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Pronunciation Learning Environment: EFL Students' Cognitions of In-class and Out-of-class Factors Affecting Pronunciation Acquisition

Abstract

The way a foreign language (L2) learner perceives his or her educational environment may affect their processes of L2 acquisition. The aim of the study presented in this paper is to explore English as a foreign language (EFL) students' perceptions of their teachers' pronunciation, in-class and outside-class factors regarding pronunciation acquisition, such as pronunciation activities, recordings, focus on form, peer pronunciation, listening to music, to mention a few. A group of 89 participants responded to a survey, via which the data necessary to respond to the following three research questions was collected. How do EFL learners perceive their teachers' pronunciation? What is the relationship between EFL learners' perceived level of their L2 teachers' pronunciation and perceived L2 teachers' classroom language use? What factors, in the view of L2 learners, contribute to their pronunciation acquisition? The results indicate that there are significant differences in the perception of teachers' pronunciation at different educational levels. Also, in L2 pronunciation learning the EFL students report the following factors as moderately important: L2 teachers' pronunciation, in-class L2 use, pronunciation error correction, and in-class and out-of-class exposure to multimedia that provide access to a broad range of L2 pronunciation varieties.

Keywords: educational environment, EFL learners' perceptions/cognitions, EFL teachers' pronunciation, in-class and out-of-class factors affecting pronunciation acquisition

Introduction

The way a learner perceives his or her proximal educational environment may shape the learning paths (Dörnyei, 2005) and foreign language (L2) learning outcomes (Williams & Burden, 1997). More specifically, if a language

learner is exposed to such factors, for instance, as an appropriate model of a language, clear instructions and effective error correction, and if these factors are compatible with the individual's expectations, the learning processes may accelerate. However, the reverse situation may transpire if a learning environment does not fulfill the anticipated standards. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to attend to students' cognitions regarding their learning environment in order to establish the best possible conditions for learning. The aim of this paper is to place in the limelight these environmental factors that students of English as a foreign language (EFL) perceive as conducive to their L2 pronunciation learning. For this purpose, the outcomes of research into L2 learners' perceptions of a number of in- and out-of-class factors regarding pronunciation acquisition are presented and discussed below. These results may provide an insight into a better understanding of the perceived environmental factors affecting pronunciation acquisition. They may also tap into the design of student-oriented pronunciation teaching approaches.

A foreign language learning environment may be understood as a formal and informal setting which is beneficial to learning a foreign language, entailing material and non-material resources as well as "the relationships created [...] in the course of interaction among all learning process participants" (Stukalina, 2010, p. 347). This definition comprises socio-psychological, socio-cultural, pedagogical, and physical dimensions (Saglam & Sali, 2013). The first aspect involves all types of in-class student-student and student-teacher interactions and out-of-class student-interlocutor communications that are shaped by individuals' personalities and learner differences. The second one focuses on culture factors that moderate L2 learning processes (Entwistle et al., 2003). Pedagogical dimension comprises, among other factors, the role of a teacher and learners' perceptions of a teaching performance. Finally, the physical dimensions embrace, for instance, lecture rooms, classrooms, curricula, teaching materials, equipment, and aids (Stukalina, 2010). The educational environment, therefore, is a complex system of diverse constituents interplaying dynamically with one another and affecting the efficiency of an L2 learning process.

Learners are good witnesses of their own learning, and they are able to deliver reliable and valid feedback concerning their perceived efficiency of various components of an educational environment (Centra, 2003). As Culver (2010) indicates "given their role as participant observers in classrooms, students are in an excellent position to provide feedback regarding classroom teaching and overall performance of an instructor" (p. 334). Therefore, although L2 pronunciation acquisition has been thoroughly researched from a number of perspectives, such as age (cf. Birdsong & Molis, 2001; Colatoni, Steele, & Escudero, 2015; Johnson & Newport, 1989), cross-linguistic influence (cf. Święciński, 2013), motivation (cf. Bongaerts et al., 1997; Moyer, 1999), exposure to a target language (cf. Rogerson-Revell, 2011), explicit instruction

(cf. Celce-Murcia et al., 2010; Wrembel, 2004), to mention a few, scholars' interest in learners' cognitions of pronunciation learning processes has recently gained more popularity (e.g., Aufderhaar, 2004; Derwing & Rossiter, 2002; Ma, 2012). This paper aims to augment the trend of exploiting learners' perspectives associated with foreign language (L2) pronunciation learning, taking place in their educational environments.

