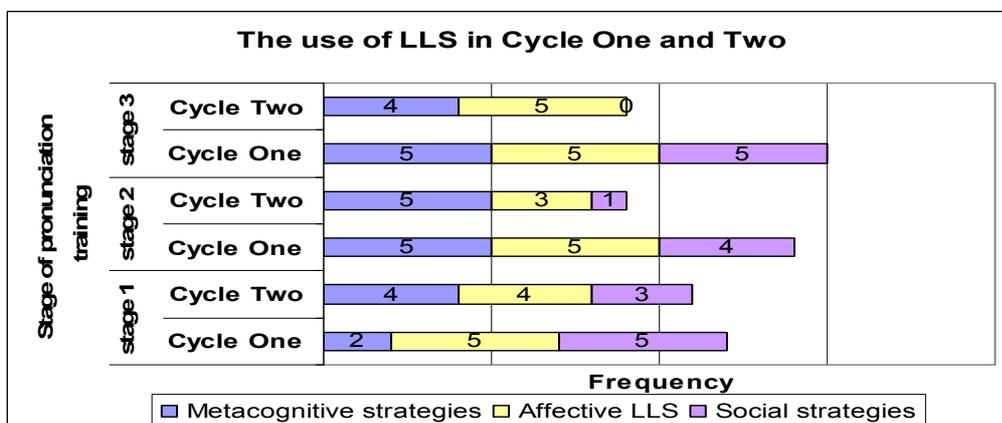
5.7 Findings of pronunciation learning strategies and tactics used in this study

The purpose of this section is to present findings of the use of pronunciation learning strategies of teachers and students compare to Oxford's and Peterson's findings. The new data found in this study are presented in Table 5.7 while data of pronunciation learning strategies and

tactics used by teachers that none were reported by students are shown Table
5.8. All data are shown in Appendix M.

5.7.1 The use of pronunciation learning strategies of teachers and students compared to Oxford's and Peterson's findings

Data reported by teachers and students in Table 5.7 show evidence of
new pronunciation learning strategies and tactics used from this study that
have not been shown in Oxford's and Peterson's reports. Strategies are
plans or methods to obtain a specific goal and affect the overall pattern;
tactics are maneuvers, details that affect particular ways to control a
situation.

Table 5.7 Pronunciation learning strategies and tactics used by teachers and students

Indirect LLS Group: Affective learning strategies

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported			
	Teachers'	Students'	Oxford's	Peterson's
*Controlling feelings and motivating	• feeling embarrassed to mispronounce sounds in classroom that motivated more attention • wanting to learn more about pronunciation • fearing that it is not correct when practicing but will try hard • being eager to learn and practise • feeling down when do not practise hard like others but will do it harder	N/A	N/A	N/A

Indirect LLS Group: Affective learning strategies (con't)

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported			
	Teachers'	Students'	Oxford's	Peterson's
Having positive attitude on the training and learning	• feeling happy to know about pronunciation • feeling very happy to be in classroom and to have learned it	• feeling happy to join the class • appreciating to practise for improvement	N/A	N/A

	• feeling to have ability to do it from the training	• judging vowel sounds are more easier • feeling of fun and happy to learn • feeling happy and enjoy activities • enjoy reading with correct pronunciation and no more Thai accent • feeling to have ability to do it from the training • showing appreciation on dictionary practice		
Showing one's confidence and to share knowledge with others	• feeling confident to have been improved after the training • feeling confident to teach others because of one's improvement	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fulfilling one's expectations	• being happy about one's improvement	• being happy about being native-like speaker • being happy and excited to understand and be understood	N/A	N/A

Table 5.7 shows four new pronunciation learning strategies in affective LLS and tactics of teachers and students. Two were used only by teachers with four tactics (grey shading) and two pronunciation learning strategies that they had shared common use (light yellow shading). Details are discussed in section 5.7.2.

5.7.2 Pronunciation learning strategies and tactics used by teachers

Teachers reported they used two pronunciation learning strategies and seven tactics, affective LLS (Table 5.8) that students did not. In social strategies, one pronunciation learning strategy and three tactics (Table 5.9) were used by teachers but had not been used by students.

Table 5.8   **Affective learning strategies and tactics used by teachers**

Indirect LLS Group: Affective learning strategies

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported			
	Teachers'	Students'	Oxford's	Peterson's
Controlling feelings and motivating	• feeling embarrassed to mispronounce sounds in classroom that motivated more attention • wanting to learn more about pronunciation • fearing that it is not correct when practising but will try hard • being eager to learn and practise • feeling down when do not practise hard like others but will do it harder	N/A	N/A	N/A
Showing one's confidence and to share knowledge with others	• feeling confident to have been improved after the training • feeling confident to teach others because of one's improvement	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 5.8 shows teachers' pronunciation learning strategies in affective LLS and tactics used in this study which was not found in students' use, and Oxford's and Peterson's study. There were two new pronunciation learning strategies found in this study, 1) controlling feelings and motivating, and 2) showing one's confidence and to share knowledge with others. There were five tactics used in the first one. They were 1) feeling embarrassed to mispronounce in class that motivated them to be more attentive to the class. Therefore they practised more in order not to feel embarrassed, 2) wanting to learn more about pronunciation, 3) fearing that it is not correct when practising but will try hard, 4) being eager to learn and practise, and 5) feeling down when do not practise hard like others but will do it harder. There were two tactics used in the latter pronunciation learning strategies. They were 1) feeling confident to have been improved after the training and 2) feeling confident to teach others because of one's improvement. They felt

their pronunciation had been improved and felt confident. Furthermore they were confident to teach others because of their improvement.

Although there was nothing new in teachers' use of social strategies in pronunciation learning strategies (see Table 5.9), there was only one new tactic, discussing about pronunciation in order to have learned from someone else.

Table 5.9   Social strategies and tactics used by teachers

Indirect LLS Group: Social Strategies

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported			
	Teachers'	Students'	Oxford's	Peterson's
Asking for help	• asking someone else to correct one's pronunciation • asking someone how to pronounce correctly • discussing about pronunciation in order to have learned from someone else	N/A	• asking someone else to correct one's pronunciation • asking someone else to pronounce something	N/A

From Tables 5.7, 5.8 and 5.9, it may be concluded that teachers used more pronunciation learning strategies and tactics than students to improve their pronunciation. These strategies and tactics will be useful for pronunciation teachers as a guideline to create and instruct different plans and method for adult and young learners in order to facilitate learners' acquisition.

5.8   Implications for pronunciation teaching and learning from Cycle Two

Teachers wrote that students were confused at the beginning of the class (Stage 1) because it was new to them. They were reluctant to

participate by asking questions or pronouncing the sounds in class. Although the researcher had introduced the indirect LLS they still needed advice and practice on indirect LLS (Metacognitive strategies, Affective LLS and Social strategies) to be more focused, motivated, and able to facilitate each other, therefore, the pronunciation training must include the indirect LLS introduction and its use with practice. It has to be done at the beginning of the class and throughout the class.

Some of the students were too shy to pronounce the words so they can not help friends in class. On the other hand, friends also cannot help them (Observer's report week 1).

5.8.1 Observation of confidence increase and indirect LLS

Teachers agreed that although only a few students reported their confidence increased, they observed that most of the students had more confidence to participate in class and speak more clearly. They enjoyed activities and confidently spoke in a role play.

I observed that students in my class who were too shy to speak in week 1, later volunteered to be the first to give a speech (Group discussion week three).

Their confidence increased week by week. They want to participate in a role play and choose a long dialogue (Group discussion week three).

Students who have more confidence accept the assignment easily. They show their sadness when they are not chosen (Observer week three).

5.8.2 The value of role play and more practice

The observer also pointed out that learners were happy to practise correct pronunciation in order to make a speech and perform the role play activity. They would try their best to pronounce sounds as accurately as they could. Therefore it would be good to maintain these activities.

Students repeatedly practised sounds and words they could not pronounce in the first week. They are very happy that those sounds and words are improved (Group discussion week 3).

When we discussed social strategies like role play and how to motivate students to help each other in class, teachers suggested that it depended on activities. We should focus more on pair activities in class, and group assignments so they help each other.

5.8.3   Limitations of student reports

I observed that the reports from students were too short although they were allowed to write in Thai. I discussed the issue in the final meeting. Teachers and the observer agreed that the report must be structured as a guideline (Appendix E) in order to give more feed back.

Thai students are not used to report writing. We should teach and guide them (Group discussion week three).

5.9   Conclusion

Teaching can play an important role in helping learners develop ways of improving their pronunciation and shaping their attitude toward the importance of pronunciation (Richards & Renandya, 2002). It is important for teachers to instruct learners about pronunciation strategies and tactics to

achieve their goal of intelligibility and accurate English speaking. Students'

achievement and confidence including personal attitude and self-esteem is a

major factor in improving English pronunciation (Kenworthy, 1987).

Chapter 6 discusses and suggests a framework of pronunciation teaching and language learning strategies instruction.

CHAPTER 6

SUGGESTED FRAMEWORK OF TEACHING

PRONUCIATION AND

LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides frameworks for the teaching of pronunciation and language learning strategies and an explanation of the framework that has been developed from this study. The framework to teach pronunciation includes strategies for teaching pronunciation, segmentals (sounds), phonetic symbols and suprasegmentals (stress, rhythm and intonations). For language learning strategies, it comprises the strategies that the students used to achieve their pronunciation learning.

6.2 A framework for the teaching of pronunciation and language learning strategies in a classroom

In teaching pronunciation in a classroom, I set out to teach under two frameworks, 1) Framework for teaching pronunciation, providing strategies to teach both segmentals and phonetic symbols and suprasegmentals; 2) Framework for teaching language learning strategies.

6.2.1 Framework for teaching pronunciation

The teacher should incorporate the following approaches:

Set pronunciation in a communicative context

Learners benefit greatly from explicit explanation of how pronunciation fits into the overall process of communication. A simple model of communication, showing a listener trying to interpret a message on the basis of cues in the speakers' speech, is sufficient. This gives learners a framework within which to understand what goes wrong when they are not understood or are misunderstood, and to gain a clear, practical idea of the nature of linguistic contrast but the basis of our ability to communicate in real life contexts.

Take a learner-centred approach

This type of teaching naturally encourages the use of naturalistic exercises and practice of real communicative situations. Classes must be learner-centred in the sense that learners should be able to practise speech that will be directly useful to them in their real lives. It is essential that learners should be encouraged to bring examples of communication failure to class for discussing. In addition to careful planning, teachers must be responsive to learners' needs and explore a variety of methods to help learners comprehend pronunciation features.

Apply strategies for teaching segmentals (sounds) and symbols

Teaching phonetic symbols might be difficult for non native speakers of English who are accustomed to a one-to-one correspondence between sound and letter because English has a highly variable spelling system. Learners need to learn how to make use of sound letter combinations and develop competence that enables them to pronounce the correct or approximately correct sounds when they encounter the written from of unfamiliar words and they also need plenty of practice.

Make analogies from the known to the unknown

Sometimes learners can solve pronunciation problems by applying what they know about familiar sounds to unfamiliar ones (Brown et al.,

1989).   Teachers may start with some sounds that are common in the learners' native language and in English, and then ask the learners to practise them.

Teach unfamiliar sound symbols

The emphasis at this stage should be placed on those sounds that are unique to English so learners become aware of the differences between the target language and their mother tongue, and take extra caution when they have to read words containing these unique sounds.

Select and prepare some common letter combinations and show learners the normal way to pronounce them

For example, the letter combination of 'ea' is often pronounced as /i:/ as in peak, team and beat, etc. However this strategy must not be overused because English does not have a fixed, one-to-one correlation between letters and sounds

Have learners practise phonetic symbols communicatively

Teachers can make a game of it, for example, creating a shopping lists by saying 'I went to the store and I found a balloon to buy'. Then a learner must add something to the list that begins with the same letter and sound as banana, basket, bread, book, etc. A list of the sounds ensures that everyone is aware of each sound under review.

Challenge learners to look for words spelled with letter combinations that represent more than one sound

Learners might look in the reading material for words that have an 'oo' combination, such as cook, and school. List those words in two columns separately. Then list the words in which 'oo' represent the sound heard in cook such as look, book, and took, etc., and the 'oo' sound heard in

school such as tool, boost, boot and noodle, etc. Learners can then share lists with everyone in the class and discuss the different sounds the letter in combinations represent.

<u>Adopt strategies for teaching suprasegmentals</u>

All words of more than one syllable are stressed, which means at least one syllable is said with greater force than the others and the remaining syllables are said more weakly. So learners must be advised that three degrees of word stress are found and they are called and marked as follows: primary stress, secondary stress, and weak stress. The stress is not fixed in the English language: that is to say, it is a free stress language. This might cause difficulties. For teaching purposes, we should thus concentrate on stressed and unstressed syllables, especially at the primary levels of learning. If words are first learned with an incorrect syllable-stress, i.e., word stress, a very great deal of time and effort will be necessary later to get rid of these wrong habits and to teach the correct habits instead, so the ideal time to learn correct syllable stress, therefore, is when words are first learned. There are possibilities for learners to mistakenly use intonations for each sentence uttered. Teachers may give guidance of how native speakers' utterances change over different situations.

6.2.2 Framework for the teaching of language learning strategies

The following headings comprise a framework for teaching pronunciation and language learning strategies to help English language teachers to develop their teaching.

- Preview teaching material and activities to identify strategies for instruction.

- Present the strategy by naming it and explaining when and why to use it.

- Model the strategy provide opportunities to practise the strategy with various activities/tasks.

- Develop students' ability to evaluate strategy use, and develop skills to transfer strategy use to new tasks.

During preliminary stages of strategy instruction, teachers will probably take a controlled and teacher-centred approach to instruction. As teachers become experienced in strategies instruction, they should adjust the content and intensify each step to establish a closer match between their instructional approach and their particular teaching context. The time required for each step is variable, depending on the difficulty of the activity and the group of learners.

The language teacher aiming at training students in using LLS should learn about the students, their needs, their interests, motivations, and learning styles. The teacher can learn what LLS students already appear to be using by observing their behaviour in class. Besides observing their behaviour in class, the teacher can prepare a short questionnaire so that students can describe themselves and their language learning. Thus, the teacher can learn the purpose of their learning language, their favourite or least favourite kinds of class activity.

6.3 Explaining the framework for the teaching of pronunciation and language learning strategies

6.3.1 Framework to teach pronunciation

<u>Set pronunciation in a communicative context</u>

In teaching pronunciation in Cycles One and Two, I followed the framework set out by Celce Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) which offers a structure for creating effective pronunciation lessons and activities on the sound system and other features of North American English pronunciation. This includes

- Description and analysis of the pronunciation feature to be targeted (raising learner awareness of the specific feature). During the action cycles, I did this by focusing on sounds difficult for Thais (see Chapter 2 section 2.1.3). Participants in both cycles recorded reading a passage (Appendix D). I analysed their problem sounds and kept as pre-test records (Appendix H and K). I compared to post-test records reading the same passage after the training. The results are discussed in Chapter 4 sections 4.2.1, 4.3.1 and Chapter 5 sections 5.3.1, 5.4.1 and details of each learner are shown in Appendix I and L

- Listening discrimination activities (learners listen for and practise recognizing the targeted feature). During the action phase I had participants listen to tapes of native speakers (in all stages) so they compared their own pronunciation and self corrected as well as corrected each other when they worked in pairs (Appendix C).

- Controlled practice and feedback (support learner production of the feature in a controlled context). Feedback was given by assessment of taped readings and self assessment in their reflective reports. The sound articulations were introduced to them and practised for correctness in addition to listening to tapes of native speakers in order to know the sound production.

- Guided practice and feedback (offer structured communication exercises in which learners can produce and monitor for the targeted

feature). I gave exercises such as role play scripts etc. before the class to let participants practise how to pronounce phonetically correctly using the dictionary as a reference. Feedback was given to them after class so as to not interrupt them while playing or reading. Another feedback was from when they had minimal pairs practice. They gave feedback to each other in class. This way they practised looking up correct words in the dictionary.

- Communicative practice and feedback (provides opportunities for learner to focus on content but also get feedback on where specific pronunciation instruction is needed). The exercises about daily conversation were given for role plays as a learner-centred approach and feedback was given to them after class.

Take a learner-centred approach

The learner centred approach in the action research project included making the teachers and subsequently students collaborators in the process and providing a process of self evaluation through reflective reports. Teachers and students (Chapter 4 section 4.2: Teachers' responses week 1, 2 and 3; Chapter 5 section 5.3: Students' responses week 1, 2 and 3) reported on their progress as well as the classroom atmosphere involved in their development. In a pair work activity, learners evaluated each other and helped correct their pronunciation. At the end of Cycle One, the teachers and I had a group discussion and revised the lesson plans for Cycle Two for more efficient training. This approach involved what learners experienced and proposed.

Strategies for teaching segmentals and phonetic symbols

In order to get an effective result in the teaching of pronunciation, I listed the following items to help my students tell the major distinctions

between:

1. Letters and sounds

2. Vowels and consonants

3. Simple vowels and diphthongs

4. Voiceless and voiced consonants

5. Word stress and sentence stress

6. Falling and rising intonations.

It is necessary for the students to get a clear idea of the positions of the tongue and lips. In making simple vowels, the tongue and the lips remain in the same position from beginning to end. A diphthong is a glide from one vowel to another. The voiced and voiceless consonants are different in positions and vibrations of vocal cords. It is also important to give students advice word stress that makes different meanings such as REcord and reCORD. Sentence stress to emphasise speakers' intentions such as 'This is the HOUSE that Jack built.' and 'This is the house that JACK built.' Into nation of falling and rising give the speakers the cue in conversation such as falling tone at the end of a sentence when speakers finish their speaking and rising tone shows incompleteness such as 'I went to the market to buy butter (Rising), eggs (Rising) and milk.'(Falling); or using rising tone in questions such as 'Is this the house that Jack built?'(Rising)

Make analogies from the known to the unknown

I taught students how to pronounce sounds in English using the Phonetic Symbols Chart I showed them the various

manners and places of articulation of each consonant sound (Figure 3.6 and 3.7) with familiar examples and practised, for examples, /d/ for Dog – voiced Alveolar Stop, /k/ for Cut – voiceless Velar Stop, /m/ for Man – voiced Bilabial Nasal, and /dz/ for Gem – voiced Palato-alveolar Affricate. These sounds never happen in Thai. Therefore it was good for the students to familiarise themselves and practise.

Teach unfamiliar sound symbols

I described sound symbols which are not in the English alphabet such as /Σ/ for sh: sure, she, /Z/ or /zh/ for sh voiced: measure, garage, and /{/ vowel sound: cat, and etc. I differentiated voicing from voiceless to voiced sounds, for examples, /p/ and /b/ (Bilabial Stop), /f/ and /v/ (Labio-dental Fricative) has the same place and manner of articulations but different voicing.

Select and prepare some common letter combinations and show learners the normal way to pronounce them

In English, letters and sounds must not be mixed up. Letters are written while sounds are spoken. It is very useful to have written letters to remind us of corresponding sounds; however, English letters do not always stand in one-to-one relationship with the sounds they are supposed to represent.

e.g.   he/ see/ eat/ key   (different letters with the same sound)

man / any/ father/ same (the same letter with different sounds)

Have learners practise phonetic symbols communicatively

In practice activities and role plays, the scripts were distributed to learners in advance to look up words in the dictionary and correctly

pronounce the words in class. Learners were well-prepared for each activity practice class and have a chance to correct each other as well as reproduce the words and sounds phonetically.

Challenge learners to look for words spelled with letter combinations that represent more than one sound

After learners remembered the sound symbols, they played the guessing game by looking up words in the dictionary. Both words and phonetic symbols were given for them to transcribe as well as listen to tape of native speaker's sample sounds and mouth shape practice.

Strategies for teaching suprasegmentals

I taught the study of stress, rhythm and intonations in week two and three when learners remembered the consonant and vowel phonetic symbols and phonetically pronounced the words. Word stress was introduced first and practised using the dictionary as a reference, followed by sentence stress and different intonations for different purposes, for example, in yes-no questions the pitch is high at the end of the sentence while in sentences beginning with a wh-question (who, what, when, where,why) and how this is not applicable. The rules for sentence stress were taught to learners to correctly and confidently emphasise the words in sentences. They then stressed content words such as noun, pronoun, verb, adjective and adverb and did not stress function words such as auxiliary verbs. I showed the connections between intonation patterns and particular types of grammatical structure. I gave them basic rules for making appropriate choices with regard to intonation with the aim of showing students how it can be used in certain situations. They will be more confident to apply these rules in the full range of possibilities. I identified and used examples from Kelly (2000) as follows.

- Information questions with who, what where, etc: **Falling** intonation, e.g. What's your name? What's the time?