Selected Factors Affecting L2 Pronunciation Learning

There have been many attempts to categorize factors affecting L2 pronunciation (cf. Celce-Murcia et al., 2010). Following Zhang's (2009) taxonomy, these factors may be roughly divided into internal and external. The former derives from learners' characteristics that entail biological (age), cognitive (aptitude, leaning style, strategies), and psychological (motivation, identity, beliefs, affective factors) aspects. The external factors are those that are influenced by the educational environment, and they are conditioned by sociocultural (amount of exposure) and pedagogical (instruction, teacher's competence) dimensions. These factors play a major role in the research described below. Therefore, there is a need to scrutinize them more thoroughly. First, more attention is given to the role of the amount of exposure to L2 in pronunciation learning. Next, the focus is shifted towards the value of a classroom instruction and a teacher.

The more the learner is exposed to L2, the better his or her L2 pronunciation attainment. This claim is shared, for instance, by Rogerson-Revell (2011), who asserts that the amount of exposure to the target language is one of the critical factors in L2 pronunciation acquisition. Be it in the target language country or not, the exposure entails an L2 learner's contact with native and non-native target language speakers, as well as a range of multimedia channels. However, a mere exposure without noticing and discriminating subtle contrasts between L1 and L2 sound systems might lead to unsatisfactory results. Additionally, age seems to be a moderating variable, because the older the learners are, the more automatized their articulatory movements for producing L1 sounds become. In consequence, "even advanced speakers find it difficult to acquire new gestural scores for L2 phonemes" (Kormos, 2006, p. xxvi). Therefore, several scholars, for instance Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), opt for early immersion instructional programs as optimal instances of an L2 exposure. In other words, because of their greater articulatory plasticity, and perhaps many other socio-psychological factors (cf. Dalton & Seildhofer, 1994), children may benefit most from an optimal exposure to L2 pronunciation in their educational environments.

The second external factor affecting pronunciation learning selected for the present analysis is pronunciation instruction. Since the beginning of the new millennium, there has been an increase in research investigating the effectiveness of explicit pronunciation teaching (cf. Saito, 2012), entailing focused instruction, the application of metalinguistic training (Macdonald, Yule, & Powers, 1994; Stasiak & Szpyra-Kozłowska, 2003; Wrembel, 2004), and various focus on form (FonF) teaching techniques, such as and focus tasks with or without corrective feedback (Lan & Wu, 2013; Saito, 2011). This movement has been a reaction to meaning-focused instruction dominant in the Communicative Language Teaching approach that disregarded the formal aspect of language learning (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010). Lan and Wu (2013) explain that

FonF instruction is a method of L2 instruction focusing on both linguistic forms and communication. It is an alternative to focus on meaning instruction of the school of Natural Approach [...], which prohibits direct grammar teaching and promotes natural input of L2 texts and listening materials only. (p. 30)

There is a bulk of empirical studies providing evidence for positive effects of explicit pronunciation instruction in the acquisition of various pronunciation aspects. For example, Wrembel (2004) conducted a quasi-experiment, in which she measured the relationship between L2 pronunciation attainment and phonological training. The experimental group outperformed the control group in such production tests as reading lists of words and reading a dialogue. In another quasi-experiment, Stasiak and Szpyra-Kozłowska (2003) aimed to determine the effectiveness of two different approaches to pronunciation teaching: pronunciation taught through imitation/drilling and pronunciation taught through phonetic instruction. Although the authors did not find significant differences in the pronunciation attainment between these two groups, they noticed improvements in the participants' pronunciation of several segmental features, for instance word-final velar nasal, dental fricatives and the pronunciation of individual words, compared with the control group that had not received any pronunciation treatment. Similarly, Saito's (2011) research results confirmed the effectiveness of pronunciation instruction. In his quasi-experiment only the participants assigned to the group taught through explicit phonetic instruction and repetitive practice improved their pronunciation performance in the sentence reading tasks. The classroom application of explicit pronunciation teaching, following FonF instruction, however, has not gained its momentum yet.

The role of a language teacher in an L2 learner's pronunciation acquisition cannot be overlooked, particularly, in the foreign language educational environment where the exposure to the target language is limited. In these contexts, L2 teachers function as major pronunciation models and sources of input for their

students (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010). Their behaviors, including their language and instruction, tap into learners' motivation which may subsequently empower learners' pronunciation (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010) and overall language learning processes (Sutcliffe, 2011; Rockoff, 2004). This has been confirmed in several studies investigating learners' perceptions. For example, teachers' command of the target language, including L2 pronunciation, was the most important factor for L2 high school students in Korea (Park & Lee, 2006), Israel (Brosh, 1996), and Iran (Moradi & Sabeti, 2014). Teachers' language proficiency was the second most important factor for L2 university students in Korea (Barnes & Lock, 2013). Also for Arabic speakers their teachers' knowledge and experiences associated with L2 language acquisition were perceived as crucial (Sakurai, 2012). These research results should be sufficient enough for L2 teachers to attribute proper prominence to their L2 pronunciation because "ignoring students' pronunciation needs is an abrogation of professional responsibility" (Morley, 1991, p. 489).