- Questions expecting 'yes/no' answer: **Rising**, e.g. Is it the blue one? Have you got a pen?

- Statement: **Falling**, e.g. He lives in the house on the corner.

- Imperatives: **Falling**, e.g. Sit down. Put it on the table.

- Question tags expecting confirmation: **Falling**, e.g. You're French, aren't you? He's very tall, isn't he?

- Question tags showing less certainty: **Rising**, e.g. Your train leaves at six, doesn't it?

- Lists of items: **Rising, rising and finally falling**, e.g. You need a pen, a pencil, and some paper. The stall sells ribbon, beads, elastic and buttons.

6.3.2 Framework to teach language learning strategies

During the action phases I informed the learners about the achievement of learning a language using direct and indirect LLS. The instructions of direct LLS were included in activities provided and indirect LLS were advised at the beginning of Stage 1. According to the framework, I focused on the following.

- Previewing teaching material and activities to identify strategies for instruction.
  I previewed teaching material and activities based on direct LLS: memory, cognitive and compensation (See Appendix A for Direct LLS and Appendix C for activities).

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- Presenting a strategy by naming it and explaining when and why to use it.

  I explained direct LLS through activities that learners had to do to achieve those assignments, e.g. I assigned them to memorise phonetic symbols, practise correct pronunciation, gave them compliments to overcome their limitations of pronouncing the sounds. I provided examples and instructed learners on the indirect LLS which are the tools to become aware of what helps them to learn English pronunciation most efficiently, and monitor and self evaluate their performance. The indirect LLS are metacognitive strategies, affective LLS and social strategies.

- Modelling the strategy to provide opportunities to practise the strategy with various activities

  The activities provided the learners the opportunity to practise direct LLS while indirect LLS helped them learn most efficiently. Various activities and tasks were guessing games and role plays, etc. (Appendix C).

- Developing students' ability to evaluate strategy use, develop skills to transfer strategy use to new tasks.

  In pairs, learners practised together, corrected each other and gave feedback, developed learners' skill to evaluate each others and yet transferred to self evaluate while practising. Metacognitive strategies helped learners regulate and exercise executive control through planning, arranging, focusing, and evaluating their own learning. The confidence to pronounce correctly lowered their anxiety and motivated them to learn more and reach their goal. They reflected on their strategies used at each stage in the reports. With affective LLS, they had a good attitude to language learning and completed their tasks.

I distributed two questionnaires to both teachers and students in Cycle One and Cycle Two. They then were asked to complete 1) the self analysis (Appendix D) concerning their difficulty in pronouncing sounds and words and 2) the self-diagnosis of their strengths and weaknesses (Appendix G) before starting pronunciation training in the first week in order to become aware of what helps them to learn English. In this case, the teachers and I learned the purpose of students' learning the language and what LLS they already appeared to be using. I observed teachers' LLS used in class in Cycle One and the teachers were asked to observe their students in Cycle Two to learn their behaviour while learning. Their reflective reports also showed the LLS they used. Therefore teachers and I understood and controlled direct LLS in activities to help students develop their skills and teach their students indirect LLS in addition individually after observing in class and learned from their reflective reports. The teachers and I had an interim group discussion to develop lesson plans for students in Cycle Two.

The process I used for teaching pronunciation and intonation is the following:

Helping them in each conversation is a good way to build confidence in the students to pronounce correctly

I read and presented the conversation with the right pronunciation and intonation. I tried my best to give some good examples of how to have a conversation by saying each word and sentence in the right way according to my teaching experience and knowledge of phonetics. Some learners asked me to teach the new words and phrases to make sure of their pronunciation. This shows they began to pay attention to their way of speaking English and became more interested in spoken English. When it came to their turn to practise conversation, they wanted to imitate my way of speaking English. I then gave the students a short lecture to make sure everybody had a chance to hear how to correct the pronunciation and intonation such as the tonal level (the high level tone, the low level tone, the high rising tone, the low

rising tone, the falling tone, the falling-rising tone, the divided falling-rising tone). It seems that the more information I gave on English pronunciation and intonation, the more questions they had. Actually, this is what I wanted to see. One reason was that at least they were beginning to pay attention to the way they were speaking English and started to form a rigorous attitude to learning a second language on their own part.

Checking their own pronunciation

My second approach was to play a tape-recorder for them to follow. From the tapes, they got to know Standard British English pronunciation and intonation. They could listen and follow the language for good English pronunciation.

Student-centred conversation practice

In this way I wanted them to practise speaking in the right way after my detailed explanation on how to pronounce each word and the intonation pattern they should use here.

Grading their conversation and role plays.

This gave them the comparison and contrast with others and could be used to mark their achievements to see if they had made enough improvement or not. I believe everyone wanted to get high scores and that grading motivated them to participate in their conversation practice aimed at improving their pronunciation and intonation.

Writing down their pronunciation mistakes and correcting them after their conversation.

This was a most effective way to help learners know where they mispronounced and then to correct themselves. Because I told them I would

grade their conversation for their pronunciation and intonation, they paid more attention to their practice. I noticed that they began to pronounce in the right way, e.g. Three in/θr i:/ but not /sri:/.

<u>Asking learners to give advice on their classmates' pronunciation and intonation</u>.

This is another important way to check if they themselves know how to pronounce in the correct way and to give them the further suggestion of paying attention to their own way of uttering a word.

<u>Finding and correcting mistakes was applied throughout</u>.

I advised them to try to find others' mistakes in pronunciation and intonation as quickly as possible. I told them, when speaking and reading let all the mistakes appear so that they corrected the mistakes while they are students, not when they are teachers.

Conclusions

These days a large number of people with a good command of English are greatly needed. With the coming of this information age, advanced technologies and media including computers and the internet, English functions as a vehicle for communication. In order to meet the demand of modern society and the new curriculum standards applied to the school, English teachers are supposed to pay more attention to our students' development in their communicative competence and abandon the traditional methods which do not fit with current circumstances. However, as we observe today's English classes, it is obvious that the traditional approaches to English language teaching still dominate our classrooms. There is no doubt we can take a greater responsibility to understand much better what will bring development to our society. It is now that we change our methodologies to give new insights on how to teach English in order to change the situation we had previously experienced.

As language teachers, we need to teach students from their own understanding of language learning and at the same time help them gain more competence all around. When teaching, we may not just recite the word 'game' by teaching them the /ei/. Instead, we will try to use "Kate plays eight games." to help the students practise the /ei/., and as a result, the students will master several ways of how to pronounce the /ei/ in the correct way. The tongue twister overcomes the problem of rote reciting for the students.

Teachers should focus on students' needs and types of discourse features to be taught, which Burns (2001:125) sees as relevant tools that can 'underpin communicative language teaching'. The teachers should provide an opportunity for their students to employ self-evaluation and self-correction which proved to best predict the success in learning English (Setiyadi, Holliday & Lewis, 1999). This is the target of the new curriculum aiming at helping the students to identify the regulations of the materials and catch the essence of the target language by themselves. In this way they can form their own experience of learning the pronunciation and intonation independently.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This study, although small in scope, has produced some interesting results which it is hoped will make a contribution towards developing future educational strategies to assist English teachers to achieve pronunciation teaching and learning practice.

The outcomes indicate that both cycles (Cycle One and Cycle Two) showed the implications of the importance of pronunciation training in the Thai context and the usefulness of dictionary usage to help learners to improve their competence and to have more confidence to speak English. The control of the contents of pronunciation training with direct LLS is crucial to the improvement of students and their confidence. The indirect LLS which they reported they used in the training had great impact on their improvement and confidence. Therefore teachers should guide learners about the use and the importance of indirect LLS before the session. The strategies reported in this study can be applied and suggested to students in all English classes. Furthermore the learners could take the skills gained from the session for their self directed learning and practising. The impact and contribution of pronunciation training, language learning strategies and pronunciation learning strategies on learners' improvement and confidence are shown in sections 7.2, 7.3, and 7.4. Sections 7.5 and 7.6 reveal the importance of qualified teachers in the view of the school principal selected for the study and a change in English language teaching according to the pronunciation training program. Finally, a summary of findings are presented in section 7.7.

7.2 Impact of pronunciation training on learners' competence and confidence

It was evident that the pronunciation training with direct and indirect LLS helped Thai students to achieve intelligible English competence and

should be included in English lessons. Further study to effect more improvement and confidence as well as more practice guidelines are recommended to English teachers.

7.2.1   Pronunciation has been improved and confidence increased

In pronunciation training learners were taught how to pronounce correct English sounds phonetically and how native speakers use a high and low voice in a sentence that is, intonation, rhythm and pitch or in a more academic sense, segmental and suprasegmental aspects. Reflective reports written by teachers and students in both cycles showed that their pronunciation was improved after they had been trained and it was evident that they had more confidence to speak English. Chapters 4 and 5 presented reports of improvement and increased confidence from teachers and students in each cycle. For example, in week 2, Teacher 4 reported "I never thought I could read, until I learned the articulation of consonants and vowel sounds, though it was difficult". Student 12 also reported that "I had difficulty reading words but now I know how to read it. I can do it correctly". Teacher 1 reported "I felt confident to pronounce and teach in class". Teacher 2 reported "Though I cannot do it well, I feel more confident and have to practise more". Moreover there was an impact on motivation to teach others. Teachers felt confident and reported they planned to continue to teach students (Teachers' report in week 3).

7.2.2   Confidence, intelligible speaking, and the ability to self-assess

Teachers reported their intelligibility had improved and that they understood how to self correct. Students showed improvement in their speaking competence after they had been trained how to pronounce English sounds using segmental and suprasegmental aspects as well as the direct LLS. The dictionary usage helped them practise and check whether their pronunciation was correct. Teachers reported that they learned how to improve their pronunciation and they knew their weakness. Teachers

observed that students had the ability to self correct using the dictionary as a reference to check whether their pronunciation was correct. Furthermore they checked each other when working together. Students were active partners in their own learning, and had developed the skills to monitor and modify their speech patterns.