The external environmental factors discussed above—that is, exposure to L2 pronunciation, elements of pronunciation instruction and L2 teachers' pronunciation—may be encountered either inside or outside the classroom. Exposure to L2 pronunciation is operationalized in the present study as EFL teachers' classroom use, peers' pronunciation, in-class listening to the recordings, out-of-class contacts with the target language native speakers, extracurricular classes, visiting English speaking countries, listening and watching authentic texts outside the classroom. The elements of pronunciation instruction have been limited here to pronunciation error correction and general in-class pronunciation practice. In the study, teachers' pronunciation has been approached from the global perspective, in which L2 learners apply holistic evaluation "invaluable in assessing the overall impression" (Szpyra-Kozłowska et al., 2004, p. 139). Generally, the aforementioned environmental factors, interplaying with pronunciation acquisition, form the core structure of the current study, in which the participants are requested to respond to how they perceive and evaluate several aspects occurring in their pronunciation learning processes. Although these judgments are subjective, they generate the data reflecting individuals' cognitions which constitute a preliminary diagnosis of the educational environment associated with pronunciation learning.

Method

The aim of the empirical study is to investigate EFL students' perceptions of their teachers' pronunciation, teaching behaviors and other in- and out-of-

class factors contributing to their pronunciation attainment. For this purpose, the following three research questions have been formulated:

1. How do L2 learners perceive their teachers' pronunciation?
2. What is the relationship between the L2 learners' perceived level of their L2 teachers' pronunciation and perceived L2 teachers' classroom language use?
3. What factors, in the view of L2 learners, contribute to their pronunciation acquisition?

Participants

The participants were 89 individuals in their first year of English Philology and English in Public Communication at Opole University, Poland. There were more female ($F = 69$) than male ($M = 20$) students. Their age ranged between 18 and 25, with the mean of 20. They declared 12 years as the average length of English language learning experience. As many as 33 participants reported at least one week of stay in English-speaking countries. More precisely, one respondent spent ten years in Scotland; five students lived in English-speaking countries between six months and two years; 16 individuals declared a six-month stay in the target language environment, and 11 of them reported a visit of up to three weeks. As the exposure to the target language is a crucial factor in pronunciation attainment, as discussed above, the respondents were asked to declare how many English language lessons they had weekly either at school or in extra-curricular activities. Only 64 of them marked that they had attended out-of-school courses with an average of 1.05 hour per week for 2.9 years. The mean values for the number of lessons at school differed, depending on an educational stage: 2.2 hours per week in the lower primary school, 3.06 hours in the upper primary school, 3.7 hours in junior high school, and 4.2 hours in high school.

Instrument

The instrument used in the study was a survey consisting of three parts (Appendix 1). The first one provided biodata, including age, gender, average length of English language learning experience, length of stay in English-speaking countries, extracurricular classes (frequency, length in years), and the number of hours of English at school (lower primary, upper primary, junior high

school, high school). The second part referred to the respondents' perception of their English language teachers' pronunciation (items 13–18), for example, How do you evaluate your primary school teachers' English pronunciation? The answers were supposed to be marked on a 5-point Likert scale from 1–very poor English pronunciation to 5–excellent, almost native-like English pronunciation. There was an option to evaluate separately the pronunciation of three different primary school teachers, three junior high school and three high school teachers. This part of the survey also contained the question regarding teachers' use of English in the classroom: How much time on average did the teacher speak English in your English lesson at primary school? The responses were also provided on a 5-point Likert scale (from 1—a teacher always or almost always used L1, 2—a teacher used mostly L1 but introduced single expressions and words in L2, 3—a teacher used both L1 and L2 in a more or less balanced manner, 4—a teacher used mostly L2 but occasionally explained difficulties in L1, 5—a teacher used always or almost always L2). Finally, the third part included items referring to in- and out-of-class factors affecting English pronunciation. The first group comprised of teachers' pronunciation, pronunciation practice in class, teacher error correction, listening to recordings in class, peers' pronunciation and one open item *other in-class factors*, which provided the respondents an opportunity to add their own in-class aspect perceived as important for L2 pronunciation acquisition. The following items designated the out-of-class factors: extracurricular classes, contact with native speakers of English, stay in an English-speaking country, listening to music outside the classroom, watching original films/TV outside the classroom, listening to other recordings (e.g., audiobooks) outside the classroom, and other out-of-class factors. The last item was an open question created for the participants to complete with the aspect or aspects that had not been enumerated earlier though perceived as important for their pronunciation learning. In this part, the individuals were to report the extent to which these factors had affected their English pronunciation on a 5-point Likert scale from 1—not at all to 5—to a large extent.