Yule, Hoffman, and Damico (1987) assert that self-monitoring is critical and is a necessary part of the consciousness raising process for creating independent and competent learners. Morley (1991) states functional intelligibility, communicability, increased self-confidence, the development of speech monitoring abilities and speech modification strategies are the goal of perfect pronunciation. Bringing pronunciation to a level of intelligibility and encouraging learners' awareness of its potential are a tool for making their language not only easier to understand but more effective (Jones, 2002). Therefore the goal of this study was set as the achievement of pronunciation competence of the learners at the level of comfortable intelligibility and to increase their confidence to speak English. Morley (1991) also states that the impact of intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communication competence that teachers should include in courses and expect learners to do well. Finally, expansion activities are made for students to incorporate the language in their own use (Krashen, 1987; Richard-Amato, 1988; Celce-Murcia, 1991; Harmer, 2001)

From the evidence of improvement, it can be concluded that learners feel confident to intelligibly speak with listeners. If speakers are certain that listeners understand what they speak according to their correct pronunciation, speakers will not be nervous and their confidence is increased (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992). The sense of improvement and the certainty of understanding and being understood by listeners according to Avery and Ehrlich's 'positive cycle' (1992) developed the confidence to speak. Furthermore their self-discovered improvement is reflected in the reports as well as their contribution to the pronunciation training associated with LLS, planning, controlling and evaluation motivated and fostered the learners' self

confidence. (Dickinson, 1987; Oscarson, 1989; Gardner & McIntyre, 1991; Pierce, Swain & Hart, 1993; Ellis, 1994; McNamara & Deane, 1995; O'Malley and Pierce, 1996; Dörnyei, 2001; Rivers, 2001). On the contrary if learners lower their anxiety and thus feel confident, they will make progress in language learning (Tuckman, 1969 quoted in Argyle, 1969). Anxiety and fear are two major terminators of motivation (Maleki, 2005). Teachers can reduce classroom anxiety by making the learning context less stressful (Dörnyei, 2001). To maintain and increase the learners' self-confidence, teachers should.

> …foster the belief that competence is a changeable aspect of development and can be promoted by providing regular experiences of success. Everyone is more interested in a task if they feel that they make a contribution. A small personal word of encouragement is sufficient (Dörnyei, 2001:130).

7.3   Contribution of language learning strategies in learners' pronunciation improvement

Learners reported they used LLS to facilitate their learning. Strategies are often used by learners as a goal driven tackling an unfamiliar language task (Chamot, 2005).

Chamot (2005) states that the strategies may be used automatically once a learning strategy becomes familiar through repeated use and then be able to use consciously. According to Grenfell and Harris (1999), learning strategies are important in second language learning and teaching for two major reasons. First, we gain insights into the strategies involved in language learning by examining the strategies used by learners during the learning process. The second reason supporting research into LLS is that less successful language learners can be taught new strategies, thus helping them become better language learners.

It may be concluded that learning strategies are sensitive to the learning context and to the learners' internal processing preferences. For example, teachers used social strategies more frequently than students. A particular learning strategy can help a learner in a certain context achieve learning goals (Chamot, 2005). Teachers also used more metacognitive strategies in stage 2 than in stage 1 while students used the strategies more in stage 1. Anderson (2002) states that young learners begin to understand the real key to learning and are engaged in metacognition. Their choice of strategy depends on their understanding of their learning processes and on which strategies have been successful in the past (Hsiao, 2004). The interpretation of language learning is closely related to the goals advocated within each learner's cultural context. Therefore pronunciation learning strategies reported in this study may be useful for Thai teachers as a focus in classroom teaching. The limitation that should be considered is that a learning strategy valued in one culture may be inappropriate in another (Politzer & McGroarty, 1985; Olivares-Cuhat, 2002; Wharton, 2000).

7.4   Contribution of pronunciation learning strategies in learners' pronunciation improvement

The ability to select and use particular strategies in a given context for a specific purpose means that the learner can think and make conscious decisions about the learning process (Anderson, 2002). It is hoped that teachers will learn from this study and guide their students about learning strategy tactics in order that the students will develop their pronunciation. To achieve their pronunciation improvement, students must receive explicit instruction in how to use these strategies and they need to know that no single strategy will work in every instance. Therefore findings of pronunciation learning strategies tactics from the study were compared with the works of Oxford and Peterson in Chapter 4 and 5 and are a valuable reference to strategies and tactics that have been successfully used. Teachers need to show their students how to choose the strategy that has the best chance of success in a given situation (Anderson, 2002).

7.5   The importance of qualified English teachers

In June 2004, the first semester of academic year 2004-2005, the researcher once again visited the school. The researcher met with the school principal and a group of teachers to discuss how the project might assist the school. It was agreed that the school committee realised the importance of English teaching. The project caused some reconsideration of English teacher assignment. English teachers used to be rotated from other subjects claiming that teachers can teach any subjects because they are senior to the students. Therefore there may be a time when an Art teacher is assigned as an English teacher. But this concept had changed as a result of the project.

> We used to rotate teachers to teach in any subjects according to years of experience in teaching. It is believed that teachers have learned those subjects in school and it is supposed that they know what to teach. English is special in that it is assigned to experienced teachers who have taught more than 2 years, no matter how much knowledge in English they have, especially the knowledge and ability to pronounce correct English words. We focus on grammatical knowledge and believe that teachers can study from the textbook before teaching. We have a sound lab room where students can learn from the tape recordings (Meeting Report, June 2004).

The research project prompted a reconsideration of this approach.

> After the project, we realised that teachers are the first role model for students. They will imitate the sounds which they heard from teachers before they have a chance to drill in the sound lab room. This semester we launch a new policy that English teachers must be able to pronounce English phonetically correctly.   Furthermore knowledge of phonetic symbols and intonation can help teachers when they encounter unfamiliar words as self-directed learning. Teachers that have been trained from the project are now assigned as

English teachers this semester. We planned to set a group to expand this knowledge in our school (Meeting Report, June 2004).

Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 who had not previously taught English were now selected to teach English. They said this is a big change, especially Teacher 4 who was very proud of this assignment. It was the teachers' perception that to be an English teacher is highly respected and only proven professionals are assigned (Researcher's interview during meeting, April 2004). She said she had hated English while she studied in school and had never thought she could read any English words until she had been trained in the project. It helped her a lot. Her pronunciation had improved and she no longer was afraid to speak English aloud. The research group was assigned as co-teachers in pronunciation training to teachers who have never been trained. On the basis of Diaz-Maggioli's study in 2003, it was apparent that when teachers have a chance to participate collegially and collaboratively in the creation and develop ownership over the learning process, their learning is more likely to promote student success.

As a researcher, I saw that it was a good sign and a big change in the school policy and students could benefit from this change. At the end of the project, I hoped that this school would be a leader to others in the concept of the importance of pronunciation learning and qualified English teachers. Research shows a strong correlation between teachers who teach confidently and affectionately with students' school success (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Sparks, 2002; Diaz-Maggioli, 2004).

7.6   A change in English language teaching

Owing to the change in teachers' recruitment and assignment, the school Principal also proclaimed that teachers will stick to grammatical rules in the textbook where English pronunciation had previously been usually ignored. The Principal will now support pronunciation teaching in

classroom. Although there are foreign English teachers in the school, it is claimed that their success is restricted because of a difficulty in communication. The pronunciation project is helpful for both teachers and students. For teachers, they will be more confident to teach and transfer their knowledge in pronunciation and act as role models more effectively and be self-directed. For students, they will get knowledge of how to speak correctly as well as becoming self-directed. We should put more emphasis on pronunciation training.

7.6.1   A change in researcher's teaching syllabus

The project encouraged the researcher to change her own teaching syllabus by teaching vowel sounds before consonant sounds according to teachers' discussion (Group discussion, Cycle One). Vowel sounds are easier thus lowering learners' anxiety and motivating their learning (Dornyei, 2001).

7.7   Summary of findings

The participants have learned to pronounce English words and developed communicative competence with confidence. The pronunciation training with language learning strategies and activities were a vital introduction to pronunciation learning and teaching necessary for today's English teaching curriculum.

The training has given the students opportunities to improve their pronunciation. The knowledge of using the dictionary as a reference to check correctness led them to self directed learning. Language learning strategies and pronunciation learning strategies supported their learning for achievement.

The action research steps of plan, act, observe, and reflect have been an instructive discipline for English teachers, and the data collection

methods have imposed reflective practices on students that they normally do not experience. The peer observations, working in pairs and group discussions produced significant benefits of reflection and critical thinking.

The data have shown that in each cycle there were different strategies used for learning achievement.

However, I found that there are still many areas of weakness, which I need to address. Students lack significant skills of reporting and self assessment. The classroom context and a gap between the adults (teachers) and the young (students) in Thai culture obstructed their participation to express themselves. I wished to promote a climate and conditions where students could freely express themselves and feel confident that their report on self improvement and evaluation of other improvements were being taken seriously.

7.8 Conclusions

The findings on learners' improvement and teachers' involvement indicate that the study has shown advances overall in the following areas:

- The learner perception was that the training had improved their pronunciation and increased overall their self-confidence in speaking English.
- The positive attitude of the learner (Affective LLS) reflects the beneficial effects of the pronunciation improvement.
- Most importantly learners were able to experience the learning context, and begin to appreciate the meaning of helping each other. Other valuable insights were gained; they learned the value of planning and evaluating (metacognitive strategies), self motivating (affective LLS), practising and accepting responsibility, working with others (social strategies) and how the strategies support themselves in learning.

7.9   Future considerations and recommendations

The study has revealed some important principles to follow and to improve future pronunciation training we need to re-consider the following:

A need of qualified teachers and teaching strategies

A large number of people with a good command of English are greatly needed, particularly in Asia (Ma, 2006). In order to meet a demand of modern society, English teachers are supposed to pay more attention to learners' development in their competence and focus on a more effective and successful method. However it is obvious that the traditional approaches to English language teaching still dominate our classrooms. As language teachers, we should not focus on reciting anymore, but focus on teaching learners from their own understanding of language learning and help they gain increased confidence and competence. From my action research study, I have recommended that as far as teachers' English proficiency is concerned, we should work out the qualifications for learners and require the minimal level at least in a period of given time. We should provide learners with various types of courses to enhance their English proficiency and promote familiarity with good approaches in the teaching of phonetics. If it is boring the learners will not study pronunciation diligently because it requires a lot of hard work. Therefore positive and interesting measures must be taken to attract their attention educationally (Ma, 2006). Therefore the teachers' own enthusiasm is what motivates learners the most (Laidlaw, 2005).

A new perception of pronunciation learning

Phonetic symbols are not difficult to learn and teach, but before learners can do so language teachers must learn how to use them effectively to correct learners' accented pronunciation and intonation. It does require a

lot of practice before a strong command of the symbols is possible. Phonetic symbols should be introduced to learners as early in their education as possible because pronunciation and intonation are the foundations of verbal language. Once learners have some facility in reading words, they no longer need instruction in this skill unless there is a special need (Anderson et al., 1985). If bad habits are formed, it will require double the effort later to correct them. Learning phonetic symbols may not be worth doing for its own sake. It is invaluable as a tool for decoding and pronouncing words correctly. Emphasis should be placed on applying the knowledge of phonetic symbols to actual pronunciation rather than to the learning of generalizations. The knowledge of the phonetic symbols and letter sound combinations should also support the growth of students' English vocabulary (Lu, 2002). If the teaching of phonetic symbols was stipulated in the curriculum, learners at all levels could be using them to unravel the pronunciation of unfamiliar English words and to avoid making the words with Thai characters bearing similar sounds. Learners need to understand that the latter habit will not help them learn how to correctly pronounce the target language.

An awareness of the importance of pronunciation and a learner-centred approach

All students can do well in learning the pronunciation of a foreign language if the teacher and student participate in the total learning process. Success can be achieved if each has set, respectively, individual teaching and learning goals. Pronunciation must be viewed as more than correct production of phonemes. It must be viewed in the same light as grammar, syntax and discourse, that is, a crucial part of communication. Research has shown and current pedagogical thinking on pronunciation maintains that intelligible pronunciation is seen as an essential component of communicative competence (Morley, 1991: 513). With this in mind, the teacher must then set achievable goals that are applicable and suitable for the communication needs of the student. The students must also become part of the learning process actively involved in their own learning. The content of

the course should be integrated into the communication class, with the content emphasizing the teaching of segmental and suprasegmental aspects, linking pronunciation with listening comprehension, and allowing for meaningful pronunciation practice. With the teacher acting as a speech coach rather than a checker of pronunciation, the feedback given to the student can encourage learners to improve their pronunciation. It is of importance to concern ourselves with the fostering of learner motivation, as it is considered to be the most effective and proactive power relationship lead to positive learning atmosphere (Thanasoulas, 2002). If these criteria are met, all students within their unique goals can be expected to do well learning the pronunciation of a foreign language. For language acquisition, once learners consciously notice the input, it becomes intake and output, and develops long-term memory (Schmidt, 1990, 1995, Ellis, 1997).

Careful consideration must be given to being aware that the pronunciation of any one learner might be affected by combination of many influential factors such as age, gender, prior experience (Pennington, 1994). The key is to be aware of their existence so that they may be considered in creating realistic and effective pronunciation goals and development plans for the learners.

The usefulness of language learning strategies

Introduction to the use of LLS is essential to the learners' achievement in language learning. Learners are being encouraged to learn and use a broad range of LLS that can be tapped throughout the learning process. This approach is based on the belief that learning will be facilitated by making learners aware of the range of strategies from which they can choose during language learning and use (Cohen, 2003). Cohen states that providing strategy training with explicit instruction in how to apply LLS as part of the foreign language curriculum is the most efficient way to heighten learner awareness. Rather than focus students' attention solely on learning the language, teachers can help students learn to think about what happens

during the language learning process, which will lead them develop stronger learning skills (Anderson, 2002).

7. 10 Final comments

The scope of the study was how learners improve their pronunciation and how learners used their learning strategies during training. The study's contributions to knowledge are that teachers will learn from the study about the importance of pronunciation and language learning strategies that support students' learning, and change their view of teaching. Also, in the broader area, there is a change in the Thai school curriculum in teaching English and the skills of English teachers. In addition, this research study raised awareness of the importance of pronunciation training in improvement and confidence, and presented stages of pronunciation training, how to teach and control the training in one school context.

It was evident that the pronunciation training with direct and indirect LLS helped Thai students to achieve intelligible English competence and should be included in English lessons. It is hoped that the results of this small-scale enquiry will serve as a template for further research into pronunciation training in Thailand, and persuade other educational bodies and schools to put commitment and resources behind embarking on more widespread pronunciation training endeavours. Thailand's education and economy is to a large extent reliant on its education to English communicative competence in the world of globalization and competitiveness.

The academic sector has to play a major role to ensure it is producing graduates who have the abilities to communicate more efficiently and effectively and it is imperative that both school principals and teachers seize the initiative and make a commitment to establish and maintain a flow of competent English speaking students. From my perspective, I am convinced,

as a result of the research, that pronunciation training and language learning strategies have a significant contribution to offer.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Oxford's taxonomy of language learning strategies

Oxford's taxonomy of language learning strategies

Oxford's (1990:17) taxonomy of LLS is shown as follows.

Direct language learning strategies

- memory strategies: creating mental linkages; applying images and sounds; reviewing well; employing action. Memory strategies are those used for storage of information, aid in entering information into long term memory and retrieving information when needed for communication.

- cognitive LLS: practising; receiving and sending messages strategies; analysing and reasoning; creating structure for input and output. Cognitive LLS are the mental strategies learners use to make sense of their learning. They are used for forming and revising internal mental models and receiving and producing messages in the target language.

- compensation strategies: guessing intelligently; overcoming limitations in speaking and writing. Compensation strategies help learners to overcome knowledge gaps to continue the communication (Oxford, 1990b:71).

Oxford (1990a, 1990b) also describes three types of indirect LLS. They are

Indirect language learning strategies

- metacognitive strategies: centering learning; arranging and planning; evaluating. Metacognitive strategies help learners regulate and exercise executive control through planning, arranging, focusing, and evaluating their own learning.

- affective LLS: lowering anxiety; self –encouraging; taking emotional temperature. Affective LLS are concerned with learner's emotional requirements such as confidence, and enable learners to control feelings, motivations, and attitudes related to language learning.

- social strategies: asking questions, i.e., asking for clarification or verification; asking for co-operating with others, i.e., co-operating with peers or co-operating with proficient users of the new language ; empathising with others, i.e., developing cultural understanding or becoming aware of others' thoughts and feelings (Oxford, 1990a, 21). In social strategies, experienced teachers may easily think of specific LLS for each of categories, for example in asking question, students might ask specific like "Do you mean…?" or "Did you say that…?" in order to clarify or verify what they think they have heard or understood. Social strategies lead to increase interactions with the target language and facilitate interactions with others, often in a discourse situation (Oxford, 1990b, 71).

Appendix B

Pronunciation learning strategies

Pronunciation learning strategies of Oxford (1990) and Peterson (2000)

Direct Language learning strategies (LLS)

Direct LLS Group: Memory

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported	
	Oxford's	Peterson's
Representing sounds in memory	• using phonetic symbols o one's own codes to remember how to pronounce something	• making up songs or rhythms to remember how to pronounce words

Direct LLS Group: Cognitive

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported	
	Oxford's	Peterson's
Practising naturalistically	• imitating a native speaker or teacher • talking aloud to oneself • talking silently to oneself • noticing mouth positions or watching lips • concentrating intensely on pronunciation while listening to the TL • trying to avoid producing inappropriate native language sounds • imitating the overall TL sounds with native language words for fun	• trying to recall how a teacher pronounced something trying to recall and imitate a teacher's mouth movements • listening to tapes /television/movies/music • concentrating intensely on pronunciation while speaking • speaking slowly to get the pronunciation right • noticing or trying out different TL dialects • mentally rehearsing how to say something before speaking • talking with others in the TL

Direct LLS Group: Cognitive (con't)

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported	
	Oxford's	Peterson's
Formally practising with sounds	• repeating aloud after a native speaker or teacher • repeating aloud after tapes • repeating aloud after television or a movie • repeating silently • reading aloud • doing exercises practising to acquire TL sounds • practising sounds first in isolation and then in context	• pronouncing a difficult word over and over • practising words using flash cards • practising saying words slowly at first and then faster • memorizing and practising TL phrases
Analysing the sound system	• listening to pronunciation errors made by TL speakers speaking one's nativelanguage	• forming and using hypotheses about pronunciation rules • noticing contrast between native and TL pronunciation

Direct LLS Group: Compensation

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported	
	Oxford's	Peterson's
Using proximal articulations	N/A	• No specific examples of this strategy were documented in the literature review.

Indirect Language learning strategies (LLS)
Indirect LLS Group: Metacognitive Strategies

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported	
	Oxford's	Peterson's
Finding out about TL pronunciation	• acquiring a general knowledge of phonetics • reading reference materials about the rules	N/A
Setting goals and objectives	• deciding to focus one's listening on particular sounds.	• deciding to focus one's learning on particular sounds. • deciding to memorise the sounds (or the alphabet) right away.
Planning for a language task	N/A	• preparing for an oral presentation by writing difficult-to-pronounce words very large in one's notes.
Self evaluating	N/A	• recording oneself to listen to one's pronunciation.

Indirect LLS Group: Affective Learning Strategies

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported	
	Oxford's	Peterson's
Using humor to lower anxiety	• having a sense of humor about mispronunciations.	N/A

Indirect LLS Group: Social Strategies

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported	
	Oxford's	Peterson's
Cooperating with peers	N/A	• studying with someone else • teaching or tutoring someone else
Asking for help	• asking someone else to correct one's pronunciation • asking someone else to pronounce something	N/A

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Appendix C

Lesson plans of pronunciation training Cycle One

Lesson plans of pronunciation training Cycle One

<u>Cycle One</u>

Pre-meeting   Tape record, reading passage / Self analysis and Questionnaire

Week one: 5 days (10 hours / 2 hours each)

Segmental aspects of consonant sounds

Descriptions   The importance of pronunciation training
Articulation of consonant sounds
How to use English-English Dictionary

Activities   Look up words in a Dictionary and pronounce consonant sounds together/pair works.
Remember symbol game
Differentiate place/manner of articulations
Listen to tape of native speaker's sample sounds and

practice

Reflective report
Group discussion

Expectations   Pronounce each sound symbol phonetically and
correctly.