Procedure

The study was conducted through a pen-and-paper survey distributed and collected in December 2016. At that time, the participants had already been familiarized with some basic phonetic and phonological concepts regarding pronunciation resulting from their participation in the obligatory university courses. However, the content of the survey, formulated in Polish for a greater clarity,

was general enough and did not require specialized knowledge. The average amount of time spent on completing the survey was 30 minutes. Although the respondents were encouraged to ask for clarification if necessary, there were no instances thereof. The data was later analyzed with basic descriptive statistics. A t-test for dependent samples and the Pearson-product moment correlation were used for further calculations.

Results

For the purposes of finding the answer to the first research question regarding the evaluation of EFL teachers' pronunciation, first, the mean values (Mean) and the standard deviations (SD) were computed for three groups of teachers: primary school, junior high school, and high school. Later a t-test was applied in order to determine any significant differences in the participants' evaluations between three pairs of teacher types: primary and junior high school teachers, junior high and high school teachers, and primary and high school teachers. As Table 1 shows, primary school teachers' pronunciation viewed by EFL individuals reached the lowest mean value (Mean = 3.15, SD = 1.05) in the three groups of teachers. Junior high school teachers' pronunciation was evaluated slightly higher (Mean = 3.63, SD = 1.04), and high school teachers' pronunciation was perceived as the best, with the mean value of 3.8 (SD = 1.03). The results of a t-test displayed statistically significant differences in the perception of primary and junior high school teachers' pronunciation, as well as in the pronunciation of primary and high school teachers. In other words, the participants perceived primary school teachers' pronunciation as significantly worse than that of both junior high and high school teachers.

Table 1.
Perceived EFL teachers' pronunciation

EFL teachers' pronunciation		Mean	SD	t	df	p
1st pair of teachers	Primary School	3.15	1.05			
	Junior High School	3.63	1.04	-4.16	88	.000
2nd pair of teachers	Junior High School	3.63	1.04			
	High School	3.80	1.03	-1.17	88	.243
3rd pair of teachers	Primary School	3.15	1.05			
	High School	3.80	1.03	-4.66	88	.000

Perceived teachers' in-class use of English was measured as a factor contributing to the target language exposure. The results of basic descriptive statistics showed an interesting tendency of the perceived EFL teachers' use of the target language. On average, primary school teachers were reported to use mostly L1 during their lessons (Mean = 2.12, SD = 1.02). Junior high school teachers (Mean = 2.96, SD = 1.01) used more L2 than primary school teachers, whereas high school teachers belonged to the group that scored the highest mean value (Mean = 3.62, SD = .98) for the target language use in class. The correlation between teachers' L2 use in the classroom and perceived teachers' pronunciation was computed in order to provide the answer to the second research question on the relationship between the L2 learners' perceived levels of L2 teachers' pronunciation and teachers' classroom language use. The values of correlation coefficients indicated strong positive relationships, presented in Table 2. Interestingly, the higher the level of the perceived teacher's pronunciation was detected, the more L2, in the view of the participants, the teacher used in the classroom. Moreover, the strength of this relationship reflected the tendency observed earlier in the case of the scores for teachers' pronunciation that increased with educational levels represented by those teachers. The correlation coefficients reached higher and higher values for every consecutive educational stage, so that in the group of high school teachers the relationship between pronunciation and L2 use was the strongest. This might indicate that the participant's responses were fairly consistent.

Table 2.

Correlation coefficients (r) between the perceived levels of teachers' pronunciation and L2 teachers' classroom language use

Correlation coefficient r		Teachers' classroom language use		
		Primary School	Junior High School	High School
Teachers' pronunciation	Primary School	.41*		
	Junior High School		.44*	
	High School			.52*

*p < .05

The analysis of the data regarding the perception of factors affecting pronunciation acquisition refers to the third research question. As presented in Table 3, out of six in-class factors included in the instrument, three were perceived as moderately affecting the target language pronunciation learning: pronunciation error correction (Mean = 3.3, SD = 1.26), teacher's pronunciation (Mean = 3.18, SD = 1.25) and in-class listening to the recordings (Mean = 3.11, SD = 1.09). Their values were slightly above the average. The means calculated

for peers' pronunciation (Mean = 2.18, SD = 1.04) and in-class pronunciation practice (Mean = 2.84, SD = 1.27) were below the average, which means that neither of them was perceived as important or very important for pronunciation acquisition. Other in-class factors enumerated by the respondents, such as reading, pronunciation games, paying attention to pronunciation, repetition after a teacher, were perceived as marginally important for L2 pronunciation learning.