Familiarize with sound symbols. Students will practice each sounds using the table as reference.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="9" align="center">Consonants</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2"></td><td colspan="8">Front ← →
Back</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8">How to make the sound: Don't use your voice   Use your voice</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Put both lips together</td><td>Use top teeth and bottom lip</td><td>Use tongue behind top teeth</td><td>Touch bump behind teeth with tongue</td><td>Between ← →</td><td>Hard bit of the roof of mouth</td><td>Touch roof of mouth (the soft bit) with your tongue</td><td>Use your throat</td></tr>
<tr><td>Stop air. Let it go suddenly</td><td>p
b</td><td></td><td></td><td>t
d</td><td></td><td></td><td>k
g</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Stop air. Let it go gradually</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>ch(tΣ)
j(dZ)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Let air pass</td><td></td><td>f</td><td>th(T)</td><td>s</td><td>sh(Σ)</td><td></td><td></td><td>h</td></tr>
</table>

through		v	t̶h̶(Δ)	z	zh(Z)			
Let air out of your nose	m			n			N	
Air goes round tongue				l				
Nearly touching	w					r	y	

Week two: 5 days (10 hours / 2 hours each)

Segmental aspects of vowel sounds and suprasegmental aspects of stress

Descriptions	Articulation of vowel sounds Word stress
Activities	Look up words/sound symbols in a Dictionary and pronounce each word together (consonant + vowel sounds) / pair works Differentiate mouth shape /listen to tape and practice Word stress practice Reflective report Group discussion
Expectations	Familiar with consonant and vowel symbols Pronounce words phonetically and correctly

Tongue	Vowels				Diphthongs		
High	**Front** ⟵⟶				**End at front** ⟵⟶		**End at**
	Back				**back**		
	i:	I	Y	u:	eI	I≅	≅Y
	e	≅	3:	O:	OI	Y≅	αY
	{	ς	A:	Θ	αI	e≅	
	Lips can be:						
Low	Spread	Neutral		Rounded	Closing	Centring	Closing

Sample of words practice:

Sound	Examples
/b/	beach, cabbage, cab
/d/	do, cod
/j/ or /dZ/	judge, major, cabbage
/k/	kick, making, take
/z/	zebra, lizard, maze
/v/	very, having, brave
/zh/ or /Z/	pleasure, beige

/b/ and /v/   ban, van

/l/ and /r/	late, rate
/th/ or /T/ and /s/	think, sink
/e/ and /eI/	get, gate
/I/ and /i:/	lick, leak
/{/ and /ç/	cat, cut

Week three: 5 days (10 hours / 2 hours each)

Suprasegmental aspects of intonations and wrap up

Descriptions	Sounds review / Word stress review Sentence stress Intonation: pitch, rhythm, linking, pausing Sentence endings to communicate emotion Wrap up
Activities	Practice with tape /pair works Role play of short sentence Reflective report Group discussion
Expectations	Read sentence phonetically and correctly and confidence speaking

Appendix D

Questionnaire for pre-test self assessment and analysis

Self-assessment and analysis

Record reading the given passage and answer the following questions.

Passage

Learning to speak a foreign language fluently and without an accent isn't easy. In most educational systems, students spend many years studying grammatical rules, but they don't get much of a chance to speak. Arriving in a new country can be a frustrating experience. Although they may be able to read and write very well, they often   find that they can't understand what people say to them. English is especially difficult because the pronunciation of words is not clearly shown by how they're written. But the major problem is being able to listen, think, and respond in another language at a natural speed. This takes time and practice. (Dauer, 1993)

Questions

1. Which consonants do you have difficulty with?

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2. Do you omit some sounds you shouldn't or add sounds that don't belong?

   What are those sounds and words?

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3. Do you pronounce all -s and -ed endings?

   What are those sounds and words?

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4. Do you pronounce consonants at the ends of words or do you omit some?

What are those sounds and words?

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5. Can you pronounce some sounds perfectly in one position in a syllable but

not in another? What are those sounds and words?

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Appendix E

Guideline for reflective report

Guideline for reflective report

The following questions are the guidelines to reflect your feelings and progress in the training. Please complete a record of your experiences daily. It is not necessary to answer all questions at a time. Choose the ones that match you and/or add more on what are not stated here.

- What have you learned from the training today/this week?
- Identify your personal feelings and frame of mind concerning the training
- Which part did you find most useful?
- Do you have any problems with the training?
- What learning strategies you used to overcome the problems? Which stage?
- What is your plan to do to overcome your problems?
- Did you feel your pronunciation has been improved? What?
- How is the training helping your pronunciation improvement?
- How much impact has the training had on your improvement?
- Which stage of the training do you find difficult?
- Do feel more improved? Which stage?
- How do you feel about the training?
- How can we improve the training programme?
- What would you like to change for the programme?
- What would you like to do more of?
- The benefits you get from the training programme.
- How confident do you feel in using what you learned?

Thank you

Appendix F

Permission letter to parents

Information to Participants (Parents)

My name is Patchara Varasarin and I am a language trainer, experiencing in Pronunciation training. I am undertaking research as part of my Doctor of Education degree at Victoria University, Australia. The aim of the research is to develop English speaking confidence by teaching pronunciation.

I would like to invite your child to be a part of my research project being conducted at their school. It will be conducted in two phases. The first phase might be described as "teacher a trainer". In this phase, English teachers will be trained, as part of a project, a pronunciation training which aims to enhance their English speaking skill and feel confident to speak. Teachers will discuss with the researcher about their improvement and what should be modified, if any. Procedures for the second phase will be discussed before continuing the second phase. In the second phase, teachers will deliver the same training program they have been trained in the first phase to the selected students from grade 8-10. Teachers will observe each other's classes and take note. The repetition of the program is to test its effectiveness.

It is expected that the project would be conducted over thirty hours each phase. There will be ten sessions of a three-hour-class. Every session will be audio-taped. The researcher, teachers and students will keep a journal about the class as well as their improvement. These data will be analysed to see if, and how the pronunciation training and language learning strategies may contribute to the participants.

Teachers participating in the project will be able to use their professional judgement when conducting the learning activities to modify tasks according to learner-centred approach. Data gathered from individual teachers and students will remain confidential.

Participation is voluntary and participants will be able to withdraw from the project at any time and unprocessed information provided will not be used. Your child's participation will not interfere with their credit score or normal subjects in any way.

Patchara Varasarin

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the researcher (Patchara Varasarin ph. 66-1-847-5123 or Prof. David Maunders ph. 61-3-9718 2506).
If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MC, Melbourne, 8001 (Telephone no: 03-9688 4710).

Victoria University of Technology

Consent Form for Participants Involved in Research

CERTIFICATION BY PARTICIPANT (Parents)

I,
of

certify that I am at least 18 years old and that I am voluntarily giving my consent for my child to participate in the research project entitled:

An Action Research Study of English Pronunciation Training,
Language Learning Strategies, and Speaking Confidence.

Being conducted at Victoria University of Technology by:
Patchara Varasarin and Professor David Maunders

I certify that the objectives of the research, together with any risks to me associated with it, have been fully explained to me by:
Patchara Varasarin.

and that I freely consent to take part in the action research groups for 30 hours and to record information as outlined.

I certify that I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered and that I understand that I can withdraw from this project at any time and that this withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way.
I have been informed that the information I provide will be kept confidential.

Signed: …………………………………
          Date…………..

Witness other than the researcher:

……………………………………………
          Date …………...

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the researcher (Patchara Varasarin ph. 66-1-847-5123 or Prof. David Maunders ph. 61-3-9718 2506).
If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MC, Melbourne, 8001 (Telephone no: 03-9688 4710).

(*Please note: where the participant/s is aged under 18, separate parental consent is required; where the participant is unable to answer for themselves due to mental illness or disability, parent or guardian consent may be required.

Appendix G

Questionnaire for pre-session self diagnosis

(strengths and weaknesses)

Questionnaire: Introspecting your own language learning

What pronunciation obstacles have you faced in learning English? If you have not achieved a target like pronunciation, which of the following do you feel help to account for this? Check the boxes that apply.

☐ I don't know where my pronunciation problem lies. I don't notice them.

☐ I know that I transfer sounds from my native language (Thai).

☐ I can't hear the difference between some of English sounds and my native
   language (Thai).

☐ I can't produce the difference between some of the sounds in English and
similar
   sounds in my native language (Thai).

☐ It's not important for me to improve my pronunciation. People understand
me without trouble.

☐ Even though I can produce some of English sounds, it takes too much effort
or concentration when I'm speaking.

☐ I like my own accent. I don't want to be like a native speaker or sound like
one.

☐ English native speakers comment that my foreign accent is cute and
charming. I don't have any motivation to change.

☐ I haven't had enough training or practice in pronunciation when I learned
the language.

☐ I learned the language too late. Only younger people can acquire a foreign
   language without an accent.

This section is for teachers as learners

1. Have you experienced in teaching English?

   If 'Yes', how do you help students with pronunciation difficulty in class?

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2. State your opinion on pronunciation teaching

   Should pronunciation be included in English class? Why?

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3. Do you think the pronunciation training will benefit you and your teaching? Why?

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Thank you.

Appendix H

Problem sounds of teachers in Cycle One

Problem sounds of teachers in Cycle One

Cycle 1	Pre-test (problem)		
Teachers	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
T1	/ϖ, th, zh, j/	a., b., e.	/ρ/
T2	/th, j, zh, γ /	a., b., e.	/ρ/
T3	/th, th, j, γ/	a., b., c., e.	/ρ/
T4	All sounds	All sounds	/ρ/
T5	/zh, j/	_	/ρ/

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

   Teacher 1 could not pronounce /ϖ, th, zh, j/ sounds.

   Teacher 2 could not pronounce /th, j, zh, γ /sounds.

   Teacher 3 could not pronounce /th, th, j, γ/ sounds.

   Teacher 5 could not pronounce /zh, j/ sounds.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position.</u>

   Teacher 1 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, and /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/
   and /k/ were pronounced unreleased.
   Teacher 2 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, and /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/
   and /k/ were pronounced unreleased in stead of released.
   Teacher 3 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/,
   and /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/ and /k/ were pronounced unreleased in stead of released.
   Teacher 5 had no problem on this category

3. <u>Sounds which are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

   All   Teachers could not pronounce English /r/ sound.

Appendix I

Comparison of Teachers' problem sounds

pre-test and post-test in Cycle One

Comparison of Teachers' problem sounds pre-test and post-test in Cycle One

Coding: IP= had improved, P= need practice

Cycle 1	Pre-test (problem)			Post test (improvement)		
Teachers	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Teacher 1	/ϖ, th, zh, j/	a., b., e.	/ρ/	P /j/	IP	P
Teacher 2	/th, j, zh, γ /	a., b., e.	/ρ/	IP	IP	IP
Teacher 3	/th, th, j, γ/	a., b., c., e.	/ρ/	P /th, th/	P /c.	P
Teacher 4	All sounds	All sounds	/ρ/	IP	IP	IP
Teacher 5	/zh, j/	_	/ρ/	IP	_	IP

The following described each learner's improvement according to Table 4.5.

Teacher 1

1. Sounds that do not occur in Thai

   Teacher 1 could not pronounce /ϖ, th, zh, j/ sounds but improved three of these sounds except for /j/ that needed practice.