Table 3.

Means and standard deviations (SD) for the perception of in-class and out-of-class factors affecting pronunciation acquisition

IN-CLASS FACTORS	Mean	SD
Pronunciation error correction	3.30	1.26
Teachers' pronunciation	3.18	1.25
In-class listening to the recordings	3.11	1.09
In-class pronunciation practice	2.84	1.27
Peers' pronunciation	2.18	1.04
Other in-class factors	1.32	.93
OUT-OF-CLASS FACTORS		
Watching films/TV in English	4.27	1.01
Listening to music	4.19	.91
Listening to recordings (e.g., audiobooks)	3.69	1.28
Contacts with native speakers	3.28	1.57
Extracurricular activities	3.04	1.61
Visiting/staying in English speaking countries	3.01	1.66
Other out-of-class factors	1.71	1.44

Higher values were obtained in the analysis of the out-of-class factors. EFL learners declare that watching films or TV in English (Mean = 4.27, SD = 1.01) and listening to music (Mean = 4.19, SD = .91) are two most influential factors affecting their pronunciation learning. Listening to the recordings (Mean = 3.69, SD = 1.28), contact with native English speakers (Mean = 3.28, SD = 1.57), extracurricular activities (Mean = 3.04, SD = 1.61) and visits to English speaking countries (Mean = 3.01, SD = 1.66) were also perceived as valuable, but not as much as the previous factors. In an open-ended item regarding other out-of-class factors, the individuals enumerated online chatting, computer games, L2 speaking and using L2 for fun. None of those items though were perceived as highly influential in pronunciation learning. Generally, the out-of-

class factors were perceived as affecting the individuals' pronunciation more than the in-class items.

Discussion

The investigation into the cognition of selected in- and out-of-class aspects of pronunciation learning environment revealed a few interesting issues. Firstly, the findings confirmed the significant role of an EFL teacher as a model for a target language pronunciation. Secondly, a strong relationship was found between the perceived teachers' pronunciation and their L2 use. Finally, several factors affecting L2 pronunciation acquisition were inspected from the perspective of a learner, and the outcomes indicated clear hierarchy of the factors perceived as conducive to pronunciation learning.

In a foreign language learning context, where contacts with an authentic language and interactions with native L2 speakers are limited, a teacher usually performs a crucial role in the process of acquiring all aspects of an L2. The instructor is often the first foreign language model to the learners. Therefore, in order to serve this purpose his or her psychological, social, and linguistic, including phonological, expertise is most desirable. For instance, the way a teacher pronounces L2 sounds and how he or she organizes pronunciation practice may have an impact on learners' pronunciation, particularly at an initial stage of their L2 learning when the individuals are still unable to exploit the language in an autonomous manner, and their L2 learning environment is restricted to in-class learning. Moreover, an L2 teacher, being a vital element of an educational environment, undergoes the processes of students' evaluation (Brosh, 1996; Moradi & Sabeti, 2014; Park & Lee, 2006).

In the present study, focusing on teachers' one characteristic feature—pronunciation, the EFL learners perceived primary school teachers' enunciation as significantly worse than that of junior high and high school teachers. This phenomenon might have at least two directions of interpretation. The first refers to EFL school teachers' level of L2 proficiency used for professional purposes. It may be speculated that higher educational stages are more linguistically demanding, so that non-native EFL teachers conducting lessons at those stages constantly need to either improve or sustain their L2 proficiency level, including pronunciation abilities. Primary school teachers, however, may be tempted to adjust their L2 language to the age of pupils by excessive simplification of linguistic and phonetic forms. The second interpretation is less optimistic because it implies a deficient state of primary school teachers' pronunciation level that calls for urgent and immediate improvement. If this is the case, in-

adequate teachers' pronunciation may cause inadvertent, difficult to eradicate pronunciation inaccuracies among young learners exposed to a distorted model of L2 pronunciation. Needless to say, being exposed to correct pronunciation is particularly important for young learners because they primarily acquire L2 through listening and speaking (Szpotowicz & Szulc-Kurpaska, 2009). However, research into the perceived pronunciation competence conducted among teachers (e.g., Henderson et al., 2012; Szyszka, 2016) did not confirm the outcomes generated from the students. Regardless of educational level, teachers evaluated their pronunciation as good. These dissimilar cognitions on L2 teachers' pronunciation deriving from students' and teachers' perspectives constitute an interesting area for further investigations. Nevertheless, the results of the present study refer to the perceived, not actual, teachers' pronunciation, and they need to be supported with further research before generalizable conclusions are proposed. Definitely, in the opinions of EFL learners, primary school teachers' pronunciation is significantly worse than that of other teachers.

The findings regarding the perceived in-class target language exposure, in this study an EFL teacher's use of L2, indicates an interesting relationship. As viewed by the participants, the higher the level of teacher pronunciation, the more the teacher exposes learners to the target language in the classroom. This strong significant positive correlation refers to teachers working in all types of schools. This may imply that teachers who are more confident about their L2 pronunciation use more L2 in the classroom. However, the directionality of this relationship cannot be stated. Therefore, the results may also be understood as meaning that more frequent L2 classroom use may result in better pronunciation. Intriguing as it is, this relationship requires more in-depth scrutiny.

Out-of-class environmental factors were perceived to exert more influence on pronunciation acquisition than the in-class aspects. Particularly, the exposure to the target language audio and audio-visual media was valuable for the EFL learners' pronunciation acquisition. This may direct teachers' attention to the gravity of the in-class actions encouraging learners to exploit the target language outside the classroom. In the new millennium, the ubiquitous access to multimedia provides unprecedented opportunities for L2 teachers to motivate their learners and to activate out-of-class exposure to various models of pronunciation through multimedia, which may result in greater sensitivity and awareness of this language aspect. Never before has an L2 learner been exposed to so many accents and pronunciation varieties provided through so many types of audio, audio-visual, and social media with the use of such little effort. This is an L2 teacher's responsibility to guide his or her student to use this opportunity.

Although the access to multimedia is mostly inexpensive and easy to reach for an L2 learner, visits to a target language country may occur costly and unaffordable to an average L2 learner. This may explain the responses of

the participants who, on average, indicated contacts with native speakers and visiting the target language countries as averagely important for their pronunciation acquisition. However, the interpretation of these data should consider high standard deviations, indicating large distribution of the responses within a group. For example, on the one hand, if students do not have access to the target language native speakers, they may not perceive this factor as significant for their L2 pronunciation, and they select a low value for this item. On the other hand, those who have an opportunity to interact with people from English-speaking countries may distinguish this factor as important for L2 pronunciation acquisition.

In the study, from among the in-class factors affecting L2 pronunciation, three attract the attention: pronunciation error correction, teachers' pronunciation and in-class listening to recordings. They are placed on top of the list of most influential in-class factors perceived by the individuals taking part in the research. The first—error correction—and its role in second and foreign language learning have been the subject of interest of several scholars, who generally confirm that both L2 learners and teachers perceive error correction as valuable (cf. Pawlak, 2014, p. 80). The findings of the present study, which go in line with the previous research, should only encourage teachers to approach in-class pronunciation corrective feedback more enthusiastically. The second aspect—teachers' pronunciation—was reported to be somewhat influential in L2 pronunciation acquisition. This outcome, however, should not discourage teachers from using intelligible pronunciation while teaching. On the contrary, even if this factor had been perceived as minimally important, it is the responsibility of the teacher to provide a good model and follow the maxim: *Primum non nocere*. Finally, the last selected factor—in-class listening to recordings—is appreciated by L2 learners probably because it functions as an opportunity to be exposed to a number of native-speaker pronunciation varieties.

Conclusion

The main aim of the study was to investigate EFL learners' perceptions regarding selected educational environmental factors associated with the target language pronunciation acquisition. The findings direct the attention towards the value of L2 teachers' pronunciation, in-class L2 use, error correction, and in-class and out-of-class exposure to multimedia that provide access to a broad range of L2 pronunciation varieties. Firstly, teachers need to be aware of the impact of their pronunciation on L2 learners, and of the factors that L2 learners find influential on their pronunciation, such as pronunciation error correction

and native-speaker pronunciation accessed through a variety of multimedia. Secondly and interestingly enough, the results revealed that students perceive teachers' pronunciation in relationship with the amount of L2 they use in the classroom: the better pronunciation, the more L2 a teacher uses in a lesson. Thirdly, bearing in mind that a pronunciation learning process can be limited by many factors, sometimes very distant from an individual's ability or motivation, for instance, an economic strain preventing visits to L2 speaking countries, an L2 teacher should promote pronunciation learning through available, motivating and easily accessed multimedia.