2. Sounds that do not occur in final position

   Teacher 1 originally pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, and /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/ and /k/ were pronounced unreleased. All were improved after training.

3. Sounds which are phonetically different from Thai equivalents

   Teacher 1 could not pronounce /r/ in English, and still needed practice.

Teacher 2

1. Sounds that do not occur in Thai

   Teacher 2 could not pronounce /th, j, zh, γ /sounds and all were improved after the training.

2. Sounds that do not occur in final position

   Teacher 2 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, and /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/ and /k/ were pronounced unreleased instead of released. All had been improved after the training.

3. Sounds which are phonetically different from Thai equivalents

   Teacher 2 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Teacher 3

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

Teacher 3 could not pronounce /th, ᵾh, j, ɣ/ sounds. The /ᵾh/ and /th/ sounds needed practice after the training.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>

Teacher 3 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/ and /k/ were pronounced unreleased instead of released. The unreleased /d/ for /s/ needed practice after the training.

3. <u>Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

Teacher 3 could not pronounce /r/ in English and still needed practice after the training.

Teacher 4

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>
2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>
3. <u>Sounds which are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

Teacher 4 could not pronounce all sounds of three categories and all were improved after the training.

Teacher 5

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

Teacher 5 could not pronounce /zh, j/ sounds and still needed practice after the training.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>

Teacher 5 showed no problem in this category

3. <u>Sounds which are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

Teacher 5 could not pronounce /r/ in English but had been improved after the training.

Appendix J

Lesson plans of pronunciation training Cycle Two

Lesson plans of pronunciation training Cycle Two

Cycle Two

Pre-meeting   **Tape record, reading passage / Self analysis and**
                        Questionnaire
                        Introduction to language learning strategies

Week one: **5 days (10 hours / 2 hours each)**

Segmental aspects of vowel sounds

Descriptions   The importance of pronunciation training
                        Articulation of vowel sounds
                        How to use English-English Dictionary

Activities   Look up words/vowel symbols in a Dictionary and
                        pronounce each word together / pair works
                        Differentiate mouth shape and vowel sounds, listen to
                        tape and practice
                        Reflective report
                        Group discussion

Expectations   Pronounce each sound symbol phonetically and
correctly.

                        Familiarize with sound symbols. Students will practice
                        each sounds using the table as reference.

Tongue	Vowels				Diphthongs		
High	**Front** ⟵————————⟶ **Back**				**End at front** ⟵⟶ **back**		**End at**
⬆	i:	I	Y	u:	eI	I≅	≅Y
	e	≅	3:	O:	OI	Y≅	αY
	{	ς	A:	Θ	αI	e≅	
	Lips can be:						
Low	Spread	Neutral	Rounded		Closing	Centring	Closing

Week two: **5 days (10 hours / 2 hours each)**

Segmental aspects of consonant sounds and suprasegmental aspects of

stress

Descriptions   Articulation of consonant sounds
                        Word stress

Activities   Look up words/sound symbols in a Dictionary and
                        pronounce each word together (consonant + vowel
                        sounds) / pair works

		Differentiate mouth shape /listen to tape and practice
		Word stress practice
		Reflective report
		Group discussion
Expectations		Familiar with consonant and vowel symbols
		Pronounce words phonetically and correctly. Students will practice each sounds using the table as reference.

Consonants							
Front ← → **Back**							
How to make the sound: **Don't use your voice** Use your voice							
	Put both lips together	Use top teeth and bottom lip	Use tongue behind top teeth	Touch bump behind teeth with tongue	Between ← →	Hard bit of the roof of mouth	Touch roof of mouth (the soft bit) with your tongue	Use your throat
Stop air. Let it go suddenly	**p** **b**			**t** **d**			**k** **g**	
Stop air. Let it go gradually				**ch(tΣ)** **j(dZ)**				
Let air pass through		**f** v	**th(T)** th(Δ)	**s** z	**sh(Σ)** **zh(Z)**			**h**
Let air out of your nose	**m**			**n**			**N**	
Air goes round tongue				**l**				
Nearly touching	**w**				**r**	**y**		

Sample of words practice:

Sound	Examples
/b/	beach, cabbage, cab
/d/	do, cod
/j/ or /dZ/	judge, major, cabbage
/k/	kick, making, take
/z/	zebra, lizard, maze
/v/	very, having, brave
/zh/ or /Z/	pleasure, beige

/b/ and /v/	ban, van
/l/ and /r/	late, rate
/th/ or /T/ and /s/	think, sink
/e/ and /eI/	get, gate
/I/ and /i:/	lick, leak
/{/ and /ç/	cat, cut

Week three: 5 days (10 hours / 2 hours each)
Suprasegmental aspects of intonations and wrap up

Descriptions	Sounds review / Word stress review
	Sentence stress
	Intonation: pitch, rhythm, linking, pausing
	Sentence endings to communicate emotion
	Wrap up
Activities	Practice with tape /pair works
	Role play of short sentence
	Reflective report
	Group discussion
Expectations	Read sentence phonetically and correctly and confidence
	speaking

Appendix K

Problem sounds of students in Cycle Two

Problem sounds of students in Cycle Two

Cycle 2	Pre-test (problem)		
Students	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
S1	/ϖ, th, th, ζ, zh, ch, j, γ/	a., b., c., d.	/ρ/
S2	/ th, th, ζ, zh, j, γ/	a., b., c., e.	/ρ/
S3	/ th, th, zh, ch, j/	All sounds	/ρ/
S4	/ϖ, th, zh, ch, j,γ/	a., b., c.	/ρ/
S5	/ϖ, th, ζ, zh, j/	All sounds	/ρ/
S6	/ϖ, th, ζ, zh, j/	a., c., d.	/ρ/
S7	/ϖ, th, zh, ch, j/	All sounds	/ρ/
S8	/ϖ, th, ζ, zh, j/	a., c., d.	/ρ/
S9	/ϖ, th, th, zh, j/	a., b., d.	/ρ/
S10	/ϖ, th, zh, j/	a., b., c., e.	/ρ/
S11	/ϖ, th, zh, j/	All sounds	/ρ/
S12	/ϖ, th, zh, j/	a., b., c., d.	/ρ/
S13	/th, th, zh, ch, j/	a., b., c., d.	/ρ/
S14	/ϖ, th, ζ, zh, j/	a., b., e.	/ρ/
S15	/ϖ, th, zh, ch, j/	All sounds	/ρ/
S16	/th, zh, j/	a., b., c., d.	/ρ/
S17	/ϖ, th, ζ, zh, ch, j/	a., b., c., d.	/ρ/
S18	/ϖ, th, zh, j/	a., b., c., d.	/ρ/
S19	/ϖ, / th, th, zh, j/	All sounds	/ρ/
S20	/th, ζ, zh, ch, j/	a., b., c., d.	/ρ/

1. Sounds that do not occur in Thai

Student 1 could not pronounce /ϖ, th, th, ζ, zh, ch, j, γ/ sounds.

Student 2 could not pronounce / th, th, ζ, zh, j, γ/ sounds.

Student 3 could not pronounce / th, th, zh, ch, j/ sounds.

Student 4 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, ch, j, γ/ sounds.

 Student 5 could not pronounce / v, th, ζ, zh, j,/ sounds.

Student 6 could not pronounce / v, th, ζ, zh, j/ sounds.

Student 7 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, ch, j/ sounds.

Student 8 could not pronounce / v, th, z, zh, j/ sounds.

Student 9 could not pronounce / v, th, th, zh, j/ sounds.

Student 10 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, j/ sounds.

Student 11 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, j/ sounds.

Student 12 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, j/ sounds.

Student 13 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, ch, j/ sounds.

Student 14 could not pronounce / v, th, z, zh, j/ sounds.

 Student 15 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, ch, j/ sounds.

 Student 16 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, j/ sounds.

Student 17 could not pronounce / v, ʤh, z, zh, ch, j/ sounds.

Student 18 could not pronounce / v, ʧh, zh, j/ sounds.

Student 19 could not pronounce / v, ʧh, th, zh, j/ sounds.

Student 20 could not pronounce /ʧh, z, zh, ch, j/ sounds.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position.</u> There are 5 sub-categories:

   a. /l/ substituted by /n/

   b. /f/ substituted by unreleased /β/

   c. /s/ substituted by unreleased /δ/

   d. /s/ may be omitted when occurs after diphthongs /ai/ i.e. nice, /au/ i.e. house, /Oi/ i.e. rejoice.

   e. /π /, /β/, /t/, /δ /, and /k/ are pronounced as unreleased instead of released sounds

Student 1 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words.

Student 2 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/ and /k/ were pronounced unreleased in stead of released.

Student 4 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/ and unreleased /d/ for /s/.

Student 6 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words.

Student 8 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words.

Student 9 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, and omitted /s/ in some words.

Student 10 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/ and /k/ were pronounced unreleased in stead of released.

Student 12 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and   omitted /s/ in some words.

Student 13 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and   omitted /s/ in some words.

Student 14 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, and /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/ and /k/ were pronounced unreleased in stead of released.

Student 16 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words.

Student 17 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words. The unreleased /d/ for /s/ needed practice after the training.

Student 18 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words.

Student 20 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words.

Student 3-5-7-11-15-19 had problems with all categories.

3. <u>Sounds which are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>
     All students could not pronounce English /r/ sound.