The outcomes, however, need to be viewed with caution because of some weaknesses of the study. The participants were asked to report their perceptions based on the recalling of past memories that are easily affected by the factor of time (Craik, 2017). Therefore, their responses regarding their school teachers' pronunciation based on their past impressions might be far from accurate. Apart from the shortcomings of human memory, the individuals might have been tempted to deploy face-saving strategies when providing the answers because they all attended the courses conducted by the researcher. Nevertheless, the participants were informed of the purpose and confidentiality of the study. Obviously, a larger sample might generate more generalizable data. Therefore, this study should be treated as a preliminary stage leading to a more in-depth analysis of the educational environment entailing pronunciation learning.

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Magdalena Szyszka

**Das Milieu für Aussprachelernen:
die Wahrnehmung vom Einfluss der schulischen und außerschulischen
Faktoren auf die Ausspracheerwerbung bei den Englisch
als Zweitsprache Lernenden**

Zusammenfassung

Die Art und Weise auf welche das Bildungsmilieu von einem eine Fremdsprache lernenden Schüler wahrgenommen wird, kann den ganzen Prozess der Fremdspracherwerb beeinflussen. Im gegenwärtigen Aufsatz wollte die Verfasserin erforschen, wie die Englisch als Zweitsprache lernenden Schüler die Aussprache der Englischlehrer und die ihre Aussprache

bewirkenden schulischen und außerschulischen Faktoren (wie z.B.: Ausspracheübungen in der Klasse, Aufnahmen, Formbeachtung, Aussprache der anderen Schüler, Musikhören) betrachten. Die 89 Schüler zählende Gruppe sollte einen Fragebogen ausfüllen und drei Forschungsfragen beantworten: Wie betrachten die Schüler die Aussprache ihrer Englischlehrer? Was für ein Zusammenhang, wennschon, besteht zwischen der wahrgenommenen Beurteilung der Aussprache der Lehrer und deren Fremdsprachgebrauch im Unterricht? Welche Faktoren (den Schülermeinungen zufolge) beeinflussen ihre Ausspracheerwerbung? Die Forschungsergebnisse lassen statistisch relevante Unterschiede in der Wahrnehmung der Aussprache bei den auf unterschiedlichen Bildungsstufen unterrichtenden Lehrern erkennen. Die Beurteilung der Lehreraussprache korreliert positiv mit dem Fremdsprachgebrauch des Lehrers im Unterricht. Ansonsten messen die Schüler den folgenden Faktoren Gewicht bei, welche ihrer Meinung nach nur in geringem Maße den Ausspracheerwerb beeinflussen: Aussprache des Lehrers, Fremdsprachgebrauch im Unterricht, Berichtigung der Aussprachefehler, Kontakt mit der Sprache und verschiedenen Aussprachearten über die sowohl in der Schule als auch außerhalb der Schule ausgenutzten Medien.

Schlüsselwörter: Bildungsmilieu, Perzeption der Schüler, Aussprache des Lehrers, die Ausspracheerwerbung begünstigende schulische und außerschulische Faktoren

Pronunciation learning environment:

In-class and out-of-class factors affecting pronunciation acquisition

The main aim of this survey is to investigate your perceptions of some selected in-class and out-of-class factors related to pronunciation learning. Your anonymous responses will be used only for the purposes of the study, and they will not affect your course mark. Therefore, please, provide sincere and credible answers. If you find any of the survey items unclear, please, report it immediately.

- Biodata.

Complete or mark the correct answer.

- Age: ...
- Gender: ...
- How long have you been learning English? ... (in years)
- How long did you stay in (an) English-speaking country/ies? ... (in weeks, months or years)
- Which country? ...
- Have you attended extracurricular English activities (outside your regular school)?

YES	NO
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- What type of activities were there?

A. group	B. individual	C. other: ...
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- How many times in a week did you attend them? ...
- How long did you attend them? ... (in years)
- What was the mother tongue of your teacher?

A. Polish	B. American	C. other: ...
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- How many English lessons per week did you have in your regular school?
 - Primary school: grades I–III

A. 1–2 hours	B. 3–4 hours	C. more than 4 hours
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 - Primary school: grades IV–VI

A. 1–2 hours	B. 3–4 hours	C. more than 4 hours
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 - Junior high school: grades I–III

A. 1–2 hours	B. 3–4 hours	C. more than 4 hours
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 - High school: grades I–III

A. 1–2 hours	B. 3–4 hours	C. more than 4 hours
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- EFL teacher pronunciation. Circle the correct answers.

- How do you perceive your primary school (PS) EFL teacher's pronunciation?
Pronunciation competence scale: 1—very poor, almost unintelligible, 2—poor, with strong L1 features, 3—average, but generally intelligible, 4—good, intelligible, with few L1 and a lot of L2 features, 5—very good, almost native-like or native-like.