Appendix L

Comparison of students' problem sounds

pre-test and post-test in Cycle Two

Comparison of students' problem sounds pre-test and post-test in Cycle Two

Coding: IP = had improved, P = need practice

Cycle 2	Pre-test (problem)			Post test (improvement)		
Students	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
S1	/ϖ, th, th, ζ, zh, ch, j, γ/	a., b., c., d.	/ρ/	P /th, th/	IP	IP
S2	/ th, th, ζ, zh, j, γ/	a., b., c., e.	/ρ/	P /zh, j, γ/	IP	IP
S3	/ th, th, zh, ch, j/	All sounds	/ρ/	IP	IP	IP
S4	/ϖ, th, zh, ch, j,γ/	a., b., c.	/ρ/	P	IP	IP
S5	/ϖ, th, ζ, zh, j/	All sounds	/ρ/	IP	P /b.	IP
S6	/ϖ, th, ζ, zh, j/	a., c., d.	/ρ/	P /j/	IP	IP
S7	/ϖ, th, zh, ch, j/	All sounds	/ρ/	P /th/	IP	P
S8	/ϖ, th, ζ, zh, j/	a., c., d.	/ρ/	IP	IP	IP
S9	/ϖ, th, th, zh, j/	a., b., d.	/ρ/	IP	IP	P
S10	/ϖ, th, zh, j/	a., b., c., e.	/ρ/	IP	P /a.	IP
S11	/ϖ, th, zh, j/	All sounds	/ρ/	P /zh, j/	P /a.	IP
S12	/ϖ, th, zh, j/	a., b., c., d.	/ρ/	IP	P /a.	IP
S13	/th, th, zh, ch, j/	a., b., c., d.	/ρ/	IP	P/c.	IP
S14	/ϖ, th, ζ, zh, j/	a., b., e.	/ρ/	P /z, zh, j/	IP	IP
S15	/ϖ, th, zh, ch, j/	All sounds	/ρ/	IP	IP	IP
S16	/th, zh, j/	a., b., c., d.	/ρ/	P /zh/	IP	IP
S17	/ϖ, th, ζ, zh, ch, j/	a., b., c., d.	/ρ/	IP	P /c.	P
S18	/ϖ, th, zh, j/	a., b., c., d.	/ρ/	IP	IP	IP
S19	/ϖ, / th, th, zh, j/	All sounds	/ρ/	IP	P /a.	IP
S20	/th, ζ, zh, ch, j/	a., b., c., d.	/ρ/	IP	IP	IP

I transcribed sounds from tape recordings of each teacher and placed those sounds in three categories. I analyzed the improvement in two main types. They were 'had improved' (IP) or 'need practice' (P). The level of improvement is those sounds was pronounced correctly in every time of reading. The 'need practice' was to pronounce sometime incorrectly.

The followings were to describe each learner's improvement according to the Table above.

Student 1

1. Sounds that do not occur in Thai

S1 could not pronounce /ϖ, th, th, ζ, zh, ch, j, γ/ sounds and the /th/, /th/ sounds needed practice after the training.

2. Sounds that do not occur in final position

S1 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words. All were improved after the training.

3. <u>Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

S1 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 2

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

S2 could not pronounce / th, ʧ, ζ, zh, j, γ/ sounds and the /zh/, /j/, and /γ/ sounds needed practice after the training.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>

S2 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/ and /k/ were pronounced unreleased in stead of released. All were improved after the training.

3. <u>Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

S2 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 3

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

S3 could not pronounce / th, th, zh, ch, j/ sounds but had improved all sounds after the training.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>

S3 could not pronounce all sounds but had improved after the   training.

3. <u>Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

S3 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 4

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

S4 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, ch, j, γ/ sounds. All sounds needed
 practice after the training.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>

S4 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/ and unreleased /d/ for /s/ but had improved after the training.

3. <u>Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

S4 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training

Student 5

1. Sounds that do not occur in Thai

   S5 could not pronounce / v, th, ζ, zh, j,/ sounds. All were improved after the training.

2. Sounds that do not occur in final position

   S5 had problems in all categories, but pronounced unreleased /b/ in substitution for /f/ needed improvement after the training

3. Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents

   S5 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 6

1. Sounds that do not occur in Thai

   S6 could not pronounce / v, th, ζ, zh, j/ sounds and only the /j/ sound needed practice after the training.

2. Sounds that do not occur in final position

   S6 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words. All were improved after the training.

3. Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents

   S6 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training

Student 7

1. Sounds that do not occur in Thai

   S7 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, ch, j/ sounds and only the / thr / sound needed practice after the training.

2. Sounds that do not occur in final position

   S7 had problems in all categories, but had improved after the training.

3. Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents

   S7 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 8

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

   S8 could not pronounce / v, ʧh, z, zh, j/ sounds. All were improved after the training.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>

   S6 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words. All were improved after the training.

3. <u>Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

   S8 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 9

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

   S9 could not pronounce / v, th, ʧh, zh, j/ sounds. All were improved after the training.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>

   S9 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, and omitted /s/ in some words. All were improved after the training.

3. <u>Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

   S9 could not pronounce /r/ in English, and needed practice after the training.

Student 10

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

   S10 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, j/ sounds. All were improved after the training.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>

   S10 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/ and /k/ were pronounced unreleased in stead of released. The /n/ for /l/ sound needed practice after the training.

3. <u>Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

   S10 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 11

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

   S11 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, j/ sounds. The /zh/ and /j/ sounds needed practice after the training.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>

   S11 had problems in all categories. Only /n/ for /l/ needed practice after the training.

3. <u>Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

   S11 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 12

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

   S12 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, j/ sounds. All sounds were improved after the training.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>

   S12 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words. The /n/ for /l/ sounds needed practice
   after the training.

3. <u>Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

   S12 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 13

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

   S13 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, ch, j/ sounds. All sounds were improved after the training.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>

   S13 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words. The unreleased /d/ for /s/ sounds needed practice after the training.

3. <u>Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

   S13 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 14

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

S14 could not pronounce / v, ~~th~~, z, zh, j/ sounds. The /z/, /zh/, and /j/ sounds needed practice after the training.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>

S14 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, and /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/ and /k/ were pronounced unreleased in stead of released. All sounds were improved after the training.

3. <u>Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

S14 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 15

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

S15 could not pronounce / v, ~~th~~, zh, ch, j/ sounds. All sounds were improved after the training.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>

S15 had problems in all categories but had improved after the training.

3. <u>Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

S15 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 16

1. <u>Sounds that do not occur in Thai</u>

S16 could not pronounce / v, ~~th~~, zh, j/ sounds. The /zh/ sound needed practice after the training.

2. <u>Sounds that do not occur in final position</u>

S16 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words. All were improved after the training.

3. <u>Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents</u>

S16 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 17

1. Sounds that do not occur in Thai

   S17 could not pronounce / v, th, z, zh, ch, j/ sounds. All sounds were improved after the training.

2. Sounds that do not occur in final position

   S17 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words. The unreleased /d/ for /s/ needed practice after the training.

3. Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents

   S17 could not pronounce /r/ in English, and needed practice after the training.

Student 18

1. Sounds that do not occur in Thai

   S18 could not pronounce / v, th, zh, j/ sounds. All sounds were improved after the training.

2. Sounds that do not occur in final position

   S18 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words. All sounds were improved after the training.

3. Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents

   S18 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 19

1. Sounds that do not occur in Thai

   S19 could not pronounce / v, th, th, zh, j/ sounds. All sounds were improved after the training.

2. Sounds that do not occur in final position

   S19 had problems with all categories. Only /n/ for /l/ needed practice after the training.

3. Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents

   S19 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

Student 20

1. Sounds that do not occur in Thai

   S20 could not pronounce /tʃ, z, zh, ch, j/ sounds. All sounds were improved after the training.

2. Sounds that do not occur in final position

   S18 pronounced /n/ for /l/, unreleased /b/ for /f/, unreleased /d/ for /s/, and omitted /s/ in some words. All sounds were improved after the training.

3. Sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents

   S20 could not pronounce /r/ in English, but had improved after the training.

   The sounds that most participants did not improve and needed practice in category 1 were /tʃ, th, z, zh, j, γ/. In category 2 they were sub-category a (/l/ substituted by /n/), sub-category c (/s/ substituted by unreleased /δ/) and sub-category b (/f/ substituted by unreleased /β/) respectively. They were all improved in category 3 of /r/ sounds.

Appendix M

Comparison of the use of pronunciation learning strategies

Indirect LLS Group: Metacognitive Strategies

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported			
	Teachers'	**Students'**	**Oxford's**	**Peterson's**
Finding out about target language pronunciation	**N/A**	**N/A**	• acquiring a general knowledge of phonetics • reading reference materials about the rules	**N/A**
Setting goals and objectives	• concentrating on the practice assignment • concentrating on consonant and vowel sounds for improvement	• targeting on improvement • focusing on consonant sounds.	• deciding to focus one's listening on particular sounds.	• deciding to focus one's learning on particular sounds. • deciding to memorise the sounds (or the alphabet) right away.
Planning for a language task	• preparing oneself well before each class to be improved • preparing oneself and practice before each class • planning to remember all consonant sounds before learning vowels	• preparing oneself ready for the next step • practising well so can remember all sounds • planning to remember all consonant and vowel sounds and symbols	**N/A**	• preparing for an oral presentation by writing difficult-to-pronounce words very large in one's notes.
Self evaluating	• being more attentive to the class for improvement because it is useful • will be practising more though feel improved • always practising and feel improved	• being more attentive to all classes for improvement because it is good • realising that one's pronunciation is improved and accent is good so should study hard, learn more and practise	**N/A**	• recording oneself to listen to one's pronunciation.

Indirect LLS Group: Affective learning strategies

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported			
	Teachers'	**Students'**	**Oxford's**	**Peterson's**
Using humour to lower anxiety	**N/A**	**N/A**	• having a sense of humor about mispronunciations.	**N/A**
***Controlling feelings and motivating	• feeling embarrassed to mispronounce sounds in classroom that motivated more attention • wanting to learn more about pronunciation • fearing that it is not correct when practicing but will try hard • being eager to learn and practice • feeling down when do not practice hard like others but will do it harder	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**

Indirect LLS Group: Affective learning strategies (con't)

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported			
	Teachers'	Students'	Oxford's	Peterson's
***Having positive attitude on the training and learning	• feeling happy to know about pronunciation • feeling very happy to be in classroom and to have learned it • feeling to have ability to do it from the training	• feeling happy to join the class • appreciating to practice for improvement • judging vowel sounds are more easier • feeling of fun and happy to learn • feeling happy and enjoy activities • enjoy reading with correct pronunciation and no more Thai accent • feeling to have ability to do it from the training • showing appreciation on dictionary practice	N/A	N/A
***Showing one's confidence and to share knowledge with others	• feeling confident to have been improved after the training • feeling confident to teach others because of one's improvement	N/A	N/A	N/A
***Fulfilling one's expectations	• being happy about one's improvement	• being happy about being native-like speaker • being happy and excited to understand and be understood	N/A	N/A

Indirect LLS Group: Social strategies

Pronunciation Learning Strategies	The use (tactics) reported			
	Teachers'	**Students'**	**Oxford's**	**Peterson's**
Cooperating with peers	• practising with someone else • guiding someone else to do it	• practising with someone else • feeling like to learn and share with others	**N/A**	• studying with someone else • teaching or tutoring someone else
Asking for help	• asking someone else to correct one's pronunciation • asking someone how to pronounce correctly • discussing about pronunciation in order to have learned from someone else	**N/A**	• asking someone else to correct one's pronunciation • asking someone else to pronounce something	**N/A**

Intentionally left blank