PS teacher 1:	1	2	3	4	5
PS teacher 2:	1	2	3	4	5
PS teacher 3:	1	2	3	4	5
- How do you perceive your junior high school (JHS) EFL teacher's pronunciation?

JHS teacher 1:	1	2	3	4	5
JHS teacher 2:	1	2	3	4	5
JHS teacher 3:	1	2	3	4	5

- How do you perceive your high school (HS) EFL teacher's pronunciation?

HS teacher 1:	1	2	3	4	5
HS teacher 2:	1	2	3	4	5
HS teacher 3:	1	2	3	4	5
- How much time in a 45-minute lesson did your teachers use English (L2)?
Mark on the scale: 1—never, 2—rarely, 3—sometimes, 4—very often, 5—always or almost always.

PS teacher 1:	1	2	3	4	5
PS teacher 2:	1	2	3	4	5
PS teacher 3:	1	2	3	4	5
JHS teacher 1:	1	2	3	4	5
JHS teacher 2:	1	2	3	4	5
JHS teacher 3:	1	2	3	4	5
HS teacher 1:	1	2	3	4	5
HS teacher 2:	1	2	3	4	5
HS teacher 3:	1	2	3	4	5
- In-class and out-of-class factors regarding English pronunciation acquisition.

To what extent have the following factors affected your English pronunciation?

Mark on the scale: 1—not at all, 2—slightly, 3—moderately, 4—very, 5—extremely

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Teachers' pronunciation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Practicing pronunciation in the classroom | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Pronunciation error correction by the teacher | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Listening to the recordings in the classroom | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Peers' pronunciation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Other in-class factors: ... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Extracurricular activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Out-of-class contacts with native speakers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Visiting an English-speaking country | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Listening to music outside the classroom | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Listening to audiobooks outside the classroom | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Watching films/TV outside the classroom | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Other out-of-class factors: ... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

STYLE GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

Authors are requested to submit manuscripts formatted in APA style (*American Psychological Association*, 6th ed.).

All manuscripts must include an abstract in English (maximum of 250 words). After the abstract please provide keywords.

Main text: 12 Times New Roman

Long citations (more than 40 words): 10 Times New Roman, indent by 1 tab either side, one empty line above and below, no quotation marks.

1.5 spacing

APA headings

Level	Format
1	Centered, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Headings
2	Left-aligned, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading
3	Indented, boldface, lowercase heading with a period. Begin body text after the period.
4	<i>Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase heading with a period.</i> Begin body text after the period.
5	<i>Indented, italicized, lowercase heading with a period.</i> Begin body text after the period.

In-text citations (examples):

Author's name and date in brackets:

The experience of critical incidents and effective reflection upon them allows teachers to control their classroom actions more consciously and create critical events (CE's), which were described earlier as intended, planned and controlled (Woods, 1993).

Woods (1993) believes that critical events are structured and occur in well-defined staged of conceptualization . . .

Two authors:

(Ballantyne & Packer, 1995)

As Ballantyne and Packer (1995) demonstrate ...

Three authors:

(Barker, Callahan, & Ferreira, 2009)

Subsequent use:

(Barker et al., 2009)

Six authors or more:

Lorenz et al. (1998) argued...

(Lorenz et al., 1998)

Authors whose last names are the same:

(D. Francis, 1985; H. Francis, 2004)

Online sources (unpaginated), provide paragraph or section title instead:

(Peterson & Clark, 1978, para. 4)

(Moss, Springer, & Dehr, 2008, Discussion section, para. 1)

No author, provide shortened title:

(“Primary Teachers Talking”, 2007)

(*Reflective Practice*, 2005, pp. 12–25)

Secondary citations:

Smith (as cited in Maxx & Meyer, 2000) noted that “there is”

Citation within citation:

As it has been noted that “there is no relevance . . . (Smith, 2005)” (Maxx & Meyer, 2000, p. 129).

& vs. and:

As Smithson and Stones (1999) demonstrated. . .

. . . as has been shown (Smithson & Stones, 1999) . . .

References

Selected examples (for more consult APA manual):**Book, one author:**

Goldberg, A. (2006). *Constructions at work*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Book, two authors and more:

Jarvis, S., & Pavlenko, A. (2008). *Crosslinguistic influence in language cognition*. London: Routledge.

Translated book:

Freud, S. (1960). *Jokes and their relation to the unconscious*. (J. Strachey, Trans.). London, England: Routledge & K. Paul. (Original work published 1905).

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